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**Book Review: Relocating Global Cities: From the Center to the Margins M. Mark Amen, Kevin Archer and M. Martin Bosman (Eds), 2006 Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield 226pp. No price given, hardback; £17.99 paperback ISBN 0 7425 4121 5 hardback ISBN 0 7425 4122 3 paperback**

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primary arena for local policy-making is the socioeconomic domain” (p.205) could arguably require a greater focus on the skills of economic migrants and the ways/degrees to which they are currently being (effectively) utilised, and how this may relate to assumptions, expectations and attitudes of the local host society.

In sum, further elaboration over the host-stranger relations model within the context of post-2004 EU enlargement, coupled with an additional focus on the importance of the state and the local institutional-political context would embellish what is an already interesting and valuable addition to the literature on city-level policy responses to labour immigration.

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## Relocating Global Cities: From the Center to the Margins

M. Mark Amen, Kevin Archer and M. Martin Bosman (Eds), 2006

Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield

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According to the back cover of this edited book, its formative purpose is to put forward an alternative approach to the study of globalised urbanisation. This is primarily achieved

through eight in-depth case studies of cities on the periphery of the mainstream global cities literature. In addition to these case studies, there is an introduction and a concluding chapter by the editors themselves, as well as a foreword by Saskia Sassen.

The introductory chapter seeks to carve out the rationale for the book as a whole. The editors identify two main general objectives. First, there is an empirical objective in that they hope to broaden conventional global cities research by focusing on cities that are “not often considered in the current literature” (p. 2). Secondly, there is a theoretical rationale in that they hope that the various chapters will shed further light on the advantages and drawbacks of the “two main paradigmatic approaches” in global cities research with the explicit purpose “to move farther towards a synthesis” (p. 2). These two main paradigmatic approaches are dubbed the ‘market-driven approach’ (global city-formation as the result of global expansion of capitalist relations) and the ‘agency-driven approach’ (global city-formation as the result of the active and knowledgeable actions of human agents). However, although both objectives seem sound enough, it can be noted that neither the broadening of the geographical scope of the literature nor the synthesis of these two paradigms is explicitly broached in the ensuing chapters.

What follows, then, is not a series of explicit analyses of ‘secondary cities’ or ‘competing paradigms’, but a collection of fairly conventional but consistently high-quality contributions that examine very different cities from very different perspectives. Consequently, there is no real structure to the book and the chapters can easily be read as separate, valuable contributions to the global cities literature, which are only loosely tied in that they provide unique windows through which constellations of power relations come into view as the basis for urban differentiation in a globalising world.

The first case study is by Beaverstock and his colleagues of the Globalisation and World Cities research group and network

(GaWC). It examines how and to what degree the changes associated with the European Economic and Monetary Union have altered the London–Frankfurt relation. The chapters by Keith Beavon and Scott Salmon focus on Johannesburg and Sydney respectively and show how processes such as gentrification and internal fragmentation that underlie capital realisation in global cities are spurred by a variety of political bodies. Erik Swyngedouw and Johan Moyersoen, in turn, illustrate how these political bodies may well operate at very different spatial scales in the face of globalisation: their compelling examination of the paradox of Brussels’ global city-formation demonstrates how the city’s ever-increasing internationalisation is embedded in a provincial (even a parochial) straightjacket.

Mark Amen and Martin Bosman add another component to the discussion of the day-to-day production of global cities through their analysis of the multifarious processes of regional place-imaging and global branding of Tampa, and their consequences for power distributions within the region. Miguel Lacabana and Cecilia Cariola identify oil as the key sector that articulates Venezuela to the global economy, thus making Caracas the site for the necessary managing and servicing of oil exports and process earnings. This focus on the production of a globalised centrality in the periphery is further elaborated in James Tyner’s chapter, in which he presents an interesting discussion of how the organisation of the deployment of low-wage workers has promoted the development of resources and networks in Manila that amount to a capability for organising global labour mobilities. And finally, Mike Douglass and Pornpan Boonchuen demonstrate how the internal socioeconomic and cultural restructuring of Bangkok gets (re)constituted as it is propelled into massive capital investment and subjected to relentless imaginaries about globalisation.

Taken together, *Relocating Global Cities* is most certainly a valuable contribution to the global cities literature. The most notable

merit of this book is that—unlike most edited volumes—the quality of the individual chapters is constantly high. The book is, however, not without its problems. First, as I noted before, there is a puzzling disjuncture between the individual chapters (conventional, but high-quality studies) and the overarching framework as presented by the editors (bridging the divide between two paradigms). Secondly, the whole rationale of studying cities that are on the so-called margins of this literature has been repeated now on so many different occasions that it can barely be called a fruitful starting-point for further investigation (see, for instance, Richardson and Chang-Hee, 2005; Derudder *et al.*, 2003; Gugler, 2004). Furthermore, the suggestion that the likes of Sydney, Brussels, London and Frankfurt are ‘underresearched’ in this context can hardly be taken seriously. However, in the end, these are only minor criticisms that concern the overall positioning of the book and which do not devalue its usefulness or quality. Put simply: the editors have brought together a fine group of scholars and they have pushed them to deliver their best work. I can therefore warmly recommend this book to anyone interested in contemporary global cities research.

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