

# Chapter 3

## Working

As we saw in the previous chapter, the history of urbanization all around the world is long and multifaceted. Thus far we have considered this history without paying much attention to the internal dynamics of cities. In this chapter, we set out to describe some of the production and employment features of cities. These features are not only of critical importance in their own right, but also shape urban patterns and urban growth trends as a whole. In turn, cities constitute major foundations of the growth and prosperity of modern economies. The discussion that follows focuses mainly, but not exclusively, on cities in the modern era.

### 3.1 Working and Living in the Urban Milieu

In their internal organization, cities appear at first glance to be composed of a bewildering and incomprehensible mass of heterogeneous objects and activities. More careful scrutiny, however, reveals that there are some fairly systematic organizing principles that can help to moderate this complexity and to bring it into more understandable order. In particular, one way of clarifying at least some of the puzzling diversity that characterizes the internal organization of the city is to describe it in terms of three broad structural features comprising (a) production space (areas where goods and services are created), (b) residential space (the parts of the city where workers live and carry on much of their social life), and (c) circulation space (where movement through the city occurs, and notably the daily movement of workers between production space and residential space). The interweaving of these three spaces delineates the spatial layout (spread) and internal interactions (flows) of every city, though their specific shape and form vary widely across the cities of the world. Frequently, these spaces interpenetrate and overlap with one another in various ways, as, for example, when residential space is also used for production.

Of course, the city as a whole is always considerably more substantial than this simple threefold schema suggests, and we would need to introduce many more social, cultural, and political attributes in order to get a more complete sense of the urban in its full complexity and vitality. But this schema is useful for our discussion both here and in the next chapter because it points to some of the most basic structural elements of the city. Thus, production space is where employment sites are concentrated and where people earn a living; residential space is where urban dwellers live, socialize, pursue family life, and raise children; and circulation space provides channels of access between different urban activities, most especially between home and work. One of the most obvious features of the modern city is the daily cycle of urban life in which large numbers of individuals—perhaps the majority of the adult urban population—leave their residences in the morning and journey through the city in order to reach their places of employment or livelihood; and then in the late afternoon and early evening proceed through a reverse set of motions as they travel from work back to home. This picture is modified in cities where many people live and seek livelihoods in the same parts of the city, whether because work is informal or home-based or because accommodation is provided in factory complexes. It is also worth bearing in mind that “home” involves considerable domestic labour, usually disproportionately borne by women.

In any case, without work, whether formal or informal, and the productive activities that support it, urbanization as we know it could not survive. Indeed, one of the primary reasons for the existence of cities in the first place is their function as centres of economic life. By the same token, production and work activities are the principal drivers of urban development, and the basic factors that induce the growth (and decline) of cities.

## **3.2 From Craft Production to Capitalist Industrialization**

Even before the historical transition to industrial capitalism in the 17th and 18th centuries, the large city populations recorded in the previous chapter were engaged in distinctive forms of urban life revolving around production and work, and above all traditional small-scale craft activities focussed on outputs like textiles, ceramics, furniture, and leather goods, whether for internal consumption or for trade. Some of this trade involved exchange for agricultural products originating in surrounding agricultural communities; some of it, usually the greater part, involved exports to more distant locations in exchange for imports.

With the advent of capitalism and the rise of factory-based types of production, new modes and patterns of urbanization began to make their historical and geographical appearance. The most advanced expression of this new order of things is represented by Britain after the early 18th century when the Industrial Revolution started its inexorable rise. As in earlier phases, external connections were crucial in

the development of cities; in particular, Britain's industrialization was intimately associated with the import of commodities (i.e. industrial inputs such as cotton and foodstuffs such as wheat) from various colonies and settler communities around the world.

The factories and workshops that proliferated as early industrialization processes in Britain ran their course were located above all in areas close to energy sources such as waterpower and coalfields. However, as the steam engine came to supplant the water mill, coal rapidly became by far the dominant source of energy, especially in the major manufacturing sectors of the 19th century such as textiles, metal goods, and machinery. Clusters of factories and workshops comprised the functional nuclei of the rising manufacturing towns. Immediately around them, extensive tracts of working-class housing also came into being as people (often displaced agricultural labourers from the surrounding countryside) moved into the towns in search of employment.

For much of the period of classic industrialization, workers in the main British manufacturing towns formed a downtrodden and impoverished proletariat, vividly described by Engels in his book *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, which portrays the horrors of working-class housing conditions in Manchester in the middle of the 19th century. At this time, capitalist forms of industrialization and urbanization were also developing rapidly in different parts of Continental Europe and the United States, with resulting urban social problems much like those of Britain. Early and at first very tentative forms of town planning, such as street cleaning, public health measures, and housing legislation, were introduced in attempts to mitigate some of these problems. Also, as the 19th century wore on, the sporadic passage of relatively progressive social legislation (including the official authorization of trade unions) gradually, and in noticeably diverse ways in different countries, brought about improving wages and living standards for the working classes.

The accelerated economic growth and the associated expansion of towns and cities in Western Europe and North America over the 19th century meant that these areas steadily consolidated their already significant position as a dominating core of the emerging world system, though in practice, the core itself was divided into very unequally developed regions (in particular, some were focused on agriculture while others experienced industrial development and accelerated urbanization).

In relation to this core, the rest of the world could be described as a periphery spread out over Africa, Asia, and Latin America, much of it subject to colonization and economic dependency in various ways. As a corollary, the organization of world trade in the 19th century and well into the 20th century adhered to the logic of an international division of labour in which the periphery produced raw materials (especially agricultural products and minerals) to supply the factories and feed the workers of the core countries while a portion of the manufactured products of the core was exported to the periphery (usually at very unfavorable terms of trade). The net consequence was greatly enhanced growth in the core and a steadily widening

gap between the wages and living standards of industrial-urban workers in the core and the mass of workers in the periphery. In relation to this system, urbanization under the aegis of colonial capitalism in the periphery was dominated by the expansion and development of *entrepôt* (i.e. warehousing and exporting) cities at coastal sites like Accra, Calcutta (Kolkata), and Lima, which also hosted emergent production and servicing functions. Urbanization also proceeded at resource exploitation locations, trading posts, and administrative centres at more inland locations. Intertwined with the expanding colonial system of urbanization were networks of earlier indigenous cities and settlements. In these ways the first or imperial globalization was constituted as a system of uneven and hierarchical relationships between different places across the world.

### 3.3 The Mass-Production Metropolis and Beyond

By the beginning of the 20th century, industrialization in the core capitalist countries was moving into a new and dynamic phase marked by the rise of mass production and its deployment in process industries like steel and chemicals and assembly industries such as cars and machinery. In the context of the new rounds of economic growth set in motion by these events, urbanization in the core capitalist countries expanded at a notably rapid pace. The most dramatic expression of this turn of events was the emergence of the so-called Manufacturing Belt of North America, stretching from the Midwest of the United States to New England plus adjacent parts of Canada (Fig. 3.1). An echo of this development also occurred in



**Fig. 3.1** American Manufacturing Belt. *Source* A. Pred, The concentration of high value-added manufacturing. *Economic Geography*, 1965, 41: 108–132

the guise of a smaller and more fragmented Western European counterpart extending discontinuously from the Central Valley of Scotland and the Midlands of England, through northeastern France, much of Belgium and southern Holland to the Ruhr region of Germany. Both of these macro-regions constituted the economic engines of North America and Western Europe over the first half of the 20th century and well into the 1960s. As such, they constituted by far the most important centres of industrial production and working-class life in the more economically developed parts of the world.

Among the principal metropolitan areas in the North American Manufacturing Belt were Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Toronto, Montreal, Pittsburgh, and Boston. Representative cities of the equivalent Western European Belt were Birmingham, Lille, Roubaix, Essen, and Dortmund. The urban areas of these two great industrial macro-regions came to be marked over much of the 20th century by distinctive social and occupational structures reflecting the division of labour in metropolitan manufacturing systems. On the one side, white-collar workers formed an elite group of managers, professionals, and technical employees who oversaw production and commercial affairs. On the other side, large cohorts of blue-collar workers made up the manual labour force in the primary mass-production plants and their associated input suppliers. The main industrial cities of North America and Western Europe also attracted significant inflows of migrants. Thus, over the middle decades of the 20th century, African-Americans moved northwards from Southern states like Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi into the American Manufacturing Belt in search of work; and Eastern and Southern Europeans also migrated in large numbers into major industrial centres not only in Europe but also in North America.

In the 1950s and after, manufacturing activities also started to grow rapidly in a number of cities in selected parts of the world periphery (e.g. Brazil, Chile, Nigeria, India, Malaysia, South Korea, and Indonesia). Much of this growth was based on local import-substitution policies involving the expansion of industrial capacity designed to displace mass-produced goods imported from the core countries. Various cities in Asia, (e.g. Kuala Lumpur and Taipei), Africa, (e.g. Lagos and Accra) and Latin America, (e.g. São Paulo and Mexico City) that were affected by this trend also acquired significant working class populations whose numbers were boosted significantly by rural-urban migrants. In some of these places, industrial workers along with mine-workers and other urban dwellers played an important role in anti-colonial politics.

The mass-production system revolved centrally around the assembly-line in large dominant plants constituting the functional core of the system. The suppliers of these plants formed tiers of direct and indirect input producers. The system was also associated with many different kinds of administrative, commercial and financial functions. Some of these functions were located inside the factories in the main manufacturing cities themselves, but large numbers were also accommodated in specialized office districts in primate cities like New York, London, Paris, and Berlin, or in regional centres such as Johannesburg, Hong Kong and Buenos Aires. In addition, activities like the stock market and merchant banking were concentrated in the same cities, as they had been since the time of imperial globalization

when they played a strong role in the coordination of financial and commodity flows through international networks. These primate cities were accordingly centres where the more prosperous business and professional classes congregated, and this state of affairs was in part reflected in the superior cultural infrastructures and services that these places had to offer. Even so, certain inner-city areas of these primate centers were typically occupied by small-scale labour-intensive workshops producing outputs like clothing, furniture, jewellery, printing services, while significant tracts of their more suburban fringes were colonized by large factories.

Over the first half of the 20th century, despite interludes of financial crisis and war, this industrial-urban system consistently engendered rising wages and high levels of prosperity in the core countries. In particular, after the Second World War, the so-called “Long Post-War Boom” lasting until the late 1960s, created unprecedented levels of economic well-being for workers in North America and Western Europe, and helped to underpin the *Pax Americana* under which the post-War international political settlement was partly stabilized. These developments coincide with the period that we earlier described as “American globalization”.

By the 1950s, many parts of the world periphery (now coming to be known as the “Third World”) were assertively gaining their independence from the former colonial powers, and were seeking their own pathways to growth and development. As we have seen, some of the larger Third World countries also attempted at this time to promote indigenous industrialization programs on the basis of import substitution. Many cities in these countries experienced waves of in-migration from surrounding agricultural areas where standards of living were significantly lower and where technical and organizational changes in agriculture were also leading to population displacement. Hence population growth in these cities was at times far in excess of actual labour demands giving rise to shanty towns with large numbers of economically and politically marginalized individuals making a living on the basis of informal work (i.e. work that is officially unrecorded and/or evades regulation and taxation, or is illegal). The urban areas most affected by this syndrome, (i.e. mega-cities such as São Paulo, Lagos, Mumbai, and Manila) often came to be described as being “macrocephalic,” signifying their relatively overgrown dimensions in relation to other cities in the same country, and even by comparison with large cities in richer countries.

## 3.4 Crisis and Renewal

### 3.4.1 *Industrial-Urban Restructuring*

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Long Post-War Boom in the core capitalist countries was beginning to show signs of exhaustion. The causes of this change are too complex for a full treatment here, but one of the important contributory factors was certainly a rapidly accelerating tendency for manufacturing activity to disperse away from traditional industrial cities and regions and to seek out alternative

locations where land and especially labour were relatively cheap. This process took the form of the relocation of branch plants, first of all to the southern states of the US (the “Sunbelt”) and less developed regions of Europe (like the Italian *Mezzogiorno*) and then to various parts of the periphery of the global economy. The resultant decline of productive activity in the previously dominant industrial cities of North America and Western Europe provoked deepening fiscal crises and rising unemployment, so much so that by the mid-1970s, the American Manufacturing Belt itself was coming to be known as the “Rust Belt,” a term that captures the extensive dereliction, abandonment, and job loss that came to characterize the region at this time. Detroit, the former world capital of car production, was notably devastated by decentralization of production capacity and employment. Even today much of Detroit remains in a state of advanced decay and its current population is just half of what it was at the beginning of the 1970s (see Fig. 3.2).

Other major urban casualties of this phase of global urbanization were in some of the poorest countries in the world, which were especially badly affected by the economic crises in the US and Europe in the 1970s. Encouraged to take on initially cheap loans (available as a result of an expanding supply of petro-dollars) to cover the costs of import-substitution policies and declining income from exports of primary commodities, the burden of these loans increased greatly as interest rates rose during the crisis. Cities in countries which had seen significant modernization, such as Zambia or Kenya, saw a collapse in investment, infrastructure provision and



**Fig. 3.2** Empty Packard plant and surrounding derelict land, Detroit, 2010. *Source* A.J. Scott and E. Wily, *Emerging cities of the third wave. City: Analysis of Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action*, 2011, 15: 289–321

even basic services. City life and work became more precarious and informalized—at times even accompanied by reversal of migration as well as by remittances of food and income from the countryside to the city.

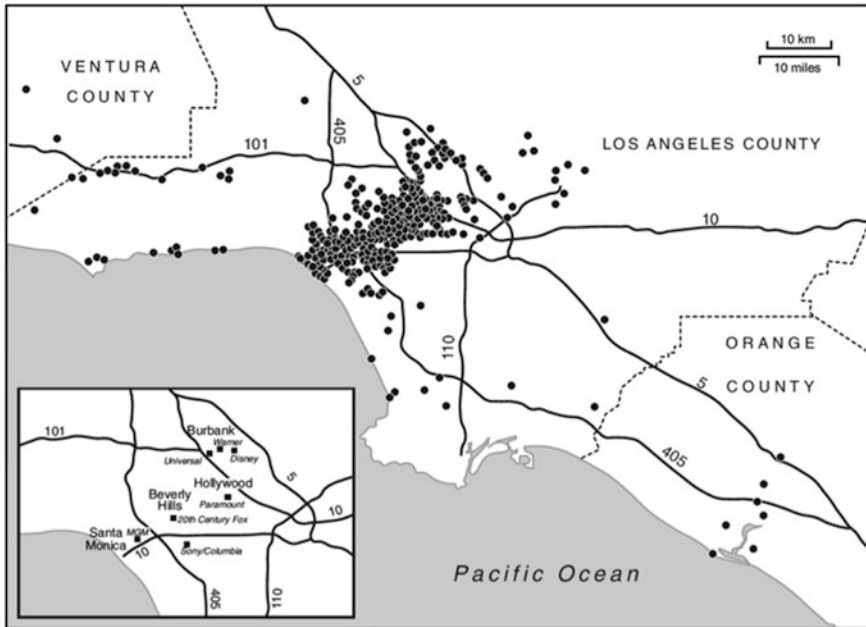
From the early 1970s onwards, the outflow of branch plants and investment capital from the core countries of capitalism to selected sites in the world periphery continued apace. Favored destinations for this relocation activity were export processing zones in Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Mexico and Brazil, and subsequently in emerging Chinese industrial cities, such as Shenzhen and Shanghai. In tandem with these developments the old international division of labour involving the flow of raw materials to the core and the reverse movement of manufactured products to the periphery started to give way to a new dispensation in which unskilled blue-collar manufacturing jobs were increasingly being relocated to the cities of the periphery while the more skilled white-collar functions of management, R&D, and commercialization remained concentrated in the large metropolitan areas of the core countries. Accordingly, it seemed for a while as though the long-term economic geography of capitalism was destined to coincide with the establishment of a durable division of global space into two specialized zones, one devoted more or less exclusively to white-collar employment and the other to blue-collar employment. It turned out, however, over the 1980s and 1990s, that much of the world (and especially the urban world of work) was due to develop in some surprisingly unforeseen ways.

### ***3.4.2 The New Capitalism and Urban Occupational Change***

The foundations of the mass-production system and its satellite production activities coincided preeminently with capital-intensive electro-mechanical technologies. But after the late 1970s and early 1980s, a new technological regime based on digitized methods of calculation, information storage, and communication started to emerge and began insistently to penetrate into all sectors of the capitalist economy, including not only manufacturing, but also, business, financial, and other service sectors. As it happens, the 1980s also coincided with the collapse and reorganization of the old tripartite international order designated in terms of First, Second, and Third Worlds. This shift was manifest in the rise of corporate globalization as the concrete expression of a steadily integrating worldwide capitalism reinforced by a turn to pro-market neoliberalism in the policy sphere.

The new capitalism that started its historical ascent at this time was distinguishable not only by a rapidly evolving technological environment, but also by the displacement of the mass production system as the leading edge of growth and innovation. Expanding new and revitalized sectors like high-technology and software production, business and financial activities, personal services (ranging from medicine to tourism), and a vast array of cultural and creative industries including film, music, architectural design, and media rose to prominence as significant foci of capitalist development. Of special interest here is the fact that these sectors are





**Fig. 3.3** Locations of motion-picture production companies in Los Angeles. Many different kinds of industries at different periods of capitalist urbanization evince this same tendency to form specialized industrial districts in the city. Clustering of individual production units is induced in large degree by their transactional interrelationships and by their joint dependence on a common labour market. *Source* A.J. Scott, A new map of Hollywood: the production and distribution of American motion pictures, *Regional Studies*, 36, 2002, 957–975

also overwhelmingly located in large metropolitan areas, not only in the traditional core countries of world capitalism, but now, too, in many big cities in former Third World countries. Firms in these sectors are strongly susceptible to agglomeration economies in the sense that as they cluster together so the costs of interfirm interaction and labour recruitment tend to fall while innovation is stimulated by the co-presence of many different producers and associated interfirm flows of information. Hence firms in these sectors frequently locate in close proximity to one another in the city to form specialized industrial districts, including high-technology clusters, office districts, and quarters devoted to creative and cultural production (see, for example, Fig. 3.3). These sectors and the work arrangements peculiar to them now account for some of the most dramatic and far-reaching shifts in patterns of urbanization today, especially but not exclusively in the more advanced capitalist countries.

As digital technologies and corresponding organizational readjustments penetrate into the more advanced sectors of contemporary capitalism, the economic and social character of the cities where these transformations are most in evidence is shifting rapidly. This is apparent not only in new and revitalized clusters of

economic activity within cities but also in new kinds of labour market structures and corresponding forms of social stratification that are being grafted onto and are increasingly replacing older social arrangements. In very schematic terms, the upper occupational tier characteristic of the new capitalism in large cities today can be identified in terms of what Richard Florida has called a “creative class” or what others have referred to as “symbolic analysts.” This upper tier is made up chiefly by highly qualified and usually well-remunerated individuals whose work requires them to exercise well developed cognitive and cultural skills in activities that include scientific research, engineering, software development, financial analysis, business consulting, film production, artistic pursuits, and so on. The lower occupational tier, by contrast, is composed to a large degree of individuals who carry out tasks like child care, house cleaning, taxi driving, dish-washing, infrastructure repair, unskilled office work, and a host of similar low-paying activities.

Note the important point that a significant proportion of the occupations in the lower tier of the labor force consist of activities that involve both direct and indirect services to the upper tier of urban workers. Also, in response to the elevated flexibility of labour demand arrangements in the new capitalism, the organization of work in both the upper and lower tiers (but especially in the lower) is frequently typified by high levels of part-time and temporary employment. The resultant precariousness of employment for many low-paid workers in the cities of advanced countries, and the stark contrasts between skilled, well-paid work, and unskilled poorly paid work resembles in some respects the more strongly informalized and unequal labour markets of cities in middle and lower income countries.

An exemplary case of how work in many large cities is changing in response to these developments can be found in the shifting occupational structure of the Los Angeles metropolitan area over the last decade or so. Thus, between 2000 and 2012, the number of blue-collar workers in manufacturing in Los Angeles declined by as much as 31.8 %. Over the same period, the number of workers in high-level or cognitive-cultural occupations grew by 39.0 % while workers in low-wage service occupations increased by 18.6 %. A large proportion of the latter workers is comprised of ethnic and racial minorities and immigrants from low-wage countries. A further symptom of the changing structure of rewards and penalties in urban life today is the great expansion in the number of homeless individuals in large cities. It is estimated, for example, that some 30,000 homeless individuals are now living in and around the downtown area of Los Angeles.

Urban economies across many cities in Africa and Asia, too, are marked by high levels of “informality,” involving small-scale production, repair and recycling, marketing of agricultural goods, and retail trade. In India, for example, estimates placed informal employment at 83 % of non-agricultural employment in 2000, and in Kenya at 72 %. Across much of Africa informal employment stands at over 80 % of the working-age population in cities. Some of this informal activity is caught up in long distance trading networks, as for example in the case of consumer goods transported from Southeastern China to West Africa. Global corporate

producers, too, are frequently connected to the informal economy as in the case of production activities that are linked to poorly regulated factories and sweatshops. In addition, formal workers in many cities rely on informal supplies of housing and services.

### 3.5 Urbanization and Work in the 21st Century

In the 19th and much of the 20th centuries we could speak reasonably meaningfully about a world system comprising a core and periphery each with distinctive patterns of economic development and urbanization. Echoes of this core-periphery terminology continue to resonate in what scholars in the 21st century often refer to as the Global North and the Global South, indicating respectively the wealthier and poorer areas of the globe, and the often stark inequalities existing across different parts of the world. As globalization proceeds, however, the mutual interpenetration of the North and the South becomes increasingly pronounced. Unskilled immigrants from the Global South converge persistently and in substantial numbers on the cities of the Global North where they for the most part find jobs entailing low-wage menial activities. Conversely, direct foreign investment in “emerging economies” remains high despite a slowdown of economic growth in these countries in recent years. At the same time, while the most advanced sectors of capitalism today are concentrated in the cities of the North, many are also firmly implanted in the cities of the South, which by the same token are also playing an increasingly important role in exporting high-technology, business service, cultural, and allied products to the North.

Systematic evidence of this changing economic geography can be found by scrutinizing Table 3.1, which lists 75 cities identified by MasterCard as the most attractive worldwide centres for advanced business and commercial activity in 2008. This particular ranking has its deficiencies, but it is probably about as good a representation of a first-cut urban-economic geography of the more prosperous side of the new capitalism as we are likely to get at the present time. Not surprisingly, Table 3.1 reveals that the cities of the Global North are clearly dominant, with London, New York, and Tokyo occupying first, second, and third places, respectively. However, a number of cities from the former Third World also rank highly, notably Singapore, Hong Kong, Seoul, Taipei, and Shanghai, all of them in Asia. In addition, as we scan further through the rankings a large number of cities from other parts of the erstwhile Third World also increasingly make an appearance, and cities like these will undoubtedly improve their rankings in the future.

In spite of the eclipse of the mass production system and the rise of new configurations of business and advanced industrial activity, traditional manufacturing has by no means disappeared and is still quite evident in many cities around

**Table 3.1** The top 75 Worldwide Centers of Commerce as defined by Mastercard Worldwide

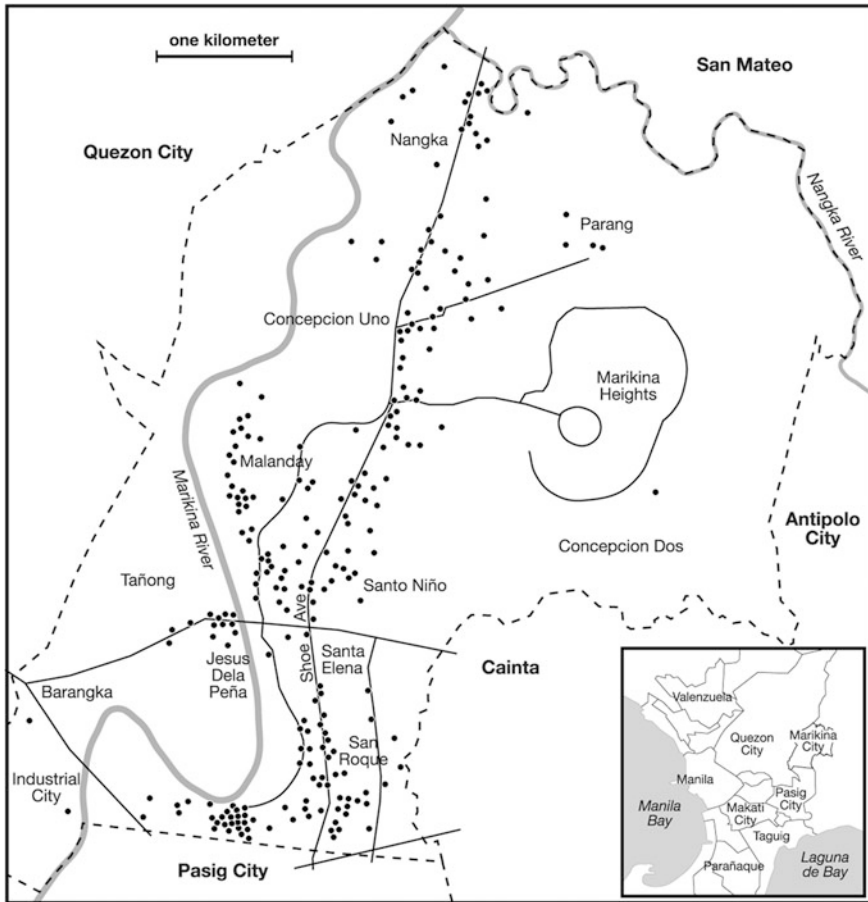
Rank	City	Country	Index value	Rank	City	Country	Index value
1	London	United Kingdom	79.17	39	Dusseldorf	Germany	50.42
2	New York	United States	72.77	40	Geneva	Switzerland	50.13
3	Tokyo	Japan	66.60	41	Melbourne	Australia	49.93
4	<b>Singapore</b>	Singapore	66.16	42	<b>Bangkok</b>	Thailand	48.23
5	Chicago	United States	65.24	43	Edinburgh	United Kingdom	47.79
6	<b>Hong Kong</b>	Hong Kong	63.94	44	<b>Dubai</b>	United Arab Emirates	47.23
7	Paris	France	63.87	45	Tel Aviv	Israel	46.50
8	Frankfurt	Germany	62.34	46	Lisbon	Portugal	46.46
9	Seoul	South Korea	61.83	47	Rome	Italy	45.99
10	Amsterdam	Netherlands	60.06	48	<b>Mumbai</b>	India	45.71
11	Madrid	Spain	58.34	49	Prague	Czech Republic	45.50
12	Sydney	Australia	58.33	50	<b>Kuala Lumpur</b>	Malaysia	45.28
13	Toronto	Canada	58.16	51	Moscow	Russia	44.99
14	Copenhagen	Denmark	57.99	52	Budapest	Hungary	44.52
15	Zurich	Switzerland	56.86	53	<b>Santiago</b>	Chile	44.49
16	Stockholm	Sweden	56.67	54	<b>Mexico City</b>	Mexico	43.33
17	Los Angeles	United States	55.73	55	Athens	Greece	43.25
18	Philadelphia	United States	55.55	56	<b>São Paulo</b>	Brazil	42.70
19	Osaka	Japan	54.94	57	<b>Beijing</b>	China	42.52
20	Milan	Italy	54.73	58	<b>Johannesburg</b>	South Africa	42.04
21	Boston	United States	54.10	59	Warsaw	Poland	41.26
22	<b>Taipei</b>	Taiwan	53.32	60	<b>Shenzhen</b>	China	40.04
23	Berlin	Germany	53.22	61	<b>New Delhi</b>	India	39.22
24	<b>Shanghai</b>	China	52.89	62	<b>Bogotá</b>	Colombia	38.27
25	Atlanta	United States	52.86	63	<b>Buenos Aires</b>	Argentina	37.76
26	Vienna	Austria	52.52	64	<b>Istanbul</b>	Turkey	36.14
27	Munich	Germany	52.52	65	<b>Rio de Janeiro</b>	Brazil	35.91
28	San Francisco	United States	52.39	66	<b>Bangalore</b>	India	35.78
29	Miami	United States	52.33	67	St. Petersburg	Russia	35.55
30	Brussels	Belgium	52.16	68	<b>Jakarta</b>	Indonesia	35.40
31	Dublin	Ireland	51.77	69	<b>Riyadh</b>	Saudi Arabia	35.37
32	Montreal	Canada	51.60	70	<b>Cairo</b>	Egypt	35.29
33	Hamburg	Germany	51.53	71	<b>Manila</b>	Philippines	35.15
34	Houston	United States	51.30	72	<b>Chengdu</b>	China	33.84

(continued)

**Table 3.1** (continued)

Rank	City	Country	Index value	Rank	City	Country	Index value
35	Dallas	United States	51.25	73	<b>Chongqing</b>	China	33.13
36	Washington DC	United States	51.19	74	<b>Beirut</b>	Lebanon	31.81
37	Vancouver	Canada	51.10	75	<b>Caracas</b>	Venezuela	26.11
38	Barcelona	Spain	50.90				

Names of cities lying in peripheral and formerly peripheral areas of the world system are set bold



**Fig. 3.4** Geographic distribution of shoe manufacturers in Marikina City, Philippines. Each dot represents one manufacturer. *Barangays*, or local administrative divisions, within Marikina City are named, as are adjacent municipalities. The inset shows the location of Marikina City within the Manila Metropolitan Area. *Source* A.J. Scott, “The Shoe Industry of Marikina City, Philippines: A Developing Country Cluster in Crisis”, *Kasarinlan: Philippine Journal of Third World Studies*, 20, 2005, 76–99

the world cities, and nowhere more so than in Asian cities where foreign and domestic owned factories abound. China exemplifies this point dramatically. Additionally, industry in the form of small-scale, labour-intensive production can be found extensively in poorer countries, as exemplified by the information provided in Fig. 3.4 and Box 3.1 where the shoe industry of Marikina City in the Philippines is described. At the same time, marginalized informal and precarious labor continues to proliferate in large cities in poorer countries (Fig. 3.5). The recent expansion in manufacturing and other economic activity in more dynamic Asian and other cities represents an important opening towards growth and prosperity, but the poorest cities of the global South, notably in Africa, have struggled to attract outside investment beyond the primary commodity and minerals extraction sectors. All the same, many African cities, including Dakar, Accra, Lagos, Kigali, Nairobi, and, of course, Johannesburg, are increasingly participating in the modern world economy as entrepreneurial centres in their own right, and local economic development policies in many parts of the continent are seeking to strengthen the networks and productivity of the informal economy as well.

### **Box 3.1. The Shoe Industry of Marikina City, Philippines**

Marikina City lies in the far northeast of the Manila Metropolitan Area. For over a century it has functioned as the principal centre of the Filipino shoe industry. Like much small-scale enterprise in both rich and poor countries, the industry is organized into a tight spatial cluster of firms (see Fig. 3.4) that often work together in various kinds of subcontract relations and that share a common labour market. Most of these firms are quite small and few of them employ more than ten workers. Wages are notably low in the Marikina shoe industry, and the main output consists of cheap shoes fabricated in both leather and synthetic materials for the domestic market. Almost all of the firms within the industry are family enterprises owned by individuals with roots that go deep into the local community. A distinctive intra-family division of labor is discernible in many shoe factories, where the wife is frequently engaged in financial and commercial tasks and the husband in shop-floor supervision. Some child labour is also to be found in the industry. Until the 1980s, the shoe industry in the Philippines was protected by high tariff barriers, but over the 1990s trade liberalization accelerated greatly. One effect of this shift has been a notable rise in imports of foreign shoes into the country with China leading the way as the main source of supply. This state of affairs has forced many Marikina shoe manufacturers to close down in recent years. One response to this state of affairs on the part of local manufacturers and policy makers has been to attempt to upgrade the quality of shoes produced so that they can fend off competition from imports and contest niches in international markets.



**Fig. 3.5** Repair and recycling of old cooking oil cans, Mumbai, India. *Source* National Geographic, <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0705/feature3/gallery7.html>. Published with permission of Magnum Photos

### 3.6 A Variegated and Uneven Mosaic

One way in which we can begin to make sense of some of the more recent trends and patterns described in this chapter is to put them in the context of the multi-dimensional global system of cities outlined in Chap. 1. A world-wide network or lattice of large cities and extended city-regions has emerged since the end of the 20th century, almost all of them characterized by dynamic economies, with multiple links and connections to each other as well as to many different small and medium-sized urban areas, agricultural zones and areas of resource extraction.

The core cities and city-regions that make up this worldwide lattice have populations in the multiple millions, and in some cases in the tens of millions (see Table 2.3), and are found in both the global North and the global South. These cities are the preeminent sites of the segmented occupational and economic systems described earlier, though each of them has its own specific character reflecting its peculiar forms of economic activity. Accordingly, these cities compete and collaborate with one another across the globe in relation to their complementarities and correspondences. Interspersed within this dominant pattern of global city-regions are large numbers of small and medium-sized cities with an enormous diversity of economic characteristics.

Certainly, modes and levels of economic development differ greatly from one another across this global-urban system so that the forms of labour, livelihood and employment characteristic of each individual city also vary widely. Moreover, work activities not only differ greatly from one city to another but are also highly variegated both functionally and spatially within each individual city. Much of this variegation is, of course, an expression of the intra-urban division of labour.

Cities, then, are dense clusters of inter-related processes of production, work, and life. This inter-relatedness is also one of the principal foundations of what, following the sociologist Emile Durkheim, we might refer to as the organic solidarity of urban society, that is, the tightly-wrought interdependencies that hold cities together as centres of shared social, economic and public life. Equally, though, urban communities in capitalism are dense sites of private property, competitive economic relationships and socially selective forms of appropriation so that urban existence is also subject to intense contestatory pressures. The following chapter elaborates on these themes of the private and the public in cities in relation to the challenge of creating and finding urban shelter.

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## Further Reading

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## Additional data sources

For a general view of global urbanization processes: United Nations. 2009. *World Urbanization Prospects*. <http://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/index.htm>.

For demographic data on cities around the world: <http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=POP&f=tableCode%3A240>

For urban development indicators by country: <http://data.worldbank.org/topic/urban-development>

For business and economic conditions in leading world cities: <http://www.mori-m-foundation.or.jp/english/ius2/gpci2/>

For statistics and other information on the informal economy: <http://wiego.org/wiego/core-programmes/statistics> and [http://laborsta.ilo.org/informal\\_economy\\_E.html](http://laborsta.ilo.org/informal_economy_E.html)