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North America's Metropolitan Imaginaries

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Abstract: Scholars of modernity have taken a particular interest in processes of urbanization and—thinking of Simmel, Benjamin, Mumford and Weber—the character of different varieties of city. From a different angle, notions of urban imaginary have gained greater purchase in the field of contemporary urban studies in comparative analysis of varieties of city. This essay begins with notes on both classical accounts of the city in social theory and current concepts of urban imaginaries. The notes revolve around the essay's main topic: the institution of cities of New World, specifically those of the United States and Canada. Paralleling Castoriadis' conception of the imaginary institution, the present author argues for a more exact notion of metropolitan imaginaries, differentiated from the broader subject of urban imaginaries. 'Metropolitan imaginaries' denotes processes of urbanization at the heart of networks of migration, transport, and flows of capital and culture. As part of larger imaginaries, metropolises generate immigrant cities. The specific kind of creation in question produces creativity also by concentrating intellectual and creative schools of design in architecture and visual culture. In sum, metropolises are not merely part of networks of connection and creation; they produce networks and act as the hubs of interaction and creativity within larger social imaginaries. The essay explores this argument in the contexts of US and Canadian modernity and state formation, with specific foci on New York, Chicago, and Toronto. The conclusion notes two limitations to the case presented here and sketches planned directions for future research.

Key words: social imaginary — metropolises — immigration — design — visual arts

For the city and the urban environment represent man's (sic) most consistent and, on the whole, most successful attempt to remake the world in which he lives in more after his own heart's desire. But if the city is the world which man created, it is the world in which he is henceforth condemned to live. Thus, indirectly, and without any clear sense of the nature of his task, in making the city man has remade himself (Park, Burgess, and McKenzie 1967, p. 3).

Introduction

Scholars of modernity frequently focus on the city as the locus of political institution, the center of figuration of social relations, and the pacesetter of change. The Americas are no exception. Using terms like *constitution*, *figuration*, *colonization*, *institution* and *foundation*, sociologists, historians, and political scientists invoke impressions of the planting and expansion of European societies in the Americas. From within modernization studies, Louis Hartz provides the settings of a historicized sociology focused on *foundation* (Hartz, 1964). Through the course of colonization and then independence, societies develop from founded fragments to more singularized entities with new universalist visions. Amongst observers, Hartz's paradigm of New World societies is still a matter of debate (Eisenstadt, 2002; Mota and Delanty, 2015; Wagner, 2014). Whatever else one can say about Hartz, his comparative analysis underscores the polarity of urban and rural experiences and the vitality that the movement of people supplies to the creation of New World societies. Cities in the Americas were nodes of such movement and America's metropolitan cities sharpen the distinction even further. In cities, identities formed and legacies coalesced. They have been destinations and points of egress for migrants and stations for the passing traffic in goods and ideas. As such, cities mark the conquest of space, the colonization of indigenous worlds, and the contraction of time through the creation of the institutions of a public sphere, and infrastructure in communications and transport. They also more or less connect to transatlantic circuits and, to the extent that they join the larger transatlantic sphere, they sit at the cusp of old and new world social formations and imaginaries. In this sense, cities are part of larger national and trans-national imaginaries, as well as loci of their own imaginaries.

Are cities the places where social beings are made? Not entirely, or at least not as completely as Robert Park supposes in the anthropological conjecture above. Missing from his consideration is the axiom of historical sociology that migration is central to the formation of cities in New World societies. In considering this question, this essay enlists the notion of *urban imaginaries* as a supplement to the other sociological concepts listed above (constitution, figuration, colonization etc.). The concept of urban imaginaries is far from unusual. Many contemporary urban studies work with an array of concepts of urban imaginary, following Kevin Lynch or Néstor García Canclini, among others, and with figures such as Mumford and Simmel in the background.¹ A synopsis of the conceptual discussion suggests the following. From a sociological point of view, it may seem banal to suggest that cities are human creations.

However, there is a paradox in cities as a form of materialization of creation. On one hand, cities are creations in the sense that their inhabitants design urban space with purpose; that is, they seek to subject the dynamics of city making to a form of social ordering. In this respect, the political dimension of the social institution—that is, the human capacity to create societies as dynamic whole worlds that also simultaneously base themselves on a legacy of the past—is particularly visible in New World societies. It is less difficult in New World societies that are ‘born modern’ to imagine the formation of cities as projects of social ordering and re-ordering. The invention of skyscraper, the skyscraper city, and urban planning in North America come as little surprise in this context. They are inventions of a society creating itself in conditions more open to novel practices. However, on the other hand, cities are ever-changing ecologies of a wider society, a collective complex of multiple dynamics, practices, and institutions. In this respect, cities are subject to social doing that goes beyond any purposeful design. As ecologies, cities are, for instance, subject to the impact of the interaction of crowds, the assault of pollution, and the massification of the structured environment (infrastructure, housing, industry, and transport). They are irrepressible formations that no singular will or plan can completely subdue. In other words, urban imaginaries set the patterns of city formation and delimit how policy and planning processes can shape urban reproduction and transformation.

As the objective here is to gain analytical purchase on the historical specificity and diversity of North American cities as loci of creation in modernity, this essay proposes a more precise concept of imaginary, one that matches the theoretical exactitude of the study of social imaginaries represented in *Social Imaginaries*. Following Castoriadis’ conception of the imaginary institution, the essay explores *metropolitan* imaginaries as the creation of major cities out of the tension of *instituted* and *instituting* dynamics of interaction (Castoriadis 1987). Two comments on the character of social imaginaries conceived in this fashion precede an outline of the specificity of creation in North American societies and cities. Social imaginaries configure the political patterns of institutionalization and the bodies of social practice through which social change occurs and by which social continuities come about. Social imaginaries frame meaning as a whole for each society, as well as furnishing each society with worldly forms of articulation of meaning (Castoriadis 1987, p. 370; see also Adams et al 2015). For Castoriadis, the imaginary is a collective and political institution that emerges on a tension of continuity and discontinuity. In other words, the imaginary comprises ‘given structures, ‘materialized’ institutions and works, whether these be material or not; and...*that which* structures, institutes, materializes. In short, it is the union *and* the tension of instituting society

and of instituted society, of history made and of history in the making (Castoriadis 1987, p. 108). Castoriadis's conception of the imaginary institution casts the two sides of this tension embodied together in the 'social-historical'. The social-historical, in turn, provides a world context for the emergence of cities and, specifically for present purposes, metropolises.

In North American societies, the tension of the imaginary institution has a specific character. The political institution of the US and Canada as outcomes of the republican revolution pre-figured the making of metropolises as highly novel sites of urban living and focal points for New World creation. In a sense, the imaginaries of New World social formations created metropolitan imaginaries as generative configurations of regions and regional networks and flows. The metropolitan imaginaries shaping the largest and most dynamic cities of North America are, in turn, distinguishable from urban imaginaries by the intensity of formation that occurs in them as a specific type of city, one in which there are forceful flows of people, trade, and ideas to and through economic, political, and cultural hubs. Scale, density, and heterogeneity are distinctive features of metropolises created through the impulses of intensive migrations, movements, and flows, as well as instituting conditions in which such migrations, movements, and flows can continue.² To be more exact, high levels of human migration, the construction of innovative built environments, and the concentration of cultures of design and the visual arts, form cities as metropolises and, in turn, institute the conditions in which these three dimensions of metropolitan life can continue.

The paradox of cities noted above alludes to these three dimensions of the metropolitan institution. First, metropolises are vital locations that concretize wider process of interaction of cultures. People move in, out, and through cities, interacting both with an anonymous collective and with their fellows. For immigrants, they are often a first point of encounter. As metropolises are immigrant centers, they generate conditions in which cultures are cast in intercultural relations with one another. Cities are relational in a second way: ideas, science, and doctrines course through urban networks and institutions. Metropolises attract creative specialists, who, in turn, concentrate the arts of city making—architecture, engineering, and planning. North American metropolises concentrate intellectual and creative schools of design. Third, this essay considers ingenuity in relation to the arts. The arts contribute to the cityscape of creativity, not only in institutional activities of galleries, theatres, and so forth, but also in the construction of democratic spaces of grass-roots practice. In metropolises, the intersection of the two sides is lively and productive, albeit always constituted in tension. To sum up the

key distinguishing features of the metropolitan imaginary, metropolises stand out because of the intensity of encounters and interaction that they host, the creation of space and design of the built environment, and the vivacity of the visual arts.

There is an especial intensity to this imaginary. Classical perspectives in sociology illuminate particular aspects of urban imaginaries. Weber, Simmel, Mumford, and Benjamin all recognized the rich tapestry of city life in European modernity. Mumford was the foremost thinker on cities in human sciences, at least when it came identifying the originality of America's urban imaginaries and thematizing metropolitan dynamics for non-American audiences (Mumford 1996). He succinctly delineated the operative forces of creativity that congregated in the metropolis. As the zeniths of creativity, metropolitan cities shaped the regional zones surrounding them. Benjamin's writings focus on the mundane experiences of the structured city, relating more poignantly to the problem of memory. In Weber's thought, the sociology of the city represented a distinct vein of thinking. When it comes to Europe, Weber's long essay on the city, highlights towns and capitals with a democratic and revolutionary potential to imagine and constitute alternative modes of social and political life (Rundell 2014). Simmel's sociology of the metropolitan condition draws into relief abstract and generalizable features of modern urban life (Beilharz 1994, pp. 64-9; Simmel 1976). Simmel pointed to the manner in which established inhabitants with an established habitus enacted abstract features of intense interaction with their urban fellows coupled with great distance from community life. He argues—as does Mumford also—that the urban experience in large cities generates a metropolitan animus through the daily routines of life. Simmel's vision, as Harvey observes (1989, pp. 26-7), is also applicable to US cities as well as to Berlin. In this respect, Simmel's perspective may be closer to the varieties of modernity experienced in the Americas, though Weber was well aware of urban trends in North America and had visited the United States.

Notwithstanding any applicability of classical perspectives on to the New World modernity of North America, this essay departs from writings on the city by Simmel, Benjamin, and Weber in order to explore American varieties of social experience beyond European forms of the social-historical. The particular focus is on the imaginary institution of metropolises in the US and Canada, including more detailed exploration of the development of New York, Chicago, and Toronto from the mid-nineteenth century through to the end of the twentieth century. This exploratory work sets a research agenda for a comparative historical sociology

of cities across the Americas. The present author argues that migration, creation and design, and the vitality of the visual arts are all definitive dimensions of New World metropolitan imaginaries in North American states. The conclusion outlines directions for further research on American cities.

Migration, Nations and Modernity in the Americas

Migration helped to make the Americas. Transnational migration in the era of mass transfer was a three-stage movement from interiors to oceanic voyages, and then either settlement or a second internal migration. The prospect of enrichment drew voluntary migrants to frontiers, plains, border regions, hinterlands, and deserts, as well as inland cities. Over time, such secondary movements along with international migration transformed the Americas instituting a spectrum of fateful migratory experiences quite distinct from African and Europe societies. Furthermore, this historical process had an additional dimension of violence and conflict. In many American societies, a protracted war on indigenous worlds conditioned the mode-of being for colonizer-settlers. At war with indigenous civilizations (or in the wake of inter-civilizational warfare) and dis-embedded from the social and cultural order of old world origins, American New World cultures were at a distance from both indigenous and European old worlds. New World cultures were possibly alien to both their milieu of origin and their environments of growth (Eisenstadt 2002). Such conditions molded a variety of sentiments of belonging.

In such circumstances, Americans created new territorial states out of an ongoing process of conquest, migration, in-habitation, the expansion of agriculture, mining and industry, and, finally, through cultural practices, institutions and heritage. The extension of canal and railway transport, institutions of the public sphere, and postal and telegraph networks certainly accelerated colonial encroachment on the interior lands of the two sub-continents.³ In Brazil, Argentina, the US, and Canada, the railways demarcated national territories just as effectively as declared national borders did. Rail linked provinces, cities, towns and districts. In addition, the advent of steam shipping considerably increased the volume of traffic coursing America's largest rivers and lakes, while also dramatically reducing the duration of Atlantic crossings (Brands 2010, pp. 247-50). Along with technical improvements in commercial sailing, steam shipping opened pathways to mass migration across the world. Atlantic crossings to the Americas formed major channels of movement in the new era of migration. The states of the Americas became territorial entities through the conquest of their interiors.

In this context of migration and territorial state formation, some cities took on the character of immigrant cities and generated secondary migrants for inland centers. Cities such as were Chicago, Denver, Dallas, the networked towns and cities of Las Pampas, Winnipeg, Calgary, Medellin, Santa Cruz, Belo Horizonte, Puebla, and Guadalajara nodes of sub-regions, which aggregated provincial and local historical experiences. In such cities, colonizer-settlers engaged in a process of New World place making. As makers of local and regional identities and experiences, they were engulfed by a social imaginary, which they were co-makers of, and which they constantly re-made. Local and provincial loyalties multiplied alongside the colonizing process of territorial expansion (Grab 2005). By supplementing emerging US nationalism and confederal Canadian loyalty, provincial and local loyalties could extend the reach of patriotic attachment, albeit often in relationships of tension with the national.

This is the backdrop to the extensive immigration of the second half of the nineteenth century. Starting with the United States, the essay explores dimensions of architecture, urban design, and public and gallery art in the three metropolises. In these cities, American societies made place in a variety of ways through intercultural interaction and conflict. In the wake of the demise of the Atlantic empires, new states and reinforced colonies constituted societies in flows of people, trade, doctrines, sciences, and methods. Makers of modern New World societies and cities acted and conflicted in those flows. Forming cities, styles of architecture, modes of urban design, and public expressions of culture was part of the abundant constitution of distinctive North American societies. They were new; but at their most spectacular, they often proclaimed an Antiquity that never existed for Euro-America. While they seemed to the world to shine brightly with modernity, so to speak, the three metropolises of the US and Canada expressed an imagination of the past, which, with time, grew to prominence.

Conquest, Continentalization, Movement, Conflict and Pluralism in the US

The US is widely seen as the immigrant society par excellence. In terms of sheer overall numbers and impact, it is difficult to disagree. Two eras stand out in magnitude. The steady pace of immigration up to the 1880s gave way to rapid increases lasting through to the phase of nativist reaction in the 1920s. During these four decades, more than twenty million left Europe for the US (Reader 2004, p. 161). The population doubled. Whether the newcomers were formerly city dwellers or not, they invigorated the forces of urbanization and diversification.⁴ In response to the cultural experiences and heritage brought by newcomers in such high volumes, the Federal Government began to style population policy in racial and

ethnic terms, despite having a deeper commitment to national assimilation in place since the end of the Civil War. Immigration ran well ahead of the policy response, which in itself furthered the development of urban localism beyond the large portal metropolises. Many of the immigrants who entered through Ellis Island, Angel Island or Galveston Island would wind up staying in New York, San Francisco or Houston. At the height of the in-take, thousands funneled themselves through Ellis Island to undergo the confronting experience of immigration inspection (Anbinder, 2016, pp. 329-53).⁵ New York, being the main gateway, became an immigrant metropolis (Anbinder 2016, p. 873). After 1900, the axis of transatlantic migration for the majority shifted from northwestern Europe to southern and eastern Europe. The intercultural and economic impacts on the US' most significant cities would be, in time, most profound.

The second era dates from the end of the Vietnam War to the turn of the twentieth century. During these decades, the US population increased by a quarter. The elimination of national quotas in 1965 permitted greater heterogeneity with immigrants from Asia bringing a diversifying presence. Even so, by the end of the century, the most significant trend was immigration from the rest of the Americas. In this second period, migration had an even weightier impact on cities and mitigated against a singular sense of national belonging. Migrants altered the look of San Francisco, Los Angeles, Houston, San Antonio, Miami, Chicago, Washington, and, again, New York. Multiculturalism came under attack in the 1990s—well before the hyperbole of a US-Mexico wall featuring so highly in Trump's rhetoric—in a reaction of resentment to Latin American immigration. As a counterpoint, migrant social movements and some labor unions campaigned for the rights of the undocumented. At the close of the second era, the struggle over Latin American migrant citizenship was a crucible of conflict over multiculturalism and labor rights.

The two periods of intensive immigration were exceptional. Far from the 'melting pot of nations' often presumed of the two eras, a spectrum of ethnicity emerged. Both eras produced distinctive waves of particularism and discrimination in immigration policy at odds with multicultural principles. The long wave of westward migration in the nineteenth century forced the pace of formation of the territorial state. The end of slavery as a stylistic culture of the South and as a mode of production was a pre-condition of this pattern of western movement and seizure. Seen as a longer-term process, the colonization of the continent by the US entailed a prolonged but undeclared war on the First Nations, a one-sided war with Mexico, territories

purchased from France and Spain, and a westward surge of internal migration. A logic of continentalization was at work, entailing also the imagination of the land as continental. Noting that the archival records are unclear, Belich (2009) conjectures that twelve million moved westward between 1815 and 1930. By any measure, this transfer is of historical significance. Yet, the size is one aspect only. Although mainly an internal migration, the sheer collective effort involved, and the potential for culture shock for so many, would have been as great as the journey across the Atlantic (Belich 2009, p. 65). The movement is entirely comparable to the international migratory impulses nourishing the US at the same time. Researching those trends, historians have undertaken a significant revision of frontier historiography as part of a critical evaluation of Turner's legacy (Cronon 1992). There is general support for the argument that the US created several connected frontiers in occupied borderlands. Asian immigration from the Pacific coast augmented some of the later trends. Debate centers on the question of which concepts are best equipped to represent this conflictual past—frontier, regions, borderlands. This is a question for another time, but for the moment let us conclude from this debate that there is no cause to return to the Turnerian paradigm.

While historians debate the causal complexities impelling westward movement, the internal consequences are clear enough. The westward surge altered the character of the polity creating the conditions for the consolidation of the cities of the eastern seaboard and the Midwest. International and domestic migration concurrently nourished two signifying myths of the republic: the hospitable settler-immigrant society and the frontier as the space of passionate endeavor (Roberts and Murphy 2004, p. 276). Between both myths sat the American Dream of private home ownership. The Dream began with The Homestead Act (1862), which granted settlers plots of land in the West. Colonization of the interior from that point revolved around land settlement, railroad extensions, and repopulation. The domination of both myths and the Dream would mean that US cities would not take on the civic character of old-world Latin cities with central plazas and public places of reasoned deliberation. The urban imaginaries diverged from Latin patterns in one crucial respect: they lacked truly public spaces where politics, culture, and citizenship could democratically flourish (Cranz 1982, pp. 233-234; Brands 2010, pp. 281-82; Murphy 2001, pp. 299-304). This is even more the case for metropolises. To be sure, there were metaphoric structures of the public sphere (as Habermas might interject), and they may reflect the tension of Enlightenment rationality and Romantic impulse. However, they do not produce places for political activity and deliberative democracy in the lasting manner of the Latin European tradition. Lacking public spaces of hospitable

engagement, the dynamics of inequality and exclusion marginalized Blacks, Mexicans, Koreans and many others from the urban and symbolic centers of decision making. Consequently, in them a politics of rights-claims around representation and recognition has formed. In place of spatial and metaphorical agoras, US cities have a suburban topography of houses and a suburbanized American Dream, but no lasting democratic center. For all this, urbanization proceeded apace as a process of social creation.

Cities are the loci of forces of transformation. However, there is creative intervention also and American imaginaries produce this in abundance. Architecture and urban planning mobilize artful purpose to design buildings, parks, and precincts. The result, if not always the intention, is a balance of shapes and forms. Architecture in the US has been, in this way, a forceful collective representation of a city. As a designing art, it captures the undertow of movement in the forms of spaces that architects and engineers create, often synchronizing a Roman version of classical geometrical shapes with modern patterns of utilitarian rationality (Roberts and Murphy 2004, pp. 81, 112). Cities designed with admixtures of styles emphasizing through-flows can be expressions of inter-civilizational engagement. By drawing influences from different places and different eras into a collective expression of relationships to the world, architecture can give a trans-historical quality to urban spaces. Where cities have this quality, their centers, squares, parks, and railway stations invoke other times and even temporalities. Architecture is purposeful design for cities that invite entry, flows, transmissions, exchanges, and departures. When design best crystallizes a city's intercultural, economic, and political transactions, architecture acts as a force for encounters and conviviality.

The American New World would seem to hold out opportunities for expansive urban design; it certainly seemed to for modernist architects. Modernism also had a chapter in the history of park design. The architects of urban parks considered parkland to be a civilizing influence (Cranz 1982; Schuyler 1986). Bucolic spaces could provide relief from the city. Moreover, planners regarded parks as democratic commons for equals to share without prejudice. However, in many respects, parks were inaccessible, remote, and culturally exclusive. In each period, designers seem to have focused on opening access to the excluded: the working class, the middle class, women, immigrant minorities, the elderly, African Americans, and the people with disabilities (Cranz 1982, pp. 194-206). Modernist strategies in park construction displaced the contingency of street life by drawing working class people to

the disciplines of organized athletics, the arts, and education (Cranz 1982, pp. 80-4). Parks designed on these principles had an ordering form, remote from the rhythms of the metropolis.

As a wider paradigm of urban design, modernism produced utopian projections of the liberating powers of metropolitan forces (Berman 1982). Across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, New York and Chicago were exemplars of modernist design. In practice, modernism could produce poor development. The most reductive modernist currents in urban design and architecture were, without doubt, levelers of metropolitan diversity (Harvey 1989, pp. 16-22, 31-2). Proponents of modernist strategies delivered spaces marked by utilitarian placelessness and structures that excluded historical ambience. Working against competing classical trends in design, modernist reactions to historical forms ranged from ambivalence through to deep hostility. They entered a terrain of styles for which Rome had been one key inspiration, albeit a distant one. Classicism and more hybrid forms, on one hand, conveyed memory and intercultural flows more effectively. This was a contrast with modernism's fragments of mass utility, which lacked connection. New York and Chicago each have ecologies that reflect different combinations of rival paradigms of design. Both are products of different migratory patterns. Moreover, New York and Chicago are architectural articulations of the imaginary significations of civic life, while, by contrast, Los Angeles is a product of a globalist 'California ideology' (Roberts and Murphy 2004, pp.187-8). All three are worldly, as well as being globally networked. For New York and Chicago, patterns of creation, design, and the arts attest to this.

New York

Once the world's most populous city, New York, has been a continual focal point of dense diversity. New York is a city of islands, entry points, and passages in and out. As well, it is a city of movement across a multitude of spaces and communities formed by velocities of migration greater than arguably any other city. Its metropolitan inventions—starting in the nineteenth century (Brands 2010, pp. 14-27, 273-305)—signified connections and interactions. Also a maritime city through to World War 1, Lower Manhattan had a port culture of exchanges, expansive movements, and fraternization. New York's waterways, bridges, roads, trains, buildings, subways, and sidewalks facilitate traffic of all kinds (Beilharz 1994, pp. 79-81).

As a twentieth century metropolis, New York has been the paradigm of the skyscraper city. As a visual barometer of modernity, the skyscraper came to symbolize the city's reputation. Skyscrapers entail particular sensual experiences. They magically complete an optical transparency with glass and elevators and their rapid passages to the new lofty heights. Many landmark skyscrapers of New York fulfilled architects' designs to conduce experiences of the sublime for those passing through them (Sennett 1990, pp.116-7). Signifying open-ness and accessibility, as well as the Promethean pursuit of endless creation and power, the glass towers populating the skyline of Manhattan continue the kinetic logic of influx, transitions, and egress implicit in the grid plan of early nineteenth century city leaders. In this respect, and in so many other ways, New York planned its built symbolic expressions of modernity ahead of the trend, as it were (Berman 1982, p. 289).

As a blueprint for city making, New York's grid plan became the exemplar for other cities (Reader 2004, pp. 51-61). Roman inspired, the grid, in the hands of American city-makers, turned into a signification of Protestant abstraction and Promethean ambition (Sennett 1990, pp. 48-55). There would be no public center, *agora*, or forum in the modern city and, therefore, there would be no point of gravity that might imply limitation. Spread of the grid was commensurate with the broad vision of continental nation building developed by New York's bourgeoisie (Beckert 2001, pp. 182-95). After the Civil War, the northeast's influence crept over the South. New York finance was a plank in the integration of the US, while the emancipationist vision of New York's bourgeoisie gained hegemony (Belich 2009, pp. 245-7; Beckert 2001, pp. 7-46, 111-144). Beginning with Cleveland—an early industrializer—the grid template spread with little regard for topography, including the signs and impact of First Nations occupation. The grid could not be static and, in Manhattan, expansion northwards from the original settlement followed straight lines.

The form of Manhattan would be, from that point, an architecture suited to the motion of the city's bustle. Yet, the democratic need for living spaces was to be the parent of invention. Central Park was a watershed for New York and for cities more generally in this respect. As a foundation point for the urban park movement, Central Park condensed the benefits and problems of city design into one urban space (Cranz 1982 pp. 29-31). It initially fell short of its inventors' lofty aims (Schuyler 1986). Better transport to Northern Manhattan overcame many of the gaps and more New Yorkers came to use the park and expand their experience of the city. The original design firm continued to design parks as part of the decentralization of

the city's populace to The Bronx and Brooklyn (Schuyler 1986 pp. 167-179). Modernism allowed amply for such breakthroughs to recreational activities and respite from the city, even as New York continued to grow and incorporate other parts of the region.

Americans had faith in planning in the early twentieth century. Design framed the outlines of Chicago, Kansas City, Cleveland, as well as New York. In designing new buildings, architects and urban planners learnt about bending style to meet regulations. Soon enough, however, vertical construction pushed through New York's 1916 building ordinance to allow the impulse to leap skywards across Manhattan. Apartment living was normalized in these years also. After World War 2, New York morphed into a megacity crisscrossed by freeways, causeways, bridges, and tunnels. The architect of the city's transformation, Robert Moses, was at the heart of a paradigm of the suburban city. He left the grid and the original features of New York's growth behind, extending New York by concentrating on the boroughs outside of Manhattan. Many other American cities went on to follow his goal of continuous construction (Harvey 1989, pp. 69-75). Inspired by Le Corbusier's anti-humanism, Moses' city planning and engineering produced a modernist animosity towards traditional ideals of the city. In place of democratic geniality and intercultural openings, Moses' paradigm responded to crowded metropolises with mass housing estates and inter-city highways built after the demolition of established communities. New York's urban renewal programs of the 1950s and 1960s exemplified the unintended consequences of this paradigm: segregation of low-income housing projects and creation of a new racial politics of urban reform (Berman 1982, pp. 290-312). The shift away from parks, vibrant port life, railroad travel, and bridges to expressways and high-rise housing blocs re-shaped the class and race ecologies of New York. Immune to the heritage of connectivity, this phase of city making produced un-embedded transit links, massified housing, and streets re-designed for cars. The city it left to its inhabitants was, like Los Angeles, a conurbanized mass whose habitability was declining, as critics like Jane Jacobs pointed out (Beilharz 1994, p. 79). Jacobs' theory of the city and her activism represented a separate pole of attraction for urban studies, one that echoed Lewis Mumford's ecological understanding of the city complex. She and many like-minded advocates stood against tendencies to expansion, extension, and intensification. In those tendencies, technocratic reason sought to triumph over the living civilization of the city. New York's vibrancy could produce two honed versions of modernism in Moses' vision of rational mastery and Jacobs' vernacular of sidewalks and communities. The metropolitan imaginary produced both poles of interpretation of planning, while architectural designs continued the admixture of forms that sustained movement and

flows. As a metropolis, New York could generate sharp and momentous conflicts around vital questions of how people could and should inhabit cities, while also containing complex social relations.

New York has a topography of iconic intersections, enduring architectural landmarks, renowned African-American heritage, eminent universities, festivals, parades, and of course, world leading galleries, museums, dance companies, orchestras, and theatres. As indicated in the introduction, this essay focuses specifically on the arts. At all levels, art as a public good nourished urban space. The creative energies of multi-ethnic artistic communities defied subsumption (Berman 1982, pp. 312-40). The periodic resurgence of artistic communities illustrates well the presupposition that the indeterminacy of the metropolitan imaginary and the complexity of urban interaction exceeds all forces of subjugation. At another level, producing art and constructing a creative economy contributed to the city's reputation for global eminence from the 1980s (Zukin 1995, pp. 109-51). In this sense, New York may be 'not a city, but a world', as journalist Konrad Bercovici concluded in the 1920s (cited in Anbinder 2016, p. 354). As a world, it produced multiple arts of world renown. In particular, the city was a global center for jazz, which attracted a worldly audience for a local scene of renowned performers. Chicago was another, with its own jazz brand. Yet, New York could add jazz to a classical music tradition that migrant musicians had frequently nourished.

From the outset, however, the creative arts were a world divided around modernism, class, gender, and race. Philanthropists had initiated American art collecting in the Gilded Age, as the wealthy began to expend new riches on private collections. In the early years of the twentieth century, different modes and genres of artistic practice mixed in a participatory style outside of established public institutions. Artist-initiated groups like the Municipal Art Society gave an unofficial voice to advocacy for a more complex ecology of cultural production. However, in the 1930s, national institutions such as the Federal Art Project and the Museum of Modern Art also lent institutional support to the democratizing impulses of New York's creatives (Saab 2004). This initiated a commingling of popular and High Art. New York's 1939 World Fair was a moment in this process, inasmuch as it projected democratic intent for the populace (Saab, 2004, pp. 129-56). The Fair presupposed that a dialogue with the viewing public could garner public support for the more controversial modernist traits of the visual and architectural arts. By confronting the public's disdain for aesthetic modernism, the Fair contributed to the difficult coevolution of popular and high art. Intercultural experimentation

in this pre-war period also contributed to growing nexus of arts organizations and practicing artists. Many from Latin America and the Caribbean made work in and around the Museum of Modern Art, the New School of Social Research, and the Art Students League. The work of Diego Rivera, Joaquín Torres-García, and Frida Kahlo, among others, influenced modernism and communicated modernist techniques throughout the US and the rest of the Americas. They entered a tempest of creative and intellectual exchanges with others.

From this point on, the intersections between artistic groups, cultural institutions, and the private sector enlarged themselves in two bursts: one after World War 2 and another from the 1980s. Stoked by philanthropy, governmental support, and an aggregation of taste for High Culture, cultural organizations grew and diversified (Zukin 1995, pp. 118-22, 128-33, 142-4). Strategies of cultural revitalization counted theme parks and entertainment centers alongside the arts as the *sine qua non* of a world leading cultural sector. In turn, museums and galleries reinvented themselves as global concerns towards the end of the century. In this context, ancillary retail businesses have grown as tourist attractions, as well as commercial entities. Yet, all must interface with the creative communities of practitioners, as well as with the vast audiences of consumers. In this sense, the symbolic economy of New York's neon-lit 'brandsapes' coexists with the cultural city. New York was alive with many alternative sites and layers of production, often with complex relationships to museums and galleries.

Chicago

An unlikely achievement like Chicago attracts fascination. Chicago benefited from its location on the shores of Lake Michigan and its access to the Great Lakes. Connected to the transport lines of the Lakes system, the city had a harbor that gave it a favored position in respect of the Mississippi Valley. Yet, it was the envisioned project of a metropolis in the interior, stimulating the agency to make a 'great' interconnected city inland, which was indispensable to the emergence of Chicago. Far from a 'natural' production, this city had an exceptional metropolitan imaginary. Projects of development magnetically attracted investment, inland migration, and architectural innovators. The end of the US Civil War cleared the ground for its take-off in terms of both ending the formal culture of the southern states and transforming the social relations of labor. Above all, Chicago formed a nexus to interior zones that were emerging as mapped and imagined regions. To its vast West was a hinterland which it had a mutually constitutive relationship with (Spears 2005; Cronon 1991). There were many environmental conditions on the Plains working against the growth of Chicago. Nevertheless,

the mirage of success impelled endeavors to make this city. In the nineteenth century, Chicago fast became a node in a network crossing seven states in the Midwest. Chicagoans made the network with railroad links and shipping operations. The human, economic, and cultural traffic coursing through the networks kindled a historic process of unrivaled growth. It was a market city receiving and trading resources, finance, and services, as well as an industrial city producing commodities (Cronon 1991).

Demographically, Chicago grew in leaps, unsurpassed for a time by any other city in the world, including New York. Reaching the one million mark in time for the 1893 World Fair, the city was home to more than two million by 1910. People came in numbers, but also for opportunities. In this important respect, Chicago was not only a commercial city, but also an immigrant destination. First the Irish, then Poles, Germans, Bohemians, Italians, and Greeks; later Black Americans, and East European Jews. All, along with their compatriots in the towns and the plains of the Midwest, imagined Chicago to be a metropolis, along with all that is alluring and repelling about one. On his 1904 visit, Weber too saw reason to feel both, as he was attracted to the restive energy and shaken by the thin veneer of civility evident in the disorder of the city's public life (Spears 2005, pp. 3-5). W. E. B. Du Bois also wrote about racism as a lived experience in Chicago and segregation as a spatial consequence of racism in northern cities.

Chicago exhibited an especially ferocious level of class conflict and social protest. Furthermore, modernity produced in Chicago a dark underbelly of racial violence, mob gangsters operating with impunity, and an entrenched sex industry (Boehm 2004, pp. 67-9). Migrants entered a crucible of urbanization and often confronted difficult conditions. It was some time before Italians earned respect as political actors and citizens. Germans suffered badly in World War I. New migrants entered the labor market near the bottom. Blacks in impoverished and crowded southern neighborhoods saw little change. Migrants congregated and organized within enclaves for decades, the main communal strategy available to survive and negotiate the political intrigues of city hall and the state legislature. Churches initiated members of the community into Anglo-American culture through English-language instruction and education in daily customs. They were the cornerstone of inter-generational mobility for Poles, Irish, and German immigrants. In the postwar period, the national economy boomed and manufacturing benefitted disproportionately from the growth.

In such favorable circumstances, municipal government had an opportunity to stabilize. It did so under Mayor Richard Daley's direction from the mid-1950s to 1976. His machine-like administration had its critics. However, relative to other cities, the city's administration exercised remarkable agency, and successfully so (Felion 2015). City government invested in housing, airports, bridges, expressways, public art, and major buildings. With the city economy booming at above national rates, sliding in the mid-1970s, and then recovering more quickly than other cities, Daley's political machine was able to initiate a public-sector led makeover of Chicago. The unlikely city had always generated problems of urban design for itself and responses to those problems. Daley's phase of government was an episode of change in a city that was a frontier in planning and architecture.

The unlikely city emerging as an urban power had a form that expedited its flows and movements. The metropolitan imaginary signified its dynamics and social relations in the city's architecture. Nineteenth century Chicago was, in the eyes of architect Louis Sullivan, a city dreamt into being by its makers from the gifts given the area by nature (Cronon 1991, pp. 14-15). Yet, this city seemed to many an insurgency against nature's ecological rhythms. The relatively simple layout of the city and the constructive inventiveness of its architects spoke to the artifice of its imaginary institution. Urban historians attribute the American invention of the skyscraper to Chicago. The skyscraper was an invention that itself signified the principle of limitlessness in its sleek materiality. As far as Sullivan was concerned, it was necessary to strip back the design of buildings back to basic utility in order to scale new heights. With a Beaux Arts training and an artisanal flair derived from education and experience in different cultural environments, Sullivan's genius was to challenge ornate Gothic designs by making an aesthetic virtue of their core structures. He built with a frugal modernist style, intending his designs for the wider populace. Designed with utilitarian character—a characteristic that would define the city's architectural movement for decades after him—the skyscrapers that architects in the Midwest assembled for business found quick favor with Chicago's canny capitalists. Architectural firms themselves became formidable enterprises as a result. As they did so, New York and Chicago increasingly began to rival one another in fashioning advances in skyscraper construction. Chicago's initial edge spread to milieu of modernist metropolis makers.

Like New York, Chicago had a plan as a modernizing reference point. Architect Daniel Burnham led a design process for a 1909 plan. The initiative responded to the city's visible inequalities (Boehm 2004, pp. 73-5). Burnham's private correspondence and speeches indicate

a reformer-like concern for public amenity, particularly around civilizing initiatives in education, public health, and parkland development. A century later, the city's landscapes may have meshed well with the built environment within 'the Loop'. However, in the early 1900s, that was not the case. City elders (and perhaps many of its people) desperately sought pastoral enclaves. The 1893 World Fair—led by Burnham also—provided impetus to vibrant park construction. The plan reveals how city elders had imagined the grid as a canvass on which moderns could design city form based on prevailing progressive values. By integrating Parisian, Viennese, and German exemplars with the unmistakable progressivist animus of the City Beautiful movement, planners embraced some of the principles of organic emergence that would be later evident in Chicagoan sociology. For Burnham, creativity and invention in the city was an art and a democratic mission, as it was for Sullivan. Burnham's plan may have been incomplete in its implementation, but it clearly left a legacy for urban planning.

Often echoing elements of the Burnham Plan, Chicago's burgeoning firms made the most of investments made in Depression-era public works and during wartime. With dynamic new designs, architects clustered into a current known as the Chicago School. As a center for innovation, Chicagoan architecture welcomed talent from abroad. Mies Van Rohe was an exemplar. From the mid-1940s through to the 1960s, his modernist constructions blended European and Midwestern styles and techniques. His ever-newer, ever-better structures signified a sublime order within, contrasting with the apparently anarchic rhythms of the streets outside (Sennett 1990, pp. 111-4). With a new vocabulary and a singular focus on the relationship of structure to space, Miesian design dominated architecture across three decades. His encased glass interior walls conducted light, while exteriors of glass imparted transparency. With further spatial innovations, Miesian architecture sustained the experimental flair of the modernist Chicago milieu.

Architecture was part of the patchwork of Chicago as a cultural city, as well as a capitalist one. The cultural city gained momentum following the fierce industrial and political confrontations of the 1890s. The city's elites invested in civic institutions of art. Swayed by the arguments of reformers, major industrialists embraced the refining arts as a strategy of metropolitan progress and fought the resistance of ingrained interests to establish cultural institutions for the city. The Field Museum of Natural History, the much-frequented Art Institute, and the Auditorium of Music (part of the university after World War 2) filled out the cityscape alongside the rising skyscrapers. Institutionally, the arts looked formidable.

Initially, for artists on the ground, there were countervailing trends. Migration influenced genre and style in art (Spears 2005, pp. 234-57). Enduring the sanctimonious antipathy of Chicago's moral guardians, modernists began to make a mark in the 1920s, defying the hostile atmosphere of city authorities to produce lasting work. Chicago's architecture and industrial engineering provided an artisanal environment in which modernism in painting and performance could gestate. If Chicago was not the progenitor of a new genre, it was certainly the productive recipient of the stylistic idioms and preferences of modernism. Self-reflective about their own practice, Chicago's small vibrant group of artists spoke a language of modernism comparable to avant-garde contemporaries in Latin America. Absorbing impressionist, cubist, and urban realist techniques, a mode of artistic expression crystallized in the city's cultural engagement. Artists also found inspiration in the Mexican muralists, especially those associated with the reformist Hull House, which was hospitable to foreign artists.

With its metropolitan grammar, Chicago became a center where practitioners could make art as a public good. The Museum of Contemporary Art began in the mid-1960s at the initiative of curators, critics, and artists. Working at the meeting point of institutional and community culture, the museum supported emerging artists, while marking the city's own art history in exhibitions of less-recognized artists. In this vein, recovery of African-American art as a place-specific record of segregation in the South Side's Black Belt has also been an emerging direction in public exhibition. Like communities in Harlem, which have advocated for landmarks to black memory, Chicago's communities sought sites of important moments in the story of Civil Rights (Zukin 1995, pp. 126-8, 277-8). When the University of Chicago broadened its curriculum to incorporate Art History in the mid-1970s, it too connected creative practice to a wider context of artistic production and social and political critique. Training at the Art Institute had already adopted a similar approach, inspiring artists to capture trends of the times in the pathos of their new work.

High levels of immigration and cultural cross flows are dimensions of the historical creation of both Chicago and New York. The metropolitan imaginary institutes patterns of interaction that go beyond the rationalization of city life. The imaginary generates distinct ecologies of creativity, also illustrated here in the field of architecture. If, as the present author argues, the patterns are specific to US cities, how distinct are the metropolises of Canada, the other North America?

Canada's Metropolises

Historians and historical sociologists have interpreted Canada's history through the prism of juxtaposition to the United States (Grabb 2005; Lipset 1989). Furthermore, the popular trend of continuous historical comparison with the US has acted as an interpretive dialectic through which Canadians have developed an identity. As a cultural trend, this has influenced the creation of national institutions, including the signifiers of identity—national emblems, the flag, and the anthem—as well as the institutions of the state. The origins of Anglophone Canada in the long American Revolution no doubt have inspired self-conscious comparison. At the same time, Canada has formed on the back of a Francophone legacy and the contestatory political culture of Quebec. State formation as a process has allied with a complex collective identity. Canada's immigrant confederation reflects the circumstances of its political foundation (Gibbins 2002). The Confederation's legacies are conspicuously two-sided. On one hand, they relate to a political constitution based on negotiation between the center and different provinces. On the other hand, the Confederation addresses a founding multinational population whose constituent parts had extraordinary capacity for strong cultural identity. There are, thus, enduring tensions between dominant Anglo-Canadians and Quebecker' traditions, on one hand, and between the heirs of colonial settlement and the First Nations that define Canada's contemporary form of liberal multiculturalism, on the other (Taylor 1992). Aligned to this are unresolved tensions over its history of civilizational conflicts, refracted today through the prism of race and ethnicity, a history of dishonored treaties, and a regime of bi-culturalism. As a result, the specific version of state management of language and culture is 'polyethnic', rather than multicultural, according to Kymlicka (Kymlicka 1995). Such exceptional circumstances of state formation define the particularity of the social-historical in Canada.

In character, colonizer-settler Canada is an immigrant society (Lipset 1989, pp. 174-187; Edmonston 2016). However, migration numbers fluctuated more sharply compared to the US. There was only one discernible phase of consistently thick immigration. A wave of migration began in the late nineteenth century, petering out abruptly with the start of World War 1. The year 1913 was a peak with more than three hundred thousand arrivals reaching Canadian shores. Mainly, they came in response to promotion of West Coast development. Boosters attracted Americans from the US. Part of a 'settler transition' current, they were able to adjust effortlessly (Belich 2009, pp. 127, 282-3). Yet, numbers from Asia were remarkably high

before a nativist backlash suppressed entry from China altogether. While the Depression and the Second World War arrested the process, post-war settlement of refugees boosted the numbers again. Foreign-born Canadians had fallen to as little as fifteen percent of the population at one point. With a consistent rise from the 1970s, the number of foreign born reached seven million in 2011, around a fifth of the population. Asia and the Caribbean are the most prominent sources in those more recent decades (Edmonston 2016). They are, moreover, more likely than previously to arrive in Quebec. Extraordinary rates of emigration offset post-war immigration to a degree. However, this pattern also distinguishes Canada's experience from that of the US (Edmonston 2016).

Even though immigrant impulses have been indispensable to Canada's trajectory, the nation has experienced waves of aversion to foreigners and migration, particularly after the Russian Revolution and during the Depression (Avery 1995). The Chinese especially suffered, being the only group ever excluded. The preference for white migrants from within the Commonwealth remained up until the 1960s, aside from particular refugee intakes. In the late 1960s, in response to business interests, labor unions, and political and ethnic pressure groups, Federal Governments steadily modified exclusionary policies to cease discrimination against Asian and Black migrants.

The impulses of migration nourished Canada's metropolises in the latter half of the twentieth century. Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver could claim more than half of Canada's population (Edmonston 2016, pp. 42-4). Moreover, nearly three quarters of the country's immigrants land at one of the three. Montreal incorporated a third of Quebec's people, receiving a high number of French-speaking migrants from the Caribbean, North Africa, and the Middle East. One quarter of Ontario's population inhabited Toronto. With over half the population living in cities, Canada is unquestionably an urban society and with the three major cities diversifying dramatically, it is right to class each as a heartland of ethnic pluralism (in Kymlicka's terms). The prominence of the three cities is a significant measure of their metropolitan character. Each city is an outcome of different strategies to achieve global city aspirations. They are major metropolises receiving migrants, generating models of urban creation, and fostering a vibrant arts sector. Toronto is the case study here, although some comparative remarks on Montreal moderate the discussion.

Toronto: Migration and Creation (with notes on Montreal)

It is easy to consider Toronto as a metropolis quite unlike New York and Chicago. Although Toronto started as a town of traders and railway builders, it struck its own divergent character as a Victorian milieu of urban stability (Dendy et al 1986). Strategically situated and protected by a strong line of forts, the colonial town represented a British frontier of settlement. British architects and builders produced some superb colonial examples of the art. In the wake of the 1837 rebellion, the city directed its energies to commerce, finance, industry, the railroad, and shipping. Rail augmented the connections with New York and Montreal that Toronto had attained through canal transport. With finance and industry also growing, Torontonians met the 1867 inauguration of the Confederal Constitution with a mood of confidence in both Canada and the British Empire. In the late mid to late Victorian era, attention focused on, first, the enhancement of public buildings as built representations of modernity and, second, public infrastructure, institutions, and services as the necessities of a civilized city. Universities, a concert hall, botanical gardens, and artistic societies accompanied sewerage, garbage collection, a developed police force, and hospitals.

However, like other metropolises, Toronto experienced the effects of rapid industrialization and urbanization. The population doubled in thirty years between 1880 and the First World War. It reached nearly two hundred thousand in 1891 and then half a million by 1920. Jews and Italians living alongside of Irish immigrants grew into distinguishable communities. As Toronto developed industry, it increasingly left Quebec City behind to become the epicenter of economic and cultural traffic. Though lacking a planning process like the Burnham Plan, civic leaders were not bereft of concerns consonant with the City Beautiful movement (Dendy et al 1986, pp. 152-4). The concerns became contested public issues. Their model of urban modernity particularly favored family-based home ownership as a moral principle over apartment tenancy, the sentimental and patriarchal home-and-hearth over shared residence and apartment blocks (Flanagan 2018, pp. 182-215). First wave feminists challenged the model with a vision of citizenship that re-cast women as public political actors, rather than privatized subjects. Toronto and Montreal became battlegrounds in the national struggle for women's suffrage, which, to a great degree, was a struggle over the boundaries of the public and private spheres.

Civic leaders subsequently proposed suburban expansion as a means of achieving greater home ownership. The prospects for a great Toronto seemed promising. The booming Twenties made car ownership common. In response to the growth of vehicle traffic, municipal authorities

began a road-paving program. Toronto's center became a more densely occupied space and its character began to change. Major banks located their headquarters there in elaborate buildings possessing a powerful elegance that itself communicated power. Of course, the architecture of the built environment generally improved. Yet, the bright promise of continual progress faded. The population plateaued and remained at steady levels until the 1950s (Dendy et al 1986, pp. 199-203). No great expansion took place. As the city's boundaries remained fixed at that time, and only modest growth occurred, the city's density increased in the postwar years.

Since the 1970s, Toronto has diversified (Myles and Hou 2004; Dendy et al 1986, pp. 13, 208; Lipset 1989, pp. 112-3). Portuguese, Greeks, Indians, Pakistanis, Koreans, Filipino, Canadian-Japanese, and migrants from the Caribbean altered a city historically influenced by Irish, Italian, Chinese, and American settlement. There is a long-standing Black community also, which recent Caribbean immigrants have culturally renewed (Trotman 2005). Comparison with US cities indicates that the 'color hierarchy' is flatter overall in Canadian cities (Myles and Hou 2004, p. 40; see also Lipset 1989, p. 112). Moreover, as Toronto blacks buy houses they tend to leave black majority neighborhoods; by contrast, the reverse is the case for Chinese migrants. Indeed, the usual ecology of enclaves analyzed by the Chicago School was largely absent in Toronto. The class pattern tends to follow the Paris example, where low-income earners find themselves at the peri-urban edge, rather than in the center, as they have been in US cities (Myles and Hou 2004, p. 51). This is due to considerable political and financial investment in the center, arresting the decline of the downtown area. Office construction and an increase in public amenity and accessibility brought people back and the population of downtown increased. The fast pace of migration, along with the mixture of migrants, have produced an extraordinarily diverse city without the atrophy of the inner urban zone typical of many US cities.

Migrants and cultural fusion enriched the city's design cultures. Similarly, architects trained in the United States brought American designs and new skyscrapers. The city was heir to a mixture of styles, which combined local robust optimism with the neoclassical grace notes of defined architectural genres. Art deco and international styles joined the mixture through the roving influences of foreign architects who came to Toronto and left their mark, including Mies Van der Rohe. The designs they introduced helped local architecture to flourish. Urban design acquired a broader horizon in the 1960s and 1970s. As Canada's cities became more diverse, architectural trends shifted to meet new demands. With design philosophies influenced

by international models, Canadian architectural and urban design proved receptive to unconventional inspirations. Japanese designers practiced in Toronto, Scarborough, and Ottawa. US architects plied influence on trends in Toronto, alongside of more established British guidance. New structures altered the vista with a singular blend of colors (silver, white, black, gold) and basic materials (Dendy et al 1986, pp. 254-265). Artists worked alongside architects, provincial and municipal advisors, and a creative intelligentsia—not the least of whom was urbanist Jane Jacobs—in promoting productive design partnerships. With noteworthy public transport and cycle transport actively supported by the two tiers of government, the city’s center benefitted from numerous measures of sustainable development. In addition, the city notched up notable achievements in heritage restoration, particularly in the conservation of structures of Georgian, Gothic, and Edwardian architecture (Dendy et al 1986).

To consider Toronto as a metropolis, one must also look beyond the commercial city to the cultural city. As was the case with the architects, forms of international modernism influenced visual artists (Carney 2017; Walters 2017). Modernism itself brought a tension between foreign trends and provincial themes analogous to the tension between the Enlightenment and Romanticism. In particular, primitivism was a vein of romantic thought and practice that applauded provincial representations, especially in landscape painting. Primitivism enlivened debate in Anglophone literature and the visual arts in the 1920s and 1930s, just at the time when direct Federal Government support for the arts was starting to incrementally increase (Carney 2017, pp. 4-36).⁶ Previously neglected by the main galleries, allied artists in Toronto and Montreal profited from official support and media promotion of modernist works, notably the productive but short-lived Group of Seven and the Beaver Hall Group (which promoted women artists) (Walters 2017). Montreal’s modernist trajectory was quite different, due to a strong connection with trends in France. Quebec’s *art vivant* movement stood against the conservative Catholicism of the Francophone establishment and looked to ‘living’ styles of young radical modernists in France for inspiration (Carney 2017, pp. 139-155). Their position left them at odds with the Federal and Quebec governments. Tensions arose in Toronto around funding during the Spanish Civil War, when many writers, poets, and artists sided with the Republican cause and the Left, both perceived to be foreign forces. Still, the exhibition of new work in The Art Gallery of Toronto expanded at this nexus of institutional support and artistic and intellectual production. Artists turned steadily towards depictions of the urban, leaving the wilderness behind. In contrast to the trend, it proved a struggle to obtain funding for artistic programs during wartime, even though English Canadian artists and the

National Gallery spoke with a united voice in advocating for the sector as a whole (Carney 2017, pp. 189-92).

Modernism went into decline in the 1950s. It had proved to be an adventure in finding a Canadian identity distinct from the US and differentiated within the Commonwealth. Its romantic and Canadian currents receded in the early Cold War years as the belief that representation of a collective identity was highly problematic grew (Carney 2017, pp. 260-69). By this time, a defined public sphere of the creative sector had brought together the active arts community, the galleries, the newspapers, and the universities in Toronto and Montreal. Both metropolises were central sites of intellectual exchange over vital ideas of modern art, as well places of creativity. Many artists called for a national funding body, resulting in the formation of the Canada Council for the Arts in 1957. A unique blend of French, US, and British models, the Council was the only source of public investment for many years (Gattinger 2017). One of the criticisms of Council funding was that its grants went primarily to artists in Central Canada and Quebec (particularly Toronto and Montreal). The criticism itself suggests a metropolitan pattern of artistic production, as well as funding. In any case, other funding bodies, many of them provincial and metropolitan in scope, have come to supplement the Council in an expanded field of grants-based art production. With the passage of decades, the recession of modernism, and the rise of feminist and First Nations critique, neglected forms and contexts of art have also come into focus for funding bodies. Much of the activity emanates from Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. Montreal is the most vibrant today. The city's rise in the arts on the back of a strong foundation in philosophy was evident by the start of the current century. Art and philosophy drew from a common Gallic fund of meaning, as well as other American sources. The sector is unquestionably livelier and more diverse. However, both the life and the diversity are metropolitan in character and location.

Conclusion

In the introduction, the essay tables the proposition that major North American cities are creations of metropolitan imaginaries. Metropolises thrive on the movement of people and their cultures in and through them. Metropolises also generate cultures of design, which set trends of invention amongst architects, engineers, and town planners. The latter group are creatives working at the cusp of overarching instituting and instituted imaginaries. The arts make for case study discussions here. New York, Chicago, and Toronto distinguish themselves from other cities through region-shaping patterns of migration and transport. The essay argues that

the three are imaginative pace setters in the creation of built environments and the artistic expression of historicity. The controversies over modernism point to struggles over inclusion of new practices, techniques, and styles in communicating new experiences.

Are similar patterns of interaction evident in other major cities in the Americas? This question directs future research in a larger project.⁷ There is space here for two observations. In the process of swallowing up the North American continent, Canada and the US generated some of the most significant edge cities: think of Los Angeles and Vancouver. Although cities at the edge of Canada and the US, both states founded them to mark as zones of contact and conflict between Euro-America and First Nations. There are other borderlands of such intercivilizational engagement also: think of Prince Albert in Saskatchewan, or Fort Dakota and Sioux Falls. Latin America has comparable frontiers, such as Temuco in Chile and San Cristobel in Chiapas. However, as a second observation, inclusion of cities of Latin and Central America and the Caribbean in the scope of analysis will diversify the spectrum considerably. As Canclini, Roniger, and Sznajder reminds us, divergent modernities constitute variegated figurations of public and private spaces (Roniger and Sznajder 1998; García Canclini 1997). Furthermore, exploration of other cities in the Americas will illuminate other constellations of the social-historical, particularly those animated by the imperial backgrounds of Spain, France and Portugal (Eisenstadt 2002). Alongside the studies of religious, civilizational, and political imaginaries in the current issue, this outline of the imaginary institution of cities suggests that there is ample room (and an urgent need) for research on the multiple imaginaries of the Americas.

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Jeremy C A Smith works in the School of Arts at Federation University Australia and is a Visiting Fellow at the University of Victoria, Canada. He has published in *European Journal of Social Theory*, *Critical Horizons*, *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, *Atlantic Studies* and *Political Power and Social Theory* and is the author of *Europe and the Americas: State Formation, Capitalism and Civilizations in Atlantic Modernity* (Brill, 2006) and *Debating Civilizations: Interrogating Civilizational Analysis in a Global Age* (Manchester University Press, 2017). His current work revolves around civilizational analysis and social imaginaries.

¹ For an example of case studies inspired by Lynch and Canclini, see Cinar and Bender (2007). Lynch's sense of the imaginary lies in the artful patterning of cities and the images city-dwellers construe of their fragmentary experiences. Both as art and as image, the imaginary, as a domain of meaning, is greater than all human artifice in the city. The imaginary furnishes an orienting cognitive map with which to read the grammar and visual cues of urban spaces. García Canclini's work addresses the agency available to Latin Americans to anchor modernity in their metropolitan locations in the context of free trade and economic integration (1997). Megacities of the Third World produce distinct multicultural imaginaries, according to Canclini. They are cities of migration and movement generating multicultural complexity. As illustration, Mexico City is the product of a segmented imaginary, which, in turn, generates many cities within the metropolis. Cinar and Bender stress the plurality of cities and the inner pluralism of city life. Arguably, both the multiplicity and the inner pluralism are in the grain of modern urban experiences, rather than a unique feature of postmodernity as Cinar and Bender wish to claim.

² I am deeply indebted to the essay's reviewers for their remarks, recommended revisions, and suggestions.

³ On the US and the role of the small Federal government in integrating the continental nation in the nineteenth century, see Knöbl in this issue.

⁴ By 1920, more US citizens lived in cities than in the country.

⁵ In the twenty first century, 40% of US citizens can claim an ancestor who passed through Ellis Island.

⁶ Alongside other theoretical reference points, Carney draws on Taylor's notion of social imaginary to explore the deep moral influences of Canadian artists' public and private exchanges.

⁷ Jeremy C A Smith, *American Imaginaries: Nations, Societies, and Capitalism in the Many Americas* (Rowman and Littlefield, forthcoming).