

City, Democracy and Citizenship: Historical Images, Contemporary Practices

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In occidental imagination it is impossible to separate the city, democracy and citizenship from each other. On the one hand, what makes the occident different from the orient is itself defined via this inextricable relationship. On the other hand, an unbroken unity of history as a seamless web has been constituted where city, democracy and citizenship have *always* implicated each other. My focus in this chapter is not how the occident has defined itself against the orient by constructing images of a series of absences in the orient as regards city, democracy and citizenship (Springborg, 1987). Rather, the chapter focuses on the question of various historical images of the city, democracy and citizenship and illustrates how these images are increasingly incongruous with contemporary practices.

The images of city, democracy and citizenship are not merely representations but institutions toward which we either orient (or are constantly provoked to orient) our thoughts and practices about the political. The question of what it means to be political is always oriented toward these images that have been constituted as not simply true or false but as unassailable conditions of being political. All those routinized literary and

academic practices where the origins of 'city', 'democracy' and 'citizenship' are etymologically traced to the 'Greek', 'Roman' and 'medieval' cities, and affinities between 'their' and 'our' practices are established, not only orient toward but also reproduce such images. After being 'reminded' that *polis*, politics and polity; *civitas*, citizenship and civility; and *demos* and democracy have 'common roots', we are provided with images of virtuous Greek citizens debating in the *agora* or the *panyx*, austere Roman citizens deliberating in the republican senate, and 'European' citizens receiving their charters in front of the guildhall.

It is not that many literally believe that 'we' are descended from the Greeks or the Romans, or even the medieval Europeans in any straightforward way. Nor would many believe that since these historical times the meaning and practices of cities, democracy and citizenship have remained unchanged. Rather, these images mobilize and provoke an invented tradition: that we are somehow *inheritors* of an occidental tradition that is different from and superior to an oriental one. These images then invent not one but two traditions. All the same, as subjects become familiar with these images, the

images themselves become 'natural' ways of seeing and perceiving. For the occidental imagination some images are now such ways of seeing: that democracy was invented in the Greek *polis*; that Roman republican tradition bequeathed its legacy to Europe and that Europe Christianized and civilized these traditions. The image of the virtuous citizen is ineluctably linked with the occidental tradition whether it is told through canonical thinkers such as Aristotle, Cicero, St Augustine, Marsilius and Locke or through narrating epic battles where citizenship virtues were discovered. While in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries this narrative was told as a seamless web, constituting an occidental tradition of city and citizenship, in much of the twentieth century its seamlessness was called into question. Yet, until the present, this narrative has held sway: views such as liberalism, republicanism or communitarianism are really different ways of telling the same occidental narrative.

This chapter however, aims neither to critique these images nor document how they have been constructed nor suggest ways in which different images can and must be produced. These tasks have either been tackled elsewhere or are still waiting to be tackled. Instead, this chapter draws attention to the fact that these images are increasingly incongruous with contemporary practices that constitute themselves as political and, by virtue of this constitution, begin to produce different images of the city, democracy and citizenship. Throughout the second half of the twentieth century we witnessed various practices that were originally deemed as outside the political, and which assembled themselves as relatively routinized, durable and effective strategies and technologies, making, enacting, and instituting political demands and translating these demands into claims for citizenship rights. At first interpreted as 'social movements', then as 'cultural politics', these practices are increasingly being constituted as 'insurgent citizenship practices' by agents themselves as well as scholars.

Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, this divergence, and the consequent incongruence between historical images and contemporary practices were widely noticed and debated. However, two inadequate reactions dominated these debates. First, there are those narratives which interpret the divergence and incongruence as 'decline' or 'end' and urge 'renewal', 'reinvention' and 'regeneration'. An entire nostalgia industry emerged where narratives yearning the loss of 'active citizenship', 'decline of public sphere', 'the death of the social', and 'the end of politics' are woven into the fabric of interpreting the present. Second, there are those narratives which argue that, since the contemporary city and the way democracy and citizenship are enacted through it have no affinities with these historical images and realities, we have to think about the city anew without owing anything to these historical images, yearning for an epistemic break. Neither reaction is, in my view, capable of distinguishing the new elements of the present while understanding the historical trajectories through which the narratives of urban democracy have been recreated, reinterpreted, appropriated and incorporated into the present. We need to isolate the rationalities behind the *modern* image of urban democracy before we discuss the incongruence between it and contemporary practices.

GOVERNING MODERN CITIES: LOYALTY, VIRTUE, CIVISM, DISCIPLINE AND SUBSIDIARITY

'The solution of the problems of democratic government rests in the cities. ... The political problem of the modern city is the problem of democracy' (Innis, [1945] 1995: 482, 485). So said Harold Innis in 1945 in an address reflecting on the problems of democracy. He expressed succinctly the fact that modern social and political thought always posed the question of the city as a question of government: a question of

organizations, ideologies and institutions of government but not rationalities of governing cities. The modern city was constituted at the centre of the question concerning democratic government, and modern social and political thought about the city and government arise from that fundamental institutional concern (Munro, 1918, 1926). It essentially constitutes the city government as a territorialized container within which and through which government becomes possible, desirable and feasible.

Beginning with its first modern interpreters such as Alexis de Tocqueville ([1835] 1945) and John Stuart Mill (1861), institutionalism has been a prevalent aspect of thought on city government (Magnusson, 1986; Stoker, 1996). The modern democratic conception of the city that emerged in the early nineteenth century expressed a particular conception of city government, which became synonymous simultaneously with democracy and the state. In a sense, city government was state government writ small. This was later reproduced by the concept 'local state', where city government was a territorialized container of state administration, politics and government. According to this 'modern tradition', while citizenship originated in the city and played an important role in the history of citizenship in occidental civilization (Heater, 1990; Riesenber, 1992), its significance as a milieu cultivating citizenship was linked to government of the state. So the question of city government was posed from the point of view of governability of the state. Thus, while modern social and political thought on the city deployed images of the birth of democracy and citizenship in ancient Greek cities, its republican transformations in ancient Roman cities, and its revival in medieval European cities, it simultaneously distanced itself from those images: while democracy was cultivated and bred in the city, it was a question of governability of the state. While the glorious images of 'ancient institutions' and 'tradition' always dominated thought on city government, the state was considered the protector and arbiter of

this democratic 'heritage'. There are understandable genealogical reasons why the dominant groups in the nineteenth century made such historical linkages, but we cannot explore them here (Isin, 1995).

The modernity of city government was thus inextricably associated with governability of the state and its citizens. In Britain, America and Canada the crystallization of this question can be traced from the period after 1835 in which a new framework for city government as a container was gradually articulated. Yet it was not until the early decades of the twentieth century that the city government in its modern form could be said to have emerged. Although by the end of the nineteenth century the basic structures had crystallized, the city government was still restricted by a heavy dependence on local rates for finance and it was not until the 1920s that any scheme for state support for local services was provided on any significant scale (Loughlin, 1996: 79). In the twentieth century city government was locked into a network of government that operated at various scales (nation, region, city) and capacities. Neither autonomous nor subordinate, modern city government was a technology defined by a tension between state and local authorities (Isin, 1992). Loughlin argues that the modern city government that crystallized in the twentieth century therefore had no functional affinity with historical forms of city government either in medieval European or ancient Greek or Roman cities (Loughlin, 1996). For Loughlin any appeal to a tradition of city government expressed as a right to local self-government cannot comfortably rest on ancient tradition and history. The various shifts in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries make such claims highly implausible. Nor can such appeals be based on some authoritative constitutional norms in Britain, America, Australia or Canada. For Loughlin, if tradition is to be invented it must now be found to rest on modern practices and thus on a set of political understandings which commanded widespread support throughout the twentieth century.

Yet the epistemic break from history advocated by Loughlin neglects the appropriation and incorporation of historical images into numerous reforms of city government. Governing modern cities embodies complex organizations, rationalities, institutions, processes and norms that are simultaneously deterritorialized (politics spilling over the current boundaries of the city) and reterritorialized (politics overlapping with other boundaries than the city such as the state, empire, nation). These complex and overlapping networks are endowed with capacities for effective governance and vested with various degrees of political legitimacy (Brodie, 2000). Because of these complexities the obsessive focus on the formal legal status of city government as a territorialized container of state politics presents a distorted view. Modern city government, while constrained in principle by the *ultra vires* doctrine, has in fact been vested with considerable capacities that are not necessarily expressed in its formal or legal powers. As many students of local government have observed, although formally subordinate, city government has, as a result of the changes in government during the twentieth century, 'acquired a relatively important position in an interdependent network government' (Loughlin, 1996: 83). Yet this statement is itself misleading as it refocuses our attention on the city government as a territorialized container rather than investigating the ways in which governing cities embodies various deterritorialized and reterritorialized rationalities of government.

By posing the question of governing cities as city government, that is, as a question of governability of the state through the city as a container, modern social and political thought often identified democracy and efficiency as competing 'functions' of city government (Loughlin, 1996: 82-3; Sharpe, 1970; Stoker, 1996). Thus, the emphasis on authority (ability to perform governmental functions), autonomy (capacity to deliver services according to local needs), taxation (powers to raise revenue) and representation

(legitimacy for accountability) functions of modern city government received widespread attention and, depending on political persuasion, scorn or admiration (Dahl, 1967; Jones, 1998; McDermott and Forgie, 1999; Pratchett and Wilson, 1997; Read, 1994; Yates, 1977). Similarly, thought on democracy and citizenship revolved around electoral representation, voter turnout, 'citizen' participation, fiscal austerity, management structures, and organization forms (Berry et al., 1993; Bucek and Smith, 2000; Burns, 2000; Dahl, 1964; Gabriel et al., 2000; Goldsmith, 1998; Pratchett and Wilson, 1997; Ward, 2000). This exclusive focus on authority, autonomy, taxation and representation resulted in too much emphasis on institutional and organizational arrangements of city government rather than its rationalities within the broader network of modern government. In other words, there has been an undue emphasis on city government rather than governing cities (Osborne and Rose, 1999; Rose, 2000). Thus, the focus on jurisdictional issues such as autonomy and efficiency has interpreted the city as an enclosed, territorialized and hierarchical container of the political rather than spatialized, deterritorialized and reterritorialized network of governing rationalities (Magnusson, 2000). To shift focus from city government to governing cities requires investigations into the rationalities of governing cities. I shall briefly highlight what I consider the most important modern rationalities governing cities and the traditions of social and political thought that arose from them before I consider how new urban democratic practices are shifting these rationalities. These rationalities are loyalty, virtue, civism, discipline and subsidiarity.

Loyalty

The city in modern democratic thought is simultaneously the milieu and object of *loyalty*. The citizen as a man (later also woman) of property constitutes himself (later

also herself) as an agent capable of political judgement while at the same time investing himself in the city, which becomes his work. The citizen identifies with the city and owes allegiance and loyalty to it. But this identification does not contradict with his identification with the nation. Rather, it becomes the foundation of the nation-state. The work of nationalism was actually done in the city in the sense that loyalty to the nation-state was bred and nurtured in the city via the bourgeois public sphere. While considering loyalty a fundamental aspect of the city, the sociological tradition arose out of a concern with the relationship between loyalty and citizenship and the city as an intermediate association between the individual and the state (Durkheim, [1890] 1992, [1894] 1984; Tönnies, [1887] 1963). Modern democratic theory, therefore, constituted the city as the space in which the loyalty of the citizen to the nation and the state was cultivated, bred and nurtured. The conduct of the citizen – especially the valorization of active citizen – implicated his (later also her) loyalty in the city as that space where a subject became a citizen oriented toward the state, nation and the city with affection and devotion. Patriotism toward the city was transformed into patriotism toward the nation and vice versa. The sociological tradition considered the patriotism of the city the foundation of the patriotism of the state and the nation.

Virtue

The city is also where the citizen becomes *virtuous* through his (later also her) engagements in politics defined as a broad field in which a citizen conducts himself (later also herself) towards the conduct of others. The civic virtue of the citizen consists in the fact that his conduct oriented toward the city is not only his right but also his obligation. The city becomes a space of government in the sense that the citizen constitutes himself as both subject and object of conduct in the public sphere. The citizen is therefore not

simply a man but virtuous patriot as that man (later also woman). The exercise of this right *and* obligation can be as passive as simply voting or as active as taking part in the everyday life of politics. For the political tradition this was a fundamental aspect of the city fostering democracy (Mill, 1861; Tocqueville, [1835] 1945). For the political tradition the question of democracy was the question of the city – or more precisely, the question of governing the city.

Civism

That a subject becomes a virtuous citizen via developing loyalty toward the city means that the city becomes a breeding ground for active citizenship and democracy. But how does the city become that space which cultivates virtue? Virtue of the modern citizen is *civic* precisely because it is expressed through a loyalty to his (later also her) city as both a particular place and an abstract idea. The city is where citizens are habituated into democratic imagination via practice, experience and education. But *civism* is not taught in the city as though it is a course, but is cultivated and bred as a disposition, a *habitus*. The citizen makes himself in the city by publicizing himself (later also herself) toward others through everyday experience. Civism makes man (later also woman) governable. For the philosophical tradition this was a fundamental aspect of the relationship between city and citizenship (Rousseau, [1755–62] 1983; Strauss, 1964).

Discipline

While the city is constituted as a space of liberty for the citizen, it is also constituted as a space of *discipline* for strangers and outsiders – non-citizens. It is not that liberty did not require discipline. On the contrary, breeding loyalty, virtue and civism in publicizing subjects as capable citizens requires discipline as conduct upon conduct. In fact,

liberty and discipline presupposed each other. But those who lacked certain attributes of citizens – strangers and outsiders – were subject to different institutions of discipline such as prisons and asylums. The city may be a space where the citizen conducts himself in public as a political agent with rights and liberties, but it is also a space where those who lack or are denied such citizenship rights are subjected to discipline and punishment. The tensions between liberty and order and between discipline and civility in the modern city constitute citizenship as a space where the ‘normalcy’ of citizens is articulated against the ‘pathologies’ of non-citizens. As the legal tradition emphasized, modernity of the city as a corporation consisted precisely in the public rights of self-government vested in it by the modern nation-state to act on the conduct of its subjects (Frug, 1980; Gierke, [1868] 1990, 1900; Maitland, 1898).

Subsidiarity

The modern city is also that space where it is most appropriate to deliver services such as education, welfare, parks, prisons, recreation and the like for the publicization of the subject into citizen. The city is the closest level of government to the citizen and is approachable and direct. The *subsidiarity* of the city consists in the shared relationship between the state and the city in publicizing the citizen. While there is always a tension in terms of allocating resources to the city to deliver services and the exact nature, extent and combination of these services, the city is the appropriate level of government to deliver these services because these matters can arise and can be decided locally. The economic tradition on the city highlighted this aspect of city government as its essence (Boyne, 1998).

RE: THE POLITICAL

While these rationalities of governing cities can be related to their democracy and

efficiency functions and are expressed in its institutions, they are not reducible to them. Neither are they reducible to each other. Loyalty, virtue, civism, discipline and subsidiarity are distinct but related rationalities of governing cities that are deterritorialized (explode and spill over municipal boundaries) and reterritorialized (implode and redefine municipal boundaries). Moreover, they are neither coherent nor complementary aspects of governing cities in that there is always an agonism amongst these rationalities. Finally, institutional arrangements such as authority, autonomy, taxation and representation derive from these broader rationalities of governing cities rather than being its constitutive aspects. Thus, considering institutions of modern city government in isolation from its broader rationalities results in a distorted view of governing cities. These rationalities assemble the historical images that we have of virtuous Greek, Roman, medieval, early modern and modern citizens in and of the city. So while there may be little functional affinity between modern city governments and their historical counterparts, these rationalities of governing cities explain why these images are constantly invoked for government of the modern city. These historical images capture possibilities and implode and recode them onto municipal boundaries by overcoding their significance and mapping them back onto these historical images.

These images are also increasingly called into question by the contemporary practices of citizens of cities. Scholars such as Holston (1998, 1999, 2001), Fincher and Jacobs (1998), Kofman (1998), Sandercock (1998a, 1998b), and Wekerle (2000) have captured the changing images in contemporary practices of urban citizenship. Holston, for example, has emphasized that ‘both the elite and the subaltern mark urban space with new and insurgent forms of the social – that these forms are not, in other words, limited to the latter’ (1998: 48, n. 8). For Holston ‘Among the most vocal critics of liberal citizenship in this sense are groups organized around specific identities – the kind of prior differences

liberalism relegates to the private sphere – which affirm the importance of these identities in the public calculus of citizenship’ (1996: 193). Thus, for these subaltern groups the ‘right to difference’ becomes an integral part of the foundation of citizenship. For Holston ‘Although this kind of demand would seem contradictory and incompatible with citizenship as an ideology of equality, there is nevertheless a growing sense that it is changing the meaning of equality itself. What it objects to is the equation that equality means sameness’ (Holston and Appadurai, 1996: 195). With these struggles

right becomes more of a claim upon than a possession held against the world. It becomes a claim upon society for the resources necessary to meet the basic needs and interests of members rather than a kind of property some possess and other do not. It is probably the case that this change applies mostly to socio-economic and political rights rather than to civil rights. ... But in terms of rights to the city and rights to political participation, right becomes conceived as an aspect of social relatedness rather than as an inherent and natural property of individuals’ (Holston and Appadurai, 1996: 197).

Formal citizenship is neither necessary nor a sufficient condition for substantive citizenship. The new claims to citizenship are new not only because they force the state to respond to new social conditions but also because they create new kinds of right, based on the exigencies of lived experience, outside of the normative and institutional definitions of the state and its codes (Holston, 1998: 52). This is quite a different image of right that resides in a virtuous citizen that modern thought about urban democracy and citizenship articulated. Rather than a focus on the virtue and loyalty of the dominant citizen focus has shifted here to the insurgence of the dominated and to the right as claim rather than privilege.

Following the same logic, the city is also not a space of loyalty but of agonism. While

the city becomes a space where these new forms of rights are articulated, it becomes a battle zone for this very reason: the dominant groups meet the advance of these new citizens with new strategies of segregation, privatization and fortification (Holston, 1998: 52; Holston and Appadurai, 1996: 200).

These sites vary with time and place. Today, in many cities, they include the realm of the homeless, networks of migration, neighbourhoods of Queer Nation, constructed peripheries in which the poor build their own homes in precarious material and legal conditions, ganglands, fortified condominiums, employee-owned factories, squatter settlements, suburban migrant labour camps, sweatshops, and the zones of the so-called new racism. They are sites of insurgence because they introduce into the city new identities and practices that disturb established histories. (Holston, 1998: 48).

These insurgent forms are found both in organized grassroots mobilizations and in everyday practices that, in different ways, empower, parody, derail, or subvert state agendas. They are found, in other words, in struggles over what it means to be a member of the modern state – which is why I refer to them with the term *citizenship*. Membership in the state has never been a static identity, given the dynamics of global migrations and national ambitions. Citizenship changes as new members emerge to advance their claims, expanding its realm, and as new forms of segregation and violence counter these advances, eroding it. The sites of insurgent citizenship are found at the intersection of these processes of expansion and erosion. (Holston, 1998: 47–8)

For Sandercock ‘A new city is emerging, and it is ... the city of cultural difference’ (1998b: 175).

We need to start understanding our cities as bearers of our intertwined

fates. We need to formulate within our city a shared notion of a common destiny. We need to see our city as the locus of citizenship, and to recognize multiple levels of citizenship as well as multiple levels of common destiny, from the city to the nation to transnational citizenship possibilities. We need to see our city and its multiple communities as spaces where we connect with the cultural other who is now our neighbour. ... The modern project of the nation state emphasized unity and sameness over difference and diversity. The rise of multiculturalism as a political force is a sign of the failure of that modernist project. The cities and regions of the future must nurture difference and diversity through a democratic cultural pluralism. ... If cultural imperialism and systemic violence are features of contemporary global urban and regional changes, then a politics of difference is a prerequisite for confronting these oppressions. A politics of difference is a politics based on the identity, needs, and rights of specific groups who are victims of any faces of oppression. ... A rejection of the ideal of the homogeneous community as part of the future cosmopolis leads us into an investigation of the idea of *multiple publics*, together constituting some form of civic culture, as a basis for the survival of a culturally pluralist form of cities and regions. ... [Cosmopolis is] an always unfinished and contested construction site, one characterized above all by its space for difference. ... At the moment these global forces and top-down processes are increasing economic, social, and cultural polarization in an overall climate of increasing uncertainty and decreasing legitimacy of governments everywhere. In response, mobilized communities within civil society launch struggles for livelihood, in defence of life space, and in affirmation of the right to cultural difference (Sandercock, 1998b: 182–217).

These images do not invoke the loyalty, virtue, civism and discipline of the austere citizen but the subaltern, the other, multiple and the insurgent. In turn, these images also show up in historical studies of cities and citizenship. Take, for example, Ryan's (1997) study on democracy and publicization of the citizen in American cities in the nineteenth century. She finds that citizens were not found loyal and virtuous in the American city but these values were themselves constantly contested in streets, squares, buildings and parks of the city via revolts, strikes, parades and ceremonies that were multiple, heterogeneous and ambiguous rather than fitting into a dominant, universal image of the 'bourgeois public sphere'. Similarly, Pamplona (1996) investigates how the consolidation of the republican order in both New York in the early nineteenth century and Rio de Janeiro in the late nineteenth century required the constitution of certain subaltern groups as the others of republican citizenship and how this consolidation involved violent riots and contestation. Just as scholars of contemporary cities such as Holston and Sandercock are turning their attention to how the dominated contest and question the dominant images that constitute them as lacking virtue, loyalty and civism, historians such as Ryan and Pamplona are also discovering in cities where previous representations of harmony and unity are giving way to multiple images of agonism and contestation. Those practices that were deemed outside the political not only by virtue of being vicious, disloyal and uncivil but also by virtue of being outside the city as a territorial container are appearing with increasing clarity as practices of citizenship by those who were constituted as its others.

RIGHTS TO THE CITY AS A NEW IMAGE OF CITIZENSHIP

That the claims for group-differentiated rights actually arise out of the city and are

connected with postmodernization and globalization is fairly easy to illustrate. Consider the question of immigrants in North America and Europe and their political status. While the debate rages over this as a national issue, whether immigrants should be given political and social rights, the majority of immigrants settle in cities and use urban resources to mobilize and articulate their demands for recognition. In Germany it is impossible to understand citizenship rights for Turks without examining their spatial concentrations in major cities such as Berlin or Frankfurt (Barbieri, 1998). Similarly, it is impossible to understand the complexities that arise from Latino citizenship in America without understanding the settlement patterns and forms such groups have engendered (Rocco, 1996). Cities are therefore constituted as political spaces where the concentration of different groups and their identities are intertwined with the articulation of various claims to citizenship rights (Sassen, 2000). It is within this domain of groups and identities that the appropriation and use of urban space is articulated, which in turn constitutes urban citizenship as a field of debate and struggle.

In contemporary studies the metaphor 'rights to the city' has proved a useful organizing concept to interpret the new practices of urban citizenship (Holston, 1998; Kofman, 1998; Sassen, 1999; Wekerle, 2000). The phrase itself was suggested by Henri Lefebvre in its singular form (Lefebvre, 1968). In the late 1960s, he articulated this concept and the city as work, as *oeuvre*, which was the dominant mode of its production in Western history. By contrast, for Lefebvre modern capitalism constituted the city as a product. While the emphasis was on the city's use value in the former, it was on the city's exchange value in the latter. Lefebvre believed that, to claim the rights of ages, sexes, conditions of work, training, education, culture, leisure, health and housing, it was imperative to think through the city (Lefebvre, 1996: 157). The recognition of these rights required the pluralization of groups whose everyday lives were bound

up with the city. The struggle to define and appropriate the spaces of the city was crucial in claiming these rights (Lefebvre, [1974] 1995: 410–11). For Lefebvre, 'the right to the city manifests itself as a superior form of rights: right to freedom, to individualization and socialization, to habitat and to inhabit' (1996: 173). Accordingly, 'the right to the *oeuvre* [the city as a work of art], to participation and *appropriation* (clearly distinct from the right to property), are implied in the right to the city' (1996: 174). Neither a natural nor a contractual right, the right to the city 'signifies the rights of citizens and city dwellers, and of groups they (on the basis of social relations) constitute, to appear on all the networks and circuits of communication, information and exchange' (1996: 194–5). It follows that, 'To exclude the *urban* from groups, classes, individuals, is also to exclude them from civilization, if from not society itself. The *right* to the city legitimates the refusal to allow oneself to be removed from urban reality by a discriminatory and segregative organization' (1996: 195). Thus, 'This right of the citizen ... proclaims the inevitable crisis of city centres based upon segregation and establishing it: centres of decision-making, wealth, power, of information and knowledge, which reject towards peripheral spaces all those who do not participate in political privileges. Equally, it stipulates the right to meetings and gathering.' (1996: 195).

It is noteworthy that Lefebvre identified the dominant groups in the contemporary city as the 'new masters' (1996: 161). He observed that they already claimed the central areas of New York, Paris and other major cities, and he described the new city as 'New Athens'. But what he meant here is not the glorious ancient Athens as the birthplace of democracy but the ancient Athens of deep class and group cleavages between citizens and slaves, outsiders and oppressed groups. It is not that the New Athens had slaves in the ancient sense of that term, but that in the city the new masters created a social space that catered to their exclusive use while surrounding them with masses to

provide services. Lefebvre observed that the new masters were made up of a very small minority, as in ancient Athens, and were comprised of 'directors, heads, presidents of this and that, elites, leading writers and artists, well-known entertainers and media people' (Lefebvre, 1996: 161). Underneath this layer were 'executives, administrators, professionals and scholars'. He was particularly concerned with the rise of this secondary layer of the dominant groups – in the intriguing parlance of Bourdieu, ([1979] 1984) the dominated fraction of the dominant class – because their interests diverged not only from the working classes and the subjugated groups but also from the bourgeoisie. For Lefebvre the right to the city was the right to claim presence in the city, to wrest the use of the city from the privileged new masters and democratize its spaces. Lefebvre saw the rights to the city as an expression of urban citizenship, understood not as membership in a polity – let alone the nation-state – but as a practice of articulating, claiming and renewing group rights in and through the appropriation and creation of spaces in the city.

Lefebvre wrote at a time in which the new politics of the city was just crystallizing (Burkhard, 2000; Shields, 1999). Since then, the global flows of ideas, images, music and capital and labour both emanating from and concentrating in globalizing cities have become the defining moments of our age. Today, the rights of immigrants, ethnicized and racialized groups, gays and lesbians, women, poor, and other subaltern, marginalized or oppressed groups are by and large fought for in cities. Yet these struggles are not waged on a binary plane against a common adversary but pit groups against groups and divide, fragment, blur and shatter identities, rights, sensibilities, loyalties and obligations. That the articulation of rights to the city, not as rights to property but as rights to appropriate the city has proved a useful way of thinking about the rights that arise in the city. But this does not mean that Lefebvre has been appropriated uncritically. Rather, the emphasis has shifted from 'the

right' to 'rights' to emphasize the multiplicity of the ways in which the city has been appropriated. The task of disentangling the interests of various groups and mapping overlapping networks of power relations in contemporary cities is intensely difficult. And the conceptual and analytical tools that we inherit either from the nineteenth-century sociological, political, philosophical and economic traditions of thought as outlined above or even from scholars such as Lefebvre are scarcely adequate to the task. The nineteenth-century conception of rights in the city were closely associated with the property rights of the bourgeois man. The city as a corporation institutionalized property rights and incorporated the city into the realm of the state with its rationalities of loyalty, virtue, civism, discipline and subsidiarity. Rethinking rights that arise in governing contemporary cities requires articulating rights to the city rather than rights of the city as a corporation, a government, in short, a territorial container of politics. It requires rethinking urban citizenship beyond the confines of the city government and instead investigating ways in which governing cities articulates ways of being political.

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