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## Introduction

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## **Introduction**

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The final decades of the last century saw a profound shift in thinking about large-scale economic process: the traditional idea of 'international economy' was challenged by the concept of 'global economy'. Much more than a semantic tweak, the new terminology implies a reassessment of states as the key institution for understanding contemporary economic change. In these more 'transnational times', other players come to the fore, notably 'multinational corporations' morphing into 'global corporations' but also major cities reinterpreted as 'global cities'. Such changes are commonly known as globalization, a keyword that has dominated much thinking about living in the twenty-first century and what it portends. Our focus in Volume I is on cities in globalization, a specific selection of readings that showcase the global and world city literatures with particular reference to research and debates on the basic economic meaning of cities today.

In this rethinking of economic change, the idea of globalization has been approached in two different ways, and cities are critically implicated in both. First, there is the 'rescaling thesis' whereby economic processes have grown beyond the territorial confines of states; in this argument the state is leaking economic power upwards to the global scale while simultaneously losing power downwards to the local (sub-state) scale, to regions and cities. This is associated with neoliberalism whereby major finance, service and commodity producers are able to exploit different scales of activity to ensure weak economic governance to their corporate advantage (Brenner 2004; Brenner and Theodore 2002). Second, there is the 'space construction thesis' in which the nature of the space economy has fundamentally changed from national spaces of places (territoriality) to global spaces of flows (networking); it is here that cities are directly opposed to states as networked global cities transcending state economic jurisdictions. This is associated with information and knowledge production (financial, professional, creative and logistic)

whereby traditional primary (agriculture), secondary (manufacturing) and tertiary (servicing) productions are being surpassed in a new network society (Castells 1996). It is the second approach that dominates this volume through tracing a research lineage from 'world city hierarchy' (Friedmann and Wolff 1982; Friedmann 1986) through Sassen's 'global city' (Sassen 1991, 1994) to Taylor's (2001, 2004) 'world city network' via Castells' (1996) 'network society'. The research and debates we present are largely situated about these conceptualizations of cities in globalization; this has been our means to fit a thriving and ever expanding literature into the confines of a single volume with just twenty four key chapters.

We define antecedents as writings on cities before globalization that herald the global and world cities literature. Such research divides into two main types: a few central place researchers stretched hierarchical relations between cities to transnational levels (Christaller 1950; Berry and Pred 1965), and there were political economy researchers who took comparative studies to the international sphere (Walton 1976; Feagin and Smith 1987). But two geographers appear genuinely 'out of their time' in their portentous studies of cities: Peter Hall (1966) on 'world cities' and Jean Gottmann's (1961; Gottmann and Harper 1990) development of his concept of 'megalopolis'. We feature items from their researches as antecedents below. They are followed by the basic lineage references as our foundation studies. From the central place tradition John Friedmann (1986) provides the most influential worldwide image of cities in globalization (world city hierarchy) and from the comparative research tradition, Saskia Sassen (1991) provides the most influential new concept for understanding cities in globalization (global city). Manuel Castells (1996) uses the latter concept to illustrate his 'spaces of flows' argument, which we also feature plus a second item from Sassen (1994) showing her interpretation of global cities as not just comparative but strategically relational.

The massive influence of these foundation studies does not mean that they went unchallenged. Korff (1987) queried the research agenda set out by Friedmann and more generally a severe empirical deficit was identified (Short

et al. 1996; Taylor 1997) even leading to the description of 'so-called world cities' (Cox 1997). And Sassen's (1991) contribution did not prevent ensuing conceptual confusion (Taylor and Lang 2004). More substantively, there were three important debates generated. The one stimulated by James White (1998) was about contemporary major cities being much more than facilitators of new global capital – we feature this debate in full. A second debate has been led by Jennifer Robinson (2006) focusing upon the many important cities in poorer countries across the world that are conspicuous by their absence in global cities studies (see also Roy 2009). We feature her initial critique below. The third debate is about the relation of global cities to 'developmental states' typical of the Pacific Asian rise to economic prominence (Hill and Kim 2000; Hill and Fujita 2003). This relates to wider debates on the veracity of globalization relative to national economic development (Hirst et al. 2009) but here focuses upon the doubtful notion that Friedmann and Sassen overtly neglect the state in their analyses. As such, this debate is not included below. There are other critiques from specific conceptual vantage points, notably Michael Samers' (2002) critique of the global city hypothesis from an immigration perspective and Richard Smith's (2003) poststructuralist conceptualization of world city actor-networks. These represent vibrant debates within the literature that we have been unable to accommodate within our space limitations.

Beyond the foundation studies we have chosen to concentrate on relational studies of cities in globalization as world city network analyses. Initiated by specification of the world city network (Taylor 2001), this drew on Sassen's identification of advanced producer services as the key economic sector generating global cities but extended consideration to many more cities that housed offices of the leading business service firms. And the emphasis was on network structures based upon mutuality rather than traditional competition through hierarchies. In addition this approach provides a clear programme for data collection that directly addresses the data deficiency problem which, as noted above, has dogged the literature from its inception (Taylor 2004; Taylor et al. 2011). Thus here we present a small number of empirical studies to show different aspects of the world city network (for comprehensive coverage

of this approach, see the website of the Globalization and World Cities (GaWC) Research Network at [www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc)). By focusing on just leading service firms it can be argued that this work misses out the vast majority of major corporations that constitute the global economy. In a series of papers Alderson and Beckfield (2004; Alderson et al. 2010) have described a 'world city system' on the basis of network analyses of headquarter and branch locations of leading corporations across all economic sectors (see also Wall 2009), moving beyond previous studies based on counts of corporate headquarters (e.g. Godfrey and Zhou 1999). Alderson and Beckfield have good longitudinal data and we feature one of their analyses below. In addition, a debate between the two approaches is included in the final section of the volume that focuses on extending the network approach as a way of bringing some prior loose ends together, featuring a comparative reassessment of concepts, an alternative city network, network power relations, and finally, how this all relates back to the starting point, central place theory.

It cannot be over-emphasized how difficult this selection process has been. We started with a 'long list' of more than 50 items and in narrowing down the coverage we inevitably had to omit some important papers and even debates. For example, there is now a flourishing literature extending the world city network model in a number of ways, such as its application at multiple scales (e.g. Hoyler et al. 2008), its potential integration with global commodity chain analysis (Derudder and Witlox 2010) or new methodological advances in its visualization (Vinciguerra et al. 2010) and analysis (Neal 2012; Liu and Derudder 2012). There are also numerous case studies of individual city trajectories in globalization (see for example the contributions in Marcuse and van Kempen 2000; Gugler 2004; Amen et al. 2006, Derudder et al. 2012) which highlight the variety of urban outcomes found in contemporary globalization but do not form part of this selection. In mitigation, we argue that by focusing on inter-city relations at the global scale, the collection of papers included here holds together better because we have been able to present them as a narrative of research effort over several decades.

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