The 15-Minute City in Toronto: Insights from Lefebvre and Fanon

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Abstract

This major paper examines the spatial and political project of the 15-minute city by drawing on the insights of Henri Lefebvre and Frantz Fanon. This research paper interrogates the 15-minute city urban vision and explores the social and spatial implications of the model. This analysis explores the different contexts where this plan is being promoted, highlighting local dynamics of socio-spatial inequality, state policy, and expectations of social life in urban areas. It applies a conceptual framework that foregrounds the works of Henri Lefebvre and Frantz Fanon which offers insight into the ways that areas can be spatially organized into hierarchical relations and be impacted by racialized and gendered dynamics of everyday life. This paper also examines the 15-minute city in Toronto within existing popular planning discourses and in the context of neoliberal policies and dynamics of socio-spatial inequality. I am engaging in a contextual reading that looks particularly at the role of the state and everyday life in influencing spatial and social relations. The aim of this research is to challenge the underlying assumptions around desirable social life and urban space and to highlight the colonial, capitalist, and neoliberal dimensions of the 15-minute city.

Foreword

This major paper is reflective of the knowledge I gained in order to meet the requirements for the degree of Master of Environmental Studies. This paper has brought together my course work, internship experience and research, in order to concentrate on the components of (1) urban politics and governance (2) environmental policy (3) along with the fields of environmental justice and political ecology. This research links to the components as it addresses the political-economic dimensions of urban governance and diversity of thought within urban politics, the power of non-state actors in influencing the state, and the potential impact policy has on the most marginalized of communities. This paper is reflective of my primary interest in examining how embodied nature/societal relations are organized in cities. Additionally, it reflects my focus on interrogating the ways that the spatial organization of places is shaped by dynamics of gender, race, and socio-economic inequalities which play an active role in shaping the realities of everyday life and notions of desirable urban life.

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Introduction

Debates on how to effectively execute urban design and make cities more accessible have become pertinent during the coronavirus pandemic where deep-rooted social inequalities have been exacerbated in cities and beyond (United Nations, 2020). The 15-minute city has emerged in urban planning discourse and municipal circles around the world as a popular post-pandemic recovery plan and as a way to 'reimagine' cities (Sisson, 2020). The 15-minute city model promotes the development of neighbourhoods and cities where everything residents need can be accessed in 15 minutes by foot or bike. A closer look at the model suggests that despite its' promotion by urban elites as both a transformative and unique vision for cities, it repackages many plans inspired by New Urbanism, early modern colonial and imperial designs, and modern architecture and design visions for cities. Additionally, the 15-minute city vision, in suggesting that the spatial reorganization and the proximity of both diverse resources and spaces contributes to a better urban life and more connected social relations, needs to be interrogated.

Plans for city building and the development of urban spaces need to be understood through a lens that recognizes the active role that urban planning has played in contributing to inequity and spatial separation. This approach also suggests that one can understand the local intricacies of diverse cities globally and understand how current urban spaces continue to be shaped by socio-political and economic structures stemming from processes like capitalism, imperialism, and colonialism. Critiquing the 15-minute city also suggests exploring how current policy is influenced by neoliberal ideologies and state intervention. Additionally, it calls into question how the state grapples with segregation and a lack of diversity in communities but implements policy and projects that reinforce spatial separation.

This research paper argues that the 15-minute city vision fails to capture local contexts and address the ways in which space is produced unequally through capitalist and neo-colonial logics. Moreover, the insights of Henri Lefebvre and Frantz Fanon help to caution ideas like the 15-minute city. Their combined perspective speaks to the ways that inequalities can be organized spatially by both developing hierarchical relationships between spaces and in the ways that racialized and gendered dynamics can be perpetuated in everyday life. This paper also argues that the prospect of the 15-minute city would embrace neoliberal policies and ideologies in Toronto. Given the dynamics of socio-spatial inequality that exist locally, this vision could lead to more pronounced spatial separation and alienation.

Exploring the connections between the 15-minute city, and particular historical contexts and concepts developed by Fanon and Lefebvre, requires a qualitative approach using two methods. Firstly, through a textual analysis with a strong theoretical engagement in the works of Fanon and Lefebvre, I engage in a contextual reading that explores relationships among texts and a critical analysis of certain concepts. This analysis helps build a theoretical framework on territorial relations, the role of the state, and contradictions of everyday life. It informs my analysis on the role of the state in organizing space alongside dimensions of race and gender. I engage Lefebvre's *Marxist thought and the city*, *The Urban Revolution*, *State, Space, World: Selected Essays*, *Critique of Everyday Life* and *The Production of Space*. The works I review from Fanon include *The Wretched of the Earth*, *Black Skin White Masks*, *A Dying Colonialism*, and *Towards the African Revolution*. The second method is a review of secondary literature including academic and non-academic work on the topic of socio-spatial inequality and literature on the 15-minute city model. This literature helps point to the dynamic contexts within which the 15-minute city model is being proposed as well as the spatial and social assumptions that underly

this model. Additionally, it provides an in-depth understanding of how the model might relate to current urban dynamics.

Theoretical Concepts

Urban reform projects like the 15-minute city are often presented in language that aims at addressing inequalities and polarization with state-led projects and policies as well as place-based strategies and planning reforms. The inequities in question are often presented in isolation from global and historical processes like colonialism, capitalism and neoliberalization. These political-economic forces and their legacies shape the way space is produced and affect where people settle and what kind of spaces are made available for them. To prepare the ground for these arguments about the 15-minute city, it is important to explore some theoretical concepts and explain how they are being mobilized.

Everyday Life

Everyday life is conventionally defined as a set of daily routines and activities. Everyday life is often characterized as being normal and natural. Early on in sociological theories, everyday life as a theme was ignored in investigations that explored society as a form of scientific investigation and objectivity in relation to social structures (Kalekin-Fishman, 2013). Everyday life was seen as dis-connected from social structures or social relations, an afterthought or a naturally occurring and predictable set of practices and occurrences. German philosopher Martin Heidegger and others denigrated everyday life as lowly and banal daily routines in contrast to an exalted conception of intellectual life, thus they did not pay much attention to it (Sim, 2015). A contrasting way to see everyday life is to see the concept through examining people’s daily creativities. This partially follows French philosopher Gaston Bachelard’s work,

around lived, affective experiences and memories in relation to different spatial forms and places. This perspective suggests that working people's creativities can be detected in their intimate and poetic daily interactions (Kaplan, 1972). Less one-sided Henri Lefebvre suggests that everyday life does indeed describe mundane daily routines that produce space and spatial practices, but that these practices are not inevitable, uninteresting or unimportant (1991a; 1991b). While people do reproduce the structures of power in their daily life, to treat these as merely banal is to suggest that there is no alternative to the way things are (1991a; 1991b). In fact, Lefebvre is suggesting seemingly obvious daily routines harbour surprises. Everyday life is contradictory because it includes people's aspirations, daydreams and imaginations, which may exceed or subvert the normalcy of the daily round (Lefebvre, 1991a; 1991b; 2003).

Alienation

Henri Lefebvre's interpretation of alienation stems from the work of Karl Marx. Marx's theory of alienation is tied to his theory of exploitation, which explains how workers are subjected to the capitalists (their employers) so that the fruits of their labour can be taken away from them. The products of people's labour thus become alienated from them. Marx thus saw alienation in relation to production in capitalist society and its broader ramifications. One of these is commodity fetishism. The very separation of the fruits of labour-power from the labourer in capitalist commodity production makes it appear as if the commodity is independent from the conditions of its production. On this basis, the commodity can become mystified and appear as a fetish-like force exercising magical power over people. Commodity fetishism is thus a result of labourers being divested from having collective control over the conditions of production (Marx, 1867). On this basis, Lefebvre emphasizes further manifestations of alienation in capitalism. Among these are colonialism and the state, particularly the role of the state in

subjecting land to private property and organizing class divides through space. As will be elaborated on later, alienation is also crucial for Fanon and his analyses of the everyday impacts of compartmentalization. This paper is particularly interested in how urban reform projects can contribute, unintentionally or otherwise, to alienation through the development of social segregation through spatial separation. The term is thus important to understand how capitalism shapes spatial forms and urban life.

Spatial Separation

On the topic of the spatial composition of cities and the dynamics of socio-spatial relations this paper focuses on the concept of spatial separation. Marcuse (2018) pushes a conversation on how spatial separation is experienced differently with inequalities organized in specific forms felt through dynamics like polarization and power, which are connected by systems of global capital. Identifying different forms of spatial separation, Marcuse offers a more dynamic approach to urban research, moving away from simple or singular characterizations of spatial inequality in cities. Kempen and Marcuse (1997) highlight the impacts race has in contributing to segregation, which refers to the involuntary concentration of communities in certain peripheral and suburban areas. On the topic of segregation, which can often lead us to (mis-)characterize neighbourhoods, Walks and Bourne (2009) ask that we challenge how communities are being portrayed in society and be purposeful in how we speak about people who have been marginalized and excluded from society. When discussing socio-spatial dynamics I am exploring the spatial proximity and lived intersectional interaction of society with the environment, including the accessibility of communities of different social backgrounds to resources and services. Moreover, in exploring socio-spatial inequality I am investigating the

relationship between social and spatial structures and the extent to which disparities arise in relation to dynamics of class and race.

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is described as an evolving and contradictory state-led project of enabling 'free markets' (Peck and Theodore, 2019). Additionally, neoliberalism operates as a mechanism of regulation that manages spaces and dynamics of conflict and struggle (Peck and Theodore, 2019). Exploring socio-spatial dynamics through theories of neoliberalism (including privatization and rising inequality) is central to relate the state to rescaling and reform. For Peck and Theodore (2019), "late neoliberalism" relates to some of the reactive measures that have been taken to undo or react to measures like privatization and financialization and their results such as sociospatial polarization (p. 257-158). Late neoliberalism as an attempt to bring forward communities they had left behind or that were targeted by neoliberal mechanisms and projects spurred on by an authoritarian regime, drew on undercurrents such as racism and bigotry (Peck and Theodore, 2019, p. 257-259). Pursuing this vision has meant the restructuring and targeting of certain spaces where people are already marginalized - specifically for immigrants or communities of colour who are further marginalized in order to maintain domination and the hegemony of those in power (Peck and Theodore, 2019, p. 258-263). Ali Bhagat (2019) speaks to the ways in which neoliberalism operates on an urban scale by increasing policing and inequality, which has strengthened racial divides (p. 2). Importantly, he notes a contradiction within neoliberalism. Diversity and tolerance are celebrated while the "retrenchment of the welfare state" further marginalizes the racialized poor through surveillance and securitization (Bhagat, 2019, p. 2-3).

Colonialism

Colonialism is conventionally defined as the practice of extending control over another territory and exerting political-economic power and exploitation over a nation. Cole Harris maintains that understanding the complexity of colonialism means investigating the geographic dispossession of the colonized in order to understand the way people are dispossessed and marginalized through the restructuring of space (2004). Additionally, Harris (2014) argues that the dispossession of land is also connected to ways that the colonized are linked to the state through the reliance on infrastructure in order to support some sense of livelihood which further undercuts their autonomy and attempts to further erase histories of colonial people while at the same time enriching the state. Drawing on the work of Lefebvre, Kipfer and Goonewardena (2007) maintain that colonization exists when political power is connected to territory, where an inferior social group is bound by a superior one and moreover a dominated space is produced by a dominant group through a racialized periphery-center dynamic (p. 20). They connect Lefebvre's notion of colonialization to Frantz Fanon's nuanced perspective on decolonisation, thus emphasizing the role of racialized spatial relations in colonial as well as post- or neocolonial contexts. This paper draws on this perspective in order to explore the ways in which when qualified appropriately, the term can be seen in relation to visions that seek to recast territorial relations and spatial dynamics between the center of cities and their surrounding regions as well as to think about how colonial legacies are upheld and challenged currently.

Chapter Overview

This research paper begins by exploring the vision and motivation behind the 15-minute city concept and the underlying social assumptions it makes about urban social life and the

spatial organization and forms it promotes. The 15-minute city is explored in relation to visions of New Urbanism along with visions for sustainable development. The first chapter also explores how the 15-minute city is being developed or adapted in different social spaces and the implications this could possibly have in the local context of these cities, which are shaped by colonial and capitalist dynamics. The cities explored include Bogotá, Portland, Stockholm, and Paris. This chapter highlights the intricacies of central urban spaces and the ways that social relations and dynamics are influenced by imperial and colonial histories which live in city spaces today. The second chapter explores Lefebvre's and Fanon's respective views about the spatial organization of life in unequal capitalist and colonial societies, and how these insights can help one understand ideas like 15-minute city. This section looks specifically at how their work could help one think about how strategies that foreground spatial integration and physical proximity as central tenets of a desirable urban social life. This chapter highlights how Fanon and Lefebvre could help us think about the role of the state in influencing the spatial organization of places in ways that promote spatial separation and employ a racialized and gendered dynamic that permeates everyday life and affectively influences people. The third chapter reflects on the prospect of the 15-minute city in Toronto and how it compares to existing planning visions for the city. This section suggests that the 15-minute city aligns fairly well with currently promoted principles such as compact city building and mixed-use planning. This chapter also suggests that given socio-spatial inequality in Toronto and the way the city is organized it would not be successful in many areas of the city and might actually cause spatial separation to be extended, particularly in the suburbs. Lastly, based on the insights of Lefebvre and Fanon, the implementation of the 15-minute city could further encourage the state to contribute to spatial

separation through the design of communities that would not only exclude people but make sentiments of alienation and difference more pronounced.

Chapter 1: The 15-Minute City

The 15-minute city model promotes the development of neighbourhoods and cities where everything residents need can be accessed in 15 minutes by foot or bike. This approach has been claimed by scientist and professor Carlos Moreno as a concept to reimagine urban areas. It has been popularized in places like central Paris where Mayor Anne Hidalgo plans to implement it in order to promote environmental sustainability and urban connectivity. Additionally, this vision encourages mixed-use development and promotes socially and economically diverse communities in order to improve quality of life. The plan promotes functional and social mix in cities; it is a decentralized city model that attempts to engage a variety of local actors in plans to build social equity and opportunity for people (Balleto et al., 2021).

During the pandemic the 15-minute city has garnered attention because of a renewed interest in developing stronger local communities and visions to creatively utilize public space to effectively meet the needs of people. The pandemic has also raised questions about how urban spaces and networks can be affected by diseases. It has made it clear that health considerations should be a part of planning efforts. At the same time, Covid-19 has exposed and amplified existing social and economic inequalities. The 15-minute city is considered as a remedy to these disparities and an opportunity to challenge conventional relationships between neighbourhoods. For Moreno the advantages of reorganizing space and reconfiguring essential services and leisure activities are clear; they will positively influence social relations and bring communities together.

At the core of the 15-minute city is the idea that proximity is key to the fundamental well-being of people. Proximity and accessibility are seen to facilitate the ability for the everyday person to enjoy urban life and to build connections with their neighbourhoods.

According to Moreno, the 15-minute city is founded on the concepts of “proximity, diversity, density, and ubiquity.” Residents should be able to exercise the social functions of “living, working, supplying, caring, learning and enjoying” (Willsher, 2020). The idea of chrono-urbanism is a key principle of the 15-minute city, which promotes close proximities of amenities and infrastructure but also explores how people spend their time (Reid, 2020). “Chrono-urbanism” connects urban rhythms with quality of life (Moreno et al., 2021). Bringing different activities together facilitates social interaction and brings the city itself to life, to supposedly confront current approaches that promote a “utilitarian way of life, based on segregation and the separation between space and lifetime” (Moreno, 2021, para. 5). In Moreno’s work there is a sense that the ‘normalcy’ of everyday life can be broken up if resources and people can converge to offer a more creative and suitable urban life for people.

Promoters of the 15-minute city concept argue that density, diversification, and digitalisation improve quality of life by promoting community (Moreno et al., 2021, p. 98). The vision came from a commitment to tackle car dependency and unsustainable practices of transportation that have increased economic and social inequalities (Moreno et al., 2021, p. 94). Moreno et al., (2021) are also interested in fostering a social environment where reduced car dependency can foster healthier lifestyles made possible by walkability and mental wellness spurred on by increased social interaction with community members (p. 100).

Digitalization is also a key dimension of the 15-minute city which is linked to technological platforms and connectivity, aspects of what people have called ‘smart cities’. The 15-minute city is thus aligned with Goal 11 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Moreno et al., 2021, p. 98). Goal 11 speaks to the development of resilient, safe, and sustainable communities that foster diversity and inclusion (Moreno et al., 2020, p. 98-99). This

is important to recognize because it speaks to the viability of the 15-minute city to gain traction as a policy issue and as an actionable measure. Moreno et al., (2021) speak to how digitization in cities can better quality of life by furthering social inclusion and investment in infrastructure that addresses the climate crisis (p. 98-99). It is important to recognize however that technological fixes and networked infrastructure in the context of smart cities can lead to further economic disparities and social fragmentation (Hollands, 2008).

Those who promote the 15-minute city assume that a desirable urban life is characterized by proximity and accessibility, that is the ease by which people can navigate the urban environment on a daily basis. They claim that this is so because mixing human activities in place automatically increases social interaction, fosters mobility and deepens social relationships. Additionally, they suggest that functionally diverse and physically integrated environments support sustainability, liveability, social equity, and climate mitigation while also promoting the autonomy and protection of people of diverse identities. These assumptions and principles behind urban planning visions are not new; they can also be found in other urban design movements and the work of other well-known urbanists.

Inspiration and Implications

The 15-minute city builds on planning reforms popularized in North America and Europe. This includes visions promoting concepts like social mix, urban intensification, complete streets, and mixed-use planning. Moreno cites Jane Jacobs and Le Corbusier as central influences of the 15-minute city. Jane Jacobs' critique of urban renewal policies and 'natural' surveillance have influenced various city development efforts. Jane Jacobs (1961) advocated a finely grained mix of land uses in order to develop better livelihoods and to promote diversity

and bolster cities. However, Jacobs did not necessarily speak to cultural or social mixing. Although Jacobs's version of mixed-use planning can lead to increasingly mixed communities based on factors like employment, it does not consider the diverse localized dynamics among people. Additionally, a pre-occupation with land uses arguably undermines the impact that spatial organization enforced through policy has on people. Jacobs was a critic of visions like the 'Neighbourhood Unit' of planning, which she thought contributed to functional segregation, diminished walkability, and decreased social interaction (Sharifi, 2016, p. 4-5). The influence of Jane Jacobs on Moreno's work highlights a seeming paradox: advocacy for desegregation and social mixing need not lead to an actual end of separation and segregation.

Historically there have been spatial interventions that indicate the power of urban design and architecture as tools utilized to curb the spread of infectious diseases (Pisano, 2020). Moreno credits the work of Le Corbusier and others for promoting architectural modernism and expressing a willingness to redesign spaces to improve the physical layout of cities being impacted by war and disease in the 20th century (Pisano, 2020). Moreno often cites Le Corbusier's statement that "a house is only habitable when it is full of light and air" to reference the ways he spoke to eliminating clutter and fostering hygienic environments with adequate air quality and sunlight (1986, p. 123). Moreno embraces Le Corbusier's design principles that promoted a minimalistic and intentionally calculated geometric vision for the layout of cities and encouraged utilizing modern materials for building physical infrastructure in neighbourhoods (Pisano, 2020, p. 2). Le Corbusier's modernist vision for the city encouraging strategically organized and strongly ordered neighbourhoods can also be seen in the 15-minute city concept. However, Moreno is critical of Le Corbusier's track record of attempting to build efficient cities by demolishing and rebuilding neighbourhoods while also contributing to lasting issues of urban

sprawl and automobile dependency (Moreno et al., 2020). Moreno's vision is different in that he rejects the architectural functionalism and strict separation of zones that Le Corbusier proposed in some of his plans. The 15-minute city attempts to develop infrastructure that is multifunctional and spatially integrated to encourage accessibility and combat socio-spatial segregation through encouraging diversity and social mix. The similarities of the visions of Le Corbusier and Moreno are in their advocacy for efficient city building, arguably at the expense of marginalized neighbourhoods located in peripheral neighbourhoods, and egalitarian efforts promoting genuine desegregation.

The 15-minute city is also inspired by New Urbanism. New Urbanism is a planning approach concerned with developing diverse neighbourhoods that are walkable and environmentally friendly. Cliff Ellis describes that New Urbanism weaves together a range of spatial designs that develop quality human-oriented designs that contribute to sustainable development and urban revitalization (2002, p. 261). A central principle of New Urbanism is to 'bring into proximity' a variety of public and private activities to promote a strong economy, support neighbourhoods that are mixed-use and compact, and have a balanced transportation system (Ellis, 2002, p. 262-269). Critics have argued that there is a tendency in New Urbanism to push for housing reform projects and state-led revitalization efforts in neighbourhoods as a solution to local issues and that this ignores and amplifies racial, social, and economic challenges (Ellis, 2002, p. 282).

The primary social goal of New Urbanism is to foster a sense of community. This goal operates on the premise that the organization of space influences the quality of social interaction (Łuka, 2018, p. 19). Łuka maintains that new urbanists try to foster community by developing private residential areas and mindfully designing and placing public spaces (2018, p. 19). One of

the ways this is done is through complete streets. Complete streets are streets designed to accommodate all road users. However, Hui et al. argue that the concept of complete streets not only includes ways of facilitating safe transportation and the functionality of cities. It also requires that one analyze how streets operate as destinations themselves rather than just avenues to a destination (Hui et al., 2017, p. 15-16). This perspective challenges how effectively one can foster a sense of community through complete streets.

New Urbanism also promotes higher density in mixed-use urban areas. Density in cities is often linked to more vibrant cities with a strengthened sense of community. The diversity of people in these spaces is key to fostering compete neighbourhoods (Talen, 1997, p. 1364). The vision of New Urbanism is based on a philosophy that views the proximity of people as a catalyst for a sense of togetherness in urban space. This vision itself holds preconceived notions about what social cohesion actually looks like. New Urbanism promotes a social contact among people by creating space and facilitating physical proximity among people (Talen, 1997, p. 1364). The assumption is that the physical design of places and the prioritization of density and mixed-use planning will improve social interaction and consequently foster a better sense of community (Talen, 1997, p. 1364). Interestingly others maintain that in order to create a genuine sense of community, one needs to build a community of like-minded and demographically similar people (Talen, 1997, p. 1367-1368). New Urbanism has been critiqued for linking the spatial planning of cities with community development superficially, and for identifying strong social relations with territorial integration (Łuka, 2018, p. 22-23). Proponents of the 15-minute city have adopted this uncritical approach to proximity, sociability and community. They also fail to understand the socio-political dynamics shaping neighbourhoods, the historical ways that

urban spaces have been managed, and the fact that simply promoting a 'mix' of people and amenities is not the solution for inequality and social issues in urban areas.

Context

This section explores the contexts in which the 15-minute city is being promoted. The cities are all characterized by a clear distinction between the city center and the surrounding areas. They have all been influenced by dynamics of colonialism, neoliberalism, and social inequalities, albeit in distinct ways. The cities explored include Bogotá, Portland, Stockholm, and Paris.

Bogotá

The city of Bogotá is an urban space where processes of globalization and colonialism have left an imprint on the political and economic conditions that exist today. Bogotá is the capital district in Colombia, and is home to key economic, political and administrative functions. The metropolitan area of Bogotá is recognized as a diverse and vibrant center. The imperial and colonial connections in the region are complex and deeply rooted. Firstly, Bogotá was colonized by the Spanish in 1492. The networks of cities developed by the Spanish Conquistadors operated as nodes through which hegemony and military power were exercised (Mendieta, 2011, p. 138).

Spanish control of the city was seen as representation of domination because it illustrated a proclamation of authority over a physical space that was a representation of hegemony and because the central city was developed as political and legal spheres of authority (Mendieta, 2011, p. 138). Additionally, during the 16th century Colombia saw the arrival of African slaves on the Pacific and Caribbean coasts (Escobar, p. 131, 2016). Interestingly, Bogotá is seen as relatively sheltered from the unrest, resistance and re-structuring that occurred through *La*

Violencia, which was concentrated in rural areas (Escobar, 2016, p. 139-140). The current urban dynamics of Bogotá are complicated by the way that Colombia is a particular settler-colony with a racialized class structure even as it is dominated by the imperial influence of the United States. The class structure includes complex relationships among Indigenous, Mestizo and Afro-Colombians. There are a range of imperialist connections to the region; perhaps the strongest is the U.S. -led' war against drugs' through foreign and military intervention under projects like 'Plan Columbia' (Miroff, 2016). There are also relationships between Colombia and the U.S. through foreign aid and counter terrorism measures.

The 15-minute city gained traction in Bogotá because the pandemic amplified socio-economic inequity in the city. Additionally, Bogotá was spotlighted for their development of an 84-kilometer emergency bike network to help people reach their destination during the pandemic. Bogotá has one of the highest percentages of bicycle trips in Latin America. The city's long-term aim is to develop infrastructure sufficient to move at least half of all trips to micromobility vehicles (Jaramillo, 2020). The 15-minute city in Bogotá is largely framed in environmental terms, a way to improve the layout and safety of streets by reducing speed limits and encouraging bicycle commuting (Jaramillo, 2020). Interestingly, the promotion of cycling as the main mode of transportation has been tied to calls to increase the safety of streets in order to encourage women to become more involved in cycling (Jaramillo, 2020). Also, Guzman et al., (2021, p. 252) suggest that in some dense and socio-economically privileged areas of Bogotá, a 15-minute city more or less exists already. At the same time, areas with the least favourable socioeconomic conditions lack the services and amenities to make the 15-minute city possible, which is the historical result of inequitable city building (Guzman et al., 2021, p. 251-253). With

the pandemic, disparities between the rich and poor (as well as rich and poor districts) has accentuated these inequities.

The current urban dynamics of Bogotá complicate the potential of a 15-minute city because of the social inequality and socio-political tensions in the region. Data show that low-income neighbourhoods are concentrated in the periphery of the city and that in informal neighbourhoods where there are high residential densities and many employment opportunities, amenities are scarce (Guzman and Bocarejo, 2017, p. 4496-4497). In terms of the relationship between the core of the city and surrounding areas, Guzman and Bocarejo (2017, p. 4492) maintain that land values are cheaper in the periphery areas because of the lack of amenities in the area and because of the large numbers of low-income families that reside there. Implementing the 15-minute city would arguably have contradictory effects because new amenities in target areas might help push people into poverty, possibly displacing them if they cannot afford to remain in that neighbourhood (Guzman and Bocarejo, 2017, p. 4492).

Some of the efforts made to curb inequalities in Bogotá that have been pursued with private investment rather than public infrastructure and investment in localities. This has led to increased fragmentation (Tellez, 2018). Bogotá is a segregated city. The northern area of the city center and the central core of the city includes the wealthiest area and a high concentration of jobs (Guzman and Bocarejo, 2017, p. 4500). The most densely populated areas are in the peripheries of the city (Guzman and Bocarejo, 2017, p. 4500). Guzman et al. demonstrate how social and spatial segregation has generated pronounced imbalances in funding for communities and “fragmented urban development patterns between central and urban peripheries” (2017, p. 247). Implementing the 15-minute city in this context would increase spatial separation and

social polarization. It would also likely enrich the private sector, which already plays a central role in developing urban infrastructure.

Colombia's poorest province Choco is home to many Afro-Colombian people who are living in extreme poverty (Columbia Reports, 2020). Interestingly some of the peripheral provinces in Colombia are also home to significant indigenous populations including La Guajira and Cauca and have high levels of poverty (Colombia Reports, 2020). The discourse around race in society in Colombia runs deep and it has become increasingly understood as a systemic issue affecting life expectancy and access to health services (Escobar, 2016, p. 131). In the early 20th century, there was significant migration from Afro-Colombian communities to Bogotá, where they faced internal displacement and were further marginalized (Escobar, 2016, p. 131). Despite racial and social discrimination, Afro- Colombians have been able to garner power by investing and building businesses in the downtown area and organizing around gender equality (Escobar, 2016, p. 136-139). Currently in Bogotá there are protests against tax reforms, police violence, and infringement on Indigenous land (BBC, 2021). From this perspective the site of Bogotá emerges as a point of potential leverage under a 15-minute city model, and in contrast in more peripheral areas like Choco there is an existing effort to build equity and invest in local communities that could be undermined by the 15-minute city.

Stockholm

Stockholm is the capital city and the most densely populated urban area in Sweden. Stockholm is widely regarded as an ideal space for urban planning because of the existing vibrancy and rich history. Sweden was part of the European imperial zone. In colonial times, it was a central trading company and as a military power. The Caribbean island Saint-Barthélemy

was a colony of Sweden from 1784-1878; it was the most long-lasting among Swedish colonies (Sjöström, 2001). Saint-Barthélemy served as a central location for the Swedish slave trade and it was seen as a 'testing' location to understand the viability of expanding the colonial empire in other places. On Saint-Barthélemy there were clear racial divisions between the slaves and the European colonizers. Afro-Caribbean people, others of African descent, and women bore the brunt of the persecution and marginalization (Sjöström, 2001). Interestingly, Sjöström, writes that social control continued to be exercised over descendants of slaves even after abolition. This had lasting impacts on local communities (Sjöström , 2001, p. 84-85). However, given the lack of lasting power that Sweden had as a colonial power in other places, colonial legacies in Sweden do not quite match those in the major European powers.

The 15-minute city has inspired the idea of the 1-minute city in Sweden. Interestingly, some of the critiques that have been lodged against the 15-minute city appear to be addressed in this model. The government agency Vinnova along with the Swedish Centre for Architecture and Design want to develop this model on a national scale. The 1-minute city initiative is called "Street Moves" and its premise includes paying close attention to the street level and encouraging local communities to participate in street design (O'Sullivan, 2021a). The vision includes transforming shared public space and optimizing the local streets. This includes developing shared facilities like outdoor gyms, urban gardens, and electric charging stations. It also aims to replace parking spots and allow people to optimize the immediate curb space through modular street furniture. This project is already underway in four different places in Sweden, including neighbourhoods in Stockholm (O'Sullivan, 2021a).

One of the differences between the 15-minute city and this vision is that there is not a focus on the larger elements of city building like transit and employment opportunities, but

rather a focus on spaces that are in the immediate vicinity of inhabitants. Interestingly, the 1-minute city model sees the space directly outside of the household and the streets as a direct access point to the rest of the world and amenities in communities. This perspective challenges conventional understandings of the streets as places for vehicles and stores. In terms of design, the 1-minute city is inspired by the traditional "parklet model" (O'Sullivan, 2021b). Vinnova claims that this model can prompt streets in Sweden to become an "innovative platform for rapidly and powerfully addressing climate resilience, public health and social justice combined" (O'Sullivan, 2021a).

In Sweden urban neoliberalism has played a key role in the development of neighbourhoods and local infrastructure. Firstly, there has been increased securitization and policing of immigrant neighbourhoods. In exploring housing, Hedin et al., (2012) found that increased social and geographic polarization in Sweden is the result of super-gentrification and lower-income filtering. Hedin et al., (2012) speak to the impact that neoliberal political reforms have had on the state and housing policy (2012, p. 460). Gentrification has reshaped inner-city neighbourhoods and reinforced income inequality (Hedin et al., 2012, p. 460). It is important to highlight the counter-movements that have occurred in Sweden and the urban uprisings that have been organized by predominantly racialized youth in suburbs which in Sweden are referred to as "föroten", which are often compared to the French "banlieue". The uprisings in these suburbs have often been portrayed as linked to challenges that 'the poor' and immigrants are facing; in fact, they are challenging the ways in which neoliberalism has become embedded in Sweden and are demanding radical change (Sernhede, Catharine, Thörn, 2016). In some ways, these protests can also be traced to the consequences of the Million Program housing project, a key plank of the Swedish welfare state. The Million Program attempted to develop 1 million dwellings over 10

years from 1965-1974. It further contributed to the high rates of housing construction but also destroyed and displaced inner-city communities through urban renewal. As a result, the Swedish elite became further concentrated in the core of the city while middle and lower-income individuals were pushed out of the core. This spatial division has been described by some as ethnic segregation (Baeten et al., 2017).

In suburban parts of the country, there have been discussions about the ways in which marginalized communities have been the target of the state and been heavily impacted by the prevalence of financialization and gentrification in the country (Schierup, Ålund, Neergaard, 2018, p, 1846). Loic Wacquant's conception of the "advanced marginality" is referenced in various studies on cities and urban poverty in Sweden. Urbanization in Stockholm continues to promote territorial stigmatization and make the city increasingly racialized (Sernhede, Catharine, Thörn, 2016, p. 160-163). Currently, city centers are mainly middle and upper class as well as white. In turn, the poorer suburban regions are largely non-white and continue to face challenges like disproportionate policing (Sernhede, Catharine, Thörn, 2016, p. 160-163). In this context, the 1-minute city appears to insulate both the privileged and the marginalized. However, it does not address the structural urban inequities in the region and could further isolate communities from each other.

Paris

The 15-minute city proposal backed by Mayor Hidalgo is part of her longer vision for Paris, which includes lowering the carbon footprint of the city with cleaner and more efficient modes of transportation along with more green space (Yeung, 2021). The 15-minute city model also builds on Mayor Hidalgo's "Plan Vélo" aimed at making Paris a people-friendly city by

making the streets of Paris cycle-friendly (Reid, 2020). Paris is a global city as well as a tourist and culture hub (Eren, 2017). Its role as a global city builds on its past and present connections to the French empire and the French imperial state. The French colonial empire was present in North America, Africa, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, and India. During the Second French Colonial Empire, the most important colony was Algeria. Paris is still the center of French and partly European imperialism, which has some impact on the way that the Paris urban region is organized. Due to the economic and political decision-making processes that converge in central Paris, Parisians are connected to the far-flung geographies of former and current French imperialism. The suffering of the Algerian people at the hand of the French state and French settlers are still felt in both France and Algeria, for example in debates on secularism, ancestral connections, cultural ties to the region, as well as in architectural and planning legacies.

Over time Paris also became a popular spot for immigrants who have been heavily influenced by Frances's imperialist history (Eren, 2017, p. 128). Friedman and Wolff (2018, p. 21) maintain that world city formation accentuates class inequality to the point of generating social polarization between different social classes: the elite and the middle-class that dominate urban life and the global city working class who are often racialized (as non-white in white-dominated global cities). The marginalization of the latter often takes the form of a physical separation between working-class neighbourhoods and ruling- and middle-class class quarters. They experience violence both in the community and through state police action (Friedman and Wolff, 2018, p. 21). This also holds true in Paris.

Fleury et al. (2013) argue that although there is a concentration of wealth in the core of Paris, there has been less socio-spatial diversity and an increased concentration of clusters tied to poverty in certain suburban areas. Additionally, despite the fact that there are a number of

suburban regions in Paris that are relatively affluent in relation to the city center, the 15-minute city as currently constructed could increase the existing socio-economic inequalities in the region (Fleury et al., 2013). The city of Paris has been planned and designed based on a center-periphery model (Cohen et al., 2012). It builds on the legacies of Georges-Eugène Haussmann (Cohen et al., 2012). The work of Haussmann is argued to have ushered in a new understanding of urban space and a new conception of how neighbourhoods relate to the city as a whole (Harvey, 2003). Harvey (2003, p. 113-114) maintains Haussmann transformed Paris by mobilizing capital in order to make it circulate better. The enormous transformation that Paris went through in the 19th century could not have occurred without the financial capital required to build projects and organized spaces. Although not all of the impacts of the restructuring of Paris can be attributed to Haussmann, his influence was considerable, notably in reorganizing state finance to fund urban development projects and displace lower-class residents (Harvey, 2003, p. 133-140). Planners in Paris still sometimes draw on the work of Haussmann as a reference point for desirable city-building. This is true also for social mix policies and place-based interventions in the name of countering social unrest since the 1980s (Carpenter, 2018).

In thinking about the 'Haussmannization' of Paris it is interesting to see how the dynamics of a revamped city makes evident the unique and complex relationships between communities and the locations in which they reside (Gandy, 2014, p. 29). It is important to note that public works projects benefitted the upper class most; they were designed to maximize social and spatial control and resulted in greater inequality (Gandy, 2014, p. 37). The new infrastructure, including the sewer and water systems, brought to the surface complexly gendered and sexualized social tensions, including middle-class fears about modern urban life and urban unrest (Gandy, 2014, p. 41-49). Gandy speaks to the ways in which the urban transformation of

Paris made more apparent economic and social differences and recast the differences between the middle and the lower class (Gandy, 2014, p. 50-51). One way in which Haussmannization recast social relations was by pushing working-class communities out of the city centre towards the East, North and South of the City of Paris. This encouraged spatial distance separation between residential and employment spaces as well as form of social segregation between the 'beautiful' quarters (business districts and wealthy residential areas) and working-class Paris: *les beaux quartiers* and *les quartiers populaires*. In the 20th century, this distinction was recast and now exists in complex ways at the scale of the metropolitan region (the *Ile-de-France*). The distinction between the city of Paris (which was the metropolitan scale in Haussmann's era) and stigmatized working-class districts (*banlieues*) in various parts of the wider region represents a modified version of the old Haussmannian divide.

In this context, it is important to look at the 15-minute city model (as it is proposed for central Paris) in relationship to suburban Paris (*la banlieue*), particularly the working-class districts inhabited to a disproportionate degree by non-white residents (the *banlieues*). There have been several policy interventions and state efforts employed to tackle some of the challenges that these neighbourhoods have been characterized as having like spatial isolation, poverty, unemployment, low education rates, and unrest (Carpenter 2018). One of the major approaches to the French suburbs have been the promotion of social mix. Carpenter (2018, p. 30) argues that this approach has actually strengthened social segregation instead and done little to tackle marginalization. One example to demonstrate this claim is *Programme National de Rénovation Urbaine* (PNRU) launched in 2005 through which social housing estates have renovated or demolished, or, as official discourse has it 'valorized' with mixed-tenure housing development and a greater social mix. Kipfer (2016) maintains that this project cannot be seen

solely in relation to neoliberalism; it also represents a state-led effort to re-organize territorial relations along racialized lines and in response to histories of urban struggle led by inhabitants (p. 618). Interestingly many policymakers in France have drawn on concepts like social mix and place-based strategies to promote spatial and urban strategies (Kipfer, 2016). The ways that housing redevelopment and state policies have sought to reorganize territorial relations makes me think that the 15-minute city could be implemented to cement or deepen spatial divides (between Paris and the banlieues, for example) and manage unequal relations between different social groups (in the City of Paris itself).

Portland

Mark Elden, a developer in Portland, has promoted 20-minute living as an innovative and desirable urban lifestyle. Elden says that twenty-five years ago developers and engineers were not interested in the creation of a 20-minute neighbourhood and that what was once seen as innovative is now becoming common practice (Willis, 2021). The 20-minute vision in Portland is framed not just in terms of transportation, but also in terms of land-use and zoning: mixed-use (Willis, 2021). Portland is a significant, if secondary city in the imperial United States of America. Interestingly, Portland is often characterized as the "whitest big city" in the United States (Nagesh, 2020). The city of Portland is frequently portrayed as a progressive haven and a hyper-liberal city in the U.S. American sense of the term liberalism. And yet Portland as a whole is deeply divided in terms of class and race. Its city centre has faced the reality of gentrification for decades. It has one of the least affordable housing markets. Many locals have been displaced from the city core (Nagesh, 2020). The city of Portland also continues to be a rallying point for people on the right as well as people on the left on the political spectrum. Recent confrontations

between Black Lives Matter activists and other members of the local left, on the one hand, and federal police as well as far right supporters of ex-President Trump have laid bare racial, social, and economic inequalities in the U.S.A.

A review of the current demographics and spatial organization of Portland shows that the zoning tendencies that exist today have kept alive some of the exclusionary patterns that have historically existed. The Black community and other people of colour have been disproportionally impacted by these patterns (Bates, Curry-Stevens, Coalition of Communities of Colour, 2014). Although African American settlement can be traced back to approximately 1850, African Americans came to Oregon even earlier under provisions where they worked as skilled labourers, interpreters, and artisans. (Portland Bureau of Planning, 1993, p. 2). From the 1840s to the 1920s, Oregon passed laws excluding Black province from the state. Individuals from the Pacific Islands, Chinese and Indian people faced other discriminatory laws and exclusionary practices (Portland Bureau of Planning, 1993, p. 2). As in other North American cities during middle of the 20th century, housing in the inner city was largely ignored, thus preparing the ground for urban renewal initiatives in the postwar period (1993, p. 104-109). Today, urban renewal exists in a different form: gentrification.

Elden's proposal for a 20-minute city in Portland must be situated in this fraught urban context. Its implications can be seen most clearly in West Portland Park. Goodling, Green, and McClintock, (2015, p. 506-508) have focused on this part of Portland to underscore how the 20-minute city would reinforce disparities and racialized poverty. The West side of the city is dis-proportionately White and more well-off while the East side is less affluent and ethnoracially more diverse. Beyond the city centre, socio-economic inequalities continue to affect communities of colour in particular ways across Multnomah County. In this context, the meaning

of the 20-minute city is derived from an already existing downtown culture and its patterns of socialization. Implementing this vision in the outer regions of Portland (which are more diverse and spatially separated from the downtown core) could lead to social displacement and further social divides across the region.

Reflection

In reflecting on the vision of the 15-minute city and the contexts where the model is being promoted, it is clear that the vision presumes a number of things about the organization of space. In promoting measures like complete streets, social mix, and mixed-use development, it draws on New Urbanism and places too much emphasis on the impact that spatial reorganization has on communities. When proposing to reconfigure space in order to facilitate greater engagement with one another and the environment, the 15-minute city vision is devoid of an equity lens; it does not ask what people can afford to live in the 15-minute city; nor does it consider whether people will (want to) interact with members of other communities. The 15-minute city vision also just assumes that the hyper-proximity of residents to other people and amenities is intrinsically linked to human satisfaction. The model suggests that the lifestyle one lives in the 15-minute city is also identical to one's neighbour and that the amenities within close reach are in fact the essential and affordable services that residents require. One of the most glaring critiques of this model is that it underestimates how dynamics of class, gender, and race influence someone's ability to live in urban spaces and access the housing market. It is also important to recognize that putting different people into hyper-proximity to one another does not address socio-economic inequalities and their effects on people's residential choices and lived experiences.

Although the 15-minute city encourages sustainability and resilient spaces in principle, it is difficult to discern whether the infrastructure in these spaces is accessible for the average person (much less the marginalized and disadvantaged individual). In addition, one has to think about what constitutes a safe community and human well-being. Doing so requires inclusive economic growth and less inequality amongst people. Developing social infrastructure for communities is certainly important, but if the conversation does not also address how political-economic forces play a central part in the functioning of cities and the redistribution of wealth, then the sentiments about social cohesion that inform the 15-minute city are contradictory and misleading.

The different cities discussed in this chapter demonstrate the key role that capitalism and neoliberalism have played in politically repackaging old urban visions in order for the state to gain increased social control over spaces and supposedly foster diversity among people. Exploring the colonial and capitalist connections in these cities reveals the ways that these pervasive processes permeate city spaces and urban infrastructure. It also reveals how the assumptions made by proponents of the 15-minute city are not only elitist but further contribute to dynamics of socio-spatial inequality and spatial separation. In cities like Paris and Bogotá it is clear that racialized communities have been marginalized by the state through policies that reorganize territorial relations and do not adequately invest in the most disadvantaged communities. Additionally, the implementation of the 15-minute city in the different local contexts also suggests that this model lends itself to a technocratic approach to reorganizing communities. The 15-minute city project is often taken from Paris and imposed on other regions without planners appreciating the local contexts.

Chapter 2: Insights from Henri Lefebvre and Frantz Fanon

This section brings together the contributions of Henri Lefebvre and Frantz Fanon to analyze spatial issues and urban questions. It explores their respective views about the spatial organization of everyday life and the role of the state in colonial and capitalist societies. In drawing on the works of Lefebvre and Fanon to explore the 15-minute city, this paper suggests that the combination of their perspectives offers insights into how this model could impact the way urban space is organized spatially and lead to hierarchical relationships between spaces. Additionally, their perspectives push an analysis on how dynamics of gender, race, and class relate to social relations in urban space, and influence both how one interacts with space in everyday life and how inequalities are embedded in society. Lefebvre and Fanon provide a theoretical approach to understanding the conditions within which visions like the 15-minute city exist and the ways that (neo-)colonial and capitalist dynamics shape this model. The focus of their theoretical contributions includes exploring the role of the state in organizing space as well as the social and cultural dimensions of this role.

Fanon Biography and Methodology

Frantz Fanon was born in 1925 on the French colonial island of Martinique in the Caribbean (Cherki, 2006). In *Frantz Fanon: A Portrait*, Alice Cherki describes that much of Fanon's life is not extensively known, but he did grow up with comfortable means in a big family (Cherki, 2006, p. 6-7). In his young adulthood Fanon joined the Free French Army during the Second World War. That experience, characterized as it was by sentiments of struggle, tragedy, and racial inequality left a deep impact on him (Cherki, 2006, p. 12-13). Following this experience, Fanon departed Martinique to go to medical school in Lyon. There, he developed an

interest in psychology. Revising what was supposed to be his doctoral thesis, he produced his first book *Black Skin, White Masks.* After completing his residency as a psychiatrist, Fanon demanded to be stationed at the Blida-Joinville psychiatric hospital where he attended to French soldiers as well as Algerians. Interestingly, he treated Algerians who had undergone torture as well as those who participated in the colonial resistance (Cherki, 2006). After resigning from the Blida he followed the Front de Libération Nationale into exile in Tunis. In exile, he wrote for the FLN's El Moudjahid and composed *The Wretched of the Earth*, which were completed just before his death in 1961. His shorter political analyses and other writings can be found in *A Dying Colonialism, Towards the African Revolution,* and, most recently, *Alienation and Freedom*.

The legacy of Frantz Fanon in society today is difficult to quantify because of the enormous impact he has had on the fight for national liberation and anti-imperialist movements. In the current contexts of continuous Indigenous struggles for sovereignty, the fight for Palestinian liberation and movements like Black Lives Matter, Fanonian perspectives are often practiced and cited. The legacy of Fanon continues to live on both in the street and in various academic disciplines.

In the 1990s, post-colonial theorists were credited for a considerable surge in attention paid to the work of Fanon (Sekyi-Otu, 1996, p.4). Writers like Homi Bhabha contributed to the resurgence of interest in the work of Fanon, however the post-colonial theoretical emphasis on psychoanalysis in Fanon's work has been heavily critiqued (Sekyi-Otu, 1996; Kipfer, 2007). Ato Sekyi-Otu (1996) articulates that the postmodernist takes on Fanon "deprives us of weapons with which to confront some of the urgent questions of the postindependence world: questions of class, ethnicity, and gender, of democracy and human rights, against assertions of cultural

particularity and difference" (Sekyi-Otu, 1996, p. 2). Stefan Kipfer (2007) similarly argues that Bhabha's take on psychoanalysis in Fanon also moves away from the Hegelian-Marxist and liberatory Black traditions and their subsequent insights, which does not allow for his key perspectives on dynamics of everyday racism and liberatory struggle (pp. 703-706). Also, Bhabha's critique misses Fanon's "attempts to tie utopian desires for a new nonliberal humanism to organizational and intellectual strategies of liberation" (Kipfer, p. 707). These critiques don't want to minimize Fanon's psychiatric work but rather insist that one read Fanon's work as a whole, including his political, anti-colonial, and liberationist writings.

On this topic, Ato-Sekyi-Otu proposes a methodological reading of Fanon. He suggests that Fanon's works "constituted a dialectic dramatic narrative" (1996, p. 5). Ato Sekyi-Otu emphasizes that one read the "discourse of a racially divided Manichean world manifestly predominantly in *Black Skin, White Masks* and the first chapter of *The Wretched of the Earth* in its interactive relation with, say discourses of class and of local forms of human universals" (1996, p. 22). What this emphasizes is a dialectic reading of Fanon that explores the themes and perspectives that permeate the various, diverse aspects of his life work.

Everyday Realities and Colonial Space

Exploring Fanon's insights on colonial realities and the dynamics of political struggle for liberation helps one understand how space is organized and connected to realities that are deeply racialized, gendered and tied to social class. The colonial relation impacts the ways in which political and economic systems operate to marginalize individuals and influence everyday interactions and political struggles. In his later work, Fanon powerfully speaks to the dynamics of colonial French Algeria, the interactions between the colonized and the colonizer, the

relationships between native and European quarters in metropolitan areas, as well as the public and private dichotomy. Fanon refers to compartmentalization to describe social and spatial divides in the colonial world. He utilizes the word both as a metaphor and as a way to observe social realities. In referencing the spatial dynamics under colonial rule, Fanon describes that "the colonized world is divided into two. The dividing line, the border, is represented by the barracks and the police stations…the native sector is not complementary to the European sector" (1963, p. 3-4). Fanon describes compartmentalization as a feature of a "Manichean world where economic conditions and inequality cannot hide the human reality of the colonial context that exists" (1963, p. 5-6). These insights suggest that the colonial dynamic is pervasive, operating in both explicit and implicit ways.

As a metaphor, compartmentalization helps us understand that the colonial world is not reducible to segregation. It also refers to an existential divide between the colonized and the colonizer and to the dichotomy between people who are considered human and those who are treated as non- or not-fully human: the colonized. It is important to make this distinction because it establishes that while racial segregation is linked to compartmentalization, it is only one aspect of it. Therefore, simply destroying spatial segregation does not end compartmentalization as such. The latter is tied to the very nature of colonialism and the colonial state. In *A Dying Colonialism* Fanon (1965) describes that "the colonial situation standardizes relations, for it dichotomizes the colonial society in a marked way" (p. 126). Nonetheless, it is clear that Fanon was highly critical of forms of spatial separation such as segregation and understood that in order to pursue liberation, people had no choice but mobilize in and through that space, engaging in political struggle in part by appropriating the geographies of colonial compartmentalization.

Gender and Race Relations

In thinking about how embedded colonial realties were, Fanon's insight into types of racialization and gendering detail spatial organization and everyday experiences. Fanon describes the gendered aspects of society in connection to the struggles of Algerian women as well as the functioning of patriarchy both societally and within the household. Fanon writes that "apart from the charwomen employed in the 'conquerors' homes, those whom the colonizer indiscriminately calls the 'Fatmas', the Algerian women, especially the young Algerian women, rarely venture into the European city. Their movements are almost entirely limited to the Arab city" (1965, p. 52). In *A Dying Colonialism*, Fanon makes it clear that Algerian women were confined in two ways: by the conditions established by the colonizer and by pre-existing forms of gendering and patriarchal domesticity. Fanon describes that women had two navigate both forms of confinement in their daily lives and in the national liberation struggle.

These intricacies were tied to how for some Algerian women involved in the liberation struggle, unveiling helped them gain autonomy and encouraged them to compare themselves to others in the movement for liberation (Fanon, 1965, p. 108-109). This was a process with many obstacles, however, because "having been accustomed to confinement, her body did not have the normal mobility before a limitless horizon of avenues of unfolding sidewalks, of houses" (Fanon, 1965, p. 49). Fanon understood that the emancipatory, genuinely decolonial aspects of the liberation struggle depended on the capacity of women to decide for themselves whether to veil or not (Kipfer, 2007, p. 702). Fanon was clear that French policies of forced unveiling were oppressive for Algerian women. Yet he also recognized the nuanced ways in which women used the veil as an act of resistance and solidarity (Kipfer, 2007, p. 701-703). These observations help us understand the many ways in which colonial space is gendered, possibly reinforcing colonial

compartmentalization and spatial separation. Fanon insists that gender dynamics are tied up with daily bodily interactions as well as spatial design and architecture (Kipfer, 2007, p. 712-713). Gender dynamics are notably contradictory and provide openings to challenge the norms and conditions upon which spatial separation exists under colonial rule (Kipfer, 2007, p. 713).

It is interesting to think about Fanon's perspective on gender relations, culture, and national liberation in relation to feminist arguments. Feminist critiques of Fanon's work on gender, sexuality, the subjugation of women and the gendering of spatial organization stress that Fanon was speaking specifically to gender relations under colonial rule. Drucilla Cornell (2001), for example, argues that the metaphor of 'Algeria unveiled' challenges the perspective of the European colonizer on the supposed lack of autonomy that the colonized women possessed (Cornell, 2001, p. 29-31). Cornell exposes what the European imagination did not see: the role of women in the revolutionary struggle to liberate Algeria (2001, p. 29-31). Fanon's contribution also was to alert us to the new roles women played in the struggle for freedom and their broader implications: that the pursuit of national liberation also meant reconfiguring cultural dynamics in order to achieve genuine freedom from a colonial and oppressive state.

Under colonial conditions Fanon spoke to how colonialism dehumanized people and how racism within colonial relations acted as a form of alienation. Fanon's work highlights the complex and intimate ways in which colonial relations combined forms of spatial, economic, and racialized forms of oppression that showed up in everyday interactions and social structures (Fanon 1963; 1965; 2008). Fanon highlights how racialized dynamics are influenced by the state to make colonial rule both more visible and spatially explicit. In *Black Skins, White Masks*, Fanon writes that "the Black problem is not just about Blacks living among whites, but about the Black man exploited, enslaved and despised by a colonialist and capitalist society that happens to

be white" (2008, p. 178). This quotation not only speaks to dynamics of racial capitalism and inequality. It also directly counteracts the argument often proposed by those who see social mixing as the place-specific solution to inequality and the spatial separation. Since compartmentalization refers to racialized social divides in colonial context (and not only spatial segregation), undoing the physical dimensions of segregation does mean the end of compartmentalization. As Fanon suggests, through racialization, "the white man is locked in his whiteness, the black man in his blackness" (2008, xiii- xiv).

When one speaks about spatial separation in the colonial world it is important to recognize that Fanon focused on the role that state actors had in constructing and sustaining this separation. Fanon did not have a full-fledged state theory per se, however this does not take away from his insights into the role that 'agents' of the state such as the officer, the doctor, and the solider. Fanon speaks about the significant role state 'agents' played in the maintenance of colonial rule as well as the subjugation of the colonized through coercion. Fanon writes that "we have seen how the government's agent uses a language of pure violence. The agent does not alleviate oppression or mask domination" (1963, p. 4). In this way the state explicitly plays a role in upholding the subjugation of the colonized and as well as spatial divides in colonial geography. It is important to point out the way that Fanon across many of his works described that colonial violence also manifested as a psychological, ideological, and societal force (Fanon 1963, 2008). In *Towards the African Revolution*, for example, Fanon pointed out that maintaining racialized colonial rule required more than brute force; it was also intricately tied to a form of violence that constructed and constrained the colonial subject (1967). Reproducing colonial relations can be a hegemonic process because of the affective dynamics of colonialism and the ways in which racism 'moves' through everyday life (Fanon, 1963).

Recasting Relationships for Liberation

Fanon's vision for decolonization is linked to a transformation in society that challenges imperialism as well as forms of domination and hierarchical relations in colonized societies. Given his emphasis on the everyday dimensions of colonial rule, he was clear that ongoing political organizing was central to effect lasting change following political revolution and liberation and to undo the social divides created by racism and colonial culture (Fanon, 1967). In this sense, Fanon understood the struggle against colonial oppression also as a protracted struggle against alienation. He knew that this alienation was palpable throughout all political and social institutions and felt by the colonized in everyday life, in form of guilt, a sense of inferiority and cultural disempowerment (Fanon, 1967, p. 36-39). In turn, Fanon highlighted solidarity is key for the colonized to recognize how their shared experiences are tied to a common destiny: liberation (1967, p. 145). Importantly for us, decolonization also means challenging the spatial organization of colonial societies, including relations between public and private space, and relations between city and country (Fanon, 1965). For Fanon, anticolonialism includes the development of a national consciousness. Jane Gordon (2011) argues that for Fanon national consciousness was a way to confront the alienation of colonialism and racism. He thought that national consciousness (not to be confused with nationalism) could develop under the leadership of the colonized that challenge the system that denies them citizenship and freedom through a process that is dialectical, insistent, and generational (Gordon, 2011, p. 44). It is interesting to think about how Fanon's perspective on national consciousness challenges the specific and collective identities of the colonized and proposes that society be rebuilt in its entirety, at all spatial scales and at all levels (from the everyday to larger social institutions and structures).

Henri Lefebvre: Biography and Approach

Henri Lefebvre was born in Hagetmau, at the foot of the French Pyrenees, in 1901. He was raised in a middle-class family. In *Understanding Henri Lefebvre*, Stuart Elden describes that growing up during the Russian Revolution had a lasting impact on Lefebvre while exploring Marxism in the following provided him with balance in his life (Elden, 2004, p. 1-2). Lefebvre attended the University of Paris (the Sorbonne) and originally intended to study engineering but then later switched to study in philosophy (Elden, 2004). In the foreword of *The Urban Revolution,* Neil Smith describes that at the Sorbonne, Lefebvre became immersed in a rich political, cultural, creative and intellectual milieu of people of diverse backgrounds that heavily influenced him at a time where he was also studying intellectuals like Hegel, Marx and Nietzsche (Elden, 2004, p. viii). Following Lefebvre's work with the journal *Philosophies* co-founded by himself and a group of students, Lefebvre completed military service and had several jobs outside of academia working as a factory worker and as a cab driver (Elden, 2004, p. 2).

Later in life, Lefebvre worked as a teacher and he also joined the Parti Communiste Français (PCF) in 1928 (Elden, 2004, p. 2-3). After being removed from his teaching job he joined the French resistance (Elden, 2004, p. 3). Neil Smith maintains that Lefebvre was "an emerging intellectual figure by the eve of World War II" and "was forced from Paris and from his university post following the Nazi invasion and he lived out the war as a Resistance fighter in Southern France" (Lefebvre, 2004, p. viii-ix). Additionally, Neil Smith emphasizes that his work for the Communist Party combined with his everyday experiences informed his legacy and future works in fields such as philosophy and sociology (Lefebvre, 2004, p. viii). Lefebvre's involvement with the PCF ended in 1958. Lefebvre passed away in June of 1991 at the age of ninety.

Lefebvre's contributions ranged from philosophy to urban theory and history. Neil Smith explains that Lefebvre has been particularly admired for his work on dialectics and space and for his theoretical contribution to urban research (Lefebvre, 2004, p. ix-x). Exploring modern capitalism through the dynamics of space, *The Production of Space* and *The Urban Revolution* have emerged as some of Lefebvre's most lasting works from the period in which they were written (Lefebvre, 2004, p. x). Smith maintains in these texts, one can find "the pathbreaking analytical work connecting urban research not just with Marxist theory but with social theory and philosophy, broadly conceived" (Lefebvre, 2004, p. x). In the following, I consider "Lefebvre as a point of departure" (Goonewardena et al., 2008, p. 11-13) to shed light on the relationships between urban questions, time, and space (Goonewardena et al., 2008, p. 11-13). Among these are spatial organization and urban planning visions.

The 'Urban' and Everyday Life

For Lefebvre the conception of everyday life is linked to a range of rhythms and temporal everyday experiences. Zieleniec describes that Lefebvre defined everyday life as "made of recurrences: gestures of labour and leisure, mechanical movements both human and properly mechanic hours…weeks…months, years, linear and cyclical repetitions" (2018, p. 9). In the *Urban Revolution*, Lefebvre differentiates between a global level (G), a mixed level (M), and a private level (P) of society. These levels are all dialectically inter-connected (2003, p. 78-79). Within this context, the urban can be thought about as a mediating level within the totality as it relates to the larger social order and state actors, along with the lived experiences of people. Level M refers to the urban level, and an intermediate stage between global conditions and everyday encounters (Lefebvre, 2003, p. 80). With urbanization and the rapid growth of cities,

Lefebvre describes that “the second level (M) appears to be essential…it is a terrain suitable for defense or attack, for struggle” (Lefebvre, 2003, p. 89). In this way, the urban as a concept is not identified only or necessarily by physical markers or demographics as it is often conventionally done (Kipfer, Saberi, Wieditz, 2012, p. 5). For Lefebvre everydayness was not realized in the ‘urban’ but rather that everydayness is found in “the generalized segregation: the segregation of moments of life and activities (2003, p. 140-141).

If for Lefebvre, the urban represents a level of analysis, it also constitutes a form, the form centrality and the many possible differences centrality articulates. The difficulty of identifying the urban as level and form has to do with modern urbanization processes, which are in continuous, if uneven flux. These processes make it chronically difficult to distinguish urban and rural life, both morphologically and socially (Kipfer, Saberi, Wieditz, 2012, p. 5). As urbanization becomes an amorphous field far outflanking and transforming pre-existing settlements, the urban as centrality/difference is submerged (but may re-emerge) within these urbanization processes. For Lefebvre, this was particularly the case in the postwar period, neocapitalism (Kipfer, Saberi, Wieditz, 2012, p. 5). In the *Production of Space*, Lefebvre (1991b) adds that urban space should not be understood a series of objects in space (built environments, for example). As social space, it is produced by various aspects of social life. As a whole, Lefebvre’s analysis of the urban asks us to pay attention to the ‘encounters’ that generate urban life and may have the potential for something bigger to occur. For him, this understanding of the urban as centrality/difference is also relevant to understand the dynamics and potentials of social movements, particularly for those marginalized from existing centres of life.

In exploring Lefebvre’s understanding of everyday life and urban space in capitalism, it is interesting to explore how city spaces are managed and how inequalities are felt. The work of

Lefebvre (1991a;1991b) arguably pushes an analysis of how people experience the city in daily interactions and imaginaries as well as their relationship to political life and the state. Lefebvre (1991a) shows how capitalism permeates everyday life, for example through education, leisure and recreation and basic daily routines. The state plays an important part in this process. Lefebvre's notion of the state mode of production (SMP) allows one to think about how states shape and change the production of space, increasingly through the process of mondialisation. This concept of mondialisation does not just encompass the "process of becoming worldwide", but Lefebvre's notion also includes "a continual, ongoing making and remaking of worldwide social space" (Lefebvre, 2009, p. 22).

State and Space

In *State Theory in the Political Conjuncture: Henri Lefebvre's "Comments on a New State Form*", Neil Brenner (2001) speaks to how Henri Lefebvre's reflection on space and state requires a critique of the modern state form. For Lefebvre, the SMP describes the state's growing and direct role in the development and management of capitalist industrial expansion (Brenner, p. 791). Brenner maintains that Lefebvre's work points towards the underlying ways that the state becomes imbedded in spaces through the development of social and territorial dynamics which facilitate the growth of capital accumulation (2001, p. 792). It is interesting to think about mondialisation in relation to imperial networks across urban spaces given the neocolonial dimensions of cities that operate specifically in global cities. Lefebvre also saw mondialisation as a way to recognize the fragmented and differentiated dynamics of social life entangled with various social, political and economic relations articulated at different scales (2009, p. 23). Additionally, Lefebvre saw state institutions as playing a key role in the development of

capitalism in and through the production of housing estates, urban infrastructure, and suburban enclaves (2009, p. 20). For him, the production of capitalist state space includes ‘colonial’ strategies to marginalize and peripheralize territories (Lefebvre, 2009, p. 21).

It is key to recognize that Lefebvre saw space as political. The politics of space can be seen in the impact spatial organization has on different social forces (2009, p. 33). Socially produced, space is political also because it is contradictory, as can be seen in urbanism, territorial management, and spatial planning (Lefebvre, 2009, p. 186). These ways of producing space reproduce social relations and appear to support cohesion in everyday life. And yet they are in tension with the heterogenous conditions they encounter and sometimes produce. In this way, they leave room for the development of counter-spaces that challenges the power of the state (Lefebvre, 2009, p. 189).

In *Henri Lefebvre on State, Space, Territory*, Brenner and Elden (2009) explore how the territorial trap is developed and reproduced within society. Brenner and Elden argue that one can think of state space in itself as territory. The “territory effect” refers to the state’s ability to generate and navigate territorial dynamics in ways that naturalize socio-spatial relations (p. 354-356). Brenner and Elden maintain that the state employs strategies of capital accumulation that manage space and territorial relations on local and global scales (p. 369-370). When speaking of uneven and combined development it is also key to recognize that the global flow of capital works to also increase the differentiation of space and the formation of territorial relations. Brenner and Elden (2009) speak to the ways in which place-based strategies and projects can be employed by the state to reshape and rescale territorial relations and increase hierarchies between spaces.

From reading Lefebvre, it is clear that space operates as a political instrument and that it can be manipulated and manufactured. In speaking to the political nature of space, Lefebvre explains that the state exerts authority over space through "its strict hierarchy, the homogeneity of the whole, and the segregation of the parts" (2009, p. 188). Homogeneity refers to the way that space is produced and the reproduction of sameness (Lefebvre, 2009, p. 212-214). Fragmentation is linked to the way space is separated and broken into various separate spaces (Lefebvre, 2009, p. 214-215). Hierarchical relationships include the way spaces are broken down and take different forms such as the distinction between central and peripheral areas that are hierarchized and the concentrations of authority, leisure, and power (Lefebvre, 2009, p. 15).

In *Marxist Thought and the City* Lefebvre (2016) mentions how segregation had a deep impact in separating the working-class from middle class neighbourhoods (p. 10). This piece by Lefebvre highlights the way in which urbanization is tied to the capitalist mode of production and the ways in which resistance to capitalism took on urban forms. Lefebvre discusses town-country dynamics and the spatial fragmentation that developed in urban spaces (2016). He offers insight the ways in which urbanism can help generate capital and lead to dynamics like alienation, increased spatial separation, as well as fractured social relationships. These insights speak to the power that territorial relations have in creating divisions between those in power and those who are marginalized. Understanding territorial relations also helps us connect spatial organization and socio-political dynamics to colonial and imperial histories.

Lefebvre distinguishes between three dimensions of the production of space: spatial practices (daily routines of (re)production), representations of space (ways of conceiving space), and spaces of representations (through which space is lived and experienced) (Zieleniec, 2018, p. 6-7). In *The Production of Space* Lefebvre maintains that "the dominant form of space, that of

the centres of wealth and power, endeavours to mould the spaces it dominates (i.e., peripheral spaces), and it seeks, often by violent means, to reduce the obstacles and resistance it encounters" (1991b, p. 49). Interestingly, when discussing the production of abstract space, Lefebvre argues that the reproduction of social relations is inappropriately reduced to biological reproduction and that traditional gender roles are oversimplified and stereotyped, for example through the distinction between public and private space (1991b, p. 49-50). Here, Lefebvre uses the term urbanism to describe the state's role in the production of space. Urbanism is "a superstructure of neocapitalist society, a form of 'organizational capitalism'…a bureaucratic society of controlled consumption (2004, p. 164). Lefebvre emphasizes that "urbanism is a mask and a tool: a mask for the state and political action, a tool of interests, that are dissimulated within a strategy and socio-logic" (2004, 180). It is interesting to think about the role the state plays not only in the systematic ways that space is organized but also in the intentional and powerful ways in which urban planning at large influences spaces.

Reflection

The works of Fanon and Lefebvre provide valuable insights into thinking about the viability of the 15-minute city model. Lefebvre and Fanon were strong opponents of segregation, particularly spatial segregation. Their combined works speak to how spatial separation can lead to the formation of peripheralized spaces that are home to marginalized communities and contribute to forms of racial segregation that function to exclude and dominate the segregated. Drawing on the insights of Fanon, the 15-minute city could also advance a form of colonial control where the violence and oppression people feel is felt in everyday life, in the affective ways people move through spaces that are tied to systems of racism and imperialism. In turn,

Lefebvre's work wants us to think of the role of urbanism in generating spatial separation, for example by gentrifying and diversifying neighborhoods. Both Fanon and Lefebvre force us to connect spatial organization to social life and the spatial relations between social groups. For Fanon in particular, this means paying attention to the ways in which space is racialized and gendered in everyday life and beyond (Fanon, 1963;1965;1967).

It is interesting to think about what Fanon and Lefebvre, our two egalitarian critics of segregation, would think about the vision of the 15-minute city as a model that promotes connectivity and a diversity of both infrastructure and people. Many of the components proposed in the 15-minute city model - social mix, hyper- proximity, complete streets – appear to be tools not only for social cohesion but also against spatial separation. However, social-mix planning as well as other types of diversity planning such as place-based policy and New Urbanism, have a checkered, indeed fraught historical relationship to social separation, particularly when it comes to the 'place' of post-colonial migration in metropolitan areas (Kipfer, 2016, p. 607).

Lefebvre and Fanon might look at the 15-minute city by placing it within territorial relations between dominant, central and dominated, peripheral social spaces (and the globally articulated colonial and imperial dimensions of these relations) (Kipfer, 2016, p. 605). At first sight, Lefebvre might concede that the 15-minute city holds promise. If 'the urban' is generated when different activities encounter each other, the hyper-proximities promoted by the 15-minute city could generate innumerable daily meeting points. Indirectly and unintentionally, these could provide openings for a range of people to organize and mobilize politically. It would be interesting to consider how marginalized people living within the 15-minute city could challenge existing centralities by claiming space and power and promoting autogestion in their own communities. However, if the 15-minute city is implemented in places where it is already close

to being a reality – in some central city spaces – but not in places without the necessary infrastructure or investment – already peripheralized social spaces - the 15-minute city could deepen existing forms of spatial separation or even social segregation. In the latter scenario, the 15-minute city would represent a new way for the state to reproduce capitalist social relations by organizing hierarchical, fragmented and homogenous territorial relations.

Fanon's sharp perspective helps us detect the specifically racialized and (neo-)colonial aspects of 15-minute city planning. Remember that for him, "racism as lived experience is intimately tied up with various forms of colonial spatial organization" (Kipfer and Petrunia, 2009, p. 113) and state agents play a key role in this spatial organization. In urban contexts, where social segregation has strong racialized dimensions (with or without strong colonial legacies), implementing the 15-minute city in the selective way outlined above would continue to exclude spatially peripheralized communities on the basis of racism (as well as class). With respect to the first, seemingly more promising scenario outlined above, Fanon would remind us that spatial proximity is not a sufficient recipe against racialization. It does not by itself change how people of colour, and Black people specifically move through hyper-dense urban space. Nor does it transform the way in which they interact with 'agents' of the state within the 15-minute city.

In short, Fanon and Lefebvre want us to be cautious against a state-led, inegalitarian approach to urban planning (even if that approach appears to be critical of spatial separation). Instead of accepting elite- and the state-driven definitions of desirable urban social life, they would advocate for a bottom-up and community-led approach to urban visions like the 15-minute city.

Chapter 3: The 15-Minute City in Toronto

What is the prospect of the 15-minute city as a plan to enhance social cohesion and accessibility? A place as diverse and complex as Toronto raises questions about the viability of this model. Its' spatial vision could reinforce the current socio-political and economic contours of the city. Toronto is the most populous city in Canada. It is internationally known for having a multicultural and multi-ethnic population. The downtown core encompasses the central business district, along with a vibrant entertainment hub that attracts people from all over the world. Toronto in many ways "articulates the Canadian economy with the global economy" (Ali and Keil, 2006, p. 491-492). Its ties to other global cities are both economic and cultural; they include familial connections between diaspora communities and other parts of the world (Ali and Keil, 2006, p. 491-492). The diversity of people in the city along with the ways that the core of the city and surrounding areas have evolved complicate the socio-spatial profile of the city.

The prevalence of socio-spatial inequality in Toronto results from settler-colonialism and ongoing dynamics of capitalist development. Spatial separation disproportionately impacts communities of colour and Black people. It is complicated along lines of gender, sexual orientation and religion (Vincent, 2018). It is thus important to study deeply rooted social and spatial inequality and the role of race therein with care. Ronald van Kempen and Marcuse (1997) argue that the changing spatial order of cities can be explored by taking into account economic activity and the circulation of capital, demographic shifts, dynamics of racism, and the shifting role of the public sector. Additionally, Marcuse (2018) suggests that spatial polarization and the spatial concentration of power be analyses in relation to systems of global capital. There thus are multiple forms of spatial segmentation and separation. They are not reducible to "ghettoization", as Walks and Bourne (2009) have pointed out. In addition, spatial separation is caused by

multiple forces. Clearly, race is a significant factor when exploring socio-spatial inequalities, but an emphasis on race only would simplify the intricacies of social and spatial relations. The implications of socio-spatial inequality in Toronto and rising income inequality have manifested in where people reside, the resources that are accessible to them, and the social interactions of communities with their environment.

David Hulchanski's census-based research on income inequality among Toronto neighbourhoods from 1970 to 2005 is often highlighted (2011). His analysis indicates a rapidly decreasing number of middle-income neighbourhoods, a widening gap between high and low-income neighbourhoods, and trends that indicate that those of lower income are being pushed towards the peripheral areas of the city. Hulchanski's analysis however does not provide a rich and qualitative social analysis of the dynamics that shape communities and fails to depict the internal intricacies of neighbourhoods that cannot be mapped or remedied through policy change and state intervention. Despite the valuable insights of this type of data analysis, there are methodological critiques of quantitative research on segregation and neighbourhood composition. This type of disparity research fails to capture how unequal social relations permeate and cut across social spaces while also being co-constituted by the state (Reed and Chowkwanyun, 2012; Wacquant, 2008). This raises the question of how to explore socio-spatial inequalities in relation to state intervention while studying how policy shapes and regulates spatial relations. Christian Schmid (2012, p. 42-45) maintains that urban research should pay attention to territorial relations between central and peripheral spaces, including the urban struggles that shape or contest these relationships of domination, marginalization and exclusion. If one pays attention to the role of the state in producing space and shaping urban processes, one

can appreciate that the relationship between central and peripheral spaces in cities like Toronto express forms of social inequality that are politically organized.

The Local Context

Contextually the amalgamation of the City Toronto in 1998 brought together the municipalities of Metropolitan Toronto, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, York, and East York (Slack, 2000). Some of the challenges that the City of Toronto has experienced prior to and following amalgamation included increasing poverty, deteriorating urban infrastructure, and fiscal imbalances (Slack, 2000). In relationship to these dynamics, it is important to consider current and historical settlement trends. Historically, immigration patterns saw largely people from British and other European backgrounds coming to Canada, but these demographics have changed in the past 50 years with the bulk of immigrants coming from other parts of the world, particularly Asia (India and China, above all) as well as Latin America and Africa (Siemiatycki, 2011, p. 1215-1219). These immigration patterns are important to consider in the Toronto context. They force us to understand where people settle in the city and how communities relate (often unequally) to urban infrastructure and state policy. In fact, relating immigration and patterns of immigrant settlement to larger processes of capitalist development and its imperial dimensions not only helps us understand how inequalities are produced at the point of production and beyond (Marx, 1867). It also pushes a conversation about the role of accumulation in shaping space, transforming daily lives and concentrating wealth locally.

In Toronto there is a consensus that income inequality has been on the rise and, if left inadequately addressed, will continue to negatively impact the composition of neighbourhoods and the organization of the city. In Toronto, approaches to these issues have varied.

Organizations such as the United Way of Greater Toronto, for example, have explored neighbourhood poverty and have mapped the evolution of neighbourhoods related to increasing income gaps, thus demonstrating the intensification of poverty in the inner suburbs (2004). However, this analysis of what the United Way called ‘poverty by postal code’ does not explore how the demographic composition of various social spaces is connected to broader gendered and racialized dynamics, including those related to health and education disparities. Furthermore, this focus on seemingly homogenous social spaces does not acknowledge the intricacies of suburban life and the ways in which community partnerships and familial relationships play an integral role in the functioning of different neighbourhoods.

Toronto is reported to have the most drastic income inequality in Canada. Is the costliest major city in the country – which has harsh implications for vulnerable populations receiving stagnating income (Toronto Foundation, 2019, p. 12). Moreover, some neighbourhoods in the city are ethnically segregated, which is partially attributed to a continued lack of job availability for individuals and a lack of access to housing that is affordable for low to middle-income peoples (Toronto Foundation, 2019, p. 20-22). *The Opportunity Equation in the Greater Toronto Area* (2017) report found that disparities between the rich and poor have widened. Toronto is facing increasing challenges in being stuck in the current conditions of income inequality (p. 6-10). This report emphasizes that income disparities in the city are related to negative social and economic outcomes including lower levels of trust in elected officials, higher rates of imprisonment and violence, and a lack of diversity in neighbourhoods (p. 38-39).

Politics and Planning

Current planning visions for Toronto as laid out provincially and municipally promote diversified communities, improved quality of life, and managed growth. As outlined in the Toronto Official Plan "Toronto's future is one of growth, of rebuilding, of reurbanizing and of regeneration" (City of Toronto, 2007). There has been a particular focus on the development of neighbourhoods that promote compact planning and mixed-use hubs that connect to transportation networks (City of Toronto, 2007). The Official Plan provides a broad vision for the city with language tied to urban reform, climate mitigation, and liveability. The 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (which directs land-use planning in Ontario) prioritizes mixed-use planning and the development of sustainable and resilient neighbourhoods. Additionally, province's regional Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) prioritizes intensification in "strategic growth areas", complete communities, and sustainable infrastructure to better manage growth. In practice, however, it is not always clear how decisions follow the direction of these visions. Lehrer and Wieditz (2009) maintain that despite good intentions, these policies promote real-estate driven intensification, which supports gentrification and displacement while further marginalizing communities who rely on public housing (p. 93).

Provincial policies and municipal plans thus champion mixed-use development, a mix of residential types and tenures in order to develop more complete and compact neighbourhoods. And yet, social inequality and spatial separation in Toronto have become more pronounced. This is because reform planning has become incorporated into neoliberalism. Roger Keil argues that urban neoliberalism connects global shifts in the makeup of capitalist economies to the lives of urban communities (2002, p. 579). Keil develops this theoretical argument by analysing policy decisions made by the Conservative provincial government elected in 1995 (2002, p. 580) and

how these decisions relate to the contradictory re-regulation of everyday life (2002, p. 587-592). In Toronto, neoliberal governance has led to what Kipfer and Keil (2002) view as "an as-yet-incomplete process of consolidating the competitive city" (p. 234). They define the competitive city "as a set of policies, ideological forms, and state orientations that articulate strategies of accumulation, patterns of class formation, and forms of social control" (Kipfer and Keil, 2002, p. 234). Analysing the new Official Plan, waterfront planning and the proposal for the 2008 Olympic Games, Kipfer and Keil contend that the seemingly progressive and reform-oriented language of urban planning in the new City is permeated by entrepreneurial and neoliberal goals that facilitate contradictory and yet powerful elite claims to the city (2002, p. 229).

It is interesting to consider how the 15-minute city vision (which includes official planning ideas such as mixed-use and compact development) relates to urban neoliberalism in Toronto. In this context, it is easy to forget that progressive visions for politics and planning do not tell us enough about planning practice and its relationship to race, gender, and class. Kipfer and Petrunia (2009) maintain that what are often characterized as progressive planning visions for Toronto are often part of a contemporary bourgeois culture that combines economic neoliberalism with a "circumscribed sociocultural liberalism" (p. 130). Ultimately, this bourgeois culture remains deeply apprehensive about racialized spaces and the everyday lives of people in these communities (Kipfer and Petrunia, 2009, p. 130).

In cities like Toronto, urbanists who promote gentrification have contributed to social polarization and the clustering of high and low-income neighbourhoods (Walks and Maaranen, 2008). Important for any assessment of the 15-minute city is the recognition that housing policies and urban visions have been factors in producing existing socio-spatial inequalities and the spatial separation in the city. The condofication of Toronto is recognized as a central force of

gentrification (Lehrer and Wieditz (2009, p. 86). Lehrer and Wieditz maintain that urban growth policies often give the development industry the freedom to invest in the gentrification of spaces, thereby displacing existing communities and transforming the surrounding neighbourhood both in terms of resources and social practices (2009, p. 96-97).

The City has also seen public housing redevelopment projects. The original and still most important of these is guided by the Regent Park Revitalization Plan, which was released in 2002 to rebuild the Toronto neighbourhood based on mixed-use principles and increased public green space. Kipfer and Petrunia (2009) argue that despite the promises of diversity planning, the project functions as a multifaceted racialized plan to recolonize a segregated city space (p. 111). Lawrence Heights and other ongoing revitalization efforts spearheaded by Toronto Community Housing also attempt to alter territorial relations by promising to improve infrastructure and living conditions. It is important to point out that this revitalization effort is different from previous efforts both in its' vision and the 'stakeholders' involved in the project. The Lawrence Heights public housing project was the biggest and inaugural development in the township of North York under the Metropolitan Toronto government (Rose, 1972). As a consequence of fraught dynamics between the government and residents and social tensions, residents demanded infrastructural improvements early in the life of project, but these demands remained unheard (Rose, 1972). Current revitalization efforts that are to be completed by 2025 appear more promising in bringing together residents' inputs in the rebuilding process and working with an aim of zero displacement. However, the new, 'mixed' and much intensified Lawrence Heights will however be even more dominated by those able to pay for market and ownership housing than Regent Park. Questions thus remain about the ways in which this project will revitalize a 'priority neighbourhood' located in a suburb whose social, economic, and racial tensions date

from the period of urban renewal and are considered a threat by planners and decision-makers. These examples highlight some of the context of housing and development in Toronto and the direction of the state. Exploring the context of housing in Toronto to understand the viability of the 15-minute city in relation to revitalization projects is important because of the ways that the cost of living, settlement patterns, and socio-economic status influences where people reside in.

Colonial Context

Before returning to the theoretical perspectives of Frantz Fanon and Henri Lefebvre, it is important to make some qualifications. They did not write about settler-colonial societies as they exist in places like Toronto. In this context, it is important to understand how Fanon and Lefebvre can be brought closer to our colonial realities. There have been debates about the distinction between the 'colonial city' and the 'settler colonial city'. In the extant literature, the 'colonial city' has been conceptualized as sub-centres within larger imperial networks that connect the metropole to the colonies (Hugill, 2017). "Key centres of military and administrative coordination…settlers and imperial agents, as well as theatres for performances of imperial strength", colonial cities were meant to help facilitate the movement of resources from the periphery to the metropole (Hugill, 2017, p. 3). For this purpose, colonial cities were organized in particular ways. To ensure the domination of imperial players, colonial city planning sought to solidify "hierarchal divisions in city spaces" (Hugill, 2017, p. 3).

However, as Hugill argues (2017, p. 3), research on colonial cities that foregrounds "metropolitan forms of domination" over distant colonies is less useful when thinking about colonies where a "demographically majoritarian group" has occupied Indigenous land and asserts settler sovereignty against the original imperial power (Hugill, 2017, p. 4). Patrick Wolfe (1999) speaks to the distinction between colonialism and settler-colonialism and their respective

relationships to people and place. He explains that in settler colonies, settler colonialists intend to stay for good to develop a different or “new” society on the colonized land (Wolfe, 2006, p. 388). In this way, settler-colonialism develops into a system that includes and permeates the state, policies and ideologies. Hugill adds that in settler societies, colonialism is not a thing of the past. Colonial hierarchies and forms of domination remain intact and continue to dispossess and evict indigenous people, also in urban areas (2017, p. 5-7).

In settler colonial contexts, the analysis of colonial urbanization must thus be modified. In Toronto, for example, non-indigenous people relate to the Canadian state in different ways in part because of their different migration histories and their different historical relationship to the original imperial power. Some have long-lasting ties to the British colonizers or hail from other parts of Europe. Others have arrived in Canada from non-European continents, including former British colonies in Asia, Africa or the Caribbean. Canada itself has inherited aspects of the British Empire aboard, as we can see in the Caribbean, where Canadian banks and other economic interests continue to be a powerful force. At the same time, all non-indigenous inhabitants of Canada occupy what Indigenous peoples like the Haudenosaunee and the Anishinabek call Turtle Island. Ontario alone is home to approximately 207 reserves held by a range of First Nations, and there is a significant urban Indigenous population. Both First Nations and Indigenous groups continue to fight for sovereignty, land and infrastructure to support their communities. Barman analysed how various settler interests dispossessed Indigenous peoples by confining them to reserves, exploiting their land (often with minimal or no ‘compensation’), and assimilating and moving them ‘elsewhere’ (2007, p. 5-8). Barman underlines the role of governments and courts in the enduring suffering of Indigenous peoples and the pursuit of urban

development, which has institutionalized dispossession while occasionally sanctioning sanitized forms of indigeneity (2007, p. 8-11).

In Canada capitalism and hegemony are thus tied to settler-colonial histories as well as complex patterns of immigration and settlement. It thus remains crucial to understand settler-colonialism and ongoing Indigenous resistance. Glen Coulthard (2014, p. 9) maintains that although it has been traditionally unpopular to link Indigenous studies and Marxism, these two fields can be brought into conversation with one another to shed light on dynamics of colonial domination, the relation between settlers and Indigenous peoples, and the political economy of capitalism. Coulthard further argues that this approach to settler colonialism offers a way of examining Indigenous people's experiences in the city and their struggles for autonomy, particularly in low-income communities (2014, p. 174-176). The colonization of Indigenous land and the domination of Indigenous people was facilitated in part through spatial segregation (Coulthard, 2014).

Sherene Razack maintains that when colonial control was eased somewhat and urbanization expanded in the 1950s and 1960s, "the segregation of urban space replaced these earlier spatial practices: slum administration replaces colonial administration" (p. 129). She underlines the parallels between Canada's nation-wide settler-colonial geography and the violent relegation and spatial demarcation of Indigenous communities in the margins of the city, parallels that highlight the enduring prevalence of colonial domination (Razack, 2002, p. 129). In this context, we may ask if initiatives like the 15-minute city will further marginalize Indigenous peoples, separate communities spatially, and thus negatively impact the livelihoods and prospects of prosperity for future generations.

Prospect of the 15-Minute City in Toronto

Investigations into the plausibility of the 15-minute city have raised questions about how the vision might have to be adapted to neighbourhoods outside the downtown core. In an article analysing the liveability of neighbourhoods in Canada, it was found that despite the higher percentage of amenity-rich neighbourhoods in Toronto, this vision would require rethinking the design and composition of suburbs (Bozikovic, Castaldo, Webb, 2020). They found that the implementation of the 15-minute city nationally would likely result in people having to move towards central Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal because of how 'amenity dense' these spaces are (Bozikovic, Castaldo, Webb, 2020). They point out that spatial divisions in these cities mean that people navigate different spatial forms, forcing people in the suburbs to rely heavily on automobiles. These complexities go beyond the scope of physical planning (Bozikovic, Castaldo, Webb, 2020). They speak to the political and social challenges of retrofitting neighbourhoods for the 15-minute city model.

In Toronto, the disparities between the central core and the rest of the city have been discussed, in fact, these inequities are visible for everyone to see in the form of uneven infrastructure and investment. Given these inequities, implementing the 15-minute city might further marginalize inner suburbs such as Scarborough and Etobicoke, which are home to a high proportion of racialized and low-income people (Bozikovic, Castaldo, Webb, 2020). Such a scenario is even more likely given the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had deeply racialized and gendered effects, heightened disparities between communities, and impacted smaller municipalities and suburban areas in the Greater Toronto Area in devastating ways (GTA) (Miller, 2020). Black people, other people of colour and lower-income communities have been disproportionality impacted by the coronavirus (Bowden, 2020). In this context, it is not clear

how the 15-minute city can lend itself to equitable city planning and help tackle the social and spatial divisions in the city.

Placemaker Jay Pitter has confronted the 15-minute city vision with an equitable planning vision, asking us to think about existing technocratic and colonial approaches to planning (O'Sullivan, 2021b). These approaches have spurred on urban inequity, segregating communities, unevenly policing of spaces and generating unequal access to resources and amenities (O'Sullivan, 2021b). Pitter says that cities by design have created "buffers across race and class specifically" and that the 15-minute city does not take into account how years of planning interventions have "concretized deep social divisions between people" (Sullivan, 2021b, para. 5). This makes one think about how the 15-minute city could accentuate spatial divisions in Toronto, further alienating people who confront deep social inequalities every day. In addition, Pitter's comments point to the obstacles in the way of transporting the 15-minute city model from Paris and to Toronto and its specific setting.

In thinking about the viability of the 15-minute city in Toronto, the first things that comes to mind is that in the downtown core of the city it already exists, at least in part. There, public transportation is accessible while amenities and essential services are readily available. In terms of the social life that the 15-minute city seeks to promote, it is difficult to discern the extent to which people's lifestyles both fit this model or can be adapted to conform to the high level of sociability and leisure time that the model promotes. Certainly, the downtown area has a dynamic urban life that lends itself to socialization and leisure, but it is difficult to assess the extent to which people who live in the area enjoy local amenities regularly. To develop such an assessment is beyond the scope of this paper; it would have to study people's everyday routines. In the downtown core for example, people may live in the same neighbourhood, on the same

street, even in the same building without following the same daily schedule or mobility patterns. While for some downtowners, all daily activities can be found in close physical proximity, others have jobs, family obligations or hobbies that push them far beyond a 15-minute radius. Indeed, some downtown residents may not find the 15-minute city a desirable form of urban life at all.

It is interesting to think about the significant spatial differences between the downtown core and the rest of Toronto. Based on solely the physical layout, the 15-minute city turns into the 30–45-minute city in places like Malvern, and other parts of Scarborough. In places as complex as Scarborough, the implementation of the 15-minute city could enhance spatial separation and deepen feelings of alienation among people who experience spatial organization as a form of racism. As we have seen, the unequal relations between places like Malvern and downtown Toronto are linked to settler-colonial and imperial dynamics and translated through policy interventions. The implementation of an urbanist project like the 15-minute city in Scarborough could lead to the increased securitization, policing, and surveillance of racialized communities. It might also threaten to displace existing neighbourhoods due to gentrification. It is important that in acknowledging the different social and racial composition overall of downtown Toronto and the suburbs that we have a nuanced perspective on the way that the recasting of territorial relationships privilege certain people and places.

A central concern about the 15-minute city being implemented in Toronto is how suburban areas could adapt to this planning vision and whether individuals would be forced to change their daily routines in order to remain residing in these communities. In Toronto, many suburbs are home to middle- and low-income communities who cannot afford to live anywhere else. This poses a number of questions. Where can people afford to live outside of suburbs? How can existing spaces be reappropriated to promote hyper-proximity? And how could people who

work in the city core commute to work within 15 minutes? The development of the 15-minute city concept in suburbs would likely raise concerns about gentrification. The investment in communities and the revitalization of neighbourhoods to facilitate this plan could increase property values. Developing environmental amenities like green spaces might be positive for people's wellbeing but could displace residents and reduce social diversity. Walks and Maaranen (2008) maintain that in Toronto there is a correlation between gentrification and lower levels of social diversity in neighbourhoods (p. 317-318). Additionally, they argue that gentrification is likely to decrease social mix in neighbourhoods and, if carried out fully, neighbourhood are can be confronted with high levels of displacement, which leads to social polarization (Walks and Maaranen, 2008, p. 321-322). In the suburbs, the 15-minute city could also further marginalize communities with infrastructure that promotes walkability and cyclability because these dynamics often prompt gentrification (O'Sullivan, 2021b). Therefore, some of the fundamental social objectives of the 15-minute city that encourage sociability and promote a sense of community could be difficult to facilitate in Torontonian suburbs and contribute to increased spatial separation.

Fanon and Lefebvre on the 15 -Minute City

The first lesson from the combined works of Lefebvre and Fanon is that spatial organization and the development of different spatial domains is political, and that space is produced is in part through a process of conception. This means that spaces are designed and strongly shaped by the perspectives of the planner or the architect as well as the relationships these have with regular people. Secondly, both Fanon and Lefebvre help us understand that spatial organization is connected to everyday realities that are intertwined with racialized,

gendered, and economic dynamics. Thinking about the racialized dichotomies that existed in colonial societies as described by Fanon, as well as the role of state 'agents' in maintaining conditions of domination, one can think about how everyday racism and processes of decolonization function today. These realties exist in relation to dynamics of imperialism and colonialism, which in Toronto have contributed to racialized and gendered inequalities and spatial separation between the city center and some surrounding suburbs. We can compare Fanon's notion of compartmentalization and one of its manifestations (racial segregation) to the ways that social polarization in Toronto combines with racialized dynamics to further marginalize particular communities such as people of colour, low-income communities, and Indigenous peoples. These polarizing and marginalizing dynamics would likely be amplified by the implementation of the 15-minute city.

For Lefebvre, state institutions play a central role in capitalist urban restructuring, for example by recasting territorial relations and separating dominant and from dominated (peripheral) social spaces through class and culture (Lefebvre, 2003, p. 92). The 15-minute city could only be enforced in Toronto if the state played a role re-regulating territorial relations between center and peripheral areas and exercising control over social interactions. The implementation of the 15-minute city would arguably take the form of social mix planning in ways similar to the spirit of ongoing public housing redevelopment projects in Toronto. In a paradoxical way, the 15-minute city could be utilized as a place-based policy to cultivate urban hubs where some residents neither have to nor want to leave their neighbourhoods while others are pushed out. Consistent with planning visions for Toronto and its neoliberal ideologies, the 15-minute city would likely cater towards only those who can afford to live in '15-minute areas', thus reinforcing racialized and social hierarchies between spaces.

The implementation of the 15-minute city downtown would reinforce socio-spatial inequalities across metropolitan areas. It could have negative implications for peripheral areas where local communities are already underfunded and do not have a level of infrastructure comparable to the downtown area. Distanced and underserviced, peripheralized inhabitants will likely feel alienated both from their environment and from themselves. Based on Fanon's understanding of racism as a form of alienation, it is likely that the 15-minute city could contribute to racialized, even neo-colonial dynamics and thus contribute to the social peripheralization of communities of colour and other disadvantaged communities. His work alerts to the way in which 15-minute city might fortify specifically racialized hierarchical relationships across neighbourhoods and within them.

In central city areas that approximate the 15-minute city model, Fanon might point to dynamics of racialization that may make people of colour feel as if they were being confined by everyday gestures and thus forced to assimilate into the dominant community in order to feel like ordinary persons. From this perspective, the 15-minute city project could function as a coercive state project that may promise diversity and dense social interaction while in fact encouraging compartmentalization, social distance and spatial separation. Central Toronto is of course a complex and contradictory space shaped by forms of micro-resistance and, sometimes, social movement mobilization. On an optimistic day, Lefebvre might suggest that the 15-minute city model and its emphasis on dense social interaction might contribute to these contradictions by promoting open-ended encounters among people from diverse backgrounds. Such encounters might harbour potential for social transformation and provide the ground upon which different social groups can come together, linking their struggles and building dynamic political coalitions to fight injustices. In this sense, the 15-minute city might provide an opening for people to

protest and organize in public against the negative effects of the 15-minute city project itself, demanding appropriate social investment in infrastructure and neighbourhoods and pushing for equitable and inclusive planning. However, the daily encounters that shape urban life are not socially neutral; they can also reproduce or generate forms of social domination, including the forms of racialization that Fanon highlighted in his work.

In any event, both Lefebvre and Fanon would agree that the 15-minute city is not a recipe to address the root causes of inequality. If implemented under the neoliberal and colonial capitalist conditions that prevail in Toronto today, this urbanist project would likely displace subordinate inhabitants – particularly people of colour, Indigenous communities, women, and Black people - by making it difficult for them to afford staying in the social spaces where it is being implemented. At the scale of the urban region, this dynamic of displacement would deepen racialized social and spatial hierarchies. The effects of this dynamic would be disproportionately felt in a range of suburban spaces. But here we have to insist that spatial divisions and inequalities exist not only through core-peripheral dynamics between the central city and the surrounding areas, but also within suburbs themselves. Even heavily stigmatized places like Scarborough are internally divided between neighbourhoods defined by poor and minority communities, on the one hand, and often secluded, even isolated places of socio-economic privilege, on the other (Walks and Bourne, 2009). The 15-minute city is likely to intensify the social fractures within and across social spaces.

Conclusion

This paper explored the 15-minute city model in order to analyse the ways in which inequalities in urban areas are organized spatially partly by establishing hierarchical relationships between different social spaces. Investigating the cities of Bogotá, Stockholm, Portland, and Paris showed how neo-colonial and capitalist realities that exist today are related to colonial and imperialist dynamics. Additionally, this research explored the basis of the 15-minute city model in connection to New Urbanism and analysed the connections between the physical organization of space this vision calls for in relation to perspectives on a desirable urban life. This paper argues that the 15-minute city vision has not adequately taken into consideration the political-economic historical context through which these urban spaces developed. As a result, the 15-minute city vision is blind to the nuanced spatial and social realities it wants to change. By exploring the scholarship of Henri Lefebvre and Frantz Fanon, this paper showed the ways that the implementation of the 15-minute city urbanist vision could accentuate hierarchical relationships between spaces where spatial separation is more pronounced, and everyday life is further shaped by racialized and gender dynamics. In Toronto, this paper maintains, the implementation of the 15-minute city would advance the neoliberal logic that has prevailed within urban politics in Toronto and that has further alienated people in their everyday lives. This research made me think about what planning reform could look like by employing a more egalitarian perspective on the social impacts of urban planning. In challenging the way that urban reform is carried out it, it calls for a more nuanced perspective on how to promote spatial integration without deepening social-spatial separation.

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