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GLOBAL CITIES, TAKE 2 : THE VIEW FROM URBAN HISTORY HISTORICAL EXPLORATIONS INTO THE TRANSNATIONAL MUNICIPAL MOMENT

Since the 1960s and 1970s when it emerged distinctively as a sub-specialism among many others, urban history has elected questions about the autonomy of its realm, among its followers as well as among its critics. Was the city a dependent or an independent variable ? This has been one point that has been discussed endlessly, for its intellectual importance (is there an order of facts that can be labelled as specifically 'urban' ?) and its social consequences (needs the field to become institutionalized ?).¹ One of the cleavages that emerged from these discussions was the distinction between those who claimed the cities to be cohesive and active social bodies, and who insisted that they were a point in systems of cities that derived from economic development. The frailty of such debates has been pinpointed by outsiders as Charles Tilly, who once admonished urban historians to go out of their bailiwick and stop oscillating between 'the time space particularism of local history and grand timeless, spaceless processes, causes and effects'.² The diagnosis was interesting, but Tilly's cure for this disease was to exhort urban historians to admit that their turf was quintessential social history, and to turn back to interpreting 'the ways that global social process articulate with small -scale social life'. Problem is that this very suggestion was not foreign to the discussions which had fathomed the futility of the

¹ Shavings and sparks of this debate can be caught through the pages of the dedicated journals *Urban History* and *Journal of Urban History*, as well as from a series of articles and chapters, among which Eric Lampard 'urbanization and social change: on broadening the scope and relevance of urban history', in Oscar Handlin and John Burchard *The historian and the city*, Cambridge Mass: MIT Press, 1963, 225-247; David Cannadine 'Urban history in the United Kingdom : the 'Dyos phenomenon' and after', in David Cannadine & David Reeder, *Exploring the urban past. Essays in urban history by H.J Dyos*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1982 ; Richard Rodger 'Theory, practice and urban history', in Richard Rodgers, ed, *European urban history*, Leicester : Leicester University Press, 1993 ; Harry S.J Jansen 'Wrestling with the angel: on problems of definition in urban historiography', *Urban History*, 23:3, 1996, p.277-299

² Charles Tilly 'What good is urban history ?', *Journal of urban history*, 22 :6, 710.

positions and cleavages he had just singled out: the overlap or distinction between urban and social history had been at the heart of the debate in the former decades, notably between the supporters of the 'new urban history' and the followers of the British historian H.J Dyos.³ The Gordian knot was hard to cut, especially when it took a form that was so close to the debate between agency and structure that has been harnessing so much of the energy of the social sciences and humanities in the last century, for a very meagre return if we consider that there is no possible winner and loser in such a badly arranged show. For those who are interested in cities in history, new possibilities nevertheless lurk, which ought not to line up with these lingering discussions. As often, it is a shift into the landscape of a discipline that creates the opportunity to make former frontlines less absorbing. This also seems to be true with the urban aspects of human societies, and this is where from this volume takes its cue. There are ways, not to hit a middle ground between two competing definitions of a sub-discipline and field, but to go over that and show how urban history can contribute to an understanding of one of the most salient anxiety of our today's world. This begins by appreciating the place and contribution of history in globalizations studies.

Bringing history back in: globalization, history and historians

When the globalization theme took off from the late 1980s, the choir began by stressing the novelty of interdependencies, interconnections and awareness of these. Globalization, it said, had its roots in the 1960s and 1970s to develop fully in the 1980s and 1990s. This short horizon was shared by those who celebrated globalization achievements as well as from these who lamented its impacts,⁴ by who stressed the economic aspects of globalization, its governance embodiment or its

³ Cf. Stephan Thernstrom, 'Reflections on the new urban history', *Daedalus*, 100, 1971, p.34

⁴ there is no contrast, from this point of view, between Kenichi Ohmae, *The borderless world : power and strategy in the interlinked world economy*, Cambridge MA., MIT press, 1990 and Richard Falk, *Predatory globalization : a critique*, Cambridge : Polity Press, 1999

cultural aspects.⁵ It was not so only that the history of interconnections and interdependencies was merely forgotten about: even for who considered historical developments and used them to support some developments, history was considered a liability. Arjun Appadurai, despite he stressed the interest of making genealogies and histories of today's cultural cosmopolitanisms, concludes by suggesting to 'cut into the problem through the historical present'.⁶ When summoned in pronouncing about the intensity and future of globalization, it seems there was not time left for scrutinizing the past. But it came back through the back door while the discussion about economic globalization evolved.

Political scientists, geographers, sociologists and anthropologists who had embarked on the globalization train began to question the historical nature of globalization and to wonder how new were the different phenomena that were encapsulated into it.⁷ Part of this debate revolved around the question of datation: 'how old was the current economic world system ?' triggered interesting discussions, which took on board the heritage of the world system theory elaborated by Fernand Braudel or Immanuel Wallerstein.⁸ The interest for global civil society protagonists also pushed social scientists to solicit the works of historians to contextualize their own research.⁹ But

⁵ The sense of a 'rupture' and the presentation of the last decades as a break is at its highest in Ulf Hannerz, *Transnational connections : culture, people, places* London and New York : Routledge, 1996.

⁶ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at large. Cultural dimensions of globalization*, Minneapolis/London : UNiversity of Minnesota Press, p.64

⁷ for economic aspects, see Kevin O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization and history ; the evolution of a nineteenth century Atlantic economy*, Cambridge MA. : MIT press, 1999. For international relations, Barry Buzan and Richard Little, *International systems in world history : remaking the study of international relations*, Oxford ; New York : Oxford University Press, 2000.

⁸ Significant examples are Giovanni Arrighi, *The long twentieth century : a preliminary sketch* , London : Verso, 1994 and Andre Gunder Frank and Barry Gills, eds, *The world system : five hundred years or five thousand ?*, London and New York : Routledge, 1994

⁹ A convincing example is the first chapter of Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond borders : advocacy networks in international politics* Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1998

this was quite tangential to historical studies, and historians or historical scholarship did not engage with globalization studies. For sure, historians had been investigating interconnections and interdependencies of many sorts for a while. But they did it within a circle of questions and purposes that were relevant for their own discipline or fields. American historians developed their ideas of a 'transnational history' that stretched across US borders mostly to fight against prevailing views about American exceptionalism;¹⁰ women's historians explored the cross national bonds of informal and organized sisterhood to get a grip on feminist pasts;¹¹ historians of the Black Atlantic tried to extract the substance of anti slavery or liberation movements to put national histories under pressure.¹²

This began to change at the turn of the century, or so it seems. Then, the historical gaze contributed to debunk several assumptions as to the newness of late 20th century interconnections. A powerful example, told by Ewa Morawska, is about the contribution of historians of migrations to the sociology of current migrations in the United States of America.¹³ Alejandro Portes, one of the most influential scholars in immigration sociology, identified "transnational communities" as one of "the themes for a new century" in a couple of publications in 1996 and 1997, making

¹⁰ See Ian Tyrell 'American exceptionalism in an age of international history', *American Historical Review*, 96 (1991) 1031-72, and Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic crossings. Social politics in a progressive age*, (Cambridge (Mass.): The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998

¹¹ Leila Rupp, *Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women's Movement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997) ; Ian Tyrell, *Woman's world/woman's empire: the women's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 1991) ; Bonnie S. Anderson, *Joyous Greetings: The First International Women's Movement, 1830-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000)

¹² Robin Kelley, "But a Local Phase of a World Problem": Black History's Global Vision', *The Journal of American History* Vol. 86, Issue 3., 1999, p. pp. 1015-72

¹³ Ewa Morawska, 'The Sociology and History of Immigration: Reflections of a Practitioner', In Michael Bommers and Ewa Morawska, eds, *International migration research : constructions, omissions, and the promises of interdisciplinarity*, Burlington, VT : Ashgate, 2005

transnationalism a successful agenda in sociology and anthropology of immigration. Immigration historians, who had had long been aware of crossover identities and practices in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, disagreed on the claims this was a novel phenomenon. Between 1997 and 2001, they pointed out the historical inaccuracies of such claims, established unrecognized similarities between past and present transnational involvements, and acknowledged their differences, to paraphrase Morawska. The result was a more balanced account of continuity and change in this enduring phenomenon, and a renewed interest for collaboration and exchange between historians and social scientists.

Similar attempts to engage globalization scholarship have emerged from various regions of the historical discipline, of which only a few will be mentioned here. Manifestos and recommendations were one form of this engagement, confronting globalization studies to their chronological blindness and using history to stress some of their analytical weaknesses.¹⁴ New disciplinary proposals, and revivals of former fields, have flourished.¹⁵ National commitments embraced a wider perspective.¹⁶ Moreover, historians have explicitly begun to question past links, aspirations and projects that witness of the historical nature of interconnections and interdependencies. Medieval or early modern historians, who have a tradition of being less dependent from the iron cages of national histories, were the quickest to

¹⁴ Two outstanding examples are Frederick Cooper 'What is the concept of globalization good for ? An African historian's perspective', *African Affairs*, 100 ; 2001, p. 189-213, and Charles Bright and Michael Geyer, 'World history in a global age', *American Historical Review*, 100:4; 1995, 1047-1060

¹⁵ World history, an ancient sub-specialty who came of age after World War 2, is being reinvigorated by the desire of several world historians (among others Patrick Manning and Jerry Bentley) to steer the field towards the study of connections and circulations. In the early 2000s, Bruce Mazlish and Akira Iriye came forward with the project of a 'new global history' that was to chart globalization, is seen as a distinctly twentieth century phenomenon with its roots in the age of expansion of the early modern world (go to <http://www.newglobalhistory.org/> for more details).

¹⁶ See Thomas Bender, ed, *Rethinking American history in a global age*, Berkeley : University of California Press, 2002, that clearly establishes the internationalization of US history as an attempt to capture 'the historical spaces opened by globalization'.

kick in, as suggested by the breadth of Sanjay Subrahmanyam's suggestions for 'connected histories'¹⁷ or the decided attempt by Serge Gruzinski to explore the attempt by the Spanish monarchy to dominate the 'four parts of the world' between 1580 and 1640.¹⁸ But others were ready to march. Anthony Hopkins led a collective charge in 2002, in a volume that followed up a workshop held in May 2000 and which proposed a periodicization of specific forms, projects and practices of globalization since the 14th century.¹⁹ One of the participants to the collection, Christopher Bayly, soon clung on with a very convincing volume that sounds like a clear message: historians are now willing to investigate the connections and circulations through which interconnectedness and interdependencies have increased and recesses over time.²⁰ Conferences, workshops, publications, projects and resources have emerged at a high rate since a few years.²¹ The result has been an increased historical awareness among globalization scholars,²² and the emergence of an interdisciplinary dialogue where first hand historical research is used to think about globalization.²³ The growing interest for the transnational perspective in modern

¹⁷ 'Connected histories : notes toward a reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia', in Victor Liberman, ed, *Beyond binary histories. Re-imagining Eurasia to c.1830*, Ann Arbor : The University of Michigan Press, 1997, p. 289–315

¹⁸ *Les quatre parties du monde : histoire d'une mondialisation*, Paris : La Martinière, 2004

¹⁹ Anthony G. Hopkins, *Globalization in world history*, New York : W.W Norton, 2002

²⁰ Christopher A. Bayly : *The birth of the modern world 1780-1914. Global connections and comparisons*, London : Blackwell, 2004.

²¹ One of them, the Geschichte.Transnational gateway, set up by a team of German and French scholars and fueled mostly by German historians, offers a good view of conferences, research projects and publication in the field (<http://geschichte-transnational.clio-online.net/transnat.asp?lang=en>)

²² 'globalization is a long term historical process that, over many years, has crossed distinct qualitative periods' is one of the few points of convergence of scholarly views is identified by Manfred B. Steger in his introduction to Manfred B. Steger, ed., *Rethinking globalism*, London : Rowman & Littlefield, 2004, p.1.

²³ As suggested by the intensive use of the Hopkins and Bayly's volumes in Jean François Bayart, *Le gouvernement du monde : Une critique politique de la globalisation*, Paris : Fayard, 2004.

history, that is the study of circulations and connections across different national contexts, is partly a result of this motivation to engage globalization as an historical object.²⁴ This is the kind of contribution we are anxious to make in our own field.

Global cities: the irrelevance of history

Though our historical interest for connections and circulations among and about municipal urban government was born from our explorations in municipal archives of two cities, Birmingham (UK) and Lyon (France),²⁵ we have never felt that we should limit our interest to these two cities or to the historical chunk we were studying. At first sight, an interest for the organizational or technical know-hows that municipal urban governments should use to create and maintain fledgling policies of housing, planning, fire fighting or public health seem quite parochial. But the fact that these know hows, from the last decades of the 19th century, were circulated across borders by municipal officials, technicians, firms, scholars or reformers, took us well beyond our favourite cities. On one hand, these very connections and circulations called for an attempt to follow their deployment, and to replace the activity of a given city into a wider exchange of knowledge, ideas, technologies or regulations with its own geography and chronology. On the other hand, both within our towns and among urban geographers, sociologists or planners the buzz words were 'benchmarking', 'internationalization', or 'networking', while cities were competing to find a niche and be a place on the economic map, especially in Europe. This *Zeitgeist* is probably why

²⁴ An interesting up to date survey of the theme can be found in Gunilla Budde, Sebastian Conrad and Oliver Janz Eds, *Transnationale Geschichte : Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2006. A review in English by Michael Geyer, together with a set of other accounts of the book, is available at <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/rezensionen/2006-4-032>

²⁵ For our initial forays into the field, Shane Ewen, 'the internationalization of fire protection: in pursuit of municipal networks in Edwardian Birmingham', *Urban History*, 32, 2, 2005, p.288-307; Pierre-Yves Saunier, "Changing the city: urban international information and the Lyon municipality, 1900-1940" *Planning perspectives*, vol.14, n.1, 1999, 19-48.

we followed, regularly though not assiduously, the development of three threads of scholarship that never failed to intrigue us, for they seem both so close and so distant.

In other districts of the social sciences and the humanities, our colleagues were at work to analyze the importance of cities as places in the new international division of labor (the world city/global city thread), the development of the international activities of municipal urban governments (the internationalization of cities theme) and the fortune of local authorities networking (the multilevel governance theme). These sociologists, geographers or economists seemed to be very different creatures. Some of them were flying from Singapore to Seoul where local authorities were listening to their advice about how to rise to the rank of 'global cities', others were pronouncing on the new rise of cities in an age of transnational governance and obsolescence of the nation state, and many lived on lower versions of this gleaming activities. All of them surfed the wave of globalization, claiming that this new international political economy of flows had given a new importance to the study of cities. Despite that we were not really at ease with such entrepreneurial and prophetic skills, we learned a lot from what they wrote. The insistence of world cities scholars on hierarchy made us wonder about the polarities of our own circulations and connections; the very detailed analysis of what specific municipal governments could gain in contemporary networking propelled our curiosity for the costs and benefits of municipal organizations decades earlier, and current municipal policies to attract foreign investment and market their image on the regional or global scene led us to question what was at stake in intermunicipal cooperation and competition in the modern era. What they said also sound familiar to us: the interchange of urban policy recipes and methods was a basic feature of the municipal scene in the 19th century, local authority networking was on the map since the early 20th century, and more generally some cities had been commanding places in the organization of the world economy since centuries. In fact, we could not help but thinking that we had something in common, and that the inter-relations between cities we were studying had some sort of connection with their narratives of competition, networks, hierarchy and command.

The reverse was obviously not true, at least from our point of view: almost none of these scholars had the slightest interest for what municipal urban governments did across borders from the middle of the 19th century to the last

decades of the 20th. Almost none, as someone like Jefferey Sellers has been keen to consider that the current international activities of municipal urban governments, especially in terms of creating links with one another across borders, had some historical precedents not only in the celebrated Hanseatic League but also in circuits that took shape during the 19th century.²⁶ But this was it. For world city scholars, this was not only because, for a long time, they neglected to consider the role of city governments as global actors, if only to boost their city to global city status. While they have superficially done so, as part of a move to include 'agency' their agenda that bent too heavily on macro economic trends and structures,²⁷ they are still not really interested into what municipal urban governments have done after they emerged from the construction of nation states. At most, history is a heuristic tool to explain variation in the fate of specific global cities and to account for their accumulation of global features. Janet Abu Lughod's historical exploration of America's global cities, as well as Neil Brenner's take on her volume, are a blatant illustration of this limited and teleological use of history.²⁸ Despite Abu-Lughod's insistence that 'history matters', her historical explorations are limited to tunnelling through the past to unveil the 'roots' of current global cities, with a focus on current characteristics such as established by global and world city scholarship (the impact of global economic flows and cycles on the city's position and social space). As she writes, "explaining the developments during (the) most recent cycle of urban development constitutes the ultimate goal of this book" (p. 161). All in all, Anthony

²⁶ Jefferey Sellers, 'Transnational urban associations and the State : contemporary Europe compared with the Hanseatic League', in Nico Randeraad, ed., 'Formation and transfer of municipal administrative knowledge', *Yearbook of European Administrative History*, 15, 2003; "Re-Placing the Nation: An Agenda for Comparative Urban Politics," *Urban Affairs Review*, 40, 4 (2005), p.419-445.

²⁷ Lip service has been paid by Saskia Sassen to post Second World War city twinning in a recent piece, while Andrew Kirby, Sallie Marston and Kenneth Sea Holes contributed a very brief chapter on 'World cities and global communities : the municipal foreign policy movement and new roles for cities' in Knox & Taylor, *World cities*

²⁸ Neil Brenner, 'World city theory, globalization and the comparative-historical method. Reflections on Janet Abu-Lughod's Interpretation of Contemporary Urban Restructuring', *Urban Affairs Review*, September 2001, p.124-147

King's caveats of the presentism and economicism of global-world cities scholarship seem to have remained unheeded,²⁹ and this has been especially clear in our sphere of interest, that is the role of municipal urban governments to foster interconnections and interdependencies among cities in the 19th and 20th centuries. P.J Taylor has once revealed the cause for this neglect in a very concise sentence: with the emergence of a state centered political and economic world order from the Westphalia treaties to the very late 20th century, cities disappear out of the radar screen of world city scholars 'Cities became nationalized, mere components of nation states, cogs in national economies'.³⁰ Exit cities and rest in peace : as the pendulum of history swung to nation states, it was as just if they had become non entities as sites or protagonists of the intense cross national, regional and global economic flows of the 19th and 20th centuries. It would be only at the favour of a new political and economic order, the globalization moment of the late 20th century, that they would surface again to benefit from the attention of world city scholarship. The growing literature on the internationalization of cities and the changes into urban governance does not show a much higher degree of attention for history. While most of world city scholars are keen to engage with world system theories and their medieval and early modern avatars, most scholars of the internationalization of cities bluntly confine their interest into the last 3 or 4 decades. There is not even a feeling that this could be different when one reads some recent volumes like Peter Kresl & Earl Fry *Urban response to internationalization* (2005), or Hank Savitch & Paul Kantor *Cities in the international marketplace* (2001). According to them, the new world economic and political order was born yesterday, and it was only following this cue that municipal urban governments had to adjust their governance structure and policies to develop their appeal for capital and firms. Even a scholar like Patrick Le Galès, who is keen to consider the historical development of urban governance in Europe, and to stress the agency of cities in claiming international status from the 1980s, considers that the 19th and 20th centuries mark the eclipse of European

²⁹ King, A. D. *Global cities: post-imperialism and the internationalization of London*. New York: Russell Sage, 1991.

³⁰ Taylor, *World city network*, p.15

municipal governments as significant actors.³¹ Integrated within the national economy and polity, it would only be from the 1980s with the strengthening of European construction and the retrenchment of the state that they find a window of opportunity to come back as significant political and economic agents.³² Shifting towards the third stream of studies we have been following up, Le Galès only quickly acknowledges the long history of formal municipal networks similar to those who have been blossoming in Europe from the 1980s. There, he fares better than the bulk of scholarship that investigates this aspect of the international policies of municipal urban governments. Municipal networks have notably attracted the attention of scholars who tried to survey the emergence of multi level governance in tow contexts. For those who are focussing on the impact and forms of European integration, stressing the growing role of policy networks, the associations and networks of municipal urban governments who tried to lobby by the EU and shape a European Union urban policy were an interesting case in point. There again, the idea and the empirical studies that derived from it did limit their interest to the 1980s.³³ Another set of scholars were interested into world size municipal networks, as one of the clues that witnessed for the recent strengthening of a global civil society who contributed to frame and answer issues beyond the national domains. This literature on social movements, issue and advocacy networks, has elected a few themes as central: social contention, human rights, women's rights and the environment are some of these.³⁴ It is in this context that empirical investigations of municipal networks with an activity in climate protection has developed.³⁵ There again, it was not even considered possible that municipalities had done anything to consider these

³¹ Patrick Le Galès, *European cities : social conflict and governance*, Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2002

³² It is interesting to note that the French version of the book is titled *Le retour des villes européennes* (the return of european cities)

³³ John Bennington & Janet Harvey 'Transnational local authority networking within the E-U : passing fashion or new paradigm', in David Marsh, ed, *Comparing policy networks*, Buckingham : Open University press, 2003, p.149-166.

³⁴ A good introduction to this field is Sidney Tarrow *The new transnational activism* New York : Cambridge University Press, 2005. -

³⁵ Bulkeley, H. and Betsill, *Cities and Climate Change: urban sustainability and global environmental governance*. London: Routledge. 2003

environmental questions before the last decades, and one statement that the history of transnational municipal networks began in the 1980s is a clear indication of the chronological horizon of these studies.³⁶

This fact that the history of cities was not relevant was another reason why we were fascinated by the scholarship on world cities, internationalization of cities or transnational local authority networking. We did and do not blame any of these authors for doing so. First because the benefits we derived from their achievements, and second because we do not think that anyone should be taken to task for having omitted to pay tribute to the disciplinary division of labor. Clearly, their agendas and projects were just foreign to consider historical whereabouts, and why historians would moan about it ? Nevertheless, we were left with this contrast between a sense of familiarity from our part and an estrangement from history on behalf of this impressive mass of scholarship.

A transnational agenda for historians of cities

Let's wrap it up: on one hand, historians are now on the move to historicize globalization understood as the uneven pulse of interconnecting bonds between regions, culture, religions, linguistic worlds or nations. On the other hand, the urban side of globalization studies dismisses one chunk of history, that is the 19th and 20th century, history as irrelevant. Even an urban theorist like Michael Smith, who we believe has hit the right buttons in his critics of global-world city theory,³⁷ does not see the history of cities as a way to 'historicize the global city'. The book section that he develops under this title sheds a critical light on the 'newness' of the current globalization moment by stressing how industrialization deindustrialization and urban restructuring have been features of 19th century capitalism as well, but he does not connect this to the history of cities in the 19th century.³⁸ Smith's for wider political and

³⁶ Harriet Bulkeley 'Transnational municipal networks and urban governance' Paper presented at the Joint Sessions of Workshops – Uppsala 2004 Policy Networks in Sub National Governance: Understanding Power Relations .

³⁷ Michael Peter Smith 'The global city : whose social construct is it anyway ? », *Urban Affairs Review*, v.33, n.4, 482–488, 1998.

³⁸ Michael Peter Smith, *Transnational urbanism. Locating globalization*, London : Blackwell, 2001.

historical context to historicize the criss-crossing of social spaces across borders and between localities does neither include the history of cities as a possible resource. Though, his call for localized study of transnational urbanism, his concern for transnational practices, makes us believe that there a passage to be explored here. Briefly put, this is how the project for this volume has emerged: as an attempt to make ends meet, as a proposal to make urban history one of the avenues to historicize globalization and its urban sides, and as a proposal for the cross fertilization between the history of cities and urban studies in the globalization test tube.

There are several possible ways for the meeting to take place, of which we will just mention a few here, as a reflect of the past, present and possibly future agenda for historians of cities who would want to join the party. We'll pay a specific attention to the actual or possible contribution by historians of the 19th and 20th century, not only because this is our turf, but also because this is the chronological chunk that is relegated into oblivion by scholars of current urban global trends.

The first, and possibly most obvious one, is the history of urbanization itself. Medieval historians like Thierry Dutour have stressed that the dynamics of economic exchange sustained urban growth and gave birth to interconnected cities in Europe from the 8th-9th centuries, and warn us that the urban adventure is a component of the development of economic exchanges.³⁹ Paul Hohenberg and Lynn Hollen Lees had also stressed in a former synthetic essay that, before the year 1000, Europe was but a phase of a long distance commercial activity that linked Northern territories to China and sub Saharan Africa, with a core in the rival empires of Constantinople and Baghdad. Several threads of caravan cities, port cities and emporium cities served this trading activity, and their growth followed the pulse of this long distance trade.⁴⁰ Paul Bairoch, who embraced an even wider picture in his mammoth survey from the 1980s, also suggest that the study of the growth of cities from commercial fortune in the very long term, from Phoenician Tyro an Byblos and African medieval cities, can usefully stimulate the historical imagination when it comes to contextualize

³⁹ Thierry Dutour, *La ville médiévale. Origines et triomphes de l'Europe urbaine*, Paris : Odile Jacob, 2003

⁴⁰ *The making of urban Europe*, Cambridge Mass : Harvard University Press, 1985 chapter 2.

interconnection and interdependence. This is all the more true with the urbanization waves of the Middle Ages, and the transcontinental archipelago described by Janet Abu-Lughod for 1250-1350,⁴¹ the system of cities generated by the expansion of the Spanish empire in the 14th and 15th centuries, and for the urban development of the 19th and 20th century in Europe and in Asia, Africa. In all these cases, whatever the fuel of urbanization, trade, industry, colonial expansion, their reconstruction of urban growth rhythms and maps seem to make urban historians able to provide a useful compass to assess the breadth of world systems. Scholars who belong to this 'cliometric' side of urban history may also find ways to contribute to the urbanisation of globalization history through another arrangement that takes insight from global-world city scholarship. Peter Taylor and the Leigborough group have been very keen to reconstruct the different flows between their world cities, to provide measurable data upon which to establish the directions of flows that link these cities together, so that a geography of global connectivity could be established. What is interesting here is not so much that they have sampled, analyzed and mapped the localization of services firms branches, media conglomerates companies or INGOs. We do not think that localization as such allows to pronounce on the content and intensity of an activity in a given place. What we find more intriguing is their attempts to study connectivity from more connecting data. This is what they have done, for example, with air passenger travel from 1977 to 1997.⁴² Scholars of urban systems, such as Pim Kooij and others, would certainly be able to marshal empirical evidence to reconstruct the circulations of measurable quantities among cities in the 19th and 20th century: the telegraph, the steamship, the telephone, the railroad moved words, goods and people between cities, and data can be gathered and harnessed to provide a clear view of connections and circulations between urban sites in regional, oceanic or global settings.⁴³

⁴¹ Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European hegemony : the world system A.D. 1250-1350*, Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1989.

⁴² <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/datasets/da10.html>

⁴³ Recent clues for such a contribution have been provided by Michael Miller's study of the 'business' adventure in transportation that the Hajj pilgrimage has represented since the steamship took over. See his 'Pilgrim's progress : the business of the Hajj', *Past and Present*, 191, May 2006, p.189-228.

The historical study of cities as sites for flows is, also, clearly a promising spot. Let's only consider the kind of flows and related consequences which Arjun Appadurai told us as creating major disjunctures in our radically different modern world: ethnoscapas (flows of people and the impact of these flows), mediascapas (for information), technoscapes (technologies), finanscapas (capital) and ideoscapes (ideas, ideals and ideologies).⁴⁴ We think that historians of cities can contribute to explain that cities, as platforms, hubs and sites for these different flows throughout history, have often been places where disjuncture was created. Pick up ethnoscapas, and try to place Appadurai's assertion that the movement of people is now an essential feature of the world, which affects national policies and international relations 'to a hitherto unprecedented degree'. 13th century Venice, 16th century Mexico or Goa, early modern Constantinople, late 19th century New York City, and you see municipal authorities and urban societies, aside with monarchies or national governments when available, coming to grips with the question of transcultural urban landscapes and polyglot societies and facing major disjunctures in the history of the community. One of the answers that was provided was urban segregation, and scholars are beginning to explore painstakingly the actual implementation of globally diffused segregationist ideas, linking it to transnational capital flows and flows of political support.⁴⁵ Cities have also been sites for temporary migrations, such as those generated by pilgrimages or tourism. There again, urban historians can suggest some dots on the 'i' and crosses on the 't' of globalization, by showing how much the impact and responses to these momentaneous irruptions have changed Mecca, Roma, Benares or the cities from the European Rivas and the South East Asia seashore over centuries. Similar suggestions could be made for each of Appadurai's scapes. Just consider briefly that values such as freedom and identity and other major values and ideals have been assembled and maintained in urban settings, that newspapers, news agencies or radios and televisions are living from an about city news, that a host of technologies have emerged, spread or

⁴⁴ Appadurai, *Modernity*, p.33-43

⁴⁵ This is the current project of Carl Nightingale at SUNY Buffalo, who is working on a book project called *Race Cities: A World History of Urban Color Lines*. See his stimulating *The Transnational Contexts of Early Twentieth-Century American Urban Segregation.* *Journal of Social History*, Spring 2006, p.667-702

organized for and between urban sites. It is only for Apapdurai's finanscapes that the cities as sites do not appear as a fruitful investigation ground, though the localisation of major financial or commodities markets in urban sites may offer some leverage to explore how some financial and business groups have managed to locate these major economic institutions in a given place. In all these fields, there is room for historians of cities to join efforts with Janet Abu Lughod's attempts to show that global forces have shaped city's evolutions well before the last decades of the 20th century,⁴⁶ and to complete her findings by saying how much city life, city groups and city equipments have shaped these global forces. This exploration of cities as sites where globalization deployed as a range of processes, projects and impacts has begun with the long list of studies that have pushed the history of cities beyond the territorial limits of the city they were studying, and we think that it will boom in a near future under the spell of historians of cities who want to prove that cities matter, and to chart the contribution of cities to world history.

But there is also a more specific urban angle to this attempt to historicize globalization that historians have explored. This might be where an urban variable clearly emerges. Indeed, there has been an intensive interchange of ideas, images, know hows, knowledge of and about the city in the *longue durée*. Through the mechanisms of imperial and national construction and competition, views and ways to conceive, organize, manage, design, describe or live urban life have been shipped many times across the oceans and the lands. European cities were taken in a net of comparison, narratives and images by pilgrims, travelers and officers from almost an immemorial time, while the cities of the New and the Old worlds, and in the former case this concerns the urban sites of North as well as of Central or South America, have been connected by comparisons, by flows of administrators and migrants, by legislative and juridical frameworks since the late 16th century. The fascination that the Spanish settlers and visitors felt for cities like Mexico was very much similar to the hopes and aspirations of those who envisioned America as the 'City on the hill'. Similar urban comparisons which vehiculated images, impressions, comparisons and emulations certainly took place in a South East Asia of connected histories, while it is only by ignorance that we cannot speak of other regions.

⁴⁶ Abu-Lughod, *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles* .

The modern age is not just another layer in this *longue duree* history of urban circulations. As other moments, it has specific features, most of them having to do with the perception of the city by our human kind that lived this moment. In fact, it is quite suggestive to realize that observers from the late 19th century fathomed some of the statements that world-city scholars have been making a century later: just like Norman Angell stated that the world had become integrated to an unprecedented degree,⁴⁷ other world watchers spoke of the world city that was to emerge from the city regions growing out of industrialization,⁴⁸ while the latter was perceived and defined as a common present and future context for the Old and the New World.⁴⁹ In those years, the Atlantic nexus was conceived as the core of global urbanization, and those who coped with this process for questions of business, power, government or knowledge considered it a privileged space for comparisons, action and inspirations. It was the moment when the urban variable gained in autonomy as a specific domain, both in the professional, political or social national spheres, and in the transatlantic trade of non material goods. This social division of the interchange work was partly based on the perception of this common urban fate of the Atlantic world, and the 'urban question' was shaped from national as well as from transnational grounds. Though this may have not yet been fully considered, many professions, disciplines and policies connected with the city were shaped through transnational interchange, and notably its transatlantic basin. The fields of housing, urban public health (visiting nursing, urban dispensaries), sanitation engineering, policing, fire fighting, unemployment, city planning, urban sociology and municipal urban government itself were such specializations of the social urban domain that thrived on transnational circulations and connections as much as from national demands and contexts.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Norman Angell, *Europe's optical illusion*, London : Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, 1909.

⁴⁸ Patrick Geddes, *Cities in evolution; an introduction to the town planning movement and to the study of civics*, London, Williams & Norgate, 1915.

⁴⁹ Contemporary statistical surveys of urbanization such as those by Alfred Legoyt (1867) or Emile Levasseur (1887) in France, Adna Weber in the US (1899), do resolutely embrace a number of countries on both sides of the Ocean and frame the 'growth of cities' as a transnational and transatlantic process.

⁵⁰ Clues and leads in Christiane Crasemann Collins., *Werner Hegemann and the Search for Universal Urbanism*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2005; Colette Chambellan, *Le*

From the second half of the 19th century, while the city became the object of a dedicated comparative attention that provides us with the archival and documentary evidence to build up a transnational history of cities, projects for changing the situation at home began to be extracted from the observation of cities across the Ocean. Gertrud Schlichter, Daniel Rodgers and Axel Schäfer may have been the first to chart the transatlantic basin urban interchange.⁵¹ This was when what was characteristic of the “European” or the “American city” began to be disputed and discussed in order to be used in the management, government and politics of urban societies. This debate not only touched upon questions and answers, but also the identity of those who were asking the questions and suggesting the answers. This was the moment when elected officials, political leaders, social activists and architects invented themselves as urban experts through the observation of cities in other lands. We are still grappling with the legacy of this moment when a specific trade in urban ideas, designs, regulations was developed out of this mutual observation.

Urban matters were discussed as ways to access beauty, to organize social order, to achieve a certain idea of government, to fulfill national glory, to establish certain living standards, to win market shares. This latter aspect is often left behind, but there was an Atlantic market for lighting provision, transportation and waste management in cities from the second half of the 19th century, well before the recent

Musée Social en son temps, Paris: Presses de l'Ecole Normale Supérieure, 1998; Christian Topalov, *Naissance du chômeur 1880–1910* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994) ; Kathryn Kish Sklar, Anja Schüler and Susan Strasser (eds.), *Social Justice Feminists in the United States and Germany: A Dialogue in Documents, 1885–1933* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998); *Contemporary European History*, special issue ‘Municipal connections’, v.11, n.4, November 2002 ; *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, special issue ‘Medicine as a Social Instrument: Rockefeller Foundation, 1913–45’ Vol. 31, No. 3, 2000 ; Shane Ewen, ‘the internationalization of fire protection: in pursuit of municipal networks in Edwardian Birmingham’, *Urban History*, 32, 2, 2005, p.288–307.

⁵¹ Gertrud Amy Schlichter, *European backgrounds of American reform 1880–1915*, Ph. D, University of Illinois, 1960 ; Daniel Rodgers, *Atlantic crossings. Social politics in a progressive age*, Harvard UP, 1998 ; Axel R Schäfer, *American Progressives and German social reform, 1875–1920*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000.

growth of the conglomerates that now preside over the destiny of urban waters from India to Europe and South America.⁵² Those who engaged with urban aspects included businessmen as well as physicians, lawyers, municipal technicians, scholars, migrants, administrators and diplomats. Their worldviews, their actions, their aspirations and their limits evolved out of the dynamics of mass migration, the expansion of firms and banks, the struggle of nation states for status and power, the development of research universities and the professionalisation process. The urban dialogue between American and German urban reformers, extensively surveyed by Daniel Rodgers and Axel Schäffer at the turn of the 19th century is a reminder of this situation: municipal governments and city planning experiments were often discussed and compared as elements in a social reform package that also included social insurance or economic regulation. While they were promoting urban autonomy, zoning, city planning, administrative reform or the municipal ownership of utilities, American Progressives such as Richard Ely, Frederic Howe, Frank Goodnow or Edward Bemis were also installing the university professor as an important figure in the public sphere, just like the German professors they had trained under.⁵³ The trade in urban ideas was not merely an exchange about city things. It was part and parcel of the discussions about the organization of human societies, and there was a clear connection of these exchanges to the stir of universal aspirations and ideologies, from socialism and liberalism to pacifism.⁵⁴

While there are many possible urban ways to contribute historical depth to the study of globalization, we have chosen to focus on a very specific one in this volume. What we have picked up here is just the most appropriate to open a conversation with current scholarship on global cities, on the internationalization of cities, and on city

⁵² One example with Samuel J Martland, 'Progress illuminating the world: street lighting in Santiago, Valparaiso and La Plata 1840-1890', *Urban History*, 29, 2; 2002.

⁵³ See also Dorothy Ross, *The origins of American social science*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1991, chapter 3.

⁵⁴ Pierre-Yves Saunier 'Taking up the bet of connections: a municipal contribution', *Contemporary European History*, special issue 'Municipal connections ', v.11, n.4, November 2002, p.507-527

networks and their contribution to multilateral governance, because of our evaluation of such opportunities. The point of departure for this ambition is to reverse to postulates made by our colleagues who work on the last decades. One is the role of cities as passive sites for the flows that have been making and unmaking the world. The other is the oblivion into which the moment between the beginning of the 19th century and the end of the 20th century has fallen. We want, instead, to insist on a 'transnational municipal moment' which came into existence at the very moment when the crystallization of the state in its national form happened. To do so, we have chosen to focus on the role of municipal urban governments as one embodiment of urban agency, in its most institutional form, and to explore the 'transnational municipal moment' with a range of contributions that explore different chronological, geographical and thematic aspects of this moment.

Explorations into the transnational municipal moment

Though, we do not believe that municipal urban governments are impersonations of cities, and it is clear to us and to the contributors of this volume that many other protagonists participate to the establishment, operation and maintenance of the durable structures we are purporting to scrutinize. But what municipal urban government has to offer is a range of first hand opportunities to study how policies, knowledge, regulations and know hows have been exchanged by discrete protagonists who have recorded their activities in report, correspondence, budgets and regulations. We do believe that the historical contribution to the study of globalization must be based on first hand scholarship based on original material, not merely on an assemblage of second hand material. Municipal urban governments are then an appropriate target for scholars who want to ingrain their urban studies into time.

We are contending that from the middle of the 19th century emerged durable protagonists, structures, cultures, legal and organizational frameworks for the transnational activities of municipal urban governments, patterned on long lasting circulatory regimes and spaces which still contribute to frame the activities of cities on the world scene today. We share a set of hypothesis that support this contention. First, we observe the definition of perceived convergences across different nations in

the 19th century: while a sense of difference never yields abruptly to a discourse of similarity, there is nevertheless an ever increasing discourse that insists on the existence of a common horizon for cities in Europe, the North Atlantic, but also outside the 'industrial west'. The growth of cities, which used to be seen as the pride or the pray of a nation, is seen as a common feature, the result of major economic, social and cultural change through which a number of 'issues' are established with a sense that common problems face the urban dwellers and the urban leaders from Glasgow to Mumbai. Second, we accept the idea that municipalities were a matrix in the development and implementation of policies aimed at regulating the social domain that emerged from this changing economic, social and cultural order –the space between the individual and the state, the private and the public- especially in Europe between the late 19th century and the 1930s. This encompassed unemployment, housing, public health, transportation and education policies. The nationalisation of these policies and the emergence of the welfare state often extrapolated from these municipal experiments and the personnel that was involved in their operation.⁵⁵ Third, we argue that all over the modern age, from 1850 to 2000, these municipal policies were eagerly observed across national borders, to be rejected or emulated, through the different communities that municipal technicians and elected officials took part into. Take any aspect of municipal activity in any city with some reasonable amount of urbanity, that is a correspondence with the relational function of cities such as manifested by their place as nodes and platforms in cultural, financial, ideological, migratory, religious flows, and you'll find that it has been sculpted, bumps and holes, in rhetorical or practical reference to experiences that were led in distant cities and foreign lands, with a clear consciousness that they shared a repertoire of issue setting and issue solving devices. Fourth, we think that the different communities which took part to this market of municipal knowledge

⁵⁵ In this sense, the 'great transformation' was preceded by a 'little transformation' that took place in municipalities. This is the point made by one of our contributors in his book, which begins by acknowledging this remark by Karl Polanyi that it was the observation of the municipal achievements in Red Vienna that marked the beginning of his reflection about the relation between economic, social and political change. See Renaud Payre *Une science communale ? Les réseaux de la réforme municipale dans la première moitié du xxe siècle*, Paris : CNRS Editions, 2007.

operated in specific and shifting frames that made for what possible and impossible for them to sift, winnow and claim. Inter-municipal circulatory regimes, i.e sets of long term patterns and relatively stable interactions between mutually identified protagonists in a given geopolitical and geographical framework have been operating since the second half of the 19th century, and their impact is still felt in current or recent trends like the internationalization of cities or the development of local authority networking. All these are not isolated statements. They rely on a body of scholarship that has been turned out by various sectors from the social sciences and humanities that turned their attention to these leftovers of modern history that municipal urban governments have been for a long time.⁵⁶ We now turn to put some of these research results in context while we scrutinize the two intertwined processes, which developed from the 19th century and that made the transnational municipal moment possible and suggestive. They are the municipalization of the world, that is the common status that urban governments come to live by across the globe, and the world of municipalities, i.e the connections and circulations that these municipalities have created to cope with this situation and the problems urban governments had to face.

The municipalization of the world

To continue the dialogue with world/global city scholarship, we are grasping cities at the very moment they dash off from the radar screen of world city scholars, that is at the beginning of the 19th century. In fact, we take it that the integration of cities into the nation state was a necessary condition for transnational inter-municipal relations to take place. This integration, so far, has largely been treated according to its economic dimension, the expansion of markets and the new order of production being seen as the causes for the integration of urban economies into national

⁵⁶ For two overviews of the literature in the field, see Pierre-Yves Saunier, 'Taking up the bet on connections : a municipal contribution', in special issue 'Municipal connections: co-operation, links and transfers among European cities in the Twentieth Century', *Contemporary European History*, Vol.11, N.4, 2002, 507-527, and 'La toile municipale aux XIX^e et XX^e siècles : un panorama transnational vu d'Europe', *Urban History Review/Revue d'Histoire Urbaine*, vol.XXXIV, n.2, Spring 2006, p.163-176.

economies. On the political level, the rise of the modern state had already strangled urban political autonomy in Europe since the 15th century, if we follow Charles Tilly,⁵⁷ and the nation state invention of local authorities as cogs in the machine was the cherry on the cake. But the establishment of this order, precisely because it was a by product of the consolidation of the nation state, also created the conditions for a common landscape of resentment and aspirations among municipal officers, municipal officers and urban elites in different counties. The assignment to a similar subaltern position in the administrative and political order as the nation state central government took over, the relegation to inferior forms of sovereignty where fiscal and legal compulsion tools had been captured by central governments, the disparition of urban forms of citizenships created a common 'legal' condition among cities across the world. In spite of obvious differences as to the domain that they granted to municipalities, national laws that gave a legal status to city government were shot in gusts between the late 18th century and the middle of the 19th century. Without considering the numerous revisions and modifications, there is a sense of rhythm that one can get from a rapid enumeration of the municipalization of the European city: France established a common mould for local communities with the decree of 14 December 1789, Prussia forged a municipal legislation in 1807, England created an incorporation standard with the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, Belgium gave municipalities their national status in 1836 Norway implemented a municipal status in 1837, Denmark in 1857, Sweden in 1862 and Italy in 1865. This did not mean that national homogeneity was obtained, and the case of united imperial Germany with its many different municipal legislations is a testimony of the diversity of municipal status that was possible inside a single nation state. But the municipal condition, that is the relative position of the urban government within a national institutional framework, became a common if not similar situation in Europe during the first two tiers of the 19th century.

The municipalization of the world was not merely a European phenomenon. Some of the frames that established municipalities as surrogates of the national government did not stay put within the limits of a given country. The French framework that put the *commune* at the bottom of the political and administrative pyramid travelled in

⁵⁷ Charles Tilly, *Coercion, capital and European states AD 990–1990*, Oxford : Blackwell, 1990.

the wagons of the revolutionary and imperial armies throughout Europe, before it was taken even further when the French colonial adventure began, first in Algeria and later in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Meantime, the British formula that establishes municipal corporations as creatures of the Parliament migrated across the Oceans to North America, South East Asia or Australia. Similarly, Dutch, Belgian or Spanish and Portuguese municipal legislations made their mark in their respective overseas projections. Though municipal government was not deemed as the appropriate form of government for native populations in any European empire, there eventually was an establishment of municipal urban governments, with some touch of electoral process, if only because the colonial powers were anxious to find a tax basis to contribute to the expanding costs of urban infrastructures.⁵⁸ Municipal councils appear, as in Shanghai in 1854 in the British concession, municipal legislation develops as with the Indian Municipal Act of 1874 or the Nigeria Townships Ordinance of 1917. There is much that remains to be thought and said about these migrations and the adaptations and inventions they fostered, and it is clear that we can't just confidently record and map the spread of the English or French 'models' as homogeneous and conflictual blocks. First, because the intensive cross observation between the two countries since the end of the 18th century, notwithstanding or because their fiery antagonism, quite likely included their respective municipal legislations : the anglophiles French liberals who copied the French municipal law of 1837, the cautious French mongers who established the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 certainly had an eye on each other's system. Second, because the municipalization of the world is not the steady implementation of European invented municipal government in faraway lands. On one hand, and just like in Europe, there were existing structures that associated urban dwellers to the government of cities before 'national' legislations made their mark. In Macao, Manilla or Havana, municipal government made in Spain or Portugal had to downsize existing authorities that had been established in the course of a centuries long history of urban life. Though there are hints that the urban government system was weak in China, the growth of the municipal government 'made in West' after the 1911 Revolution did not

⁵⁸ See the interesting section on Municipalities overseas in the 'Villes européennes outre mer' chapter by Xavier Huetz de Lemps and Odile Goerg in Jean Luc Pinol, *Histoire de l'Europe urbaine, tome II*, Paris : Seuil : 2003, p.152-159

take place in a vacuum.⁵⁹, and structures of urban government have been identified from Korea to Kyrgyzstan via Sri Lanka. On the other hand, it was from their agency that some non-European countries like Japan or the Ottoman Empire designed reform projects through an observation of European municipal institutions. This could be a very painstaking process that included study and survey of European municipalities an even, as in the case of Istanbul, the creation of two pilot municipalities in Beyoghlu and Galata, and a linguistic and functional translation of the European vocabulary, beginning with that of 'municipality' (*belediyye*).⁶⁰ On the whole, recent research on this 19th century municipalization of the world suggests that new municipal institutions did not simply erased previous structures: in Beirut, in Tunis, in Damas, scholars have found a strong connection between pre-municipal institutions and the municipalities.⁶¹

If there is still a lot to be learn about this first wave that municipalized the world, we are really at loss with a second wave, that which followed World War 2. As former colonial possessions gained autonomy and national status, they adopted the nation state framework of their former metropolises. One aspect was the implementation of municipal legislations, creating a common subaltern status for urban governments, and expanding the status of municipalities that had often been hitherto reserved to a selected number of urban sites, as in French controlled Africa. During the years 1940-1960, the municipal condition became the common lot of cities in the whole

⁵⁹ Henriot, Christian. *Shanghai, 1927-1937: Municipal Power, Locality, and Modernization*, Strand, David, , *Rickshaw Beijing: City People and Politics in the 1920s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989 ; Goodman, Bryna, , *Native Place, City, and Nation: Regional Networks and Identities in Shanghai, 1853-1937*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1995

⁶⁰ Nora Lafi, 'From Europe to Tripoli via Istanbul : municipal reforms in an outpost of the Ottoman empire around 1870', in Joe Nasr and Mercedes Volait, eds, *Urbanism, imported or exported ? Native aspirations and foreign plans*, London : Wiley, 2003, p.187-205

⁶¹ See the contributions in Nora Lafi, ed, *Municipalités méditerranéennes. Les réformes urbaines au miroir d'une histoire comparée (Moyen-Orient, Magheb, Europe Méridionale)*, Berlin : Klaus Schwarz verlag, 2005, especially Jens Hannsen 'The origins of the municipal council in Beirut 1860-1908', p. 177-213

world. There is much too be learned about this second wave of municipalization, especially as to the references that were used by the new independent countries to shape their municipal legislation or practice. At first sight, it would seem that colonial frameworks were discarded, but there are certainly some aspects of them that remained in place, while other references and experiments were sought or provided by multilateral cooperation (from the UN division of technical assistance and its public administration branch, for example), or by the tutelary powers of the Cold War Era. What kind of advices may have been given and taken by and from US AID and Point IV program advisors, or by Soviet and Soviet trained administrators, is an area that offer quite interesting opportunities and insights in a near future.

Though, municipalization was not only a matter of constitutional or legislative status, and cannot be captured by mere examination of the moment where these legislations or regulations were sat up. There were, in many different national contexts, several moments where the municipalities were 'reinvented' and the municipalization of the world revamped, following the shifts in jurisprudence or legislation often impulsed by the efforts of municipalities to expand their sovereignty or their domain. Several of these moments are discernable throughout the modern age, with a couple more salient than the other. One of these episodes was the late 19th century-early 20th century, when municipalities on both sides of the Atlantic opened a conversation where foreign experiments and examples were used to justify municipal intervention in the fields of housing, transportation, lighting, water provision or public health. The transatlantic debate on municipal trading was the highlight of this moment, an episode we are quite familiar with thanks to the studies of a number of scholars.⁶² Another such moment of reinvention has been taking place from the 1980s. It has been captured by political scientists mostly, especially on the European level. They have stressed that European integration and the redefinition of capitalist mechanisms on a world plane had opened possibilities for European urban governments to act as organizers and regulators of local societies, as well as protagonists in the economic

⁶² Patrizia Dogliani, *Un laboratorio di socialismo municipale: la Francia, 1870-1920* Milano: Franco Angeli, 1992, p.163-182 ; Marjatta Hietala, *Services and urbanization at the turn of the century. The diffusion of innovations*, Helsinki: SHS, 1987 ; Daniel Rodgers, *Atlantic crossings.*, chap 4 et 5.

arrangement of the world order.⁶³ In many European countries, this triggered or combined with retrenchments of the national states that gave more leverage to urban municipal governments to seize on new competences and assert their presence and importance. Though, this third and more recent wave of the municipalization of the world was not limited to Europe. In Latin America, the transition from authoritarian regimes to democratic ones, often gave way to a new status and role from municipal urban governments, all the more that it took place in a context when the national governments were led to retrench their activities and expenses under the demands of multilateral and foreign loaners. Across the world, similar opportunities also flourished, all the more that international organisations like the United Nations and its agencies were anxious to promote local liberties and open direct channels with municipal and other local governments, especially in order to promote global policies in the domain of the environment or human settlement .⁶⁴

We think that there is a lot to be gained to think of these different moments together, connecting them with questions and frameworks. The municipal condition, as a transnational factor and circulation, clearly participates to the making of an interconnected and interdependent world, creating a common condition among urban governments at world scale. Charting and mapping its developments would be a contribution to historicize globalization. The debates about the subaltern condition of municipalities within nation states, as exemplified by past debates as the one on municipal training, by the fights of the 1950s around the European charter of self government, or by the current discussions for the establishment of a World charter of Local self government, also signify that this is a transnational theme and arena. Last, but not least, there are interesting comparisons to be made between the two moments in the municipalization of the world. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, like at that of the 20th and 21st centuries, opportunities have been seized by municipal urban governments to raise up their profile and step forward in new spheres (housing or services yesterday, economic governance and international

⁶³ See Le galès, *European cities*, esp chap 3 et 4.

⁶⁴ This attitude was especially manifest during the preparation of the 1992 Earth Summit, an 1996 Habitat Conference. On the environmental scene, see Bulkeley and Betsill, *Cities and climate change*

relations today, social cohesion and urban renewal in the two cases). In both contexts, there is a similar component of liberalism and laissez faire in the mainstream definition of national states competences, which left urban governments to face the matters that the growth of urban populations, the importance of inner cities poverty or the confronted them with. Another common feature in this long term history of the municipalization of the world is that, from the late 19th century, urban governments have built from their perception of common status, fate and problems to build worlds of their own, where they could compare situations, exchange experiments, define problems and adapt solutions.

The world of municipalities

From the last decades of the 19th century, and sometimes over the opposition of their respective national states, municipalities have engaged in cross borders conversations. These were carried out by municipalities as such, but also by the individuals who were connected or interested to municipal government as a career, a field of study or a market. The history of this world of municipalities, that Marjatta Hietala was the first to tackle in the 1980s,⁶⁵ has been steadily developing, and overview of this development has been given elsewhere.⁶⁶ We do think that it is relevant, unto its very specific details, to the current study of globalization and of the place of cities in it. Another reason why it is relevant is that the regimes which have ordered the world of municipalities for more than 150 years are still operating today, and that they contribute to shape what urban governments can think and do, individually and collectively. Accordingly, our purpose here is to identify the regimes, the configurations of intermunicipal exchange, i.e sets of long term patterns and

⁶⁵ Marjatta Hietala was the first to pay a specific attention to this with her work on Finnish and Scandinavian cities. See Marjatta Hietala, *Services and Urbanization at the Turn of the Century. The Diffusion of Innovations* (Helsinki, SHS, 1987) ; “Transfer of German and Scandinavian Administrative Knowledge : Examples from Helsinki and the Association of Finnish Cities” *Jahrbuch für Europäische Verwaltungsgeschichte*, 15, (2003) 109–130 ; “La Diffusion des Innovations : Helsinki 1875–1917”, *Genèses*, 10, (Javier 1993), 74–89

⁶⁶ Saunier, ‘La toile municipale’

relatively stable interactions between mutually identified protagonists. Specific cities moved in and opted out the structures and channels that ruled these regimes according to the tactics and strategies of their governing and administrative leadership, but they still knew they were out there, and there are few lines of municipal work that were not affected one way or another by the symbolic, practical and political capital that ran through the world of municipalities.

The first regime is a regime of informal international transfers dating from the late 19th century and the early 20th century. Selective borrowing or imposition are the most frequent processes of exchange that can be observed. As they often take place between two geographically defined points, or between a geographically defined point and a series of others, transfers is a convenient though approximate way to define the flows that develop under this regime. Originally, this regime was developed in the European and North Atlantic context, but quickly expanded towards Latin America, North Africa, the lands Down Under and the Middle East, most often following imperial tracks. The selling of services, the exchange of know hows as well as the definition of urban problems and municipal government canons has ever since been pulsing through the channels that have then been opened, though around changing cores and in contested geographies. The paradigm of this regime, its social and cultural engine, is emulation to cope with current urban problems as a 'modern metropolis' should, and its actors were mostly municipal technicians, municipal elected officials as well as those who had to define and tackle urban affairs at the national level. Its impact is felt through the travelling of technologies, regulations and designs, organized and maintained by peer to peer contact.

The second regime is one of structured transnational organization. It was sketched on the eve of WW1, and took an enduring form in the 1920s. Under its spell, the field gets formalized with dedicated long lasting institutions that act as stages and stagers of the interchange in municipal matters. These transatlantic clearing houses, specialised institutions and individuals, contribute to create, orient and feed webs through which information is selected, winnowed, changed, translated, adapted, selected. Members of municipal governments are one of the players in these networks, hard gamers if ever, but also striving to control them alongside an increased number of protagonists. Intergovernmental Organizations and

Philanthropic Foundations played a major role in setting up the regime itself,⁶⁷ while the emphasis that was put on technical and administrative aspects of municipal urban government opened avenues for scholars to embark as experts. The organisations of municipalities are the spearhead of this regime, in a thicker and thicker fabric where the hegemony of the International Union of Local Authorities, created in 1913, was disputed after World War Two by new organisations that adopted a different stance, defined a new circulatory space or introduced a different political creed.⁶⁸ Under this regime, the definition and diffusion of 'one best way' solutions tends to substitute to the variety of ad hoc imitations, borrowings and imposition. What is at stake is a definition of universal tools, words, ideas, professionals and policies to cope with the City as a regional and global fact. In this regime, the interplay between the different municipal organizations on one hand, and the world order on the other, is a crucial one. Indeed, one of the major stakes that the municipal organisations have been contesting about is to be recognised as the speaking voice of municipalities in the world, and to sit at debates that had been the exclusive domain of the national states. The creation, in 2004, of a new intermunicipal organization called 'United Cities and Local Governments' is clearly the expression of this ambition to make the voice of cities heard by the United Nations Organizations and the other intergovernmental organizations such as the World Bank. It is also the result of the insistant invitation by these intergovernmental organizations for municipal associations to provide them with a single partner, one that could provide both easily identifiable partnership possibilities, and opportunities

⁶⁷ Pierre-Yves Saunier, '*Selling the idea of cooperation*. The US Foundations and the European components of the Urban International (1920s-1960s), in Giuliana GEMELLI (ed.), *American Foundations and large scale research: construction and transfer of knowledge*, Bologna: Clueb, 2001, 219-246

⁶⁸ on IULA, see Patrizia Dogliani, "European Municipalism in the First Half of the Twentieth Century : the Socialist Network", *Contemporary European History*, 11, 4 (2002), 573-596, and Renaud Payre and Pierre-Yves Saunier, « L'internazionale municipalista : L'Union Internationale des Villes fra 1913 e 1940 », *Amministrare*, anno XXX, gennaio-agosto 2000. On the new organizations and their relationship wit IULA, Oscar Gaspari, "Cities Against States ? Hopes, Dreams and Shortcomings of the European Municipal Movement 1900-1960", *Contemporary European History*, 11, 4 (2002), 529-548.

to shunt national governments on subjects they'd not be keen to commit themselves, like the Kyoto protocols.

The third regime could be labeled as the global and regional competition maze. Its growth in the 1980s took place hand in hand with major changes in the political world order, in the international political economy and in urban governance in several national and regional settings, the result being an explicit research of economic competitiveness by individual cities which resorted to collective strategies to achieve this goal.⁶⁹ In Europe only, more than 40 thematic networks have been created to band municipalities together by issues, by public policy sector, by size, by regions, by features.⁷⁰ Those networks often include business firms and regional governments side by side with cities. Often tailored for a very specific aim and very much concerned with lobbying at Brussels, they have been thriving on a market oriented discourse of competition, including the competition among their members and among the networks. Urban mayors feature prominently in their activities while the administrative or technical branches of municipal governments are mostly side kicks that provide backstage logistics or behind the scene expertise. These European features are roughly valid for other regional scenes and for the global arena, though it is of course ridiculous to assert this in a mere short phrase. The variety of partners that have bet on cities to develop their strategies (utilities firms, regional and global IGOs) is still fueling the developments and operation of this regime.

These three regimes are not strictly temporal, they intertwine rather than succeed to one another, their protagonists and features can recess in the background or come to the fore in an uneven manner. There are of course many continuities of discourse, practice and personnel that we won't even suggest here, and the enmeshment areas between the different regimes are of very special interest. Our point is that those

⁶⁹ See the assessment of these changes and their impact in Patrick Le Galès, *European cities : social conflicts and governance*, Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2002

⁷⁰ an idea of this ongoing networks craze in Paolo Perulli, Fabio Rugge, Raffaella Florio 'Reti di città: una forma emergente di governance Europea', *Foedus.Culture Economie e Territori*, n.4, 2002, p.53-70.

regimes are all in operation today, with their actors, structures and values rooted in time, and that they need to be taken into consideration together with economic globalization or governance changes to appreciate the current internationalization of cities. They may provide a key, as well, to find the urban variable, the specific contribution of cities to the making of the modern world, so deceptively pursued by urban historians since the 1970s. These are the lines we briefly sketched to invite a group of scholars with different perspectives to join us in this volume, and we hope readers will find their contributions as much useful as we did.