The Transformation of Cities

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The Transformation of Cities

Urban Theory and Urban Life

David C. Thorns

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Preface

In 1996, I attended the United Nations Habitat 2 conference in Istanbul. This amazing multicultural event stimulated and challenged my thinking about the way the city was being changed in the last years of the twentieth century. The next stage in my journey was a sabbatical in 1998 taking me to Los Angeles, New York, Kingston (Jamaica), London, Paris and Geneva where I saw, at first hand, a range of global cities. King's College London and the British Library of Political and Economic Science gave me access to excellent resources and a time to develop plans for the book. On returning to Aotearoa/New Zealand in September, 1998, I undertook a new course on Globalisation and Urban Change which shaped this book. In 1999, I also had the opportunity to visit Shanghai and attend a conference on the Future of Chinese Cities. Seeing the pace and scale of urban development and the juxtaposition of the traditional and ultra modern in the urban landscape confirmed my focus upon urban transformation as the key theme of the book.

People as well as places have been significant in shaping my ideas over the past three years. I have been fortunate to work amongst colleagues who have provided a supportive and stimulating environment and who have aided, often unwittingly, the development of my research. There are also particular people to whom I would like to express my thanks – Peter Marcuse, Sharon Zukin, Chris Hamnett, Alan Murie, Pat Mullins and Terry Burke. With all, I have had valuable conversations. My honours classes in 1999 and 2000 have also been a valuable sounding board for ideas and a constant source of challenge. So to Alex Broom, Lynne Batty, Lorraine Leonard, Carmelia Chaves, Sarah Meek, Sarah McAlpine, Hazel Ashton and Tobias Geisler I express my appreciation. Lorraine Leonard also ably assisted me in the construction of the bibliography. During the past three years, I have greatly appreciated the support, encouragement and critique of my colleagues on the Foundation for Research Science and Technology research programme – New Zealanders at home, Harvey Perkins and Ann Winstanley. Harvey, in particular, has been particularly significant as a sounding board and critic for my ideas and also provided much appreciated feedback on earlier drafts of this book. Steven Kennedy

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David C. Thorns
Christchurch

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List of Abbreviations

CBOs	Community-based organisations
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NIMBY	Not-in-my-backyard
PTAs	Parent–teacher associations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
TNCs	Transnational Corporations
UN	United Nations
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements
UNCRI	United Nations International Crime and Justice Research Institute
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WTO	World Trade Organisation