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### A Review of “The New Economy of the Inner City, Restructuring, Regeneration and Dislocation in the Twenty-first-century Metropolis”

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religious believers, these landscapes are ‘as real as the history of the exploration of land forms, peoples, languages, flora, societies, climates, and every other aspect of life on Earth’ (p. 159). Reflecting the ‘cultural turn’ in geography, he claims that religious space is ‘nondefinitive, protean, multivalent, temporally ambiguous, irregular, and by definition, ultimately unchartable’ (p. 160). And yet, religious space is always ‘folded together’ (p. 160) with physical space. As a result, he asserts that exploration of religious space ‘focuses at every step on how the symbolization of space is related to the occupation of space’ (p. 160) – something the cultural turn within geography grapples with at many levels. Through explorations of pilgrimage, migration, ritual, time, the state and the body, he demonstrates how the study of space and religion ‘incorporates data drawn from the testimony of those who see, hear, taste, touch and smell places that do not show up on the academic geographer’s map of the world’ (p. 160). Here, scholars of space and religion take examples and methods from geographers, and equally, can contribute back to that study.

Whether spaces of religion or spaces of politics, literature, film or new social movements, this book offers geographers new ways at looking at the implications for the spatial turn beyond the discipline. Each chapter points to seminal authors within their fields and core works of scholarship which will inform any work on spatial analysis in cultural geography. Although this review necessarily focuses on only a selection of the chapters, each will provide productive insights which will inform those working in geographic scholarship.

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**The New Economy of the Inner City, Restructuring, Regeneration and Dislocation in the Twenty-first-century Metropolis**

T. A. Hutton, *London, Routledge, 2008, ISBN 978 041 577 134 4*

This book developed as a project from a long-standing interest of the author in the evolution of the urban economy, and more particularly the complex production systems, labour markets, and industrial land use of the metropolitan core. The author has written many articles on the subject using a coherent narrative on comparable case studies around the world, on which this volume builds its arguments. In a remarkable and indeed very needed methodology of fieldwork, the author and his team actually register on plot size and on a frequent basis (evolutionary, longitudinally) what

functional changes occur in the economic occupation of inner cities streets – in this volume in London, Vancouver, Singapore and San Francisco. This very impressive description and summary of fieldwork makes reading the book already worthwhile. The occupations are repeatedly mapped and described in detail. This is done to illustrate a conceptual and theoretical framework of ‘the new inner city’, which, after the post-industrial city, is argued to be of a fundamentally new nature. The book places inner city new industry formation within the development history of the city, and underscores its role in larger processes of urban transformation.

The so-called post-industrial city is a heuristic that emerged after industrial restructuring in the 1970s and 1980s, with expansion of service industries in the central business district (CBD) of cities, accompanied by industrial disinvestments in those areas and social upgrading processes of the employed labour force. Thomas Hutton now (building on Allen Scott’s (1988), Ed Soja’s (2000) and Richard Florida’s (2002) influential monographs) advocates the new inner city to go beyond the post-industrial metropolis, by the emergence, survival and growth of small-scale, creative and technology intensive manufacturing and service firms, including cultural and innovative production. It balances service and manufacturing jobs in inner cities, stimulates convergence of urban production systems, provides sustainable economic development opportunities and acknowledges the hybridised and recombinant nature of modern production and labour opportunities in the knowledge-based economy (pp. 2–7). A major driving force, according to Hutton, is the new economy of dotcom firms. His narrative throughout the book is – compared with previous literature backed by actual empirical longitudinal developments – forceful, provoking and convincing. But the question remains whether indeed the developments described and explained do need an ‘entire new theorization’ (p. xiv) on urban economic development?

The principal purpose of the book is to systematically examine the implications of new industry formation in the city’s inner districts. It is indeed all there, and deserves close attention, since this is state-of-the-art conceptualisation. Yet, as the book is excellent in mapping the processes and actual land use imprints of new industry formation, it is about the implications that discussion arises. I mention five issues. First, the changes in inner cities take place gradually and not revolutionary. Actually, this is acknowledged in the book itself, as it is argued that the new economy is a recombinant version of and mixture with the ‘old economy’ (co-evolution). As recombination is the virtue of practically all innovation, the claim that the recombination of design and technology are the main drivers for a completely new economic paradigm in inner cities (p. 279) might be overstated. The book actually lacks a generalising test for the acclaimed economic revival of inner cities. A convincing testing of the economic value (in terms of long-lasting employment growth, firm survival, productivity or innovation) of the narrative provided is urgently needed.

Second, the issue of causality is significant as ever. The common critique of Richard Florida’s statement on creativity and growth in cities (does creativity lead to more than proportionally growth, or are creative people attracted to growing cities?) also

applies to the conceptualisations in this book. Do new economy and cultural oriented firms contribute to economic growth, or are they also the result of localised growth?

Third, the definition of the new economy is puzzling and problematic throughout the book. According to the entry of new economy in the book's index (pp. 330–331), definitions of it can be found for: constituent industry groups of dotcom firms (p. 29), as development phase in the inner city (p. 26), as development signifier (p. 272), as implications of inner city structures (p. 282), as cause of instability in London's inner city (p. 100), as new policy discourse (pp. 289–292), for the restructuring of urban form (p. 286) and for social class reformation (p. 289). It appears to me that the concept is too broad – and resembles that of the knowledge economy – to be uniquely defined. This is disturbing, as it forms the backbone of the argument of the book.

Fourth, the spatial scales of the processes at hand vary considerably throughout the conceptualisations. It is argued that the inner city is a focal point in the city region and even within international economic relations ('glocalisation', p. 35). But the central focus on inner cities and local development in the book does not seriously investigate functional relations with other places in the city region or elsewhere. Maybe convergence and a more balanced industry structure in inner cities – two of the main advantages of the new economy of the inner city – are less urgently needed when the larger city region provides economic complementarities. The recombination of old and new economic activities is also not uniquely attached to inner cities, but might appear elsewhere as well. And international specialisation is maybe not a bad thing for local development.

Finally, the policy implications of the newly proposed theory and conceptualisation are not very clear. The book concentrates on new forms of production in the inner cities. The implications for consumption and housing (that can also be *reasons* for new forms and places of production) are touched upon generally (p. 38), but not worked out coherently with the production argument. The section on policy (pp. 290–292) states that policy initiatives that are signalling a development (as opposed to regulatory) emphasis for cities are encouraged, and that policy shifts in the postindustrial era also involves larger state as well as local government and agencies involvement (p. 291). The establishment of policies and programmes to more fully develop the cultural potential of cities is thought to be entirely reasonable (p. 292). These policy statements in the book strike me as rather (too) generic in nature. An uneven (over time, space and interest groups) and very insecure distribution of costs and benefits is likely to be attached to these policies.

Notwithstanding these fundamental issues, this book, in short, is a provocative and important narrative in progress. It builds on important issues in urban economics and urban geography. The diversified and many folded research field is still building its conceptualisation – and in this phase there are no clear-cut definitions yet. This is witnessed by the book, in which everything is presented in manifold as well: the potential spheres of impact (p. 9) come in five, the purposes and objectives of the study (p. 11) come in five, the central research questions (p. 11) come in six, and the research

orientations (p. 12) come in three. The concept of the new economy of the inner city, however appealing, is not a full theory yet and appears to be not unambiguously testable. Of course the author, Thomas Hutton, continues his important work on this, as is warranted in the conclusions. We have to wait for the anticipated progress, and meanwhile reading the present volume is highly recommended.

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### **Shanghai Pudong: Urban Development in an Era of Global–Local Interaction**

Y. Chen, *Amsterdam, IOS Press, 2007*, Sustainable Urban Areas Series, ISBN 1 586 0374 71

Looking at contemporary Chinese cities, one is often compelled to feel aghast at the affluence and prosperity accumulated over such a short period of time. Within a time span of a little more than a decade, Pudong in Shanghai has risen from farmlands to the icon of China's economic success. This ultimately leads to a simple question: what made this possible? It is a question that has grasped the attention of anyone who's been observing China's regional development over the last three decades, but that has not been provided a comprehensive overview. Here in her book, Yawei Chen examines the urban growth of Shanghai, addressing the same question with the support of meticulously collected first-hand data.

The research in this book is essentially an *ex post facto* analysis of the Pudong area development, examining various local–central government initiatives and decision-making processes involved. Three main issues are under scrutiny: (1) how the Pudong mega-project was delivered in the globalising world; (2) how local development processes had been influenced by the global–local interaction; (3) how public–private partnerships were involved in this mega-project to enable the Pudong development. Five chapters in total are devoted to address these issues. Chapter 1 starts with a