Tourist Utopias: Las Vegas, Dubai, Macau

Tim Simpson

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
University of Macau
Macau SAR, China

tsimpson@umac.mo

February 2012

The **ARI Working Paper Series** is published electronically by the Asia Research Institute of the National University of Singapore.

Note: The views expressed in each paper are those of the author or authors of the paper. They do not necessarily represent or reflect the views of the Asia Research Institute, its Editorial Committee or of the National University of Singapore.

Citations of this electronic publication should be made in the following manner: Author, "Title," ARI Working Paper, No. #, Date, www.nus.ari.edu.sg/pub/wps.htm. For instance, Smith, John, "Ethnic Relations in Singapore," ARI Working Paper, No. 1, June 2003, www.ari.nus.edu.sg/pub/wps.htm.

Asia Research Institute
National University of Singapore
469A Tower Block #10-01,
Bukit Timah Road,
Singapore 259770
Tel: (65) 6516 3810
Fax: (65) 6779 1428
Website: www.ari.nus.edu.sg
Email: arisec@nus.edu.sg

The Asia Research Institute (ARI) was established as a university-level institute in July 2001 as one of the strategic initiatives of the National University of Singapore (NUS). The mission of the Institute is to provide a world-class focus and resource for research on the Asian region, located at one of its communications hubs. ARI engages the social sciences broadly defined, and especially interdisciplinary frontiers between and beyond disciplines. Through frequent provision of short-term research appointments it seeks to be a place of encounters between the region and the world. Within NUS it works particularly with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Business, Law and Design, to support conferences, lectures, and graduate study at the highest level.

Tourist Utopias: Las Vegas, Dubai, Macau

In Dubai, the tourist is the perfect citizen who, rather than paying taxes, simply comes for two weeks, deposits a lot of money, and leaves with no further demands. Tourism is probably not what we think it is. Tourism no longer assumes the diplomacies of the state. The state borrows techniques from tourism. It is how the state has learned to float multiple stories and fabulous stupidities over a revenue stream.

(Easterling, 2006, p. 127)

At the start of the twentieth century, the sparsely-populated settlement of Las Vegas, Nevada served primarily as a temporary water stop for travelers on wagon trains and railroads *en route* between Los Angeles, California and other regions of the United States. The Trucial state of Dubai in what is now the United Arab Emirates was a small village whose negligible economy was dependent primarily on pearl diving and whose security relied on subjection to administration of an Indian Princely State under the sanction of the British Crown. The Chinese territory of Macau was a Portuguese colony whose "golden age" as a gateway for trade between Europe and Asia had ended more than two centuries before, and the city had earned the apt moniker of "sleepy backwater." In 1900 the populations of Macau, Dubai, and Las Vegas, respectively, were 64,000, 10,000, and 19. W.H. Auden referred to Macau in an early twentieth century poem as a European "weed" in the East, an "oddity" where "nothing serious can happen." At the time the words were written, the basic sentiment could have legitimately been applied to all three cities.

Little more than a century later, Las Vegas is known around the world as an entertainment Mecca, adult playground, and "city of sin," serving as a cinematic, literary, and philosophical metonym for prurient excess and hyperreality. Dubai is a phantasmagoric experiment in innovative architecture and futuristic urban design, featuring the world's tallest building, biggest shopping mall, and largest artificial island, and a sovereign debt so sizable that the city's economic troubles have the ability to rock global markets. The tiny city of Macau is now the most densely populated territory in the world, and has eclipsed even Las Vegas to become the most lucrative site of casino gambling on the planet. No longer simply overlooked, marginalized, or forgotten places through which people passed on their way elsewhere, each of these cities has become a "destination" attraction. These cities have gained prominence by producing nothing tangible, aside from the built environment itself, the construction of which is often designed and funded by non-local if not transnational concerns for the purpose of attracting non-local and often transnational tourists. Each city relies almost exclusively on profits derived from affect-driven tourist consumption related to such activities as gambling, shopping, sightseeing, and relaxation. Of course a territory with a local population that produces nothing and devotes the majority of the daily schedule to excessive consumption and leisure is not sustainable. Thus, the economic viability of each city today is completely dependent on those temporary tourist visitors as well as the nomadic workers who provide various touristic services, from hotel room cleaners to web designers, from security guards to singing gondoliers, from masseuses to celebrity chefs. That is, without tourist visitors and nonlocal workers these seemingly vibrant cities would effectively cease to be viable concerns. In 2010 alone, and in the midst of a global economic recession, Las Vegas, Dubai, and Macau were visited by a combined total of more than 70 million tourists; that number is significantly greater than the entire population of the United Kingdom, whose empire only a century ago covered a quarter of the earth.

3

FROM IMPERIALISM TO EMPIRE

At the start of the twentieth century, London was the hub of both national industrial capitalist production and international administration of a global empire, and the epitome of a "world city." London remains one of the most prominent cities in the world today, but the world around it has changed dramatically in recent decades. The collective ascendance of Las Vegas, Dubai, and Macau indicates a new regime of capital, the replacement of one form of imperialism with another type of Empire (Hardt and Negri, 2000), and the concomitant emergence of a new type of world city. In contrast to the type of territorial conquest that characterized the imperial ambitions of Britain, Portugal, and Spain (the powers that at one time or another colonized those three territories), contemporary Empire is "a *decentered* and *deterritorializing* apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanding frontiers" (p. xii). With a focus on Las Vegas, Dubai, and Macau, this article theorizes and analyzes an emergent urban form that is crucial to the spread of Empire – the city of tourist consumption that I will call the *tourist utopia* – with a focus on interrelationships among urban morphology and design, post-Fordist regimes of labor and consumption, themed environments and scripted experiences, mobility of tourists and workers, new forms of sovereignty and citizenship, and the production of new neo-liberal spaces and subjects.

In the remainder of this introduction I will develop my argument by addressing four objectives. (1) I will highlight the unique status of Las Vegas, Dubai, and Macau as enclavic "spaces of exception" within larger federal states. (2) I will use these three "post-world cities" to update the world city literature, which emerged in the political-economic context of industrial capitalism and the discourse of developmentalism, for the contemporary era of Empire. (3) I will explicate my comparative approach which conceptualizes these three cases as Foucaultian "paradigms." (4) I will explain my intentionally ironic reference to these cities as "utopias." Having thus clarified my argument, the remaining bulk of the paper will detail nine axiomatic assumptions underlying such exceptional, post-world city, paradigmatic, tourist utopias.[1]

FROM STATE TO SPACE OF EXCEPTION

The key condition that has enabled the remarkable development of these cities is that each is an autonomous "space of exception" to normal political and juridical rule, an enclave or "offshore" space in a larger federalist territory. These cities reveal "that intensified processes and patterns of uneven development today are increasingly expressed in enclave spaces" (Sidaway, p. 332). The identity of each comes from its exceptional status. The state of Nevada was for most of the twentieth century the only site of legal casino gambling in the United States. Dubai is widely regarded as the most progressive emirate in the UAE, the most open to foreign investment and visitors, and the least restrictive of personal liberties. Macau was for more than 400 years a European enclave in China, and even as a post-colonial city now rejoined with the motherland it

---

[1]   This research is based on an extensive review of the academic literature pertaining to each of these three cities, as well as experiential data emanating from a combined 10 years residence in Macau; two research trips to Dubai for a total of two weeks; and six trips to Las Vegas over a period of several years, each varying in length from several days to one week. In each city I have sought to engage tourists, workers, designers, artists, policy makers (where possible) and other relevant actors; to participate in the conventional tourist activities in order to apprehend the experience and observe the behavior of other tourists; to assess the qualitative effect of the built environment and urban form, and their various ambiances and scripted experiences; and paid particular attention to the infrastructure networks and transit points (e.g. airports, elevated trains, ferries, border crossings) that link the city and its subjects to other places.

remains a paradoxical enclave within the state as the only site of legal gambling in the PRC, with its own internal mini constitution, currency, legal regime, police force, and immigration policies.

Aiwha Ong (2006) and Ronan Palen (2003), have highlighted in different ways the importance of such exceptional spaces in the contemporary global economy (see also Baldacchino 2010; Hudson, 2000). For Ong, neoliberal economic policies in Asia can be understood as the deployment of the exception by nations in the region as a post-developmental strategy of governance. South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, and China in different ways pursue strategies of economic development via creation of special zones that entice transnational corporations with tax breaks and an available and "flexible" labor force, and "variegated citizenship" that parcels out economic advantages or personal freedoms to select local ethnic groups. Palan, on the other hand, describes the creation and evolution of distinct enclaves of financial activity that rely on a dialectical bifurcation between "on shore" realms that are subject to conventional state regulation and taxation, and "off shore" realms where some degree of those regulations are withheld. Offshore is not a literal description of an island locale, "not a territorial space but a juridical innovation," that functions in "an economy that is serving to destabilize established concepts of place, territory, and identity" (Palan, 2003, p. 162). Indeed while the phrase "offshore banking" calls to mind such locales as the Cayman Islands, Malta, Vanuatu, or the Isle of Man, the largest offshore center in the world today is actually the City of London (Palan, 2003, p. 19). Offshore refers to a constructed legal fabrication or regulatory fiction that cuts across or reconfigures conventional territory.[2]

The key operation of both "neoliberalism as exeption" and offshore finance is an uneven division or segmentation of a larger sovereign territory into parts, and selective application or relaxation of special regulations, or delineation of particular liberties, to only a circumscribed component of that territory. Palan contends that offshore designation "divides the sovereign corporate space of the nation into (at least) two virtual territories characterized by different degrees of regulation and taxation, specifically to attract international business" (p. 20). This "juridical bifurcation" (Palan, 2003, p. 20) of the nation-state is indicative of both approaches. Tourist utopias have developed as symbolically offshore "spatio-juridical enclosures" (Palan, 2003, p. 1), spaces of exception to conventional legal regimes in the national territory. Each city can be understood as a departure from the normal state order to which it belongs. They are "offshore" cities in a manner similar to which we think of offshore banks and tax havens, free trade zones, duty free shops, and shipping "flags of convenience." But the tourist utopia is a fundamentally different type of exception than those studied by Ong and Palan. Ong and Palan have examined exceptional spaces of *production*, whether that production is focused on conventional manufacturing of commodities for export or production of financial wealth through private banking; but the tourist utopia is an exceptional space of *consumption*.[3]

---

[2]   Like Gilles Deleuze's (2004) "desert islands" the offshore utopia may be born by "disarticulation" or "fracture" from continental territory, as in the case of Macau's relationship to the mainland, or by "originary" oceanic emergence or eruption from the confines of the larger national space, as with Las Vegas and Dubai (p. 9).

[3]   "Ong's focus on production also leaves those enclave spaces oriented towards consumption (such as enclaved tourist resorts) largely outside her vision" (Sidaway, 2007, p. 334).

FROM WORLD CITY TO POST-WORLD CITY

At the start of the twentieth century, there had emerged a clear network of world cities that managed industrial capitalism at national levels and various international empires, including New York, London, Manchester, Paris, Berlin, Chicago, Vienna, and St. Petersburg. To explore the role of industrial capitalism in production of the contemporary city, John Friedman (1986) proffered his world city hypothesis; seven statements about the functional role of cities in the global economy. However, in a period of Empire "the urban is now the generalized way of life of the postindustrial period of capitalism. The 'world city' has no externality left because it encompasses everything" (Keil, 2007, p. 167). In this environment we might understand the tourist utopia as an exception, an alternative type of world city for the contemporary era of capital. If the world city hypothesis was tied to the role of cities in the spread and development of a Fordist, industrial economy, then the tourist utopia is a significant node for dissemination of a post-Fordist and increasingly post-industrial global economy – a post-world city.

In a recent critique of the world city paradigm, Therborn indicates two shortcomings of the world city research agenda that call into question the explanatory power of the approach and that are particularly relevant to the emergence of tourist utopias: "It leaves the state out (of focus). It leaves the city out, as a built meaningful environment" (p. 273).

First, in these accounts, the state is all-but-absent as a primary component of geopolitics and of the global economy. "The world has been seen only as a world economy, and a world economy from which states are absent or marginal, and in any case declining and uninteresting" (p. 272). In other words, the world city approach tends to present those primary cities of London, New York, and Tokyo, as essentially "stateless," as autonomous nodes in an interconnected network that stretches around the globe. This assumption is consistent with the very different approach of Hardt and Negri, who tend to see the importance of states declining in the contemporary era. However, in contrast to the perspectives of both Friedman and Hardt and Negri, I will suggest that tourist utopias are thoroughly embedded in states and their economic vitality depends on a strong state. This might at first seem at odds with my suggestion that these cities are spaces of exception, but as we will see, the exceptional condition of these cities only becomes meaningful in the context of the state, and depends on that state for its very definition. However, functioning as "spaces of exception," the relationship of these cities to the state is of a paradoxical type – the centrality of the state derives from the very fact that it appears peripheral.

Second, Therborn complains that the global city literature ironically overlooks the importance of the city itself as a lived environment. Therborn notes that this research program "excluded urbanity, of any kind, city design, architecture, sociability, culture" (p. 273). In the world city literature, global cities appear as little more than corporate zip codes or "command points," an abstracted business environment in a networked economy, thereby effacing not only the actual office buildings, but the city parks, museum exhibitions, iconic landmarks, population diversity, transportation, and leisure activities that make the city what it is. To understand tourist utopias as post-world cities, by contrast, requires understanding exactly how the architectural elements, design decisions, population movements, and patterns of labor and leisure contribute to the ambiance of the city, comprising both its promise and its perils. Therborn's prognostications about the pending decline of the world city paradigm may be premature, but his criticism about its inherent limitations tied to "the hegemonic hold of stateless economism" (Therborn, 2011, p. 282) is apt. I redefine world cities in a manner that valorizes both their relation to the state and their appeal as actual experiential urban environments, and locates them as sites of consumption crucial to ongoing transformation of the global economy.

LAS VEGAS, DUBAI, AND MACAU AS PARADIGMS

This study is animated by Jennifer Robinson's (2011) call for a "comparative gesture" in the field of urban studies and joins a growing body of literature devoted to this cause (see also Robinson, 2004, 2006). This emergent comparative approach departs from traditional such approaches which tend to view cities as clearly bounded and self-contained spaces and seeks conventional metrics of concurrence or distinction among them. Contemporary comparative approaches instead conceive of "relational" comparisons that stress "interconnected trajectories – how different cities are implicated in each other's past, present and future" (Ward, 2010, p. 480), or approach comparison less as a method than as a strategy of theorizing itself (McFarlane, 2010). My study complements this enlightening but largely theoretical and abstract comparative urbanism with an empirical application of the approach to actual cities. The aim of this approach is *relation* rather than *separation*, *analogy* instead of *collation*, *allegory* as opposed to *correlation*.

I focus on Las Vegas, *Dubai*, and Macau because they are singular aberrations, three distinct urban environments that each poses a paradigmatic case. The indigenous characteristics of each city set it well apart from the others: a Sunbelt city in the American West which developed under a regime of market capitalism and democratic governance; an Islamic emirate and port in the petroleum-rich region of the Middle East, with roots in feudal patronage and with a unique corporate-style absolutist dynastic regime; and the oldest European colony in Asia recently reunited with China's post-Maoist, market-socialist economy. These three cities differ markedly in their respective geographies, cultures, histories, economies, and political systems. At the same time, the collective development of these cities says much about the dramatic changes in world systems in the latter twentieth century. Not much more than a generation ago Las Vegas, Macau, and Dubai stood, more-or-less, respectively in the First, Second, and Third Worlds. Today the "spatial divisions of the three Worlds" are "scrambled so that we continually find the First World in the Third, the Third in the First, and the Second almost nowhere at all" (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p. xiii). I am thus motivated by Robinson's (2011) eagerness "to encourage all kinds of novel and unusual comparative research to compensate for years of neglect and to challenge entrenched assumptions of incommensurability" in urban studies (p. 19), and to seek comparisons that confound divisions between the West and the rest, the North and the South, developed and developing states (see McFarlane, 2010, p. 728). The factor that makes these diverse cities commensurable is capital, and each represents the cutting edge of speculative financialization and consumption-driven accumulation typical of the contemporary economy.

Following Therborn's lead, but taking it a step further, I hope to deconstruct the very idea of a world cities *paradigm* by modulating the direction of the logic which informs the argument. The tourist utopia functions as a paradigm in the Foucaultian sense of the word. Like the panopticon for Foucault or the concentration camp for Agamben, "Paradigms establish a broader problematic context that they both constitute and make intelligible" (Agamben, 2009, p. 17). Friedman's world cities argument began with a set of seven hypotheses, which subsequent scholars explored in deductive fashion by testing them in various cities. The present approach, by contrast, begins with three singular and paradigmatic cases that function simply by the "analogical logic of the example" (Agamben, 2009, p. 18). Rather than proceed by deduction or induction – from universal law to particular case, or particular case to universal law – I proceed from the "particular to the particular" (Agamben, 2009, p. 19). In one sense, each city is nothing more than an exaggerated or hyperreal version of itself; each are cities of superlatives, featuring attractions that are the world's first, largest, tallest, and longest, or from a different perspective, most obscene, most environmentally wasteful, most ridiculous, or most exploitative, making them each superlative cities for analysis due to the transparency of their characteristics. I am not so much trying to place the *city* in the *world*, or find the *world* in the *city*, but to illustrate how the city simultaneously constitutes and demonstrates a set

of capital relations immanent within it. The aim is not to articulate an urban type but rather to allow each singular case to serve as "an *exemplar* of a general rule that can never be stated a priori" (Agamben, 2009, p. 22). After describing the tourist utopia, I will conclude characteristically with another paradigmatic case – a house of cards – that makes intelligible the discussion which precedes it.

IRONIC UTOPIAS

My reference to Las Vegas, Dubai, and Macau as "utopias" is intentionally ironic. Indeed, these cities might be construed as dystopian for the manner in which vast resources are deployed to benefit a few at the expense of many others, with often devastating social costs (Fong et al, 2011) and environmental consequences, in ways that do little to enrich people's humanity, community, intellect, or fellowship with their neighbors. However, we should be careful not to dismiss a utopian impulse that reverberates through the "topological imaginations" (Robinson, 2011, p. 16) of these cities, from several multiple perspectives, because it is crucial to understanding their recent development.

Each city is replete with all manner of fantastical and hallucinatory environments and attractions, representing myriad historical eras and cultural traditions, offering a wide variety of ambiances and experiences, and creating an environment akin to a cinematic dreamworld. The ancient civilizations of Babylon, Egypt, and Greece; the travels of Ibn Battuta and Marco Polo; capitalism's origins in Venice, Genoa, and Lisbon; the baroque dreams of Mad King Ludwig of Bavaria and Walt Disney – all converge in the built environment of the tourist utopia. True, the results, often unintentionally comical, are not paradisial, but they reflect competing attempts to imagine and construct Shangri-La with enormous appeal to tourists. Each city is ostensibly designed for *homo ludens*, man at play, and circulates images privileging consumption over production, leisure over labor, gratification over the daily grind. So while maintaining our critical edge we should not cynically dismiss the fact that tens of millions of people travel to these cities every year for the purposes of pleasure.

Each of these cities reflects a particular and widespread strain of neoconservative utopian thought that believes that an increasingly global "free market" will lead to perpetual economic growth, enhanced freedom, and the end of history; and that world conflict will dissipate into a global regime of democratic capitalism (Gray, 2003). The cities are the product of processes of federal financial deregulation and urban entrepreneurialism privileged by neoconservatives, and these programs are celebrated in plebian activities like gambling and shopping. In that sense, the development and governance of these cities emanates from one variety of utopian thought, however misguided that belief may be in light of empirical evidence.[4]

For prospective workers from peripheral states in the South or Southeast Asia, the job opportunities provided by these cities creates an attractive image of an Eden of employment (see Haines, 2011). This is evident simply by observing the huge numbers of people scrambling to reach these cities by any means possible. The ugly reality of labor exploitation belies this utopian hope, but it still animates the desires of many potential expatriates. In the case of Dubai, for example, many of the primarily South Asian workers who have built the fantastic architectural attractions for the city work in brutal and inhumane conditions of exploitation which could be described as bonded slave labor.

---

[4]   This belief might find some solace in the fact that in a post-Keynesian world where central banks use interest rates to fight inflation, and corporations streamline and downsize, each with no regard for the consequences these actions have for labor, Macau has managed a local unemployment rate of only 2.1% while simultaneously opening its borders to approximately 100,000 foreign workers.

Regardless of its promises of remuneration, the city is a chimera for such workers, who will never have the opportunity to enjoy the beach-front resorts, air-conditioned shopping malls, and indoor ski slopes in the manner of the well-heeled tourist. Indeed, the fantasy of the neoliberal utopians is disproven by the actual experiences of the migrant laborers. The word utopia should thus be read with all of the intended irony intact. These *topoi* are simultaneously utopian and dystopian, no-place and non-place (Auge, 2009), dreamworld and catastrophe (Buck-Morss, 1995). Perhaps they are best understood as deprecated heterotopias (Foucault 1986), the deconsecrated "other spaces" of global capitalism.

PARADIGMATIC COMPOSITION OF TOURIST UTOPIAS

The tourist utopia is a paradox. An otherworldly, or post-world city; a nexus of a decentered global empire; a space of exception embedded in the state; a site of productive consumption; a conflicted and overdetermined Arcadia. Heterotopological analysis of such phenomena requires an appropriate analytic. Illumination of these paradigmatic cases will therefore proceed via explication of a set of axiomatic statements that emerge from the tourist utopia itself; these statements address concepts of morphology, sovereignty, economy, governance, population, labor, architecture, urbanism, and leisure. Discussion of each axiomatic begins with an orienting statement and follows with examples drawn from one or more of the three cities. Commitment to comparisons and paradigmatic pretensions necessitate some sacrifice of depth for the purposes of breadth. The discussion is necessarily schematic and partial and meant only to make a tentative comparative case that might prompt further discussion.

MORPHOLOGY - Each city is representative of a peripheral geography or function – island, coast, littoral, port, entrepot, terminal, container, desert – thereby possessing "an edge where it meets another condition" (Koolhaas, 1998a, p. 1257).

"Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable" (Foucault, 1986). The Chinese characters for the word Macau, *ou mun*, literally means "gate," and Macau was for some years an *entrepot* where European powers accessed China and Japan, just as Dubai served as a gateway for Europe to reach Persia and the Sheikdoms of the Middle East. The psychological achievement of the space of exception is enabled by either literal or symbolic markers which serve to indicate the end of one space and the beginning of another. In terms of geography this might be illustrated by the juxtaposition of the shore to the sea in the case of Dubai and Macau, or the relationship of the monotonous horizontal flatness of the desert to the resplendent greenery, glass, and electric illumination of the urban environment in the case of Dubai and Las Vegas. It might emanate from the inherent artificiality of the reclaimed land and faux islands of Macau and Dubai, or the reclaimed water that makes Las Vegas viable as a human habitat. Las Vegas, Spanish for "the meadows," appears as an oasis, an island surrounded by the sea of the desert. Dubai is an incongruous glittering glass metropolis marking a liminal space between the desert and the sea. Macau is a cluster of islands mediating the terra of China to the South China Sea estuary. Each of these imaginary atolls animates tourist fantasies. "Dreaming of islands," writes Deleuze (2004), "is dreaming of pulling away, of being already separate …" (p. 10).

SOVEREIGNTY - Each city is an extra-territorial enclave or "space of exception" embedded in a federalist national system, with an ambiguous sovereignty which is variously "graduated" (Ong), "bifurcated" or "commodified" (Palan, 2003).

Las Vegas, or the normalization of the exception

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed in 1848 to end the Mexican-American War, ceded the formerly Spanish-controlled Mexican territory that is now Nevada to the United States. The City of Las Vegas was founded in 1905, and Nevada legalized gambling in 1931. For most the twentieth century, Nevada was the only site in the United States where casino gambling was legal, prompting significant conflict with the federal government. At the same time, Las Vegas was dependent on a strong federal presence for its own development, and the "federal trigger" has been beneficial throughout the city's history. The city would arguably never have developed on its own, and "it was the link to the larger system of the political economy that provided the necessary valorization of the Las Vegas location for future expansion . . ." (Gottdiener et al, 1999, p. 9). Las Vegas has been in the latter half of the century one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the United States and is the only city in the country founded after 1900 whose population grew to more than 1 million by the year 2000 (Moehring and Green, 2005, p. 1). The city has, in turn, repaid that support via the subsequent "Las Vegasization" of the United States.

If Nevada was for nearly a century a space of exception, the manner in which gambling has become normalized across the country in recent years as other states pursue aleatory strategies of municipal development illustrates the manner in which the crisis state of capitalism becomes normalized and the "'state of emergency' in which we live is not the exception but the rule" (Benjamin, 1968). Today, casino gambling in the United States is legally sanctioned in 11 states, and there are casinos on Native American reservations in 28 states.[5] If we include state lotteries and gambling on horse and dog racing, there is some form of legal gambling in 48 states plus the District of Columbia, the latter the very site of federalist power that once sought to control its spread (Gross, 2007).

Macau, or bifurcated territory and graduated sovereignty

Macau's ambiguous status in relation to both China and Portugal has served the interests of both states. Although controlled by Portugal for nearly half a millennia in a tacit agreement for which the Portuguese Crown paid an annual rent to Guangzhou of 400 taels of silver, the city was never technically declared a colony and was at various times an "overseas province" of Portugal or a "Chinese territory under Portuguese administration" (Goncalves, 2003). Clayton (2010) refers to this status as Macau's "sort of sovereignty." This ambiguity allowed both states to use the enclave for various business ventures and vices, including trade, human trafficking, smuggling, and a lucrative gold market.

Gambling was legalized in the Portuguese-controlled territory of Macau in the mid-nineteenth century. Local billionaire Stanley Ho controlled the monopoly gambling concession for 40 years leading up to Portugal's handover of the territory to the PRC in 1999. Following Portugal's return of the colony to the PRC, the Macau government liberalized the local casino industry and granted gaming concessions to six entities, most of which are transnational concerns based in the United States, Australia, and Hong Kong. These companies have invested approximately US$25 billion to transform the city into a phantasmagoric consumer landscape. They are motivated by 1.3 billion

---

5   The Native American reservation in the United States is another type of space of exception, outside the juridical control of the federal government, but dependent on the nation state whose treaties grant that authority.

potential Chinese consumers located just across the border. To encourage and facilitate domestic consumption as an economic growth strategy, the PRC Central Government has introduced an Individual Visitation Scheme (IVS) which relaxes exit visa requirements for Chinese from selected cities and provinces so that they may visit the former colonies and Special Administrative Regions (SAR) of Macau and Hong Kong as individual tourists. The tiny city of Macau, with total land mass of 26.2 square km and a population of 552,000, now attracts more than 26 million tourists per year, more than half of whom travel from mainland China. In 2008 Macau became the most lucrative site of casino gaming in the world, and by 2010 Macau's casino revenues quadrupled those of the Las Vegas strip.

The IVS can be understood as a neoliberal technology of governance, what Ong (2000) refers to as a form of "graduated sovereignty." Graduated sovereignty involves a two-dimensional governance strategy devised by developmental Asian states to capitalize off of the global market. It involves "differential state treatment of segments of the population in relation to market calculations," as well as a "state-transnational network whereby some aspects of state power and authority are taken up by foreign corporations located in special economic zones" (Ong, 2000, p. 57). Both of the techniques of governance have been applied to Chinese citizens in relation to Macao. Site of residence is strictly controlled in the PRC through the *hukou* system of household registration; the IVS partitions out increased freedom of cross-border mobility to residents of select mainland cities and provinces. This allows the government to control the flow of tourists into Macao and to privilege residents of more affluent locales. We can understand the Macao SAR itself as akin to an SEZ, a "state-transnational network" (Ong, 2001) where the authorities have permitted foreign casinos to operate as one component of a strategy of governance.

This arrangement serves a dual purpose for China. These policies not only allow for an exceptional rate of economic growth and development for Macao whose government coffers bulge with the proceeds from taxes on casino revenues, they also facilitate China's mobilization of its population for consumption-driven economic development (Leonhardt, 2010). Following the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997, the Chinese central government made tourism a key growth area of the economy, and created three week-long, annual public holiday periods or "Golden Weeks" to encourage domestic and cross-border tourism.[6] Thus the development of Macau into a tourist utopia derives directly from the crisis state of both capitalism and communism.

Another strategy of graduated sovereignty pursued by the Macau government involves commodifying residency status by awarding it to foreigners who invest in real estate. For Chinese nationals to be eligible in the program they must hold a third country passport. Real estate agents can arrange passports from countries like Belize who sell offshore citizenship. Ability to purchase residency via property purchase and third country passport is an example of "commodified sovereignty" (Palan, 2003). Commodification of sovereignty has consequences for sanctity of the nation state. As Palan notes, when sovereignty becomes commercialized, "the most hallowed aspect of the nation is destroyed" (p. 161). However, the process does not signal a weak nation, but rather a desanctified and demystified nationality. This dissolution of national identity facilitates capital movements. "The transcendence of modern sovereignty thus conflicts with the immanence of

---

[6]   But alongside its economic benefits, the Chinese government sees tourism as "an inexpensive substitute for education," (Nyiri, 2009, p. 154), a pedagogical or civilizing practice that helps create "quality" (*suzhi*) citizens. Tourism is therefore a biopolitical project of subjection that produces a more refined and productive consumer, who in turn helps develop the national economy. The same is true of tourists from the Middle East that visit Dubai.

capital," write Hardt and Negri (2000, p. 327). "Historically, capital has relied on sovereignty and the support of its structures of right and force, but those same structures continually contradict in principle and obstruct in practice the operation of capital, finally obstructing its development." At the same time, the dissolution of national identity paradoxically bolsters the authority of the nation state. After all, as Schmitt (1985) famously argued, "Sovereign is he who decides on the exception." The state's ability to commodify sovereignty may damage the sanctity of national identity but it reaffirms the sovereignty of the nation itself.

Dubai, or zoning the infinite enclave

Legal gambling does not exist in Dubai, though the subject has been broached on offshore sites like the reclaimed artificial islands on which the Burj Al-Arab and Atlantis Hotels are located. These were created as literal offshore zones of the juridical offshore emirate. Reportedly the disapproval of the leader of UAE capital Abu Dhabi, which controls the vast majority of the nation's oil reserves, nixed the possibility of casino development. Petti (2008) characterizes these islands as indicative of "offshore urbanism," which he finds repeated in the upscale gated communities and proletarian labor camps which make Dubai an archipelago of exceptional spaces.

Dubai also pursues developmental strategies of graduated sovereignty. Dubai's exceptional status within the UAE derives from its relatively progressive outlook, openness to foreign workers and tourists, and relaxation of restrictions on civil liberties pertaining to dress, alcohol consumption, sunbathing, and so on. Tourists and workers are extended differential treatment from local Emiratis to enable their economic contribution. In addition, however, Dubai has deployed zoning technologies to subdivide its already exceptional territory into a number of sub-national districts. There are more than 20 different economic free zones in Dubai, including Logistics City, Knowledge Village, Media City, Health Care City, International Academic City, Auto Zone, Gold and Diamond Park, Biotechnology and Research Park, Textile City, and even a Flower Centre. Each zone is governed by a distinct regulatory system which differentiates it from the territory at large, with alternative provisions related to such issues as foreign property ownership, tax rates, import and export costs, and labor regulations.

Dubai has not generally commodified sovereignty by selling citizenship though it does seem to allow affluent individuals to reside indefinitely, like former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, deposed in a military coup and in self-imposed offshore exile in Dubai to avoid a prison sentence in Thailand. For most foreigners, the city makes naturalization difficult (Ali, 2010) and draws workers from continually shifting labor markets to discourage attempts at permanent residence (Haines, 2011, p. 165). But Emiratis commonly monetize their own citizenship by offering their nationality for sale to international businesses who need a national majority partner to meet local business ownership regulations. Revenue from these opportunistic partnerships make labor superfluous for many of these locals.

ECONOMY - Each city is supported largely by transnational investment, public-private partnerships, and other neoliberal economic instruments and policies, which comprise the "holy trinity of the Divine market: liberalization, deregulation and privatization" (de Cartier, 2005, p. 80).

Tourist utopias are both product and progenitor of recent changes in the world economy. In the wake of a succession of economic crises since the 1970s – and most recently in 2008 – the global economy is experiencing the most recent recomposition of capitalism (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) from a planner state to a crisis state, with consequences for the global role of cities within the economy. The planner state was a system of mass industrial production by which accumulation was based on the Fordist organization of labor on a national scale. The stability of this system derived

from a Keynesian macroeconomic bargain among the state, national corporations, and workers that ensured a mass consumer society, populated by a work force that enjoyed relatively high rates of employment, thus enabling them to serve as a market for the products they produced. Hardt and Negri have noted a shift at the start of the 1970s from the Keynesian planner state to a "crisis state." "Crisis, then, becomes the normal condition of capitalist development and rule to the extent that the bilateral processes of economic and juridical organization that provided an organic relationship between labor and capital are abandoned" (Hardt, 2005, p. 11). A global shift of capital relations, moving across a set of interrelated trajectories, from production to consumption, from savings to debt, from the "real" economy to financialization, from planning to crisis management, from stability to mobility, has significant consequences for the metropolitan environment. These movements of capital create the tourist utopia. These cities are sites of entertainment and leisure, but this festival ambiance easily obscures the extent to which their explosive development belies a profound state of crisis – a crisis of Fordism's ability to return stable rates of accumulation, a crisis of the Fordist bargain with labor that preserved high rates of employment at home, a crisis of the center-periphery model which was the basis for the international division of labor, a crisis (but not disappearance) of the sovereignty of the nation-state and the corresponding ascendance of the city as a locus of governance.

In this economic context, the role of the state in production of the metropolitan environment as well as urban governance moved from a management role to an entrepreneurial facilitator of projects undertaken by privately-held concerns (Harvey 1989; 1991). The preponderance of public-private partnerships in production of urban space is especially evident in the case of Dubai. These partnerships have been key to the city's development model for a century but have increased markedly in the past two decades. A century ago, the Dubai ruler used economic incentives to attract a Persian merchant class to the territory in an effort to promote business. The Sheik's abolition of import and export tariffs and declaration of a free port was an early form of exceptional zoning, and attracting foreign traders also had the indirect effect of creating an atmosphere of ethnic, racial, and tribal tolerance in the territory that continues today. This tolerance, both regulatory and cultural, has been key to differentiating Dubai from the other emirates in the UAE and making it an attractive site for investment and for tourism even though it lacks the oil wealth of Abu Dhabi. The early relationship between the ruler and the Persian merchants is today "replaced by a new balance, namely between the ruler on one side and a class of both local and international business entrepreneurs on the other" (Hvidt, 2007, p. 566). According to Hvidt, the Dubai model of development is distinct from the Anglo-Saxon Model, the Continental European Model, and the East Asian Model that have tended to typify development trajectories in those regions (Hvidt, 2009). Dubai Sheik Mohammad al-Maktoum is an absolutist ruler with a corporate style. Dubai development is government-led, fast-track, and dependent on a flexible expatriate labor force, and the emirate has leap-frogged industrial development entirely in an effort to create a post-Fordist service economy. The strategy has been to construct supply first in the urban environment and let it create demand and to rely on relentless city branding to attract capital. However, the aggressive enticement of foreign investment and a foreign presence has consequences for sovereignty. In a city of 1.5 million where 85% of the population is foreign workers questions about citizenship become pronounced.

GOVERNANCE - Each city is populated by "non-state actors," including such groups as pirates, smugglers, gangsters, teamsters, mercenaries, godfathers, junk bond investors, and hedge fund billionaires, who cooperate with the state in both licit and illicit partnerships for purposes of governance and accumulation.

Offshore spaces have long been the playground of pirates who often seek periodic respite in their Republic of Sale, their "pirate utopia" (Wilson, 2003). The pirate serves as an apt metaphor for the "non-state" actor common to the tourist utopia, due to the manner in which pirates serve both sides of the hyphen that separates "non-state." "Pirates are shadow figures," writes Easterling (2005), "a continuum of characters from the privateer as military entrepreneur to the social bandit as revolutionary and the terrorist as murderer" (p. 185). Pirates exist along a sliding scale of criminality, from bandit to buccaneer to privateer, sometimes sanctioned by the state in letters of marque, sometimes acting out of individual initiative or anarchist beliefs. "The pirate maintains a variable proximity to the state as both its secret agent and the criminal agent that disassembles it," says Easterling (p. 185).

Pirates were an ongoing concern in the histories of both Dubai and Macau but it is not always easy to draw a clear distinction between the pirate and the state, between the British and Portuguese colonial powers and the renegades they fought (Wilson, 2003). The British Royal Navy's operations along the so-called "Pirate Coast" of the Persian Gulf in the early 19th century was an attempt to protect shipments of the East India Company moving through the region from attacks by locals that both the British state and the corporation defined as "pirates." These attacks, however, were sponsored by the ruling al-Qawasim family of Sharjah and motivated by the British refusal to pay toll taxes to pass through the Strait of Hormuz (Onley, 2005; see also Walcott, 2006). Some historians suggest that the Chinese emperor's motivation for allowing the Portuguese to occupy Macau in the 17th century was due to the Portuguese navy's ability to control attacks by Japanese pirates who disrupted Chinese trade in the South China Sea; that is, the Portuguese were privateers sanctioned by China to fight other, unsanctioned pirates. But from a different perspective, the presence of the Portuguese in Macau for more than 450 years could be understood as "a single act of piracy sustained over 450 years"" (Clayton, 2010, p. 66)) authored by Portugal to illegally occupy the Chinese territory which was never formally declared a colony. Both the case of the British in the UAE and the Portuguese in Macau demonstrates the endemic ambiguity of the pirate in relation to the state and the manner in which state and non-state continually trade places, or wear the guise of the other.

The only pirates in Las Vegas are bare-chested renegades at Treasure Island (now called simply TI Resort) who entertain tourists in a racy outdoor performance on the strip depicting a pitched pirate battle with seductive female Sirens. However, the twentieth century history of Las Vegas is replete with myriad Mafiosos, speculators, tycoons, and other colorful characters, if not actual pirates, who worked either outside the state or in tandem with the state in order to develop the economy and govern the city. The early development of the gambling industry in the city required cash-rich investors, many of whom were involved in criminal enterprises. Histories of Las Vegas mention the varied importance of gangsters like Bennie Siegel, Meyer Lansky, and Moe Dalitz, who sought out Las Vegas as a site of investment for ill-gotten gains (Schwartz, p. 108). However, this capital was crucial to the nascent gaming industry which had no ability to draw investment from more legitimate

banking or corporate entities.[7] Rather than prohibit this influx of questionable capital, the city, county, state, and federal governments each tapped the industry for tax revenues, licensing fees, patronage, and employment.

Millionaire aviator and investor Howard Hughes helped grant the industry an air of legitimacy via investment in properties on the Strip and in outlying areas. His fiduciary role in Las Vegas ironically paralleled his descent into mental illness. His first purchase was of the Desert Inn, prompted by the fact that after renting an entire floor of the hotel, he refused to leave his room. From that locale, he went on to purchase a number of formerly criminal-owned properties on the Strip as well as worthless mining ventures across the state. By 1970, his Nevada operations employed more than 8000 people, making him the state's largest employer (Schwarz, p. 149). Several decades later his unprofitable mines became the site of gated suburban residential communities, returning profits from the expansion of the city enabled by his investment. Hughes' high-profile persona helped legitimize Las Vegas as a site for conventional investment, and his ventures, while often unprofitable, served to both displace criminal figures and to initiate a period of real estate speculation.

Hughes paved the way for later development by Kirk Kerkorian of the casino mega-resorts like MGM Grand, whose shares were publically-traded on the stock market, that would serve as a paradigm for all subsequent contemporary casino development in the global gaming industry. Kerkorian's competitor Steve Wynn tapped the financial resources of junk bond financier Michael Milliken, who later went to prison for his role in securities fraud. Ironically, part of the motivation behind such financing was concerns within the state that unless the industry could appear legitimate, the federal government might move to outlaw gaming, thus closing off the only local economic asset. Therefore, the exceptional status of Nevada and reliance on non-state actors gained traction only within the context of federalist pressures.

Ironically, the Las Vegas gaming industry had become so legitimized by the early twenty-first century that the Macau government awarded gaming concessions to Las Vegas operators Steve Wynn and Sheldon Adelson in hopes that their investment in Macau would not only help develop the economy but would also restore law and order to the territory, which the Portuguese colonial administration was unable to secure. During his monopoly gaming reign, Macau monopoly holder Stanley Ho turned over management of private VIP gaming rooms in his casinos to Chinese triad operators who began violent campaigns to protect their turf, creating an increasingly lawless atmosphere in Macau in the years leading up to the handover of the territory to China. Knowing that casino operators in Las Vegas were bound to follow the regulations of the Nevada Gaming Commission, even abroad, or risk losing their licenses in Nevada, the Macau government bet on the fact that the rule of law in the United States would work indirectly to police Macau, as North American gaming entrepreneurs would need to avoid dealing with criminal figures in Macau. This gambit has worked exceptionally well to rid Macau almost completely of the violent crime that plagued the city in the years prior to the handover, but it has in no way rid the territory of the influence of the Chinese triads. Indeed, they play a crucial role in the operations of the city on a scale that dwarfs the role played by gangsters in the development of Las Vegas.

---

[7] The Macau government imposes tax rates on gambling revenue that are relatively higher than most other locales (approximately 39% in Macau versus 12-22% in Singapore and 6.75% in Nevada), but the advantage that Macau offers is juridical. The bifurcated sovereignty of the territory positions it both inside and outside the PRC; therefore, Macau's status as an enclave that is separate from the rest of the nation state depends entirely on the legitimacy and authority of the PRC.

The triads act essentially as institutional loan sharks, fronting gambling money to high-stakes players from mainland China who cannot easily move cash across the tightly-regulated borders of the PRC and collecting gambling debts which are not legally enforceable on the mainland. Chinese triads have therefore played an instrumental role in Macau casinos since at least the 1980s, and an innovative vernacular "rolling chips" operation funds huge gambling stakes in Macau's casinos (Siu, 2007). The local government tax of nearly 40% on gaming revenue generated more than $6 billion for Macau government coffers in 2010, making the administration complicit in the system based on collusion between an oligarchy of state-sanctioned concessionaires and organized crime.[8]

For its part, Dubai's economy in the wake of the global financial crisis has benefitted from regional instability which has brought welcome capital, not only from investors in the Middle East searching for safe places to park their money in the wake of World Trade Center bombing but also from the United States military, the global police of Empire. Today Dubai serves as a base of operations for the wars waged by the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan (Davis, 2008). American military leaders use opportunistic Afghani warlords and militias to fight the Taliban, who were themselves employed as agents of the CIA to battle Soviet occupation in the 1970s, encountering yet again the same paradox the British faced in the Gulf in attempts to draw a clear distinction between the actions of the righteous state, the criminality of the pirate, and role of the sanctioned non-state actor. The same questions reverberated through the controversy engendered by Dubai's state-owned DP World's bid to manage the system of ports in the United States. Conservatives asked whether an Islamic Gulf state, even an ally, could be trusted to secure the US border. Would DP World act as rational economic agents or theological ideologues? Even billionaire soldier of fortune Erik Prince, owner of the infamous American mercenary force Blackwater which was deployed by the United States to devastating effect on the civilian population in Iraq until it was outlawed by the Iraqi government, has reappeared in the UAE. Facing legal problems and public scrutiny in the United States, Prince has relocated to the Gulf with his new company Reflex Response and assembled an 800 member battalion of foreign pirates who constitute an outsourced expatriate army for hire based in Abu Dhabi (Mazzetti and Hager, 2011). The force is being trained not only for anti-terrorism operations but also to control potential unrest in ubiquitous UAE labor camps that are home to foreign workers.

POPULATION - Each city is marked by mobility and host to large numbers of tourists and imported laborers who unwittingly create a palpable atmosphere of impermanence and temporariness.

Two types of mobility converge in the tourist utopia, prompted by two different logics of travel: leisure-based mobility and subsistence-based mobility (Scheppe, 2010, p. 107). Leisure-seeking tourists travel by the millions to the tourist utopia. In 2010, 10 million tourists visited Dubai, 25 million visited Macau, and 37 million visited Las Vegas. The nomadic tourist finds her double, her distorted reflection, in the mirror of the itinerant migrant worker. The tourist city depends on a corresponding post-Fordist labor regime which relies heavily on non-local workers. Any visitor to Dubai will be struck by the lack of interactions with local Emiratis, who comprise a tiny portion of the population. In the taxi, hotel, and shop, one will encounter Indians, Africans, Persians, Thais, and Filipinos. While Las Vegas, Dubai, and Macau host expatriate workers from a variety of countries, Filipino subjects perhaps best typify the labor regime in the tourist utopia. Filipinos are ubiquitous as a component of the labor force in all three cities, as well as across the globe. Indeed, the Philippines is currently the world's largest supplier of expatriate workers, and at any moment more than 10% of the population, and 25% of the labor force, work abroad. Those workers remit earnings back home

---

[8]   Further, at the time "there were no formal professional schools to churn out fresh-faced young casino executives. Indeed, virtually anyone who was qualified to run a casino resort on the Las Vegas Strip was, technically, a criminal" (Schwartz, 2003, p. 111).

every year that comprise nearly 15% of GDP. There are more than 42,000 Filipinos in Las Vegas – comprising the largest Asian ethnic group in the city (Clarito et al, 2005, p. 220) – more than 200,000 Filipinos working in Dubai, and more than 20,000 Filipinos in Macau. Further, Filipino workers occupy all levels of the labor force, including manual labor, sex work, household domestic work, transportation and shipping (the Philippines is the world's largest supplier of merchant marines), service work (retail, restaurants, bars), musical entertainment, professional occupations (architects, construction managers), and health care. Filipino expatriate workers are the product of a specific state policy, tied to a post-Fordist economic model. These Filipino workers often capitalize off their English language proficiency and disposition for intercultural adjustment to secure expatriate work; these remunerative skills are the ironic byproduct of the nation's subjection to dual colonialisms. A brief history of the modern Philippines helps explain the key role of Filipinos in tourist utopias.

The peoples of the Philippines were subjects of Spanish colonial rule for most of the 15th – 19th centuries. In the last decade of the 19th century indigenous anarchist organizers mobilized and agitated against the Spanish crown in Asia's first anti-colonial insurrection (Anderson, 2005). The United States eventually and reluctantly supported the revolution and quickly defeated the Spanish in 1898. The Treaty of Paris ceded control of the Philippines to the US, and in turn the US military pacified the natives of the Philippines – among them the very anarchists whose campaign the military action had ostensibly supported – in a brutal occupation that ultimately killed nearly 15% of the indigenous population. Once American rule was established, the US faced the challenge of subduing and administering a local population who spoke 40-odd indigenous languages and had no common tongue. With the Organic Act of 1901 the US administration implemented an English language education system (Gonzalez, 2004, p. 8). The penetration of English language into contemporary everyday life in the Philippines has been pronounced. In 1903 only 4% of the population spoke English, but by 1980 the number of English speakers had risen to more than 48 million, nearly 65% of the population, positioning these workers to relocate abroad and enable development of tourist utopias.[9]

The mass movement of Filipino workers overseas into this new economic field is the product of specific policies of the Philippines state, which has adeptly promoted labor mobility and sought to produce a post-colonial Filipino subjectivity that privileges overseas employment. The movement of Filipino bodies into the global economy coincided with Ferdinand Marcos' declaration of martial law in 1972, and his decision – in compliance with the desires of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the United States government – to remove trade barriers, establish special industrial and export-processing zones, and develop an export-oriented economic policy. The ostensible rationale for martial law was to contain the threat of communist insurgents; however, martial law was the "state of exception" (Schmidt, 2006) to normal political-juridical rule that Marcos exploited, with the complicity of the US, to solidify his power, and which "provided unprecedented opportunities for the IMF and the World Bank to fully restructure the Philippine economy along the lines desired by the liberalization strategy" (Bello and Broad, p. 263). Along with coconut and sugar the nation achieved its greatest economic success by cultivating and exporting the bio-power of the citizenry.

---

[9]   It is estimated that the Philippines today possesses the third largest population of English speakers in the world, following the United States and Great Britain, and ahead of Canada and Australia. This is remarkable given that of these five nations, only in the Philippines are those proficient in English second language speakers rather than native speakers (Gonzalez, 2004, p. 11). English language proficiency has enabled cross-cultural adjustment of Filipino workers, positioning them to take up jobs across the globe.

Thus the state of legal exception in the Philippines enabled the production of the exceptional space of the tourist utopia. From colonial roots stretching across Europe, the Americas, and Asia emerged a polyglot Filipino subject, often a natural adept at intercultural relations, and characterized by the very communicative qualities demanded in the "factory-society" of the current global economy: "habitual mobility, the ability to keep pace with extremely rapid conversions, adaptability in every enterprise, flexibility in moving from one group of rules to another, aptitude for both banal and omnilateral linguistics interaction, command of the flow of information, and the ability to navigate among limited possible alternatives" (Virno, 1996, p. 14). Within the space of a century the most potent anarchist, anti-colonial population in Asia was subdued, disciplined, and transformed into Americanized global coolies. Similar such histories could likely be written about Sri Lankans and Pakistanis in Dubai, Indonesians and Nepalese in Macau, and Mexicans and mainland Chinese in Las Vegas.

LABOR - Each city possesses an "economy of fascination" (Schmidt, 2009) devoted to service and consumption which depends on deployment of workers in various "immaterial," affective, or cognitive forms of labor.

So many Filipinos and others work abroad today because of changes in global capitalism that began in the last quarter of the 20th century; these are the same macro-structural changes have enabled development of cities of tourist consumption. Such workers are integral to the contemporary post-Fordist labor regime indicative of these tourist cities. The "mass worker" of western industrial capitalism has been supplanted since the 1970s by a "social worker" (Negri, 2005) whose productive activities tend towards an abstract, intellectual, "immaterial labor" (Hardt, 1999). Immaterial labor refers to work that produces an immaterial product like knowledge, information, affect, or communication. Tourist utopias depend on domestic workers and bartenders, chauffers and chefs, casino croupiers and hotel hostesses, acrobats and gondoliers, body guards and prostitutes.

Filipino workers who predominate in cities like Macau, Las Vegas, and Dubai and who are paid a wage to deploy English language in performance of affective labor demonstrate how in contemporary life, "Our brains, linguistic capacities, and interactive skills have all taken the place of fixed capital" (Hardt 2008, p. 10). In order to manage accumulation from affect capital must dispossess not only labor but subjectivity of Filipino workers, in a process that we have seen is coterminous with colonialism. That is, their labor value often derives not from their "intrinsic properties" but their "situational ones" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2010, p. 5); their ability to communicate in an international language and willingness to live perpetually away from home and in a precarious state of mobility, remitting capital which is also mobile. In this way they do not move within the territorial logic of the tourist but in the perpetual nomadism of a numerical civilization. Their salability is their labor flexibility tied to their linguistic adaptability. Physicians work as nurses, school teachers tend bar, college-educated women toil as domestic workers. As Virno (2004) suggests, "Nobody is as poor as those who see their own relation to the presence of others, that is to say their own communicative faculty, their own possession of a language, reduced to wage labor" (p. 63). Immaterial labor has an affective and experiential product which is commodified in the tourist utopia.

ARCHITECTURE - Each city is characterized by superlative and iconic architecture and themed environments which are narrated and scripted to produce "experiences."

Las Vegas, Dubai, and Macau are known for their superlative architectural developments, ranging from the world's largest shopping mall (Dubai Mall), to the world's largest hotel (MGM Grand, Las Vegas), and the world's largest casino (Venetian Macau). Each city is guilty of also grasping at slightly more desperate attempts to reach world-class status, promoting the first indoor ski slope in the Middle East (Ski Dubai, Mall of the Emirates), the world's most powerful beam of light (Luxor Hotel, Las Vegas), and the world's largest "elevated" wave pool (roof of the Galaxy Resort, Macau), not to mention the radiant appeal of the world's biggest gold nugget (at the Gold Nugget, Las Vegas), the world's largest cushion diamond (the Star of Stanley Ho, on display at Grande Lisboa, Macau), and the world's largest crystal chandelier (Sands Macau). Such structures and attractions are clearly meant to help brand the cities as a destination but do nothing to contribute to the livability of the metropolitan environment.

The iconic architecture found in tourist utopias is also of a particular type, and differentiated from iconic buildings of an earlier phase of capitalism. Twentieth century industrial capitalism was defined by architecture of the International Style, popularized by Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, and Le Corbusier. The International Style shunned architectural ornamentation in an effort to create a sleek modernist aesthetic of glass, steel, and concrete that exposed the functional element of the materials in the design. The corporate skyscraper was the iconic element of the modern cityscape, a testament to not only the ego of the industrialist but also to his or her commitment to the social and cultural life of a particular city. Such structures like the Empire State Building were meant to not only serve as the headquarters of a business enterprise, but to engage the surrounding city, function in social ritual, enhance public space, and contribute to civic life (Kaika, 2011, p. 982). What stands as iconic architecture in the tourist utopia, however, illustrates a different type of iconicity. These buildings typify the "global style" (Hal Foster, 2011). Such structures are primarily prestige products, initiated by companies whose operations are principally located elsewhere, funded by transnational elites with no particular commitment to the social environment, built by star architects-for-hire, and which play no discernible role in the city in which they are located. As Aureli (2011) notes, "the agenda of the iconic building is a postpolitical architecture stripped bare of any meaning other than the celebration of corporate economic performance" (p. xii). They are meant to contribute not to the life of the city for residents but to how the city skyline is viewed by visitors from afar. Each tourist utopia has its own iconic Tower of Babel: Dubai's Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world; the Stratosphere Tower in Las Vegas, the tallest free-standing observation structure in the United States; and the Macau Tower, the "tenth tallest tower of its kind" (also featuring the world's highest bungee jump). Kaika (2011) refers to contemporary iconic buildings as "autistic architecture," buildings that do not engage in a communicative way with the city to which they belong. Each is a necessarily temporary "totem for flexible capitalism" (Kaika, 2011, p. 976), an element of the built environment that mimics the fate of the tourists and expatriate workers that populate the cities, temporarily located *in* the city, but not *of* the city.

If iconic buildings are "autistic" and do not communicate with the surrounding city, themed environments are guilty of the opposite: an overabundance of communication. Themed environments feature overt architectural and design motifs that call forth associations with other cultures, times, or places. The Luxor Resort in Las Vegas and the Wafi Mall in Dubai are each modeled after Egyptian pyramids; the Venetian Resorts in Macau and Las Vegas reproduce faux art and architecture from Venice; the MGM Macau and Dubai's Mercato Mall both create the ambiance of a European city square, but enclosed by glass. Whereas contemporary iconic architecture tends to be uncommunicative, the themed environment presents a pre-constituted narrative that is difficult to escape. "In the themed environment," contends Lonsway (2010), "space is constituted as a

textual device" (p. 51). The thematic narrative aims to create an experience which can be commodified.

URBANISM - Each city is based on a grammar of architectural and spatial design elements with such characteristic features as glass curtain wall construction, large enclosed atriums, and ubiquitous air conditioning, to produce the effect that the interior "is the privileged domain for the urban encounter" (Koolhaas, 1998b, p. 1073).

Henri Lefebvre (2003) famously contended that the "complete urbanization" of the world was replacing the Fordist regime of industrial production to become the prime strategy for resolving the internal contradictions of capitalism. Marxist concepts of class, division of labor, collective bargaining, and social reproduction that emanated from struggles on the factory floor were being subsumed in an epistemological shift by the more diffuse concerns of the globalization of the urban itself – production of increasingly standardized and homogenous space, accompanying experiences of leisure and consumption, density of intercultural contact, the colonization of everyday life by capitalism. If this globalization of the urban was merely "virtual" in Lefebvre's time it seems fully realized today.

The case of Dubai is one of complete urbanization of nature, the wholesale transformation of the desert into a "total landscape" (Mitrasinovic, 2006), complete with indoor ski slopes and ice skating rinks; enclosed and air-conditioned shopping malls and bus stops; gated communities with incongruous names like the Greens, Lakes, Hills, Meadows, and Springs; and extraordinarily costly artificial islands constructed in the sea for speculative purposes from the very sand that has so little value on land.

This wholesale urbanization creates a particular type of urbanism. When we combine mobile, autistic, and extremely-narrated architectural elements with such discursive factors as commercialization of sovereignty, it creates a form of "post-civil society" (Jameson, 1990). For my purposes "post-civil" refers not so much to a historical state that occurs after the implementation of a civil society, but an alternative, parallel, or compossible (Deleuze, 1993) state (much like we might understand the post-modern as a contiguous critique of modernity). Indeed, in the case of Dubai and Macau we could question the extent to which an actual civil society has ever existed. If civic spaces are understood as "socially inclusive spaces with a high degree of autonomy from the state and commercial interests" (Douglass, 2008, p. 27), the nature of urbanism in tourist utopias almost precludes such spaces from existing. For Hegel civil society served "as mediator between the immanent forces of capital and the transcendent power of modern sovereignty," voices advocating for common good by steering a path "between the self-interested endeavors of a plurality of economic individuals and the unified interest of the state" (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p. 328). When the spatial organization of interior urbanism is aligned with a transient and provisional population of tourists and workers who have either have no genuine stake in the city or the right to political participation, a form of post-civil society is the result.

The tendency towards interiority and enclosed forms of encounter in shopping malls and hotel atriums creates an urbanism that illustrates Hardt and Negri's (2000) contention that in capitalism today "there is no more outside" (p. 186). For these thinkers the spatial division between inside and outside was an underlying characteristic of modern political and philosophical inquiry that informed theories of sovereignty (civilized/natural), liberalism (public/private), and war (us/them). Hardt and Negri (2000) contend that "the capitalist market has always run counter to any division between inside and outside" (p. 190), thriving rather on commerce and interchange; today we live under the real subsumption of society to capital which precludes any vantage point or position "outside" the capital relation. The interiority of air-conditioned and enclosed urban encounters illustrates this

condition in its application to the built environment, whether it involves sipping coffee at a café under a glass ceiling or painted sky in a shopping arcade, navigating an indoor canal in the basement of a casino resort, skiing the indoor desert slopes, or moving from metro to mall on an indoor pedestrian people mover.

LEISURE - Each city is focused on such heterotopian activities as tourism, gambling, shopping, dining, sex work, sightseeing, relaxation, amusement, festivals, and spectacle in a way that highlights how "leisure is the true revolutionary problem"[10] in contemporary capitalism.

Finally, to return to where we started, each city is ironically utopian; these cities are not actual utopias, "sites with no real place," but real places where all the characteristics of contemporary Empire are "simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted" (Foucault, 1986, p. 24). That is, these cities function much in the manner of Foucault's "heterotopias," or "other spaces" – actually existing utopias. In his initial inchoate heterotopology, Foucault discusses an array of examples of the phenomenon, and each of his heterotopian exemplars appears as a component of the tourist utopia: the garden, museum, and fairgrounds; the honeymoon, motel, and brothel; the ship and the colony. Through these spaces wander the multitude – aimless tourists, distracted shoppers, hard-luck gamblers – their journeys played out across artificial architectural wonders and phantasmagoric retail spaces.

Robinson Crusoe was the prototypical modern nomad, enduring environmental disasters and encounters with Barbary pirates until eventually taking an unplanned lengthy holiday as a castaway on a desert island which served as his own ironic utopia. Left to recreate a semblance of civilization, Crusoe's spiritual development progressed only alongside his labor efforts, both leading in tandem to his survival and in the end representing "the best illustration of that thesis which affirms the close ties between capitalism and Protestantism" (Deleuze, 2004, p. 12). That is, Crusoe's hard work literally "paid off." For its part, the tourist utopia effectively severs the connection between the ascetic Calvinist work ethic and the spirit of economic productivity which has served, from Marx to Weber, as a mainstay of the mythology of capitalism; the offshore tourist utopia revels instead in the neoliberal promise of capital accumulation based on nothing but play. Productive leisure has overtaken industrial labor as the *sine qua non* of the post-world city. If it materializes at all, resistance to Empire may emerge from such spaces, where the multitude composed of the immaterial proletariat and mobile tourists meet in the sepulchral saturnalia celebrating capitalism's endemic crisis state.

CONCLUSION, OR THE CITY OF CARDS

In 2010, professional card stacker Brian Berg built the world's largest house of cards, a replica of Macau's Venetian Resort, constructed inside the resort property. Berg broke his own Guinness World's Record (set in a card construction of Cinderella's castle at Disney World) by using 218,792 cards, more than 4000 decks, to build the 272 kg structure without using glue or tape to hold the cards together. The house of cards itself exemplified many of the elements of the tourist utopia discussed herein. As a city-within-a-city, the house of cards is a type of enclave within the larger territory. As a simulation of the Venetian Macau, which is a copy of the Venetian property in Las Vegas, itself modeled after Venice, the Italian city which trades off of idealized and nostalgic constructions of its own past, the house of cards illustrates the logic of the themed environment. As

---

[10] "…Une idée neuve en Europe," Situationist statement published in *Potlatch*, 1954, quoted in de Cauter, 2005 (p. 57).

an iconic structure, the Venetian card house makes no contribution to the civic life of the surrounding city. As the "world's largest" house of cards, the structure gains its relevance from its superlative stature, verified by Guinness, and inconsequentially meaningless. As a constructed and mediated event designed to attract visitors and viewers, the house of cards contributes to an economy of "fascination." The fact that the structure was built by an American who roams the globe building card houses for hire for various corporations parallels the influence of entrepreneurial foreigners and non-state actors in the local Macau economy. Finally, the structure was painstakingly assembled over the course of 44 days in a bravura display of immaterial labor – after all, what is the nature of "professional card stacking" other than a form of immaterial productivity taken to its most ludicrous extreme? It is work, no doubt, but a form of work whose outcome is a more-or-less pointless, ephemeral and affective product whose effects will live in nothing but tourist memories and photos and presumably on the Venetian Resort's bottom line, though in an intangible manner which cannot be calculated by any clear metric. There is a direct and natural homology connecting the immaterial labor indicative of building card houses and the immaterial or affective nature of the products of the companies that have employed Berg as an itinerant architect; those companies include shopping malls in Hong Kong and Istanbul, casinos in Las Vegas and Johannesburg, Disneyland, Holiday Inn Hotels, and the San Francisco Opera. Finally, the house of cards is one more exceptional example of a "general rule that can never be stated a priori" (Agamben, p. 22), a singular instance which functions analogically to illuminate another singular instance, in this case the very diagram or *dispositif* of the tourist utopia. We move from singular case to singular case, from the post-world cities of Las Vegas Dubai and Macau to the house of cards, and back again. That is, the house of cards functions in a heterotopian manner to "create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory" (Foucault, 1986, p. 27).

"I think there's a lot of things in our world that we're searching for answers for," said Berg in an interview with the *Daily Mail* on the day the Venetian structure was completed. "Cures for things, the environment, energy, and I think sometimes the simplest idea is probably the one that's most powerful, and will produce the most sort of viable results." While its contributions to environmental or energy problems is probably negligible, no doubt from the standpoint of political economy, building a house of cards illustrates in strikingly simple terms the ability of capitalism in a post-Fordist crisis state to recompose itself and to find a source of accumulation even in the most unlikely dimensions of leisure activity. No product is manufactured, and therefore nothing is consumed, just the relentless monetization of affect. In that sense, Berg is correct that the construction of the tourist utopia is a simple but powerful idea. But the house of cards might also be read as a cautionary allegory for the tourist utopia. In an effort to create cities whose primary purpose is tourist consumption has the effect been to construct something like a Venetian "city of cards"? In the case of Berg and the Venetian, each party cooperates to construct a structure from which both may accumulate as much capital as possible from tourist visitors, then both parties walk away and the structure inevitably collapses like the autistic architecture of today. It was never meant to last. The preponderance of the industry of structural "subtraction" in Las Vegas (Easterling, 2005), the implosion of buildings as a component of real estate speculation and simultaneously as a spectacle for tourist fascination, demonstrates once again the emptiness of the tourist utopia as well as capitalism's ability to turn even its own destruction into a means of accumulation.

Lefebvre (1996) not only predicted the complete urbanization of experience – of which the tourist utopia seems exemplary – he also raised an urgent and timely question about the "right to the city." Las Vegas, Dubai, and Macau render this question in stark relief. If the city is given over completely to consumption by foreign visitors, how does it function as a home for residents and as a site of political consciousness and human sociation? If "urbanism as a way of life" shapes a particular type of urban personality, then what subjects are produced by the tourist city? If civil society requires the

possibility of communication in a certain sort of public space, what happens as those spaces are increasingly themed, interiorized, encapsulated, and – following the logic of neoliberalism – privatized? **"**This is a world," says Harvey (2008), "in which the neoliberal ethic of intense possessive individualism, and its cognate of political withdrawal from collective forms of action, becomes the template for human socialization" (p. 32). Las Vegas, Dubai, and Macau, each in their own way, crystallize a constellation of characteristics pertaining to urbanization, immaterial labor, mobility, consumption, accumulation, and dispossession that typify the contemporary tourist utopia (see Figure 1 for summary of characteristics). Ironically, it seems that it is mobile capital itself, rather than those traveling tourists, that found its offshore utopia in Las Vegas, Dubai, and Macau, which serve as capitalism's Republic of Sale (Wilson, 2003). Each may be understood as a post-world city: an autonomous space of exception that nevertheless remains embedded in the state; a post-developmental enclave of consumption activities that become a new form of production; an urban space whose spectacular festival ambiance belies its dependence on a fundamental state of crisis and strategies of disposession; a phantasmagoric city of cards held together without glue or tape.

Figure 1: Summary of Characteristics of Tourist Utopia

Morphology	Overt juxtaposition of land/water, desert/sea, natural/urban, etc. that highlights juridical separation and enclavic status
Sovereignty	Individual space of exception embedded in a federalist state territory
Economy	Post-Keynesian, post-Fordist, neoliberal crisis state
Governance	Non-state actors work in tandem with the state for mutual benefit
Population	Mobile tourists and workers with no enduring civil commitment
Labor	Work involves immaterial and affective qualities
Architecture	Built environment designed to heighten ambiance and generate sensory experiences
Urbanism	Interiorized, encapsulated and simulated forms of encounter that confound modern dichotomies of inside/outside
Leisure	Consumption subsumes production as locus of political identity and action

REFERENCES

Agamben, G. (2009) *The signature of all things: on method*. New York: Zone Books.

Ali, S. (2010) *Dubai: gilded cage*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Anderson, B. (2005) *Under three flags: Anarchism and the anti-colonial imagination*. London: Verso.

Auge, M. (2009) *Nonplaces: an introduction to supermodernity*, trans J. Howe. Verso.

Aureli, P.V. (2011) *The possibility of absolute architecture*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Baldacchino, G. (2010) "'Upside down decolonization' in subnational island jurisdictions: questioning the 'post' in postcolonialism, *Space and culture*, 13(2): 188-202.

Bello, W. and Broad, R. (1987) "The international monetary fund in the Philippines," in *The Philippines reader*, ed. D.B. Schirmer and S.R. Shalom, Boston: South End Press.

Benjamin, W. (1968) "Theses on the philosophy of history," *Illuminations*, ed. H. Arendt. New York: Schocken.

Buck-Morss, S. (1995) "The city as dreamworld and catastrophe," *October*, 73: 3-26.

de Cauter, Lieven (2005) *The capsular civilization: On the city in the age of fear*. NAI Publishers.

Chuihua, J. C., Inaba, J., Koolhaas, R., Sze, T. L., Eds (2001) *Great leap forward.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Design School.

Clarito, A.D., Lawler, H., Palmer, G.B. (2005) "The Filipinos," *The peoples of Las Vegas: One city, many faces*," ed. J.L. Simich and T.C. Wright: 220-46. Reno: University of Nevada Press.

Clayton, C. (2010) *Sovereignty at the edge: Macau and the question of Chineseness*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Davis, M. (2008) "Sand, fear, and money in Dubai," in M. Davis and D.M. Monk, *Evil paradises: dreamworlds of neoliberalism*. New York: The New Press.

Deleuze, G. (2004) *Desert islands: and other texts, 1953-1974*. Semiotexte.

Deleuze, G. (2003) *The fold: Liebniz and the baroque*, trans Tom Conley. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (2010) *Nomadology: The war machine*. Seattle, WA: Wormwood Books.

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1987) *A thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Douglass, M. (2008) "Civil society for itself and in the public sphere: Comparative research on globalization, cities, and civic space in Pacific Asia," in M. Douglass, K.C. Ho, and G.L. Ooi, eds, *Globalization, the city, and civil society in Pacific Asia: The social production of civic spaces*. New York: Routledge: 27-49.

Easterling, K. (2005) *Enduring innocence: Global architecture and its political masquerades*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Easterling, K. (2006) "On pirates, statisticians and cruise ship directors," interviewed by Nader Voussoughian, *Bidoun,*7.

Fong, D.K.C., Fong, H.N, Li, S.Z. (2011) "Social costs of gambling in Macao: before and after the liberalisation of the gaming industry, *International gambling studies*, 11(1): 43-56.

Foster, H. (2011) *The art-architecture complex*. London: Verso.

Foucault, M. (1986) "Of other spaces," *Diacritics*, spring: 22-27.

Friedman, J. (1986) "The world city hypothesis," *Development and change*, 17: 69-83.

Goncalves, A.M.A. (2003) "Macau, Timor and Portuguese India in the context of

Portugal's recent decolonization'', in *The Last Empire: Thirty Years of Portuguese Decolonization,* Eds S. Lloyd-Jones, A.C. Pinto (Bristol: Intellect): 53-66

Gonzalez, A. (2004) 'The social dimensions of Philippine English,' *World Englishes*, 23(1): 7-16.

Gottdiener, M., Collins, C.C., and D.R. Dickens (1999) *Las Vegas: The social production of an all-American city*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Gray, J. (2003) *Al Qaeda and what it means to be modern*. Chatham, Kent: Faber and Faber.

Gross, D. (2007) "Why is Las Vegas gambling on the decline?" *Newsweek*, Nov 5.

Haines, C. (2011) "Cracks in the façade: landscapes of hope and desire in Dubai," A.

Roy and A. Ong, eds, *Worlding cities: Asian experiments and the art of being global*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Hardt, M. (1999) "Affective labor," *boundary 2*, 28(2): 89-100.

Hardt, M. (2005) "Into the factory: Negri's Lenin and the subjective caesura (1968-73). *The philosophy of Antonio Negri: Resistance in practice*, ed. T.S. Murphy and A.B. Mustapha. London: Pluto Press.

Hardt, M. (2008) "Introduction" in C. Marrazi, *Capital and language: from the new economy to the war economy*, trans. G. Conti: Semiotexte.

Hardt, M. and Negri, A. (2000) *Empire*. Harvard University Press.

Harvey, D. (2008) "The right to the city," *New left review*, Sept/Oct: 23-40.

Harvey, D. (2007) *A brief history of neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harvey, D. (2005) *The new imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harvey, D. (1991) *The condition of postmodernity: an inquiry into the origins of cultural change*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Harvey, D. (1989) "From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: the transformation in urban governance in late capitalism," *Geografiska Annaler*, 71(B): 3-16.

Hudson, A. (2000) "Offshoreness, globalization, and sovereignty: a postmodern geo-political economy?" *Transactions of the institute of British geographers*, 25: 269-283.

Hvidt, M. (2009) "The Dubai model: an outline of key development process elements in Dubai, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 41: 397-418.

Hvidt, M. (2007) "Public-private ties and their contribution to development: the case of Dubai," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 43(4): 557-577.

Jameson, F. and Speaks, M. (1990) "Envelopes and enclaves: the space of post-civil society – an architectural conversation," *Assemblage*, 17: 32-37.

Kaika, M. (2011) "Autistic architecture: the fall of the icon and the rise of the serial object of architecture," *Environment and planning d: society and space*, 29: 968-992.

Kaika, M. and Thielen, K. (2006) "Form follows power: A genealogy of urban shrines," *City*, 10(1): 59-69.

Keil, R. (2007) "Empire and the global city: Perspectives of urbanism after 9/11." *Studies in political economy*, 79: 167-192.

Koolhaas, R. (1998a) "The generic city," *S,M,L,XL*. Monticello Press.

Koolhaas, R. (1998b) "Singapore songlines: Portrait of a Potemkin metropolis, *S,M,L,XL*. Monticello Press.

Lefebvre, H. (1996) *Writings on cities*. Cambridge: Wiley-Blackwell.

Lefebvre, H. (2003) *The urban revolution*, Trans R. Bononno. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Leonhardt, D. (2010) "In China, cultivating the urge to splurge." *New York Times Magazine*, Nov 28. http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/28/magazine/28China-ht.html?pagewanted=all

Lonsway, B. (2009) *Making leisure work: Architecture and the experience economy* London: Routledge.

Mazzetti, M. and Hager, E.B. (2011) "Secret desert force set up by Blackwater founder," *New York Times*, May 14, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/15/world/middleeast/15prince.html?_r=1&pagewanted=print.

McFarlane, C. (2010) "The comparative city: Knowledge, learning, urbanism," *International journal of urban and regional research*, 34(4): 725-42.

Mitrasinovic, M. (2006) *Total landscape, theme parks, public space*. Ashgate.

Moehring, E.P. and Green, M.S. (2005) *Las Vegas: A centennial history*. Reno: University of Nevada Press.

Negri, A (2005) *The politics of subversion: A manifesto for the 21st century.* Polity.

Negri, A. (2008) *The porcelain workshop: For a new grammar of politics*. Los Angeles: Semiotexte.

Ong, A. (2006) *Neoliberalism as exception: Mutations in citizenship and sovereignty*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Ong, A. (2000) "Graduated sovereignty in South-East Asia. *Theory culture & society*, 17(4): 55-75.

Onley, J. (2005) "Britain's informal empire in the Gulf, 1820-1971," *Journal of social affairs*, 22(87): 30-45.

Palan, R. (2003) *The offshore world: sovereign markets, virtual places, and nomad millionaires*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Petti, A. (2008) "Dubai offshore urbanism," *Heterotopia and the city: Public space in a postcivil society*, ed. M. Dehaene and L. de Cauter. London: Routledge.

Rafael, V. (2005) *The promise of the foreign: Nationalism and the technics of translation in the Spanish Philippines*. Duke University Press.

Robinson, J. (2011) "Cities in a world of cities: the comparative gesture," *International journal of urban and regional research*, 35(1): 1-23.

Robinson, J. (2006) *Ordinary cities: Between modernity and development*. London: Routledge.

Robinson, J. (2004) "In the tracks of comparative urbanism: Difference, urban modernity, and the primitive," *Urban geography*, 25(8): 709-723.

Scheppe, W. (2010) *Migropolis: Venice/Atlas of a global situation*. Hatje Cantz.

Schmid, H. (2009) *Economy of fascination: Dubai and Las Vegas as themed urban landscapes*. E. Schweizerbart.

Schmitt, C. (2006) *Political theology*. University of Chicago Press.

Schwartz, D.G. (2003) *Suburban Xanadu: the casino resort on the Las Vegas Strip and beyond*. New York: Routledge.

Sidaway, J. (2007) "Enclave space: a new metageography of development?" *Area*, 39(3): 331-339.

Simpson, T. (2009a) "Materialist pedagogy: The function of themed environments in post-socialist consumption in Macau." *Tourist studies* 9(1): 60-80.

Simpson, T. (2008a) "Macao, capital of the twenty-first century?" *Environment and planning d: Society and space* 26: 1053-1079*.*

Siu, R.C.S. (2007) "Formal rules, informal constraints, and industrial evolution: The case of the Junket Operator Regulation and the transition of Macao's casino business." *UNLV Gaming Research and Review Journal*, 11(2), 49-62.

Smith, B. (2010) "Scared by, of, in, and for Dubai," *Social and cultural geography*, 11(3): 263-283.

Therborn, G. (2011) "End of a paradigm: the current crisis and the idea of stateless cities," *Environment and planning a*, 43: 272-285.

Virno, P (2004) *A grammar of the multitude*. Semiotexte.

Virno, P. (1996) "The ambivalence of disenchantment," *Radical thought in Italy: A potential politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Walcott, Col. T. (2006) "The Trucial Oman Scouts 1955-1971: an overview," *Asian affairs*, 37(1): 17-30.

Walker, R. and Buck, D. (2007) 'The Chinese road: Cities in the transition to capitalism', *New left review* 46: 39–65.

Ward, K. (2010) "Towards a relational comparative approach to the study of cities," *Progress in human geography*, 34(4): 471-87.

Wilson, P.L. (2003) *Pirate utopias: Moorish corsairs and European renegadoes*. New York: Autonomedia.

Wu, F. (2009) "Neo-urbanism in the making under China's market transition," *City*, 13(4): 418-31.