

ROUTLEDGE NEW DIPLOMACY STUDIES

Global Cities, Governance and Diplomacy

The urban link

Michele Acuto



Global Cities, Governance and Diplomacy

This book illustrates the importance of global cities for world politics and highlights the diplomatic connections between cities and global governance.

While there is a growing body of literature concerned with explaining the transformations of the international order, little theorization has taken into account the key metropolises of our time as elements of these revolutions. The volume seeks to fill this gap by demonstrating how global cities have a pervasive agency in contemporary global governance.

The book argues that looking at global cities can bring about three fundamental advantages over traditional IR paradigms. First, it facilitates an eclectic turn towards more nuanced analyses of world politics. Second, it widens the horizon of the discipline through a multiscalar image of global governance. Third, it underscores how global cities have a strategic diplomatic positioning when it comes to core contemporary challenges such as climate change.

This book will be of much interest to students of urban studies, global governance, diplomacy and international relations in general.

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Michele Acuto
Oxford

Recurrent acronyms

ANT	Actor-Network Theory
CBD	Central Business District
CCI	Clinton Climate Initiative
CCP	Cities for Climate Protection
CLP	Central London Partnership
COP	Conference Of the Parties
EEBRP	Energy Efficiency Building Retrofit Program
ESCO	Energy Service Company
GaWC	Globalization and World Cities network
GCS	Global Civil Society
GHGs	Greenhouse Gases
GLA	Greater London Authority
GLC	Greater London Council
GOL	Government Office for London
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IR	International Relations (the study of)
IULA	International Union of Local Authorities
LBB	London Business Board
LCCA	London Climate Change Agency
LDA	London Development Authority
LGA	Local Governmental Authority
LPAC	London Planning Advisory Committee
PEG	Private Environmental Governance
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
SDS	Spatial Development Strategy
STS	Science and Technology Studies
SUP	Strategic Urban Planning
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UDP	Unitary Development Plan
UNCHE	United Nations Conference on the Human Environment
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

1 Introduction

Spotting the ‘gorillas in our midst’

OVERCOMING INATTENTIONAL BLINDNESS

The problem

Students are asked to watch a game where two sets of players are moving irregularly around the screen and tossing a basketball to each other. They are instructed to count the number of passages between members of a team. After a little while, a researcher stops the tape and asks: ‘Did you see the gorilla?’ At this stage a conspicuously large percentage of them stares puzzled at the investigator: ‘Gorilla? What *gorilla*?’ Yet, the examiner replays the very same scene and there it is: a person dressed in a furry black gorilla costume walks right into the middle of the screen, thumps its chest, and calmly strolls out of sight. It is the same recording, and there is absolutely no trick. Only about eight per cent of the viewers notice the primate while watching the game.

The ‘invisible gorilla’ experiment was devised in 1998 by Harvard psychologists Daniel Simons and Christopher Chabris in order to explain two common phenomena of conscious perception known as *change* and *inattention blindness* (Chabris and Simons 2010). When entrusted with a specific undertaking, people are often incapable of noticing even very evident transformations to the background of the context they are looking at, remaining ‘change’ blinded by their attempt to achieve continuity across views and of sampling the key elements of the scene under scrutiny. Moreover, students were also affected by ‘inattentional’ biases: ‘when attention is diverted to another object or task, observers often fail to perceive an unexpected object, even if it appears at fixation’ (Simons and Chabris 1999: 1060). As these scientists proved, students asked to focus on the teams passing the ball failed to notice a very evident element of the scene they were staring at. Too busy concentrating on the players, spectators miss the gorilla as it meanders across the screen. In both cases, it is the focus on the task that hinders a complete visual experience: observers simply cannot perceive the entirety of the dynamic scene when focusing their attention exclusively on a specific feature of it.

Cities are the invisible gorillas of international studies. They are fundamental components of global governance in the twenty-first century, they

2 Introduction

influence the dynamics of our (global) political scenario and, yet, international analysts cannot see them because they are entrusted with looking at players the discipline has traditionally assumed crucial in order to explain some of the machinations of the game of world politics. Focusing too much on the presence of nation-states and inter-governmental relations on this scene, scholars have failed to perceive the relevance of other elements in world politics. International studies has become rooted in a chronic hyperopia that has largely dismissed the role of cities as subsumable under domestic matters. State-centric inattentional blindness hinders the discipline's true capacity for eclecticism and a holistic appreciation of the complexity of world politics and, most importantly, of the epochal revolution in the basic parameters of politics in the twenty-first century from the dominance of *government* to that of *governance*.¹ Integrating cities in international theorizations can redress some of the blinding 'embedded statism' (Taylor 1996) bias in most political branches of the discipline such as international relations (henceforth 'IR') and diplomacy, and that is nowadays critically challenged by processes of globalization.

To redress this perceptual flaw, I here seek to introduce cities as elements of the architecture of world politics, what is commonly called 'global governance' (Dingwerth and Pattberg 2006), and illustrate how cities can produce political structures that influence the geography of its diplomatic relations.² In my book I illustrate how the key metropolises for globalization processes, those that Saskia Sassen (1991) labelled 'global' cities, interact with this worldwide set of power alignments defining the geography of world politics. Inquiring into the 'influence' of global cities for global governance, as I will note in Chapters 5 and 6, is not, however, just a matter of finding these cities' agency. Rather, it is crucial to depict this influence *in relation to* the structures that define such geography not to present global cities and world politics in absolute dualism: metropolises are necessarily embedded in the wider architecture of global governance and, vice-versa, this latter inevitably is positioned on, as much as in, these cities. In this sense I believe it becomes legitimate to ask: What is the influence of global cities in the contemporary evolution of global governance and diplomacy?

Answering this query requires, in my view, the development of a more refined appreciation of the spatiality of world politics in which such connections unravel. This is an analytical consideration that will prompt me to develop a nuanced account of the global city's agency pinpointed on both a theory for their diplomatic capacity to produce structures in the realms of global governance, and thus influence its geography, as well as on geographical parameters to make sense of how such mutual constitution is realized geopolitically. *Structuration* theory, from political sociology, and *scalar* analysis, from human geography, will respectively provide these twin instruments and, ultimately, converge in a 'scalar structurationist' (Brenner 2001) framework I will then apply to the empirical studies in Chapters 6–9.

Overall, I will argue, looking at global political dynamics emerging from global cities, and through the holistic lens of scalar structuration approaches,

brings about three fundamental advantages on the traditional state-centric and IR-focused paradigms. First, it widens the horizon of the discipline by building a multi-scalar image of global governance rather than limiting it to a discrete selection of specific 'layers' of politics. Second, it facilitates a 'structurationist' turn in IR towards non-dyadic analyses of world politics that go beyond dichotomies such as continuity/change, structure/agency, or domestic/international. Third, it underscores how global cities acquire strategic potential when it comes to non-traditional challenges such as those of global environmental governance.

Why now?

In 1951, Isaac Asimov, father of science fiction, opened his most famed book *Foundation* with a graphic portrayal of the planet that was leading an imaginary galaxy mastered by humankind in all its width. 'Its urbanization, progressing steadily, had finally reached the ultimate. All the land surface' – he wrote – 'was a single city' (2004: 10). A few years later, J. G. Ballard, another of the columns of modern-day fiction, depicted a similar atmosphere in his dystopian novel *The Concentration City*, where the urban settlement in question encompasses everything known to its inhabitants, which cannot do anything more than accept the view 'that the City stretches out in all directions without limits' (2006: 49). No escape is offered to the impuissant protagonist, who travels endlessly along rail lines, only to get back to the point of origin without ever leaving a disturbing conurbation. Many are the examples in the contemporary arts that refer to such images, demonstrating that the interplay of a frail humanity with a muscular urbanism has a resonance deeper than mere whimsical attraction. Fictional parallels notwithstanding, these visions might not be too distant from reality: if at the outset of the twentieth century only one in ten used to live in cities, nowadays half of the human population is settled within metropolitan areas.³

If at the time of Asimov and Ballard some of these trends were only apparent, we are now at a stage of human history where the urbanization of the world's population is unmistakably evident. Humankind, to use an elegant expression coined by architectural historian Joseph Rykwert (2000: 3), has been 'seduced by a place' it itself created. The symptomatic urban attachment more or less rationally developed by men and women throughout history has made of the metropolis a central symbol of civilization, to the extent that we might now live in what Henri Lefebvre (2003) called 'urban society'. From a social, as much as from a technological viewpoint, humankind is now mirrored in the city more than in any other construct. If the 'move to the city' is not a novel characteristic of our existence, its contemporary ecumenical scale and staggering pace, its varied mobility and social complexity, as well as the unprecedented potential connectivity among people, are all traits that, *ipso facto*, specify the epoch we live in (Hall 1966: 18). Social and physical aspects of urbanization since the early twentieth

century have not just brought about quantitative changes in the dislocation of humanity across the globe; cities have also become the hinges of our society as they influence both lifestyle and mobility of the world's population. They have become the defining feature of humanity's modes of aggregation, and a persistent backdrop for the vast majority of its social interactions (Mitchell 2005).

As American economist Robert Murray Haig highlighted at the outset of this 'city boom' in 1926: instead of explaining why so large a portion of the population is found in the urban areas, one must give reasons why that portion is not even greater. The question is changed from 'Why live in the city?' to 'Why not live in the city?' (1926: 188). The urbanization of the world's population is not solely a physical process, but also an inherently social revolution that redefines the spaces of interaction amongst people, and thus conversely the contemporary practice of political relations. It is the rise of this 'urban age' that makes our task of redressing both the discipline's blindness to cities a non-postponable necessity. Cities can no longer be sidelined as the sole domain of technical sciences such as architecture, or the 'place' of geographers and sociologists. Rather, they need to be appreciated for their rightful status in the organization of politics in the present age.

Why *global* cities?

A study of urbanization alone would, however, fail to convey the active political presence of cities in the dynamics of global governance and diplomacy, while most likely duplicating much of the developments of urban research. This view might redress some change blindness, but would do little to save international studies from its chronic *inattentional* bias. Even if coupled with analytical considerations of the interconnection between this trend and globalization, such research might risk getting lost in the growing worldwide webs criss-crossing the Earth at unimaginable speed. To avoid this methodological bewilderment, I propose here to ground such political study in the fulcrum of such processes: *global* cities. Global cities such as New York, London or Tokyo stand as crucial elements of a defining feature of today's worldwide change: they are the strategic hinges of globalization. They represent strategic loci where globalizing forces and flows are re-articulated, promoting the time/space compressions that are redesigning the human condition in the present millennium. Since I seek here to 'translate' this economic-centric idea into a concept that can effectively speak to the international studies public, I will introduce more explicit (global) political considerations into this frame – a move towards which Sassen's original orientation is particularly prone (Sassen 2005b). To this extent, I will refer to the 'global city' to highlight a status of global interconnectedness attained by some contemporary world cities that occupy a core positioning in the complex of the globalizing flows of our time. As I explain more in detail in Chapter 3, in an epoch dominated by global economic flows and growing societal interconnectedness, global cities represent the *strategic hinges of globalization*.

Thanks to their strategic positioning, these metropolises can allow for a dynamic understanding of the reconfigurations underpinning world politics, while striking a balance between the physical manifestation and ethereal socio-political bases of these epochal changes.⁴ This analytical move, as David Harvey noted in 1996, can prevent much of the disorienting 'emptiness' of many analyses that privilege process, as well as much of the oppressiveness of materialist understandings, thus considering politics from a dialectical consideration of 'process-thing relations' (Harvey 1996: 435). The macro-dynamics of globalization and urbanization can, in practice, be anchored to an entity such as the global city, which stands in the very midst of them as both their subject and their engine. These contemporary globalizing post-industrial metropolises, as pivots of today's unprecedented transformations, are therefore the empirical 'thing' allowing a focus capable of presenting international scholars with a view that reconnects micro and macro 'processes' through its urban political texture.⁵ Thanks to this location at the crossroads of worldwide processes, global cities are playing an essential role in formulating a new human geography of the present age by adding to the complexity of the global landscape of political, economic and cultural interactions and connecting micro (local one would say) political processes with macro (or global) trends and relations. Yet, what exactly is the significance of global cities in these revolutionary transformations, and why does this matter for world politics? This study is geared towards unpacking the presence of these metropolises in those profound socio-political redefinitions of the human condition in the twenty-first century that are prompted by these processes.

I will focus here on politics specifically, and thus on the impact of these cities on the practice of power relations in an epoch of tumultuous transformations and evolutions. An appreciation of the key role played by these localities in the redefinition of the global political system can open up the horizons of the discipline, reconnecting macro levels of analysis with micro transformations at the urban level. Yet, bringing global cities in a policy-prone academic field also represents an attempt towards a more inclusive *practice* of international politics that should consider global cities as participants in the dynamics of global governance rather than just subjects of 'higher' politics. The sporadic encounter between international theorists and global cities has been largely vexed by misleading state-centric assumptions that have depicted metropolises as mere places, overlooking the 'active' participation of cities in world affairs, and that have made little headway towards an effective theoretical advancement capable of including metropolises in the discussions of world politics. To correct this flaw I will concentrate on both the situated relevance of these cities as places *for* politics, as well as their more active capacity as actors *in* politics. The task here should not, however, be one of duplicating the significant headway made in this direction in urban studies. Rather, by bringing global cities into international studies, scholars will be able to contribute to the development of a new conceptual

architecture that allows for more than a mere replication of this body of research.

The answer

The scholarship (and its limits)

Little interest has thus far been paid to the role of cities in either international relations theory or more broadly in the study of world politics. Overall, the international scholarship on this issue is relegated to a few rare theorizations that offer very limited accounts of the global political presence of the city. It is for instance symptomatic that the only call for a study of the international impact of cities dates back more than 20 years, and has thus far been widely ignored. In 1990, Chadwick Alger set out to compile an account of the research on the world relations of cities available at the time in order to 'bridge a gap' between macro social science paradigms and the multifaceted experience of everyday life as it unfolds in cities (Alger 1990; Magnusson 1994). Concluding that an inquiry into the city's agency in world politics must necessarily reach out to fields of studies outside conventional IR circles and 'ferreting out fragments of work' nested within 'often subject-specific theorizations', the American political scientist issued a call towards a multi-disciplinary engagement that could prompt social scientists to rid themselves of the 'tyranny of state system ideology over the mainstream of their disciplines' (Alger 1990: 494, 513).

Two decades after that survey the theoretical panorama of the discipline seems far from improved. This is even more surprising when considering that one of the 'founding fathers' of the study of global governance, James Rosenau, had certainly hinted at the relevance of the city in his seminal 1995 piece *Governance in the Twenty-first Century*:

It seems clear that cities and microregions are likely to be major control mechanisms in the world politics of the twenty-first century. Even if the various expectations that they replace states as centers of power prove to be exaggerated, they seem destined to emerge as either partners or adversaries of states as their crucial role becomes more widely recognized.
(Rosenau 1995: 27)

Certainly, the political importance of cities followed this trajectory by progressively creeping in the policy agendas of several international organizations such as the World Bank, as well as by acquiring a growing recognition in the media. For instance, the popular international affairs magazine the *Economist* produces a widely acknowledged index of the quality of life in major cities across the world known as 'Livability ranking' and compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit by elaborating data gathered by the Mercer Quality of Living Survey. Even more scholarly outlets for international academics such

as *Foreign Policy* have (albeit briefly) taken global cities into consideration through a biennial survey published in 2008 and 2010. These publications notwithstanding, international studies as a discipline stands largely immune to the spreading interest in the present-day effects of urbanization, and the role of the world's key settlements. For instance, diplomacy as carried out by local governments has only been the object of a small number of studies in the early 1990s, such as Heidi Hobbs' *City Hall Goes Abroad* (1994) or Earl H. Fry's examinations of municipalities' activism in world politics (1990).

Despite these unfortunately overlooked studies, one of the most relevant limits of the scattered international scholarship on the subject remains that of limiting the consideration of cities to a subjected position: cities tend to either be represented as the sites *for* IR, or be subsumed as lower-level governmental entities with limited reach. This is for instance the shortcoming of the recent *Cities and Global Governance*, a collection of essays on the topic which certainly went at great length in this direction and paid particular attention to global cities. The book sets out with the task of promoting 'innovation in international relations theory with case studies that widen the basis for theorizing the role sub-national formal and informal political actors play in global governance' – an ambitious but imperative pursuit for both the theorization and practice of world politics (Amen et al. 2011: 38–39). Yet, despite the multidisciplinary gathering, *Cities and Global Governance* only began to scrape the surface in terms of theorization of global cities in IR, falling short of a concrete frame for analysis. It is perhaps not sufficient to survey existing strands of literature that can back up this eclectic endeavour. It is now imperative to develop ontological and epistemological bases to understand the role of global cities in the international system – a consideration recently voiced by Simon Curtis (2011) in the *Review of International Studies*, albeit still with little attention for their actual actor capacity. Crucially then, to allow the international theorist (and even more centrally spectators) to comprehend the centrality of metropolises in our epoch, I would also argue that an 'active' understanding of their interconnection with global governance is imperative, and here is where the book encounters a commonplace problem that the few recent cases of IR global city analysis have in terms of *direct* relevance to world politics.

This is exemplified by the case of a recent article which appeared on the pages of the *SAIS Review*, where Kent E. Calder and Mariko de Freytas justly argued against the neglected role of the global city in international affairs. In this piece, they sought to redress the overall hyperopia of international studies by describing 'global political cities as actors in twenty-first century international affairs' (2009: 79).⁶ Yet, despite the promises of a title that uses the term 'actors' to indicate the participation of global cities in international affairs, Calder and de Freytas portrayed metropolises as hubs where political influence is gathered, but not exerted. Their approach is intuitive: if Sassen described global cities in their economic essence as settlements with a global significance, the same can apply for other social spheres such as international

politics. Developing Sassen's definition, the authors characterize the 'global political city' as 'a metropolitan area that serves as a policy hub, major political diplomatic community, and strategic information complex of global import' (2009: 94). Examples of this are Brussels, Moscow, Beijing and Washington DC. Calder and de Freytas are, in this case, a poignant case of the scholarly flexibility of the global city concept. As Sassen highlighted in the revised second edition of her 1991 study, various globalizing processes are nested in these metropolises as strategic, but not necessarily all-encompassing, events. To this extent 'one can actually study the global city function without having to study the whole city' (Sassen 2001: 315). Hence, the authors were able to illustrate the global relevance of their cases (Washington DC *in primis*) in the political sphere without necessarily enquiring into the political agency of such entities.

Yet, considering the city as an actor means allowing for that actor to be analysed in its rightful position as a participant in the phenomena that are constantly reshaping the 'international' and the structures of global governance. While Calder and de Freytas seemed to hint at this possibility, their analysis did not go as far as their title suggested.⁷ They alluded to the actor-ness of these urban entities, but forgot that what distinguishes an actor is its purposeful agency: the capacity to meaningfully produce a particular effect even if discreetly. This is not an uncommon mistake, as the chapters in *Cities and Global Governance* testify, and it points to a need to better qualify the 'agency' of global cities in world politics. In order to fully appreciate the breadth of global cities' impact on present-day international affairs, we need to step beyond this scholarly reticence and look at both the influence they have indirectly *and* directly. What is interesting for international scholars is, in fact, not the form of the global city itself but its influence *on* and capacity to participate *in* the global political spheres. Attempts to map a political ranking of global cities across the globe, or to describe the location of particular metropolises on transnational circuits, inevitably result in a duplication of the substantial strides made in this direction by urban scholarship.

From this viewpoint, a niche literature emerging from diplomatic studies has attempted some re-theorization with direct relevance for sub-national forms of diplomacy such as those of cities. Pinpointing the concept of 'para-diplomacy' (as short for 'parallel diplomacy'), a long-lived notion in use since the 1960s (Butler 1961) to describe the possibility of coexistence of parallel external relations 'tracks' running across countries, such as those of federal and state executives, this scholarship has introduced some attention to the external relations of sub-state actors. Yet, this tiered understanding of diplomatic relations was largely sidelined until the late 1980s. Then, borrowing this terminology, Ivo Duchacek (1986) revived the idea of paradiplomacy as a form of political agency by sub-national entities. The author developed a framework where these non-central actors 'perforate' (Duchacek et al. 1988) the sovereignty of states, putting forward their particularistic interests through

cross-boundary, trans-regional and global connections. Duchacek's approach, essentially rooted in the piercing of the traditional international order by unconventional actors at the 'lower' levels of policymaking, gained some moderate attention across academia.⁸ However, little elaboration on the profusion of very diverse non-governmental actors in world politics is present within this strand of studies, which remains focused mainly on regions and sub-national governments within federal states (Huijgh 2010). Besides, the diplomatic role of cities, let alone 'global' ones, has received to date only a very superficial consideration. These paradiplomacy works, while capable of recognizing cities as actors in international affairs, have lacked a theoretical engagement with both the sources of such agency, as well as oftentimes the global impacts of the growing interaction between them and global governance. Likewise, a key problem of this paradiplomatic take has been a large disregard for the sources of such 'external agency' of cities, which have appeared as actors in this literature with almost no problematization of their internal basis for such world political roles. While I will illustrate more extensively below how these shortcomings can be overcome, it is important to note here how the international scholarship on global cities has thus far encountered three major limitations I will attempt to redress in my study:

- first, it has not devised a theoretical *framework* to ferret out fragments of urbanist and geographical analysis effectively and translate them into IR considerations;
- second, it generally lacks a productive and progressive appreciation of the *active* participation of cities in world politics and the direct political influence they have on global governance;
- third, where such active role has been hinted at, no analytics of the sources and *impacts* of this diplomatic capacity have thus far been developed.

Making (international) political sense of the global city

The trouble with the contemporary landscape of world politics is that if we choose to move beyond a state-centric view what we are 'left' with is a multilayered, pluralistic and structurally complex image of a global architecture as characterized by a 'variable geometry' (Held and McGrew 2002: 42) of power where influence differs from place to place, and from issue to issue, with varying dominant loci of control. Political structures in this Gordian landscape, seem too elusive to be grasped. This disorienting complexity often leads theorists, and international ones in particular, to simplify and abstract the nature of such scenarios. Indeed, as Rosenau also pointed out, the majority of mainstream international political analysis is wary of nuance: 'too wedded in existing theories of realism and liberalism most formulations ignore and underplay the messiness of the current world scene' (2005: 132). Yet, in turn, this lack of subtlety constrains the possibilities of the discipline,

lowers the toleration of change in the observed scenarios, and provokes high degrees of inattentional blindness to unexpected elements that elude the basic parameters of world politics. Considering the 'influence' of global cities on this architecture means, in practice, inquiring into the possibility of ascribing 'power' to these entities as a *relational* effect of their socio-political interaction with the geography of global governance.⁹ By doing so, we admit the possibility of finding agency through its effects in the multiplicity of power alignments of world politics reflecting the agency of global cities. To borrow from Doreen Massey's analytical work on the spatial distribution of power in social relations, a view that aptly echoes the ontological rethinking of global governance noted above, it is then useful to ask what 'power-geometries' (i.e. the 'geographical organization of society in terms of power') sustain, and are produced by, the role of global cities in global governance (Massey 1993). This approach is what will lead me to take into account not only the *influence* global cities have on global governance, but also what the *sources* of this influence are pinpointed on, and who controls them.

When we look at the actant dimension of the global city, we are forced to open the 'black box' of city politics, but this in turn brings about a gamut of epistemological challenges for international and political theorists. The biggest test here, at least for the scope of my inquiry, is how to account for global cities as coherent (if not unitary) entities when their nature is so inherently dispersed and yet interconnected. Conveying the essence of the 'open intensity' of these cities might, however, be a disorienting experience, and it is no surprise that only a few have ventured upon this enterprise. If one were to attempt such endeavour from the grounds of international studies, the resulting research would probably go astray into the localized intricacies of the city while pointlessly replicating the headway made in this direction by urban studies. Indeed, as more than a century of urban scholarship can testify, defining what a city is might be a gargantuan, if not futile endeavour. Deeply intertwined with that complex texture of worldwide flows of goods, ideas and people, global cities present us not only with the complexities of cities at large, but also with the intricacies of their inherently networked essence. This multiplex nature might bring many – if not all – international theorists to ask a question that American political scientist John Mollenkopf posed almost two decades ago at the outset of his research into New York City politics: 'Is urban politics worth studying at all, or is the urban political realm so subordinate to, dependent on, and constrained by its economic and social context that factors from this domain have little independent explanatory power?' (Mollenkopf 1992: 24). Or, to put it simply, why should we bother ourselves with the nuances and intricacies of politics within cities if at the end of the day this latter is nothing but a subject of broader forces and institutions?

As I noted above, the predominant reaction to this problem in international studies has to date been the academic equivalent of a dismissive shrug. The global influence of cities, considered as sub-national entities nested in the core

Westphalian hierarchy of world politics at levels below the state, has thus far been met in international theory with assumptions of separateness, discontinuity and exclusivity (Hocking 1999b: 17). The city has thus generally acquired a diminutive status that has located urban politics below the more prominent contexts of the state and the international.

Unpacking the influence of the global city, in this view, has a two-fold significance: considering the 'relevance' of these metropolises for global governance means taking into account what *agency* they have as both an emergent effect of their positioning in the geography of world politics (as places) and regarding their capacity to make an active difference in the state of affairs (as actors). As I will illustrate, this consideration presents us with two possible meanings of agency: a positional understanding that equates influence with mere capacity to have a significant impact on the state of affairs (what I will label the *actant* dimension), and a more active understanding that considers influence as capacity to purposefully impact the state of affairs (what I will label the *actor* dimension). As such, agency understood as mere influence needs to be considered alongside agency interpreted as something that is 'intentional under some description' (Davidson 1980: 50). However, the two are not competing alternatives: every actor, that is every element that can influence the state of affairs rationally, is necessarily an actant in that it logically also influences them by virtue of its existence. Yet, the contrary does not apply.¹⁰

This argument becomes even more dependent on the nature of the influence that metropolises have on such a political landscape. Asking 'Do global cities act?' thus implies not just demonstrating presence, but also inquiring into the 'individual' capacity to influence global governance and to reactively influence this latter's state of affairs.¹¹ As such, we are presented here with a cascade of puzzles: if we could start with a somewhat simplistic query on the link between global cities and global governance (why do global cities matter for global governance?) it will become progressively crucial to unpack this problem into these two dimensions of agency for analytical purposes, in order to then reassemble them in a more refined explanation of their connection. This two-pronged analysis begs for a consideration of the power-geometries created or at least influenced *by* global cities in the broader geography of global governance, as well as the power-geometries which underpin such agency. It is thus necessary to take into account the realm of the 'urban', and thus look into the city, as well as the realm of world politics in which the city acts. Separating, at least analytically, these types of agency allows for a more systematic understanding of their related influence on world affairs: as places of agglomeration in the fluidity of worldwide networks, global cities could display attractive forces in world affairs. Likewise, as actors, these cities might have a (political) capacity for transnational policymaking. At a theoretical level, the problem that we are then faced with when tackling global cities is these entities' role in those processes pulling and stretching the spheres of world politics.

The study

Outline of the book

In order to introduce international scholars to the connections between global cities and global governance, the book is built on a progressive reasoning emerging from the lack of a solid and methodological scholarship on this theme. To develop the necessary conceptual apparatus that allows me to systematize an investigation of cities in global governance, I begin by illustrating the *agency* of these metropolises in the geography of global governance first, and the *structuration* underpinning the mutually constitutive relationship between them afterwards. This reasoning is thus organized as follows: in the first part (Chapters 2–4) I focus on tracing the global city's agency in global governance by problematizing their linkage and then presenting two possible understandings of the term 'agency'; in the second (Chapters 5–7) I investigate the impact and limitations of this influence against the global environmental governance context introduced in the previous part of the book. I then conclude in Part III by considering how such a relationship shapes the spatiality of world politics as we know it. This approach is centred on a structurationist analytical frame applied to the empirics via Actor-Network Theory (ANT) in order to understand the global city's influence in terms of its capacity to produce structures (networks in my case) that impact the geography of global governance.

The reasoning proceeds as follows. First, in Chapter 2, I describe the geopolitical context of my analysis, global governance, through a survey of the current architecture of global climate politics, which will then constitute the backdrop within which I will locate the agency of global cities in Part II. To consider what role global cities might play in such landscape, I describe how the core international structures have progressively been integrated by an 'aggregate' non-governmental dimension and how across both realms neo-liberal approaches tend to dominate this scenario. In Chapter 3, in order to problematize the agency global cities can have in global governance, I investigate its two possible dimensions. Here I seek to demonstrate how global cities are key hinges for contemporary world affairs both in an 'actively passive' (Thrift 1983: 38) sense, as capable of having an impact on the global state of affairs (the *actant* dimension) as well as in the 'directly active' way of diplomacy and transnational networking (the *actor* dimension). This is done by introducing the localized influence of strategic urban planning and the globalized agency of city diplomacy both in relation to environmental governance – two features of global city agency I will further unpack in the 'structuration' part. Yet, as I describe in Chapter 4, this agency-focused approach presents some methodological limitations. This chapter is thus dedicated to a rethinking of the analytical bases of this inquiry, and the development of a structurationist and scalar framework to analyse the structuring of global cities in the broader geography of world politics. ANT is thus introduced here

as a methodological application of structuration approaches (Latour 2005) which can systematize both the production of structures in global governance, in the shape of networks, as well as the multiscalar global–local spatiality where these processes take place.

Having introduced my ANT approach, I turn in the second part of the book to applying it to both the actant and actor dimensions of global city agency. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are respectively dedicated to this task. I begin by deconstructing the political processes of strategic urban planning as a ‘metropolitan’ policymaking response devised to anchor and enhance the centrality of global cities in world affairs. London, the ‘pre-eminent’ (Pain 2009) global city, constitutes the test case to investigate the transnational influence of city networks. Mirroring this ANT analysis, Chapter 6 then focuses on the actor dimension of global cities by analysing the case of the Climate Leadership Group (or ‘C40’), a transnational policy network where global cities such as London partake in global environmental governance. The following chapter then illustrates these metropolises’ collective engagement with climate politics and, in particular, the development of the C40 not solely as a set of cross-national connections but also as a ‘group agent’ in world politics itself. Finally, in Chapters 8 and 9, I attempt to sketch some preliminary conclusions on the structuration of global cities and global governance and reveal them to be strategic catalysts of transnational action before, in Chapter 9, seeking to draw attention to how these ‘invisible gorillas’ can inspire more perspective-savvy views on the study of world politics and international diplomacy.

Global cities and world politics: a progressive agenda

The twin analytical structure of the book, based on considering agency first and structuration afterwards, is required because there remains a vast theoretical lacuna in terms of methodological bases to appreciate the global role of metropolises. Yet, this structurationist move is more than just a theoretical evolution. First, cities and city makers, be they local politicians and representatives, corporate elites, civil society groups, architects and planners or simply the anonymous pedestrian, have a meaningful role in facilitating conditions for, and formulating responses to, the global problems that international scholars and practitioners constantly find at the top of their agendas. Second, whether we take into consideration the politics *in* or *of* these metropolises, the structuration of global cities and global governance presents us not only with the construction of alternative avenues for political agency and thus new spaces for world politics. Contingently, in several cases, the sustained dominance of neoliberal rationalities in and amongst cities allows these geopolitical processes to result in a ‘suspension’ of politics by removing spaces for contestation and public scrutiny, pushing towards taking existing global power structures as a given. So, in the first instance global cities have a key stake in producing sub-systemic political structures, ‘sub-politics’ as Ulrich

Beck (1997a) labelled them, which allow for the emergence of innovative networks for global governance. Yet, my study will also highlight how these subpoliticizations often partake in the continuation of the dominant paradigm of world politics, neoliberalism, 'depoliticizing' policymaking processes by taking existing power structures as a given, and thus producing a temporary exclusion of politics proper (i.e. the formalized discussion on 'who gets what when and how') from even the most sensible political operations.¹² This does not mean that the sub-political structures that emerge from the participation of global cities to global governance are not vested with power relations, but rather that in some cases (those I label 'depoliticized' following James Ferguson's definition) the politics that allow these to be object to societal scrutiny are suspended or translated through processes where such relations occur unquestioned, such as those of urban planning or market procurement schemes (Ferguson 1994).

In light of these sometimes troubling depoliticizations, the scholarly agenda upon which this book relies is then, as Doreen Massey (1993: 59) put it, about developing a 'global' and 'progressive' sense of politics conscious of the inevitable relationality, and thus connectedness, of political spaces with other contexts beyond them without which we could not make sense of what happens in the scenes we observe. Accordingly we need to develop, as Massey suggests, a 'global sense of place' (1994: 154) capable of conveying how cities, instead of being bounded places, represent 'articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings'. In fact, if it was in some ways possible to draw confines around classical cities as self-contained units such as Hellenic Athens, in today's urban age it makes progressively less sense to attempt to identify our metropolises (if not cities in general) as enclosures (Robins 1991). This means, however, moving to a renewed and progressive concept of the city as an integrated component of the social spaces of the present world-system. As Massey suggests, it is nowadays fundamental to treat cities in relational terms as localized contexts whose uniqueness is not so much a result of their material confines, but rather a positioning at the intersection of manifold social relations. Whether we analyse the 'limited' confines of city politics surrounding London's strategic urban planning, or we unpack the networked creating of a transnational policy network such as the C40, as I will demonstrate, it makes no difference to this reasoning: the situated political relations of all of these cases still paint a multiscalar picture that begs for a cross-cutting perspective on world politics. What is 'progressive' about this, Massey reminds us, is that the scholar and the practitioner with a progressive sense of politics and their spaces would recognize this without feeling threatened by it, therefore encouraging, as Noel Castree (2003: 117) has also noted, 'an openness to the wider world, not a defensive putting up of barriers'. Indeed, if we were to consider an hypothetical atlas designed not on the basis of physical geography but rather mapping human relations, cities would almost entirely correspond to the peaks of connectedness of such a chart. This view treats cities as 'open intensities' in that, as 'foci of interconnections

with wider worlds', they are characterized by a distinctive 'geographical intensity of social relations and activities' (Massey 1999: 8) which is however 'open' due to their inherent relationality with other cities, flows, infrastructures, cultures and spaces far beyond their localized contexts. It is, then, my intention here to challenge international scholars and practitioners to widen the boundaries of the discipline: maybe there is more to the game of world affairs than meets our conventional international studies eyes; maybe we have thus far overlooked some very influential gorillas that can open our eyes to a better and broader understanding of the very same international game we have been staring at, whilst standing right in our midst.

Part I

Agency

2 Situating the link

PROBLEMATIZING GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

What is *global* governance?

Quite like in the case of the expression ‘global’ city, which is now widely used in public relations campaigns as a buzzword devoid of analytical weight, the phrase global governance also requires some careful consideration.

Thanks to a growing interest in this theme through the 1990s and early 2000s, there is nowadays a wide literature concerned with defining and unpacking global governance. This strand of international studies began to gain momentum as the United Nations Commission on Global Governance released its popular report *Our Global Neighbourhood* in 1995. This initial inquiry into the nature and evolution of global governance was mainly concerned with the ways authority in international politics was affected by the processes of re-alignment following the end of the Cold War. While this remains to date a key theme across most scholars engaged with this analysis, the study of global governance has fast produced a multiplicity of views.¹ This heterogeneity of understandings was engendered from the very start of the global governance literature by the interplay of three different approaches respectively focused (in order of popularity) on:

- (1) international regimes and structures;
- (2) ‘other’ global actors and connections;
- (3) ontological critiques of the above.

The three approaches represent a variety of interpretations of what the phrase ‘global governance’ actually means. First, epitomizing perhaps the central skeleton of the global governance scholarship is that vast array of international studies that has placed a central focus on the dynamics and development (and, more recently, limits) of *international regimes* and structures. Global governance is seen here as almost synonymous with the idea of ‘governance of the global’ – i.e. that worldwide system that upholds attempts at global problem-solving efforts. Exemplified by the substantial attention

paid to multilateralism and organizations and by the works of key IR scholars such as Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye (1977) or Stephen Krasner (1983), this strand of studies has burgeoned in the liberal internationalist literature and evolved across several other sub-disciplinary standpoints. Crucial to this view is the continuous clout of states on the dynamics of world politics, and a common focus on institutions and institution-making.

This field of inquiry, which could be tagged as 'mainstream' for most of international studies, has generally treated global governance as closely intertwined with, if not equal to, 'international relations' and as inherently defined by the workings of the international system of states. Not surprisingly, the global processes of the world economy or the United Nations as embodied in the work of Thomas Weiss (2000), the first editor of the popular journal *Global Governance*, tend to remain to date the core reference points for this literature. At the same time, conscious of the complex transformations brought about by the globalization of world politics, several of these scholars have also re-oriented their analyses in a problem-focused fashion, therefore allowing for more flexibility in the participation to the dynamics of 'international' politics. For instance, and certainly in line with the subsequent evolution of the literature, Weiss sought to situate the pivotal role of the UN in these processes, and point at the complexity that considering global governance dynamics introduces compared to more simplistic 'government' views.

This more flexible interpretation, echoed even in the more recent evolution of mainstream authors like Keohane, paved the way for the growth of an alternative strand of research that burgeoned with the constructivist turn of IR in the mid-1990s.² Rapidly, a multitude of scholars has engaged at length with the restructuring of global geopolitical alignments. With the explicit intent to broaden the internationalist agenda to actors and linkages 'other' than those of international relations, a second prolific venue of theorization has progressively populated the pages of key journals and catalogues of university publishers. Represented by now widely-cited works such as those of Ann Florini (1996) or Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink (1998) on transnational civil society, Peter Haas (1989) on epistemic communities, or Jan Aart Scholte (1997) on private and corporate actors, a programme of research that stresses the 'governance' aspect of the expression 'global governance' has been focusing its analytical lenses on the plurality of actors, structures and connections emerging in the global sphere.

Quite similarly to the mainstream takes above, if not even more markedly, this second strand of research has put much emphasis on problem-focused approaches in an attempt to broaden the understanding of the dominant structures underpinning global governance beyond international relations. This viewpoint has since the 1990s developed in a series of alternative accounts that, arguably, tend to conform to an array of critical theoretical standpoints. From a Marxist and neo-Gramscian tradition, scholars such as Robert Cox have attempted to demonstrate how the architecture of world politics is far more hierarchical than the mainstream line depicts it. From a

mostly constructivist perspective, a growing number of IR students has gone to great lengths to illustrate the multiple determinations that shape norms, participation and institutions in global governance. This is, for instance, represented in Anne-Marie Slaughter's analysis of the emerging new world order (2004), or in Chris Reus-Smit's theorization of the modern construction of multilateralism (1998). Similarly, from more historicist angles, studies like Craig Murphy's analysis of international organization and industrial change have sought to underline those long-lived processes that situate the present architecture of politics within the broader *longue durée* of world affairs, thus looking back at the roots of the contemporary international system (Murphy 1994). Fundamentally, this burgeoning literature has not disproven the relevance of the 'international' and its institutions, but rather illustrated the extension in the geography of global governance.

World politics are, in fact, progressively constituted by transnational linkages, multi-level processes and even privatization of some governance activities across borders – a feature that few authors would nowadays dispute. Similarly, regulation and legislation are political activities that have been opened up to a burgeoning range of claims and policy-makers, leading not just to a broader participation in traditional juridical fora, but also to the rise of new legal orders and global regulatory governance.³ Importantly, this strand of global governance analysis has tended to focus on the task of tracing the agency of what are generally identified as 'non-traditional' actors in world politics. An example of this expanding literature can, for instance, be found in the recent collection *Who Governs the Globe?*, which gathers insights on global 'governors' as diverse as the EU, international contractors or pro-gun groups (Avant et al. 2010). Yet, all throughout this scholarship, key exponents such as Scholte, Sikkink or Cox have repeatedly called for further conceptual development towards a more nuanced reading of world politics.

Responding to this lacuna, and prompted mostly by critical takes, a limited number of international scholars has attempted a series of cross-cutting ontological critiques of, for the most part, the mainstream 'internationalist' takes and, in a more sparse fashion, of its alternative views. This strand of theorization is probably best represented by the scholarship of James Rosenau who, since the late 1980s, focused his efforts on critiquing the international understanding of the relations between domestic politics and foreign affairs (Rosenau 1976; 2003). A crucial insight that comes from this approach is also that of treating this field of studies as geographically qualified: *global* governance is seen here as a political context of governance scrutinized at a 'global' level. Of course, the attempt to redraw the foundations of global governance thinking is not limited to Rosenau. Manuel Castells' inquiry into the impact of networks and the emergence of a global civil society, for example, pointed to the crisis of political institutions in charge of managing global transitions, and advocated a novel empirics of world politics (Castells 2005). The same applies to scholars such as Oran Young (1997), involved in rethinking the global governance of the environment since the early 1980s, as

well as David Lake's relational take on global political-economic frames (Lake 1999). Overall, as Rosenau perhaps best noted at the end of the 1990s, international analysts are to be criticized here as they tend to forget that the organizing principle of what we might call 'global' governance is the 'governance *in* the world' rather than '*of* the world' (Rosenau 1997: 10). The 'global' in the expression is not 'out there' or above international politics, but rather *all around us*, as Tom Weiss will also recognize later on, representing the 'totality of institutions, policies, rules, practices, norms, procedures, and initiatives by which states and their citizens try to bring order and predictability to their responses to such universal problems as warfare, poverty, and environmental degradation' (Weiss 2009: 222).

Political spheres are therefore described by these scholars in a strongly intertwined, non-exclusive and multilayered topography of global governance. The state as a locus of government is but one of the many ambits where humans interact politically, and thus just one type of the several political institutions that interact in such environment. From this viewpoint, cities (just like central governments, international organizations and states) represent one of the many 'spheres of authority' (Rosenau 2007: 89) that constitute the broader corpus of global governance.⁴ Following from this, the overall geography of global governance is perhaps best illustrated in a 'multi-level' sense (Betsill and Bulkeley 2005a). We should thus 'assess ways in which the processes of governance are aggregated' (Murphy 2000: 789) at and from this level, rather than seeking to subsume all of these under the tight frames of IR – a consideration that is strongly echoed in the alternative views as well. Crucially for my inquiry, this 'third way' approach has a fundamental potential in its geographical sensitivity of global governance as a totality composed by myriad smaller governance spheres and alignments. The 'global' in the expression global governance, as a holistic 'perspective on world politics' (Dingwerth and Pattberg 2006: 185) as I will understand it henceforth, is a spatial qualifier that hints at the need to look at international processes beyond the confines charted by IR, and becomes not only an ontological endeavour, but also a geographical effort.

Opening the geography of global governance

Wary of the definitional confusion highlighted above, and in the spirit of its ontological reassessment of global governance, I would therefore argue that the geography of world politics needs a radical re-thinking. International studies needs to be wary that the spatiality of political relations is no longer reflected in the mainstream state-centrism, as both internationalist and alternative explanations might provide a too tight fit to match the vast complexity of world affairs. To be certain, this is no novelty: several social sciences have been engaged in a debate over the changing spatiality of human relations, with human geographers leading the way in this re-theorization.⁵ Yet, international scholars have long remained relatively impermeable to the broad

calls for a reconsideration of the spatial basis of their discipline. For this reason, in the early 1990s John Agnew (1994) set out to explain how the geography upon which this analysis stands should reach beyond a Westphalian model that sees the state as 'container of societies' and prime actor on the scene of global affairs, in order to set our focus loose from what he called the 'territorial trap' of IR scholarship. International studies, in fact, does not lack geography. Spatial assumptions about world politics are present throughout not only IR, but also security studies, international political economy and not least diplomatic studies. The problem, on the contrary, is that such implicit geographies have rarely been subject to criticism, let alone occupying a centre stage in the intra-disciplinary debates of the past few decades. Many of the considerations of the discipline have been rooted, as Scholte pointed out, in a 'methodological territorialism' that has equated forms of 'territoriality' with bounded spatial units, usually then paired with states, and that needs 'no further lease on life in the contemporary globalizing world' (Scholte 2000: 58).

This problematic ontology is the heritage of reductionist engagements that see political communities as easily discernible, where the construction of the 'other' is a simple matter of territorial separateness.⁶ Yet, the discipline has remained too fascinated by such fictitious construction rooted in the 'myth of 1648' (Teschke 2003) and reinforced by a state-referential practice of international relations as carried out by policymakers in the Cold War. We therefore need to 'resist the reification of the state' (Sassen 2003: 2) and move beyond an understanding of politics that overcomes such misconceptions of fixity. Neil Brenner, one of the major contemporary socio-spatial theorists, has long argued that a move beyond state-centrism needs to recognize the blatant fact that such 'mosaic' territoriality is itself the result of a process of constant change and contestation, which is nowadays challenged by the production of alternative configurations as prompted by globalization (Brenner 1999). Escaping the 'trap' does not mean denying 'the state's continued relevance as a major geographical locus of social power' (Brenner 1999: 41), but rather rethinking the socio-political foundations of the geography of the twenty-first century, as the ontological critiques of global governance have sought to do.

Arguably, this lesson has been taken up by a minority of international theorists, with the critical works of R.B.J. Walker (1993) *in primis*, as well as James Der Derian (1990) or John Ruggie (1993), bearing witness to this moderate 'territorial turn' beyond the territorial trap. Nonetheless, much headway is still needed in this direction before the discipline can keep up with the pace set by other social sciences like human geography. There remains a tendency to reify the political space of the global system, with a widespread lack of analytically grounded understanding of it as a process, a set of political, economic and social structures in the making, which allows for change and continuity. Yet although this understanding might seem obvious to an overwhelming majority of human geographers and political sociologists, determinist interpretations of space as fixity and stability still hold a very pervasive

influence upon the social sciences and international studies in particular. Primarily focused on states, the international theorist remains 'trapped by the territoriality of their power' (Reinicke 1999–2000: 45) and blind to the multiplicity of loci at which power is operational.

This rethinking has, for instance, had some application in diplomacy. While the paradiplomacy literature (described in my introduction) evolved into a largely accepted terminology amongst international specialists, Brian Hocking sought to develop an alternative perspective on the changing character of international relations. By describing the processes of 'localization' of foreign affairs in the early 1990s, he sought to outline a more progressive picture of diplomacy aimed at breaking with most traditionalist notions of IR (Hocking 1993). Hocking highlighted how the idea of paradiplomacy represented a forced distinction between tiers of diplomatic practice, which could in reality reinforce a confrontational understanding of international relations as a milieu of intra- and inter-state competition, rather than bring about any theoretical evolution. As he emphasized in various subsequent publications, the localization trend is only a feature of a broader move towards an expansion of foreign policy to a broader array of voices than the traditional ones. Hocking described international politics as a 'multilayered' context, within which states *and* non-central governments are able to project their interests at both international and national levels in 'a multilevel political environment spanning subnational, national and international arenas' (Hocking 1993: 3).⁷ As such, he outlined the present global governance landscape as characterized by countless 'multistakeholder arrangements' that construct the texture of world politics and organize a 'diplomatic milieu' that is currently inhabited by a mounting diversity of actors 'which certainly poses a far more complex image of international interactions than does the traditional intergovernmental perspective' (Hocking 2004: 147). Unfortunately, and despite the substantial echo in diplomatic studies, Hocking's framework inspired little interest in the urban tier of this multilayered picture which has only – at best – begun to scrape the surface of the complexities underlying the engagement of cities in world politics.

Driven by IR, the study of the global is still too often underpinned by an 'internationalist' view of the system (and by proxy global governance) as a given. Even amongst the traditional agendas of IR, where there is a somewhat unanimous consent on the predominantly anarchical nature of world politics, most theorists would be wary of disputing the centrality of the hierarchical triad of 'man, state and international system' (Waltz 1959) that has dominated the discipline throughout the second part of the twentieth century.⁸ When it comes to politics, individuals remain subjects in a world of states, whose relations represent the 'upper level' of 'higher politics' that governs world affairs. Perforations to this hierarchical picture, to be fair, are indeed the bread and butter of contemporary political analysis: ever since the 1970s the literature on 'transnational relations' (Keohane and Nye 1972; Slaughter 2004) and the growing debates on the phenomena of globalization

have occupied a strong position amongst international theorists.⁹ Yet, state-centricity remains the predominant analytical game in town as the realist hierarchy man–state–international system still stands (often implicitly) as the major reference point in the discipline. This territorialism is, as Henri Lefebvre (1991: 21) reminded us, a misleading and potentially oppressive result of the modern state's role as producer of legal boundaries and internal homogenization towards the 'fetishization of space in the service of the state'.

On the contrary, the geography of global governance can be understood as a 'global' complex of all spaces through which world politics unfold. The spatial understanding that defines much of this analytical move beyond state-centrism is centred on the understanding that states and international relations are only a part of that broader social context that Pierre Bourdieu (1989) termed *social space*: a multidimensional world of overlapping social spheres, where individuals and communities are agents on, and subjects of, the structures of human interactions. This concept presupposes an emphasis on relationships over substances – be they states or other more material structures of world politics. Social space transcends the divisions created by physical space, defining the geography of human relations as ordered not solely by environmental morphology but also by individuals' relations with each other, and thus depicting an image of a global society that surpasses traditional state-centric views. This view sees global governance as a tridimensional 'jigsaw puzzle' composed of countless forms of social organization, 'each of which is configured upon differential spatial scales' that are incessantly 'being superimposed and intertwined' (Braudel 1984: 39; Brenner 1998: 8). Space is thus perceived in relational terms as a function of human relations and as a milieu that is subject to interpretation as well as contestation, rather than an immovable exogenous force on society. It is a context 'undergoing continual construction through the agency of things encountering each other in more or less organized circulations' (Thrift 2003: 96). Space is socially constructed, can be ordered, and is the context of social encounters – a set of features that then push us to inquire into what agency global cities have in shaping the social spaces of world politics.

Now, to be clear, I do not wish to dispute that states and state sovereignty still play a key role in our present conditions. However, by moving to a *relational* understanding of space, I want to remind the reader that the man–state–international triad is only a part of a much broader system of political relations which exists and is continually performed within an even wider world of social interactions. This approach carries on the critical theorists' praxeological attempt to move the discipline's discourse from 'a politics of the "international" to a politics of the world' (Walker 2010: 2) and from the state as unit of analysis to the state as a participant unit in a more extensive milieu than the international. In this sense it is fundamental to remain conscious that the Westphalian hierarchy has not utterly vanished in the processes of globalization and de-territorialization typical of our time, but has rather been reconfigured while remaining the skeleton of today's world-system.¹⁰

However, it is when we consider the social spaces of international politics as nested in a broader milieu of political and, more generically, human relations (i.e. social space) that puzzles and problems arise. Indeed, it is clear to most international scholars that, for instance, individuals can nowadays elude hierarchies and ‘cheat’ by bending the rules of the game, for example, by holding multiple nationalities or slipping through the interstices of the international system as refugees, smugglers or cybersurfers. Hence, it is in the dialectical relations between this ‘traditional’ infrastructure of politics and ‘novel’ forms of authority, sovereignty and transnational agency, or more broadly in the interaction between the realm of *government* and the broader spaces of *governance*, that we should locate the fundamental political changes of our epoch – a shift that is well represented in world politics by global *environmental* governance.

Mapping the geography of global governance

The evolution of climate diplomacy

The emergence of a global governance characterized not only by international structures but by a more complex policymaking architecture is a key dynamic that cannot go unproblematised if we aim to consider the contemporary relevance of metropolises. In fact, this is the essential geopolitical background in which the link between global cities and global governance should be contextualized. This is in accordance with the ontological task undertaken by those critiques of ‘mainstream’ and ‘alternative’ understandings on global governance which, as I highlighted above, have thus far attempted to illustrate the spatial complexity of world politics. From this angle, seeking to provide a summary of the overall political realignments recasting the organization of world politics, Rosenau (1990: 12–16) depicted how ‘turbulent’ processes of aggregation and disaggregation have promoted the ‘post-international’ emergence of a two-fold geography of global governance as extending through both (rather than exclusively) ‘state-centric’ *and* ‘multi-centric’ arenas.

The geopolitics that emerge from this transition are far more complex and ‘messy’ than the hierarchical picture drawn by the mainstream analysis. If we move beyond reductionist views, the spatiality of global governance might quite arguably be expanding into an increasingly prolific ‘aggregate’ (Dimitrov 2010: 18) dimension which stands partly as an alternative and partly as a complement to the core norms and institutions of the system. This complex policy realm is still clustered around core international processes, but is also increasingly pinpointed on these latter’s hybridization with non-governmental entities no longer just occupying advocacy roles ‘on the side’ of the multilateral world, but also carrying out key implementation and adaptation tasks.

Global *environmental* governance, besides representing a prolific background on which to investigate the international role of cities, also provides us

with a poignant demonstration of this geopolitical evolution through the past decades.¹¹ In this sense it is almost indisputable that climate change, as flagship theme of environmental policymaking, has nowadays emerged as a central theme for international politics. Since at least the 1970s, it has steadily risen to prominence in the dynamics of global governance as a prime issue of concern for both diplomacy as well as the global public at large. It has been internationalized as part of a broader debate on the sustainability of the human imprint on the Earth's environment prompted by mounting scientific, governmental and civil advocacy first voiced in the 1960s. Through an original complex of civil anxieties over nuclear weaponry, marine pollution or wildlife conservation, a green agenda has progressively seen a 'deterritorialization' (Elliott 2004: 8) of environmental issues that emerged beyond state jurisdiction into the realm of world politics. In this sense, the rise of a 'global' political architecture concerned with the environment has been prompted by the perceived need to find shared international solutions to the 'tragedy of the commons' posed, as labelled in Garrett Hardin's popular article (1968), by the problems of a booming population. Prompted by the rise of non-governmental movements such as Greenpeace, the Sierra Club or Friends of the Earth, the environmental degradation that these 'limits to growth' (Meadows et al. 1974) were beginning to showcase gained an important position in both media coverage and international debates.

The United Nations soon catalysed much of the intergovernmental action on this matter and, beginning with the 1972 Stockholm UN Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE), kickstarted the formalization of a series of international frameworks aiming to find concerted policy responses to this growing problem. The product of UNCHE, for instance, was a stable agency specifically targeted at providing a 'voice for the environment within the United Nations system' (Young 1993: 145) – the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) – which was then capable of maintaining a degree of worldwide interest and scientific impetus around the issue and assemble, in 1988, an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Since then, the IPCC has had the merit of not solely seeking to develop a coherent and cross-cutting body of scientific knowledge on the environmental impacts of global climate shifts, but has also progressively engaged the international policymaking community by providing politically-oriented analyses of the consequences of 'global warming' such as drought and flood scenarios.¹²

From Stockholm onwards the politics of the environment have witnessed an exponential increase in both civil society advocacy and multilateral (state) cooperation efforts, which in turn have prompted the rise of a multi-agency, UN-centric and growing consensual global climate process. It is perhaps with the political momentum gathering at the end of the 1980s and early 1990s that the major milestones towards the development of a global architecture specifically targeting environmental issues can be appreciated. The themes that emerged in Stockholm were in fact echoed by the UN General Assembly which, looking to the end of the millennium, established in 1983 the World

Commission on Environment and Development (WCED).¹³ This independent body, after having conducted almost 3 years of hearings and fact-finding missions, delivered in 1987 the report *Our Common Future* (often referred to as the 'Brundtland Report' after the Commission's chairperson) that has since shaped the global discourse on sustainability issues. As the results of the report magnified growing international and civil society concern regarding the status of environmental degradation, the United Nations progressively took charge of setting the direction of this movement and, after a series of targeted resolutions, called in 1989 for a new meeting that was to establish a landmark in the evolution of the global politics of the environment.

Set as a strategy-making convention faced with a rapidly deteriorating global habitat, a United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was convened in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. The 'Earth Summit' – as it was then popularly defined – produced a series of non-binding instruments, the core of which were the Rio Declaration, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and 'Agenda 21' – an environmental road-map designed to curb the destructive impact on the planet of human activities.¹⁴ Thanks to the growing centrality of the climate issue for the broader discourse on sustainability, the UNFCCC took hold of much of this political dynamic and set up a series of negotiation rounds for a legally-binding framework for its members – a step finally achieved at the third Conference of Parties (COP3) 5 years afterwards in 1997, in Kyoto, on the basis of an international mandate agreed 2 years before in Berlin. The treaty signed on this occasion, universally known as the 'Kyoto Protocol', set a series of emission reduction and environmental development targets to be achieved within an initial commitment period of 2008–12, when a new agreement is expected to succeed the Protocol.¹⁵ Importantly, the Protocol formalized the necessary twin approach to the climate issue which had thus far been discussed, but not enforced, through the UNFCCC. On the one hand, global concerted actions needed to 'mitigate' the impacts of climate shifts by reducing GHGs and avoiding a spiralling deterioration of the Earth's habitat; on the other, context- and locally-specific action is to be coupled with international efforts as states (and by proxy their communities) have to 'adapt' to the unavoidable consequences of the already-existing environmental depletion.¹⁶ To tackle these, Kyoto formalized the international policymaking nature of the governance architecture for the following decades.¹⁷

However, alongside this evolution, the 1990s saw the establishment of two other contemporary trends in environmental politics: a reframing of security concerns and an expansion of the participation in the global climate discourse. First, climate change politics progressively developed a security dimension which is nowadays 'common speak' of the international politics of the environment. This 'securitization' of climate change (Scott 2008) emerged with the notion of 'environmental security' made official by the Brundtland Report in 1987, disappeared for several years after the Rio momentum, and resurfaced prominently at the end of the century through American, EU

and NATO initiatives. More importantly, the multi-dimensional projections of the IPCC, which in the early 2000s was increasingly central in presenting scientific evidence to sustain the global climate change debate, found fertile ground in the United Nations' formalization of an individual-centred approach to security questions, as perhaps best represented by the UNDP's 1994 *Human Development Report* and its 'human security' approach, thus progressively interlinking the environmental questions to security concerns.¹⁸

The securitization of climate change was initially prompted by an attempt to bring even more convincingly the 'low' politics problems of environmental degradation to the table of 'higher' politics. Yet, if its core task was to expose the inadequacy of the traditional international instruments in the face of climate challenges, much of the result of this discourse shift has instead fostered the opposite and reinforced sovereign, where not military, claims (Barnett 2003; Floyd 2008). This has furthered states' positioning as 'climate hegemons' (Barnett 2007: 1361) in the geopolitics of climate change, culminating in the April 2007 UN Security Council debate on the security implications of climate change. The security approach to climate change has thus partly been 'hijacked' by louder governmental considerations that have progressively set this issue at the heart of their foreign policy approaches, concerned by the 'cascading geopolitical implications' (Podesta and Ogden 2007; Busby 2008) of a shifting global environment.

Nonetheless, climate change has not solely been securitized into the language of international politics: the global governance architecture concerned with this phenomenon has also been expanding an 'aggregate' dimension. This complex policy realm, while embryonic in the 1980s and 1990s, took centre stage at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). Marking the 10-year implementation review of Agenda 21, the new 'Earth Summit' was convened that year in Johannesburg. Despite containing a quite large set of overall goals, the resulting Plan of Implementation fell short of a real climate implementation roadmap, a framework that would only see the light of global politics 5 years later, at the December 2007 UNFCCC Bali conference (COP13), mostly thanks to extensive NGO pressure. Yet, WSSD had already taken a crucial step, as I will note below, in advancing the overall architecture of global environmental governance. In fact, the summit produced nearly 300 public-private partnerships under UN auspices and registered under a UN-run Partnership Database, a move that formalized the climate policymaking connection amongst the private sector and both the NGO as well as the international community.

Due to the proactiveness of these actors, the core *international* drivers of climate governance have thus been faced with an exponential growth in both the multilateral and the aggregate realms – a dynamic that has progressively highlighted the policy weaknesses of the original international negotiation-led climate roadmap. In the four decades since its early days in Stockholm, climate governance has seen a growth in the volume of interests, agendas and actors at the UN table, which has been coupled with a sprawl in negotiation

frameworks as well as in the track-II and non-governmental pressures on them. Yet, all of this has fundamentally been focused on a core diplomatic process that remains multilateral, and that has begun to struggle with this complexity. As Paul Wapner (2003: 3) noted shortly after Johannesburg: ‘the WSSD suffered not only from its size and the cacophony of voices but from a pervasive feeling of conference fatigue’.

Yet the climate governance process did not stop, and proceeded to a series of complex negotiations on the credibility of the Convention approach that, initiated in Montreal in 2005 (COP11), culminated with the 2007 UNFCCC Bali conference. The negotiations in Indonesia were at that point strongly influenced by the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC, which was adopted earlier that year and provided substantial evidence for the man-made foundations of climate change; as well as the increasingly influential *Stern Review*, compiled by British economist Nicholas Stern (2007) and containing a compelling *economic* case for global climate action. Bali, from this point of view, seemed to have achieved some of its core purposes.¹⁹ The key result agreed in this instance was the ‘Bali Action Plan’ (informally known as the ‘Roadmap’) which established an Ad-hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-Long Term) with the participation of the developing countries, United States included, tasked with preparing a comprehensive deal by COP15 in Copenhagen. The optimism of Bali led many to think the steps taken would bear substantial fruit, and thus heightened both intergovernmental and global civil society’s attention to the 2009 Danish summit. Yet, the process and its related global implementation once again progressively stalled in the lead-up to the December 2009 UNFCCC conference, which was meant to produce a renewed momentum towards a second global instrument to curb climate change, but has in fact resulted in little more than a somewhat perfunctory three-page accord and a series of annexed non-binding commitments. Yet, in its limited achievements, Copenhagen has aptly illustrated that global governance is more than international relations and that it has developed a more complex geopolitical spatiality than IR often allows.

The architecture of climate governance

To be sure, Copenhagen did not mean the end of global climate governance: the UNFCCC continued to further summits, first in Cancun (COP16) and then in Durban (COP17), seeking to restore diplomatic trust in the process and move forward on the Kyoto targets. As Robert Falkner noted: ‘after a brief period of stocktaking and mutual recrimination [...] it seems as if climate diplomacy is back on track, even if Copenhagen has lowered expectations’ (Falkner et al. 2010: 253). What appears now quite widely accepted is the fact that multilateral mechanisms have progressively felt the burden of those international politics which set them up in the first place. The COP15 in Copenhagen is a case in point. While struggling to meet the already low

initial expectations with a final accord ‘taken note of’ but not ‘adopted’, the summit presented global audiences with a spectacle of politics in disarray, with many, such as former British PM Gordon Brown, claiming that the summit was ‘held to ransom by a handful of countries’.²⁰ Rhetoric aside, that global challenge presented by the necessity of finding holistic solutions to a long-term, ever-changing and transnational problem such as environmental sustainability, was tackled by the often simplistic and short-sighted dealings of politics among states. With a diplomatic process drifting aimlessly, non-governmental participants sidelined from most of the negotiations, and the traditional realpolitik impasse vexing the dialogue, the summit resulted in yet another loose agreement and very little international action. What is perhaps more evident, at least in terms of world politics, from the 30-odd year history of global climate politics, is that two main approaches have emerged as dominant ‘models’ defining the architecture of global governance – a more traditional take based on international relations and an increasingly central civil society push based on non-governmental agency.²¹ The two embody the changing structure of global governance that is characterized by Rosenau as a coexistence of both ‘state-centric’ and ‘multi-centric’ realms of world politics.

The ‘global deal’ realm of state-centric diplomacy

To begin with, providing what is the dominant force in environmental politics, the multilateral arena has been aptly described by Robert Falkner and Nicholas Stern as a ‘global deal approach’ characterized by states as major actors and focused on the UNFCCC operations (Stern 2008; Falkner et al. 2010). This take is generally led by a governmental agenda implemented through international summits (such as Rio in 1992, Kyoto in 1997 or Copenhagen in 2009) and multilateral relations (as with the European Union’s carbon reduction schemes), and aimed at developing common targets and binding obligations to offer concerted responses to environmental degradation. Typical players within this context are of course state governments, as well as international organizations such as the UN and the EU, as well as coalitions of allied nations such as the Alliance of Small Island States or the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Core to this approach is the attempt to develop international regimes through legally-binding instruments such as protocols and top-down implementation schemes. Alongside this main goal, the ‘global deal’ take is also focused on increasing the awareness of the importance of domestic commitment and local action under the established frameworks.

Yet the core problem of the global deal approach is in its practical ‘two-level game’ mentality by which national leaders seek, contemporaneously, to maximize domestic support and international agency (Paterson 1996). This also means that prolonged negotiations and delayed responses afflict most of the frameworks set up through this approach. For instance, albeit having been

signed in 1997, the Kyoto Protocol took until February 2005 to enter into force due to a lengthy and contradictory ratification process vexed not only by international negotiations, but also by deadlocked domestic debates. This all results in a complex of multilateral processes that, due to the multiplicity of inputs and the limitations of the consensus-building approach, proceed at what Paul Harris (2008: 672) quite justly tagged as a 'glacial' pace.

The 'aggregate' realm of multi-centric diplomacy

The 'global civil society' (GCS) approach, as many scholars have termed it, offers an alternative take on the environmental question and climate change in particular (Lipschutz 1992; Price 1998; Kaldor 2003;). By relying on a bottom-up process led by non-governmental organizations and transnational advocacy coalitions such as the Climate Action Network, an umbrella organization for over 500 NGOs working on both governmental and individual action agendas, GCS approaches prompt parallel and cross-cutting political processes beyond the official 'track-I' diplomacy. In this take, actors rely mostly on campaigning and lobby instruments in order to prompt the 'global deal' track to adopt binding obligations as well as to raise civil awareness of the issue of environmental degradation. The twin task of GCS is thus performed through contemporaneous lobbying and monitoring of the activities of states and international organizations, which remain the drivers for global action. Typical policymaking arenas for this approach are therefore equally 'side events' to major conferences and social fora, as well as track-II initiatives bringing representatives from the global deal track in direct contact with an heterogeneous public of NGOs, private coalitions and local advocacy groups. Occasionally, the opposite might also occur when GCS representatives are invited to the table of high politics as either experts or ad hoc mediators.

Now, to appreciate this aggregate dimension, it is of fundamental importance not to dissociate the global civil society 'world' from the more state-centric realms of climate politics. As in Rosenau's distinction, this approach both coexists and is directly referential to the 'global deal' context. Moreover, non-governmental agency does not have a marginal role in the present political scenario. As Copenhagen insider Radoslav Dimitrov (2010: 18) pointed out, despite the more or less evident failures of state-led multilateral governance, there is today an 'aggregate climate governance' clustered 'around' intergovernmental negotiations and representing 'a vibrant multilevel policy realm'. Arguably, GCS is the key engine of much of the current momentum for global climate action, a role that it has more or less continuously played since the early days of environmental politics in the 1970s. This ultimately means that 'global deal' and 'global civil society' approaches have existed in a dialectic relationship with each other (Della Porta and Torrow 2005), where international politics has had to regularly face and internalize the pressures from GCS lobbying efforts, while the latter has actively sought to determine

the pace, agenda and commitment of the former. In this sense the 'global civil society' remains relatively external to the core intergovernmental process, on which it necessarily seeks to put pressure through monitoring and advocacy.

This, in practice, involves a double process that Kathryn Sikkink (2005) labelled 'insider-outsider coalition' dynamic: while 'insider strategies' seek to impact the global deal approach directly through lobbying government representatives, 'outsider strategies' rely on activism, either by public demonstration, media and other campaigning techniques, in order to prompt a wide public pressure on state officials. This representativeness of public concerns, coupled with the authoritative knowledge GCS actors derive from either their research-intensive bases or their track-II connection with academia, allows them sufficient international legitimacy to then take advantage of their networked and cross-cutting nature to promote climate agendas (Yanacopulos 2005). However, one of the core problems of this approach, evident since the early days of the international climate response, is that NGOs are still largely dependent on their capacity to influence states to take action, and thus largely subject to these latter's willingness to engage with the non-governmental agenda.²² The risk, therefore, is one of 'disenfranchisement' from the actual negotiations, due to several factors including lack of formal implementation capacity, funding, and clashing of normative agendas with the major track-I process, which can in turn leave global civil society 'out in the cold' (Fisher 2010). Moreover, much of what is considered 'civil' is still largely reliant on governmental actors, not solely for the implementation of global climate actions but also for its own existence. This is also to be considered in light of the willingness of state actors to maintain civil society components in the major fora of global environmental politics. For example, at Copenhagen in 2009, when NGOs were left out of the final stages of the negotiations, several states added key NGO representatives to their official delegations (McGregor 2011). In this sense, as Matthew Auer (2000: 161) argues: 'the enigma of the state lurking behind (or within) the so-called "non-state" explains why state actors remain ascendant in the mainstream international environmental relations paradigm'.

The centrality of neoliberalism and PEG

The traditional Westphalian architecture of global governance is thus increasingly embedded in plurilateral geopolitics where it coexists with entities that cut across it (such as TNCs, NGOs and quangos) and where it is hybridized in unprecedented political structures.²³ However, as Steven Bernstein (2002) has argued at length, the twin state-centric and multi-centric architecture of global (environmental) governance is characterized by a cross-cutting centrality of neoliberalism as the dominant policymaking approach, which emerged since the 1972 UNCHE initiatives and was formalized at the 1992 Earth Summit. Bernstein argues that the architecture of global environmental governance has then seen, in the past three decades, a long-term

transformation towards a more pervasive centrality of neoliberalism, and in particular its 'neo' interpretations, which form today a dominant 'norm-complex' (Bernstein 2001: 209) in world politics. 'Liberal' is in this sense understood as an approach pinpointed on 'market-oriented public policy to resolve social and political problems' in a rejection of Keynesian economics (Falk 1995: 563; Bernstein 2001: 246). Now, this dominant ideology has, of course, not gone uncontested nor unchallenged by alternative paradigms.²⁴ Yet, certain policymaking ideas have progressively spread through international instruments such as the Kyoto Protocol of 1997, joint public-private initiatives such as the WSSD partnerships of 2002, or even NGO campaigns such as those of the Climate Action Network in 2009. So, despite the obvious differences between 'global deal' and 'aggregate' actors, Bernstein identified a series of core neoliberal elements that, focused on market-based and individualist takes on politics, characterize this quasi-consensus. Crucially, market approaches to environmental protection, the privatization of the commons, and the promotion of free trade schemes to solve environmental crises, all feature prominently in sustaining the central notion of 'sustainable development' – the central tenet of this approach (Bernstein 2002: 3–6). While these do not necessarily always appear together as political strategies, they all tend to be recognized as effective and desirable instruments for environmental policy-making across both 'global deal' and 'aggregate' realms. As Bernstein noted, this has resulted in a dominance of neoliberalism through what he called the 'compromise of liberal environmentalism', which 'predicates environmental protection on the promotion and maintenance of a liberal economic order' by promoting market and other 'green growth' mechanisms over 'command and control methods' (2001: 6–7).²⁵ This has thus been accommodated, or at least bridged, amongst aggregate and global deal approaches, in the form of a compromise between growth and conservation, or more broadly between development and environment.

This neoliberal ideology has therefore spread and risen to prominence in post-Cold War world politics, and not just in environmentalist politics.²⁶ More importantly, as many have argued, this political-economic approach is now being 'exploded' at governance levels far beyond international relations, both above and below the state level (Larner 2000; Harvey 2005). As Philip Cerny (2008: 221) pointed out, the transposition of these practices is fuelled by the contemporaneous 'totalization of modern bureaucratic institutions' and governance regimes, and the 'individualization of people through capitalist commerce and personal consciousness'. Consequently, some traditional sovereign prerogatives embedded in the nature of the nation-state have become both contingent and, at the same time, progressively superseded by a focus on political individualization and by political-economic concerns. As Cerny (2010) argues, neoliberalism allows government not to be wiped out by globalization but rather to be reinterpreted and recast at multiple political levels, promoting the emergence of more pluralist policymaking arenas.

Neoliberal environmental politics has therefore steadily been developing policymaking fora beyond the UN structure, and in particular through public-private partnerships (PPPs): those joint governmental/non-governmental ventures where the provision of services is operated in concert by both state and private entities (Glasbergen 1998; Teisman and Klijn 2002). The hybridization of climate policymaking structures kickstarted in Johannesburg signalled to the wider global governance audience that, as in several other policy areas, the effectiveness of the international environmental effort was in large part dependent on both governmental *and* non-governmental agency. Crucially, as noted above, if the 2002 WSSD conference itself provided little more than a non-binding declaration of intents, the broader meeting of global environmental governance actors in South Africa and the 300 PPPs signed then, pushed towards the redefinition of governmental prerogatives and civil modes of action. While under the UN Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, a series of intergovernmental ('type I') agreements offered by the multilateral process, the numerous partnerships formalized at WSSD constituted 'voluntary, self-enforced and non-negotiated' (type-II) accords 'between different constellations of governments, international organizations, NGOs and industry partners' (Bäckstrand 2006: 293). Public-private partnerships have therefore acted as a major (albeit perhaps not the only) linkage between the aggregate and the international dimensions of global environmental policymaking, producing advocacy and lobbying bridges, as well as more concrete implementation and planning channels that, since WSSD, have been a steady presence in climate governance.

Key neoliberal promoter of this global deal/aggregate bridge is, however, a key policy actor that has often remained overlooked: *Private Environmental Governance* (or PEG), which has steadily risen to the forefront of environmental policymaking (Falkner 2003). Centred on public-private partnerships agreements and corporate responsibility actions such as the Forest Stewardship Council, the ISO-14000 scheme or more localized initiatives like the CEOs for Cities programme, PEG has become an active 'civil society' element in the global effort to curb climate change. In fact, civil society approaches can be further distinguished into at least two further categories of non-governmental approaches to global governance, broadly encompassing both interest groups motivated by 'instrumental' goals targeted to the promotion of the well-being of the members of the group, as well as advocacy networks seeking to lobby for a 'perceived common good' – a distinction that, as Thomas Risse (2007: 252) highlights, might roughly coincide with the 'for profit/not for profit' divide.

Of course, this differentiation need not be interpreted as a strict separation, but rather as a possible continuum along which all GCS approaches, be they organizations or looser networks, tend to locate themselves.²⁷ To this extent, it is *analytically* useful to distinguish these two takes as components of the broader 'global civil society' category sketched here for comparative purposes. If 'common good' advocacy approaches tend to represent the bedrock of

non-governmental environmental politics, it is now well accepted among international scholars that a substantial and tangible ‘privatization’ (Clapp 1998) of environmental governance has emerged on the international scene. Based on the need for business and industrial sectors to adapt to the changing global scenario, and the key challenges posed by the rise of climate change issues, these private actors have progressively undertaken an active role in environmental politics (Pattberg 2005).

Table 2.1 Clarifying the aggregate realm

	<i>‘Global deal’</i>	<i>Global civil society</i>	<i>PEG</i>
Polymaking process	Top-down	Bottom-up	Transnational
Main actors	States and IOs	NGOs and transnational coalitions	Market-oriented privates (corporation and business sector)
Polymaking style	• Track-I • Universal decision-making • National implementation	• Track-II • Activism • Lobby on international bargaining and national implementation	• Track-II • PPPs • Lobby on international bargaining and national implementation • Sponsoring/funding
Polymaking arenas	• International summits • Bilateral relations • Multilateral relations	• ‘Side events’ • Social fora • Insider connections	• International summits • Business councils • Ad hoc workshops
Main goals	Develop common targets and binding obligations	Prompt binding obligations and democratize process	Profit, adaptation and corporate social responsibility
Main implementation strategy	Regime-building	• Prompt regime-building • Constructive vigilance • Non-coercive regime-building • Track-II links to insider coalitions	• Corporate development • Non-coercive regime-building (self-regulation) • Ad hoc partnerships • Informal participation in ‘insider coalitions’
Sources of legitimacy	• Sovereignty • Political representation	• Represent public opinion • Authoritative knowledge	• Centrality in world economy • Influence on ‘global deal’ and ‘global civil society’
Key implementation problem	Overcome fragmentation	Limited authority	Limited authority

Private environmental governance can in this instance be tagged as capable of promoting innovative forms of governance mostly based on transnational links with diverse actors (such as states, NGOs and IGOs) that, while not an entirely new phenomenon, have a lasting impact on global affairs and constitute more than a 'transient governance fad' (Andonova 2005: 46). The hybridization of governing practices is, in this sense, not just a matter of economic privatization: first, in the public-private partnerships constituting much of the bedrock of extensive climate change action at multiple scales, government entities such as cities remain 'thin' providers in the sense that they serve a central, but not independent, role in policymaking. In turn, the private sector, represented not solely by corporations but also smaller firms, business councils and other civil society organizations, acquires a partial mandate to partake in policymaking processes.²⁸ The growing centrality of PEG promotes a now well-established 'boundary-spanning' (Eweje 2007: 15) process in climate politics. Contemporary globalization processes have 'introduced a new space and framework for acting' in which politics 'is no longer tied solely to state actors and institutions, the result being that additional players, new roles, new resources appear on the scene' (Beck 2005: 3–4). This landscape shows countless 'multistakeholder arrangements' (Forman and Segaar 2006: 205) constructing the texture that nowadays organizes world politics (Table 2.1). Yet, what is the positioning of *global cities* in this complex multi-centric realm?

3 A global influence

‘Actant’ and ‘actor’ dimensions

THINKING OF GLOBAL CITIES AS ACTANTS

The *global* reach of the city

The phrase ‘global city’ has a deeper resonance than might appear at first sight. Similar to the fate of the expression ‘cosmopolitan’ this term has been abused by many as a buzzword on which public relations campaigns have been mounted. If the popular imagery sees it as associated with tourist-ridden, skyscraper-lined, hyper-mobile metropolises, the role of these metropolises is more than just that of national or regional gateways: they are postindustrial sites connected to the widest possible (‘global’) tiers of human interactions. Cities function not solely as articulatory nodes for worldwide and regional networks, but also as engines of those globalizing processes that are reconfiguring the contemporary geography of social relations. To be certain, there is very little novelty in arguing for the existence of these cities: the scholarship on this phenomenon dates back almost a century, to the work of Patrick Geddes in the early 1900s, and has productively developed into a well-established strand of research through a vast and varied cohort of contributors coming from several disciplines, not solely within the social sciences. The original role of the phrase ‘global city’ as analytical construct, brought to fame by Sassen’s homonym research of the early 1990s, has evolved from a complex and eclectic tradition of scholars who have sought to conjugate the study of the ‘urban’ with the analysis of the radical changes underpinning our epoch (Brenner and Keil 2006).

Crucial to this tradition is the assumption that the present ‘urban age’ has seen the rise of what Geddes, in his landmark 1915 planning study, termed *world cities*: pivotal metropolises that incorporate the great majority of international business and shape the flow of global economic exchanges.¹ Later portrayed by Peter Hall in the 1960s and John Friedmann in the 1980s, these cities are distinguished from the myriad urban settlements around the globe not just on a demographic basis, but mainly for their strategic political and economic role. World cities are described as major centres of political power, great ports, financial hubs, places of production and dissemination of

information through, for instance, universities or mass media, capable of gathering a significant proportion of the international wealth (Hall 1984; Friedmann 1986). Considering all of these activities, urban analysts of the 1980s and early 1990s pointed out how these cities were central to the architecture of the present world-system, and how they occupied 'core' positioning vis-à-vis other cities, thus charting the top tiers of a world urban hierarchy.²

However, this world-system characterization might not suffice to demonstrate the distinctiveness of the key metropolises of our time, especially in terms of their active role in shaping the geography of global governance. As settlements with these features have represented a constant phenomenon throughout history, some contemporary 'world cities' are perhaps qualitatively different from those of the industrial, or the classical, civilizations (Kotkin 2006). Today's 'world cities' are contingent within both processes of urbanization and globalization, and represent central elements of the global economic system that is presently defining 'unprecedented geographies of centres and margins' (Sassen 2012). For this reason, in 'an attempt to name a difference with the [concept of] world city' envisaged by Hall and Friedmann, and to provide a more accurate analysis of their contemporary relevance, Sassen conceived the model of the *global city* in the 1990s. This analytical move was set to define those 'strategic sites' (Sassen 2001: xix) of production of global control capacities that constitute the hinges of our society. For Sassen, global cities are emerging as prime articulators 'not only for global capital, but also for the transnationalization of labor and the formation of translocal communities and identities' (2005b: 38). They represent the pivotal nodes of the intricate systems of global flows that connect people around the planet. Hence, the global city is a type of world city that exists not solely as strategic site of worldwide networks, but also as a functional entity of those globalizing processes of 'time/space compression' (Harvey 1989b) that are reconfiguring the geography of social relations and resulting in a 'multi-faceted transformation of the parameters of the human condition' (Bauman 1998: 2).

If the processes leading towards globalization are often characterized by abstract and ephemeral dynamics where time and space are frequently recast and result in contradictory effects, we can attempt to 'filter' them, as Sassen (1998) suggested, through the specifics (culture, political structures, economic functions, history and so forth) of those key places where they are mainly articulated. Sassen's formulation allows for variations in the nature of the different cities, which in turn epitomize not only nodal points as Friedmann originally conceived them, but also strategic sites of advanced production. This particular output (responsible for their global status) is principally represented by producer services, which in turn represent one of the key contemporary forces shaping the global economy. These particular localities, of which New York, Tokyo and London symbolized the apex, are distinguished by the agglomeration of central command functions (legal, financial, managerial, planning, executive, etc.) necessary for corporate organizations to

operate across multiple global locations. Hence, in contrast with understandings of power (such as Manuel Castells') as dislocated and decentralized through networks, Sassen illustrated how control over such worldwide connections is concentrated by those who take advantage of command-and-control functions embedded in specific central places. Global cities are not merely the result of flows, but also their primary engines, and would not otherwise exist if not as a part of global networks of strategic sites. This strategic positioning, as I will illustrate more extensively in Chapter 7, is the result of a complex interconnection between local specificity and linkage with transnational flows. Hence, the uniqueness of a global city (and thus its attractiveness) is supplied by a hybrid mix of endogenous drivers and global pulls (Allen 2010). 'Global city' thus provides us with an analytical 'device' to detect the particularity of a locality as an element of today's (global) socio-spatial order, representing a 'nexus for new politico-economic alignments' (Sassen 2007b: 122), which in turn is capable of grounding all of the process-thinking inspired by globalization and urbanization in a 'thing', David Harvey (1996: 434) would say, of concrete proportions.

This focus on the practice, the heterogeneous nature and the multiplicity of functions performed by metropolises such as London, is a fundamental contribution offered by Sassen to the theorization of the city in world affairs. Yet, we might need to develop the global city model further. As Sassen puts it: '*global city* is not a descriptive term [but] an analytic construct that allows one to detect the global as it is filtered through the specifics of a place, its institutional orders, and its socio-spatial fragmentations' (2006a: x). In an epoch dominated by global economic flows and growing societal interconnectedness, global cities represent in this view the *strategic hinges of globalization*.

The conundrum here is that, by opening up the concept, we also allow for a more nuanced (but I would argue not naive) understanding of what makes a global city. This is already a test for the appreciation of complexity for theorists in both urban and international studies: if it is more than one factor that constitutes the global influence of a metropolis, then we will have to allow for the possibility of multiple geographies of the top echelons of the world system, and different leaders of specific world urban hierarchies. For example, if we consider control of financial services as a metric of comparison, Hong Kong will most likely be in a leading position, while if we look at higher education and intellectual capital, the Chinese metropolis might not fall in the top tiers.³ In practice, one needs to be wary that, as Anthony King (1990) and Brenda Yeoh (1999) shrewdly pointed out in the 1990s, all cities are 'global' and 'globalizing' to some extent. It is not just the single metric that makes a city. As we will see more in detail in the next chapter, urban settlements are hubs and engines of manifold human activities, and delimiting their essence to one or two features might mean denying the vast 'horizon of meanings' (Lefebvre 1991: 222) that they represent, and thus the very same purpose for which they exist.⁴ In this sense, defining global cities as those

metropolises that attain a privileged positioning in the complex of globalization processes underpinning the twenty-first century means stepping beyond much of the 'economicism' typical of world city research that, as Pierre Bourdieu (1985: 723) observed in relation to the social sciences in general, should be held accountable for 'leading one to reduce the social field, a multi-dimensional space, solely to the economic field'.⁵ Against this reductionist account of world affairs I set out here to unpack the further complexity, depth and socio-political contradictions of the geography of world politics. This of course does not mean that financial and economic functions are to be dismissed. On the contrary, in an era of profound capitalist globalization, business-related activities still hold a supremacy amongst global networks and thus define many of the core engines of globalization.⁶ A roster of key global financial centres might indeed give us a good approximation of which cities occupy crucial positions in these time/space compression processes. Yet, as much as globalization is not solely economic, its hinges will perform and control many more networks than those of global finance. These flows should not be limited to economic, financial and commercial connections, but extended to their broadest interpretation, including global circulations of information and people. Not all global cities will carry out the same set of activities, and not all functions will bear the same weight in providing global outreach.

This approach underscores these cities' historical specificity and contingency as 'product' and 'producer' of the present set of phenomena we group under the umbrella term of 'globalization' (Taylor et al. 2007). The epithet 'global' in the expression 'global city' is thus a qualifier of the worldwide reach and connectivity of these metropolises. Yet this status, as Nick Bingham (1996: 647) noted, is a 'precarious, *contingent* effect, achieved only by continuous performance and only for the duration of that performance'. Cities are globally relevant only so long as they maintain a global reach, in terms of financial servicing as much as in other key sectors such as transportation and IT, otherwise representing mere temporary nodes in a worldwide web of social relations. In this sense it is important not to forget that new and relevant services can be developed by innovative central places at any time, reshuffling the pecking order of the hierarchies, and substituting more classical functions in their global centrality. Aware of the fluidity of the factors of globalization, we thus must not forget that, as Roderick McKenzie intuitively pointed out in 1927, the 'centres of gravity' for world affairs are 'in a constant process of change and realignment' (1927: 28). It is their contingent and networked role that depicts much of the sources of agency of the metropolis on a global scale. Global city *status* is then attained through the capacity of controlling and re-articulating a significant amount of these functions through global networks. In this sense it is imperative to take into account the governance processes that shape such influence if we want to appraise how this imprint on worldwide networks and connections is intertwined with localized political structures of the city itself. As cores of the practice of control in the

world-system, these central places can illustrate the changes of its architecture *relationally* 'from below' and from which control is articulated – a feature that reminds us of their 'indirect' influence on world affairs, and thus politics.

Global cities as *actants*

Representing key hubs of global flows and attractive magnets of society, global cities can be said to 'influence' world affairs in that they are the '*actively passive* meeting place of social structure and human agency' (Thrift 1983: 38) where the materiality of the environment constitutes a visible manifestation of society. In turn, we should not choose between a materialist and a social understanding of global cities. There is a reciprocal relation between the city as *civitas*, the congregation of individuals constituted through immaterial links of kinship, family, law and economy, and the city as *urbs*, the material construct of the urban as a morphologically distinct form of human aggregation.⁷ Much of the commonplace understanding of cities, especially outside of more progressive disciplines such as human geography, is ridden by a technological determinism that sees the city as nothing but a collection of 'things' which are purely the result of human action. This means, in a way, inferring a one-directional association between *civitas* and *urbs*, or between the social world of political, cultural and economic relations and the material world of the urban. Nonetheless, bricks, streets and parks are more than just a context to our existence: they actively participate in the determination of boundaries of our existence by limiting as much as enhancing our mobility, or by performing as media of social interaction and as facilitators of the unfolding of our daily routines. However, in order to accept this joint involvement of the global city in defining the parameters of our human condition, we need to make a series of conceptual steps that might take the international scholar into the vastly uncharted territories of sociology of technology.

To begin with, we need to admit that 'things' can act. They are, to use Bruno Latour's expression, '*actants*' in that they represent something that acts or to which activity is granted by others. As he puts it: 'we use *actant* to mean anything that acts [i.e. changes the order of things] and *actor* to mean what is made the source of an action' (Latour 2005: 71). As Latour (2000: 107) points out, an actant 'can literally be anything' (human or not) provided it is granted to be the performer of an action, and while it may not necessarily be the source of such deed, it needs to be an entity that modifies a state of affairs by making a perceptible difference. 'Things' can in this approach be capable of performing actions, and thus have influence, because they impact the order of circumstances by making a tangible difference, which is often originally the result of a delegation of functions from the human to the non-human (the traffic light directs traffic on behalf of the police officer), or at least a distribution of competences between one and the other (the car 'walks' us around while we direct its movement). In this latter case in particular, the

'artefact' becomes an intrinsically composite entity whereby human and non-human actants are co-participants in 'making a difference' (acting, that is) as a single entity. This compound of artefacts and people becomes, once again to borrow from the sociological vocabulary, a 'socio-technical assemblage' (Law 1999) representing an actant made of a multiplicity of smaller actants.

Identifying the performers of actions, consequently, becomes more than anything else a matter of conceptually packing and unpacking: we could find agency in a car by dismantling its moving assemblage into its constituent parts, possibly distributing the source of such agency among its driver and the automotive skeleton made of a motor, steering wheel and wheels, or we could go even deeper, and point to the driver's brain and the car's engine. Indeed, this is nothing but a question of scale that can go in any direction, just like we pointed out in the previous chapter when considering levels of political engagement in global governance.⁸ In our case, instead of 'diving' into micro-complexities, we move 'outwards' looking for agency at greater scales. Such a progressive sense of agency, which I will further develop in the next chapter, brings us to consider that the metropolis *as a whole* is also a socio-technical assemblage, composed by a multiplicity of actants, which in itself represents an actant in the world-system and thus in the global spaces of flows.

On a macro level, the global city is a socio-technical assemblage that, through its airports, universities and media hubs, impacts on the 'global' by coordinating and orienting global networks, centralizing their command functions, as well as articulating the social relations that extend far beyond the confines of its conurbation. In this sense, the metropolis is capable of shaping, limiting and stabilizing social action. However, this influence is not completely in the hands of people, and the social orders articulated are in a constantly ambiguous process of change and continuity. Following from this, the influence of the global city is not just a function of its attractiveness as a central place in a system of flows, but also of its imprint on the social space through its actant capacity to order such space and organize (and thus limit) other actors' agency in it. The presence of the global city is therefore a very influential one in that it makes a substantial difference in the everyday worldwide unfolding of social relations. However, admitting that cities hold some capacity of influencing the state of world affairs also brings us to a further consideration: if technologies partake in the practice of everyday life by performing social functions such as facilitating mobility or coordinating information exchanges, thus acquiring duties and roles that are delegated and distributed to them by society, then this means that artefacts will have some form of power over us and, more generically, world affairs. While not capable of rationally defining the geography of global governance, global cities as actants have a crucial role as they partake in the ordering of the spatiality of world politics and in reproducing such orders even without the continual direct interventions of their creators. In this sense, global cities represent 'strategic articulators of dynamics, processes, and institutional orders' (Sassen

2004: 125) of the contemporary world-system in that they are key 'hubs' whereby the practice of such orders is carried out. They are not just repositories of the majority of the capabilities of this system, nor the sole targets of the processes they sustain, but rather the predominant articulators of the operations that underpin the socio-spatial organization of world affairs. This in turn means that when we take global cities into consideration we are not solely prompted towards more geographical and relational readings of global affairs: putting these central places into the frame of the social spaces of world affairs also facilitates an understanding of the unevenness of the flows and local dependences, and thus of the cartography of power in global governance. This is a crucial move because, as John Allen (2003) reminds us *à propos* of the social sciences in general, many disciplines have lost the sense in which geography, both human and physical, makes a difference to the exercise of power – especially in an age of globalization where said geography can be twisted to unprecedented extremes. To this extent, identifying global cities is thus not solely an urbanist exercise, but also a very political attempt concerned with localizing the 'whereabouts of power' (Allen 2004) in today's global architecture. While finding power itself, as a relational effect of human relations, might prove to be an impossible task if not reduced to the sole possession of capabilities, studying global cities can allow international scholars to better understand the spatial arrangement of power by focusing on its relational alignments, and therefore better situating its practice in the geography of world politics – a consideration that forces us to think of cities as more than mere places. A key analytical challenge here is how to systematize the global city's 'localized' relevance while considering the relevance of this spatiality. How can one account for the development of situated urban structures in such globalizing fragmentations? The solution, I would argue, might be to look at the practices of urban governance and planning and their 'actively passive' influence on the global networks that global cities sustain.

Strategic urban planning and the environment: localizing the global

To be certain, planning is an activity that relates to numerous spheres of society, from politics to economics to more technical applications. So what is distinctive about 'urban' planning? Its key feature, as the cornerstone text on this issue by Peter Hall puts it, is that this type of planning is 'still essentially spatial' and, whatever city it has to deal with, it is 'concerned with the spatial impact of many different kinds of problems, and with the spatial coordination of many different policies' that can be elaborated to respond to them (Hall and Tewdwr-Jones 2011: 4). Urban planning is a city-centric policy response that emerges from the need to tackle the 'urban determinants' (Levy 2009: 2) of complexity and interconnectedness at this scale, two conditions that justify urban planning as a separate activity of governing from other technical spheres such as architecture or design. Planning, understood as a practice of spatial management, is crucial in the production of the physical and social

geographies of today's cities, and thus underpins the production of the 'locality' of a metropolis in relation to the broader geography in which a city is situated. Urban planning was born out of the intrinsic need to maintain some form of 'urban order' to allow cities to thrive and develop beyond pure fortune. This has for instance been narrated by Hall (1998) in his *Cities in Civilization*, where he highlighted how flourishing metropolises in their 'golden ages' usually master the conjugation of exogenous drivers and localized specificity. They can strike a balance between 'external' forces that connect the city with the world, and their 'internal' context filled with urban contradictions and planning quandaries. If, in the present age, a metropolis has to maintain a significant positioning in the world-system it needs to sustain the delicate interplay between local and global at a manageable level. If a city succumbs to the global, such as in the case of those settlements that are mere transit platforms for worldwide flows, or those cities that collapse under the insatiable demands of the international markets, then its influence will be little more than a passive and subjugated presence, and the locality will inevitably become little more than a very fluid presence in the spaces of flows of the global. If a city implodes because of internal cracks, caused by mismanagement, poor infrastructure, sprawling shantytowns and urban criminality, as well as social conflict, then little or no influence will be exercised on external scales, because no concrete urban structure will sustain it from the foundations.

Indeed, urban planning is a long-lived practice whose lineage could be traced back to the early days of civilization in the sprawling conurbations of the Middle East. Yet, its modern development is just a little older than the twentieth century, kickstarted by the re-prioritization of aesthetic considerations (central to classical planning) under the social priorities of a sprawling, industrializing and globalizing Earth. Specifically, its present-day form is the result of a shift in the importance of large-scale centralized developments, the emergence of internationalized planning practices for increasingly interconnected cities, and the mounting centrality of sustainability questions rising to *zeitgeist* status from the mid-1970s and, even more markedly, at the end of the 1990s (Hall 2000). Confronted with a changing economic and political geography and complex transnational challenges such as those sketched above, local and national authorities responsible for the management of expanding city-regions had to recast their governing approaches. This has meant not only 'new' urban plans, but also new urban political structures capable of implementing them effectively – a task that has in almost every case meant developing connections beyond their conurbations. As such, planning is a very apt focus for the analysis of how the localized networks of global city politics are pinpointed on the urban scale, but also linked directly with global governance. Planning illustrates how these metropolises are produced 'from within' – thus allowing us to inspect what actors, politics and structures are assembled to develop global cities as a key influence on world affairs. This means, in practice, that the uniqueness of a global city (and thus

its attractiveness) is supplied by a hybrid mix of endogenous drivers and global pulls.

A key governance response representing the core of many metropolises' response to globalization has in this sense been that of *urban entrepreneurialism*: the 'outgoing' management of cities that has fast become typical of most post-industrial metropolises. This notion was originally developed in the late 1980s in David Harvey's analysis of the urbanization of capital as he described how 'managerial' approaches to urban governance so typical of the 1960s were, at the end of the 1980s, giving way to 'entrepreneurial forms of action' born out of the spirit of the 'late' capitalism of the twentieth century which prompted many cities to 'take the initiative' in the economic realm (Harvey 1985; 1989a). This governance approach is characterized by the evolution of urban governance beyond its traditional boundaries, and the projection of influence as spurred by an attempt to secure prosperity through engagement with wider geographical and political spheres. As such, cities engage other spheres of governance (be they cities, states or other entities) not because of some sudden 'itch' for world politics but rather to secure their geographical positioning. As a consequence, entrepreneurial governance seeks to combine the traditional welfare role of the city with a competitive, risk-taking and outgoing edge that is more concerned with wealth and prosperity (Hall and Hubbard 1996). However, urban entrepreneurialism does not eclipse local management, but re-orient it towards the global needs and appetites of the growing metropolis.

To promote further connectivity, a growing number of entrepreneurial metropolises have formulated a 'response to globalization' (Carmona and Burgess 2001) and to the fragmentation highlighted above by developing what is generally known as 'strategic urban planning' (SUP). This focus is based on the assumption that 'global city-making' is not only a process of urban management, but a politically-driven dialectic conjugation of a complex two-fold dynamic of centralization and spatial dispersion through which metropolises seek to assert their role in the networked texture of the present world-system. SUP, in these cases, has progressively taken over metropolitan planning as a method focused on environmental awareness, stakeholder inclusiveness and global orientations, which in turn are prompting innovative governing structures capable of responding to the expansion of city government into city governance.⁹ As such, SUP provides a vantage point to scrutinize the assemblage of city-specific governance structures into networks capable of providing a 'localized' (but by no means not just 'local') response to the disaggregating dynamics underpinning world affairs.

As Peter Newman and Andy Thornley (2005) described it in their study of the globalization of urban politics titled *Planning World Cities*, SUP indicates a city-wide policy with specific spatial implication for geographical areas within such conurbation, and targeted at the establishment of policy priorities.¹⁰ Strategic planning lies 'at the fulcrum of the global/local interaction' of these cities and thus illustrates that urban politics *and* planning, conjunctly, matter

to the extent that 'city governance can shape global forces' (Newman and Thornley 2005: 276) – and it is thus not merely overwhelmed by the complex of worldwide reconfigurations described above. Strategic planning has a 'linking' role in that it seeks to connect resources, actors and ideas, which in turn form the core structure on which it is implemented. This networked dimension, if perhaps still too implied in *Planning World Cities*, is the object of direct scrutiny in many contemporary studies concerned with SUP and particularly in practical municipal circles. SUP has, in fact, become not just a policy orientation but also a political strategy sought after by sub-national governments in order to develop productive engagements with other private and governmental actors at the urban scale. As the UCLG defined it in a recent research paper:

[Strategic urban planning] allows local governments to enlist the participation of social actors, to achieve consensus about policies and projects and to encourage partnerships aimed at proposing, implementing and evaluating projects.¹¹

This is not just a process of clustering, but also one of innovation: alternative combinations of rules and resources are organized into new political structures order to overcome emerging and complex urban problems. Moreover, as I will demonstrate in Chapter 5, this is not necessarily a process in the hands of local governments only, as a plethora of other actors intersect with such networking dynamics to formulate strategic planning responses. Governance and environmental orientations of SUP are for instance well represented in the experience of Sydney, which has to date produced a number of strategies targeted not only at increasing its positioning in world affairs, but also at maintaining a particular 'green' edge in urban planning. The Australian metropolis has indeed succeeded in improving its status in this direction, and that success is the result of underlying urban governance processes characterized by increasingly entrepreneurial approaches promoted by both local authorities such as the City of Sydney Council, as well as higher layers of government such as the state executive of New South Wales. This process is perhaps best embodied by Sydney's newest urban strategy, the *Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision*, which sets out to create a 'green, global and connected' metropolis and which has to date put Sydney in the spotlight of 'best practice' talk among global cities.¹² Yet, as cases such as Sydney might tell us, strategic planning is rarely aimed at producing a *direct* impact on world politics: rather, it presents a 'local' response to the complex dynamics of international affairs and globalization, and thus in a sense it looks 'inward' towards the city, producing effects on global processes in an 'actively passive' but not rationally calculated way. Yet this does not mean that SUP does not represent rationality and policymaking: on the contrary, what strategic planning ultimately reminds us of is that there is some very conscious, albeit generally collective rather than top-down and managerial, political agency in the global

city. In turn, this consideration of the processes sustaining the actant influence of metropolises pushes us towards a cognate dimension: that of the city as an actor.

Thinking of global cities as actors

From actant to actor: entrepreneurship becomes diplomacy

Maintaining an understanding of global cities as actants with influence over diverse geographical and social spheres means admitting that at the same time metropolises are objects *of* politics and objects that *have* politics (Winner 1986: 20). As such, global cities emerge in the accounts above as a very entrepreneurial catalyst *in*, not just places *for*, governance engagements beyond national boundaries. However, why then can we talk of cities as 'actors'? If we move beyond the stereotypical understanding of cities as mere places, we can positively answer this query by introducing a further dimension of agency that global cities have in world affairs.

The capacity to influence the state of (world) affairs has in some cases been attributed to metropolises in an 'active sense' too. First, as I noted, cities have expanded both their reach and policymaking structures to 'bring in' actors and networks far beyond their local confines into the production of strategically-planned and entrepreneurial approaches. International studies has also provided some mild and niche recognition, at least on behalf of its 'diplomatic' branch, as to the possibility for sub-national actors such as cities or regions to undertake foreign activities in a somewhat similar fashion to states. A useful clarification on this international role comes for instance from a pilot project run in 2006 by the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, which conceptualized 'city diplomacy' as a set of processes by which cities 'engage in relations with actors on an international political stage with the aim of representing themselves and their interests' (Melissen and van der Pluijm 2007: 11). In this light, diplomacy applies to the 'urban sphere' in that it represents a communication process between the city seen as a sphere of authority and other political organizations, as carried out by legitimate representatives of these entities. Diplomacy, from this point of view, applies beyond mere ambassadorial and advocacy activities, as it also pertains to mediated economic and cultural practices in the context of goods provision and facilitation, as well as to the development and daily relations within the global networks of flows that run among cities. Global cities, either alone or more frequently grouped in transnational networks, are progressively engaging institutional frameworks and political organizations.¹³ Willingly, these local actors produce new spaces of engagement and re-designate the confines of their national, regional and local spaces of dependence. For example, urban settlements have to date set up cooperation forms that, in structure and competences, might match state-based institutions, thus making it hard to deny the capacity of local government representatives to undertake foreign

policy activities. This is the case, to cite but one of the many, of the Mayors for Peace group founded in 1982 by Hiroshima's Mayor Takeshi Araki to tackle the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The initiative has grown throughout the past two decades to reach a membership that, as of July 2010, stands for 3,104 cities across 134 countries, with a permanent secretariat regularly lobbying at the United Nations where the programme holds special consultative status at the UN Economic and Social Council. Though this approach to cities' practice of external relations is certainly 'narrower' than the focus of our inquiry, its framing role serves as a testimony of the potential for local authorities to develop independent and inclusive governance systems, and thus demonstrates a growing confidence in the role of cities on many world political issues.

When we move to consider the global city as a globally-networked actant we are reminded that, as Patrick Le Galès (2002: 262) put it, cities 'are not passive spaces suffering the indiscriminate exercise of top-down logics'. When we introduce global cities as elements of the global political scene we are, in fact, not simply adding a factor to our equation of world politics: on the contrary, these entities represent a fundamental variable that influences directly the structures and mechanisms of global governance, making a substantial difference and promoting, I argue, fundamental changes to the core parameters of such environments. However, international agency does not happen in a vacuum. An analysis of the agency of global cities in world affairs necessarily pushes us towards a need for an evolution in the discipline's method of understanding political relations on a global scale. This means that, while taking into account the power structures catalysing collective action, theorists need to consider how these are influenced, if not inextricably intertwined, with power-geometries beyond the urban scale.

Once again, global environmental governance might provide us with a poignant demonstration of the shortcomings of this understanding. Cities have, in fact, steadily carved out a substantial role in this realm. As the push for a global response to climate questions has gathered momentum and expanded throughout the 1980s and 1990s, both through state-led 'global deal' and civil society approaches, cities (not just global ones) have also sought to participate in this mounting governance architecture. Mostly represented by their local governmental authorities or, in some cases such as London, regional governing bodies, cities have progressively entered the arena of 'higher' politics, with a first wave of urban internationalization taking place in the 1990s, and a subsequent sprawl of urban-based organizations and frameworks since the early 2000s. This 'localization' (Hocking 1993) of environmental foreign policy has been generally prompted by a two-fold process. On the one hand, cities have been progressively integrated (or, as most authors would argue, 'globalized') in a global system of economic, cultural and social flows that has facilitated their interaction with peers across borders, and thus the grouping of shared concerns in collective action. On the other hand, the overarching global environmental politics discourse itself has

invested cities and urban authorities with a particular positioning, as the main milestones described above contained a substantial emphasis on the role of the 'local' as a means towards adaptation and mitigation. The Agenda 21 framework agreed at Rio in 1992 contained in its chapter 28 (since then known as 'Local Agenda 21') specific recommendations on the role of local authorities in implementing the Earth Summit's outcomes – a 'local' and 'urban' investiture that was set to develop systematically in the following years through the echoing rhetoric that cities are the public administration tier 'closest' to the people (Selman 1998).

Cities in climate diplomacy: globalizing the local

Certainly, local issues have been part of the broader agenda of international environmental politics since its early days: one of the outcomes of the 1972 Stockholm UNCHE was the initiative to convene a 'Habitat' conference specifically focused on local environmental issues in 1976 in Vancouver. This trend continued also after Rio and through the Agenda 21 push, with a second conference (Habitat II) held in Istanbul in 1996. In this sense, the UN remained all throughout the end of the last century a core driver of this 'urbanization' of climate (and more broadly environmental) issues. For instance, through the United Nations Environment Programme and in collaboration with the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), the UN has prompted the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), which has to date become a well-established representative forum for local governmental action on climate issues.¹⁴ Similarly, since 1977, the United Nations has also sought to tackle urban issues steadily arising not solely in the environmental agenda, but also in terms of poverty, development and security, by setting up a dedicated agency, UN-Habitat, which has grown in size and breadth of activities ever since. For example, in 2000, UN-Habitat established a UN Advisory Committee of Local Authorities to provide a direct channel between the UN and the representatives of city governments worldwide, and has been charged by the UN General Assembly with the task of implementing the Millennium Development Goals agenda (and in particular target 11 on slum dwellers) in urban areas.¹⁵ Quite similarly, the World Bank has also promoted a centralization of cities in international politics: beginning with the 1991 Municipal Development Program, the Bank has been enlarging its urban development desk substantially after issuing a strategy document titled 'Cities in Transition' in 2000, recently replaced by an updated and extended new policy alignment in 2009, which now underpins the organization's growing regard for the paradigmatic shift brought about by the present urbanization trends.¹⁶ The World Bank's approach definitely broadens the consideration of the urban as a relevant facet of world affairs, but still tends to treat it as a source of exogenous influence on political spheres. This is for instance embodied in the case of the 'Cities Alliance' project, the result of a coalition of governments, NGOs (such as Slum

Dwellers International), municipalities and international organizations (World Bank, EU, Asia Development Bank and UNEP).¹⁷ The Alliance mainly acts as a trust fund that provides grants for city development strategies, slum upgrading and sustainable financial strategies to attract international capitals, committing extensive funds to this goal ever since its inception in December 1999.¹⁸ Importantly, the Cities Alliance founding concerns reflected (and indeed still reflect) the rationale behind much of the growing internationalization of cities. As the Alliance reiterated on several occasions, its efforts were born out of the need for new approaches to the urbanization challenges where both national governments and the international development community had failed.¹⁹

However, it would be misleading to think that this mounting involvement of cities in environmental politics is a top-down process. On the contrary, cities have since the late 1980s sought to expand their presence in this realm. Significantly, ICLEI cemented this effort a year later, in 1993, launching the Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) Campaign with the aim of gathering a coalition of local governments sufficient to account for at least 10 per cent of global GHGs emissions.²⁰ ICLEI and its CCP Campaign are by no means the only urban-based networks now present on the global environmental scene. On the contrary, if from the 1970s through the mid-1990s global governance saw most of the city focus being developed through the UN and in international fora, since then two trends have recast the participation of cities in the political spheres described above. First, city networks have grown exponentially in numbers and membership. Second, cities have progressively carved out a more extensive role in environmental governance.

This process was at first particularly marked in Europe, especially due to the European Union's focus on subsidiarity, where urban organizations such as Eurocities, the Climate Alliance and Energie-cités, had initially pioneered international city cooperation ever since the early days of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) in 1951, if not earlier (Collier 1997; Ward and Williams 1997).²¹ The growth of networked urban efforts on climate policy then steeply ascended with the 1990 publication of an EU Green Paper on Urban Environment, which pointed out how fostering urban linkages amongst European municipalities could have provided a widening of the ranks of European consultation and collaboration, making allowances for the 'urban' layer of government as target and implementer of sizeable policies. Certainly this presents us with a much more progressive understanding of cities in political processes beyond the nation, as testified by the European Commission's URBACT initiative, aimed at developing expertise exchange across cities, and tightly intertwined with the EU Cohesion Policy that promotes harmonization amongst member states.²² An example of this growing urban participation in the implementation of the broader climate agenda is the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign, launched in 1994 by a joint initiative of the European Commission, the City of Aalborg and ICLEI, with an initial commitment of eighty municipalities to initiate Local Agenda

21 processes in their authorities and bring forward the process at the urban level.²³ Similarly, the European Commission has more and more explicitly targeted the 'urban' as a realm of implementation of regional targets and common goals, as demonstrated by the recent issuing of a guide to the 'Urban Dimension in EU Policies' that, first produced in 2007, has now been revised to a substantial set of city-targeted programmes and initiatives.²⁴

City-to-city cooperation is not just a feature of the Old Continent. To some extent in parallel with the European experience and often pre-dating it, a series of sub-state municipal networks became an established presence in several other regions, as in the case of North American with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, having its roots in a network present since 1901 and progressively active in linking Canadian cities with foreign peers; and the International City Managers Association, an extensive network of American municipal professionals founded as early as 1914 and based in Washington DC. Analogous developments have taken place in many other regions of the world, as testified by the Arab Towns Organization in the Middle East, or the Congress of the Latin American Federation of Cities, Municipalities, and Associations. All of these networks demonstrate the active capacity for city halls all over the planet to 'go abroad' (Hobbs 1994; Kirby et al. 1995) and thus seek peer collaboration. Nonetheless, most of these cases have to date had a relatively limited capacity to impact the international processes.

In terms of climate policy specifically, urban coalitions have had little impact on the overall direction of the 'global deal' and 'aggregate' approaches in the first two decades of formalized global environmental politics (1970s–1980s), mostly remaining sidelined from the core negotiations and being relegated to an 'implementer' role. Nonetheless, some 'global' urban efforts were already present in the lead-up to the 1992 Rio Summit. For instance the United Towns Organization, IULA and ICLEI were instrumental in pushing for the inclusion of a local agenda as part of the broader Agenda 21 commitments of the Earth Summit. This acknowledgment provided one of the major sparks for the development of urban policymaking efforts beyond the localized or regionalistic focus of the early municipal networks. This is for instance the experience of the United Cities and Local Governments (UCGL), an umbrella network of both individual cities and national associations of local governments, founded in 2004 with a focus on urban development and risk reduction.²⁵ One of the founders of UCGL, the World Association of Major Metropolises or 'Metropolis' was created even earlier in 1985, and has since then been developing an epistemic community of urban practitioners to promote exchange of technical skills.²⁶ This list could go on for pages, with many other cases of long-lived, proactive and cross-national city coalitions such as Sister Cities International or the Asia-Pacific CityNET.²⁷

City coalitions have thus taken the shape of transnational frameworks in that they provide 'regular interactions across boundaries' where 'at least one actor is a non-state agent or does not operate on behalf of a national

government or organization' (Risse-Kappen 1995: 9). Cities have been progressively clustering around the twin issues of sustainability and climate change, calling for a greater role for the 'urban' in the global efforts against environmental depletion. Hence, if in the 1990s the complex of urban coalitions was relatively limited in both purpose and extent, as Harriet Bulkeley and Heike Schroeder (2009a: 316) noted, since the early 2000s 'these networks have evolved to become both more comprehensive and more politically significant'. This growing interconnectedness, embodied not solely in cross-border relations and exchanges of best urban practices, but also in the 'local' expansion of governance to other sub- and non-state actors (e.g. business or activist groups), has been labelled a 'new localism' (Marvin and Guy 1997) due to cities' attempt to gain a wider room for manoeuvre via transformative local agendas. As I illustrated in the previous chapter, this proactiveness has meant an entrepreneurial extension of municipal activities beyond the 'local'. This is not solely confined to planning linkages and global market connections, but spans into the international political realm too. For instance, ICLEI and UN-Habitat have since been particularly proactive in supporting the development of other 'city-to-city cooperation' initiatives such as the World Mayors Council on Climate Change.²⁸ This, in turn, has taken a core city-led positioning in environmental advocacy, and promoted the declaration of the 'World Mayors and Local Governments Climate Protection Agreement' launched at the March 2007 UNFCCC in Bali (COP13), and based on a number of implementation measures, recently reaffirmed in the 'Global Cities Covenant on Climate' (known as the 'Mexico City Pact') in November 2010.²⁹ This means that cities (and global ones in particular) have been able to produce transnational connections across global governance.

4 Going beyond the agency impasse

THEORETICAL CULS-DE-SAC

Cities are not miniature republics

The role of global cities in today's geopolitical architecture seems ambiguous at best: concomitantly, as actants they reiterate the conditions (social and material) of our existence, while as actors they can progressively recast the parameters of global governance. Global cities are at the same time subjects capable of agency in world affairs, as well as objects bound by the global structures they are entangled into. This analytical quandary presents us with two key methodological challenges that need to be addressed at this stage. First, it is imperative not to separate the 'internal' dynamics of the metropolis from the broader contexts in which they are embedded. Second, it is fundamental to move away from an 'actor' discourse of direct international influence to then allow for cities to exist in the realm of world politics alongside states, global civil society and international organizations.

To begin with, as the actant dimension tells us, we should not make the mistake of dissociating the micro-context of urban politics from the rest of the global governance system. As Paul Peterson (1981) underscored in *City Limits*, contemporary metropolises are not 'miniature republics' and we cannot automatically transfer the logics of state politics to the urban sphere. Peterson's argument, born out of a critique of the earlier approaches to that 'community power debate' sketched above, was essentially that cities are subject to substantial constraints in their agency: by comparison with nation-states 'city politics is limited politics' (1981: 4). In his view cities are fundamentally dependent on a series of exogenous inputs, mostly of economic nature, which in turn they need to attract as they are in competition with their peers in a resource-scarce system where a lack of connection to these means decline (if not death) of the urban. Cities, and major metropolises in particular, thus engage in what he calls 'developmental politics' that seek growth through 'those local programs which enhance the economic position of a community in its competition with others' (Peterson 1981: 41). Peterson's idea, which echoes that of urban entrepreneurship, had a substantial impact on students of urban politics as it revived the debate on the exclusivity of this political

scale. While offering a perhaps too narrow and deterministic interpretation of the possibilities of cities in the contemporary landscape, this contribution had the key role of prompting a discussion that developed into a consideration of the urban as intertwined with broader political processes. Certainly, several authors reacted rather violently to the assumption that city politics can be reduced to a single set of growth-oriented interests and that local politics mattered very little as the urban was subject to broader political spheres.¹ Yet, Peterson's view still stands as a powerful reminder of the macro-determinants of 'micro' politics. As *City Limits* suggests us, the city does not just choose to be entrepreneurial: the system in which it is embedded plays a key role in pushing local actors in this direction, as one of the fundamental features of world affairs is the dominance of neoliberal and capitalist economic logics. Likewise, cities cannot just act freely. Rather, the system provides several constraints, not least the modalities of international action, which in turn prompt the need for engagement and negotiation under certain terms that, at present, remain substantially determined by the Westphalian logics of international politics.

Nevertheless, if we consider this predominantly structuralist approach to the city in conjunction with the more agency-centric takes of the urban entrepreneurialism narrative, we will inevitably find ourselves at the doorstep of a key puzzle for international studies: the global city is never completely 'excused' from, nor independent from, the rules of the world-system; yet by acting cities also contribute to the definition of what the system is about. The global collective actor-ness of these metropolises conforms, in a sense, to the systemic logic of the Westphalian order, yet by building engagements, and bypassing hierarchies, this agency also contests the founding parameters of such order. To problematize how the coexistence of these contradictory realities is possible, we need to take a look at the internal logic of collective action in these metropolises in its relation with global transformations, and reconcile these processes with the participation of global cities in world politics. This is a cul-de-sac that cannot be resolved by subsuming one dimension of agency into another, nor the global city's agency into broader world political processes. This paints a picture of global governance in which individuals, groups and societies continually remake the social world, and in which social structures affect the capacity for agency that in turn redefines such structures. Looking for the relation structure–agency alone is then not enough: without some geographical parameters of some sort, which provide some coherence to the social spaces whereby politics occur, the processes of global governance might appear 'messy' at best. Without some spatial metrics to ground it, this more nuanced understanding of agency risks spiralling into a blurry theory of world politics where everything is the source of everything and nothing can be mapped effectively. International theorists are for the most part devoid of any compass to navigate such a complex scenario. I propose to solve this analytical problem not only by paying attention to the mutual constitution of global city agency and global governance structures, but also by grounding this more critical view conscious of *scale*.

This reading also allows us to understand the *political* inherent in the social production of scale and space, and vice-versa the *spatial* inherent in the social production of what we consider as the political. As the more recent scholarship on this theme underlines, scale, and the political relations amongst them, are crucial political lenses for understanding processes that are inextricably intertwined across complex societal levels ranging from the body to families, groups, cities, regions, states and so on (Marston 2000). A geographical-scale perspective, however, is not necessarily rooted in assuming that social and political processes ‘move up and down’ (Cartier 2005b: 21) these hierarchies, but rather allows for ‘jumping scales’ (Howitt 1993) and, most importantly focuses on how scales are constructed, and how each scale is relational to larger and smaller social worlds. Yet, before moving on to a conceptualization of this geographical rethinking of global governance, I believe that a second quandary emerging from the ‘agency’ dimensions sketched in the previous chapter should be highlighted.

Cities are not people

This consideration takes us to the second analytical cul-de-sac. If, as the narratives on entrepreneurial governance and paradiplomatic capacity of global cities suggest, these metropolises can develop connections with geopolitical spheres beyond the ‘local’ then is it possible that cities are international actors akin to states? Could this state-centric reasoning be transferable to global cities? Can we talk of entities as diverse as cities, and ascribe them human-like qualities that allow them to ‘do’ things?

This theoretical step into the real analytical challenge of the ‘actor dimension’ of the metropolis opens up a problematic line of reasoning that, in the ultimate analysis, is pinpointed on deciding whether, as a popular constructivist debate on the nature of the state in international relations put it, global cities might be international ‘people’ too, and how much of this ascribed capacity is simply a useful fiction in the everyday practice of world politics. Certainly, the problem of personhood for the elements of world politics is not a brand new issue in international theory as discussions on the empirical nature of international actors emerged in IR as early as the 1960s (Wolfers 1962; Mansbach et al. 1976). However, these considerations were for long sidelined by the unproblematic consideration of states as unitary actors in mainstream IR (and in particular in neoliberalism and neorealism), or the quick dismissal that the state, in the ultimate analysis, ‘does not really exist’ (Gilpin 1986: 318). Prompted by both these positions, this debate found new life in Alex Wendt’s proposition, as part of his attempt to develop a social theory of the international, that ‘states are people too’ in the sense that they constitute purposive actors with a ‘real’ presence in world affairs (Wendt 1999: 194).

Wendt’s argument stimulated a lively debate amongst key theorists in the field, perhaps best represented in the forum ‘Is the State a Person? Why Should

We Care?’ edited by Patrick Thaddeus Jackson for the *Review of International Studies*.² Overall, the crux of the matter at stake in this exchange of views was whether describing states as ‘people’ constituted ‘a useful fiction’ (Jackson 2004) or if to these key elements of the international system could be ascribed some presence of their own. In this sense states are described by Wendt as real agents in the sense that they represent corporate actors (i.e. formal organizations with decision-making capacity) with an underlying ‘collective intentionality’ (Wendt 2004: 291) that emerges from the synthesis of their members’ attitudes. Evidence of this political presence is, according to Wendt (and a point I certainly agree on) readily available across the everyday mass media: front pages of newspapers point us to the United States, Brazil, India and even corporations like BP or Google, performing tasks such as talking, fighting or even moving, if not even displaying emotions such as those tensions and fears arising from 9/11 and the global financial crisis – just like people (Wendt 2005: 357).

Without delving too much into the several critiques of this argument, I believe it is necessary to point out two key problems in Wendt’s line of reasoning which, as Jacob Schiff (2008) has more recently noted, complicate the application of this approach.³ To begin with, there is a problematic focus, well evidenced in the 2004 debate, on stipulating whether states can be considered persons in a ‘real’ sense, with an ontological standing of their own right, or only ‘as if’ they were mere figures of speech (Schiff 2008: 368). In agreement with Schiff, I would argue that international theorists might walk a dangerous line by trying to separate these two facets: on the one hand the underlying ‘reality’ which underpins states’ personhood seems to be located somewhere beyond commonplace comprehension; on the other hand, the ‘as if’ argumentation tends to discredit the fact that ‘discursive formations’ (Schiff 2008: 371) such as speaking of ‘France’ as an international actor, while perhaps not ultimately real, are in fact real in their consequences and in the framing of our daily experiences. Seen in this light, it might be a futile exercise to attempt to dissect ‘real’ and ‘as if’ facets of state personhood as they both constitute evidence of their existence as corporate actors – a distinction I should thus not develop in my description of cities as actors.

However, there is another, and I would argue even more important, limit to this personhood debate on the state which prevents us from considering metropolises as corporate agents. As Schiff (2008: 374) rightly points out, the line of reasoning underpinning much of the ‘states are people too’ debate, not just Wendt’s theorization, might be vexed by a greater misunderstanding: the theoretical ground might have been shifted here from ‘potentially plausible anthropomorphism’ (‘states are people’) to a problematic and ‘perhaps even dangerous anthropocentrism’ (‘states are people too’). Embedded in the word ‘people’ and in the expression ‘personhood’ there might be a misleading indication that humans are the ultimate agents in world affairs. Why would we want to limit the discussion on ‘actors’ to humans and human-like entities? To paraphrase Schiff (whose ultimate aim is somewhat different to mine) there is ‘no necessary reason to identify personhood as the sole, or even the

privileged' locus of agency. Rather, as the discussion of global cities as *actants* I introduced earlier proves, and as much science and technology studies (STS) literature teaches us, non-humans are equally capable of influencing the state of affairs, and thus acting.⁴ Moreover, as Bruno Latour (1992: 235) pointed out from this STS perspective, anthropomorphism is often the result of a need to conceptualize the social (but not necessarily 'human') power of artefacts which partake in our daily lives by performing functions and actions delegated to them. In this sense, it might be simpler, not solely for international theorists but for people more generally, to 'anthropomorphize' states, ever-present but generally impersonal entities too big to be otherwise conceived, rather than the cities whose tangible presence is continually probed by our interaction with the peoples and buildings they are made of. The reason why one would want to group all entities that 'modify the state of affairs' under the label of 'actant' is thus to prevent this unbalanced account. Yet there is, as Wendt's discussion demonstrates, some value in identifying those 'actants' capable of some rationality, which we can then label as 'actors'. Hence, I suggest to move away from such personification and consider this potential dimension of global cities not as if they were 'people too' but, more plainly, as if they were *actors* too. This means considering actors as rational types of *actants* and thus only extending the influence analysed in the previous chapter to a further (but not necessarily alternative) dimension – that of rational agency.

When we consider both culs-de-sac summarized here, we are therefore faced with three key analytical challenges that emerge from the application of these two critiques to the agency-oriented research path I undertook in the previous chapter:

- (1) Global cities are embedded in global governance and cannot be studied as separate entities.
- (2) The emergence of global cities as diplomatic actors in international affairs should not obscure the local processes they are pinpointed on, but also not retain a purely metaphoric significance.
- (3) International actors are not necessarily 'persons' in a literal sense.

To solve this agency impasse, I would argue that, to prevent attributing too much agency to elements that are present but not absolutely dominant in world politics, the theorization of such micro/macro relations should be developed beyond a structure–agency dualism in a 'structurationist' sense first, and beyond the micro–macro separations in a '*scalar* structurationist' way after.

A two-step rejoinder

Step 1: a structurationist rejoinder

Structuration approaches reject the dualism and reductionism between agency and structures, promoting more balanced and critical narratives of social

relations and political processes.⁵ As such, they can provide a critical middle ground between dismissing global cities as subjects of 'higher' politics as well as attributing 'too much' agency to them. In social theory awareness of the duality between structures and agency has long been present since, at least, the works of Michel Foucault on the archaeology of knowledge, Roy Bhaskar's realist theory of science and, in particular, Pierre Bourdieu on the logic of practice.⁶ Yet, it was with Anthony Giddens' work on historical materialism that structurationist approaches became formalized sociological practice. In his critique of the foundations of modern social theory Giddens (1984: 3) noted how while human action has undoubtedly a '*durée*' in that it is characterized by at least some 'continuous flow of conduct', the social scientist cannot let this dimension of consistency across history overtake the whole ambit of the social.⁷ On the contrary, individuals' and groups' capacity to 'make a difference to a pre-existing state of affairs' (Giddens 1984: 14; 1979: 68) is an equally fundamental feature of social relations. To overcome this problematic distinction, he referred to 'structuration' as the 'conditions governing the continuity and transformation of structures, and the reproduction of social systems' (Giddens 1984: 25).

This analytical orientation presents a series of epistemological improvements: first, it allows for a method focused on an 'ontology of praxis' that locates the practice of social relations, and thus the intersection between structure and agency, as the core determinant of society; from this viewpoint it increases the explanatory power of social inquiry by not subsuming either structural into agency or vice-versa; accordingly, it prevents these mainstream problems with conflation by allowing for an appreciation of interconnection and disjunction between social minutiae and grand schemes, thus allowing for a deeper understanding of the levels of societal interaction – a 'geographical' advantage which I will underline more extensively below. The focus of a structurationist approach to global governance and the role of global cities within it is thus to be found in the relationality of the two rather than in the determination of one in the other. Likewise, structuration takes are dependent on a progressive understanding of social 'structures' as elements that 'allow the binding of time-space in social systems' and that thus allow 'social practices' to remain relatively stable across geographies and historical moments by 'lend[ing] them systemic form' (Giddens 1984: 17). As such 'structuration' is always a process, never a product, and the study of this process is not so much a totalizing interpretation of society but a way to holistically unpack the dynamics of social relations beyond reductionism. As Bourdieu has repeatedly remarked on his understanding of structuration, this approach is 'not a general theory but a method' (in Mahar 1990: 36) for social inquiry.

From this starting point structuration developed into a fully-fledged orientation through the contrast between the 'odd couple' (King 2010) constituted by Giddens' structuration and Margaret Archer's alternative 'morphogenesis' (Archer 1982) approach, first sketched in 1982 and which subsequently

germinated in the more popular ‘critical realism’ view she developed along with Roy Bhaskar (1998). The limitation that Archer found with Giddens’ original formulation of structuration was in its ‘insufficient account of the *mechanisms*’ (Archer 1982: 459) of social continuity and change which, by combining structure and agency, were lost in his theory.⁸ While not objecting to Giddens’ philosophical task of rethinking social theory beyond materialism, Archer sought to underline the theoretical merits of theorizing structuration while maintaining some *analytical* dualism to provide a better reading of structuration processes. As she noted, structuration approaches risk falling into what she calls a ‘central conflation’ if it ‘deprives *both* elements of their relative autonomy, not through *reducing* one to the other, but by *compacting* the two together inseparably’ (Archer 1996: 688). Structurationists are, in this sense, now concerned with looking at both transformation and continuity in society beyond dualistic narrations that reduce agency to social structures or vice-versa. Importantly, from a similar position, American sociologist William Sewell (1992) has taken up this critique and expanded on Bourdieu’s earlier work, to illustrate how change is possible not just because of agency, but more accurately *in* structuration. Accordingly, Sewell postulated that change occurs because social structures are multiple, their constituent ‘schemas’ (or rules) are transposable, and the resources that underpin them are unpredictably accumulated and polysemic.⁹ Change is embedded in the interconnectivity amongst these five ‘axioms’ of transformation: because structures are not unique but replicated across time and space, and their components (schemas and resources) can be transferred, accumulated and reinterpreted into new, or at least different, compositions that in turn impact the original structure, change can occur in social relations (Sewell 2005). This is a fundamental consideration for my inquiry because if I aim to describe the influence of global cities on world politics, I will then necessarily have to prove that these metropolises’ agency produces structural effects (and thus changes) that are relevant not for cities alone, but also for the broader structures of global governance. I will therefore return to Sewell’s axioms and test global city agency against them in the last part of the book.

Structuration approaches have had some impact on international theory, especially through the work of Alex Wendt (1999) and since the publication of his popular *Social Theory of International Politics*.¹⁰ As Wendt pointed out, both structuralist and agent-driven accounts leave inevitable ‘gaps’ in their theorizations of the state and the international system. Wendt, in particular, was concerned with providing a more sociologically-based narrative of the social dynamics of the international system beyond the dominant structuralist viewpoint of both Waltzian neorealism and world-system theory.¹¹ Mirroring the evolution in sociology, some international theorists have also taken up this approach and progressively ‘tested’ structuration approaches in world politics (Wight 2006; Wight and Joseph 2010). Just like in social theory, some debate has surfaced on the issue of maintaining the structure–agency duality for analytical purposes, as argued by Archer, or collapsing them in a single

narrative à la Giddens. For instance, Roxanne Lynn Doty (1997) has argued how the structurationist 'solution' to the agent-structure *problématique* is stuck in a 'self-engendered paradox beyond which it cannot press'.¹² A response to this has been presented in IR by Colin Wight (1999) who, providing a rejoinder to Doty and the broader sociological critique of structuration, has illustrated how the indeterminacy of this approach can be overcome not solely with maintaining a more solid distinction, as Archer suggested, but also by specifying the multi-layeredness of the question of agency: maintaining analytical clarity while illustrating the co-constitutive nature of agency and structure is in his account not solely a methodological problem, but most fundamentally an ontological issue. This, in Wight's view, is predominantly a question of 'locating agency' because the capacity to influence the state of affairs is necessarily 'embedded in a complex relational network of positioned practices, but does not reduce those practices to the positions they occupy' (1999: 135).

This take demonstrates that a structurationist theory is not at odds with a geographical (and more specifically geopolitical) approach to the spatiality of global governance like that of Rosenau's ontological rethinking highlighted in the previous chapter. Rather the two can be productively married into a common narrative.¹³ Wight echoes, at least in part, the spatial considerations of Nicos Mouzelis (1989), another perhaps less celebrated structurationist aligned with Archer's analytical dualism. In a similar anti-reductionist approach, Mouzelis has, in fact, sought to underscore how structure-agency is not the only useful analytical distinction in structuration approaches against Giddens' attempt to 'flatten' the social reality beyond micro-macro distinctions which in his view conflate structures with the 'macro' and agency with the 'micro' (Mouzelis 1991). Contra this approach, Mouzelis (1992: 122–28) points out how the utility of thinking in differentiated spatial terms is paramount in maintaining an understanding of the variation in the structuration and reach of different actors' agency – a take that is well aligned to my attempt to unveil the power-geometries, and thus the geographical organization of society in terms of power, that sustain the global city's presence in global governance. What relates micro to macro structuration, in his view, is those processes of 'hierarchization' (Mouzelis 1989) which, if on the one hand produce spatial orders in society, also allow for 'micro' spatial elements to display some degree of autonomy and thus have some degree of power in more complex (macro) structures, as in the case of specific departments within corporate organizations, or ministries in governments.¹⁴

Processes of hierarchization, in turn, further promote a geographical sense of structuration in global governance more akin to the scalar problem I noted in the beginning of the chapter. They allow us to see agency where it happens while not reducing agents' influences to those locations only, thus making agents (actors or actants) irremovably embedded in fixed social structures and predetermined geopolitical spatialities. Once we cut loose from the methodological chains of state-centrism, we can appreciate a widening of horizons

where new actors emerge 'from the invisibility of the aggregate membership of the nation-state' (Sassen 2007a: 190) and engage across the multiple levels of the global political milieu – a process that is not simply theoretical, but very real in the everyday world politics of the twenty-first century. Through this structurationist approach, I try to integrate both the hyperopia of international studies, by emphasizing the need to anchor an understanding of the 'big picture' in the everyday practices and 'micro' dimensions that sustain it, as well as the shortsightedness of urban studies, which begs for a reconnection of the study of localized contexts to the grand political narratives of our time. However, structuration approaches need, as noted above, to be pinpointed on some geographical parameters to effectively unpack the global cities–global governance link without drifting aimlessly in the multilayered complexity of world politics.

Step 2: a *scalar* structurationist rejoinder

Studying the 'structuration' of global cities in global governance with an eye to the geographical processes at work in such connection confronts us with a further methodological imperative: seeing international politics as a part of a broader social space is only an initial step towards a new conceptual architecture. In order to make sense of the 'messiness' of the spatiality of global governance, I would argue, it is also necessary to ground these geography-savvy analytics of world politics through a better understanding of *scale* – a relational spatial element crucial to the production of a political relations that pushes us beyond state-centrism. An 'international' studies take on global cities should not solely acknowledge the mutual constitution between these and world politics, but also be better aware of the relationship between the micro processes sustaining the urban and the macro dynamics of global governance, and consequently of the *scalar* nature of global governance.

Critical geographers have once again been fundamental in underlining how the human experience, whether political, economic or of other sorts, has historically (and certainly presently) unravelled through different layers and in multiple dimensions (Amin 2002; Brenner 2004). Scale, in this sense, has been the object of wide debate in much of the social sciences as prompted by the paradoxes of globalization, urban restructuring and the reconfiguration of the nation-state. While this discussion has originally grappled with the problem of defining 'scale' as, to use Castell's expression, a 'spatial unit' in either material or social terms, social constructionist approaches are nowadays dominant and scales are seen not as 'a pre-given or fixed platform for social relations' (Castells 1977: 445) but rather as 'a socially constituted, politically contested and historically variable dimension of those relations' (Brenner 2000: 367). As much as with space, scale is the product of social relations and thus is inherently relational. It is a socially-defined spatial unit within the broader social space of human relations – a feature that allows us to study it as a geographical parameter.

Scale, as Carolyn Cartier (2005a) noted in her analysis of the scalar ramifications of governance in China, provides theorists with a 'dimension of geographical differentiation' that can allow for a geographical systematization of the study of political relations. Since these processes cut across multiple scales, scalar reconfigurations will often be intertwined, and so will their politics. For instance, the metamorphoses of the hierarchy of states at the scale of international politics comes with contemporaneous disruptions of the pecking order of the Westphalian system that sees the often dramatic appearance of non-state elements on the international relations scene. What is important to understand here is that the processes of social construction of space, and conversely scale, are not neutral but rather deeply political acts of engagement that produce structures and thus geographical formations. In Erik Swyngedouw's words: 'scales and their nested articulations become produced as temporary standoffs in a perpetual transformative socio-spatial power struggle' (1997: 141).

Even if we have a few examples of scales that crystallize for certain amounts of time, such as those of the state of the pre-modern empires, their existence is contingent on their continued engagement with those who construct them and their space is the object of repeated recasting. This, especially in light of the structurationist reasoning sketched above, does not mean that we should be thinking of scales as systems of 'Russian dolls' or as a 'ladder' of geopolitical importance. These representations of scale tend, as Neil Brenner (2009b: 71) has underlined in his recent work, to present too much coherence, absolute geographical size and spatial order where, in reality, scale 'can only be grasped relationally' as results of contingent differentiations of social relations.¹⁵ Moreover, where scale is met with geographical fixity rather than process-thinking, as Archer has remarked, 'micro' trends tend to be associated with the individual level and 'macro' dynamics are often synonymous with societal transformations. Yet, what constitutes 'micro' and 'macro' in the social, and by proxy the political, is in reality relationally determined: mayoral re-election politics are 'micro' processes if compared to shifts in the international system, but 'macro' when looked at vis-à-vis neighbourhood disputes.¹⁶ What can be studied in this possibly endless horizon is the production of hierarchically-organized, and thus stabilized, structures that organize (as Mouzelis' analysis tells us) the structuration of social spaces.

This perspective brings us to the 'realm' of *scalar* structururations of the social space, a term Brenner (2001: 603) uses to define those inherently political 'relations of hierarchization and rehierarchization' among spatial units, and which in turn leads us to that vast ensemble of politics of scale we call 'global governance'.¹⁷ Scalar structururations are processes of differentiation and organization of the social space that produce power-geometries across it. In this sense, appreciating politics among scales means inquiring into the production and redefinition of power alignments and political prerogatives underpinning their organization. For instance, studying the scalar structururation of the modern state brings us to consider how the Westphalian system

has inscribed in the social space of a vast portion of humanity a system of nested juridical scales arranged according to the logics of sovereignty and the geography of territoriality. This is therefore, as much of the sociological and geographical literature of the late 1990s tells us, essentially an approach that seeks to decipher political processes of scale-making (and scale-jumping) that redefine the spatiality of social relations, and their effect on the hierarchical disposition of various intertwined forms of socio-spatial organization such as the state or the world economy. A scalar structuration process of particular interest for our analysis is that underpinning the redefinition of the structures of world politics beyond international relations, as noted in Chapter 2, within which I locate my analysis of the global relevance of the global city.

Analysing the role of elements (be they cities or states) in the geography of global governance faces us with a need to appreciate the duality between their agency and the structures of a world-system they are embedded in, and which stretches from the highest levels of politics to the 'pettiest' practices on the ground. The solution to these analytical quandaries is, I would then argue, to reconsider the agency-driven analytical focus maintained thus far to study the global city's influence on world politics and move towards a more balanced account of their positioning in these. This means, in practical terms, overcoming the tension of looking for urban agency *and* acknowledging its limits; likewise it means relying on a narrative that allows us to go *beyond* having to choose a specific spatiality of politics, urban or international, to study global governance as the 'global' aggregate of governance spheres (à la Rosenau), and thus as the complex architecture of world politics.

Rethinking political spaces from a global city perspective can prompt us to better appreciate the processes of scalar politics underpinning the changing relations between the Westphalian skeleton of world politics (broadly, *government*) and the broader political spaces of *governance* in which government is embedded along with new or hybrid forms of political institutions. The hierarchical system of sovereign prerogatives pinpointed on the state as axis of politics is, in fact, only a temporarily stabilized 'scalar fix' of the past two centuries that, as much as many other ordered complexes of socio-political scales like the pre-modern empires, are 'successively secured, destabilized, junked and remade' (Brenner 2004: 31). This view, in turn, requires us to first understand that scale in the contemporary global political system is not just a given system of Russian dolls, but can also be socially constructed to bypass the encasement dependency of traditional twentieth-century politics. Then, second, it demands that we critically assess what sort of encounters, structururations and organizations are inherent in the process of the social production of space and scale. As a result, to use Neil Smith's (1990: 172) popular phrase, we have to move to an analysis of the 'politics of scale' upholding, or transforming, the system of political relations we live in and producing power-geometries across multiple levels of social organization.

Nonetheless, moving to a scalar study of politics requires, as Neil Brenner (2001: 599) argued in relation to Smith's formulation, a precautionary note:

'politics of scale' is a phrase that includes a 'deceptively unobjectionable' word, *of*, which has in reality two distinct connotations, a 'singular' and a 'plural' one, and that has led to the differential application of scalar analyses to politics. The singular notion of this preposition entails an understanding of politics of scale as politics *within* scales.¹⁸ Actors engaged in a particular scale can therefore compete or cooperate to define the spatial configuration, functionality and political organization of a particular scale. Nonetheless, 'politics of scale' can also be understood to involve 'the production, reconfiguration or contestation of particular differentiations, orderings and hierarchies *among* geographical scales' (Brenner 2001: 600). This means focusing not so much on the 'internal' arrangements of a specific spatial unit (be it state or city), but rather on the relationship among interrelated scales either producing new alignments, as in the case of states 'building' international organizations, or recasting each other's prerogatives, as in the case of local governments negotiating electoral constituencies with their central governments.

Now, I would also suggest that political dynamics *within* scales and politics *among* scales are often very much intertwined and coexistent. The focus, once again, should be on the structuration of these spaces and their correspondence to both narrower and broader political processes. The global city, as both venue and vehicle of scalar structururations, offers us a unique view into the dynamic scalar construction of global governance. This is of fundamental interest to international political analysts and students of global governance because their discipline might be at the heart of the matter: cities are, in fact, not the inert recipients of exogenous forces that polarize their social structure, but loci of governance capable of formulating collective agency and defining their spaces of dependence. Their underlying political processes are intertwined with the broader spheres of global governance, and it is thus possible to reconnect local problems with global reconfigurations, as much as global plights with local causes. This, in turn, implies that we should be inquiring not just into collective action, but also into its constituency and the power structures of the governance process that sustains it.

A networking model for structururations

Structuration as an assemblage problem

What is needed in order to conceptualize the presence of global cities in global governance is an understanding of the multifaceted nature of their strategic influence that is capable of contemplating the relevance of the urban without reducing its complexity to a single one of its twin dimensions (actant or actor) or subsume them under other elements of geopolitics such as states. As French urbanist Patrick Le Galès (2002: 183) beautifully points out: 'any study of cities must steer a course between the Scylla of representing the city as a separate unit, thus risking reification, and the Charybdis of showing it to be infinitely diverse and complex'. In the attempt to navigate between these

two dangers, it is necessary to move here to a theoretical approach that can depict the global agency of metropolises in a more balanced structurationist sense, while also considering the processes of scalar aggregation and disaggregation (the politics of scale) of such relevance. A possible solution, I would argue, is offered by social theories of assemblage, and Actor-Network Theory (ANT) in particular as its most 'structurationist' wing, which have a natural tendency towards considering the aggregation dynamics that produce structures and power relations in society. Once again, I will rely here on an eclectic mix of urbanist and sociological formulations of this assemblage framework to depict a model capable of problematizing the role of global cities in global governance, as well as to unpack the twin actant-actor dimensions of this link.

A widespread interest in 'assemblage' has recently burgeoned in urban studies circles, drawing mostly on ANT discussions and critiques thereof. As Colin McFarlane (2011) justly argued, assemblage thinking is still in its infancy and has probably only really taken off in sociological studies even more recently than the 'structurationist' turn of the late 1970s and early 1980s.¹⁹ Albeit timidly, ANT-inspired narratives have thus made a gradual appearance in urban studies in the past decade – their production has, however, remained largely erratic. To redress this imbalance, a succession of authors have more recently sought to develop some coherence on assemblages from a more specifically urbanist standpoint and by drawing cross-cutting lessons from the tradition illustrated above (Farias and Bender 2010; McFarlane and Anderson 2011). Extending through multiple social scientific fields, assemblage approaches have been developed from a range of perspectives and on a vast array of topics. As such, attempts at systematic theorization have thus far been confined to a few limited methodological discussions, collective efforts based on developing the reach of the notion of 'global assemblage', or more or less explicit primers for further research in the societal dynamics of assemblage, many of which evolved in the shade of Deleuze and Guattari's work (Deleuze and Guattari 1987; Latour 2005; Collier and Ong 2005; Sassen 2006b; De Landa 2006). To overcome this epistemological variety, I propose to focus here on a specific type of assemblage thinking, that of actor-network theory, as this provides perhaps the most methodologically refined example of this literature and, as I will point out below, sketches a critical roadmap for studying not just the urban but its relation to the realm of global governance. Despite some shortcomings mostly derived from a spiralling methodological self-indulgence, ANT has in fact long been concerned with unpacking 'the tactics and strategies of power' (Law 1992: 387) and can present urban scholars with critical analytical approaches that provide an equitable account not solely of human factors, but of the very active contexts these interact with.²⁰ Precisely for this capacity to trace the articulations of society through the socio-technical texture of cities (and not just global ones), ANT can develop an eclectic bridge between urban and international studies – a connection that could in turn also strengthen not only urbanist analyses but also the theorization of global governance.

Claiming roots that go back to the works of Michel Foucault on micro-politics and, in particular, Michel Serres on translation, the assemblage tradition has been mostly developed in a socio-political sense by scholars such as Bruno Latour, Michel Callon and John Law. This, if first targeted at a re-examination of 'science in action' (Latour 1987) within what has evolved to become science and technology studies (STS), has then expanded to a rather heterogeneous body of qualitative network analysis. ANT has nowadays a relatively developed lineage of empirical application and, importantly for the discussion at stake here, methodological self-examination through debates on its core theoretical tenets and practical applications sprawling across the 1990s and early 2000s (Law and Hassard 1999). While summarizing the complexity of this scholarship might be a far-fetched task, a few central ANT epistemological tenets are particularly important in terms of problematizing the scalar structuration of global cities in global governance. Common ANT threads regard: (1) the 'assembled' nature of society, (2) the importance of considering it in terms of networking processes, and (3) the heterogeneous participation of hybrid elements ('actants') in the production of everyday life. While I have already touched upon the importance of thinking of cities through this dimension, it is imperative to underscore here how actor-network approaches are also premised on the process- and plurality-driven nature of the social, ultimately understood as a realm of mutable 'associations' (or 'assemblages') whose connections should be at the heart of every sociological inquiry, thus providing a scholarly 'investment with immanence and multiplicity' (Smith and Doel 2011: 29). Now, this is a key theoretical step because, as noted in Chapter 2, world politics as a whole, as well as urban politics more particularly, is witnessing an expansion of the realm of policymaking from government to governance alignments, thus requiring a greater sensibility to plural associations.

Concerned with explaining how such networking unfolds, stabilizes and is 'scripted' in society (or even fails in certain instances), ANT theorists set out to 'follow the actors' (Law et al. 1986: 4) involved in these associations. This ethnographic approach is developed to understand the processes of making connections, or 'translation' (Callon 1980: 211; 1986: 203), which creates convergence among previously different elements of society and determines identities, interactions and margins of manoeuvre of the actors in question. In doing so, however, ANT scholars tend to differ from most sociological analyses since they seek to re-establish the dynamics of the social while not devaluing its context (whether built or natural) and to bring back into the social world those 'missing masses' of non-human actors often degraded to the role of 'mundane artefacts' (Latour 1992: 225) while, in our everyday experience, there are no purely 'social' relations that can be dissociated from some technological mediation. This consideration leads into an analytics of 'generalized symmetry' amongst all social agents, thus allowing theoretical and practical space for non-humans to partake in the 'distribution of [social] competences' (Latour 1992: 223) and to 'prescribe' behaviours. Actor-network

approaches are in this particularly alert to *context*, to the extent that this latter generally transcends its 'background' attributes to become an 'actively passive' presence in the structuration of social relations. Technologies, whether in their built form or as social institutions, partake in the stabilization of everyday practices and represent allies to be enrolled in the heterogeneous networks that allow society to exist and evolve. From this viewpoint, ANT treats any thing that modifies the state of affairs by making a difference as *actant*, therefore granting the same capacity for agency to both human and non-humans. It is perhaps this latter feature, capable of actively accounting for the built environment, and technologies more in general, that has echoed more loudly through urban studies and produced a mounting complex of ANT analyses of the contemporary urban condition.

The actor-network approach

Actor-network analysis can, in this endeavour, provide crucial instruments to take into consideration the networked production not solely of the context, but of the broader 'context of contexts' (Brenner et al. 2011: 234) represented by global governance, where different geographical dimensions unfold unevenly both within and beyond contexts such as that of the city. In fact, if these multiple concepts such as that of 'scales' can provide analytical anchors for identifying varying dimensions of spatial differentiation, there remains a need for a method to consider systematically how such scalar structurations unfold – a toolbox the 'translation' narrative of ANT can effectively provide. By rejecting *a priori* scalar divisions as well as depicting scalar 'jumps' not as space-less leaps but as spatialized translations unfolding through very real networks, this take can allow both urban and international scholars to study the political foundations of how scales, actants and actors *come to* influence world politics.

In terms of providing an effective analytical toolbox, ANT has developed a particularly high-yielding qualitative take on the dynamics of networking. This, in view of my concern with the global political relevance of metropolises, is especially relevant in ANT's key concern with the dynamic of 'simplification' (Callon 1987): the appearance of unitary elements, from an ANT viewpoint, has to do with an inherent juxtaposition that provides some closure on that entity's limits. This is essential because when one looks at actors and these appear as acting as a single block, then the network (or 'hybrid collectivity') that sustains their agency has disappeared, 'black boxed' from sight, and masked in a 'punctualization' (Law 1992: 385). Which actants within such networks control this, and how such simplification comes about, is a crucial issue, and a pre-eminently political one. By unpacking this dynamic, ANT has in fact long been concerned with 'demystifying the power of the powerful' and exposing 'the tactics and strategies of power' (Law 1992: 387) that run through, and allow for the emergence of, actants as well as actors. In both cases ANT thus offers a way of systematizing the study of

structuration by focusing on networks as emergent 'effects' of linking structures and actants across scales (Callon and Law 1995). Implicit in ANT's attack on divides and categories that artificially distinguish social and non-human, large and small or active and passive, ANT has a natural inclination to criticize 'black boxing' and going beyond 'natural' alignments. Likewise, in its sensibility towards the non-human, be it a scallop, a door hinge or even an entire metropolis, ANT analyses are well positioned to illustrate punctuations in world affairs – a key process in bringing cities to the attention of an international arena that has to date lacked any substantial formalization of their presence.

However, assemblage thinking as systematized in ANT field research might even more importantly provide a bridge between disciplines and spatial orientations. This can allow for a methodology that traces those 'moments of translation' that allow actants to be assembled in a network, and how processes such as those of urban planning are networked both within and among cities to form collective responses across borders and scales. This approach is not simply descriptive, but also capable of conveying unevenness and power relations: the ANT frame of research for networking, in fact, pays particular attention to who (or what) is capable of 'problematizing', 'mobilizing' and 'enrolling' actants in socio-technical assemblages and thus what 'obligatory passage points' determine the shape of the network (Callon 1986). This series of networking 'steps' offers social theorists a qualitative research framework that provides a 'coding' and 'mapping' methodology for deciphering the dynamics of networking and, conversely, deconstructs the development of linkages between global cities and global governance whether the former are considered as actants or actors.

As this approach indicates, in order to 'follow actors' in the construction of spaces we can devise an analytical framework centred on the study of the role played by network-making in structuring such spaces, and thus the power relationships underpinning them. This is a model capable of coding the dynamics of networking in four consecutive 'moments' that can be broadly grouped into two key phases: organization of the network (spatialization of the relationships) and mobilization of the network ('activation' of an established set of relationships). In practice:

- I *Organization*, or the production of the network's structure. This process involves three 'moments':
 - Ia *Problematization* or 'how to become indispensable'. Actors define the nature and problematic construction of the issue at stake and seek to suggest a solution to these circumstances that locates them as mediators (or 'obligatory passage points') for the achievement of such outcomes by a group of potential 'allies' (also known as 'intermediaries').
 - Ib *Interestment* or 'how the allies are locked into place'. Having conceptualized the problem, mediators seek to position potential allies in a network by both demonstrating how the interests of these latter lie within

the network, and by redefining allies' identities and positions as part of the network.

- Ic *Enrolment* or 'how coordinates and roles are locked into place'. Closely related to the previous moment, this stage sees the negotiation between the mediators and intermediaries allied, arranging the basic *modus vivendi* of the network and establishing the boundaries of the engagement.
- II *Mobilization*, or the activation of the network's structure. Once the network actants have been problematized, interested and enrolled (and thus, conjunctly, organized), the network can be 'activated' to mobilize resources and connections, and thus become an actant itself.²¹

This narrative implies two main sets of actors interacting in such a process: 'mediators' who have the core initiative in building the network and attempt to establish themselves as hinges of this, and 'intermediaries' who are engaged as 'allies' by the mediators to organize the network (Latour 1990; Law and Callon 1992). In practice, mediators are those actors that hold sway in the power-geometries of the network by transforming, translating and modifying meanings and connections. Intermediaries are, instead, those actors and actants which transport these meanings and take part in these connections without playing active parts in their transformation. In the following two chapters I will therefore attempt to apply this qualitative system to the two dimensions of global city influence on global governance, in order to re-read the actant and actor qualities of these metropolises in a scalar structurationist sense, and thus to provide a more refined illustration of the linkage between the two beyond the agency-driven theoretical culs-de-sac mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. As a matter of practicality, I will subsume the processes of interestment and enrolment within a single 'moment' of networking, so as to consider within a single step the paradiplomatic negotiations unravelling in these processes of geopolitical establishment.

Overall, the application of this network-oriented framework will rest on the assumption that, as I noted above, identifying the performers of actions becomes more than anything else a matter of conceptually packing and unpacking: we could find agency in a city by dismantling its socio-technical assemblage into its constituent parts, possibly distributing the source of such agency among its local government(s), the various civil players such as business coalitions and local activists and the governing arrangements that 'ally' them; or we could go even deeper, and point to City Hall executives, CEOs and influential personalities, and the mayoral strategies, planning processes and politics that underpin their relations. At every stage, the politics-savvy ANT analyst finds not only a multiplicity of actants but also negotiations and hierarchies that more generally constitute the structuration of the previous level of agency. Indeed, this scalar viewpoint that can go in any direction, and thus prompt us to considering levels of political engagement in global governance – whether an actant is an 'actor' (networking heterogeneous elements) or a 'network' (made of networked by elements), then is nothing but a

question of perspective (Callon 1987: 93). This juxtaposition allows for a hybrid of networked actants to become an actor at a different scale as a process of ‘punctualization converts an entire network into a single point or node in another network’ (Callon 1991: 153). In this view, political agency in global governance is an emergent effect of one actant’s ‘internal’ (though not necessarily ‘limited’) assemblage, and needs to be unpacked accordingly to appreciate what simplifications occur at ‘deeper’ scales. In turn, considering these dynamics of punctualization allows the analysis of the city to acquire a relevance beyond urban studies and impact directly international practice and theory, as the city becomes at the same time *locus* of multiple agencies (as actant) and *determinant* of networked relations (as actor).

Part II

Structuration

5 The world politics ‘in’ global cities

Networking actants

POLITICS IN THE GLOBAL CITY

Planning the global city’s influence

Unlike many metropolises whose globalization can be traced to a relatively recent lineage, London’s centrality has deep historical roots dating back to the first millennium and following much of the modern development of the present world-system (King 1990). The British capital has long been recognized as a central place in world affairs, first through its colonial legacy as base of the British Empire, and then as a key hub on the new ‘globalizing’ economy since the mid-twentieth century. Its scholarly endorsement as a ‘global city’ dates back to long before the phrase itself was given currency by Saskia Sassen’s 1991 work. For instance, London was christened by Peter Hall as a unique node of worldwide economy, culture and politics in his (1966) *The World Cities*.¹ The city has since occupied a steady presence in the headlines of countless academic writings and at the top of nearly all city rankings. While I shall not attempt to summarize this long colonial and post-colonial genealogy, it is crucial to point out how such long-lived international presence poses an immediate analytical challenge: from the outset, London’s core positioning in world affairs has, in fact, not been in need of assertion but rather *re*-assertion.

To this extent, I will focus here on the contemporary evolution of London’s urban governance around the advent of a seemingly new arrangement for the metropolis, that of the Greater London Authority (GLA). In particular, I will be considering how a complex web of interdependences has been negotiated by the GLA (and its mayor *in primis*) to recast the city’s traditional planning in order to maintain this global centrality. If we unpack the political dynamics underpinning this structure, albeit representing some degree of novelty, London has also the potential to illustrate the multiscalar dimension of continuity characterized by the city’s redefinition of traditional dependences – thus convening agency and its limitations through a structurationist account. Precisely because of this viewpoint, it is here necessary to first turn to the background to the institution of the GLA as the centrepiece of the city’s

current strategic planning structure. This will allow us to consider how the development of the present governance system has been historically conditioned by a continuing political-economic feature: the need for strategic coordination of London's internal spatial dynamics. We therefore need to first step back a few decades and appreciate the emergence of the GLA.

The political context: a fragmented city

The development of London has thus much to do with *remaining* an indispensable hinge in the global system of flows of our time. The problematization of the city, as I will illustrate here, is a process of continuous redefinition of its engagements with both broader (national, international and global) spheres, as well as more localized contexts (town, neighbourhood and so forth). Yet, this confirms the precarious status of the global city sketched in Chapter 3. London's primacy in the world-system is not a given and wider as well as more localized scalar dynamics equally present fundamental constraints to the city's international outreach. Since at least the 1970s, London has had to face new geographical dynamics that have tested its catalytic interconnectedness. The city has had to face the problem of distinguishing its centrality as differing from many of the 'newer' global cities sprawling, for instance, in East Asia. At the same time, it has had to bear with a series of governmental drawbacks represented by both the decline of the United Kingdom as a key global player after World War II, as well as by the 'retreat' of the state on the local front through the Thatcher years.

While much of the scholarship on the British capital has traditionally underlined, echoing Michael Hebbert's famous London biography, that the city has survived through ages of complex political-economic turmoil 'more by fortune than design' (Hebbert 1998), there has been a considerable amount of *political* designing involved in shaping the governance structure around the River Thames.² The question of strategic urban planning and management in London has in this sense a history as long as its global city legacy. Yet it was not until the late nineteenth century that a city-wide structure was set up (in 1889) in the form of the London County Council, a body designed to provide some centralized coordination to the multitude of fragmented jurisdictions across a growing metropolis, to be coupled with a set of 'boroughs' providing complementary and localized authorities.³ For almost exactly a century, the shape of government in London underwent only administrative reorganizations, the biggest of which brought about the establishment of the Greater London Council (GLC) in 1963. This, responding to the suburban sprawl and continued internationalization of the city, was set up to administer strategic metropolitan services in a 'shared responsibility' partnership with the boroughs.

However, the story of the GLC is a short-lived one: in 1981, after a few years of alternation between Conservative and Labour leaderships, to the helm of the GLC was elected the radical left figure of Ken Livingstone – a

name that would resonate prominently in the London politics of the years to come. Soon, the GLC leader's programme began to confront the Conservative central government of Margaret Thatcher at both political and economic levels. This was for instance showcased by the GLC's 'Fares Fair' policy to reduce transport costs via governmental incentives, or in Livingstone's decision to enter into dialogue with Sinn Féin MP Gerry Adams at a time when Adams was banned from entering Britain due to his links with the Irish Republican Army.⁴ Progressively irritated by the widening agenda gap between the Council and Whitehall, Thatcher decided to abolish this tier of government in 1986, thus leaving the capital without a coordinating body for 14 years.⁵ In particular, the elimination of the GLC was seen as a Conservative reaction to the Labour controlled Council's attempt to demonstrate the 'small scale potential' of an alternative economic strategy pinpointed on leftist schemes such as Fares Fair, and which could have then been pursued nationally by the Labour Party in opposition.⁶ Hence, as Peter Newman and Andy Thornley (2005: 137) underlined, this time 'the motivation for change [in the governing structure] was political rather than administrative efficiency'.

In this institutional vacuum the planning powers, and more broadly the locus of urban governance, were either centralized to Whitehall or 'localized' to strengthened boroughs in a market-oriented approach with minimal interference of the former in the latter's affairs. In particular, the shape and direction of London politics were progressively hijacked by the City of London Corporation, an 'hybrid' LGA elected by both residents and resident businesses representing the 'Square Mile' (as it is popularly defined) of London's CBD. The Corporation itself has, to date, undergone very few changes since its medieval ancestor, and maintains the so-called 'non-residential' vote (popularly known as the 'business' vote), which had been abolished in the rest of the country in 1969. This has hitherto grown to an increasingly large part of the electorate and, especially thanks to the City of London (Ward Elections) Act of 2002, has greatly increased the business franchise, allowing for 24,000-odd business votes – greatly exceeding residential voters and making the Corporation one of the most direct voices of London's financial core (Kynaston and Sulkin 2001).

Besides the boroughs, ad hoc arrangements and informal governance bodies soon crowded the city's political landscape. At a metropolitan level the London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC), a consultative body formed by borough representatives, a limited planning secretariat and seconded civil experts from academia and business sectors, 'replaced' the GLC with a limited and non-binding guidance role for the central government. Practically, LPAC functioned as an assembly of the boroughs where common and localized problems could be voiced, and eventually put forward to Whitehall, but it rarely offered any harmonization functions. Hence, smaller-scale and interest-based initiatives sprawled across the city. For example, the Central London Partnership (CLP) was established in the core of the city by eight central

boroughs (Kensington and Chelsea, City of Westminster, Camden, City Corporation, Tower Hamlets, Southwark, Lambeth and Wandsworth) to coordinate a 'business voice for London', while surveying, lobbying and campaigning for the city's economic internationalization.

Along with LGA associations, corporate councils such as the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), a long-lived institution on the London scene which since 1881 had accumulated a vast and mixed membership across the capital, took the lead in pushing the city's development.⁷ This was not just a case of well-established bodies like the LCCI: a profusion of similar institutions sprawled throughout the capital and became concentrated around its burgeoning financial core, such as for example London First – a multi-sector policy council representing the capital's leading employers such as British Airways or Ernst & Young, which was from its beginnings energetically involved in promoting a business vision for London.⁸ Importantly, the vast majority of these strategic policy and business campaign initiatives were characterized by varying degrees of semi-formality. The typical council would 'sit' a series of private representatives (financial, industrial and service spokespersons), local government officials, academics and public intellectuals, and either 'host' or relate more or less directly with Whitehall counterparts. Thus London-based business began to develop lobby and strategic proactiveness in order to instill in the city's planning a neoliberal policy orientation more favourable to its thriving role in the capital. This growing influence was sustained by the city's economic development: since the mid-1960s the city's manufacturing output, and consequently its workforce, had been steadily declining, while the financial, economic and service industries were seeing a substantial expansion – making of London a mainly post-industrial site and of its business elite a prime mover in urban planning in the 1990s.⁹

At this stage, prompted by growing concerns for the city's economic competitiveness at the international level, not least influenced by the opening of the Single European Market in 1992, the Conservative government (now led by John Major) sought to reinforce its grip on the capital. Initially, it did so by convening a London Forum to strengthen LPAC's SUP role, but this had a relatively short life as it was quickly merged into the London First initiative. The Major government subsequently attempted a more complex reorganization, though not as pervasive as the 1986 reforms, by establishing a Government Office for London (GOL) that was to gather representatives from eight ministries and even rely on an appointed cabinet position (the Minister for London). In practice the GOL remained little more than an oversight body for both Conservative and, later, Labour governments, with its ministerial appointees reporting to all of the various Whitehall departments involved, and the business sector bypassing it in favour of direct lobby on decision-making structures.

But GOL was not the only government initiative of the 1990s. Whitehall also established a business-led 'London Pride Partnership' which was

entrusted with the task of advising central government on preparing a 'Prospectus' setting out a 20-year vision for the city through a Joint London Advisory Panel.¹⁰ Despite the successful confluence of private, national, borough and quango interests in this initiative, the prospectus published in 1995 lacked any implementation capacity and was soon replaced by another experiment, the London Development Partnership, that I will describe below. Overall, business remained the major source of input on the city's extremely decentralized policy structure. As Newman and Thornley (2005: 138) pointed out: 'the net effect was that during this period the strategic policy vacuum was filled, not by a government for London, but by central government heavily influenced by representatives of the business sector'. Despite the attempts by Whitehall to set the pace in London's development, symbolized by the GOL's *Strategic Planning Guidance for London*, the governance architecture of the city remained highly fragmented and yielded to even greater calls, from business and civil society alike, for a formalized metropolitan-wide structure such as the GLC. Both on the business side as well as civil society and, at least partly, local governments, the concerns were predominantly motivated by the lack of clarity on planning prerogatives and relevant authorities. Calls for a body capable of comprehensive policy guidance were stimulated by the lack of accountability and strategic planning confusion created by the co-existence of a wide variety of rather powerless bodies such as LPAC, GOL and the various quangos like London Pride. At the same time, calls for a readily-identifiable 'voice of London' grew louder and louder from all sides.

Organizing the network: problematizing the GLA

Soon the key problem upon which London's strategic planning was to be re-problematized emerged clear: global interconnectedness and national economic responsibilities, as well as the complexity in the planning demands of a 7-million people conurbation, needed a governance catalyst capable of managing, if not enhancing, the city's global positioning.¹¹ In this sense the key urban stakeholders began, from the late 1990s, to devise new 'local' connections to maintain their traditional global reach, both political and economic, which in turn conditioned the shape of 'local' planning politics and the dynamics of such a networking process – one that was progressively centred on the development of an authority for Greater London. On such a fragmented background the establishment of the GLA illustrates how a large collection of 'urban' allies were well-disposed to be locked into place around the catalyst that was to occupy this complex authority vacuum. Yet, this does not mean that the GLA materialized in a *political* vacuum: rather the twin business and strategic coordination demand dynamics described thus far conditioned the development of this new structure, grounding it in national, local and transnational dependences.

The key push for this networking process to reorganize the metropolis came from national politics. Running on a 'new left' platform at the 1997 elections,

the Labour Party of Tony Blair made re-establishing a government for London one of the priorities of its devolution agenda. While bringing back the GLC was a non-starter with the Conservative opposition, the idea of a new governance model for the city, epitomized by a stronger and more representative mayor who could embody the need for a 'voice of London', grew stronger and stronger.¹² The newly-elected government then published a White Paper called 'A Mayor and Assembly for London' in March 1998, paving the way for a referendum that was then held in May, resulting in a 72 per cent approval for a directly-elected London representative. This widespread sentiment was then confirmed in 1999 when the government passed the Greater London Authority Act, which provided for the election of a mayor to head the GLA, thus supplying strategic guidance, and a twenty-five-member Assembly (fourteen on constituency basis and eleven London-wide) with a mayoral oversight role, thus providing for social inclusion and transparency.

However, the Labour Party encountered an unexpected obstacle in the candidacy of Ken Livingstone who, after having been deprived of the party nomination by New Labour cabinet minister Frank Dobson, decided to run as an independent at the March 2000 elections. Livingstone, who after the abolition of the GLC had been elected to Parliament as Labour's MP for Brent East, entered in an internal party squabble with Blair and the executive, who sought to prevent his candidature at all costs and eventually failed, resulting in the expulsion of Livingstone from the party.¹³ This meant that Livingstone as an independent candidate had to seek endorsements from electoral forces other than his former party, and gather popular support beyond the Labour–Conservative divide. As a consequence, Livingstone's electoral agenda, reflecting some of the widespread support for his GLC before the abolition, was pinpointed on a twin strategy: highlighting the negativity of the Labour campaign against him and thus presenting himself as anti-politician closer to the people than to Whitehall; and, conversely, running on a populist ticket that had 'Londoners' at large, not Labourites or Tories, as its constituency (Turner 2001). Livingstone won by a 16-point margin over the Conservative candidate, with Dobson only coming third, and was inaugurated as London's first mayor on 4 May 2000. Yet, organizing room for manoeuvre for this new role was to be conditioned by both economic and national political continuities. Let me briefly consider these two key influences on the structural development of the GLA's strategic planning capacity.

- (1) *Business community.* Since Livingstone relied on a conciliatory agenda to run as independent without (and certainly also against the obstacles set by) the Labour Party, the support of the city's business elite was to be inscribed in the soon-to-be-mayor's plans after the election.¹⁴ Right from the start, the new governance network was therefore subject to a substantial negotiation that sought to define more specifically the interests of the business sector with key stakes on this scale. The strong influence of

private governance councils such as London First did not vanish after 2000, but rather maintained a tight grip on the GLA's operation. The interestment of business elites in the GLA-centred network was sanctioned by the mayor's decision to maintain constant relations with the engines of London's growth. This, if first symbolized by the appointment of Corporation of London head Judith Mayhew as Livingstone's advisor on business, was then formalized with Livingstone's decision to hold regular consultations with the corporate representatives of the capital. Hence, in this phase, the mayor expressed a clear will to engage the business community if this latter was able to present some degree of coherence in its strategic priorities. The demand for coordination was aptly fulfilled by the London Business Board, a conference of representatives of the major corporate councils of the city (including, as main sponsor, London First), which provided a coordination mechanism between the GLA and business associations. The mayoral meeting with the Board was soon institutionalized in the GLA's strategic planning structure with bimonthly frequency, testifying that there was 'a considerable amount of continuity of business representation from the mid-1990s onwards' (Thornley et al. 2005: 1958).

- (2) *Central government*. Likewise, in the early production of this network, the role of the 'controlling hand of government' (Newman and Thornley 1997) should not be dismissed – both in tandem with the business sector and alone. This is for instance the case of the London Development Partnership, a focus group gathering key corporate voices that was set up in 1998 after the Labour win, and strongly influenced by the 1995 'Prospectus' of London Pride, to fill the void inevitably created by the GLA election process and to present the new mayor with a prototype for economic strategy-making which was to become, in 2000, the GLA-controlled London Development Agency (Rao 2006). More importantly, the GLA Act of 1999, along with the Local Government Act of July 2000 and the Transport Act of November 2000, set up an imposed institutional framework that facilitated the rise of the GLA as core mediator, and consequently of the mayor as its pivot. As such, it is also important to note here that the actants allied into the London engagement were 'enrolled by decree' through this series of parliamentary Acts, a feature that would continue to the present day. In 2000, however, the institutionally-established role of mayor of London was, as Tony Travers (2004) noted, a substantially weak one mostly characterized by 'enabling' and 'influencing' powers rather than firm governmental prerogatives, and fundamentally affected by the lack of budgetary control on high-spend services such as education, housing or infrastructure – making the initial organization of London's strategic planning structure a 'system of networked governance with a weak centre'.

It would, however, be misleading to represent Livingstone here as a puppet of corporate interests or in the sole shadow of the central government. The

mayoral positioning at the head of London's strategic planning made him an obligatory passage point in establishing the shape of the new spaces of engagement unravelling through the GLA. His approach, based on consensus-building and stakeholder consultation, was instrumental in conciliating the interests of both the wider Londoner electorate, as well as (crucially, one might argue) those private and corporate interests that had burgeoned during the Conservative years into a series of lobby councils and policymaking associations. Moreover, having gained an overwhelming popular support and having acquired considerable political status via his opposition to the central government's agenda in the GLC years, the mayor was certainly capable of exploiting the unique institutional stature granted him by the GLA Act to position himself as core catalyst in the production of London's space. Despite the originally limited mediator positioning, Livingstone and the GLA were able to knit a prolific web of connections problematized upon not just their key role in policy coordination, but also around the 'internationalized' city image of London as a 'golden goose' (Massey 2007b: 97) for both city-based business, Whitehall and the UK more in general. In this sense, the mayor's pivotal positioning in maintaining and enhancing the global city status via strategic planning became a foremost bargaining base for Livingstone's capacity to enrol and mobilize GLA allies – a feature perhaps best represented by the 'London Plan'.

Organizing the network: enrolling allies into the 'Plan'

Since its early days, London had witnessed only two types of metropolitan-wide strategic coordination plans: the 1944 *Greater London Plan*, prepared by professional planner Patrick Abercrombie, and the 1969 *Greater London Development Plan* (or GLDP) which was the product of the GLC's bureaucratic mechanism and which never saw the light due to the abolition of the Council. The 'London Plan', officially launched in 2004 by the GLA, occupied much of the mayor's first term in office and symbolized his effort to negotiate London's positioning on his global city vision. The Plan operates at three different levels within the urban scale. Its core policy objectives are general, and thus relevant throughout the whole of the conurbation. Some content is concerned with particular geographic development of London (including transport infrastructure and economic development), and thus sets area-specific stakes. Further, the Plan also includes guidance to the boroughs on the policies in their Unitary Development Plans (UDPs), which are required by the GLA Act to be 'in general conformity' with the London Plan – thus hierarchically setting the mayor's overall planning direction above the individual LGAs.¹⁵ As such, the Plan has since grown in importance by integrating urban governance and thus forming the 'glue' and key framework for strategic urban planning. Not surprisingly, as Ian Gordon pointed out as early as 2003, the Plan contained a strong accent on London's prime international positioning, its extended worldwide economic base, and therefore on

a sustained 'global city rhetoric' shaping the tone of the debate on London's development.¹⁶

The need for a plan stemmed from the GLA Act of 1999, and its establishment of four functional bodies to provide metropolitan services under the overall GLA umbrella. These agencies are: Transport for London (TfL), the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA), the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) and the London Development Agency (LDA). In order to systematize these, the Act also prescribed a series of London-wide strategic documents covering issues such as economic development, municipal waste management, spatial development, transport, ambient noise, air quality, biodiversity and culture, thus providing not solely for a representative figure for London, but also (and indeed crucially) for that coordination impetus that was lacking in the Conservative years. Within this structural complex, the core importance of the 'spatial development strategy' (SDS) quickly gained prominence as the mayor made of this policy framework a blueprint for the future of London. Symptomatically, Livingstone rapidly changed the strategy's name to the more significant pseudonym of 'The London Plan' – a clear indication of the potential imprint of this document on the city's shape. Equally, to mark the metropolitan-wide importance of the SDS in relation to the bundle of other GLA strategic priorities, the Plan is also characterized by 'examination in public' (EiP) in March 2003, followed by a process of re-editing known as 'further alterations to the London Plan' (or FALP), to provide civil and stakeholder input in the spatial development of London.¹⁷ During the process of consultation that eventually led to the Plan and its subsequent application, Livingstone negotiated boundaries and content of the document with a range of stakeholders. This, based on his electoral manifesto that promised an 'open, accessible and inclusive' governance, was an attempt to fulfil the 1999 mandate. However, as several authors have underlined, in this interestment process the mayor 'effectively had two agendas', one with the business sector and one with the public at large, which have been dubbed Livingstone's 'central' and 'big tent' approaches – two key dimensions of the GLA's strategic planning network (McNeill 2002b; West et al. 2003).

'Central' consultations were well established in London: business representatives had at least since the post-GLC period (1986–2000) been accustomed to relate with governmental entities at both Whitehall and borough levels, such as LPAC and GOL. Moreover, since they had been authorized by the national government to play a core strategic role in the transition to the GLA after Labour's 1997 general election victory, chiefly through the LDP and the London Pride Prospectus, key business interests were in a sense already 'on the table' as Livingstone stepped in at City Hall. This latter did not underestimate the potential and influence of such interests: later in an interview with Doreen Massey (2007a) he underscored how 'big business [was] now a strong ally on a whole range of fronts'.¹⁸ This was true to the extent that corporate interests were certainly aligned to maintaining London in its premium global city positioning through a range of commercial and

financial sectors. However, this was also a marked change from the days of the GLC when Livingstone had sought to pursue an alternative economic strategy.¹⁹ Moreover, the mayor also sanctioned the centrality of business interests in the organization of the Plan by holding regular meetings with the LBB and maintaining close (almost daily and often informal) linkages with this audience through his closest advisors in the Mayor's Office and the LDA (Travers 2004: 152–53).

The 'Big Tent' approach (Figure 5.1), instead, was warranted by 1999 GLA Act which required the mayor to hold a series of popular hearings and assure the broader electorate's input into the SUP process underpinning the GLA's reorganization of London. Livingstone took this duty up with a series of innovative initiatives beyond the statutory requirements for two sessions of 'People's Question Time' and a 'State of London Debate' per year. The mayor organized a Civic Forum as an independent body comprising more than 300 civil society organizations ranging from academia to unions, consumers, religious and age groups, which was to provide stakeholder representativeness in the formulation not solely of the Plan, but more generally of his mayoral priorities – a task also entrusted to the Stakeholder Engagement initiative and also taken up through five open public sessions in 2000. At the same time, the GLA organized a series of six Policy Commissions, one of which was specifically dedicated to the Plan, to provide an appraisal of its policy orientation. However, as Newman and Thornley (2005: 145) pointed out, 'the criteria for including people in the commissions were unclear and varied between each one'. Moreover, the Plan's commission (officially 'SDS Policy Commission') was not open to the public and contained a strong business element alongside experts and planners. Membership ambivalence was not the only drawback of this broader policymaking framework. The direct impact of these consultations is unclear, since they had little part in the formulation of core planning priorities and their input came in decisively later than that of business stakeholders (Thornley et al. 2005: 1962).

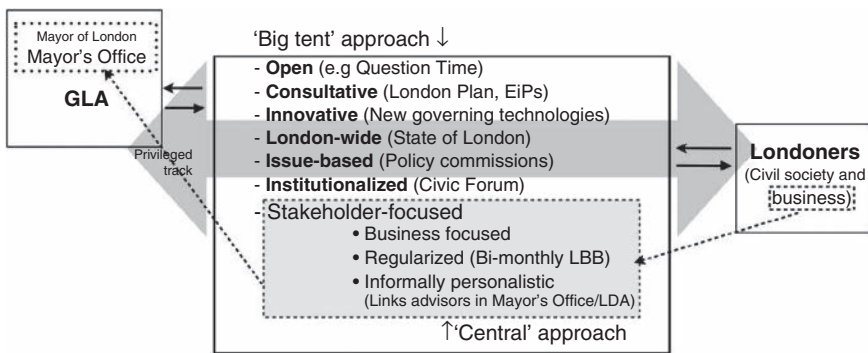


Figure 5.1 Livingstone's Big Tent

Due to the extensiveness of the consultations and in particular the planning process, the London Plan was put in place in February 2004, shortly after the end of Livingstone's tenure as mayor, and was then complemented by the comprehensive Energy Strategy issued later the same month.²⁰ Even before re-election, in June of the same year, the mayor had managed to not solely problematize, but also direct the interests and 'lock into place' the core allies of London's planning network in his twin central/Big Tent strategy. This was, however, just the beginning of the mayor's rise to an undisputed obligatory passage point of the metropolis. Livingstone's second term as mayor of London (2004–8) was marked by an even more extensive proactiveness of the GLA in London and UK politics.

Mobilizing the network: recasting political-economic dependences

Livingstone's London was not going to be 'just' a global city. The mayor, and his GLA, had a vision of an 'exemplary' metropolis not solely 'prosperous' but also 'green' and connected – a vision embedded in the London Plan.²¹ Moreover, alongside the Plan, an extensive series of other key GLA initiatives signalled the mayor's attempt to mobilize London's planning politics in a 'green' direction. Yet, in order to do so, Livingstone had to rely on the full extent of that network carefully sewn until then. To this extent, the first major environmental initiatives after the establishment of the GLA can be identified in the establishment of a traffic congestion charge and of the London Climate Change Agency (LCCA). The former is perhaps the most well-known 'green' planning example from the Livingstone years: established in February 2003, the system was devised to set a levy for those who would drive within a Central Congestion Zone in inner London, an area that was eventually extended westwards in February 2007.

While its overall environmental results remain in dispute, the congestion charge served a *political* purpose in Livingstone's approach. It demonstrated the GLA's active capacity to govern via both its (albeit limited) regulatory and budgetary powers, thus becoming a central tenet of the mayor's strategy to integrate and streamline the major planning directions through City Hall, and cementing the GLA's centrality in steering London's SUP (Pimlott and Rao 2004; Rode 2008; Bulkeley and Schroeder 2009b). On the contrary, the LCCA, instituted in June 2005, showcased the 'hybrid' networked dimension of the GLA's positioning. Set up with the direct support of private companies, it was tasked with delivering GHGs emissions projects and more broadly implementing the mayor's Climate Change Action Plan. Hence, despite strenuous opposition to the privatization of transport providers, symbolized by the lengthy battle between City Hall and Whitehall on the London Underground, Livingstone's second term saw the emergence of several public-private partnerships used as planning implementation strategies. The Climate Agency paved the way to hybridization as the key GLA policy approach. This is for instance represented by the establishment of two 'partnerships' on

climate change action, hydrogen infrastructure and energy. The former, started in February 2001, has brought together more than thirty organizations, both quangos and privates, in order to tackle the issue of climate adaptation and formulate hybrid governance collaborations to respond to the multi-faceted challenges raised locally by environmental changes on a global scale. The second, set up in April 2002, is again a public-private organization centred on a mostly governmental secretariat based at City Hall, and two project groups on infrastructures and applications gathering stakeholders from across London, and seeking to maintain a dialogue among all sectors of the economy relevant to hydrogen/fuel cell technology.²² The latter, born out of the mediation of the GLA via the LCCA, saw the agency team up with EDF Energy, a large British provider, and led to the establishment of a PPP consortium known as the London Energy Partnership (LEP) in 2006. The GLA's aim in these cases was to seek 'hybrid means' for local implementation: this was done with the intent of not giving away complete control over planning and service provision to privates, as well as by relying on a more complex set of linkages across scales to deliver globally-oriented *local* developments.

This proactiveness is also represented by the dynamics of the Olympic bid. First approached by the British Olympic Association (BOA), Livingstone rapidly offered his support and went on to a series of negotiations with Whitehall over both funding and, less extensively, planning matters – thus playing a core role in making the bid happen. So, if the IOC lobby process involved a close partnership of the BOA and GLA with Whitehall, which eventually led the process, the role of the mayor remained a crucial one throughout. Identified as the representative of London, Livingstone cemented his role as spokesperson for the metropolis and 'planner-in-chief' for the operationalization of the games. In this sense, the mayor sought the candidacy both to reinforce London's 'global' image as well as to access a large-scale urban restructuring that would have probably been impossible otherwise. In this sense, the decision to develop the bulk of the Olympic Park in the Lower Lea Valley is seen to be a project that 'liberates' the Lea Valley 'from its industrial present, and after the Games a new green landscape will emerge' (Newman 2007: 257). Crucially, the Olympic bid (and subsequent development) allowed a particularly favourable window for Livingstone to champion London's pluralistic nature and its cross-cultural appeal. This was part of a broader agenda that, as McNeill detailed it, saw the global competitiveness of London 'discursively linked to a multiethnic agenda' (McNeill 2002a: 79). Such global 'representativeness' became a centrepiece of Livingstone's rhetoric (and, later, of his successor's) as the city was the scene of devastating terrorist attacks on the day after London was awarded the games. Symbolically, this is reflected in the mayor's words from Singapore on 7 July 2005, where the city had just won the 2012 Summer Olympics and where news of the London bombings had reached Livingstone, who depicted London as 'the future of the human race' and a place that represented the whole world.

Calling on Londoners, seen as a cosmopolitan mix of juxtaposed cultures, Livingstone remarked, as Massey later underscored, the core positioning of London as a special place 'in a constellation of [global] trajectories: a *meeting place*' (Massey 2007b: 4). The 'global' London rhetoric quickly became a constant in Livingstone's representation of the British capital in the lead up to the games and the aftermath of the bombings, thus allowing the mayor to cement his role as a key player in the Olympic process while being perceived by the public at large as a popular leader of Londoners at large (not just business interests), and therefore creating 'spaces and opportunities for Londoners to show their support for the Olympic project and for the image of themselves represented in a global arena' (Newman 2007: 256).

Similarly, and more crucially for my inquiry, Livingstone also took advantage of his symbolic 'voice of London' image as well as of the political-economic clout due to the city's centrality in the world-system, and proactively engaged other major metropolises in a series of city diplomacy efforts. Fundamentally, this led Livingstone to promote the October 2005 mayoral summit that resulted in the formation of the Climate Leadership Group (C40) network, an initiative that speaks beyond its transnational climate policy motives. The impetus for the C40 implied London's exceptionalism amongst cities and the exemplary climate change action path it was taking with initiatives such as the congestion charge and the LCCA. As such, the summit was also a key arena for showcasing the responsible 'greening' of the city in light of the stalemates of international politics. Hence, rather than limiting the GLA's catalytic agency to drawing linkages *towards* its localized action, Livingstone also attempted to make London a magnet of multiscalar agency emanating *from* the city towards a multiplicity of other metropolises, corporate actors and NGOs. The cohesiveness achieved through this planning process, as well as the progressively central mediatory position of the mayor, allowed Livingstone to represent London at large and thus push the boundaries of the GLA's activity far beyond the UK – a step that would eventually flourish in the regularized transnational ties I will describe more at length in the next chapters.

However, for what concerns the agency within the city, the mayor still remained limited by its national dependences. As per the 1999 Act, mayoral planning powers were limited to the refusal of major projects. The Plan was the sole strategy allowed some targeted regulatory powers. This has now significantly changed. Much like the pre-GLA scenario of the 1990s, corporate councils such as London First issued a series of calls to both the GLA and, more importantly, Whitehall, to clarify who was responsible for strategic planning in London. The business community input, coupled with the irresistible ascent of London's mayor as transnational and national catalyst focused on a global city campaign with the Plan at its cornerstone, led the Labour government to revise its local prerogatives. Fundamentally, in October 2007 a new Greater London Authority Act devolved further powers to City Hall and its mayor, who acquired a broadened position as planning

prerogatives were expanded to 'approval and direction' in planning.²³ Strong in local political and business support, a privileged role in the Olympic project, and with a growing clout in strategic urban planning, the GLA cemented its central role in London and its key executive's fundamental function of 'running the city'. This, however, does not only demonstrate the strengthening of the mayor as obligatory passage point for urban governance. Equally, the Act provides further testimony as to the central dependences the GLA had to recast until then. The Act once again defined the legal boundaries of the mayor's capacity to organize and mobilize (or, better, reorganize and remobilize) London stakeholders as it enrolled these by decree into an even more GLA-centric network.

Nevertheless, as Livingstone was leading London transnationally, and as the new Act was prompting a tighter City Hall grip on the overall direction of the city's strategic planning, the mayor had to face the crude reality of local politics. At the third GLA elections, in 2008, Livingstone was defeated by a seven-point margin by former Conservative front bencher Boris Johnson, who took over as mayor in May. Quite plainly, the change in leadership from Livingstone to Johnson has inspired a partial redefinition of the boundaries and prerogatives of the GLA's positioning and its planning structure, as demonstrated by the change in the institutional framework entrusted with climate change policy. This has meant, for example, a move from the LCCA to a much more limited 'Climate Change Adaptation Strategy' set up in August 2008, and followed by the integration of the LCCA into the London Development Agency a year later.

At the same time, to better represent Johnson's mostly suburban electorate, the GLA has championed the establishment of an Outer London Commission in 2009 which has informed the mayor's revision of strategic urban planning in London along more conservative and more markedly neoliberal lines. For instance, the removal of Livingstone's congestion charge western extension in January 2011 after a series of public consultations in the affected areas organized by City Hall in late 2008 and 2009, was seen not so much as a reaction to the mayor's 'change' of direction in City Hall's policymaking, but rather as an attempt to establish even stronger foundations for the GLA's centrality in broader business interests not necessarily located in the Square Mile.²⁴ All of this, of course, has been taking place as the new Conservative City Hall executive has undertaken a process of redefining the London Plan. Since July 2008 the new executive has put in place a revision of Livingstone's 2004 Plan (as amended in 2007), with the new mayor setting the tone of the major changes in his April 2009 draft entitled *A New Plan for London*. Yet, despite various rhetorical novelties, the problematization of London as a global city remains solidly at the core of the GLA's SUP. The change in mayoralty has not, in this sense, provided a substantial *structural* shift. Rather, Johnson's plan has accepted this urban hierarchical narrative while also endorsing the key environmental role that the city is supposed to play on a global stage. To this extent, his 2009 draft Plan prescribed that '*London*

should excel among global cities [...] *leading the world* in its approach to tackling the urban challenges of the 21st century, particularly that of climate change'.²⁵ In this reading I thus beg to differ from several commentators such as Nancy Holman (2010: 33) who recently argued that the decline in direct references to London's 'world city' status represents 'a strong shift in direction from Livingstone's vision'. On the contrary, I would argue that the draft's statement represents an *acceptance* of London's global city role (and thus problematization), and a move towards a view that sees transnational competitiveness against other globalized metropolises as an unavoidable feature of the contemporary context. Indeed, at the heart of his strategic direction, the new mayor set the task of 'making London the *leading global city*'.²⁶

As several authors pointed out, the Plan was in this sense less of an administrative and planning roadmap, and more of a political document stating the case for London's centrality, and thus forming a core basis for both negotiation with other spheres of government as well as business – especially having problematized the GLA as the core of such global positioning. In this sense, Livingstone's Plans, and Johnson's draft replacement, are mostly intended to convey a 'vision' for London and the necessary strategies to implement such imagery while the reality on the ground might be partly different (Travers and Gordon 2010). For instance, at the time of the first Plan, the economic relevance of 'global' market forces on London was estimated to account for little more than 13 per cent in employment terms against the sound 70 per cent of the UK as a whole (Buck et al. 2002: 133) – an imbalance that, albeit partly corrected in the following years, has certainly not been tilted.

Similarly, the evolution in mayoral powers has, under Johnson as under Livingstone, continued its ascent, even when it might appear in contrast with national structures. This was for instance the potentially conflictual positioning of the Government Office for London. On the contrary, GOL has had limited relations with the GLA, and showed general support for the strategic approaches put forward by the latter, thus acting as little more than a 'post-box for the basic funding for TfL, the LDA and the core GLA's general grant' but with 'no discretion over how those sums are spent by those bodies' (Greer and Sandford 2006: 244). The marginality of GOL in London politics ultimately led to its demise: shortly after the general election and the formation of a coalition government, the new administration proposed that the office be dismantled as of October 2010. Immediately, Johnson displayed much of the same mayoral proactiveness that had characterized Livingstone, and put forward *The Mayor's Proposals for Devolution*, which not only targeted the question of 'moving' GOL's residual functions to City Hall, but also (and predominantly) planned a further expansion in the centrality of the GLA's obligatory passage point in London affairs. Johnson's memorandum, along with supporting the Whitehall-announced transfer of most GOL functions to the GLA, proposed that several planning responsibilities still withheld by Whitehall, such as the Royal Parks Agency and the Port of

London Authority, be devolved to the mayor. This does not solely mean a centralization of functions from Whitehall to City Hall, but also a strengthening of the mayoral position within City Hall itself – on the basis of the mayor's accountability to Londoners. This re-enrolment attempt is perhaps best symbolized by Johnson's decision to fold into the GLA's executive the functions of the London Development Authority, set to close down in 2012.

Overall, these governance changes have anyhow not brought about a *completely* novel reorganization of such planning networks. The problematization of London as a global city remains a fundamental line of continuity between Livingstone and Johnson (if not beyond, between GLC and GLA), and the impact of the central government's preponderance in UK politics remains substantial, whether it is in the form of limitations to the mayor and GLA's prerogatives or in the enhancement of their political positioning through Acts of Parliament such as the 1999 and 2007 GLA Acts. If the political philosophy at the helm of City Hall has shifted, the global city faith of London has arguably remained constant throughout the tenures of its first two mayors, and may remain so beyond them.

Table 5.1 The GLA politics timeline 2000–2010

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
November 1999	The Greater London Authority Act (1999 c.29) is enacted by Parliament following the positive response to the May 1998 Greater London Authority Act referendum.
May 2000	The Greater London Authority is established after the first GLA Assembly and mayoral elections: Ken Livingstone (Independent) is elected first mayor of London.
July 2000	The Local Government Act (2000 c.22) is enacted by Parliament.
June 2001	UK general election: Tony Blair wins second term as prime minister.
February 2003	The London Congestion Charge is introduced for central London.
February 2004	The mayor publishes 'The London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London' and 'Green Light to Clean Power: The Mayor's Energy Strategy' launching the London Energy Partnership (LEP).
June 2004	Second GLA elections: Ken Livingstone (Labour) wins second term as mayor of London.
May 2005	UK general election: Tony Blair wins third term as prime minister.
June 2005	The London Climate Change Agency (LCCA) is established as a separate body in partnership with key stakeholders and under the control of the London Development Agency.
July 2005	London elected to host the 2012 Summer Olympics. London Underground bombings.
October 2005	The GLA hosts the first Climate Leadership Group summit, initiating the C40.

Table 5.1 (continued)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
December 2005	Mayor's statement of intent for the revision of the London Plan.
January 2007	The Independent Commission for a Sustainable London 2012 is established.
February 2007	The mayor unveils the 'London Climate Change Action Plan' while the London Congestion Charge is amended with a western extension.
June 2007	Gordon Brown succeeds Tony Blair as prime minister.
October 2007	A new Greater London Authority Act (2007 c.24) devolves additional powers to the GLA.
November 2007	London 2012 Olympics Sustainability Plan.
May 2008	Third GLA elections: Boris Johnson (Conservative) is elected mayor of London.
July 2008	Review of the London Plan begins.
August 2008	The mayor launches a new Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.
November 2008	The LCCA is reintegrated into the LDA portfolio (effective January 2009); the mayor announces the creation of an Outer London Commission.
April 2009	'A New Plan for London' mayoral proposal published.
June 2009	Interim report by the Outer London Commission for inclusion in the draft London Plan.
October 2009	Draft replacement plan ('Shaping London') open for consultations.
December 2009	London 2012 Olympics Sustainability Plan (second edition).
May 2010	UK general election: David Cameron (Conservative) becomes prime minister and forms a Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government.
May 2010	The UK government announces the closure of the Government Office for London.
October 2010	The GLA takes over emergency planning and risk assessment powers previously held by the GOL.
December 2010	After mayoral consultations with the public and key stakeholders, the congestion charge's western extension is removed as of January 2011.

Assembling the actant dimension

The localized production of governance in a global city such as London reveals a wide variety of cross-national connections. Unpacking the dynamics of strategic urban planning in London therefore allows us to better understand the networked aggregation underpinning both the collective 'urban' responses to globalization (such as the London Plan) and more broadly of the city as an influential presence in the geography of world politics. Yet what are the key structuration dynamics that can be evinced from the analysis of

the city's urban governance and SUP? Or, in other words, what do the networked structures of London tell us about the global city/global governance nexus? As I have demonstrated, the networked assemblages on which SUP is based tell us a much more complex story than that of city government and local politics, thus unveiling their *governance* dimensions and multiscalar interconnectedness. Let me briefly sum these dynamics up with an eye on their present-day evolutions, before drawing some initial observations on the multiscalar structuration underpinning these global cities' actant relevance in world politics.

London's multiscalar planning structures

If we were to focus on the GLA's innovations alone, London could tell a compelling story of transnational agency. Looking back at the establishment of the Greater London Authority as the main aggregation catalyst of the British capital, and at this latter's constant problematization as a fragmented-yet-globalizing metropolis, numerous new cross-national engagements can be highlighted at several urban levels. Nonetheless, what this networked story tells us is also that in the last 20-odd years some continuing features have regularly impacted on London's strategic urban planning structure and limited the shape of governance in the British capital. In this sense, after its establishment the GLA has had to face at least three sets of structural constraints originating from local, national and global (or more accurately 'transnational') scales. This complex of dependences has been recast through the mayor's catalytic networking role, but has nonetheless not disappeared from London's urban governance scenario, rather promoting a certain degree of continuity in the shape of its aggregation function.

A local structuration

The relative dependence on the private sector for the delivery of strategic developments is not the only conditionality the mayor had to negotiate in activating the network catalysed around the GLA. Despite their UDPs being subject to the overall planning directions of the London Plan, the boroughs' authority locally also has a continuing impact on metropolitan politics. These, ever since their consolidation in the 1960s, have been a permanent driver in the city's planning politics. Now, arguably, the election of the Conservative Johnson to the mayoralty indicates an empowerment of the boroughs in respect to their limited role in the Livingstone era. Certainly, the new government's Decentralization and Localism Bill plays to an extent in their favour.²⁷ While this pushes for even greater authority fragmentation at sub-national levels, one factor should not be underplayed: albeit that differences with his predecessor abound on this theme, Johnson has not yet denied the catalytic positioning of the GLA vis-à-vis other London actors. This means that even in the more borough-friendly revision of the London Plan, the GLA

has been reiterating a networked positioning very similar to that of Livingstone's City Hall. In this sense, the catalytic agency of the GLA has continually allowed the two mayors to partly scale 'up' urban governance from the localized LGA level to that of a whole-of-London approach. As Tony Travers and Ian Gordon (2010: 54) point out, the statutory powers of the Plan were used by Livingstone 'impose a "metropolitan" policy on the boroughs' – an approach that seemed to persist in Johnson's first term. Another line of 'local' continuity that has characterized the decade of mayoral experience in London is the attempt to recast the boundaries of the GLA's constituency in relation to the dominant problematization of the city as a global hub, and the GLA as the core hinge of such globalization. This has its roots in the pre-GLA period when London's shape changed dramatically, and has found fertile ground in the process of redefining of London as a multiethnic community sanctioned first by Livingstone and subsequently by Johnson's continuation of a global city vision. The (at least rhetorical) idea of the 'Londoner' under both mayors has progressively widened to a heterogeneous and multicultural complex that has been constructed to expand the mayor's constituency beyond local politics.

A national structuration

As sketched above, London has, much like most metropolises in the developed world, witnessed a decline in 'the state's direct management and sponsorship of social and economic projects', coupled with an 'analogous engagement of quasi- and non-state actors in a range of public-private partnerships and networks' (Macleod and Goodwin 1999: 506). So if the establishment of the GLA meant that a further active element was added to those networks of 'mutual dependency' that, as R.A.W. Rhodes (1988) described in the 1980s, constituted central–local government relations in the UK, the GLA has evolved into a different beast altogether, both due to the decline in governmental 'clout' as well as to the proactiveness of its mayors. Moreover, the positioning of the mayor has benefited from the lack of institutionalization of Whitehall–City Hall relationships. As Greer and Sandford (2006: 241) put it, 'the ministers and officials who set up the GLA did not conceive of the need to institute specific arrangements for intergovernmental relations' and 'took refuge in the concept of the voice for London' – a move that gave the mayor substantial room for manoeuvre. Such implicit centrality has consequently been cementing the particular 'meta-governmental quality' (Greer and Sandford 2006: 242) of much of the GLA's responsibilities. The initial prescriptions of the 1999 Act, which saw the mayor's representative voice of London as an arbiter role to respond to the need for strategic coordination in the 1990s, were soon redefined as Livingstone and his office moved from a being a 'facilitator and negotiator in a diffuse web of power relations' to the 'exercise of executive authority' (Young 2006: 373). This central positioning of the GLA also means that the mayor has to negotiate his (or her) own

enrolment in the network not just with the national sphere, but also with its local dimensions of national party politics. In a similar fashion, UK politics have constrained the organization of the GLA-centred network of London through a direct electoral impact on the conduct of metropolitan planning. The centrality of the office of the mayor has in this sense made it possible for local political dynamics to determine at least in part the overall organization and activation of such a complex engagement. Nonetheless, even with declining control, Whitehall has demonstrated a coercive capacity to 'enrol by decree' allies to the GLA network, as well as to establish the general boundaries of this latter's room for agency – as testified by the two GLA Acts. This devolution might demonstrate that the state has no absolute power over the metropolis, and rather metropolitan actors can direct the dimensions of national politics. Nevertheless, this might also, and conversely, testify how London has progressively occupied a central positioning in the various layers of government's political projects and the management of globalizing dynamics that the state is confronting. The mayor's vision for an exemplary global city was the central objective of the SDS, for 'London must fulfil its potential as world city in the national interest as well as that of Londoners'.²⁸

A global structuration

Looking at the evolution of planning politics in London, a clear line of continuity can be identified in the 'privileged degree of access that the business lobby had to the agenda-setting process' (Thornley et al. 2005: 1962). As Greer and Sandford (2006: 252) put it: 'in this way the Mayor and London stakeholders complement each other: the former brings the legitimacy of an electoral mandate and the latter bring the legitimacy of expertise'. This business impact is, however, for the most part not autochthonous as corporate actors are 'based' in London but operate and very often originate from other scales and places. Limits on national resources as granted by the central government, and pulls from this transnational corporate sector, have prompted growing degrees of entrepreneurship in the city's governance as embodied, in this case, by the outgoing and innovative GLA governing style. Gordon's 2003 considerations on Livingstone's Plan, despite the 2007 and 2010 devolutions, might in this case still hold: 'if there is a pro-(global) business regime operating in London, it is not simply because of political preferences or local pressures, but because of links to potential resources for a rather powerless capital city' (Gordon 2003). The capital, through the Livingstone and Johnson years, might have improved its networked power over planning and strategic policymaking, but its room for action at a global level remains partly constrained by being a city, and hybridization remains the best perceived strategy to acquire room for manoeuvre in a contemporary economic-centric and globalized scenario – perceived as an inevitable superstructure to urban politics. As Livingstone put it in a 2007 interview, financial services and

economic centrality are a necessary part of London's SUP because 'this is not the world you create, it's the world you're in' (in Massey 2007a). Similarly, the GLA has also taken stock of the growing concerns on climate change and the widening calls for climate-aware approaches. In this case, as demonstrated here and in the previous chapter, London (not the UK) has claimed a cross-cutting responsibility role that stretches from the more localized planning activities in London to the wider climate advocacy and environmental depletion policymaking initiatives between London and other spheres of global governance – as I will confirm in the C40 case. This involvement shows a 'constraint' of a diverse type in respect to security questions. The development of the city has been undertaken, initially during the last years of the Conservative government and more markedly through the GLA, in order to adapt to the dominant changes in world politics. The centrality of the Plan here is thus no accident: invested with relatively limited powers over the city, and fundamentally restricted in its direction of the conurbation by budgetary restraints, the GLA has progressively relied on the SDS to set the 'master plan' for the city's globalization and govern the global city, if not by law, by strategic planning.²⁹ Livingstone's consensus-making approach, as much as his successor's more liberalist take, has made a fundamental mark on the way London responds to such broader trends. In this sense the 'residual' (from a national politics viewpoint) planning powers of the mayor have become a rather substantial influence on Londoners' daily lives.

SUP and global governance: some preliminary links

Global cities, as actants, hold a substantial network power on global flows, but the construction of their networked nature is far from localized and subsumable under top-down processes. Two key observations stand out from the networking narratives of strategic urban planning sketched above: first, despite the more 'localized' (at least vis-à-vis the state) scale of SUP, the links that its urban-centric processes inspire are certainly piercing through a much broader spatial extent than that of cities. As we have seen, these are both reaching 'out' to the national politics or transnational flows of goods and people, as well as going 'deep' into the even more localized contexts of London's boroughs – a geography that stretches across and around that of international relations. Second, SUP is not explicitly devised with the goal of redefining the realm of world politics, which on the contrary is often taken as a given which (to paraphrase Livingstone) we are somewhat forced to live in. Yet, by building planning connections across geopolitical scales, global cities mould the geography of global governance and connect actors, resources and institutions into new and inherently multiscalar aggregations beyond the hierarchical structures of their states. These twin observations, in turn, confirm the centrality of those two considerations I foresaw in the previous part of the book: even in a seemingly 'localized' context such as that of the

metropolis, we are today forced to develop a multiscalar perspective on politics that allows for a more extensive view of the determinants of urban development; even a 'localized' element of geopolitics such as a metropolis bears a networked influence on both smaller as well as wider processes of global governance.

What power-geometries underpin this structuration?

The case of London's strategic urban planning structures provides some cross-cutting evidence that global cities have multiscalar connections that reach far beyond the boundaries of what is generally thought of as 'the city' in international theory. These links promote globalized encounters that have the potential to change the geography of global governance by producing new governing assemblages. These represent more or less formalized policymaking networks that govern by means other than traditional governmental politics, deploying *market* or *planning* instruments as key tools to circumvent state-centric hierarchies. However, it is fundamental at this stage to summarize not only the role, but also the sources of this influence, and therefore the power-geometries that sustain it.

Unmistakably, the making of London's strategic urban planning has centred on the strategic definition of metropolises as central hinges of world-wide flows. As much as the role of the mayor, this 'global city' problematization has also represented a key obligatory passage point in establishing the city's planning priorities. The structure of the strategic urban planning has been catalysed through the GLA making the mayor a key mediator in developing London's global engagements. Intermediaries have been enrolled from across a range of different scales from localized contexts (boroughs and LGAs), to the broader metropolitan area (local industries and business partners), to the national scale and those transnationally-connected agents ranging from non-governmental actors to multinational firms. Moreover, budgetary and legal constraints set by Whitehall have represented a fundamental driver for a marked globalization strategy. In this context, power-geometries can be identified both within and outside these multiscalar engagements: on the one hand, the mayor has become the network-maker for strategic urban planning. On the other hand, the city's relative success in globalizing its planning and localizing global flows has, more or less directly, resulted in a growing centrality vis-à-vis other national peers like Birmingham or Manchester, as well as 'less internationalized' cities beyond their immediate national boundaries. Hence, as noted above, London has developed multiscalar engagements that truly range from local to global.

What influence do global cities have on global governance?

Geopolitically, global cities such as London can be justly said to be at the heart of today's world affairs. This positioning, however, does not merely

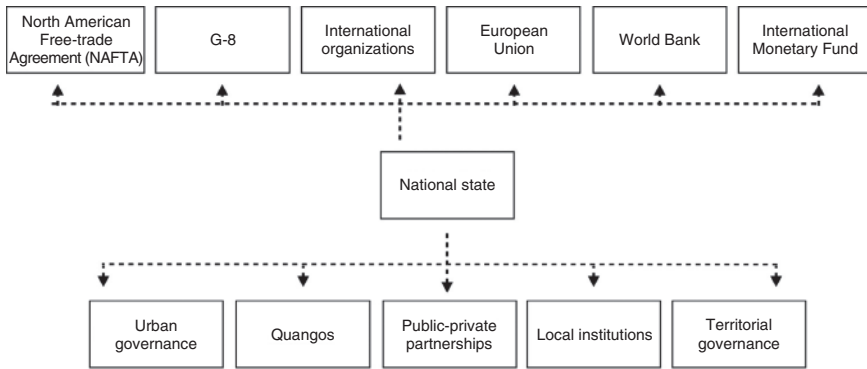


Figure 5.2 Swyngedouw's 'glocalization of governance' scheme

Source: Swyngedouw (2004).

complicate the equation of the game of international politics: rather, global cities play a key role in changing some of its essential parameters. Global cities are redefining, as *actants*, the socio-political system we live in. In terms of this actively passive agency in the geography of global governance, the metropolitan structures of SUP in London point us towards the dynamic that Erik Swyngedouw labelled 'glocalization' (2004: 25) whereby economic flows and territorial governance are contemporaneously rescaled at levels 'above' and 'below' the state (Figure 5.2).

The political-economic impact of London, in this sense, should not just be seen as promoting globalization, but also as a recalibration of international processes towards the localization of decision-making alignments, thus 'glocalizing' at least some of the structures of world affairs. These processes are 'pulling' and 'piercing' traditional Westphalian hierarchies of sovereignty and authority, as well as the international pecking order, towards a redefinition of policymaking links across more complex geographies. As a consequence, the actors assembled in these strategic planning networks are able to move beyond the hierarchies of nation-states, and acquire an 'actively passive' significance much broader than their local contexts. These metropolises are in fact strategic loci of many sources of this fragmentation that include, as Rosenau (2005: 138) pointed out, the rise of new technologies, organizational explosions, upheavals in mobility patterns, the weakening of state sovereignty and territoriality, the globalization of national economies, skill revolutions and the crisis of traditional authorities. In my cases, this glocalization redefines governance structures and political geographies because of four predominant trends represented in London's networked unfolding:

- First, the national government has had a relatively limited direct role in city politics, leaving urban planning to local and state authorities, and influencing these 'transversally' only through their fiscal policy and constitutional prerogatives.

- Following from the above, state and local authorities have had to reinvent their managerial role at the urban scale, increasingly taking entrepreneurial approaches to metropolitan planning in order to muster resources from the city's global economic base.
- Yet this catalytic role, best represented by the GLA's strategic planning, has not put local government in an absolutely dominant position: while these remain the main mediators in both metropolitan spaces of engagement, its capacity to mobilize the city rests on substantial compromise with intermediaries such as international and local business coalitions and LGAs.
- Finally, these latter (the privates and LGAs) have been moving from an intermediary role to a progressively mediatory and proactive positioning (as in the case of the London Business Board).

Therefore, by 'glocalizing' world affairs, global cities play a three-fold role in the redefinition sketched by Swyngedouw. First, they are the articulators of those local processes that reconfigure time/space parameters of our everyday lives such as, for example, inter-city communication networks. Second, they are direct participants in the emergence of supra-national and global institutions, such as regional regimes and global financial markets, as they partake as collective actors in the broadening genus of 'international' agents. Third, they are mediators that allow local entities to bypass traditional hierarchies of scale and 'reach' the global, as in the case of transnational coalitions of activists concerned with specifically local struggles. This tripartite action, which underpins both SUP and, as I will describe in the next chapter, city diplomacy, is possible because global reconfiguration processes are not solely constituted and perpetrated at a global scale existing 'above' states, but also (if not chiefly) at multiple local scales deep inside these Westphalian containers, where the sub-national is also a key site for globalization. The power-geometries of this system run through several layers rather than being confined to their particular scale, and dissociated levels like cities and international institutions are often deeply entangled in political relationships created either through perforations of intermediate levels or as a result of bypasses to pre-existent scalar hierarchies. In this context, what the networked account of urban politics within and among scales sketched above ultimately tells us is that power structures emerging in, as well as from, global cities cannot be separated from those of other spheres, and that the metropolis' agency is the result of the contemporaneous interaction of 'local' and 'global' scalar positions. The effectiveness of such agency will be the result not only of internal decision-making mechanisms, but also of politics *among* scales in a multilayered global milieu 'where the achievement of goals at one level of political activity demands an ability to operate in the others' (Hocking 1993: 3). This, if emergent from the analysis thus far, is a skill that is perhaps even better represented by the 'actor' dimension of the global city's geopolitical influence as showcased by the GLA in, amongst other cases, organizing the Climate Leadership Group.

6 The world politics ‘of’ global cities

Networking actors

POLITICS OF THE GLOBAL CITY: A NETWORK OF CITIES

Establishing a global political influence

Beginning with the larger efforts of ICLEI and UCGL and developing into myriad smaller organizations, several are the examples of city-based engagements that at least since the 1990s have progressively established an urban presence within the realm of global governance. As I have noted in Chapter 3, city networks have grown exponentially in numbers and membership and have progressively carved out a more extensive role in environmental governance. Organizations such as ICLEI have made extensive efforts in this direction since the 1990s, as with the the Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) Campaign launched by ICLEI with the aim of gathering a coalition of local governments sufficient to account for at least 10 per cent of global GHGs emissions. Nonetheless, the story of the more recent Climate Leadership Group, or ‘C40’, is perhaps the most significant case of *global city* agency in global environmental politics.¹ Belonging to that ‘new’ wave of transnational networks which appeared around the turn of the millennium, the Climate Leadership Group has a relatively recent lineage that only dates back to mid-2005. However, its networked organization and expanding centrality in international climate governance, along with its global city focus, make it a particularly interesting case of urban intersection with the dynamics of world politics. As I will emphasize here, the networked unfolding of the C40 can demonstrate the influential structuration of global cities by depicting the relation among them and wider spheres of politics. Likewise it can illuminate the role of global cities as ‘international’ actors. The C40 highlights how these two can combine to develop an assemblage of metropolises that constitutes both a structure and a ‘group actor’ in global governance, thus further unveiling the multi-scalar dynamics described in the previous chapter. Significantly, as I will evince in relation to this process, C40 cities have a pivotal part to play in promoting new governmental technologies through an emphasis on networked forms of diplomacy and hybrid (i.e. public-private) modes of governance.

Organizing the network: problematization

In order to trace the development of the C40 as networked structure across multiple scales of global governance we need to step back to the London events of the Autumn of 2005 that I described in the previous chapter. Under the initiative of the then mayor Ken Livingstone and his deputy Nicky Gavron, the Greater London Authority gathered at City Hall a group of large metropolises for the two-day 'World Cities Leadership and Climate Summit' starting on the 3rd of October.² The meeting, convened in partnership with ICLEI and the British non-profit organization The Climate Group under the original banner of 'C20' cities, focused on the governance of climate change and greenhouse gas emissions by showcasing best planning and financing practices from the various cities involved. The key issue at stake, as put forward by Livingstone, was to tackle bureaucratic and political obstacles to effective delivery in urban-focused climate initiatives. Gavron summarized this spirit in a mayoral press release on the evening of the first day of the summit:

Leadership from national governments is crucial in tackling climate change, but when it comes to practical action on the ground cities are centre stage. Cities have a special responsibility to cut emissions because they are huge consumers of energy and uniquely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. And as the urgency for action increases, we cities need to build wider and stronger links across the world. That is why the Mayor and I are hosting the Summit, to accelerate co-operation between cities committed to action.³

This statement, one of many very similar advocacy declarations voiced at the conference, sums up rather neatly the original political rationale of the initiative. Global cities sought to problematize their 'centre stage' positioning in the response to environmental depletion in relation to the dominant international actors – states. In this sense, the summit showcased these metropolises' attempt to locate cities as obligatory passage points in the global governance of climate change (and more broadly, sustainability), while at the same time underscoring the central role played by *global* cities as key hubs for population, commerce and environmental public policy. By presenting their agency on this issue as both source and solution for climate change, they argued for local government's 'practical action on the ground' and therefore not for a brand new approach to sustainability, but a more extensive interconnection of an already established capacity.

This was indeed a mirror of Livingstone's core concern that led to the meeting in the first place. The idea was not that major cities in the world were lacking the ability to tackle climate change: rather, these metropolises were already pioneering best practices in this field and a drawback was instead to be found in their limitations in exchanging expertise and coordinating efforts. Forming a network established around the indispensable role of large cities as

delivery ends of sustainability politics seems, with hindsight, a winning strategy for the evolution of the first wave of city networks. Problematicization, in this sense, was a two-fold and open-ended task: on the one hand, advocating the nature of the issue (climate change) as an urban-driven question while, on the other, suggesting not only the privileged position of global cities as repositories of innovative governance, but also demonstrating that such skills existed and were in place. This was a process that necessitated a translation of global concerns into the localized language of planning, architecture and urban public policy.

The October 2005 summit concluded with the declaration of a partnership (at the time known as the 'C20 Partnership') to be chaired by the GLA and capable of reporting back to the UN in 18 months.⁴ As such, the C20 was set to establish itself both as a 'space of engagement' (Cox 1998: 2) for global cities, gathered to exchange resources and expertise on climate change, as well as a potential collective actor capable of mediating these cities' broader links with contexts other than the urban. This means that the Climate Group had contemporaneously begun to represent, as much as prompt, connections among governance scales. Key to this catalytic agency was, right from the start, the role of metropolitan planning officials who established a thriving base of cross-national exchanges on strategic urban directions and green best practices. In particular, a central spot has been occupied since 2005 by the mayors of these cities who, as Livingstone's overarching tone for the summit suggested, sought a more or less explicit rupture with their central executives. In fact, if the majority of these 'city directors' formally belonged to the apparatus of their states as *governmental* representatives, C40 mayors have progressively taken a stance against the official diplomatic track of the international realm.⁵ Now, if this has rarely resulted in open critiques of their *own* central governments (as in the case of the Livingstone–Whitehall clashes), the 'city versus "the international"' phrase has almost achieved the state of truism in the C40 internal workings' – as several municipal officials have confirmed to me in recent years.⁶

Importantly, this bifurcation of city and state agency has been, ever since 2005, solidly based on illustrating the planning and city management powers of the Climate Group's members – a strategy that has recently culminated in a large 2011 report of C40 cities' actions on climate change and their related mayoral prerogatives.⁷ Archetypal of this present-day evolution, the 2005 conference was set up around sessions on public transport, energy supply, building retrofitting and waste management, discussing the specifics of traffic congestion or comparing heatwave responses. If largely implied but not stated, in these early meetings of the C20 initiative, a progressive split between the world of 'cities acting' and the quandaries of 'states talking' was to develop into a core theme of the expanded C40.⁸

Organizing the network: interestment and enrolment

If the first steps in the organization of the C20 highlighted the accentuated urban nature of this nascent structure, the subsequent development sought to

extend the networked agency of the Group by forging new allies and negotiating their position within this evolving framework. Problematizing, interesting and enrolling the initial pool of metropolises in the Climate Leadership Group network was a relatively easy matter since their stakes were relatively similar and several of these had common ties already. For instance, London as a core driver, as well as Paris and Berlin, were already accustomed to a similar format as they had been holding annual mayoral summits (the 'M4' initiative, together with Moscow) since 2005. Likewise, most of the participants had taken part in the workings of ICLEI and maintained regular 'sister city' relationships. Negotiating the establishment of the Group initially meant the formalization of pre-existent ties among major metropolises that gathered around the proactiveness of the GLA. Shortly after the London summit the network moved beyond its initial limited membership to encompass more key centres from the developing world, with a further bulk of thirteen cities officially joining at the May 2007 plenary in New York, bringing the total number of participants to forty, adjoined by further sixteen observers. However, conscious of the stalemates and intricacies of global governance, the C40 governing body knew that the network had to go beyond the local government sphere in order to make a concrete impact at the urban scale. This understanding had already been voiced in the 2005 summit's communiqué:

We are ready to take action and join other cities, regions, states, provinces, national governments, and corporations around the world to lead the way.

Building on Livingstone's realization that these cities already had the means to implement policy actions transnationally, a view supported by several other heads of local governments in developed countries such as New York's Mayor Michael Bloomberg, the C40 secretariat set out to reinforce the reach of the Group by venturing into the prolific world of private charities. Even before the second general summit, set for May 2007, a key promoter of the Group's outreach was enrolled in the network: meeting in Los Angeles under the auspices of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, a partnership was signed with the Clinton Foundation's newly-formed Climate Initiative (CCI) on 1 August 2006.⁹ This latter, as the agreement set out, was to be *delivery partner* to the C20 (already set to enlarge to a 'C40'). The network had found its prime intermediary.

Since then the role of the CCI in the C40 has become a crucial one, rooted in three core initiatives sketched in the 2006 partnership. First, the Foundation functions as a pivot to create a consortium capable of pooling the purchasing power of these metropolises and liaise with the major energy service companies (the so-called ESCOs, such as Honeywell or Siemens), thus facilitating the C40's structural expansion into the global market to lower the prices of energy saving products and sustainable technologies. Second, the CCI has also focused on mobilizing experts and IT from the private sector to

provide conjunct technical assistance to member cities. Third, CCI fosters the development of city-based technical networking such as the testing of emission impacts measurement tools, as well as the establishment of internet-based communications systems amongst local governments. Overall, the CCI has thus been functioning as a medium between the Group's own political and policymaking enterprise and the means to implement it on the ground. This means that the linkage with Foundation's Climate Initiative has acted as a network multiplier, allowing the C40 to go beyond the transnational municipal effort of its early days. Through the CCI's mediation, the C40 has managed to encompass several other scales in a governance engagement grouping local governments, an international charity and several private companies in a growing series of public-private partnerships (PPPs) pinpointed on these cities' key positioning vis-à-vis climate change.

Table 6.1 The C40's membership (January 2012)

<i>Region</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Membership type</i>
Africa	Addis Ababa	Ethiopia	Participating city
	Cairo	Egypt	Participating city
	Johannesburg	South Africa	Steering Committee
Asia-Pacific	Bangkok	Thailand	Participating city
	Beijing	China	Participating city
	Changwon	Republic of Korea	Affiliate city
	Delhi	India	Participating city
	Dhaka	Bangladesh	Participating city
	Hanoi	Vietnam	Participating city
	Ho Chi Minh City	Vietnam	Affiliate city
	* Hong Kong	China	Steering Committee
	Istanbul	Turkey	Participating city
	Jakarta	Indonesia	Steering Committee
	Karachi	Pakistan	Participating city
	* Melbourne	Australia	Participating city
	Moscow	Russia	Participating city
	Mumbai	India	Participating city
	‡ Seoul	Republic of Korea	Steering Committee
	Singapore	Singapore	Observer city
	Sydney	Australia	Participating city
	* Tokyo	Japan	Steering Committee
	Yokohama	Japan	Affiliate city
Europe	Amsterdam	The Netherlands	Affiliate city
	Athens	Greece	Participating city
	Barcelona	Spain	Affiliate city
	* Basel	Switzerland	Affiliate city
	* Berlin	Germany	Steering Committee
	Copenhagen	Denmark	Participating city
	Heidelberg	Germany	Affiliate city
	† ‡ London (Chair 2005–8)	United Kingdom	Steering Committee

Table 6.1 (continued)

<i>Region</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Membership type</i>
	Madrid	Spain	Participating city
	Milan	Italy	Affiliate city
	Paris	France	Participating city
	Rome	Italy	Participating city
	* Rotterdam	The Netherlands	Affiliate city
	Reykjavik	Iceland	Affiliate city
	* Stockholm	Sweden	Affiliate city
	Warsaw	Poland	Participating city
North America	Austin	United States	Affiliate city
	* Chicago	United States	Participating city
	Houston	United States	Participating city
	Los Angeles	United States	Steering Committee
	Mexico City	Mexico	Participating city
	New Orleans	United States	Affiliate city
	†‡ New York City (Chair 2011–)	United States	Steering Committee
	Philadelphia	United States	Participating city
	Portland	United States	Affiliate city
	San Francisco	United States	Affiliate city
	Seattle	United States	Affiliate city
	† Toronto (Chair 2008–11)	Canada	Participating city
South America	Bogotá	Colombia	Participating city
	Buenos Aires	Argentina	Participating city
	Caracas	Venezuela	Participating city
	Curitiba	Brazil	Affiliate city
	Lima	Peru	Participating city
	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	Participating city
	Santiago	Chile	Affiliate city
	‡ São Paulo	Brazil	Steering Committee

Note: *C40 workshop host; † C40 chair; ‡ C40 summit host

Source: Derived from www.c40cities.org/c40cities (accessed 1 June 2012).

The CCI has since then become progressively integrated into what can now be rightfully labelled as a ‘hybrid’ governing arrangement: if in the 5 years since the original partnership the link between the Foundation’s Climate Initiative and the Group’s key executive, represented by the London headquarters, has unfolded through a loose coordination of mutually-supported initiatives, the two merged in January 2011 into a common secretariat. This illustrates, as I will reiterate more extensively below, how the unfolding of the C40 network into a *collectif* capable of representing its member cities and acting on their behalf has necessarily had to go through an organizational rearrangement in order to allow a much more cohesive internal structure than the loose meeting of interests devised in 2005. Yet, before being able to evolve into a functional international (or better ‘transnational’) organization the C40 had to devise a characteristic working approach to deliver at a global

governance level. In the early days of the partnership, in fact, the CCI's role for the Group was mainly of an economic nature as global cities were already particularly active in both mobilizing political efforts and implementing innovative planning approaches – the two features that were to become the key tracks for the transnational agency of the group.¹⁰

Mobilizing the network: city diplomacy and the political track

By mid-2007 the shape of the network had achieved the present conformation: centred on a small London-based secretariat that oversees general meetings (every 2 years) and ongoing operations, the C40 is headed by a steering committee of nine and an elected chairman represented by a member city mayor.¹¹ Participation to the Group is voluntary, and the linkage among the metropolises is continuously 'activated' through a series of issue-based practitioners' workshops and ad hoc meetings that ensure a constant decentralized cooperation amongst members. Biennial conferences (London 2005, New York 2007, Seoul 2009 and São Paulo 2011) provide regular occasions for general assembly, as well as a window for continual problematization of the key role of global cities in environmental governance. The network is thus collectively mobilized as a coherent structure following a twin-track process based on direct political advocacy, mostly in the shape of city diplomacy, and catalytic technical implementation of the Group's effort to curb climate change. First, global cities have a cross-cutting lobby role. In this sense, the C40 has sought to impact directly other spheres of global governance by influencing the dynamics of both international and domestic public policy mechanisms. For instance, shortly after the London summit the C40 leadership reported to the December 2005 UNFCCC round in Montreal (COP13), and has since then taken an active part in mayoral and city-based initiatives parallel to the UN framework such as the Climate Summit for Mayors. Typical instruments activating the network in this process are international meetings and secretariat embassies, but C40 cities are also influencing their central governments' policymaking on green urban development, as well as participating in lobbying activities at the UN and in other major regional fora such as the EU. In this sense, the C40 has been particularly proactive in new forms of diplomacy, pushing for more open and less hierarchical practices of global governance that can step beyond the 'club' engagements of traditional international relations and rely on 'network diplomacy' (Heine 2008) approaches.

The main diplomatic task of the C40, of course, has been to put forward an urban-aware climate agenda, and in this, the fundamental task of the C40's political track goes beyond advocacy and lobbying. Providing an overall framework for the institutionalization of the governing technologies applied by the Group and regularization of these practices through periodic mutual consultation, the C40 can step beyond ad hoc cooperation and set up an ongoing governance engagement. Biennial summits, workshop series,

transnational policy initiatives and large-scale partnership, when coordinated through the C40, all contribute to the evolution of this city-based networking – a process of organization and activation that unravels conjunctly at both political and technical planning level within the overall architecture provided by the Group's plenary meetings as a backbone to the C40 structure. Moreover, by engaging with the global climate discourse in its political events, and then tackling implementation and innovation questions in urban-specific fora, the Group has been capable of 'de-securitizing' the issue of climate change and appropriating some extensive room for manoeuvre.

Mirroring to an extent a practice common in the history of environmental diplomacy, global cities take up the challenges of global warming by 'compartmentalizing' (Susskind 1994) the governance of this problem into a series of sub-questions to be tackled almost independently, albeit within the same broader framework. In this sense, the security dimension of climate change remains relevant in the early stages of the Group's problematization as a component of global climate governance, but is then quickly de-securitized in the C40's implementation rhetoric, as well as internal dealings. For instance, the word 'security' (and its related constructs) appeared only once in the five major C40 declarations after the 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2011 summits, and the 2008 Tokyo meeting, gaining a mention 'in passing' on the question of possible climate-induced food shortages.

The same process also allows for the question of climate change to be redirected to a more technical audience which is neither directly engaged with the dealings of 'higher politics' nor necessarily concerned with the civilizing mission of climate advocates. A de-securitization dynamic is in this case directed at allowing non-political and technical actors to intervene in the complex climate adaptation and mitigation discourse. This means in practice that the climate governance discourse has to adapt its 'internal linguistic-grammatical construction' to allow city planners, architects, financial and corporate brokers, as well as urban strategists, to partake in the Group's broader 'external, social and contextual' problematization necessary 'to hold a position from which the [security] act can be made' (Buzan et al. 1998: 32). City diplomacy by the C40 members, and even more crucially by the C40 itself on their behalf, is thus key to establishing a global city problematization and enrolling core actors for the Group's agenda, while the technical aspect of the C40's agency provides the implementation necessary to put all of this networking in practice at the level of urban planning. In this sense, the political track of the C40 also functions as a translator tasked with rendering political climate issues into meaningful technical challenges for urban practitioners engaging with highly-politicized issues such as that of climate change.

An example of this two-level 'political-technical' internationalization of the network can be found in the October 2008 C40 Tokyo conference, attended by thirty-two of the sixty members, which resulted in a joint action statement with a series of thirteen commitments ranging from citizens' education to information sharing and climate adaptation strategies.¹² The document

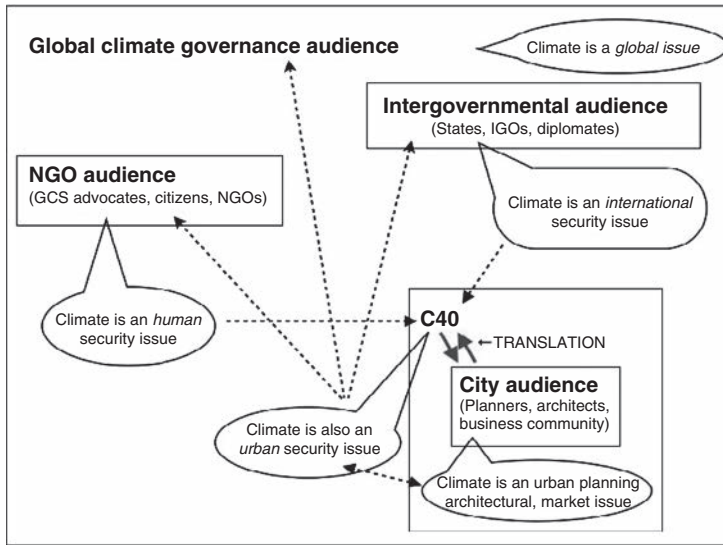


Figure 6.1 The C40's external-internal translation

follows the increasingly customary C40 approach grounded in the contemporaneous lobbying engagement with other scales (as in action 10: 'appeal to central governments about worldwide food issues') and specialized engagement among metropolises (as in action 12: 'develop heatwave plans for urban areas') – two facets of the same networked effort that allows both political and technical tracks to function jointly and couples advocacy with implementation.

Mobilizing the network: urban planning and the technical track

Despite the growing *political* recognition of the C40 in both academia and practice, it is in its *technical* dimension that the C40 has perhaps achieved the most.¹³ While the gathering of global city representatives and the formulation of concerted communiqués has certainly provided a direct linkage to the realms of 'high politics' and a growing recognition from the media, it is in the development of common strategies, shared policies, transnational instruments and preferential connections amongst global cities that the Group has been thriving.¹⁴ In fact, if the more political role of the C40 has demonstrated a capacity to partake in the global governance discourse, the more technical tackling of climate issues has had the merit of implementing real action on the ground and fostering collective responses to shared and similar problems at the urban level. For instance, since the São Paulo 2011 summit key C40 secretariat figures have repeatedly drummed on about the extensive 'climate action' undertaken in aggregate, or 'collectively', by C40 members.¹⁵ This pooled dimension of action contributes to a series of structural developments in the network: it fosters a perception of the C40 as a coherent and

coordinated whole; it improves the visibility of the C40's technical capacity; and it stresses both individual members' and collective Group participation in climate governance. In order to appreciate how this second track of action works it will be useful to step back a few years to the Group's second biennial meeting.

Prompted by the momentum gathered after the London summit, and galvanized by the prolific alliance with the CCI, the Climate Leadership Group set out for the New York summit in May 2007 in a mood of awe and optimism. Despite the almost telegraphic final communiqué, the conference launched two tactics that now form much of the core of the network's mobilization. On the one hand, the C40 set out to organize a series of issue-based workshops to bring together not only executives from the Group's global cities, but more specifically planners and technical officers from their city halls. Beginning with a meeting in Stockholm in December of that year, and following with a mounting succession of fora on, for instance, airports and ports planning (Los Angeles and Rotterdam 2008), waste management (London 2010), energy efficiency (Berlin 2010) and infrastructure financing (Basel 2011), the C40 has generated a now well-established practice of assembling practitioners in order to showcase best practices and exchange scientific knowledge on strategic urban planning. On the other hand, the summit kickstarted the CCI's mediatory role between privates and the Group. For example, via CCI, C40 has teamed up with a series of IT corporations to test-run the 'Project 2°' – an online emission tracker platform developed in cooperation with Microsoft and Ascentium that is meant to allow cities to establish a baseline for their greenhouse gas emissions, manage inventories, create action plans, track the effectiveness of their emissions reduction programmes, and share experiences with each other.¹⁶ Likewise the CCI set up a procurement scheme to facilitate green redevelopment in the Group's global cities through the C40/CCI Energy Efficiency Building Retrofit Program (EEBRP). As I will explain in more detail in the next section, this public-private partnership framework has allowed the C40 to develop into a transnational consortium (formed by C40 cities, multinational corporations and CCI) capable of facilitating the adoption of large-scale and sustainability-oriented retrofits.

Bringing together global cities, ESCOs and commercial banks under the joint coordination of CCI and the C40 secretariat, this extension of the Group's network has prompted a technical and hybrid (public-private) coordination of climate change efforts. Importantly, public-private enterprises like EEBRP and Project 2° are aimed at the establishment of common practices and preferential pathways amongst global cities, as well as between these and the private sector as key intermediary for the implementation of the Group's goals. As such, the C40 structure gains network power vis-à-vis other actors by establishing 'best practices' and standards that define the 'cutting edge' in climate governance, while also developing almost obligatory paths for member cities' city diplomacy capacity on climate issues. Moreover, this has also been extending to the relation of the C40 as a whole with other city diplomacy organizations, as the Group has sought to develop its networked

reach to ‘partner’ institutions. For instance, C40 and ICLEI have recently (July 2011) set out to develop a common baseline standard for reporting municipal GHGs emissions which will allow for easier comparison between the two organizations’ member cities. Overall, when considered jointly, both technical workshops and procurement practices constitute two elements of the same mobilizing strategy based on closely intertwined tracks: while coordinating efforts and pushing agendas in a more traditional political fashion (summits and communiqués), global cities have expanded their dynamics of engagement through more technical programmes in order to give effect to their environmental governance ambitions.

Assembling the actor dimension

The C40’s multiscalar politics

The Climate Leadership Group, as a progressively institutionalized network of global cities, has been developing transnationally as a multiscalar structure for climate governance. Yet, how does this process affect the geography of global governance in which it is embedded?

To begin with, C40 cities have attempted to overcome the problem of action beyond informal pledges that has stalled negotiations on universal environmental frameworks. By reconverting existing ties and well-established planning practices the Group has fostered more climate-focused and concerted types of city-to-city cooperation and urban redevelopment that, right from the second C40 summit, have begun to offer tangible results. This has followed Livingstone’s original logic that global cities do *not* need to develop a new ability to tackle climate issues or network their resources beyond domestic confines: these are all features that metropolises such as London, New York or Toronto already showcase on a daily basis, and the task of the C40 is rather one of pooling such efforts to maximize the efficiency of such efforts and ‘lead by example’ in environmental politics – a sector global cities might arguably be best at. The Group’s policymaking style, focused on sharing information on environmental policy and facilitating PPPs, represents relative structural novelties with respect to the ‘global deal’ universal decision-making take and the ‘global civil society’ activism that have populated global governance in the past decades.¹⁷ The C40 does not rely on the traditional regime-building emphasis typical of both the former’s bargaining and the latter’s advocacy. Rather than constructing a binding scheme encompassing global cities in similarities, the C40 emphasizes the productivity of difference (and the learning potential coming from its display) and the incentives of inter-city competition.

This has resulted in ad hoc and localized public-private implementation of generalized policy principles showcased at the Group’s major meetings, thus overcoming the checks of international negotiation by allowing cities to offer their own versions of ‘climate solutions’ and, conversely, tailoring common

Table 6.2 The C40's two-track structure

	<i>Coordination format</i>	<i>Implementation format</i>	<i>Participation breadth</i>	<i>Participation type</i>	<i>Participation incentives</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Political Track	• Biennial summits • Thematic conferences	• C2C • Coordination via secretariat	Plenary	Mainly executives	• Enhance international legitimacy • Gain access to privileged policy ties • Enhance policymaking independence	• Joint actions • Framework for workshops • Large-scale PPPs	• Summits (London 2005, NYC 2007, Seoul 2009, São Paulo 2011) • Tokyo climate conference 2008
Technical / planning track	• Workshops • Planning programmes	Coordination via administrators' (secretariat, CCI, Arup, EERBPs)	Ad hoc	Mainly planners	• Scrutinize other cities • Gain expertise • Gain access to privileged market ties	• Policy plans • Recommendations • Ad hoc PPPs	• Workshops (Los Angeles 2008, London 2010, Basel 2011) • UrbanLife workspaces (Toronto, Melbourne, Ho Chi Minh City, São Paulo 2010)

practices to the development needs of each municipality. In order to maintain such a diversified approach the C40 has enhanced the effectiveness of some traditional policymaking arenas such as transnational fora, plenary membership summits and multilateral meetings, by limiting the number of urban 'climate leaders' and selected private partners.

In this sense, the C40 has (thanks to the twin-track approach) relied on a series of participation incentives. On the more political side, the Group has offered a chance for these metropolises to enhance their international legitimacy while also improving their policymaking independence. This can be achieved, in the C40 case, by respectively being identified as active components of an effective effort against global warming while also not acting on behalf of their national governments, but rather in the name of their 'duty' as key governance scales on environmental issues. Moreover, further stimuli to active participation (and, crucially, implementation) also come from the Group's technical track. The involvement in the C40 has presented cities with the comparative advantage of the Group's pooled network power: participants in the network can in fact gain privileged access to both policy and market ties that can function well beyond the Group's purpose. This simultaneously allows municipal officials to scrutinize other cities' 'green growth' (Porter and Van der Linde 1999) strategies and gain expertise on planning best practices. As a political officer from the GLA put it: 'the [C40] meeting offers a sweeping window to survey the state of urban planning in our global competitors, and twin global action with global competitiveness'.¹⁸

When policymaking capacity and participation stimuli on the two tracks are considered jointly, the C40 case paints a picture of a transnational network capable of a double catalytic role. Hence, the Group functions as: (a) a multiscalar engagement for global cities, as well as (b) a collective actor capable of creating engagements between the urban and other scales. This has resulted in an hybrid positioning in global governance: on the one hand, as local governments, these cities have the authority to implement policies and mobilize resources for joint actions – a direct advantage on the 'global civil society' model. On the other hand, as a transnational network, the C40 as a collective actor can lobby multiple scales of governance (ranging from international to private) while also not being constrained by the strict dynamics of international decision-making when it comes to adopting climate strategies, thus offering a solution to the commitment issues of the 'global deal' approach. The C40's legitimacy for transnational environmental action comes in this sense from a median position between the 'global deal' sovereign and political representation prerogatives and the 'global civil society' authoritative knowledge and public opinion representation claims. The Group is in fact capable of asserting certain degrees of legal authority and political representativeness, since it is mainly formed by local governments, while also demonstrating authoritative knowledge in the realms of planning and development. Bloomberg has recently reiterated this in an interview for BBC, commenting on how at the 'national, international and state levels' there is

‘an awful lot of hot air’ on climate change and ‘it is up to mayors’ to solve environmental problems which governments ‘talk about, pass laws about and send out grants about, but don’t really have the “day-in/day-out” expertise or the interest to do anything’.¹⁹

Likewise, this has also presented a response to the core problem for global governance, the ‘free rider’ question.²⁰ As the activities of the network are issue-specific and participation is on a voluntary basis, metropolises can contribute in the areas where they can provide key expertise, and implement programmes that best suit their development needs. Moreover, their participation is incentivized by the scale advantages of pooling large municipal resources, exchanging best practice models and accessing privileged technical (and more broadly planning) services through the Group’s private allies. Emblematic of this approach is, for instance, the membership justification provided by Sydney’s mayor Clover Moore to her City Council on the eve of the 2007 biennial summit, where she highlighted how ‘the C40 has no formal membership and it does not require a financial contribution from the City of Sydney’ and ‘member cities are able to opt in and out of any of the agreed elements of the program’.²¹ To put it simply, the C40 costs global cities very little, and it is almost completely voluntary. In this sense, global cities have been able not solely to connect transnationally, but fundamentally to develop an hybrid form of governance centred on public-private partnerships that shifts their scale of action beyond the domestic divide problems that often prevent implementation in both ‘global deal’ and ‘aggregate’ approaches.

Presenting perhaps the greatest lead on both models, the C40’s hybrid and transnational nature enables its members to overcome the barriers set by the domestic divide between international policymaking and local implementation. Global cities are able to bypass their constitutional and budgetary constraints by activating the powers of association embedded in the mobilization of the C40 network. The direction of the policymaking process is, in this sense, neither the typical top-down approach of the ‘global deal’ perspective, centred on developing universal conventions to be applied nationally by each negotiating partner, nor the bottom-up civil society lobby that seeks to pressurize actors into binding obligations while also calling for a democratization of the decision-making process. Rather, as Mikael Román (2010: 84) underlined, the C40 allows for the possibility of ‘governance from the middle’ as the Group connects cities and their allies by mediating from a median positioning ‘below’ the state system and ‘above’ privates and civil society. In this sense, the C40 might constitute a prime example of a truly *transnational* network.

City diplomacy and global governance: some preliminary links

What power-geometries underpin this structuration?

Conditionality on wider and cross-cutting dynamics is, however, not just a feature of the networks’ structural organization. Even in its mobilization

(i.e. 'activation' of its structure) the network faces a series of superstructural constraints stemming from part of the traditional geography of global governance. The C40 has remained embedded in world politics and the international economy not solely during its organization phases but, fundamentally, also in its everyday operations. This can for instance be seen in the relationship between problematization rhetorics and mobilization instruments. As I pointed out, global cities had to cast their centrality vis-à-vis climate challenges in international political terms in order to make their positioning intelligible to the variegated audience of global governance. Yet with language comes behaviour. C40 cities have, in fact, not solely been re-interpreting the 'IR-speak' of world politics: summit procedures, representational voting, policy sharing and shared statements have been imitating several of the traditional diplomatic exchanges of international relations. If, as I noted above, this equates to an 'external' networking between the C40 as a collective actor and other spheres of governance to be translated in international political terms, what is perhaps the most fundamental link between this mimicking and the establishment of the C40 is the 'inside-out' effect of the C40's embeddedness in world politics. In this sense, the C40 has since 2005 developed a subtly political texture in its internal dealings and mobilization dynamics, which are perhaps best embodied by the questions raised by the Group's management structure.

The question of leadership has, to date, remained relatively buried in the Group's lack of transparency. Since the secretariat's composition and the internal administrative proceedings are available only to 'insiders' there is very little data available regarding how the top management of the C40 is chosen and what contrasts this might bring about. First held by the GLA's Ken Livingstone, often credited as 'father' of the C40 initiative, the chair in June 2008 passed on to the then mayor of Toronto, David Miller. However, London maintained a tight grip on the direction of the network by retaining the secretariat's headquarters and with its new mayor, Boris Johnson, as vice-chair of the Group. Since September 2010, and following an ascent that began with the 2007 summit, New York's Michael Bloomberg has taken over as chairman, occupying an active position in the network's proceedings ever since. While on the surface the 'NYLON' axis has offered some elements of continuity in the Group's direction (with strong degrees of international proactiveness and entrepreneurship), the two global city giants have mostly maintained a bond of cooperative competition. Joined in a sister city partnership since 2001, they have developed an intimate transnational relationship based on best practice exchanges and later formalized in 2008 with a further partnership agreement on governance innovation.²² Yet, between the two, New York has been the most proactive at forging cross-municipal linkages with other global cities: since 2006 the original ten-city Sister City Program of the City of New York was in fact restructured and replaced by a quasi-governmental body, New York City Global Partners Inc., set up by Mayor Bloomberg with the aim of expanding the City's interaction with key

international metropolises.²³ Since then, the 'Big Apple' has established collaborative linkages with fifty-five core cities, holding regular summits and policy consultations and strengthening its ties with other global cities. In much the same spirit, the American metropolis has progressively centralized its positioning as core mediator in the C40's structure with a substantial presence at conferences and workshops, by hosting the 2007 summit, and by subsequently taking up the chairmanship of the Group in 2010.

Indisputably, Bloomberg's imprint on the Group's structural evolution has been substantial, and centred on the twin task of developing stronger internal coherence as well as a more effective external diplomacy. In terms of the latter, the key initiative has been that of linking formally the CCI and the C40 executive teams. This move has doubled both budget (expected at about \$15 million) and core staff membership (rising to almost seventy individuals) but has also needed prolonged negotiations between the Foundation and the Group held at both Clinton and Bloomberg's New York offices through the final months of 2010 – a diplomatic puzzle mostly resolved thanks to the personal connections between the former president and the mayor.

However, the process has also been linked to the advent of a new style in the Group's inner proceedings. The 'Team Bloomberg' reform in the executive, as one of my interviewees snarkily tagged it with reference to the popular spoof action movie *Team America*, brought about an 'Americanization' of the C40's top management via New York and the CCI.²⁴ Evidence of this political shift can, in fact, be found in the changing composition of the C40 secretariat. Since its early days, the executive has been represented by a champion of Livingstone's initial approach, C40 manager Simon Reddy, who is responsible for coordinating and communicating the work of the C40 cities. Before moving on to the Group's core team, Reddy worked as director of policy and solutions for Greenpeace UK where, along with international advocacy tasks, he had a close relationship with the mayor of London and the GLA on various 'Decentralised Energy' reports and the zero carbon One Gallions London residential development. Reddy's role has been integrated (but not yet replaced) with that of two special advisers to the new chairman with substantial US pedigrees: Jay Carson, a New Yorker transplanted to Los Angeles to serve as deputy mayor, and previously close aide to both Hillary and Bill Clinton, and Rohit Aggarwala, a former director of the New York City Mayor's Office of Long-term Planning and Sustainability and management consultant at McKinsey.²⁵ Both Carson and Aggarwala bring a distinct 'Big Apple' take to the C40, as well as a clear connection with the private sector and the Clinton Foundation: while the former has been directly involved in the CCI's merger and just recently took up the position of chief executive of the new CCI-C40 secretariat, the latter worked at the US Federal Railroad Administration under the Clinton administration and has played a major role in overseeing a major 2011 report that will constitute the baseline of much of the C40's activity in the years ahead.²⁶ Crucially, Carson and Aggarwala also represent a lineage of Bloomberg's new C40 data-dependent

and structural consolidation line which is likely to impact the Group's evolution beyond the American mayor's tenure. Given this shift towards the US, there remains a more or less implicit attempt by the GLA to maintain London at the core of the Group's engagement – a strategy thus far implemented by City Hall through both a grip on the geographical location of the C40 secretariat as well as, more extensively, through leadership by example. The British metropolis was, for example, the first to complete the municipal tender for the Building Retrofit Programme under the Better Buildings Partnership scheme in February 2008, and recently promoted a waste management C40 workshop in March 2010.

Beyond the NYLON axis, C40 members tend to occupy 'secondary' positions, such as that held for instance by Los Angeles and its mayor, Antonio Villaraigosa, who had a prominent role in the initial establishment of the C40/CCI partnership, or even near-'observer status' effectively granted to more peripheral and far less entrepreneurial cities such as Lima, Addis Ababa or Warsaw. This is even, at times, an accepted positioning, as testified by an Asian local government officer who recently pointed out to me how 'there is still a clear benefit in being there and networking with the Londons and New Yorks of our time, rather than sitting outside of the room with those on the margins'.²⁷ In this view, shared by several of the Group's members and affiliate cities, is a feeling that 'NYLON' occupies a *primus inter pares* role in the C40 structure, with a few other key global cities such as Los Angeles or Toronto clustering around the centrality of this 'dynamic duo' and providing the impetus for a Group where a majority of the other metropolises are located 'on the margins' of international action. However, a series of increasingly proactive players has been steadily rising to challenge the Western Anglo-Saxon dominance of the C40. After Tokyo paved the way for the mobilization of the network with the 2008 C40 Climate Change Summit, key global cities of the 'East' progressively gained momentum in setting the pace for the Group's engagement. Headed by Seoul, host of the third biennial summit in 2009, and Hong Kong, organizer of the 'Quality of Living' workshop in November 2010 which developed into a key framework setting process, this partial Eastward shift of the C40 reflects the growing prominence of Asian metropolises in world affairs.

All of these submerged stratification dynamics exemplify a key internal factor: as Kristine Kern and Harriet Bulkeley (2009) noted in relation to European transnational municipal networks, the general characterization of these city coalitions as capable of some degree of self-governance tends to be misleadingly coupled, at least in the superficial international literature reading, with non-hierarchical, horizontal and polycentric forms of political organization. Simply, transnational networks are often simplistically assumed to be *flat*. But on the contrary, the Group's network is, despite its decentralized governance and transnational nature, far from horizontal: an uneven internal geography persists within the C40 to replicate some of the 'core-periphery' logics of contemporary world politics – a reflection that might also

be confirmed by the decision to hold the most recent (2011) summit in a rising 'BRIC' city such as São Paulo. While I will expand on this issue more extensively in Chapter 7, it is important to note here how it would be misleading to describe the structure of the C40 as a 'flat' context of city-to-city cooperation. On the contrary, since this network represents a cross-boundary engagement with explicit political and economic functions, the Group is prone to replicate the dynamics of world affairs in microcosm.

Taedong Lee (2010), of the City University of Hong Kong, has highlighted this internal asymmetry in a recent quantitative study of the C40. Focusing quantitatively on the collaborative relations within the Group, Lee has found uneven benefits and equity issues in the network's structural unfolding: 'homophily' (the tendency to be associated with similar others), the level of globalization and the extent of policy performance are all demonstrated to be positive influencing factors on the proportion of collaborative ties of C40 metropolises with other member cities. This, as he described it, highlights a 'magnet effect' (Lee 2010: 150) for some key hubs of the network such as New York. C40 cities displaying higher levels of policy performance (as demonstrated by a collection of five policies surveyed by Lee) are more likely to form collaboration ties, as in the case of the NYLON link.²⁸ Lee's study taps into the core of the internal political matter at stake here: while formally pluralist, the network displays in reality relative degrees of unevenness, with certain key cities (e.g. London, New York, Toronto) representing the main mediators of the C40's evolution, and more peripheral and passive members jumping on the bandwagon of the Group's global city problematization. Moreover, this structure is not static, as challengers to the core's centrality rise, for instance, from East Asia and Latin America, and new complex hybridizations (such as that with CCI) provide alternative structural evolutions.

Moreover, the problematization of *global* cities as key actors in climate governance also suggests another hierarchization that, although very subtle, underpins the network's organization and mobilization. The Group represents the assumed core of that global urban hierarchy sketched in Chapter 2, and if differences in status and political influence can be mapped geographically within the C40, much the same can be said of the relation between these urban cores and their more or less peripheral 'peers' who are not part of the network. Indeed, even the initial networking strategy devised by London in 2005 sought to gather an elite of core cities that, for global prominence and sheer population, were to head an urban-based approach to climate change. As a GLA political officer remarked: 'Livingstone's original idea was much in parallel to that year's G8 [...] as the Group gathered the largest economies he gathered the largest cities, where "large" was not just a measure of size but of importance'.²⁹ The parallel with the Group of Eight is not casual: the Climate Group's membership is not, as in other networks, open and accessible. Rather, the C40 gathers (at least rhetorically) the top echelon of today's metropolises, and this idea set much of the ground for its establishment. The

impetus for the C40 came, in fact, from an implicit twin reasoning that, as I described in the previous chapter, has already been reflected in the British capital's strategic urban planning. London was seen as an indisputably 'global' city and as such it had to champion not solely cities at large, but chiefly that smaller club of strategic hinges of globalization which in turn, due to their centrality, had a special responsibility due to their unique place in the world. As noted before, this perception was made explicit in Bloomberg's recent statement that a 'sense of great responsibility, and also of immense possibility, must guide [the C40's] work'.³⁰ In practice, such 'exceptionalist' reasoning means that, taking Lee's reasoning beyond the C40 network itself, these metropolises have been developing a thicker complex of relations amongst themselves than with other 'less globalized' cities – therefore enhancing their grip on world politics and the global economy, and increasing their aggregate network power.

This 'cliquishness' of global cities echoes much of the criticism directed at the elitism of traditional 'club' diplomacy.³¹ In an attempt to overcome traditional political dependences, these metropolises have devised a new transnational structure at the crossroads between a municipal network and an extended public-private engagement. Yet, in doing so, they have also recast (rather than denied *in toto*) some of the key rationalities underpinning the very dependences they have sought so hard to outdo. The Group has since its inception imitated the language and collective action dynamics of both those power politics burdening other environmental paradigms, while taking up innovative hybrid approaches of its own. In particular the C40 case still points at a complex internal political process that, though it might superficially be interpreted as horizontal, still holds large degrees of asymmetry, and within which structural unevenness has emerged apace.

What influence do global cities have on global governance?

When we unravel its hybrid and cross-national structure, the C40 presents us with a complex model of a transnational policy network that has deep ramifications through several scales of world politics. Yet, what influence does this have on global governance?

As illustrated above, the Group's agency in environmental governance has taken a twin-track format that has thus far allowed the C40 to *coordinate* urban efforts to curb climate change within an overall framework that includes real and direct *implementation* on the ground. The story narrated thus far points at a substantial level of entrepreneurship by these global cities: by undertaking innovative approaches to climate policy and para-diplomatic activities, the metropolises gathered in a transnational network and managed to mobilize joint municipal resources to produce a series of responses to the questions of sustainability and global warming. This take can be justly labelled as both 'transnational' in its reach and 'entrepreneurial' in its edge because global cities have been capable of recasting a pre-existent capacity for

networking and urban governance typical of their centrality in world affairs, in order to produce a web of innovative policy initiatives that is cutting across the traditional layers of world politics and connecting a pool of actors worldwide. The new governance structures put in place by the C40 have offered an alternative and urban response to the limits to environmental action presently faced by international politics. The burgeoning variety of these activities qualifies the 'actor dimension' of global cities not just in relation to international politics, but in global governance more in general. This, as Claus Schultze (2003: 121) put it in the case of cities of the European Union, testifies how global cities are not just 'policy-takers' subjugated to the pecking order of the state, but also increasingly qualifiable as 'policy-makers' capable of being key stakeholders in various arenas of participatory governance beyond the nation-state. As the then C40 chair and former mayor of Toronto David Miller put it after the UNFCCC Copenhagen summit in December 2009: 'While climate change demands global action, we have shown that we are not waiting for others to act.'³²

What this brief excursion in the actor dimension of global cities shows us is that their impact on world politics is not merely the reflection of each one city's agency but also of the complex networks created by the connections among them and other elements of global governance like the CCI. The two can hardly be separated, and certainly the fortunes of each often rest on the developments of the other. In this sense, it is undeniable that the links that join many of the key urban settlements of our epoch – what Peter Taylor (2004) called 'world city network' – shape the breadth of movements across the globe. The thick web of worldwide relations that unfolds through global cities offers established pathways that organize how, and where, goods and peoples transit, therefore influencing world affairs by arranging the mobility of its components. With a practical analogy, inasmuch as streets inform intra-urban mobility by offering preferred communication channels to the city's inhabitants, these networks inform global mobility by offering the most viable alternatives to travel around the Earth. City people, just like the global audience, could seek alternative routes to navigate through the conurbated spaces of their settlement, but choose streets and public areas as these latter present the best possible option on a cost-benefit basis – and the same is valid for the global grid of human mobility. Global cities, just like streets, become strategic articulators in the architecture of world affairs.

Thanks to their attractiveness and connectivity functions, global cities such as London and New York exert what David Singh Grewal (2008) has called 'network power' – the capacity to channel and standardize social spaces into structured pathways. As such, they can impact both material and social dynamics of climate governance, if not globalization, by creating preferential channels, influencing institutionalized practices and establishing standards on a universal level. This influence is derived from a tacit coordination of individuals through their networking around shared practices, standards or institutions, which become focal points in defining the shape of social

relations. Cities, private actors and NGOs are held together by their common participation in these associations which, if at first might appear un-coerced, are in reality the result of these individuals' submission to some pre-determined path and thus characterized not solely by their networked feature, but also by their exercise of some form of power. By partaking in the C40 network, members as well as (more importantly) external actors like corporations tacitly assent to limitations such as the scope of planning, in exchange for several benefits while, in turn, the network acquires influence over them, thus exploiting the control inherent in relations of *sociability* that are built on a collection of individual decisions. As Grewal illustrates, this dynamic of power can be differentiated from that of the relations of *sovereignty*, where individuals collectively partake in some decision-making mechanism that in turn limits individuals by producing a binding settlement. Their divergence is rooted in 'the difference between implicit consent to a social outcome that occurs as a by-product of individual actions, and explicit consent to that social outcome itself, as decided through a political procedure' (Grewal 2008: 48). Sociability pulls actors into common practices and networked relations by relying on their tacit consent to aggregate, while sovereignty imposes standards and practices thanks to pre-existent explicit agreements. In the latter instance, the practice of power (and thus consequent coercion and submission) is the outcome of a somewhat legitimate form of authority, while in the former, the process of networking itself involves the exercise of power by a social structure that progressively gains legitimacy. Network power, in fact, rests on a 'progressive' logic: networks have power that grows in proportion to the size of the number of people they unite, whose participation in the network itself leads to limitation in their range of choice and production of further tacit consent through the elimination of possible alternatives. In this sense, standards and common understandings 'gradually come to dominate through the pull of network power' (Grewal 2008: 49). Global cities, in this view, become the obligatory passage points of transnational policymaking linkages, and their connections the prime movers of policy implementation: their power is thus not solely derived from their individual capacities, but rather by the key positioning that global cities have in allowing networks amongst these.

Overall, metropolises such as London become the 'logistic heart' (Braudel 1984: 27) of the global governance of the environment, and therefore hold a fundamental infrastructural influence in that they maintain much direct control over the articulation of public policies and services. Hence, they acquire what Allen Scott (1997) called 'monopoly powers of place' in their capacity to define preferential pathways to implement climate responses on the ground. In a sense, all member cities partake of a certain degree of network power since they are linked to each other through the C40 connections, but some like London or New York are essential articulators and organizers of such networks, thus 'setting the standards' of these intertwined relations.

Yet, as an influence on social relations, networking is not free from many of the contradictions of power relations. In his analysis of city networks, John Allen (2010: 2895) has for example rightly pointed out that the establishment of some central cities in the geography of global flows comes at the expense of less interconnected places, as ‘the “power to” hold things together folds over into the “power over” others’. The widening extension of very sophisticated global municipal networks that the C40 inspires is a double-edged sword: on the one hand these networks assure greater policymaking interactions among major metropolises in all areas of the globe; on the other, however, they favour the emergence, as underscored by Stephen Graham in relation to communication flows, of some ‘network ghettos’ with ‘low telecommunication access and concentrated social disadvantage’ (Graham 1999). The Group becomes stratified internally, among global cities, and promotes some degree of hierarchization externally, among ‘global’ and ‘ordinary’ cities.³³

7 The world politics ‘of’ global cities

Networking networks

POLITICS OF GLOBAL CITIES: A NETWORK OF NETWORKS

Recasting a global political influence

The development of the C40 narrated thus far paints a picture of a transnational policy network that, albeit still at an early stage of institutional development, has nonetheless managed to achieve levels of cooperation and policy coordination sufficient to establish itself as a growing and innovative presence in environmental politics. However, the structural unfolding of the Group as aggregate of global cities is a networking process that has not unravelled in a vacuum. Rather, as pointed out in Chapters 2 and 5, the emergence of structures and engagements in global governance (whether *within* or *among* scales) takes place within a geography also populated by the traditional dependences of world politics, like the UN, and other spaces of transnational interaction such as ICLEI. This means that the organization and mobilization of the C40 has to confront the limitations posed by key international superstructures such as those of international relations or the global economy. In view of this geopolitical ‘embeddedness’ it is necessary to consider the network’s evolution in its *dependences*, in order to paint a picture of this case conscious of the processes of structuration between the urban scale and other realms of global governance. I will explicate this here by re-reading the ‘moments’ of networking unfolding through (both within and without) the Group from its 2005 onset until the present day, in order to consider its structural development as *conditional* not solely on its member cities’ agency but also on broader political-economic dynamics. This analysis will also evince how such a networked dimension prompts the emergence of another actant, this time transnational rather than sub-national as in the London case: the C40 emerges, in fact, as representative agent capable of building linkages across scales itself on behalf of global cities, eventually suggesting the capacity of these metropolises to assemble into a group agent similar to many international organizations and itself capable of agency.

Reconsidering the political context: C40 and world politics

The organization of the C40 illustrates a two-track evolution that has paralleled political action with technical partnerships and offered entrepreneurial solutions to overcome several of the impasses of global environmental governance. Innovativeness notwithstanding, the Group's mediators (London *in primis*) had to negotiate the network's establishment with and within broader structures. Maintaining a relative closure on the role of global cities as obligatory passage points for global environmental governance is perhaps the major challenge to the network's organization. Global cities have, in fact, to acquire a certain degree of legitimacy to partake in the complex architecture of global governance concerned with the environment. As pointed out, the Group is thus prompted to problematize its exclusive positioning in terms of international politics as this latter sphere is the one that plays the core role in the dynamics of the geography of global governance. This, in terms of the political track, has meant reiterating global cities as core actors in the global response to sustainability and climate change issues. This 'we cities' rhetoric, kickstarted by Livingstone and Gavron at London 2005, implies three logical corollaries: the urban, as the exclusive domain of cities, holds a particular centrality in the 'local action' dimension of global governance; global cities, as central places in a worldwide network of urban sites, hold a particular centrality amongst cities; the local and urban reach of *these* cities, as contemporaneously globalized and localized, holds a particular centrality when it comes to implementing climate policy effectively both globally and locally. The construction of the C40 member, and global cities more in general, as obligatory passage points for environmental governance is therefore strongly intertwined with negotiating the capacity of these metropolises to represent local, urban and city action as meaningful and fundamental action in world politics.

In turn, situating this centrality in the geography of global governance has meant facing a series of both *exogenous* and *endogenous* pressures on the establishment of the C40. Externally, the Group is conditioned by the need to relate to the broader realms of world politics in a 'language' other non-urban actors can easily understand. However, this also poses an internal problem that shapes the structure of the C40, as its capacity for action is premised on the enrolment of other global civil society allies as intermediaries in its transnational network. This is reflected in the conditionality of the C40's problematization and interestment processes with other structures of world politics.

To begin with, external closure on the role of global cities in the politics of the environment is challenged by both their capacity to deliver in terms acceptable at an international political scale, as well as by the need not to dissociate the C40's climate agency too much from the broader dynamics of global climate governance. The de-securitization and removal of climate-related political issues from the realm of international negotiations to a

context of planners and urbanists runs the risk of technicalization of the Group's agency, and thus the alienation of global deal and GCS actors from the C40's local effectiveness. This means in practice that the Group needs to mediate, continuously, between its need to depoliticize climate change policymaking (to acquire room for manoeuvre) and its need to speak the language of international affairs. The Group has in fact sought to engage other spheres of governance in order to sustain such an advocacy role with heightened degrees of international pull. To this extent, the C40's networking has been coupled with a search for a greater 'legitimacy of order' (Clark 2003) in environmental politics: positioning themselves as obligatory passage points in the global effort to curb climate change, global cities have expressed their claim to rightful participation in the international 'community' and thus their entitlement to membership in the complex of stakeholders engaged in global environmental governance. As such, the transnational political agency of the Group has focused on formulating joint statements, calls for actions and collective plans targeted towards expanding and re-problematizing the role of metropolises in global environmental politics. However, this has meant that global cities gathered in the C40 have had to cast their engagements in the 'language' of international politics. One example might be the 2009 Seoul summit's plenary declaration. Ushering in a tone of international solemnity with its opening line ('We the government leaders and delegates of C40 cities ...'), the document was compiled following canonic international law and UN consuetudinary practices marked a series of preambular acknowledgement paragraphs ('recognizing that ...', 'reaffirming that ...' and so forth), followed by a bulk of proclamations and explanatory annexes.¹

The C40 cities have thus begun to problematize their agency by speaking *in*, as much as *to*, international relations terms typical of twentieth-century world politics – a dynamic that has been evident at every stage of the networking of the Group from problematization to mobilization. A factor maintaining a close tie between the C40's internal space of engagement (for its members) and the international dependences 'around' it, can therefore be found in the Group's frequent mimicking of certain diplomatic procedures of 'higher politics'. The network has adopted much of the commonplace political language of covenants, international summits and state-centric policymaking in order to develop its internal political structure. For example, the C40 has frequently issued 'joint actions' as in the October 2008 Tokyo conference or the May 2007 New York summit, and taken part in wider agreements such as in the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Communiqué or the Global Cities Covenant on Climate (known as the 'Mexico Pact') signed at the Mexico City World Mayors Summit on Climate in November 2010.

Likewise, in order to structure the centrality of global cities the Group has, since its 2005 inception, subscribed to much of the dominant environmental governance discourse that underpins the international response to this wicked problem. So, while the C40 has devised a series of innovative responses to the issue such as the procurement system through the CCI or the issue-based

workshop rounds, much of its rhetoric remains anchored to the broader structures of world politics. This is embedded in three strands of continuity reproduced by the C40. First, when describing the positioning of global cities vis-à-vis climate change, members, Group executives and even workshop practitioners make constant reference to the political language of the UN Framework and to the scientific discourse that forms much of the widely agreed know-how on environmental politics. This is exemplified, for instance, by the constant referencing of the *Stern Review* and IPCC data in both the C40's initial networking stages as well as its more recent developments. For instance, at the 2007 New York summit, Mayor Bloomberg's keynote address made extensive reference to Stern's conclusions.² In particular, the figures on the urban contribution to climate change have been largely (and, quite arguably, uncritically) embraced by the C40, following Stern's and the IPCC's indication that cities are responsible for around 75 per cent of total greenhouse gases emissions – a statistic now espoused by the Clinton Climate Initiative as well as London's and New York City's local governments amongst others.³ This '75 per cent rhetoric' has progressively been adopted in presentations and discussions at the C40, and has today gained the status of a well-founded truism in climate change science.⁴ However, as David Satterthwaite (2008), one of the key experts in this field, has pointed out, such estimates might considerably understate the contributions from agriculture and deforestation and from heavy industries, fossil-fuelled power stations and high-consumption households not located in cities – thus often confusing consumers with producers.⁵

Now, while a discussion on the exact contribution of global cities to climate change is far beyond the scope of my inquiry, what is nevertheless interesting is the wide usage of this discourse as a cornerstone of the problematization of the Group's (and, by proxy, its members') influence on environmental governance. By repeating and showcasing the 75 per cent estimate, global cities gathered in the C40 are not just pointing the finger at themselves in a recurring *mea culpa*: on the contrary, the '75 per cent rhetoric' helps offer a scientific basis for these metropolises' centrality in climate change issues and primary policymaking positioning in responding to the threat of global warming. As the current C40 chair, New York's mayor Michael Bloomberg, put it at the opening ceremony of the São Paulo summit:

History now summons us to that duty – and we must answer its call. That sense of great responsibility, and also of immense possibility, must guide our work.⁶

A conditional organization: maintaining the boundaries of problematization

For lionized as it might sound, this self-appointment clashes with a second driver of continuity in the C40–world politics linkage: as highlighted in the introduction to the chapter, the C40 is not the only, nor the first, nor the

largest urban-based transnational policy network. This has resulted in an often equivocal relationship with other city-based organizations but not in explicit frictions. To date, very little competition has developed with other urban networks, and this might be the result of three factors: first, C40 cities are often members in some of these other groups, and are thus not willing to position themselves as supporters of radically opposite agendas. Second, and conjunctly, due to such overlapping membership, several approaches and issues treated in these institutionally different fora are actually extremely similar: for instance, Sydney's presentation at the Seoul C40 summit in May 2009 was almost identical to that at the Metropolis congress a few months earlier (October 2008), and touched upon the very same themes and recommendations later showcased at the University of Sydney's 'Building Global Cities' symposium in November of the same year. What this means is that these organizations will be less likely to develop contrasting action plans and thus antagonistic relationships. Third, the C40 has until now been extremely successful in securing both governmental and (in particular) private funding for its activities, thus minimizing the need to tap into other networks' resource pools.⁷ Overall, the C40's implicit networking strategy, in this case, has been generally focused on maintaining a certain degree of interestment in these potential allies, while not 'opening up' the organization of the network to their decision-making influence.⁸ In this sense the Group has either sought to co-opt other urban-based organizations in mutual implementation initiatives, or develop intermittent relations of mutual acknowledgment where implementation plans and conference statements might overlap.

This cooperative linkage is often dissociated from the political track, where other city-based transnational advocacy networks are at best acknowledged, to the technical track where real policymaking cooperation happens. For example, within the framework of 'Project 2°' the C40 collaborates, via the CCI, with ICLEI in testing Microsoft's web-based emissions tracking system: the software has been developed by using the knowledge base that ICLEI has acquired in developing its Harmonized Emissions Analysis Tool (HEAT), and has subsequently been delivered to C40 cities for testing. If one compares this connection with the initial participation of ICLEI in setting up the then-labelled 'C20 initiative' in 2005, where the Local Governments for Sustainability organization provided both advocacy and networking support to the GLA-sponsored London summit, the trajectory of this ambiguous relationship becomes clear. The Project 2° interaction between the two city networks, centred on planning and urban ecology analysis, is almost purely technical and the private mediators in their midst (CCI *in primis*) contribute to maintaining the boundaries of the 'conversation' within both the dominant climate change rhetoric and the specialized discourse typical of the workshops. No purely political exchange between the two subsisted at any time in the first 5 years of the C40, and their *governance* relationship was left unspecified until the 2011 summit, where the two signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) aimed at developing a standardized approach to track greenhouse

gases emissions in the cities covered by both networks – a once again predominantly technical endeavour.⁹ Hence, if the C40 had to allow for a formalized recognition on the political track, the linkage between the two organizations has generally been rooted in planning, data-based and policy-oriented transnational action.

However, the C40–ICLEI MoU is but a part of a larger governance dynamic that has been unfolding through the Group in the past few years. The C40, originating in a *conference* of large cities with adjoining climate programmes, has in fact progressively developed into a *collectif* capable of interacting with the key structures of global governance. In order to do so, the initial meeting of metropolitan ‘climate leaders’ based on loose connections amongst them has had to become progressively institutionalized into a coherent structure. A fundamental passage in this transition has been that of developing an ‘organizational strategy’ to overcome the almost informal nature of the network as initially set by Livingstone. Presented at the November 2010 Hong Kong workshop, this strategy was the first step in the C40 chairmanship of New York’s mayor Michael Bloomberg, who had taken over from Toronto’s David Miller (2006–2010) just a month before that.

What has informally become known as the ‘Hong Kong Strategy’ was thus devised, and subsequently adopted by the C40 Steering Committee, on five core points:

- (1) strengthening the C40’s organizational capacity and its ability to work with other organizations;
- (2) fostering the C40’s current programmes as established networks of cities or reorganizing them as such where initiatives are not connected;
- (3) ensuring that ‘city directors’ are fully supported by the integrated work of the C40;
- (4) making the C40 a more visible and effective leader in urban sustainability;
- (5) broadening the C40 membership to better reflect not only the (urban) leaders of today but also ‘those of tomorrow’.¹⁰

Fundamentally, the Strategy pushes, at the same time, in three directions of consolidation. First, it points towards both a greater internal interconnectedness amongst members, as well as between member cities and the C40 executive (goals 2 and 3). Second, it calls for more effective and collective engagement of the Group as a whole with global environmental governance (goals 1 and 4). Third, albeit somewhat explicitly, it gives a core positioning to the C40 secretariat to foster this ‘organizational capacity’ and to promote visibility in world politics (goals 1 to 4).

Moving towards a tighter network, the evolution of the C40 has been envisaged by its secretariat and steering committee to enhance the Group’s structural coherence. The C40 is, in this sense, attempting to develop a collective agency beyond the sole coordination of strategic urban planning

initiatives. This was begun by establishing an agenda for action as early as 2008, and progressively systematized by cementing the Group's linkages with other global governance actors like ICLEI, the CCI, World Bank or the UNFCCC, with the C40 secretariat playing an increasingly mediatory role by representing member cities as a networked whole, and thus carrying out diplomatic activities transnationally on their behalf.¹¹ With the Hong Kong Strategy, and even more at the 2011 summit, the Group has sought to state clearly in the eyes of all international audiences its intention to expand into a fully-fledged climate actor.

A conditional organization: enrolment limitations

The plan set out at Hong Kong in November 2010 and showcased in São Paulo in June 2011, illustrates the clear intention of the Group (or at least the Group's executive) to seek a greater collective influence on the dynamics of climate policy. In Bloomberg's ambitious words:

We can and must work together, more closely and productively. In the process, we will, I am confident, make C40 the world's leading, and most indispensable, climate change organization.¹²

Yet despite the move towards greater integration with the Strategy, the processes of enrolment and mobilization of the C40 show some necessary limitations and external dependences. Where the C40's evolution remains murky at best is on the issue of membership, as prompted at point 5, since the Group clearly still lacks a straightforward statement of membership criteria beyond the vagueness of being 'global' and 'large' cities, as well as membership procedures. Likewise, little has also been formalized in terms of positioning of non-municipal components of the network.

To this extent, *internally*, the Group's closure on global city centrality is also challenged by both membership ambivalence and reliance on private partners, which were originally conceived as implementers but which have expanded to a progressively mediating stake in the network's dealings. Indeed, the C40 is today substantially conditioned by a sprawling dependency on public-private cooperation to maintain an autonomous implementation of its summit and workshop plans. Of course, the most evident case of this is the alliance with the CCI. First, while the C40 draws much of its international pull by the aggregate network power of the global cities that are gathered in the network, the membership category 'global city' is not a clear-cut one and in more than one case questions have been raised as to who is entitled to be part of the organization. Second, the CCI's importance in linking the Group with privates that can provide essential services to implement the C40's goals has put the Initiative in an ambiguous position within the network. While originally enrolled as an intermediary (or 'delivery partner') capable of enhancing the network's mobilization, the CCI has fast become a key

stakeholder on both tracks of the Group's activity, and ultimately taken the position of mediator after the two merged secretariats in 2011. This connection, as evinced by several of my interviews and, not least in a recent *New York Times* article, did not solely originate in the need for an expanded organizational capacity, but was also the result of a previously loose system of coordination that 'left confused city officials and employees of the groups working at cross purposes' in an arrangement that was largely 'plagued by problems'.¹³

The complex positioning of the CCI is not a unique arrangement within the C40 structure: Group members and the original (pre-2011) secretariat have actively sought alternative public-private paths for implementation. This is for instance the case of May 2009, when the C40 signed a memorandum of understanding with Arup, a private consulting company specializing in design, planning and engineering known for its structural development work on the Sydney Opera House and for the Beijing Olympics. This partnership is intended to offer integrated sustainability support groups targeted at developing individual cities' carbon reduction schemes under the 'UrbanLife' programme.¹⁴ The project has thus far resulted in a string of workshops specifically aimed at elaborating strategic policies for urban development through Arup's technical expertise and the C40's networking of best practices and services.¹⁵ This has for instance been the case of Toronto, where the first UrbanLife study group was held (September 2009), centred on setting up a 'neighbourhood energy action plan' that, tested in a workshop in a northeastern residential suburb known as 'The Peanut', will be repeated in neighbourhoods across the city.¹⁶

However, private partners like Arup do not solely function as implementers: in their intermediary role, quite like the original position of the CCI (albeit on a much smaller and certainly less well-funded scale) they can work to establish additional links to key global governance players. In this case, Arup has for example organized an UrbanLife study in partnership not just with the C40 but also with the World Bank. Revolving around a common issue such as that of development, the May 2010 São Paulo workshop has resulted in planning for waste management with a particular emphasis on the city's largest favelas – an initiative whose outcome was delivered at the June 2011 summit. Yet, the widening of the Group's space of engagement through PPPs does not solely have the effect of shifting the scale of action for environmental governance: the C40's policymaking is also hybridized by the involvement of multinationals, consultancy firms and planning technicians, all taking part in recasting the discursive field in which climate governance occurs. In the UrbanLife case, for instance, questions such as sustainability and environmental justice have been addressed by gathering a small attendance (40–50 participants) of local city officials with Arup experts, planners and municipal officers from the C40 and relevant private sector stakeholders in what the project calls 'workspaces'. These are two-day workshops (preceded by exploratory research by Arup and the C40) where the local

dimensions of climate change issues are first illustrated in a keynote, then separated in technical scenario groups utilizing methodologies such as ecological footprint system modelling, and finally presented again for possible policy adaptation and further dissemination (via the web and reports) to other C40 cities. To put it simply, this process brings external political and economic determinants to be translated and intertwined with the daily planning practices of these metropolises, even where such constraints had little bearing to begin with. The 'workspaces' approach, very much like the broader 'workshop' take developed through the CCI, allows for the 'removal' of the issue of climate policymaking from the realms of international summitry and the entanglements of *realpolitik*, addressing the implementation of the broader political agenda of the Group through specific planning means. This link has been furthered as the C40 secretariat commissioned Arup to produce a major report focused on collecting data on member cities' climate actions and mayoral powers, later presented at the 2011 biennial summit, and resulting in a growing emphasis on the twin need for independent (private) surveying and internationalization of the Group's aggregate capacity.¹⁷ As such, Arup has now moved into a key position as implementer of metropolitan connections, as well as prime producer of baseline data for the Group's climate action.

Overall, as these examples point out, establishing the C40 structure required an enrolment of 'allies' beyond the traditional arrangements of global governance: the Group's original mediators – global cities – have had to negotiate their 'international' positioning with a charity (the Clinton Foundation) and a series of private intermediaries such as consultancies (Arup), IT companies, ESCOs and financial institutions. This development has been prompted by two limitations on the mobilization of the network: on the one hand, the C40's room for manoeuvre is constrained by the dynamics and institutions of international politics, having to cope with wider state-centric frameworks such as the UN that still define the playground for global environmental governance. On the other hand, the Group's agency is also conditioned by the restrictions posed by the international economy and the mechanisms of the global market, which (as sketched in Chapter 4) present budgetary, financial and sustainability challenges to the influence global cities can have on world affairs. Their dependence on these superstructures has pressured the original members of the Group (eighteen global cities and a small secretariat) into enrolling not solely more like-allies such as several East Asian and African metropolises, but also non-governmental intermediaries such as the CCI and its several private partners. In this conformation, the network has responded to the restrictions of international politics and economics by recasting its member cities' traditional dependences in two intertwined ways.

In order to overcome the obstacles of power politics the C40 has undergone a metamorphosis from 'international' organization to the hybrid policy network embodied in the Hong Kong Strategy. In fact, if in 2005 the shape of the Group (then 'C20 Large World Cities') was essentially based on a regular

general assembly of members, observers, a small secretariat and an ‘honorary’ chair (London), by the third C40 summit in Seoul in 2009 the network had expanded to more complex ramifications. The original skeleton of the C20, enlarged to fifty-nine cities, progressively refocused from a summit-driven process to the aforementioned workshop-conferences system, while actively enrolling allies through PPPs increasingly mediated not by each individual city but rather by the C40 coordination structure (secretariat–CCI). At the same time, in order to overcome the limits to urban public policy inherent in these cities’ interconnection with the world economy, the C40 has extended its initial loose network of city-to-city cooperation to a multi-tiered complex of ties whose effectiveness is boosted by non-governmental allies. While ‘city directors’ meet biennially at the plenary, the range of activities prompted by the group predominantly includes para-diplomatic relations among officers from the various municipalities, as well as public-private exchanges between these and private implementers. This means that, the locus of agency of the network has shifted to a governance arising from within its structure and unravelling across scales – a transformation that has not solely developed new transnational engagements but also recast traditional political-economic dependences.

A conditional mobilization: recasting economic dependency

Political mimicking notwithstanding, the contemporary effectiveness of the C40 is also, if not pre-eminently, contingent on the limitations and structures imposed by its entrenched positioning within the global economic system. Lacking extensive financial means to support large-scale implementation schemes, and largely dependent on a successful positioning in the global markets to maintain their grip on flows of goods, information and people, the global cities of the C40 have resorted to a trend that has become quite widespread in environmental politics: public-private partnerships.

For example, most of the Group’s economic obstacles have been overcome through a CCI-led system of *procurement*. ‘Procurement’ is meant here as the acquisition of appropriate goods and/or services at the best possible total ownership cost to meet the needs of the purchaser in terms of quality and quantity, time, and location. As a major example of such an approach, the C40/CCI Energy Efficiency Building Retrofit Program (EEBRP) brings together the Group’s largest cities, multinational energy service firms (ESCOs) and financial institutions, in order to develop a consortium. The Program allows C40 cities to access a ‘purchasing alliance’ administered by the CCI’s EEBRP team, where the latter ‘leverages the buying power of the C40 to achieve affordable pricing on – and thus faster adoption of – the latest energy efficient and clean energy products and technologies’.¹⁸ In practice, CCI can act as a mediator for the Group by negotiating linkages among manufacturers and global cities thanks to the pooled resources of these metropolises and the preferential connection opened for ESCOs in their retrofit market. The

purchasing alliance lowers investment barriers for products and technologies with significant energy efficiency improvement or fuel switching potential. Building owners can access the purchasing alliance products directly using their own procurement methods or as part of a larger retrofit project through an ESCO or other provider. Therefore, the Initiative allows the establishment of a financing process which allows the C40 to implement on the ground the policies showcased in the workshops. However, neither CCI nor C40 play a significant role in the final stages, where the CCI negotiates a ceiling benchmark price (not a final price) and procurement can be adjusted to adhere to a client's existing regulations and processes, leaving much of the specific implementation to the owner and their (international) market constraints. As Mikael Román (2010) noted, while the procurement operates in this case as a *de facto* governance mechanism, as an implementation strategy it seems to fall short in several cases: it may alienate some member cities with specific technology needs pushing for internationalization of standardized products and this, as a consequence, creates a tension between local industry and the global competitiveness of an exclusively Western pool of ESCOs.

The C40 certainly extends its network power over both climate policy and its related segments of the global markets, but the dominant structures within these, in turn, also strengthen their grip on urban planning worldwide. In this sense, while raising a series of important questions on the value of developing governing arrangements via markets, the C40 seems to continue the hybridization logic of global environmental politics that, born in the 1970s, has taken off in both 'global deal' and civil society approaches to finance and implementing climate actions.¹⁹ This continuity is mainly caused by two implicit reasons: first, the Group needs to overcome implementation obstacles and expand its pool of resources if real action on the ground has to be carried out effectively and rapidly; second, these metropolises need to find alternative governing paths in order to jump scales and become free from the complex (and often inefficient) hold of their states' scalar hierarchies. As a consequence, the funding of the Group's activity has also gone global and private. For instance, if the 2005 London summit was chiefly organized through the GLA with UK-based donors such as British Petroleum, Thames Water and EDF Energy, the subsequent 2007 New York summit was set up through a joint partnership of GLA and New York City and funds from J. P. Morgan Chase, Shell, Siemens, Deutsche Bank and fourteen other multinationals – a public-private capitalization trend that has continued to the present day.

So, if the logic of public-private hybridization has been one of overcoming budgetary and action limits, this has also recast the traditional political-economic dependences of these cities on their global market bases, which have not been denied in the process of hybridization via the Clinton Foundation, but rather reorganized and mobilized through an urban-centred transnational process. Much of the same can be said for the C40's connection with the World Bank – perhaps the greatest structural development of the Group in 2011.

However, the gestation of this core connection has been far longer than that of the CCI–C40 partnership. Despite talks of a formal partnership between the two being in the air since its early days, the relationship remained largely unclear until the 2011 São Paulo summit, and limited to a common participation in parallel initiatives. While the CCI linkage, especially since the merger, has provided some substantive economic support for the Group's long-term sustainability, the prompt to establish a more formal connection with the World Bank has emerged from the concerns surrounding the financing of retrofit and climate change reduction projects in many of the C40 member cities. Seen (in the words of World Bank president Robert Zoellick) as 'a natural extension of the Bank's relation with each city', the partnership with the Bank is considered crucial in order to attract more private capital and to allow a quicker payout of the various climate-sensitive projects implemented at the strategic planning level by the Group.²⁰ In this sense much emphasis has thus far been put on developing a consistent approach to climate action planning strategies across the C40. In particular, the agreement is aimed at establishing a common approach to measuring and reporting on city greenhouse gases emissions. Yet, this is not simply a planning concern: as the agreement underlines, standardized action is mainly needed to permit potential investors to identify opportunities across cities and thus to multiply the Group's financing.

To be certain, this linkage offers distinct implementation advantages, especially in terms of offering incentives to the 'less active C40 members' (an expression used in many instances by C40 and World Bank executives at the São Paulo summit) to take up more extensive actions. Moreover, the connection with technical experts at the Bank, and especially at the World Bank Institute, brings some considerable experience in leveraging 'climate financing' instruments with the private sector, thus allowing for further hybrid linkages between the CCI/C40 and not solely ESCOs but private providers more in general. As the Bank's linkage begins to develop in this direction in both the initial rhetoric on this key linkage and its related plans for action, two governance dimensions have appeared central: connecting the Bank's apparatus not solely to the political, but chiefly to the *technical* dimension of the Group's agency, allows a particular scalar reach to both actors. Furthermore, this connection allows both parties to bypass the inefficiency of the 'global deal' approach of the UNFCCC negotiations by setting up direct connections between the transnational scale of both the Bank and the C40's city diplomacy, and the urban sphere represented in the latter's planning track. This push for scalar reach and 'trouble jumping' was echoed in Zoellick's words as he underlined how the Bank's interest in setting up a direct linkage with the C40 was mainly prompted by a need to '*deepen* our partnership *directly* with cities' as these latter 'are the future of climate change'.²¹ Quite clearly, it can be argued at this stage that this declaration reinforces the C40 global cities' status as obligatory passage points for global environmental governance.

Table 7.1 The C40 timeline 2005–11

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Event</i>
October 2005	London	First World Cities Leadership Climate Summit launches the Climate Leadership Group ('C20') initiative with secretariat in London and GLA mayor Ken Livingstone as chair.
December 2005	Montreal	The World Cities Leadership reports to the COP 13 of the UNFCCC.
February 2006	Berlin	Second annual M4 (London, Moscow, Paris, Berlin) meeting
August 2006	London	The Clinton Foundation's Climate Change Initiative (CCI) becomes (now 'C40') delivery partner.
February 2007	London	Third annual M4 meeting with Beijing as guest (M4+1).
May 2007	New York City	Second C40 cities summit (C40/CCI Energy Efficiency Building Retrofit Program and CCI partnership with Microsoft).
December 2007	London	C40 workshop (co-hosted by the GLA and Stockholm).
December 2007	Bali	The Local Government Climate session of the COP 13 launches the World Mayors and Local Governments Climate Protection Agreement.
February 2008	London	The GLA becomes the first to complete a municipal trend for the building retrofit programme under the Better Buildings Partnership scheme.
April 2008	Los Angeles	C40 workshop on Airports and Climate Change.
June 2008	London	Toronto's mayor David Miller chair of the C40.
July 2008	Rotterdam	C40 workshop on Ports and Climate Change.
October 2008	Tokyo	C40 meeting on Climate Change issues thirteen joint actions.
February 2009	London	C40 signs partnership agreement with the World Bank.
May 2009	Seoul	Third C40 cities summit (C40/CCI measurement tool).
December 2009	Copenhagen	Climate summit for mayors parallel to COP 15 (Copenhagen climate communiqué and C40 Electric Vehicle Network).
March 2010	London	C40 workshop on Waste Management.
April 2010	Berlin	C40 workshop on Strategies for Highly Efficient Cities.
September 2010	London	New York's mayor Michael Bloomberg chair of the C40.
November 2010	Hong Kong	C40 workshop on Low Carbon Cities for High Quality Living.

Table 7.1 (continued)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Event</i>
November 2010	Mexico City	Global Cities Covenant on Climate ('Mexico City Pact') signed at the World Mayors Summit on Climate.
January 2011	Basel	C40 workshop on Sustainable Infrastructure Financing.
April 2011	New York City	CCI and C40 (represented by Bloomberg) sign merger agreement for a unified secretariat.
June 2011	São Paulo	Fourth C40 cities summit (World Bank–C40/CCI partnership).

Assembling the network dimension

Seven years, four plenary summits, more than ten workshops and several partnerships after its original inception in October 2005, the C40 can arguably be pointed at as a clear case of city-to-city cooperation that has evolved into an institutionalized transnational policy network with solid public-private credentials. In devising a structural linkage across a multitude of non-traditional actors, the C40 has sought an alternative path from the top-down binding schemes typical of the traditional politics of the environment. The C40's hybrid logic has allowed these cities to go beyond the international relations channels (and, consequently, stalemates) that characterize the 'global deal' approach, while also providing an innovative substitute for the 'global civil society' model that has developed in parallel with such a dominant paradigm.

The C40's multiscalar agency

Certainly, the story of the C40 is characterized by a string of changes in the governing technologies of global governance (or at least the global politics of the environment). New engagements have been devised by the global cities in the Group to overcome the traditional dependences with a series of innovative linkages: the Group's policymaking capacity that allows it to govern transnationally 'from the middle' has found fertile ground in the twin-track approach, an urban-based take on environmental issues that seeks not to develop overarching regimes but rather build on the varied strengths and approaches existing within the network and, not least, a PPP-implementation approach that has put private actors in an almost equal position to that of local governments. All of these, conjunctly, make the C40 an innovative case. However, this originality is underscored by several elements of superstructural continuity:

- Despite its originality as a frame of governance, the C40's political track is inclined to mimic the dominant dynamics of international politics;

- albeit organized horizontally, the network tends to continue with hierarchical structures both within the Group as well as between members and non-members;
- albeit representative of a novel trend in global environmental governance, the C40's PPPs approach and its common gain mentality accepts the pre-existence of global political-economic structures and is disposed to align to private interests.

As such, the C40 case, while innovative in respect to both 'global deal' and 'aggregate' dimensions of global governance, might be more comparable to that hybrid presence in the global politics of the environment noted in Chapter 2 as 'private environmental governance' (PEG).²² By linking governmental actors to private elements such as the Clinton Foundation, the C40 has also helped to continue that well-established 'boundary-spanning' (Eweje 2007) process in climate (and more broadly 'world') politics that pushes towards the redefinition of governmental prerogatives and civil modes of action boosted by the 2002 Johannesburg summit (WSSD) partnerships. This trend towards an increased private sector participation, and thus a PPP 'hybridization' of governance frameworks, has been reinforced by the Group's need to base its mobilization not solely on local government instruments, but rather through NGO actors such as Arup and the CCI, which gain policymaking and climate governance implementation capacity via the C40.²³

However, it is perhaps by comparison between the inner workings of PEG and the C40 that other lines of continuity can be found. While core actors remain different in the two models, their policymaking and implementation styles are in practice quite similar, with PPPs and lobbying at the core of their governance programmes. Where the C40 has not shown particular proactiveness, as noted above, is in the realm of regime-building – an implementation strategy rather popular amongst PEG approaches that have thus far showcased several cases of self-regulation, like the ISO-14000 or the Forest Stewardship Council, where 'non-state market-driven' (Cashore 2002) policymaking has acquired rule-making authority. As such, a 'centrality' problematization, and the power derived from a substantial influence on states as sources of transnational policymaking authority, are common features of the two paradigms.

Additionally, since PEG also relies on sponsoring of external initiatives, this activity has also benefited the C40's mobilization in the form of conference funding (as for instance in the biennial summits) and implementation contributions (in the EEBRP programme). Policymaking arenas are also reasonably related, with overlaps in the setting up of and participation to ad hoc workshops, a context where PEG and C40 often meet and negotiate joint initiatives such as those inspired by Arup's UrbanLife project. Likewise, while global cities' participation in international fora remains limited by their positioning vis-à-vis central governments, the C40's management approach recalls

to some extent the dynamics of several international business councils in that it gathers resourceful peers in a non-binding, incentive-based, policy network. Where the Group has perhaps been performing better than PEG is on the front of allowing for a truly ‘global’ rendition of climate concerns: if, as Jennifer Clapp (1998) pointed out, the problem with much PEG is in the lack of representativeness when it comes to developing nations, the C40 has thus far recognized much ‘voicing’ capacity in metropolises from these countries. São Paulo, above all, has had a growing impact on the Group’s space of engagement, both through its centrality to some of Arup’s projects as well as in representing Latin American interests at the C40 table, not least by hosting the 2011 biennial summit; other developing cities such as Caracas, Bogota or Jakarta also have plenty of opportunities for mutual exchanges with developed ‘giants’ such as New York. Nonetheless, this inclusiveness has remained dependent on the dominance of the global city rhetoric and the climate change discourses that have promoted elements of continuity amongst all network participants.

City diplomacy and global governance: some further connections

What power-geometries underpin this structuration?

The case of the Climate Leadership Group confirms that global cities have a direct capacity to change the geography of global governance by producing new governing alignments, and thus new power-geometries. Yet, what are the

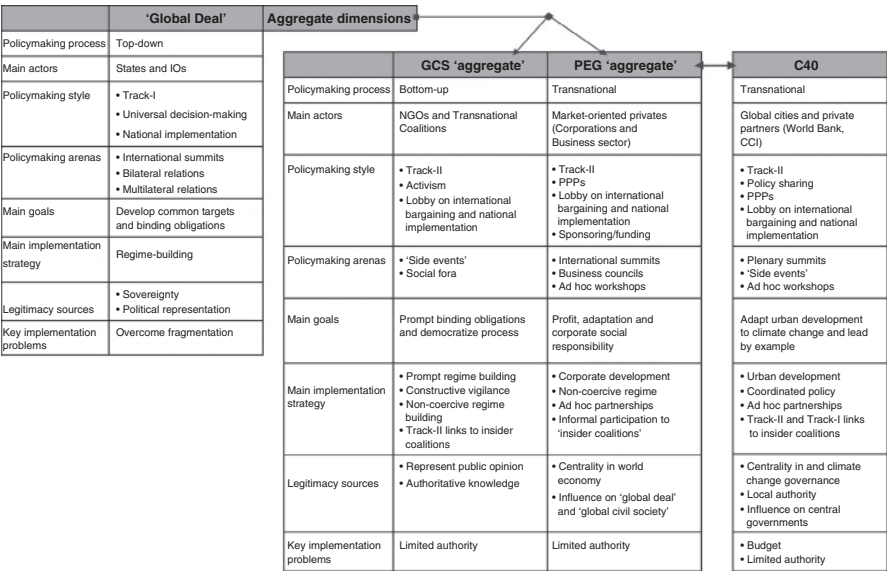


Figure 7.1 Comparing the C40's structure with both aggregate dimensions

sources of this influence, and who controls them? The development of the C40 as a transnational policy network has been based on the catalytic agency of a few core global cities such as New York or Toronto. These have, since the early days of the Group, pushed for a clear problematization of the centrality of global cities in environmental politics. In this sense, global cities have sought to position themselves as obligatory passage points for effective climate governance, while some cities in particular within this grouping have taken up increasingly mediatory roles within the network itself. If these have represented the main mediators of this process, the 'chief' negotiating positioning has generally been conducted by the Group's chair, and with particular proactiveness by the mayors of London and New York. Key allies enrolled as intermediaries in the network have been the growing number of private partners to the C40 initiative, such as Arup or the numerous companies involved in the workshops. Initially enrolled as intermediary, the Clinton Foundation's Climate Change Initiative, has since developed an increasingly mediatory role in the regular dealings of the C40. The CCI has, albeit quite subtly, progressively established itself as the C40's prime contact point with multinational corporations and the private sector. The Group has certainly sought alternatives to the CCI's agency, such as the linkage with the World Bank, but the shape and scalar reach of the network is today still very much dependent on the Foundation, which has played a key role in vetting these processes since the establishment of a joint secretariat in January 2011. As such, the C40 network has displayed two major hierarchical tendencies: first, that of core global cities (e.g. New York, London, Toronto or Los Angeles) to occupy a more central positioning than those peripheral members (such as Cairo, Lima, Karachi or Warsaw) that, while participating in *most* workshops and summits, have a limited imprint on the network's main organization. Second, a push towards hierarchization can also be recognized in the implicit membership divide that puts the Group's cities, *global* cities, in a more predominant position than other 'ordinary' metropolises neither participating in, nor affiliated with, the network's mobilization. As noted above, while the first tendency is somewhat attenuated by the emergence of non-Western, and in particular Asian centres such as Tokyo, Seoul and Hong Kong, as well as the possibilities for affiliate cities (such as Curitiba and Ho Chi Minh City) to play some active role in the workshop settings, the latter trend seems at the moment to remain fairly uncontested.

As such, the Group's network remains a fairly malleable structure. This, in turn, means that its capacity to mobilize the aggregate pool of these cities' resources is, at times quite weak, and that the organization itself is particularly subject to a multitude of urban agendas affecting the direction of workshops, biennial summits and implementation practices. This question is all the more complicated by the intertwining of C40 dealings with the CCI, which pushes for a market-friendly (if not 'market-oriented') approach to governance due to its 'mission' of applying the Foundation's business-oriented approach to the fight against climate change in practical, measurable, and

significant ways'.²⁴ The coordination of so many diverse interests has thus far been centred on a 'common gain' mentality that has to date been presented with few objections either from within or without C40 circles. Yet, this means in practice that the C40 approach to climate change, already representative of an aggregate of many local governments' needs, is also extending to encompass business and NGO agendas that see a great deal of benefit in a largely neoliberal approach to environmental challenges – a trend that neither tighter ties to Arup nor privileged access to the World Bank are likely to displace.

What influence do global cities have on global governance?

As the development of city-based coalitions like the C40 can demonstrate, these metropolises are more and more present in global environmental policymaking processes and major sources of climate agency beyond international institutions.²⁵ Nonetheless, the C40 is stepping beyond this transnational agency, as it develops into a *group agent*.

To this extent, it might be convenient to consider a somewhat analogous reflection developed by Joseph Jupille and James Caporaso (1998) when considering the external role of the EU. For these authors, there are four essential components that can be identified as 'criteria of actorness' in world politics: (1) *recognition*, or the 'acceptance of and the interaction with the entity by others'; (2) *authority*, which the authors pair with legal competence; (3) *autonomy*, understood as 'institutional distinctiveness from other actors'; and (4) *cohesion*, which is seen as the capacity to 'formulate and articulate internally consistent policy preferences' (Jupille and Caporaso 1998: 214). The C40 as a transnational organization is, in fact, progressively capable of satisfying these criteria. Let me briefly consider these four in relation to the supervenience of the C40 vis-à-vis its member cities, before moving on to some preliminary conclusions:

- (1) First, in terms of *recognition*, the C40's cross-cutting interaction with multiple layers of governance has shown a growing acceptance of this entity by other international actors and audiences. If this was originally confined to some limited acknowledgments (with the UNFCCC for example) and loose ties with the Clinton Foundation and other municipal networks like ICLEI, the Group is now increasingly appreciated. The large number of ESCOs interested in the C40's climate actions, and the strengthening of ties with firms like Arup, constitute good examples of this, but it is perhaps in the formalization of privileged access to the World Bank, a prime international actor, and the expanding volume of media attention the Group receives, that the C40 can claim mounting degrees of recognition.
- (2) Second, for what concerns *authority*, the Group has been relying not solely on the residual powers of its members' 'city directors', but rather increasingly on the pooled resources their cities can potentially network

through the C40, thus deriving authority from the powers of association of these actors' governance from the middle. This is further enhanced by an additional claim to competence in world politics that the Group has been advertising loudly since 2005: the C40, representing the largest and most globalized cities in the world, can gather a unique complex of expertise and implementation powers (through its city directors) when it comes to climate action and environmental governance.

- (3) Third, in terms of *autonomy*, the newest organizational strategy set out in Hong Kong and São Paulo has taken a series of solid steps towards institutional distinctiveness and thus capacity for international action independent from other actors. Echoed in the C40 chairs' constant rhetoric on global cities' capacity to act in spite of the state-centric quandaries of world politics, the Group has therefore sought to draw increasingly straightforward lines between its role and both 'global deal' and GCS structures. This, however, has been dependent on a hybridization process with privates and the business sector. Perhaps best embodied by the CCI-C40 merger, this evolution has for instance seen the recent establishment of a substantial organizational budget and personnel, formalized implementation linkages (as with the World Bank) and extensive internal review (as with Arup's 2011 report), but at the expense of mutating the nature of its structure from municipal coalition to 'hybrid' transnational policy network.
- (4) Finally, the C40's biggest challenges are found in the criterion of *cohesion*, if we understand this as a capacity to formulate and articulate internally consistent policies. Given the multitude of agendas, actors and cross-cutting linkages, the Group's structure remains somewhat weak in terms of elaborating and, most evidently, implementing C40-wide initiatives. The informality of decision-making and policy-making mechanisms, coupled with internal hierarchies, makes this dimension of international actorness fairly weak. Yet, the Group has progressively articulated a widely-accepted message on the centrality of global cities in environmental governance which, in turn, is providing some cross-cutting coherence to the Group's mission, at least amongst member and observer cities.

In sum, the C40 therefore showcases not solely the capacity of global cities to 'act' collectively across boundaries, but also their pooled influence in creating a transnational structure which can also acquire international agency. As I noted in Chapter 4, an assemblage of actors, cities in this case, emerges as a (corporate) group agent when the former delegate some of their governing functions to the latter, which becomes an agent of their capacity to influence the state of affairs – a well-known process when it comes to the relation between domestic and foreign politics, but that can equally be applied to the majority of political entities such as cities, corporate actors or NGOs. Yet, the aggregation function at work in this instance in the C40 is, to date, almost

exclusively 'inexplicit' with little clarity on voting mechanisms and much 'top-down' direction by the key leaders in the group such as London or New York. This presents some crucial problems in terms of legitimacy for the Group's climate and metropolitan governance. Brought about by the concurrent pluralization, liberalization and employment for governing purposes of non-governmental techniques like strategic planning, the depoliticization of frames for policymaking presents some worrying signs.

While part of the C40's legitimacy derives from the legal authority of its local governments, a feature that no PEG actor can showcase, there remain no political responsibility mechanisms within the C40, which in turn results in a lack of accountability for the network's political dealings and technical implementation strategies. Symptomatic is the fact that the secretariat composition is known only to working partners, with no indications on it in either official documents or the network's website. So, for instance, when we confront the C40's structure with Karin Bäckstrand's tripartite notion of 'climate governance accountability', which evaluates the accountability record in climate partnerships in terms of 'transparency', 'monitoring mechanisms' and 'representation of stakeholders', the C40 scores particularly poorly in each determinant (Bäckstrand 2008). Low levels of transparency are predominantly caused by the decentralized nature of the Group's workings, the technical nature of the subjects covered, and the occasional but not well-institutionalized 'C40 news' reporting. On monitoring, apart from the climate performance of the C40 cities, the network also demonstrates limitations. Certainly, the municipal representatives heading the C40 have some degree of direct accountability to their local electorates, but their transnational initiatives have a much wider impact than these, thus requiring more formal channels for the wider public to access the dynamics of this space of engagement. In this sense, the primary accountability of the Group is an hybrid of reputational and market mechanism (Bäckstrand 2008: 81). Peer pressure plays some role in both internal (amongst member cities) and external (in relation to other city networks) performance but no formally-institutionalized system exists to determine, for example, decision-making prerogatives or common positions, which are consequently left to the ad hoc and 'hallway diplomacy' (Leguey-Feilleux 2009: 105) contexts of the summits that are easily hijacked by the key C40 mediators.²⁶ At a preliminary inquiry, for instance, almost none of the member city officials involved in recent C40 events and interviewed for this research were clearly aware of the leadership bidding mechanisms or the chairpersonship voting procedures, with the notable exception of London representatives.²⁷

For the broader geography of world politics, this implies that these cities are partaking in dispersing and re-aggregating control, authority and more in general political influence beyond the vertical hierarchy of the twentieth-century state-centric system. Likewise, this confirms that this latter constitutes the skeleton, but not the entire body, of the geography of global governance. Likewise, this means that this re-spatialization happens, at the same time, on

a multiplicity of layers. First, these networking processes are recasting the geographical organization of localized politics such as those of urban planning, which become ‘glocalized’ through a series of transnational engagements. Second, they are also prompting the evolution of ‘localized’ (or, better, ‘scalarly’ circumscribed) politics within novel scales of world politics such as the space of engagement of the C40 network. Third, as this structure develops, further engagements are forged not solely by cities, but by a collective actor capable of representing them. Yet, this is not a process free from constraints. The networked unfolding of the C40 demonstrates that global cities have also a core role in the continuation of established governing rationalities, which in turn continue some of the underlying neoliberal logics of contemporary global governance and, as I will reiterate in the next chapter, ultimately limit the revolutionary potential they have to redefine the geography of global governance.

Part III

A progressive urban agenda for IR

8 Reassembling the global city's influence

Why do global cities matter? Reassembling the study

C40 chairman and New York mayor Michael Bloomberg spared no praises as he inaugurated the fourth biennial summit of the Climate Leadership Group in May 2011: 'we own tremendous influence', he reminded a vast audience of metropolitan officers and media representatives, 'what our cities do individually and in unison increasingly sets the agenda for people everywhere'.¹ Rhetoric aside, Bloomberg's statement is not overly off the map. Ultimately, the major lesson that can be found in the network processes considered here is that, as the June 2011 Arup Baseline report released at the C40 summit underlined, 'cities act' and have substantial powers in a whole range of crucial realms of global governance.² Ranging from direct ownership and operation of key services such as water and energy supply, to the capacity to set policy orientations and implementation parameters, and expanding into the realm of transnational and diplomatic initiatives, the global cities of the C40 have an influential position in the evolution of environmental (if not global) governance and a direct impact on millions of city dwellers worldwide. This is the case whether we consider the actant dimension of global city agency, or its more direct 'group agent' actor dimension in world politics. As I have illustrated thus far, these are nothing but two different perspectives on global cities. The potential emergence of the C40 itself as a group agent emergent on the agency of global cities certainly reinforces this multiscalar consideration. However, this agency presents us with a vast array of patterns of influence: dynamics of transnationalization, 'glocalization' and public-private hybridization become evident once the assemblages of (and among) the metropolitan scale of these cities are unpacked. What can we make of all of this complexity in view of global governance and diplomacy more in general?

My task thus far has therefore been one of deconstructing, mapping and coding the structuration processes underpinning the global city's relevance in world affairs. As such, I have demonstrated how these metropolises can be considered as both *actants* that have an 'actively passive' impact on the geographies of global governance as well as *actors* that can purposefully develop networked responses to engage in world political problems such as climate

change. Likewise, assemblages *of* cities can also showcase some of these qualities, as the C40 has progressively been developing not solely as an aggregate of global cities (and thus an actant in world affairs) but also as a *group agent* capable of acting on their behalf. Overall, what I have illustrated in the book thus far is a substantial amount of agency originating in, as well as from, global cities, which cannot in turn be reduced to mere 'international' and 'domestic' politics. This has painted a multiscalar picture of global governance that goes far deeper than the generally flat atlases of IR analyses. So, where to now?

The core lesson that should be drawn from this investigation is, I believe, the aggregate of all of these phenomena. The production of global city-inspired policymaking structures impacts global governance in that it charts new political geographies for collective action. Yet, as the empirical chapters have proven, there remain some important rational continuities, and in particular those of neoliberalism as a mode of governance and as a political ideology, which global cities seem not to deny, if not uphold, while recasting these geographies. If I have separated the various dimensions of global city agency for analytical purposes, and consequently reached parallel conclusions on the global political influence(s) of both metropolises as actants or group agents, and cities *as* assemblages and assemblages *of* cities, all of these dynamics happen in reality together at the same time. I therefore attempt to 'reassemble' (in classic ANT style) this complex bundle of processes in order to draw some conclusions on the relevance of global cities for global governance – both theory and praxis.

The impact of global cities on global governance

'Sub-politicizing' world politics

To begin with, it is necessary to start here by responding to the first query that set up the direction of this research: in light of the evidence gathered by unpacking both actant and group agent dimensions, what is then the influence of global cities on global governance?

What is perhaps the largest implication of global city agency as carried out globally is that parts of global governance are re-spatialized as policymaking dynamics are uprooted and recast beyond the 'global deal' skeleton of world politics. Global cities have a key stake in creating alternative paths for international policymaking. German sociologist Ulrich Beck (1997a) labelled this dynamic 'sub-politicization' as shorthand for 'sub-system politicization' – a structural displacement of the locus of political agency in contexts other than those institutionalized in traditional practice. This process implies the shift of political proceedings and dealings through different (sub-systemic) structures such as those of municipal government, as well as the production of novel structures altogether, as in the cross-boundary connections of the Climate Leadership Group. In this case, climate policymaking has for example been

partly moved to cities from the 'global deal' alignments of the UN to cross-municipal initiatives like the Building Retrofit programme. Likewise the implementation of climate responses has also seen a sub-politicization in that it has been unfolding through the hybrid organization of the CCI's procurement process or the baseline data sharing exercise coordinated via Arup in 2011. Besides, a similar argument can also be made of the 'glocalization' of city governance into the multilevel linkages that uphold SUP in London where metropolitan management is no longer synonymous with local government only. Actors like the London Business Board regularly interact in more or less formalized governance structures beyond the constitutionally-sanctioned avenues for municipal engagement.

In general, the geopolitical consequences of these sub-politicization processes are to be found in the de-contextualization of decision-making. By 'changing the rules and boundaries of the political' into alternative geographical alignments, policymaking 'becomes more open and susceptible to new linkages, as well as capable of being negotiated and reshaped' (Beck 1999: 40). This is evident, for instance, in the partial re-spatialization of the global climate policy from the security concerns of international diplomacy to the technical domains of planning and municipal cooperation of the C40. The rise of multiscale structures, the crystallization of pluralist arrangements and the privatization of governance, all result in an enlargement of traditional political processes rather than in their disappearance. The reorganization of the political spaces of our epoch questions the foundations and hierarchical prerogatives of the Westphalian system, as the emergence of sub-politics 'stresses the significance of sources of power outside the political system in a differentiated modern society' (Holzer and Sørensen 2003) – and thus implicitly of network power beyond sovereign control. While remaining capable of exerting some degree of sovereign prerogative through their core governmental institutions, such as the GLA in London, global cities have progressively embraced the productivity of networked and multiscale forms of influence. In particular, these metropolises confirm that 'the means to success in world politics' (Nye 2004) are to be found in 'soft' approaches and cross-cutting 'catalytic' (Hocking 1999a) forms of engagement. This governance redefinition, however, results in the 'decoupling of politics from government' and in the emergence of political engagements in areas beyond those traditionally 'prescribed' for them, such as parliaments, unions and electoral proceedings (Beck 1997b: 98). Consequently, this process implies the emergence of policy (and thus political) connections outside of the established and habitual governmental structures of national decision-making, which in geographical terms equates to a rescaling of control and power-geometries at a multitude of societal levels. The C40 becomes an arena for hybrid and transnational connections to govern the production of spaces (social and physical) not only at the urban level but across metropolitan borders and state boundaries.

This scalar re-spatialization has, in terms of global governance, a two-fold consequence. When considered in relation to the *international* (i.e. the realm

of 'politics among nations'), the sub-politicization of global issues at the urban and transnational scales produces an alternative geography of politics based on connections cutting across the various elements of the Westphalian skeleton. Yet, contrary to what much of the paradiplomacy and global governance literatures often assume, the policymaking networks of strategic urban planning and city diplomacy do not deny the state-centric links of international politics. In fact, it should not be forgotten here that global cities also have some key governmental qualities: some of the key elements composing the aggregation functions of both planning and city diplomacy, such as the GLA, are government entities, and the processes of transnational networking catalysing both strategic responses to globalization in SUP, or climate action in the C40, have allowed government representatives (Bloomberg, Johnson, Livingstone and the like) to play a key role in hybridized alignments. Global cities, in this sense, cannot be easily pigeonholed as components of the 'aggregate' dimension and purely 'global civil society' actors. Likewise, central governments and international structures remain important components of the networked unfolding of urban politics both within the localized context of London, where the UK Parliament's sanctioning of the GLA's powers have been fundamental in enrolling allies to the mayor's strategic planning, as much as in the globalizing engagements of the C40, where connections with 'global deal' realms has even been mirrored in some of the Group's working procedures.

To this extent, while the hierarchical system of international relations is no longer the only game in town, its global scalar structure remains a fundamental skeleton *within* the broader engagements of global governance. Alternative structures to such a framework are therefore often being engendered *in relation* to states. Even in an extremely fragmented context such as that of world politics, the role of some sub-governmental entities like the GLA has perpetrated a certain presence of national executives. This is because the geography within which world politics take place allows for change without annihilation and adaptation as well as evolution into new forms. In this sense, as shrewdly pointed out by Stephen Krasner (1999: 237), the system in which world politics take place 'is not a game of chess: constitutive rules never exclude alternatives'. On the contrary, political structures continuously overlap to form a complex texture of institutions that interrelate, alter and conflict with each other endlessly. The architecture of this political system is often flexible and capable of accommodating metamorphoses as well as additional participants. True, nation-states might 'no longer be the only problem-solving units' (Mathews 1997: 51) in this context, as cross-national networks are created, for example, between cities. Still, the rise (or return, in the case of cities) of alternative forms of political organization does not necessarily imply a complete hand-over of all governmental functions.

Rather than replacing central governments, city-centric linkages *displace* the predominance of nation states with more fluid, city-oriented and cross-cutting political connections where state elements are but one of a multitude

of allies to such an assemblage. This happens because, on the one hand, cities remain tied to states and the international arena as they are often at least partly constituent of it: governmental layers such as the GLA or Whitehall are key actors in the assemblage we identify as 'city'. On the other hand, cities are limited in their room for manoeuvre both within and beyond the urban scale as wider and pervasive structures created (or deeply influenced) by international politics define much of the geography of global governance, like in the case of the UNFCCC process for the C40 or the still predominant role of states in the dynamics of the global economy that limits both SUP and city diplomacy. The state as a locus of government is but one of the many ambits where humans interact politically, and thus just one type of the several political institutions that interact in such an environment. Its sovereign prerogatives are being 'rearticulated and reterritorialized in relation to both sub- and supra-state scales' (Brenner 1998: 3) and state-like institutions are fast emerging as spaces of dependence at multiple scales.

However, when we consider the ramifications of such an alternative context for politics in relation not solely to traditional state-centric structures, but to *global governance* more in general, the sub-politicization sketched above points us toward a mounting networked complexity in the broader domain of world politics. In fact, if the traditional state-centric structures of twentieth-century politics remain significant drivers in the dynamics of governance, as with the UNFCCC or the local governmental authorities noted above, there persists a distinctive shift in the locus of agency and the scalar arrangement of policymaking structures. As the cases of the C40 and SUP illustrate, these assemblages of political actors extend across scales: in London, for instance, the stakeholders that combine to produce the strategic metropolitan orientation are representative of a plethora of scalar configurations ranging from more traditional local (GLA) and state (Whitehall) bases to transnational and inherently multiscalar (like the London Business Board) ones.

Governing, in this view, is not a prerogative of states alone but rather a relational feature of social organization and political connections across the multiple layers of the geography of global affairs. Certainly, in the midst of these scalar redefinition processes, sovereignty has been an object of contestation and redefinition as more and more political institutions at all levels claim governing prerogatives on disparate matters. This results from a mutually-reinforcing process: as the politics of scale in global governance are becoming increasingly crowded, strategic policymaking is a necessary instrument to network diverse elements of this political scenario; this, in turn, calls for the creation of new and 'hybrid' spaces of engagement that further increase the possibility for dis-aggregation and re-aggregation beyond traditional politics. This is a series of avenues clearly opened in both SUP and C40 cases, which have therefore prompted an even greater importance for 'catalytic' practices of governance based on network and horizontal political engagements. For example, in the city diplomacy of the C40, cities have established a transnational scale of political engagement capable of

assembling their governing resources with those of other international actors like the World Bank. Hence, global cities can be rightfully identified as able to partake in the definition of new and alternative policymaking structures to the traditional Westphalian bases of global governance.

Conversely, this is reflected in a change in the geography of world politics, which is seeing the rise of alternative (sub-political) governing arrangements based on innovative and hybrid (i.e. public-private) technologies, which emerge as assemblages in their own right. Transnational networks, for example, become contexts of engagement for cross-boundary city-to-city interaction, or a 'scalar trampoline' (McNeill 2001: 349) for global cities to reach other scales beyond state and locality, as well as to negotiate with authorities and within spatial confines far beyond their immediate geographical reach. The modalities of globalization mastered by these metropolises (ICTs and mobility hubs *in primis*) therefore allow for 'scale jumping' and the creation of new connections beyond the classic pecking orders of international relations.³ In this sense, as Sassen (2007a: 208) underlined, an important feature of the 'multiscalar politics' of the present global governance milieu is that the local 'is not confined to moving through a set of nested scales from the local to the national to the international, but can directly access other local actors whether in the same country or across borders', thus often 'exiting or avoiding hierarchies of scale' and thus 'globalizing' their presence. This means that 'local' actors such as cities are no longer forced to go through their central governments to reach out to the international, and vice-versa, that 'outsiders' like NGOs and the business community can often easily access them with little impediment and control by the state they are juridically 'nested' within. Yet, could we then argue that these 'city-centric' structures equate to an absolute revolution in the global processes of world politics?

A contingent sub-politicization

Arguably, the summary of the C40's transnational impact on global environmental politics, as well as the description of London's 'glocalizing' strategic urban planning structures, depicts a compelling image of multiscalar transformation and cross-cutting respatializations in world politics. Yet, as I have reiterated throughout the book, one might incur the same 'inattentional' mistakes that much of international studies has to date run into if the result of this inquiry on the influence of the global city was to stop at a series of considerations of their transformative capacity. In this sense, Colin Wight (2001: 81) has justly underlined how 'change' has tended to become the 'leitmotif of the new millennium' whose pervasive narratives are 'apt to ignore what has not changed'. This is particularly true of descriptions that deal with non-traditional forms of agency, such as that of advocacy groups or corporations, which seem to bring about a whole new conformation of world politics compared to that of some often-distant past. However, as Wight (2001: 89) admonishes us, if in social relations 'agency' is constitutive of 'structure' (and

vice-versa), it would be particularly misleading to equate agency to change only, and to assume that change is all that agency represents, 'for just as change is constitutive of the social world, so is continuity'. Agency does not happen in a vacuum and it is constrained by, as well as carrier of, elements of continuity that, in turn, provide some of the stability that characterizes structures. Global cities are of course not free from this consideration: their 'global' agency, whether in its actant or actor dimension, is path-dependent, historically contingent and geographically situated – all features that make it a driver of continuity as much as of change. Global cities remain, unavoidably, embedded in the larger scalar geographies of world politics. Since they constitute part of global governance, the networks I have illustrated thus far also yield some degree of continuity in its geography. This is because, as I have noted in Chapter 4, the agency that cities have in both their actant and group agent capacities cannot be separated from the structures that constitute world politics, but rather it needs to be interpreted as a dimension of global governance itself. As such, global cities have a particular role not solely in the production of new governing alignments and alternative scalar configurations, but also in (at least partly) perpetrating the progression of the system as a whole.

To this extent, the re-spatialization of global governance that I have illustrated above does not necessarily lead to a 'brand new' world as it contains elements of structural continuity. London's glocalization, for instance, emerged from the fragmentation of the 1980s and 1990s through transnational networkings intertwined with the geographical limitations of Greater London and pinpointed on the successive evolution of the GLA. The city diplomacy of (and in) the C40, on the other hand, is inextricably linked to the stalemates of the 'global deal' process, underpinned by the dynamics of global markets and civil society, and limited in its unfolding to a specific network of core worldwide centres of the present world-system. Most importantly, while promoting the evolution of innovative governance structures, global cities showcase a widespread commonality in that they uphold the neoliberal dominance that Steven Bernstein (2002) and Neil Brenner, Jamie Peck and Nick Theodore (2010) have identified as playing a core role in, respectively, environmental and urban politics. This logical continuity can for example be traced in the rhetoric of 'global cities' common to both C40 and SUP arenas, as well as in the means that uphold their network powers. These, in turn, push towards the centrality of global markets, or piggyback on broader processes of fragmentation and 'common gain' mentalities, which therefore sustain the glocalization and transnationalization of these global cities. If we confront, for instance, the six elements of Bernstein's neoliberal norm-complex that dominates in climate governance, the C40 and SUP both show relevant continuities with this consensus of liberal environmentalism.

Hence the rescaling of policymaking paths beyond the state allows the explosion of the neoliberal governmental rationality across political spheres beyond its traditional confines. Yet, this is not just a spontaneous shift. The

growing dominance of neoliberal rationalities in urban policymaking is also engendered by structural constraints themselves. Common structural drivers of continuity can be found in both the analysis of world politics within and among scales. On the one hand, the perceived 'retreat of the state' (Strange 1996) in terms of welfare functions and control over everyday dynamics of social life, more and more intertwined with complex processes beyond the 'casing' of the nation-state, has allowed for a potential (although often not necessarily realized) political vacuum. This, in turn has been promptly filled by various alternative governing arrangements of disparate hybrid natures, facilitating the coagulation of *governmental* entities with non-political, private or sub-political entities. This is the case, for example, of the semi-formal London Business Board's connections within the GLA's strategic coordination of planning prerogatives, as well as of the extension of the C40 partnership with the World Bank as this latter sought to deepen its effectiveness in a context where governments might not be as pervasive as cities themselves. On the other hand, this restructuring of politics at several levels of global governance has opened an even more cross-cutting window of opportunity for the development of a 'business privilege' (Thornley et al. 2005: 1947) in the policymaking arrangements that control the everyday unfolding of social relations not solely at the urban scale, but in world affairs more in general. This is reflected, for instance, in the growing salience of private elements in the C40 network, now largely dependent on the CCI's resource pooling capacity and Arup's baseline reporting, which form core instruments for the Group's policymaking.

In particular, the role played by resource limitations, especially in terms of budgetary constraints to the local level of policymaking, remains a crucial one as it perpetuates the need to engage the economic dimension of global affairs beyond the scalar allocations of international politics. In London, GLA and boroughs have progressively interlinked their planning visions (and, arguably, fortunes) to the necessity of globalizing their urban development approaches to attract and sustain global market flows, which in turn become even more central in the global city's assemblage – a trend that is certainly apparent in London and much of the C40 too. As such, the 'change' in the object of policy is merely superficial, as this is a necessary shift in order to conform to broader underpinnings of a constrictive system such as that superimposed by the global economy on global cities' room for manoeuvre. This is, however, not just a strategic urban planning concern: even when considered as actors in world politics, global cities show a substantial drive towards a 'marketization' of their international agency. In this sense, as Okereke et al. (2009) also argued, 'the general preference for market mechanisms' such as procurement, emissions trading, voluntary baseline coordination or best practices exchanges, in contrast with more managerial and governmental (top-down) methods, as the means of tackling climate change 'could very well be regarded as evidence of the dominance of a particular rationality of government and social order'. Hence, perhaps even more

than their sovereign limitations, resource scarcity and need for more extensive financing have been pushing global cities toward transnational networking and capital pooling, which have allowed them to set up public-private hybridizations like the CCI procurement scheme, which in turn allow these metropolises to overcome such contingencies.

Conversely, this rational continuity promotes a twin process: on the one hand, wary of the impediments and dominance of a mostly neoliberal global governance, global cities shift the locus, rhetoric and object of global political agency towards alternative (urban and transnational) scales in order to bypass such structural constraints. On the other hand, equally conscious of the possibilities that a neoliberal system allows for 'individual' agency, these metropolises exert networked influence and gain room for (political) manoeuvre via planning and market instruments which in turn perpetuate the centrality of economic and technical dimensions of the system itself. These two dynamics, if considered jointly, remind us that the positioning of global cities in global governance is inherently the result of a structuration between the two.

Structuration of a global influence: a summary

How does sub-politicization influence global governance?

Global cities such as those of the C40, in their actor or actant capacity, promote the development of new governing structures that allow them to foster transformative dynamics in the alignments of world politics. To understand how this re-spatialization blazes a trail of change for the geopolitical organization of global governance it might be useful to recall here William Sewell's five axioms of structural transformation that can systematize the analysis of 'change' in social relations from a structurationist perspective. This analytical move can shed light on how the development of urban-centric structures affects world politics and how these do not remain confined to the urban scale. As described in Chapter 4, this structurationist understanding of change outlines the conditions of interaction between agency and structure that generate and allow for variation in the structure of social (and *political*, in particular, in my case) relations. According to Sewell (1992), structural change is possible because structures are multiple, their constituent 'schemas' (or rules) are transposable, and the resources that underpin them are unpredictably accumulated and polysemic.⁴ Change is embedded in the interconnectivity amongst the five 'pieces' of this set of transformative conditions: because structures are not unique but replicated across time and space, and their components (schemas and resources) can be transferred, accumulated and reinterpreted into new, or at least different, compositions that in turn impact the original structure, change can occur in social relations. As noted before, change here is to be understood as an emergent effect of the location of agency as part of the structure of social relations, not as an entity 'distinct' from it. In my cases, the agency (and thus influence) of global cities occurs as

part of global governance in that it produces governing structures such as strategic planning alignments and transnational municipal networks within the wider geographies of world politics. This 'inner' positioning of global cities in relation to global governance, as sketched in Chapter 2, allows these metropolises to have direct influence on the structures of world politics and, as I will illustrate below, at the same time remain contingent on the broader political alignments of global governance. In Chapters 5 and 6, since the agency of global cities took place within the geography of global governance, their capacity to recast the confines of the latter resulted from their effectiveness in restructuring its assemblages – an influence I summarize here through Sewell's five axioms.

Multiplicity of structures

To begin with, global cities partake in the production of alternative policy-making structures to the hierarchical disposition of the Westphalian system, and thus prompt the multiplication of structures in global governance. This is true whether we consider the actant or actor dimension of their agency. In the former, strategic urban planning, and thus the politics networked around it, co-exist in these metropolises with other structural determinants of urban politics which range from national (or federal) institutions, to state and even lower local political architectures, while it is also quite arguably embedded in wider international and possibly global frameworks. Hence, for instance, London is affected by the national government's budgetary framework, but has also to cope with the complex set of European Union directives that emanate from Brussels. Such structures are different from the SUP networks described here because they rely on diverse political legitimizations (e.g. Whitehall and the broader UK electorate) as well as different scalar foci, and unravel contemporaneously with those of strategic planning, thus making this latter coexist with sub-urban, national, regional and even international politics.

This multiplication process is equally identifiable in the transnational and international spheres where the politics 'among scales' undertaken by global cities takes place. In this sense both dynamics sketched in Chapters 5 and 6 point towards the expanding complexity that pushes from the centrality of government hierarchies to the pervasiveness of governance alignments. This has seen the creation of some ad hoc structures for the management of such 'hybrid' scenarios. This is for instance the case in the 'central' dimension of the mayor of London's relations with Londoners as based on a close planning partnership with the London Business Board, or the creation of a public-private management group in the C40 by merging CCI and C40 secretariat personnel into a single entity. Moreover, the networked evolution of the Group contributes to the existence of a multiplicity of governing structures surrounding the international scale of global governance. City-to-city cooperation as it has been developing through the C40, in fact, provides an

alternative governing technology to that of the predominant 'global deal' international paradigm, and thus partakes in both civil society and private environmental governance approaches in prompting a variety of distinct political approaches existing at (and across) different governance scales and operating with different modalities, while also not simply representing a type of these two approaches, but an alternative in itself.⁵

Transposability of schemas

Nonetheless, the agency of global cities in global governance is not limited to the multiplication of structures: metropolises also have a core role in promoting the transfer of procedures and techniques, which in turn prompts change as they apply these 'schemas' to a range of cases outside of the domains in which they were originally conceived. In the politics within the urban scale, this transposability unfolds through the variegated networks that sustain strategic urban planning. London's SUP processes are in fact the result of a hybridization of sub-national centralization of planning powers, and the progressive 'flattening' of governance processes to a more horizontal process amongst key London stakeholders – a designation that no longer encompasses local residents only. In order to overcome a very similar problem such as that of globalizing the economic base of these metropolises, SUP processes have adapted a technical approach such as that of urban planning, originally in the hands of urbanists alone, and opened its governing rationale to a multitude of actors. If this has meant a transfer of the locus of agency in SUP from government to governance arrangements, the application of technical directions has therefore been devised not solely for the sake of urban development, but for the broader evolution of the metropolis as hub of global flows. Moreover, in London SUP has also moved (by decree) to a metropolitan layer of government that has very different priorities to those of Whitehall and the boroughs.

In this shift, both cities have experienced how the transposability of schemas and resources can happen not solely within the same spatial confines, but also among scales. As such, planning and governing practices also reverberate across entities such as the C40, which facilitate the application of generalized governing knowledge not necessarily developed within the confines of the network itself to *urban* problems that such schemas might have not originally been devised for. This allows global cities to transfer governance approaches from civil society, PEG and 'global deal' contexts and apply them to solve a similarly shaped issue (climate change), reinterpreted through different (metropolitan) lenses, thus prompting diversity and innovation by extending governing practices to new realms which in turn reshape their meaning and application procedures. For instance, the practice of procurement has been taken on board relatively quickly by the Group and is playing a key role in activating its members' connections with the private sector, albeit this financing scheme would originally be run not for governmental entities but rather for private-to-private economic interaction *within* the confines of governmental

arrangements. Likewise, some of the language (and, more broadly, behaviour) of international politics has 'entered' the city-based realm of the C40, producing some mimicking of these manners by actors that have very different prerogatives, political horizons and legitimate bases for global action. In addition, it is also to be noted here that the C40 has equally drawn from other urban-based networks, such as ICLEI, borrowing both some rhetoric and some working procedures originally intended for cities at large that have in turn been applied to questions arising from global city problems in particular, which might however be of very different nature due to the extreme interconnectedness of the latter as opposed to less globally-integrated cases.

Unpredictability of resource accumulation

Both multiplicity and transposability features are, in turn, facilitating resource accumulation not just in a material but also a social sense. Within the urban scale, the unpredictable results of the globalizing engagement in London's SUP have been coupled with an expanding polysemy of the resources these planning processes have been linking.⁶ The extensive and multiscalar network unravelling through these SUP dynamics thus illustrates how the enactment of schemas and the mobilization of resources can have reverberations that might impact those layers that connected them in the first place. For instance, the positioning of the GLA as a hinge of a new network devised to respond to the city's fragmentation has resulted in an increasingly central role for the mayor of London who, right from the start, clashed with Whitehall and played an increasing part in defining what London planning can and cannot do – a role further reinforced, perhaps paradoxically, by the advent of a Conservative mayor and a Conservative-led national government. Both Johnson and Livingstone have, quite arguably, changed the dynamics of British politics within London, if not the UK.

At the transnational level, the catalytic and hybridized growth of the C40 network has brought about a series of challenges that were certainly not forecast at the beginning. For example, the application of PEG approaches to the Group's workings has pushed for an exponential expansion in the volume of public-private partnerships and hybrid planning schemes which, consequentially, have led to a greater bearing of business interests onto the Group's mobilization. This is, of course, well represented by the rise of the CCI to a quasi-mediator status. Similarly, the accumulation and development of traditional political technologies such as those of multilateral coordination, best embodied in the C40's political track, have pushed leadership challenges to the fore in the present evolution of the network's overall organization.

Polysemy of resources

However, this pooling of resources also pushes towards the multiple application of programmes and approaches that can be inventively drawn, and not

just transposed, from such connections. For example, it should be noted how SUP instruments, applied to these globalizing metropolis cases, have acquired novel meaning. This polysemy (i.e. multiplicity of meanings), driven by the *political* limitations of the GLA, has been exponentially augmented by the intersection of other layers of government (e.g. the Corporation of London) as well as private and quango actors (e.g. the London Business Board). The key result, in both cities, is that planning has become an instrument of politics and a technology of governing for those in charge of SUP. The London Plan has acquired, along with its more technical features, both the role of lobby instrument and a meaning of 'strategic vision' (where 'political' is the implied term) to catalyse linkages at the metropolitan scale. This has for instance been put in practice by the GLA to promote London globally and demand a devolution of powers from Whitehall nationally. Likewise, the plans produced through SUP have acquired a budgeting connotation in the sense that they have been devised to prescribe a coordinated set of transnational linkages in order to overcome budgetary limits that would have otherwise restricted these cities' room for manoeuvre. The need to gather resources, in this sense, has also promoted conciliatory and consensus-making takes applied not just to local electoral contexts, but also (if not pre-eminently) to planning processes, which have in turn become the stepping stone to networking and accumulation. Quite similarly, climate change actions and environmental plans have also acquired the ancillary meaning of promoting the city's attractiveness in the global market. To this extent, while originally devised to enhance urban sustainability, the greening of London's agendas has also understood environmentally-prone SUP projects as an *asset* necessary to maintain a global city's competitiveness in the present global scenario.

This polysemic effect has meant that cities have imported into the network an array of resources and schemas which have then been made intelligible for a concerted and transnational *urban* application. One international example is the issuing of 'joint actions' with a marked urbanist accent at several C40 meetings such as Tokyo 2008, but a much similar case could be made for the setting up of an 'international secretariat' to coordinate the Group's policy and advocacy. Yet, a somewhat reverse process has also a key importance here: global cities have applied a pre-eminently urban instrument, that of planning, to a series of usages beyond its metropolitan development scope. As such, the C40 has effectively attempted to 'govern' by planning where its limitations (legal and budgetary, for the most part) did not allow for explicitly political action. Best represented by the bifurcation of the network's transnational agency in its twin tracks, this practice has meant the marriage of international political rationales with planning practices, and vice-versa.

Intersection of structures

All of these four features of change then feed back into the production of a multiplicity of structures since transposability, polysemy and accumulation

happen in a networked context where governing structures intersect. Within the domain of 'urban' politics these factors of change, of course, have not been limited to the metropolitan scale since this latter has been redesigned as a 'glocal' space of engagement where a multiplicity of actors and structures cutting across scales have been networked in the strategic urban planning process. So, for instance, the transnationalizing proactiveness of the mayor of London has played a progressively greater role in linking urban structures with other governance arrangements. This is of course the case of the C40, where local practices are showcased and connected not solely to other metropolitan structures such as New York or Hong Kong, but also to very different institutional settings such as the UN, the World Bank or the realm of civil society groups. Moreover, global cities like London have progressively caught the attention of a burgeoning number of media and research outlets that have begun ranking and exposing strategic planning approaches to a global audience. For instance, urban planners in Australia and the UK regularly consult rankings and datasets such as the Mori Memorial Foundation's Global Power City Index, Price Waterhouse and Coopers' 'Cities of Opportunity' annual report, Knight Frank's 'Wealth Report' in collaboration with CitiBank, or the Mastercard 'Worldwide Centers of Commerce' list, as well as a more popular political outlet such as *Foreign Policy* magazine's biennial 'Global Cities Index'.⁷ Networked and compared across these linkages, the changing dynamics of strategic urban planning have certainly a key potential to promote governance change in several other non-urban domains.

Moreover, SUP exchanges not solely amongst planners in global cities but also between these and other national, international and non-governmental political structures have progressively become the *leitmotifs* of the Climate Leadership Group, both through the technical track as well as in the examples and references supporting the rhetoric of the political dimension of the C40. Besides, one of the core principles at the basis of the Group's establishment, reiterated regularly across summits and workshops, is that global cities do not need to reinvent planning and urban governance structures, but rather better link them and learn from each other.

This, in turn, is directly networked with other structures of global climate governance and, more generally, to the international complex that constitutes its backbone. The Group has engaged the broader 'global deal' dynamics of international politics in a series of instances, as in the reporting to UNFCCC after the C40's first summit, or in the constant relations the Group has by proxy in its member cities' connections with their central governments. Linkages with the global civil society approach have also been on the menu of the C40's mobilization, as the two have met for instance in the 'side event' initiatives at the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Conference and as local civil society groups have taken part in some of the recent workshops.⁸ Equally, if not more prolifically, the C40 has intertwined its transnational agency with private environmental governance, which has come to represent a substantial public-private hybridizing force in the network's organization. Thanks to

these overlaps, the C40's capacity to develop political engagements can expand far beyond the Group's transnational structure – a dynamic that, just like the production of SUP structures, pushes towards a re-spatialization of planning and climate governance problems, which in turn redefine the broader geopolitical contexts in which they unfold. As such, global cities transcend our traditional and IR-dominated theoretical frames of reference, bypassing scalar (globe, state, region) as well as political (supra-national, governmental, regional and local) hierarchies and piercing through the layers of sovereignty of the Westphalian system that has thus far represented the background of most international theory. In their activities, they stand as a reminder that the geography of how global political relations unfold is far more complex, multiscalar and variable than international politics indicates. Yet, this internationalization of cities also raises some important questions about their actual revolutionary potential to redefine global governance 'from below'.

From sub-politics toward anti-politics: a risky business?

As I have demonstrated, the processes that bring about a redefinition of decision-making structures at scales other than the institutionalized arenas of international politics, also allows in some (albeit not all) cases for a continuation in the disaggregation of government into governance. Hence, if power alignments might be recast beyond the established systems of national and international structures, a contemporaneous reconfiguration of international and local policymaking allows for a potential 'depoliticization' of these processes: the acceptance of existing power structures as a given and thus the more or less temporary exclusion of politics proper (i.e. the formalized discussion on 'who gets what when and how') from policymaking operations.

The hybridization of governance structures I highlighted above is, in this sense, not just a matter of privatization: first, in the public-private partnerships constituting much of the bedrock of the global city's glocalization and transnationalization, government entities such as the GLA remain 'thin' providers in the sense that they play a central, but not independent, role in policymaking. Global cities in the C40 are still key network-builders (i.e. 'mediators') but their capacity to mobilize (i.e. 'activate' the governance structure of) SUP and the Group is more and more dependent on non-governmental allies such as the CCI. Through this particular linkage, the private sector, represented not solely by corporations and firms but also by advocacy NGOs and other civil society organizations, acquires a partial mandate to partake in the policymaking technologies of these cities by virtue of its capacity to sustain planning implementation and urban growth. Additionally, hybrid approaches to governance trickle down into the key governmental mediators of these networks: Bloomberg's, and thus conversely the C40's, emphasis on data analysis and public-private partnerships, Livingstone's catalytic 'Big Tent' strategy, or the continuous exchange of personnel

between the NGO and corporate sectors and the executives of both the Climate Leadership Group and the GLA, all evince a direct expertise linkage that hybridizes practices and structures. Moreover, the process itself is progressively characterized by a 'shift from politics to administration', that is 'from debating principles to debating mechanisms' (Root 2007: 44).⁹ For example, the capacity of 'governing by planning' through the Spatial Development Strategy (the 'London Plan') has become a core instrument in the hands of the GLA to catalyse policymaking processes unfolding at London's metropolitan scale.¹⁰ Likewise, in the C40, the policy transfer (in the workshops and summits) and hybridization processes (through the CCI and Arup) can also be pointed at as a type of governing practice with an even more pervasive scalar reach than many of the instruments of 'global deal' diplomacy, but (as noted in Chapter 6) perhaps less accountable and revolutionary. This is evident at both levels of intra- and inter-scalar affairs. As noted in the case of the C40, the sub-politicization of environmental governance has been achieved by these global cities through a 'transnationalizing' process that has developed at the same time a political track parallel to the global deal and global civil society spheres, and a technical track that has provided much of the implementation powers crucial to permit real action beyond the rhetorics of biennial summits. Likewise, in the 'glocalizing' dimension of the global city, catalytic negotiation with key urban stakeholders and strategic planning have become the major instruments for effective governance by local authorities such as the GLA. What these two processes tell us, in fact, is that sub-politicization dynamics can also inspire this depoliticizing effect. As Beck explains, sub-politics can often be equated with more 'direct' forms of political action in that they result in 'selective interventions' that have the capacity of 'bypassing the institutions of will-formation (political parties, parliaments)' by mobilizing political agency beyond alternative grounds (Beck 2007: 95). Hence, the emergence of sub-political arrangements diminishes the state's capacity to implement and formulate policy autonomously. Since it changes the institutional rules and negotiable boundaries of the political, the sub-political can be said, as Beck (1999: 40) puts it, to 'sets politics free'. This is because these cities are not just creatures of their central governments: London does not 'act' on behalf of the UK only. Quite similarly, the development of the C40 can illustrate a pluralist package of interests and actors far beyond international spheres. While global cities remain solid mediators in this transnational network, the political leverage of non-governmental actors like the CCI echoes loudly in all the networked accounts of Chapter 6. However, this political opening, due to its occurrence in a context that is characterized by some systemic constraints such as those of global markets, also allows for a manipulation of the engagements happening in such alternative governing structures. As such, when coupled with a contemporaneous depoliticization, this re-spatialization presents some questionable consequences.

This dynamic might, in fact, result in a 'suspension of politics' that, by removing the space of contestation, runs the risk of transforming these urban

links into what James Ferguson (1994: 255) famously labelled an 'anti-politics machine' – an apparatus that expands the exercise of power through depoliticization, technicalization and temporary suspension of politics proper from even the most sensible political operations. Now, this does not mean that the links I have described are devoid of 'politics' or that the machinations of these anti-politics dynamics are lacking in power relations. On the contrary, and perhaps somewhat paradoxically, anti-politics processes are actually very much power-laden. The 'political' that disappears in this instance, as the social relations of these urban links bring climate change and planning to a different scale and a sub-system application, is that 'space of dissensus for enunciating difference and for negotiating dissensus' (Swyngedouw 2009: 608) that allows societies to determine *collectively*, in Lasswell's popular triad, who 'gets what, when and how' (Lasswell 1950).

In this context, one of the most dangerous effects of depoliticization is that, as John Harriss (2002: 11) puts it, 'existing power structures are in fact accepted as a given'. This, for instance, is the case of the global deal architecture when it comes to the C40's agency, which does not seek to contest or ameliorate the shortcomings of such climate responses, but rather devises parallel (or alternative) governance schemes to bypass it. In the case of the C40 one could therefore very well make much of the same case that Betsill and Bulkeley (2005b: 490) made of the Cities for Climate Protection programme where networks are 'held together through the creation of financial, political, and discursive "glue" and that the exchange of information and other material resources is a means through which such connections are secured rather than being an end in itself'. Quite similarly, the inevitability of the global marketplace, as structured through the systems of international financing and global commodity chains, is taken for granted as an inescapable fixture in contemporary world politics, and strategic planning or city diplomacy solutions are sought via their neoliberal terms. The internationalization of cities into the broader spheres of global governance is in fact not just a result of a cosmopolitan drive for the common good: along with the philosophical tenets for the growing presence of key globalizing metropolises in environmental politics, we need to take into consideration the more pragmatic and economically determinist reasons that drive most of this transnational move of city halls at large. The 'marketization' of city public policy and the commodification of environmental respatialization at the urban level, in this sense, only prompts further governing disaggregation, in particular, and does little to improve the oft-unequal status quo of the contemporary global system. So while on the international politics scale cities contribute to raise awareness and promote new green agendas, at the crucial everyday street level of urban policy the contradictions of the neoliberal system that lead to a call for novel governance solutions at a broader scale are perpetrated with more and more dangerous 'politics via markets' (Lipschutz and Rowe 2005: 173). Hence, as Tony Travers and Ian Gordon (2010: 49) described it in the case of London: 'without effective fiscal autonomy in planning for infrastructure

provision, the need to manage diplomatic relations with higher levels of government (and other funders) can divert city strategies from those appropriate to the needs of the mass of their own constituents'. Scrutinizing the twin actant-actor structuration of global cities and global governance, in this sense, highlights some joint theoretical-practical problems. Since they partake in the continuation of established governing rationalities, which in turn continue some of the underlying logics of contemporary world politics, global cities ultimately limit the revolutionary potential they have in recasting the architecture of global governance. Yet this is a consideration that forces us, in my view, to step beyond the analysis I have carried out thus far, and thus expand the network approach here to better grasp the geography of world politics *and* its problems.

9 Conclusions

Appreciating the urban link

RE-SPATIALIZING GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Developing a global sense of politics

The networked stories of both C40 and strategic urban planning exhort us to 'see like a city' if we want to appreciate the complexity of the overall assemblage of global governance: this, as Warren Magnusson (2011: 2) pointed out, implies an ontological shift from the simplistic hierarchical order of the state to a understanding of politics that sees it 'in terms of complex practices of government' which 'always involve multiple authorities in different registers'. This relational understanding begs for a progressive take on the geography of global governance and, very much like Doreen Massey's 'global sense of place' illustrated in Chapter 3, requires a toleration of the complexity of the global scenario and a comprehension of the necessary interconnection between the objects of our international political studies and people, places and connections often far beyond them. This equates to developing a 'global sense' of politics as spatial processes that are continuously being recast at, and linked across, multiple levels.

Such a multiscalar 'assemblage' view of global governance also holds an even more fundamental ontological meaning. It is not just in the scales and assemblages themselves that a truly critical investigation has to take place. Rather, it is in the *relations* amongst these that the core dynamics of global governance should be found. As I have attempted to demonstrate in this book, governance assemblages (be they cities, states or other networks) do not unfold in a vacuum, but rather in a complex spatiality where they are forced to intersect or bypass other structures, which in turn affect their nature. It would therefore be a fairly limited exercise to scrutinize the 'agency' of global cities without considering the structures in which they are embedded and, vice-versa, taking into account its structures without paying attention to the agents that partake in defining them – a mutual structure–agency constitution that can be overcome by moving on to a structurationist approach to world politics and a multiscalar ontology of global governance.

This, in international theory, means taking Putnam's logic of 'two-level games' (Putnam 1988) much further than the American political scientist

might have ever considered: if he sought a 'general equilibrium' between 'second image' (Waltz 1979) approaches focused on the domestic sources of international politics, and 'reverse second image' (Gourevitch 1978) theories analysing the international sources of domestic politics, I here suggest stepping forward even further by 'exploding' this rationale. International scholars, I have argued, should move towards a more progressive multiscalar analysis of global governance centred on the relation between the highest levels of politics and the lowest, 'everyday' some would say, tiers of social organization, and specifically the global city in my case. Such a theory of structuration steps beyond traditional two-level domestic/international spatiality of international studies, considering the engagements of world politics as geographically situated in a multiple and intertwined layering of manifold scales. In this sense, while describing scalar structururations, Neil Brenner (2009a: 32) has fittingly compared this multidimensional understanding of social space to a flaky millefeuille – that powdery French dessert made of 'a thousand leaves' of pastry that perhaps best describes the complex crystallization, superimposition and disaggregated ordering of the multiple and intertwined scalar spaces of global governance. Looking at the global system with a 'millefeuille logic' entails a relational and 'deeper' sense of global governance which takes an inherently multiscalar position on the unfolding of world politics. Scales, as 'dimensions of spatial differentiation' (Cartier 2005a: 22) allow us to make sense of this extremely complex, and indeed particularly messy, picture by providing a geographical focus or a set of comparative spatial lenses to trace structururations. This, however, should not be decoupled from a series of geopolitical considerations emerging from the second part of the book. First, we cannot dissociate layers of politics because governance 'assemblages' happen contemporaneously at multiple scales, and layers of politics are continually influenced by other scales. Second, scalar structururations are incessantly performed in engagements exercised within, as well as among, scales. Third, these scalar structururations are also recurrently recast, broken and remodelled through countless engagements to develop new forms of governance structures, which are in turn upheld by power relations that are far more pervasive than much international theory illustrates. Therefore, scales (and scalar analysis) should not become a new 'territorial trap' for twenty-first century international studies, but rather allow us to 'ground' our inquiries and trace power relations cutting *across* them.

Reconnecting the power-geometries of global governance

If analysed separately the two actant/actor dimensions of global city agency can provide us with a multiscalar picture of the influence of the metropolis as both a complex assemblage as well as a unit that can promote assemblages; there is much more to the theoretical relevance of these links for world politics. This two-fold influence is not just running along parallel tracks. On the contrary, taken into account *jointly*, these dynamics allow for an even more

cross-cutting understanding of the relationality embedded in the geography of global governance. It is precisely the linkage between the 'actant' and 'actor' dimensions developed above that present us, I believe, with the most concerning dynamic.

What is being overlooked, in the ultimate analysis, is not just the two dimensions of agency, analysed to some extent in urban and (far more reluctantly) international studies, but even more importantly their connection: not just the presence of globally influential actant/actors but also the processes of redefinition of the geography of global governance and the depoliticization problems inherent in these. What international studies remains largely blind to, I would argue, is the *multiscalar interconnectivity* inherent in the emergence of group agents in global governance. Seen through a 'global' sense of politics, this logic entails that agency in global governance emerges at a multiplicity of scales beyond the 'international'. As I have illustrated in my book, whether we look at the global city only as focus of our analysis or we take it into consideration jointly with the scalar contexts in which it is embedded (in my case urban and international politics), we are likely to find much influence on global affairs unfolding within and from these metropolises.

This results in a twin conclusion: on the one hand, as described in Chapter 5, political agency of worldwide significance can be found *in* the global city as a governance assemblage of worldwide significance. The election of a powerful mayor at the helm of Greater London influences not just the organization of its urban scale, but also this global city's role as hinge of multiple transnational flows and core engine of the national economy. On the other hand, as described in Chapters 6 and 7, political agency of worldwide significance can also be identified as an emergent property *of* the global city as a group agent capable of undertaking diplomatic activities quite similar to several other more traditional international actors. This collective type of agency, in turn, influences the complexes of worldwide practices, technologies and rationalities constituting global governance. In this sense, the capacity of an LGA such as New York to forge alliances with other local governments, or sign memoranda of understanding with corporate and international organizations such as the Clinton Climate Initiative or the World Bank, makes a significant difference to the unfolding of world politics beyond the traditional Westphalian dimension of state-to-state relations. Likewise, the ability of metropolises to gather in transnational municipal networks focused on bringing an urban-aware agenda into the broader debate on climate change, as in the case of the C40, allows such metropolises to pool resources, exchange information, devise joint actions and relate to political structures 'above' the localized level of municipal affairs, therefore bypassing national hierarchies by constructing innovative scales of climate action or linking multiple contexts in a multiscalar response to this global challenge.

In this view, and as the progression of the C40 hints at, the multiscalar logic of agency in global governance necessarily needs to allow for the possibility of groups of actors to network and produce collectives, or group agents,

‘that operate in a manner that parallels the way that individual agents behave’ (Pettit 2009: 67). This is a thought process that is very common with states, and that relies on a traditional concept of political philosophy – that of *supervenience*. In this scholarship, supervenience is used to identify the emergence of a set of properties ‘over’ another, in the sense that there cannot be a transformation (or more specifically ‘difference’) in the former without also producing a difference in the latter: in this case, the former set is said to ‘supervene’ the latter set.¹ As such it is possible to argue that group agents ‘exist’ because they ‘materialized superveniently on the contributions of group members’ (List and Pettit 2011: 75). This, however, does not mean that group agents are ontologically autonomous, but rather that they supervene their members in a holistic manner that ‘allows group attitudes to come apart from its members’ attitudes on them’ (ibid.). This approach has a particular relevance as it allows, on the one hand, for a multiple spatiality of global governance: as List and Pettit (2011: 40) also underlined, ‘group agents may *nest* within one another’. Cities as group agents can exist within states representing partly structured, but not absolutely limited, agents in their own right. On the other hand, ‘international’ group agents, such as states, might interact with actors that emerge from very different spatialities, such as cities or transnational advocacy coalitions, producing a variety of complex power-geometries in global governance. This progressive sense of supervenience and structuration in world politics, in turn, begs for a more geographically-prone understanding of politics.

Extending the discipline: on not taking cities for granted

In its capacity to trace power-geometries and inspire such a progressive ontological turn, I have demonstrated how ANT is thus particularly prolific for a critical rethinking of the multiscalar geography of global governance. Naturally wary of top-down impositions and ‘macro’ generalizations, this qualitative view can offer progressive and multiscalar analytics that look for the agency hidden in the actors ‘punctualised’ (i.e. aggregated) at a certain scale and ‘the mechanics of power’ (Law 1992: 390) upholding these simplifications. Multiscale and networked narratives can therefore contribute to move the considerations of a still predominantly state-centric discipline to a process- and scale-oriented understanding of global governance. Seen as a complex system of political relations beyond the confines of international relations, this realm allows us to consider the vast genus of actors and structures intertwined in the production of political alignments of our epoch from the ‘global’ to the ‘local’. As Peter Taylor (1996) pointed out, going beyond the embedded statism of the social sciences opens up new spaces for our analytical inquiries. This, in turn, shows us how the horizon of politics extends across a far deeper geography than mainstream international theory assumes. As Rosenau (1992: 272) puts it, those ‘vast transformations as the emergence of a new world order at the macro level of politics cannot occur

without corresponding, or at least compatible, changes taking place among citizens at the micro level'.

Lacking the theoretical tools and multidisciplinary engagements necessary to understand the complexity of the relevance of global cities for global governance, international theorists have thus evaded much of their practical relevance. More importantly, by turning a blind eye to metropolises, they have a direct stake in the problematic depoliticizations that plague the revolutionary potential that these urban links have to recast global governance beyond its international skeleton. As such, the ontological premises that are developed in international theory often ignore the re-spatialization(s) happening in practice, which in turn feeds back into the inattentional blindness I highlighted at the beginning of this book. This analytical quandary presents us not just with a theoretical but also a *practical* challenge, for as IR has to date largely overlooked the complex and multiscale nature of political agency in global governance, the praxis in diplomatic fora has also allowed for some of the depoliticizations of the neoliberal consensus to occur unquestioned. This is more than a theoretical whim: as Mike Davis has fittingly advocated in his *Dead Cities*, even if the academy has progressively accepted postmodern and critical approaches prone to an appreciation of the mounting global complexity beyond neoliberalism, it is in the real world of everyday politics that we should be measuring our scholarly success. As he reminds us, when it comes to urban issues it is still 'vulgar economic determinism' that currently holds the seat of power (Davis 2002: 415). The internationalization of cities into the broader spheres of global governance is in fact not just a result of a cosmopolitan drive for the common good: along with the philosophical tenets for the growing presence of key globalizing metropolises in environmental politics, we need to take into consideration the more pragmatic and economically determinist reasons that drive most of this transnational move of city halls at large. Hence sustainability initiatives are then often prompted by the need for these metropolises to compete in attracting capital, tourism and culture and thus, for instance, being progressively driven by the lure of a sprawling genus of city rankings. The 'marketization' of city public policy and the commodification of environmental planning at the urban level, in this sense, might only prompt further hierarchization between 'global' and 'ordinary' cities and, in particular, might do little to improve the oft-unequal status quo of the contemporary global system (Massey 2007b; Robinson 2006). This critique is not to say, however, that a focus on cities is the wrong way. On the contrary, there is much to gain from the 'glocalization' of environmental initiatives at scales below and above the state, and there is certainly much to be praised when it comes to today's metropolitan innovative potential. Indeed, as many of the cross-national networks of localities are showing us, urban public policy can demonstrate flexibility and a governance capability that challenges the effectiveness of the machinations of traditional global governance alignments. Nevertheless, the environmental (if not, more broadly, the political) role of cities should not go

unscrutinized. Problematizing the bases, directions and long-term *political* consequences of the ‘glocalization’ of cities, and thus taking into account issues of political participation in policy-formation mechanisms, is an imperative for practitioners and analysts at all governance levels. International scholars should take into consideration, as Australian philosopher Clive Hamilton (2010: 268) puts it, the ‘democratization of survivability’ at all levels, not solely the international but chiefly the everyday scale of urban affairs. To put it simply, we should not take cities for granted.

Rethinking the spatiality of global governance

As I demonstrated through my study, bringing global cities into international studies is not a utopian undertaking: to paraphrase James Rosenau (1995: 13), the task ‘is not so much impossible as it is a challenge to one’s appreciation of nuance and one’s tolerance of ambiguity’. This move is about expanding the toolbox of our discipline in a truly eclectic move capable of problematizing the breadth of the ‘power-geometries’ (i.e. the geographical organization in terms of power) underpinning world affairs, instead of concentrating on the layers as separated and subjugated to one we assume, perhaps wrongly, as fundamental (Massey 1993). Global cities can help us locate many of the practices that constitute and revolutionize the global political system by reconnecting the macro level of analysis typical of international studies, concerned with broad changes, trends and interactions, to the micro level of the practices of everyday life as they unravel in a context, the ‘urban’, that represents a quotidian experience for a majority of humanity. This will allow for an integration of these ‘local’ political systems in the so-called sphere of ‘high’ politics because global cities are today at the forefront of a series of non-traditional challenges such as climate change, terrorism and pandemics, which are setting crucial tests for international politics.

Yet this requires international scholars to step beyond the comfortable realms of IR theory. ‘Epochs of transition such as the one we live in’, as Sassen (2001: 363) pointed out in the second edition of *The Global City*, ‘demand taking theoretical risks’. The task here is to illustrate more complexity rather than provide more abstraction. The solution, I have argued, is one rooted in the method of structuration. It is in fact impossible to develop a theory of city agency proper by setting this apart from the wider context in which it is embedded. Rather, the contribution of bringing global cities ‘into’ our international calculations is in their capacity to promote innovative forms of multidisciplinary engagement with urban studies and political sociology. This eclectic viewpoint can inspire an ontological shift to consider global governance as a context characterized by a multiplicity of power-geometries emerging from the mutual interaction of city agency and global political structures.

However, a scenario where metropolises influence global governance while also being influenced by it, as well as where politics *in* the global city are intertwined with those *of* the global city, nuance and appreciation of

complexity can easily spiral into indetermination – a spectre that mainstream IR has thus far avoided by abstracting world politics into international relations. In order not to respond to this simplicity with pure complexity, it is then also necessary to develop some geographical parameters to make sense of such an intricate world-political landscape. This, in human geography and sociology has in the past few decades prompted a large debate on the analytical utility of *scale* as a measure of social spaces – an innovation that, I will argue, gives concreteness to structuration analysis.

International studies has thus far attempted to play some ‘catch up’ with this scholarly evolution yet, lacking the analytical apparatus necessary to apply such an approach to its puzzles, it has often slipped into an overlooked propensity: that of substituting the traditional scale of the discipline, the state, with the ‘thought-virus of globalism’ (Beck 2000: 122) and an immensely more complicated scale such as that of the ‘global’. As sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (1998: 1) once famously put it, globalization has become a ‘fad word fast turning into shibboleth’. Object of countless studies and target of multiple attacks, it has crept into the social, cultural, economic and political spheres, always present but almost never agreed upon. This, in turn, has frequently just ‘shifted’ or ‘reoriented’ the crucial debates of the discipline, rather than producing some truly critical and innovative knowledge.² As Erik Swyngedouw justly pointed out:

the preeminence of the ‘global’ in much of the literature and political rhetoric obfuscates, marginalises, and silences an intense and ongoing sociospatial struggle in which the reconfiguration of spatial scales of governance takes a central position.

(Swyngedouw 2000: 63)

Problematizing relational concepts of space and scale in international studies, in fact, does not mean substituting the mainstream state-centric ontology of the discipline with a new scalar focus, be it the global with its volatility or the local with its constricting materiality. Swyngedouw’s critique rightly pushes us towards paying more attention to the inherently socio-political nature of scale as relational contexts, a space of encounters that can be ordered, constructed, remade and retrenched – a logical passage that brings us to the heart of the matter. In my study I did not seek to promote a substitution of the state with the global city, nor a ruthless critique of either the international or the global spheres of human action. Rather, I here pointed towards the need for an appreciation of cross-cutting processes constituting the spatiality of global governance, which are often sidelined or simplified by the discipline.³

Local and global politics: the urban link

In the midst of all the systemic reconfigurations brought about by globalization, urbanization and the post-Cold War neoliberal order, global cities can

assume the status of critical lenses for understanding the manifold dynamics of structuration underpinning the changes of today's world politics. They can represent a privileged window into an urbanized humanity in constant movement, as well as on the multiple (and inherently political) processes of scalar organization reiterating and revolutionizing world politics. To this extent, global cities can offer an 'heuristic space' capable of 'producing critical knowledge' not only about the urban condition but also 'about major social, economic and cultural reconfigurings [sic.] in our society' (Sassen 2005a: 352). They can, I have argued, provide international theorists with a practical platform to anchor our analytics of the global in order to understand the production of the spaces of world politics where it is visibly intertwined with the practices of everyday life and where global power-geometries unfold in the very tangible spatial arrangements of steel, concrete and neighbourhood planning. By linking the urban sphere of politics with the international scales of world affairs, we can supply an even more concrete appreciation of global transformations and problems to the lay reader. Considering global cities in their interconnectedness with scales beyond the local, in fact, provides an understanding of how the grand challenges of our time play out in the practice of everyday life. Such a view steps beyond the traditional two-level approaches. It considers the spaces of world politics as an intertwined layering of many socio-political layers, and the practice of global governance as an attempt towards the pluralistic coordination of multiple scales, rather than the exclusionary club diplomacy of international relations. Comprehending how cities relate to world politics is a foremost necessity in order to grasp the epochal changes underpinning the correspondence between individuals and politics in a globalized age, as well as the relations of domination and opportunity nested in what is often wrongly assumed to be 'below' the realms of politics.

Global cities can, in my view, eclectically rejuvenate a discipline that could potentially be capable of tracing such processes, but has instead turned to self-indulgence and spiralled into meta-theoretical speculation. This critical move also allows us to reconnect the realm of politics, both global and urban, with its material and practical dimensions. If, as Brenner (2001: 604) pointed out, 'processes of scalar structuration are constituted and continually reworked through everyday social routines and struggles', then looking at the global city will allow us not just to appreciate such macro changes, but also the micro contexts and practices that underpin them. In a time where half of the world's population lives in urban settlements it might seem paradoxical that an entire discipline within the social sciences has to date failed to appreciate something as familiar to people as cities. Perhaps, what Peter Brown (1981: ix) once underlined apropos of the state is today more than ever true for the city in international studies: 'it is sometimes said that the last thing a fish would discover is water: as a basic feature of its environment, it is taken for granted'. Likewise, as the world is rapidly urbanizing outside of their windows, international scholars have failed to notice the escalating centrality

of cities around them for the landscape of global governance in the twenty-first century. In this sense, my study has been an attempt to prove that global cities represent a unique and overlooked set of lenses through which to understand the growing complexity of such global political challenges as climate change, and thus to reconnect holistically the multiple levels of politics in our urban age beyond the limits of our chronic, state-centric inattentional blindness to the broader geography of world politics. This critical move could prompt world politics scholars to admit that some of the greatest governance challenges and revolutions of our time might in fact be happening just outside our international studies departments if not, quite literally, on our doorsteps.

Glossary

The following provides a summary of the key terminology used both in terms of ‘stipulative’ (i.e. designed by me) and ‘lexical’ (directly drawn from the relevant literature) definitions applied in the study (Robinson 1954: 35). Each term also indicates its literary source.

Stipulative definitions

Global cities Metropolises representing the strategic hinges of globalization processes. (Derived from Acuto 2011; Brenner and Keil 2006.)

Global governance The global complex of (formal and informal) political coordination – across multiple levels from local to global - among public authorities and private agencies seeking to solve collective problems. (Derived from Weiss 2009: 222.)

Strategic urban planning (SUP) A metropolitan-wide policy aimed at ‘establishing a coherent mobilization framework’ for urban stakeholders by providing coordination and long-term strategies. (Derived from Borja and Castells 1997; and Newman and Thornley 2005.)

Lexical definitions

Actant Anything that can influence the state of affairs. Following Latour, I use *actant* to mean anything that acts (or to which activity is granted by others), and *actor* to mean what is made the rational source of an action. (Latour 1992: 256)

Depoliticization The acceptance of existing power structures as a given and thus the more or less temporary exclusion of politics proper (i.e. the formalized discussion on ‘who gets what when and how’) from political operations. (Harriss 2002: 11)

Group agent Group composed by a multiplicity of actors and that operates in a manner that parallels the way that individual agents behave. (List and Pettit 2011: 69)

Inattentional blindness Inability to detect a dynamic element of a complex scenario; ‘when attention is diverted to another object or task, observers

often fail to perceive an unexpected object, even if it appears at fixation'. (Chabris and Simons 2010: 1063)

Obligatory passage point A critical node that is functionally indispensable to a network. (Latour 1992: 234)

Power-geometry 'Geographical organization of society in terms of power.' (Doreen Massey, 'Notas sobre las geometrías del poder', in *Dia-Critica*, Caracas. On file with the author.)

Public-private partnership Joint governmental/non-governmental ventures where the provision of services is operated in concert by both state and private entities. (Teisman and Klijn 2002)

Scale Dimension of geographical differentiation. (Cartier 2005a: 21-38)

Scalar structuration 'Relations of hierarchization and re-hierarchization' among spatial units. (Brenner 2001: 603)

Sub-politicization Short for 'sub-system politicization' – a structural displacement of the locus of political agency in contexts other than those institutionalized in traditional practice. (Beck 1997a)

Supervenience The emergence of a set of properties over another. (Davidson 1980; List and Pettit 2011: 75)

Notes

1 Introduction: Spotting the ‘gorillas in our midst’

- 1 On eclecticism amongst theories of international relations see Katzenstein and Sil (2008). Of course, I here wish not to underplay the value of eclectic theorizing *within* the confines of the discipline itself, but rather to underline how much more innovative, holistic and constructive an engagement *beyond* such boundaries could be.
- 2 On global governance as architecture of world politics see Dingwerth and Pattberg (2006).
- 3 2007 is conventionally assumed to be the year of the ‘great turn’ when urban inhabitants have overtaken rural settlements in terms of percentage of the global population. Of course, this year is somewhat arbitrary due to the difficulty of compiling an exact world-wide census (Satterthwaite 2007; Burdett and Sudjic 2008).
- 4 I expand on this ‘strategic sites’ definition in Chapter 3. For a broad overview of the concept see Sassen (2005a).
- 5 On the need to reconnect micro and macro in international studies see the earlier work of Chadwick Alger (1984–85).
- 6 I have provided a more extensive rejoinder to this in the following issue of the *SAIS Review* (Acuto 2009).
- 7 They argued, for instance, that cities are ‘increasingly important in *shaping* international politics’ (Calder and de Freytas 2009: 94, emphasis added) but they refrained from describing them as participants in this context.
- 8 A small literature on paradiplomatic activities and ‘perforations’ then developed in the following decade (Soldatos 1990; Aldecoa and Keating 1999; Lecours 2002; Yongsan 1994).
- 9 Power is described here as relational social fact that can be qualitatively studied, as in Allen (2004) and Dahl (1957).
- 10 This would otherwise mean that *everything* can have some form rationality – a quality that is quite blatantly not shared amongst all elements of the state of affairs.
- 11 To paraphrase Charles Tilly’s famous question on the political role of communities (Tilly 1973).
- 12 These ‘depoliticizing’ dynamics are analysed more in depth in the last part of the book. For an overview of the literature see Harriss (2002). The definition of ‘politics’ in brackets is of course that of Harold Lasswell (1950).

2 Situating the link

- 1 For a broader overview of this burgeoning set of views see Wilkinson and Hughes (2002).

- 2 On the former see for example Keohane (2002); on the latter Barnett and Finnemore (2004).
- 3 The idea of new legal order has been cemented by the growth of the UN and European law, as well as, in particular, by the presence of the World Trade Organization as a dispute settlement mechanism (Jarasuriya 1999).
- 4 Rosenau (2007: 89).
- 5 Since the latter decades of the twentieth century the nature of spatiality has in fact been questioned in unprecedented ways across almost all the social sciences (Soja 1989; Wolch and Dear 1989; Thrift 1996).
- 6 Topical on illustrating this fallacy is Osiander (2001).
- 7 In contradiction to the paradiplomacy approach, he also pointed out how this localization does not necessarily entail the decline or rejection of the state. In some cases sub-national involvement might even complement the action of other political layers, as the level of independence and political relevance of these tiers changes from issue to issue and across political arenas.
- 8 The triad, originating in E. H. Carr's 'three images' approach, has reached mainstream fame with Kenneth Waltz's work on the nature of the international system (Waltz 1959).
- 9 Arguably this can be traced even further back to the work of Karl Deutsch. The idea of 'perforations' to the system is borrowed from Duchacek et al. (1988).
- 10 Indeed, whether such a skeleton is destined to disappear in the long run due to these pressures is a consideration left here, for practical and conceptual matters, to the latter chapters of this study.
- 11 This argument can be traced, amongst others, in Paterson et al. (2003) and Elliott (2002).
- 12 See: 'Summary for Policymakers', in IPCC Working Group II, *Climate Change 2007: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*, eds Martin Parry, O. F. Canziani, J. P. Palutikof, P. J. Van der Linden and C. E. Hanson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 8, www.gtp89.dial.pipex.com/spm.pdf (accessed 20 November 2011).
- 13 Resolution UNGA 38/161. The commission began its operations in 1983 under the direction of the former Norwegian prime minister Gro Harlem Brundtland.
- 14 Other products of the Earth Summit were the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Statement of Forest Principles. On the Rio negotiations see Mintzer and Leonard (1994).
- 15 For a review of the Protocol see Grubb et al. (1999).
- 16 Topical on this twin take is the journal *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change*, kickstarted in 1996. See www.springerlink.com/content/1381-2386/ (accessed 20 April 2011).
- 17 The Protocol negotiations led to a coupling of the regime-building focus typical of international politics until then with a 'common-but-differentiated responsibilities' reasoning that has since shaped the contrasts of international climate politics (Rajamani 2000).
- 18 Early cases for a security discourse tied to environmental issues can be found in Falk (1971) and Westing (1989).
- 19 Even in this case, the so-called Bali Roadmap is 'singularly indistinct in its details' (Haas 2008: 1) due to what appear to be growing limitations of multilateral climate diplomacy.
- 20 As reported in a BBC interview, 22 December 2009. Available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8423831.stm> (accessed 10 April 2011).
- 21 This twin structure is also noted in Bernstein et al. (2010).
- 22 This is argued for the first 30-odd years of global climate policy in Newell (2000).
- 23 Quasi-states and quangos (a shorthand for 'quasi-non-governmental-organizations') proliferate in these contexts (Cerny 1993).

- 24 See for instance Clapp and Dauvergne (2005).
- 25 The 'green growth' expression, spearheaded by the UN at Rio in 1992, has been formalized by the OECD through a joint ministerial declaration in June 2009, aimed at promoting a green and responsible kind of economic growth. See www.oecd.org/greengrowth (accessed 3 April 2011). For less critical analysis of the possible benefits of green and economically competitive approaches see Porter and Van der Linde (1999).
- 26 A quite comprehensive summary on neoliberalism can be found in Saad-Filho and Johnston (2005), as well as in Thorsen and Lie (2006), also available at <http://folk.uio.no/daget/What%20is%20Neo-Liberalism%20FINAL.pdf> (last accessed 17 November 2011).
- 27 As Risse (2007: 253) himself points out. Certainly environmental advocacy NGOs will need to seek some form of profit to maintain their campaigning activities, while instrumental PEG coalitions will very likely act in (or at least proclaim) the interests of a common good.
- 28 This, as I will note in Chapters 5 and 6, raises questions of legitimacy and accountability not just domestically but also at a multiplicity of scales, if not transnationally.

3 A global influence: 'actant' and 'actor' dimensions

- 1 In Geddes' (and subsequently Peter Hall's) view 'business' is seen as much broader than just economics, but the term is privileged as commerce and trade constituted key flows of people, ideas and goods.
- 2 See for instance Cohen (1981) or Knox and Taylor (1995). Intuitively this underscores the strong world-system analysis component of this tradition, mostly pinpointed on Immanuel Wallerstein and Fernand Braudel's works, which remains to date a core tenet of many key 'world city' theorists such as Peter Taylor.
- 3 For a more updated and in-depth analysis of these metrics see PricewaterhouseCoopers' *Cities of Opportunity* project at www.pwc.com/us/en/cities-of-opportunity (accessed 12 September 2011).
- 4 Lefebvre (1991: 222).
- 5 Here 'economicism' (Bourdieu 1985: 723) is used as a shorthand for economic determinism.
- 6 As much as not all global city functions will bear the same weight on a global scale, the networks through which they are articulated will also be subject to hierarchies, and thus conversely determining the centrality of cities to different extents (Neal 2008).
- 7 The relational moment represented by the *civitas* (Weber 1958; Mumford 1961) as a place in the social spaces of the world-system necessarily crystallizes in the material spaces of such system, with which it develops a reciprocal relationship.
- 8 As Latour (1988: 163) underlines: 'nothing can be reduced to anything else; nothing can be deduced from anything else; everything may be allied to everything else'.
- 9 On this three-dimensional orientation see De Graaf and Dewulf (2010: 471–77).
- 10 The study, originally published in 2005, has just very recently been revised in an updated edition (Newman and Thornley 2011). I maintain references to the first volume where appropriate. For a recent review of strategic urban planning see Albrechts (2004: 743–58).
- 11 United Cities and Local Governments, Commission on Urban Strategic Planning, *Policy Paper on Strategic Urban Development* (Barcelona, UCGL, 2005) p. 3. Retrieved at www.cities-localgovernments.org/sections.asp?IdBackPage=11. The policy resulted in a multi-city study recently published as United Cities and Local Governments, *Local Leaders Preparing for the Future of our Cities* (Barcelona,

- UCGL, 2010), available at www.sustainablecities.net/docman-resources/cat_view/110-resources/186-ucgl-policy-paper-on-urban-strategic-planning (both accessed 23 March 2012).
- 12 I have illustrated this case more in depth in Acuto (2012: 381–99).
 - 13 This is of course not just a feature of European metropolises only.
 - 14 The Council was founded in 1990 at World Congress of Local Governments for a Sustainable Future held at the United Nations in New York and comprised more than 200 local governments. As Bulkeley and Betsill (2003: 22) noted, this was also supported by the lobby of two other coalitions, the International Union of Local Authorities and the United Towns Organization, who began campaigning for a ‘local perspective’ to be included in the conference.
 - 15 For the city-specific UN efforts see Alger (2010: 71–3).
 - 16 www.wburbanstrategy.org (accessed 27 April 2011).
 - 17 <http://citiesalliance.org> (accessed 27 April 2011).
 - 18 For a comparative study of the Cities Alliance with UN-Habitat see Pieterse (2008: 61–83).
 - 19 These are the two founding concerns of the Alliance. See: *Cities Alliance 2009 Annual Report: Building Cities and Citizenship* (Washington, DC, Cities Alliance, 2009), p. 3.
 - 20 An extensive analysis of the CCP can be found in Bulkeley and Betsill (2003) as well as in Lindseth (2004).
 - 21 An argument could also be made for the medieval origin of this ‘transnational’ practice, dating back to cases such as the Hanseatic League (Ewen and Hebbert 2007; Kern and Bulkeley 2009).
 - 22 European Commission Inter-Service Group on Urban Development, ‘The Urban Dimension of European Union Policy’ (Brussels, European Commission, 2010) and <http://urbact.eu> (accessed 9 June 2011).
 - 23 The Campaign has since then gathered more than 2,500 local governments from all over Europe to implement the 1994 ‘Aalborg Charter’. <http://sustainable-cities.eu> (accessed 18 April 2012).
 - 24 See *The Urban Dimension in European Union Policies 2010*, issued by the European Commission and available at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy.htm (accessed 1 March 2012).
 - 25 www.cities-localgovernments.org (accessed 2 April 2012).
 - 26 The organization has since been focused on developing relationships between more than 100 member cities, organizing large triennial congresses and providing training and seminars through the Metropolis Training Institute in Montreal. www.metropolis.org/main-activities (accessed 2 April 2012).
 - 27 www.sister-cities.org/ and www.citynet-ap.org/ (accessed 2 April 2012).
 - 28 The expression is from the 2009 special issue of *Habitat International* on ‘City-to-City Cooperation’ (Bontenbal and Van Lindert 2009: 313–33).
 - 29 www.worldmayorscouncil.org/the-mexico-city-pact.html (accessed 27 April 2012).

4 Going beyond the agency impasse

- 1 For a sample of the ‘city limits’ debate see Logan and Swanstrom (1990) and Sanders and Stone (1987).
- 2 With contributions by Jackson, Wendt, Iver Neumann and Colin Wight. See *Review of International Studies* 30, no. 2 (2004): 255–316.
- 3 Recent rejoinders to Wendt can be found, besides the 2004 forum, in Lomas (2005), Wendt (2008) and Franke and Roos (2010).
- 4 See for example Law (1987).
- 5 For a more extensive review of structuration and post-structuration approaches see Parker (2000).

- 6 A similar argument could also be made for Habermas' theory of communicative action, although less explicitly dualistic than in Bourdieu's and Foucault's cases. See Foucault (2002 [1970]), Bhaskar (1979) and Bourdieu (1990).
- 7 The methodological challenge, for Giddens, is to express the ways in which structures 'incorporate the *longue durée* of institutions within the flow of daily life' (Giddens 1983: 78).
- 8 Archer 1982: 459.
- 9 I maintain here Sewell's terminology, especially in privileging the denomination of 'schemas' as the institutionalized social practices underpinning structures over Giddens' more popular 'rules', in order to maintain logical coherence with Sewell's effective framework.
- 10 This in IR has been voiced by, amongst others, Carlsnaes (1992) and Dessler (1989). For a commentary on this question also see Hollis and Smith (1991) and Bieler and Morton (2001).
- 11 A structurationist rejoinder already illustrated in Wendt (1987).
- 12 A feature also pointed out in Ashley 1989. The term 'aporia' is from the Greek and refers to a seemingly insoluble logical difficulty.
- 13 Besides, much of the prompt for the structurationist turn in social theory emerged from a partly geographical endeavour such as that of Pierre Bourdieu's work on the redefinition of social space and its core dynamics.
- 14 The notion of hierarchization as a process of structuration, rather than a top-down boundedness that annihilates 'micro' agency, is a centrepiece of Mouzelis' work on organizations and bureaucracy.
- 15 Brenner 2009b: 71–72.
- 16 Here Archer has echoed American sociologist Jeffrey Alexander (Alexander and Giesen 1987) in an attempt to move from the dualisms of a social (and thus political) theory of 'reduction' to the critical and progressive dualities of studying 'links' in a way that is conscious of the inherent relationality of micro and macro, structure and agency or continuity and change in social relations.
- 17 Brenner emphasizes that these are 'vertically differentiated' units as he focuses on the production of new state spaces and new sovereign prerogatives. The question of verticality is here tackled in the next section.
- 18 This is for instance epitomized by John Agnew's analysis of the 'reconstruction' of diverse and highly specific geographical interpretations of Italy undertaken by Italian political parties in the 1990s. Agnew illustrates how, after the 1992–94 collapse of the Italian political system, the four newly dominant parties have engaged in a struggle over the redefinition of 'Italy' as a geographic space (Agnew 1997). I refer to this topical example of 'singular' notions of scalar politics used by Brenner for coherence with his original analysis.
- 19 Throughout most of the core literature on ANT, for instance, scholars such as Law, Latour and Thrift have often pointed out that 'structuration' theorists such as Giddens, Elias or Bourdieu have influenced their positions (Law 1992: 386).
- 20 A good overview of the limits and critical potential can be found in the three-part forum on 'Assemblage and Critical Urban Praxis', published in *CITY*, vol. 15, nos 2, 3–4, and 5 (2011), and centred on the response to Colin McFarlane's initial article as provided by Brenner et al. (2011). I have myself provided a rejoinder to this debate, illustrating as I do below how ANT can provide a critical and multi-scalar assemblage approach (Acuto 2011).
- 21 All quotes from Callon (1986) and Law (1987).

5 The world politics 'in' global cities: networking actants

- 1 And indeed Hall was already working here in the shadow of Patrick Geddes' recognition of this importance in the early 1900s (Geddes 1915).

- 2 Indeed, Hebbert's biographical attempt was in fact not to suggest the casual nature of the city's evolution, but rather depict the incredibly elusive, kaleidoscopic and ever-changing complexion underpinning the history of London.
- 3 On the LCC and the transition to the GLC see Barlow (1991) as well as Young and Garside (1982).
- 4 This early Livingstone–Conservative clash is perhaps best embodied in Tariq Ali and Ken Livingstone's *Who's Afraid of Margaret Thatcher?* (Ali and Livingstone 1984). As Hebbert (1998: 115) put it: 'like no other GLC leader before, Livingstone used the wealth of County Hall and its location beside Westminster Bridge as a political platform to challenge and tease the government'.
- 5 I will use the conventional metonym 'Whitehall' as figure of speech for the UK's central government.
- 6 The argument for the abolition of the Council was then made public via a White Paper called *Streamlining the Cities*, which displayed a disparity of service provision between the boroughs and the GLC, accounting (according to the paper) for a mere 16 per cent of the grand total. The GLC was later dismantled through the Local Government Act of 1985 (c.51). On the Labour Party's attempted implementation of an alternative economic strategy at both local and national levels see Callaghan (2000: 105–30).
- 7 A similar case could be made for the London branch of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), founded in 1965. Cf. www.londonchamber.co.uk and <http://www.cbi.org.uk> (accessed 10 March 2012).
- 8 Cf. www.london-first.co.uk/about-us/ (accessed 10 March 2012).
- 9 The decline of manufacturing and the 1970s–1990s transition of London to a postindustrial conformation is widely documented. See amongst others Hamnett (2003), Sassen (2001) and Buck et al. (2002).
- 10 Comprising part of the Panel were the CBI, LCCI, the Corporation of London and the City of Westminster, as well as LPAC, the Voluntary Service Council and the Training and Enterprise Council. This was part of a broader 'City Pride' government initiative also targeting Manchester and Birmingham (Kleinman 1999).
- 11 Greater London's population rose above the 7-million mark in the 1999 mid-year estimate. Cf. Office of National Statistics (1999) *Key Population and Vital Statistics*, Series VS no. 26, PP1 no. 22. Available at www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=539 (accessed 9 February 2012).
- 12 As Minister for London Nick Raynsford put it in June 1997, the central government was not seeking to legitimize a return to the GLC, but rather a move to a new form of 'streamlined and strategic' (Pimlott and Rao 2004: 35) city-wide government.
- 13 The Labour nomination controversy and the clash between Livingstone and Blair is narrated in detail in D'Arcy and McLean (2000).
- 14 One of the first policy statements of Livingstone's GLA was the paper 'The Mayor and Relations with the Business Community' (London, Greater London Authority, 2000).
- 15 Thus, if boroughs maintain responsibility for preparing their UDPs, these are then subjected to the oversight of the GLA.
- 16 As noted by Ian Gordon in 'Capital Needs, Capital Growth and Global City Rhetoric in Mayor Livingstone's London Plan'. Paper presented in the session 'The Production of Capital Cities' at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, New Orleans, 7 March 2003. On this also see Holman (2010).
- 17 In contrast, the other strategic prerogatives of the GLA are overseen not via EiPs but rather by 'proxy' through the GLA Assembly. These strategies have progressively been intertwined with the Plan from 2004 until the present day.
- 18 The interview is also available at <http://lwbooks.co.uk/journals/articles/keninterview> (accessed 16 March 2012).

- 19 This was perhaps best embodied in his 1985 London Industry Strategy.
- 20 *Green Light to Clean Power: The Mayor's Energy Strategy* (London, Greater London Authority, 2004).
- 21 See for instance the foreword to the 2008 consolidated version of the Plan. Mayor of London, *The London Plan: Consolidated with Alterations Since 2004* (London, Greater London Authority, February 2008), p. xi.
- 22 See respectively <http://london.gov.uk/lccp/about> and www.london.gov.uk/lhp/about (both accessed 20 March 2012).
- 23 Greater London Authority Act (2007 c.24).
- 24 See Dan Milmo, 'Transport: London Mayor Unveils Congestion Charge Rethink', *Guardian*, 2 July 2008. Available at www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/jul/02/london.congestioncharging; and 'C-charge Extension to Be Scrapped', BBC News, 27 November 2008. Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/london/7752046.stm (both accessed 27 April 2012).
- 25 Mayor of London, 'The Draft London Plan: Draft Spatial Development Strategy for London' (London, Greater London Authority, 2009), p. 5. Emphasis in original.
- 26 Mayor of London, *Greater London Authority Strategic Plan 2009–2012* (London, Greater London Authority, 2009), p. 4. Emphasis added.
- 27 See Department for Communities and Local Government, 'Decentralisation and Localism Bill: An Essential Guide' (London, DCLG, December 2010). Available at www.communities.gov.uk (accessed 10 January 2012).
- 28 *The London Plan* (2008), p. 4.
- 29 Interestingly, most of these documents quickly became identified not merely as 'GLA strategic planning' but as 'the mayor's strategy for ...' – a rhetorical device that remains widely applied even in the current Johnson administration.

6 The world politics 'of' global cities: networking actors

- 1 I will hereinafter refer to the 'C40' and the 'Group' interchangeably.
- 2 Taking part in this summit were London, Barcelona, Beijing, Berlin, Brussels, Chicago, Curitiba, New Delhi, Madrid, Melbourne, Mexico City, New York, Paris, Philadelphia, Rome, San Francisco, São Paulo, Shanghai, Stockholm, Toronto and Zurich.
- 3 GLA mayoral press release (4 October 2005): 'Mayor brings together major cities to take lead on climate change.' Available at www.london.gov.uk/media (accessed 14 November 2011).
- 4 Communiqué of the Large World Cities (C20), 5 October 2005, London – action #6, p. 2.
- 5 The expression 'city directors' is often used in C40 workings to overcome the vast diversity in governmental prerogatives of the highest representatives of each metropolis.
- 6 Interview with C40 member city local government (transport and planning) officer, Singapore, 14 January 2011.
- 7 ARUP–C40 joint report 'Climate Action in Megacities: C40 Cities Baseline and Opportunities' available at www.arup.com/Publications/Climate_Action_in_Mega-cities.aspx (accessed 17 July 2011).
- 8 The expressions have often been reiterated, not least by the successive C40 chairs David Miller of Toronto and Michael Bloomberg of New York, at the outset of each biennial summit.
- 9 For the text of the agreement see: Clinton Foundation press release, 1 August 2006: 'President Clinton Launches Clinton Climate Initiative.' Available at www.clintonfoundation.org/news/news-media (accessed 14 August 2011).
- 10 As President Clinton remarked at the latest biennial summit: 'in 2006 the only thing that we could do a good job of was [to] provide direct support' as cities were

- good 'at all the rest.' Opening remarks of President William J. Clinton, 1 June 2011, São Paulo.
- 11 This is presently still the case despite the development of a common CCI–C40 secretariat – perhaps with the exception of an expanded organization, as I will note below.
 - 12 Joint Actions of the C40 Tokyo Conference on Climate Change, 24 October 2008. Retrieved from <http://c40tokyo.jp/en> (accessed 10 November 2011).
 - 13 Recent cases of academic attention to the case can be traced, amongst others, in Pattberg (2010) and Bulkeley and Schroeder (2009a).
 - 14 See for example the BBC World Service special *The Climate Connection* (9 December 2010), 'Part Four: The New Leaders', which has pointed at the C40 as a model of innovative climate leadership. 'From Toronto to Seoul, Karachi to Addis Ababa the C40 leaders have put aside their naturally competitive instincts to create real environmental benefits for their own citizens and to share them with other cities.' Available at www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/science/2010/12/101201_climate_connection_prog_four_tx.shtml (accessed 8 August 2011).
 - 15 See for instance the interview with C40 Chair special advisor Rohit Aggarwala on E&E TV's *OnPoint*, 27 July 2011, available at www.eenews.net/tv/video_guide/1373?page=1&sort_type=date (accessed 8 August 2011).
 - 16 www.project2degrees.org/Pages/about.aspx (accessed 14 November 2011).
 - 17 'Relative' is a necessary caveat here: as I will illustrate more in depth, both policy sharing and PPPs are approaches that are not unique to the C40. Rather, the group's policymaking style is peculiar in that it relies almost exclusively on these rather than on the more common regime-building focus of the other two governance approaches.
 - 18 Interview with former Greater London Authority communications officer, London, 1 July 2009.
 - 19 'Michael Bloomberg: Too much "hot air" on climate change', BBC News report, 27 May 2011. Available at www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-13582351 (accessed 15 July 2011).
 - 20 A problem brought to the forefront of environmental policymaking by the Stern Review.
 - 21 Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of the City of Sydney (Meeting no.1456), 2 April 2007, p. 229.
 - 22 See www.london.gov.uk/media/press_releases_mayoral/london-and-new-york-announce-new-partnership-and-exchange-programme (accessed 13 April 2011).
 - 23 This of course while maintaining its historic 'sister' relationships. www.nyc.gov/html/unccp/scp/html/about/main.shtml (accessed 13 April 2011).
 - 24 Interview with former Greater London Authority political officer, London, 8 December 2010.
 - 25 Even executive staff secondment, much like the questions of leadership, is therefore a relatively obscure practice within the C40 – with almost no information or public competition available. See: Andrew Revkin, 'Cities as Hubs of Energy and Climate Action', *New York Times Dot Earth Blog*, 5 November 2010 (available at <http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/11/05/cities-as-hubs-of-energy-and-climate-action/>) and the related note on Mike Bloomberg's website at www.mikebloomberg.com/index.cfm?objectid=227CB90C-C29C-7CA2-F42A901309F07101 (both accessed 18 February 2011).
 - 26 Along with Revkin's report cited above also see Patrick McDonald, 'The Curious Case of Jay Carson', *Los Angeles Weekly*, 28 August 2009 (available at http://blogs.laweekly.com/informer/2009/08/jay_carlson) and Annie Karni, 'The Planner Behind Bloomberg's PlaNYC' *NY Sun*, 29 May 2007 (www.nysun.com/new-york/planner-behind-bloombergs-planyc/55342 both accessed 19 February 2011).
 - 27 Interview with C40 member city local government (planning) officer, Singapore, 13 January 2011.

- 28 The policies considered to quantify the extent of policy performance in this study are: conducted GHGs emission inventories, adopted emission reduction target, development of a local climate action plan, implemented climate policies and monitored and disclosed information. Lee's study has relied on the City Climate Catalogue, a pool of community data on GHGs emissions. See www.lg-action.eu/index.php?id=7772 (accessed 13 April 2011).
- 29 Interview with Greater London Authority political officer, London, 30 June 2009. This parallel is acknowledged in a few scholarly analyses of the C40 such as that in Bulkeley and Schroeder (2009a: 317).
- 30 Mayor Michael Bloomberg's opening speech, C40 São Paulo summit, 1 June 2011.
- 31 I borrow the term 'cliquishness' from Derudder and Taylor (2005), who have conducted a study similar to Lee's but applied to the world city network of corporate service firms.
- 32 Reported in *C40 Newsletter*, April 2010. Available at www.c40cities.org/about/newsletters (accessed 12 February 2011).
- 33 I echo here the critique of Jennifer Robinson (2006).

7 The world politics 'of' global cities: networking networks

- 1 C40 Large Cities Climate Summit statement, 'Seoul Declaration' (18–21 May 2009), available at www.c40cities.org/news/news-20090522.jsp (accessed 27 April 2011)
- 2 Mayor Bloomberg's keynote address to the C40 Large Cities Climate Summit 2007, 15 May 2007. Transcript available at www.c40cities.org/summit/2007/speeches (accessed 24 April 2011).
- 3 'By some estimates, urban areas account for 78 per cent of carbon emissions from human activities' (Stern 2007: 517). The same could also be said of the 'canonical' definition of 'sustainability' set by the Brundtland Report *Our Common Future* in 1987.
- 4 The figure now regularly appears in speeches, presentations, reports and pamphlets at both C40 summits and workshops.
- 5 On the need for refinement in imputing GHGs emissions to cities also see the more recent (Word Bank-led) paper by Hoornweg et al. (2011), available at <http://eau.sagepub.com/content/early/2011/01/08/0956247810392270> (accessed 13 March 2011).
- 6 Mayor Michael Bloomberg's opening speech, C40 São Paulo summit, 1 June 2011, available at http://c40saopaulosummit.com/site/conteudo/index.php?in_secao=27&lang=3&in_conteudo=112 (accessed 17 July 2011).
- 7 This has however, at least throughout the interviews I conducted between 2009 and 2011, emerged as an area of constant concern for both the C40 management and the key cities involved in the network and I would not dismiss lightly the possibility of mounting clashes with larger urban networks on such grounds.
- 8 This is for example the case when it comes to C40–UCGL connections.
- 9 The MoU can be found at [www.iclei.org/index.php?id=1487&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=4643&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=983&cHash=712a8184bb](http://www.iclei.org/index.php?id=1487&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=4643&tx_ttnews[backPid]=983&cHash=712a8184bb) (accessed 17 July 2011).
- 10 The Strategy, yet to be officially released, was sketched at the Hong Kong summit (5–6 November 2010) and revealed publicly by Bloomberg in his opening address to the fourth biennial summit in São Paulo (31 May–2 June 2011).
- 11 This is more crucially represented in the partnership signed with the World Bank, as I illustrate below.
- 12 Mayor Michael Bloomberg's opening speech, C40 São Paulo summit, 1 June 2011.
- 13 Michael Barbaro, 'Bloomberg and Clinton to Merge Climate Groups', *New York Times*, 13 April 2011.
- 14 www.arup.com/Homepage_C40_UrbanLife.aspx (accessed 9 August 2011).

- 15 Another output of the C40/Arup UrbanLife initiative is the production of Arup reports with strategic recommendations which the firm is developing for the Group's members in order to prompt coordinated municipal action. An example of this is the 'Water Resilience for Cities' and 'The Smart Solution for Cities' reports recently published by Arup (January and August 2011), see www.arup.com/Publications/UrbanLife_Water_Resilience_For_Cities.aspx (accessed 9 August 2011).
- 16 Similar UrbanLife projects have also been developed in Melbourne (in March 2010, focusing on smart ticketing and infrastructure for metropolitan transport) and Ho Chi Minh City (in May 2010, to address water management).
- 17 Arup–C40 joint report 'Climate Action in Megacities: C40 Cities Baseline and Opportunities' (July 2011 version 1.0), available at www.arup.com/Publications/Climate_Action_in_Megacities.aspx (accessed 17 July 2011).
- 18 Clinton Climate Initiative, 'CCI's Energy Efficiency Building Retrofit Program, EPC toolkit for higher education'. New York, April 2009, p. 2, available at www.clintonfoundation.org/what-we-do/clinton-climate-initiative/resources/EEBRP.pdf; and 'CCI Building Retrofit Overview', available at www.clintonfoundation.org/what-we-do/clinton-climate-initiative/cities/building-retrofit (both accessed 12 February 2011). The administration will now shift to the CCI–C40 joint secretariat.
- 19 A trend cemented through partnerships formed at Johannesburg's 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, as noted in the previous chapters.
- 20 A summary of Robert Zoellick's speech at the C40 São Paulo summit (1 June 2011) and of the partnership is available at <http://go.worldbank.org/BVGELE3NQ0> (accessed 17 July 2011).
- 21 Ibid., emphasis added.
- 22 I borrow once again the expression from Robert Falkner (2003), albeit the phrase is now common in much of the environmental politics literature (Pattberg 2007).
- 23 What has yet to be seen at large is PEG's common hybridization with global environmental advocacy approaches which has, for instance, provided many of the legitimacy bases for the Forest Stewardship Council. Compare for instance Chan and Pattberg (2008).
- 24 To this one could also add, as Román notes, the inherent political agenda of the Clinton Foundation itself, which brings with its implementation support for the former president's take on world politics (Román 2010: 80).
- 25 See www.mayorsforpeace.org/; www.c40cities.org/ and www.sister-cities.org/ (all accessed 9 June 2011).
- 26 Leguey-Feilleux (2009: 105–6).
- 27 Overall, discounting GLA officers, I discussed the C40 with twenty-six municipal officials involved in various stages of the Group's workings between 2005 and 2011. All interviews on file with the author.

8 Reassembling the global city's influence

- 1 Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, opening speech, C40 fourth biennial summit, São Paulo, 31 May 2011.
- 2 Arup report 'Climate Action in Megacities: C40 Cities Baseline and Opportunities' (Version 1.0) released by the C40 Climate Leadership Group and Arup on 1 June 2011. Available at www.arup.com/News/2011_06_June/01_Jun_11_C40_Climate_Action_Megacities_Sao_Paulo.aspx (accessed 24 June 2011).
- 3 The notion of 'scale jump' is from the first edition of Neil Smith's *Uneven Development*, and is here intended to mean moving beyond the Westphalian pecking order, not as a rejection of scale. Jumping scale itself is a process of scalar structuration.
- 4 I maintain here Sewell's terminology, especially in privileging the denomination of 'schemas' as the institutionalized social practices underpinning structures to

Giddens' more popular 'rules', in order to maintain logical coherence with Sewell's effective framework.

- 5 As noted in Chapter 2, this distinctiveness is of course mostly analytic and should not obscure the amount of commonality among approaches. 'Distinct' is thus to be understood here as operating on different scalar dynamics *and* with some degree of diversity in their governing technologies, in order to distinguish diverse structures from those complexes that operate across scales.
- 6 'Unpredictable' should not be interpreted here as an indication of absolute randomness of resource allocation: rather, as Sewell himself points out, what often remains unpredictable is the *consequence* of accumulation schemes, even when these gather resources with substantial degrees of planning.
- 7 See for instance www.mori-m-foundation.or.jp and www.pwc.com/us/en or www.knightfrank.com/wealthreport/ (all accessed 22 June 2011). All of these were widely mentioned in most of my interviews with municipal officers from both planning and political departments in London.
- 8 This is the case, for instance, with the Arup UrbanLife workshop in May 2010, held in São Paulo with a focus on the city's major favelas.
- 9 Thus removing the debate on the acceptability of such principles and shifting the discussion to their technical implementation only.
- 10 On the role of the Plan as a governing technology see Rydin (2010).

9 Conclusions: appreciating the urban link

- 1 The idea now has a long lineage in philosophy, tracing back to a debate from the 1980s and 1990s, as in the cases of Davidson (1980) and Kim (1993). A useful companion to supervenience can be found in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* available at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/supervenience> (accessed 9 May 2012).
- 2 Of course, this is predominantly the case of those international theories that sought to make of globalization the *explanans* of some of the key problems faced in the discipline, and it is a critique certainly less relevant for those who moved towards a view of this set of phenomena as their *explanandum*. In this latter case in particular, some theorists like Jan A. Scholte and Rob Walker have offered particularly useful insights into the global transformations brought about by recent forms of globalization.
- 3 Indeed, even when it comes to the state scale, international studies has struggled in providing cross-cutting explanations of its changes and of the quality and accuracy of those sociological and geographical studies cited here. Swyngedouw (1996: 1500) himself lamented that, although 'the book of state re-scaling has been advanced by a number of authors [...] the actual mechanisms through which this process takes place remain vague and under-theorized'.

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