City and Ecology: Notes towards an urban ecological politics

Stefan Kipfer

Our understanding of urban ecology continues to be informed by the nature ideologies of Social Darwinism, romanticism and scientism which are currently mobilized by political actors for concrete social projects: neo-fascism, eco-capitalism and different variants of environmentalism.[1] Accordingly it is not at all self-evident that the city should provide the site for ecological politics.[2] Under the impression of romantic ideologies, ecological problems are often linked to the ills of urbanization *per se* while Malthusian voices of the environmentalist movement interpret ecological problems and urban decay to inevitable evolutionary laws. In turn, solutions to the crisis of ecological sustainability tend to be looked for in a non-urban context, be it in the form of 'individual' suburban survival strategies, utopias of rural decentralization or the replacement of modern urban civilization by "organic" modes of rural living. Only in neo-capitalist strategies of 'ecological' planning does the city take centre stage in ecologically-oriented strategies of change.

These nature ideologies do not help us understand urban ecology as a process imbued with power relations. From the point of view of romantic thought, the city is important politically only in negative terms: as the anti-thesis of a co-operative and harmonic natural order serving (quite undialectically) as a dystopian mirror of an alternative future.[3] In Social Darwinist terms, the modern city with all its market-induced instabilities and disruptions is no more than a reflection of the realm of "nature", which is guided by the inexorable principles of competition and selection.[4] Finally, eco-system planners do situate themselves in the city, yet they do so by assuming that the science of ecology can provide the tools to adjust urban systems to eco-systemic imperatives irrespective of the social dimensions of the urban process.[5]

Recognizing and criticizing intellectual current which inform contemporary ecological politics is not enough, of course. I suggest that Romantic, Social-Darwinist and scientist propositions can be countered with a materialist approach to urban eco-politics. My claim in this paper is that such an alternative approach can be formulated through a critical engagement with Marxist and post-Marxist discourses which are sensitive to the ecological, spatial and symbolic dimensions of capitalist social formations. Accepting that "urban ecology [...] is not the transferal of biological imagination onto urban societies, but [...] the sum of our social practices in cities related to our natural environment,"[6] I will offer five cuts on urban ecology which can be read as attempts to tentatively and all too briefly delineate the parameters of analysis and action that a self-consciously urban ecological politics of transformation might take into account.

1. Situating the city

As David Harvey has pointed out, "there is in the final analysis nothing "unnatural" about New York City."[7] "Nature" is not something "out there" to bring back into the city or for people return to. Rather, the concept of urban ecology expresses the dialectical unity of "nature" and society. Through the modern, predominantly urban complexes of production, distribution and reproduction, the urban itself is implicated in the production and transformation of ecology. Cities do depend on non-human ecological processes, which escape the full knowledge and control of humans; yet they are also a part of these processes, for capital and labour flows are themselves integrated in the highly differentiated socio-ecological structures of modern cities. Urban ecologies represent spatially specific "natural/social articulations".[8]

Urban ecologies are spatializations of human and non-human processes in two major ways. On the one hand, cities share a common "natural" – ecological, social and economic – history with their regional, national and international hinterlands. As Cronon[9] has shown in his study on Chicago and the Midwest, the city and the "frontier" are not polar opposites, but are connected through energy flows and commodity transactions which stimulate agricultural production and sustain the "second nature" of the urban built environment. On the other hand, urban modes of life have become the norm for people in advanced capitalist regions to the extent where the distinction between city and countryside has become exceedingly problematic. In an ever-expanding and deepening world economy, socio-ecological life, even in ostensibly rural areas, is being urbanized as metropolitan areas continue sprawling and as agriculture is being fully industrialized and commodified. In the urban ecologies of North America, Europe and Japan, "first nature" or "nature" in the romantic sense of the word can no longer seen separate from the spatial reproduction processes of capital.[10]

Ironically, ideas and images of the "the country and the city" continue to interpret people's lived experience even in these highly urbanized times.[11] In cities, "nature" is not only produced and appropriated materially (here: physically) but also represented and constructed symbolically.[12] Partly stabilized through institutions of civil society (education, the media) and cultural practices such as advertisement, visual arts, landscaping and tourism,[13] many current nature ideologies have specifically urban origins. Modern arcadian and romantic imageries of "nature", for example, are specifically urban reactions to the threats and dangers of the industrial city. Although positing a retreat from the conflict-ridden, sinful and all too Promethean profanities of urban life into the idyllic, virtuous and divine realm of "nature," the realization of modern pastoral ideals has been fully dependent on urban expansion, notably on the mobilization of industrial wealth for the construction of arcadian utopias in the suburbanization process.[14]

If urban ecology expresses a nexus of "nature, culture and society," there is no reason why critical ecologists should shy away from the project of developing *urban* ecological visions.[15] Pragmatically, such visions could be based on the recognition that dense forms of urban living are in principle less energy-extensive than networks of dispersed 'rural' communities.[16] Politically, a transformative ecological politics would not dis-engage from the experience of industrialization and urbanization, it must build on them while striving to counter the destructive effects of *capitalist* urbanization. Such a perspective would counter

not only anti-urban nostalgia but also bourgeois "ideologies of the city" which have influenced current eco-managerial approaches to urban planning and may serve the purpose of providing urban growth coalitions with a sense of purpose and legitimacy.[17]

2. Urban ecology and the societal relations with nature

Any form of political mobilization is socially and spatially situated. The "middle-class" basis of a large part of what is commonly understood as environmental politics in metropolitan countries is a well-known fact. Although "middle class" is an increasingly problematic category describing many different and contradictory class positions (including the precarious position of educated but underemployed young adults who have played important roles in new social movements), both fundamentalist and mainstream environmental movements tend to draw disproportionately on professional middle class strata for membership and electoral support.[18] Given the social situatedness of environmentalism, constructing universal images of nature devoid of human practice to defend ecological stability and preserve wilderness is highly problematic.[19]

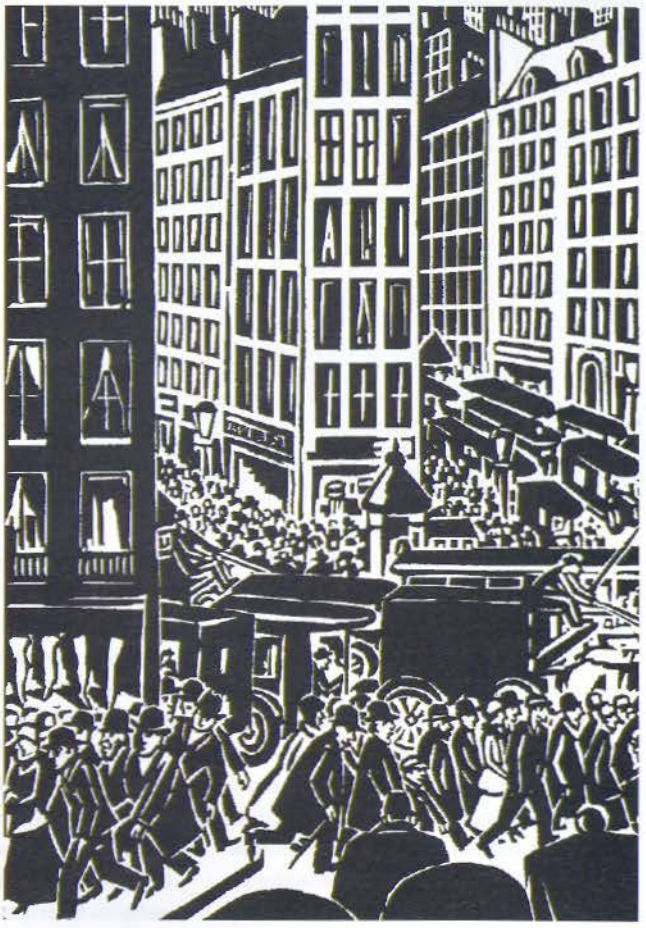
In reality, the human experience of "nature" is itself socially specific and finds multiple expressions in what Jahn calls societal relationships with nature. Societal relationships with nature encompass specific physical, social, symbolic and epistemological dimensions and include basic forms of human survival such as work health, nutrition, biological reproduction and inter-generational relations.[20] Societal relationships with nature are thus mediated through the power relationships of class, gender, sexual orientation, racism and imperialism which have regulated human bodies in modern social formations and mould the forms in which we relate to non-human life-forms.[21] By extension, urban ecologies are sites where these societal relationships with nature assume historically and geographically concrete forms.[22]

In cities, "nature" is thus represented and appropriated unevenly and unequally. The configuration of suburbia in industrial Britain and North America, for example, was not only intended to symbolically reconcile man (sic) with pastoral nature by means of the very environmentally destructive processes of capital accumulation which had made the suburban utopia possible in the first place. Sub-urbanization was also predicated on the exploitation of colonial peoples and ecologies, the cementation of patriarchy in its nuclear bourgeois form of the single-family home and the ghettoization of the working class in the dismal quarters and workplaces of the industrial city. To put it differently, suburbanization can be understood as a particular socio-ecological constellation which includes processes of class formation, gendered and imperialist division of labour, forms of spatial segregation along lines of "race," ethnicity and class, and symbolic as well as physical forms of instrumentalizing non-human ecologies.[23]

Given these urban connections between spatial exclusion, social exploitation and the appropriation of human and non-human "nature," every ecological project represents a social and economic project as well, while "every social (including literary and artistic) project [is] a project about nature, environment and eco-system."[24] Urged by workers and environmental justice activists who face ecological problems such as toxic emissions and dump sites in their segregated spaces,[25] environmentalists cannot continue to pretend to defend the integrity of external or universal nature but must broaden the concept of ecological politics to include such questions as heterosexism, environmental racism, women's reproductive rights, and workers health and safety. In connecting these distinct but related struggles, urban ecological politics would encompass an articulatory politics of identity, difference and counter-hegemony.[26]

3. Urban ecology and the structure of the capitalist city

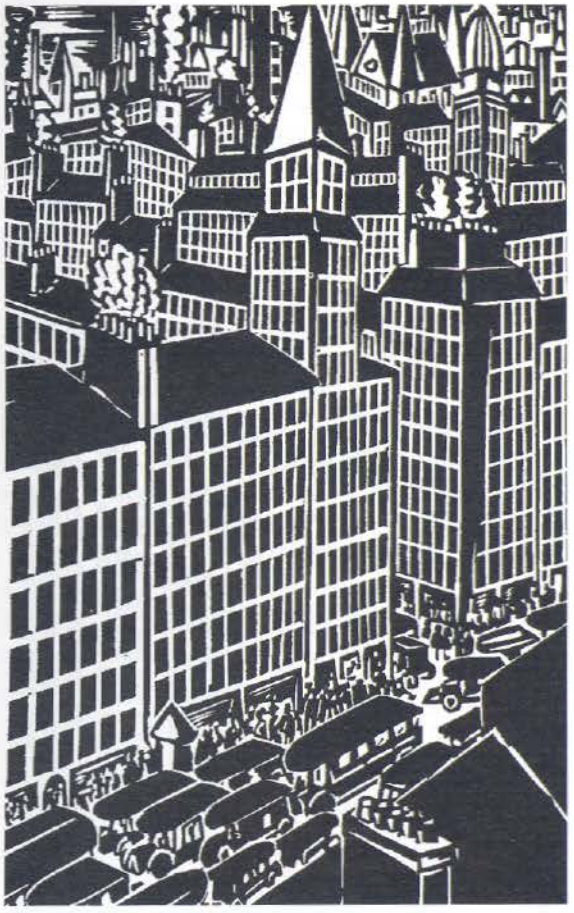
In the urbanization process, the degradation of human and non-human ecologies is socially produced. Since societal relationships with nature are mediated through urban ecologies – spatial constellations of human and non-human histories – urban ecological crises can be understood as crises of the societal relationships with nature, not as the products of urban and human infringements on "naturally" self-regulating eco-systems external to human practice. In cities, "the individual spheres of society and nature are not in a critical state, but society's relationships with nature are."[27] In the following

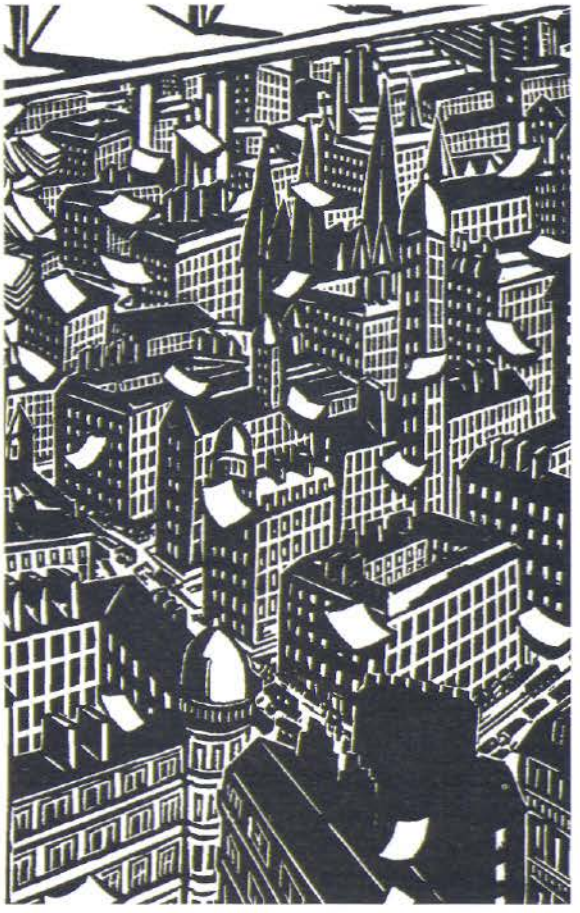


three sections, I would like to clarify this statement by foregrounding the capitalist dimensions of the societal relations with nature and demonstrate that urban ecologies are enmeshed with the production of space in capitalist social formations.

The reproduction of capital depends on the successful mobilization of "conditions of production" – the pseudo-commodities of labour-power, non-human ecology, and the "communal, general conditions of social production" which include collective infrastructures like transportation and communications systems. Labour-power, non-human ecology and the communal conditions of production are treated by capital as if they were commodities: they are objectified in the labour process and sucked into the monetized process of commodity exchange. In these processes the concrete and interdependent qualities of land, community and labour-power are no longer 'visible' other than on capital's terms: as universally exchangeable goods or isolated objects of production. Yet the conditions of production can never be fully subsumed under the control of capital. While permeated by the logics of capital, they are not produced and owned like regular industrial commodities and cannot be manipulated by purely technical means. Capitalist social formations are thus riddled with uncertainties also because capital is blind to its ecological and extra-capitalist bases.[28]

The mobilization of the conditions of production is an inherently spatial process which extends to imperialist divisions of labour and the production of urban space. Although capitalist relations of production originated in the post-feudal countryside, capitalist industrialization has been a primarily urban phenomenon. Historically, the progression of capitalism came thus to depend on the constitution and periodic reorganization of the "structured coherence" of urban space,[29] that is to say a relatively stable configuration of labour markets, consumption norms, inter-corporate relations, built environments and technological systems of energy and matter transformation. Urban regions can be seen as particular "spatial fixes"[30] where labour-power is reproduced in working-class milieus, water and energy flows are appropriated and transformed, and technological dynamism is propelled by collective infrastructures, relationships of proximity and non-market transactions.





As a central moment in the organization of the ecological foundations of capital, the relative spatial fixity of cities also embodies social and ecological costs produced by capitalist modernization.[31] Many aspects of current ecological degradation, for example, can be traced back to the postwar city and the Fordist regime of accumulation characterized by mass production, mass consumption and an all-pervasive, cross-sectoral technological complex feeding on neo-colonialism, cheap fossil fuels and the petrochemical industrial complex.[32] In postwar metropolitan regions, Fordist production and consumption took a particular geographic form dominated by functionally and spatially dis-aggregated suburban neighbourhoods, single-storey industrial plants, office parks and automobilized transportation systems. Symbolizing a new stage in the subsumption of human and non-human creativity under the logic of capital,[33] this energy-intensive and spatially extensive mode of accumulation crystallized in urban form and has led to massive ecological costs which cannot be multiplied indefinitely or extended to a planetary scale.

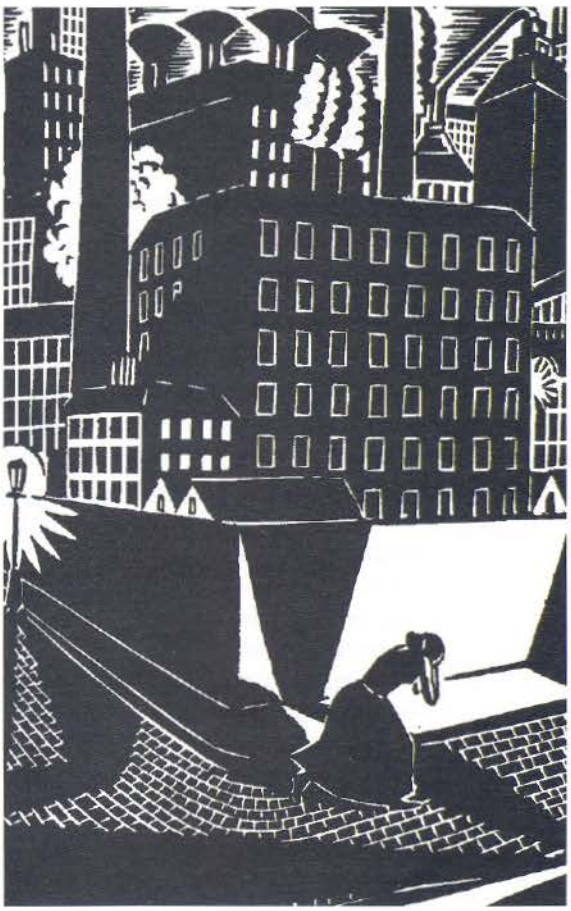
If indeed ecological degradation is produced socially and deeply enshrined in urban space, then oppositional, transformative urban ecological politics could adopt a use-value perspective of the city and aim at, for example, protecting the built environment from the pressures of real-estate speculation, integrating agricultural and industrial production systems in a new food regime, reversing the functional separation of living, working and recreation, and building non-hierarchical social relationships in households, workplaces and communities. Such an alternative urban ecological project cannot help but confront the urban capitalist aspects of the societal relationships with nature which are geared towards maximizing exchange values.

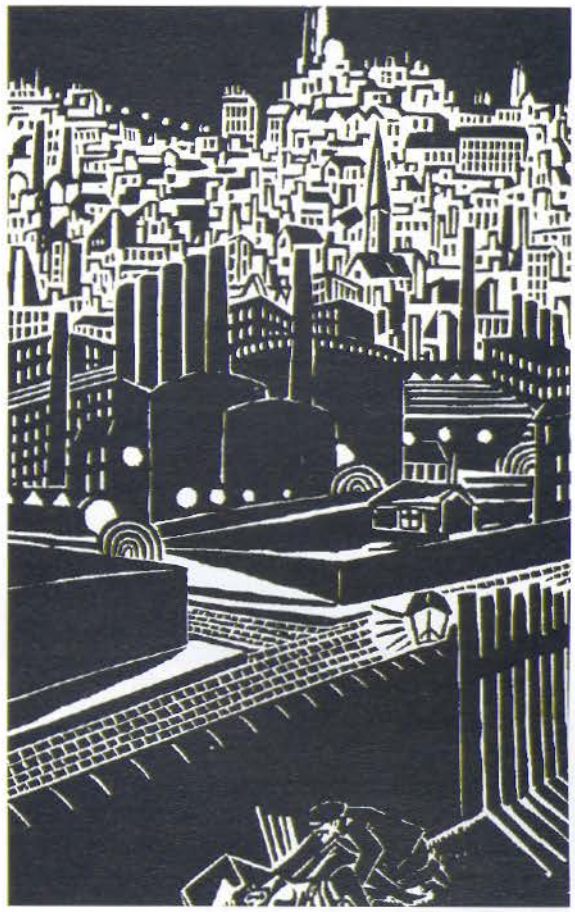
In the long term, trans-formative strategies of ecological politics can only be successful if they exploit the dependence of capital on the production of urban space by resisting the expansion of commodified spaces and preventing capitalist social relations from stabilizing in urban space.

4. Politics, hegemony and the regulation of urban ecologies

How can we find a way out of this structural narrative back to considerations of political action? As already indicated, capitalist development pre-supposes the mobilization of the conditions of production and therefore the production of space. Since capital does not have the means to ensure its own reproduction and is furthermore built upon relationships of exploitation in the spheres of production and reproduction, the rule of capital is never complete and in its partiality remains contingent upon political organization. Politics is thus a formative element in "the basic regulation [stabilization and routinization, S.K.] and symbolic constitution of societal relationship with nature".[34] Given the social, ecological and spatial limits to capital, an analysis of urban ecology necessitates a discussion of local politics.

Neo-Gramscian theoreticians of capitalism have highlighted the role of agency and the politics of hegemony in the constitution of historical capitalism. These analysts have pointed out that the laws of capital are not underlying constraints which operate behind people's backs and are hidden beneath popular consciousness.[35] Instead they become generalized, if at all, through collective practices which are congealed products of social conflict and condensations of the balance of power among organized political forces.[36] Ultimately, laws of development are no more than historical configurations of social relations tied together by what Gramsci called hegemony: (1) constellations of dominant and subaltern political forces which are bound together by alliances, ideological formations and the institutions of state and civil society; (2) the cultural practices of everyday life which constitute people's political subjectivities and routinize conflict to *temporarily* immunize social relations from direct political challenges in a space of *normality*. By extension, one can suggest that the (structural) societal relationships with nature are "bound together with a relationship of hegemony and compromise."[37]





Similarly, the materialization of capital in urban space is negotiated through a complex constellation of political conflict and comprise among urban political forces which construct the particular ways in which urban space is organized, controlled and commodified. The mobilization of the conditions of production and the constitution of the structured coherence in the Fordist city, for example, was facilitated by the practices of urban growth coalitions (developers, real estate agents, boards of trade, state agencies, politicians, local newspapers etc.). In locally specific forms, these growth coalitions unified the interests of urban elites, tied certain subaltern groups (construction unions, for example) to a vision of unlimited growth, and sustained what appeared to be a "natural" (inevitable and apolitical) process of urban expansion.[38] Thereby, these growth coalitions politically and symbolically unified the material flows and infrastructures of the Fordist city and temporarily cemented the structured coherence of the postwar city. The latter would disintegrate under the combined pressures of spatial restructuring and movement mobilizations which *rendered visible* the historical contingency of postwar (dys)-urbanization and dis-engaged political subjectivities from the constraints of normal everyday life.

For urban ecological politics, two conclusions follow from these observations. First, strategies aimed at the construction of an alternative urban ecological future are inevitably bound up with issues of protracted cultural change. Given the multiple dimensions of the societal relations with nature, the task here would be to combine the variegated strands of the cultural politics of nature with the search for collective political subjectivities

which are not fully captured by the economistic culture of the capitalist city. Second, urban ecological activists should continue to be active players on the more "traditional" terrain of the state and civil society to engage the dominant actors which clustered in and around the local state have removed the regulation of societal relationships from democratic control. Such a two-pronged urban ecological politics could play a role in tilting the balance of political forces in a reformist direction or, conversely, disrupting the ties among dominant and reformist subaltern groups to construct a broader counter-hegemonic bloc in support of socio-ecological change. This is no easy task. The struggles of social movements in Western Europe have demonstrated the difficulties of simultaneously nurturing a culture of resistance in alternative institutions and articulating counter-cultural milieus with state-centred strategies of radical reform.

5. It all comes together in global cities: transnationalization, urban ecology and local politics

Since the 1970s the spatial configurations and social forms of capitalist development have been progressively reorganized. The multi-national and neo-colonial divisions of labour, which had embedded the national Fordist economies of the postwar period, are being superseded by *transnational* constellations of production, finance and class structure.[39] The formation of a network of global cities such as New York, Tokyo, London, Los Angeles and Toronto has thrived on the selective integration of nation-states into a transnational capitalist regime. As headquarter cities, nodes of financial transactions, milieus of a transnational managerial and professional class, and destination points of new immigration movements, global cities are integral to the organization of transnational capital, financial and labour flows and the production of a "global post-modern" consumer culture.[40]

Just as ecological considerations have become central to the modernization of contemporary capitalism,[41] the problematic of urban ecology has become a crucial aspect of urban transnationalization.[42] Through their ties to transnationally dispersed hinterlands, global cities connect urban with global ecologies by binding together capitalist societal relationships with nature which operate at local and global scales. First, the financial institutions, producer service networks and telecommunications infrastructures agglomerated in global cities manage the financial conditions under which non-human ecologies and human bodies are transformed into manageable resources on a transnational scale. The current global financial regime of high interest rates, short-term investment horizons and debt enforcement has led to accelerated rates of exploitation of minerals, forests and agricultural lands in those (mostly Southern) countries which are forced by structural adjustment regimes to generate foreign exchange and maximize export production.[43] As spatial bases of transnational financial flows, global cities are central moments in the subjugation of human and non-human creativity to the imperatives of global finance.

Second, in global cities urban trans-nationalization means a new round of local-regional ecological degradation. While global cities embody global societal relationships with nature in the medium of money, the formation of global cities presupposes the production of space and the reorganization of urban ecologies on a regional scale. Global cities operate in office complexes, bulky telecommunication systems, vast data banks, international airports, railway stations for high-speed trains, gentrified residential districts and spectacular places of cultural consumption. The requirements of global cities thus imply processes of spatial expansion which tend to increase pollution levels and exert mounting pressures on water and energy sources. In the case of Zurich, Switzerland, for example, global-city formation has been related to the construction of a multi-nodal urban region of spatially dis-aggregated suburban residential areas and ex-urban business districts which are connected through multi-directional commuting flows and growing car-traffic volumes.

Third, while global cities depend on the mobilization of non-human ecologies to sustain the intensification of land use and the absorption of increased pollution levels, these processes of ecological degradation in global cities are refracted through relationships of power and exclusion which Friedmann and Wolff[44] have tried to grasp with the terms "citadel" and "ghetto." The operation of global cities cannot rely on the aforementioned spaces of power alone, it also depends on armies of low-paid workers who are employed in those precarious and gender-segmented sectors (ranging from data-processing to personal services) which maintain the citadels of control and upscale living.[45] While high-income professionals and executives have access to "nature" as an amenity and symbol of power in exclusive, lush and green neighbourhoods, these workers are disproportionately exposed to smog, toxic emissions, and water shortages in populous or immigrant neighbourhoods which are often segregated along ethnic and "racial" lines. The degradation and re-constitution of urban ecology in global cities is mediated by processes of spatial polarization and fragmentation.

The Los Angeles rebellion in 1992 has indicated that the transformation of urban ecologies and the production of urban space in global cities is permeated with politics. Indeed, one might suggest that the urban is the central mediating instance which unifies urban ecologies with transnational capitalism.[46] Transnational processes are transmitted, modified or challenged depending on the particular balance of power among locally-connected political forces who negotiate the control of urban space and struggle for cultural hegemony. The *particular forms* in which urban ecologies are transformed is influenced by organization of growth coalitions in state and civil society and by the intersection of urban development with the politics of identity and everyday life. Looking at the very different examples of Zurich[47] and Los Angeles,[48] it seems that socio-ecological change and political conflict have fractured the hegemonic cohesion of global cities, making it more difficult to sustain the structured coherence of urban space in hegemonic (non-coercive) ways.

In global cities, no purely local ecological politics is possible, for urban ecological strategies are part and parcel of the struggle for the modalities of world-market integration. Urban ecological politics could thus engage in two-pronged strategies of transnationalization itself. First, given the segmentation of global city populations along lines of class, gender, ethnicity and "race," the construction of an alternative urban ecological future depends on the possibility of transnationalizing counter-hegemonic politics *locally*. A politics of articulation (most notably considerations of anti-racism and environmental justice) is absolutely central to bridge and partly transform the real differences among subordinate groups and engage them in solidarity actions against the strategies of capital and the "anti-cosmopolitanism" of neo-fascism.[49]

Second, the cross-cultural linkages of immigrant communities also provide an opportunity to build transnational alliances with movements in areas of the world whose socio-ecological characteristics are already connected to the control points of the global economy.

Conclusion

Urban ecologies dialectically unify human and non-human processes and spatially mediate the (physical, social and symbolic) societal relationships with nature. In structural terms, the production of urban space in the modern city is one of the main means through which capitalist social relations instrumentalize the ecological conditions of production and externalize costs on human and non-human communities. Politically, the mobilization of urban ecologies for the purpose of capital accumulation is problematic and thus mediated by the politics of hegemony: the processes of contestation and compromise in state, civil society and everyday life which regulate societal relationships with nature and stabilize or disrupt the structured coherence of urban regions. The case of global cities has indicated that at this point in the history of capitalism, local political-ecological strategies are connecting points at which urban ecologies become intertwined with global eco-systems and transnational capitalism.

If local politics fuse urban ecologies with extra-local scales of ecological reproduction and human interaction, then cities constitute strategic sites for oppositional ecological activism as well. Such activism should accommodate an articulatory politics of identity and difference not just because societal relationships with nature are multi-dimensional but also because recent socio-spatial transformations continue to fragment the life experiences of city dwellers. If one were to foreground considerations of capitalist urban development in a discussion of urban ecology and hegemonic politics, as this paper has tried to, the main challenge lies in combining the cultural politics of everyday life with a critique of capitalist modernization on the one hand and the state-centred strategies of socio-ecological reform on the other. In this light, an alternative urban ecological vision would include use-value forms of production and urban living, democratically coordinated human relationships with nature and webs of solidarity spanning across cultures and continents.

. . . **Stefan Kipfer** is a graduate student in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University, Toronto. He is currently completing his Masters thesis on local politics, urban change and global-city formation in Zurich, Switzerland. . . . . .

Notes

1 David Pepper, *The Roots of Modern Environmentalism* (London: Croom Helm, 1983).

2 Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm, *Die Dritte Stadt* (Frankfurt a/M: Suhrkamp, 1993).

3 Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Stuart Hall, "The Problem of Ideology – Marxism without Guarantees." in *Marx: A Hundred Years On.* Betty Matthews (ed.), (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1983) 57-86.

4 Robert Park, E.W. Burges., and R.D. McKenzie (ed.), *The City* 2nd. ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1925); for a critique see Manuel Castells, La Question Urbaine. (Paris: François Maspero 1972); and M. Gottdiener, *The Social Production of Urban Space* (Austin: University of Texas Press 1988).

5 The Royal Commission on the Toronto Waterfront, *Watershed* (Ottawa 1990).

6 Roger Keil, "The Environmental Problematic in World Cities." in *World Cities in a World System,* Paul Knox and Peter Taylor eds., (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1995) forthcoming.

7 David Harvey, "The Nature of Environment: The Dialectics of Social and Environmental Change" *Socialist Register* 1993: 1-51.

8 Noel Castree, "The Nature of Produced Nature: Materiality and Knowledge Construction in Marxism," *Antipode* 27 1(1995):24; Franz Hartmann, "Towards a Socio-Ecologial Theory of Urban Space," (Paper presented at American Association of Geographers Annual Conference, San Francisco April 2, 1994).

9 William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: Norton, 1991).

10 Neil Smith, *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital and the Production of Space* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1984).

11 Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 1973).

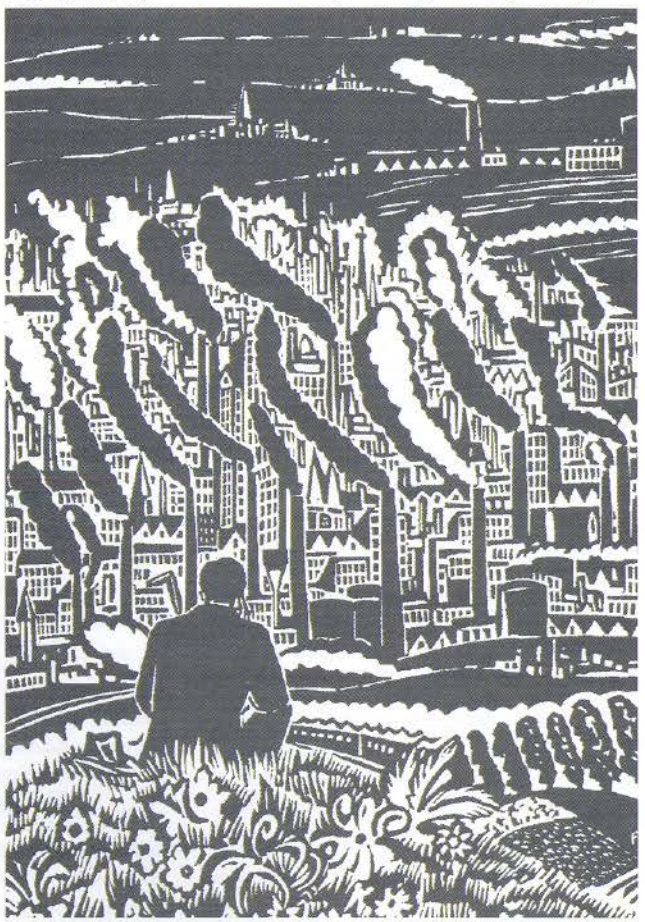
12 According to Redclift, "external nature such as wildlands, is every bit as much a social construction as 'second' nature, although transformed in the process of consumption rather than production" (1987, 228). Shopping malls are good indications for this point. Although they are sites where the commodified and abstracted products of concrete human and non-human "natures" are admired, sold and recycled into ecological reproduction processes, shopping malls are generally seen as symbols for the complete separation between "nature" and the city. Michael Redclift, "The Production of Nature and the Reproduction of the Species," *Antipode* 19 2.(1991): 222-230.

13 Alexander Wilson, *The Culture of Nature: North American Landscape from Disney to the Exxon Valdez* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1991).

14 Robert Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia* (New York: Basic Books, 1987).

15 p.m. *bolo'bolo* (Zurich: Paranoia City).

16 Pachlke argues that high density urban living has the advantage of saving energy by *a.* reducing average residential space per person; *b.* reducing the reliance of private car transportation; *c.* minimizing the need for individual ownership of domestic appliances *d.* reducing the energy intensity of heating and cooling systems by minimizing the number of exterior walls per residential unit; *e.* reducing birth rates in non-agricultural settings; *f.* increasing the reliance on collective modes of transportation; *g.* reducing the daily



distances travelled per capita; *h.* reducing urban pressures on agricultural areas *i.* achieving the critical population mass for recycling, re-using and repairing systems. Robert Paehlke, *Environmentalism and the Future of Progressive Politics* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989) 247-9.

17 Walter Prigge, "Metropolitanisierung" Kommune 3 20.(1989).

18 Claus Offre, "Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics" in *Changing Boundaries of the Political: Essays on the Evolving Balance Between the State and Society, Public and Private in Europe* Charles Maier ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) 63-106.

19 In the mainstream environmentalist discourse of jobs vs. the environment, Keil detects as "deep-seated class prejudice" of middle class suburbanites who mobilize notions of clean, healthy, smart, consumption and service-oriented modes of economic development against the 'dirty' and 'productivist' world of blue-collar workers. Roger Keil, "Green Work Alliances: The Political Economy of Social Ecology," *Studies in Political Economy* 44 (1994). In non-metropolitan countries, such a brand of anti-urban environmental politics often reifies nature in calls for wildlife preservation and clashes with those oppositional forces for whom ecological concerns are not separable from social justice and economic survival. In areas of wildlife conservation of tropical rainforests of Amazonia and Central America, voices in support of the preservation of the "virgin" nature, which in many cases have come from local middle classes and metropolitan environmental organizations such as WWF, have sometimes been at odds with the politics of peasants, forest dwellers and native populations for whom there exists no ecological politics separate from concerns of social justice and economic survival. Daniel Faber, "The Ecological Crisis of Latin America: A Theoretical Introduction" *Latin American Perspectives* 19.1(1992):3-16; Suzanna Hecht and Alexander Cockburn, *The Fate of the Forest: Developers, Destroyers and Defenders of the Amazon* (London: Penguin 1992).

20 Thomas Jahn, "Ecological Movements and Environmental Politics in Germany" *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* 4 1(1993):7-8.

21 This point can be illustrated with reference to democratic theory. It is commonplace in environmentalist circles to criticize the "Enlightenment tradition" of Western culture for constructing a dualism between reason and nature as a discursive strategy for man to objectify nature. However, until very recently, the status of 'reason' (i.e. political maturity) has been reserved for men of prosperity which could be entrusted with the responsibilities of controlling nature and managing social affairs. Workers, peasants, women, and slaves (in that order) were for a long time excluded from the sphere of rational politics because they were considered closer to nature and thus unable to conform to the standards of propertied political rationality.

22 Keil, 1995, forthcoming.

23 Robert Fishman, 1987.

24 David Harvey, 1993, 31.

25 Robert Bullard, *Confronting Environmentalism Racism: Voices from the Grassroots* (Boston: South End, 1993).

26 Kate Sandilands, "Ecology as Politics: The Promise and Problems of the Ontario Greens" 157-73; Laurie Adkin, "Counter-Hegemony and Environmental Politics." 135-56. Both in *Organizing Dissent: Contemporary Social Movements in Theory and Practice.* William Carroll ed., (Toronto: Garamond, 1992). On the politics of articulation, see Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (London: Verso 1985).

Following Laclau and Mouffe, Adkin defines counter-hegemonic politics in the following terms: "I will consider as counter-hegemonic those discourses critical of capitalist accumulation, or productivism, of science as domination of nature, of the prevailing ideologies of science and technocracy, of relations of subordination-domination (gender, racial, heterosexual), and of the institutions and social practices that underpin such relations, including the restricted nature of liberal democracy and the separation of the personal and the political, or the private from the public. A counter-hegemonic discourse is formed by the rearticulation of elements of existing identities, values, and conceptions of need" (136).

Note also Andrew Ross' description of what he calls the politics of nature: "any broad understanding of the "environment" and the "politics of nature" must also include the full range of issues that have come to be known as the politics of the body: health care rights, reproductive rights, the politics of the immune system, concerns about diet and nutrition, sexual politics, the ethics of bio-technologies, the politics of skin colour, the politics of workers safety, and so on. It is in the contexts of these environmental issues that people experience limits to their social growth, and these are the areas where individuals invest their strongest political passions and feel that their opinions and actions can have the most effect." Andrew Ross, "Getting the Future We Deserve," *Socialist Review,* (1991): 148.

27 Thomas Jahn, 1993, 7.

28 James O'Connor, "Capitalism, Nature, Socialism: A Theoretical Introduction" *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism,* 1.1 (1988): 11-45. On the colonial and patriarchal dimensions of the conditions of production, see Mies, 1986; Faber, 1992.

29 David Harvey, *The Urban Experience* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989).

30 see Harvey, 1989.

31 Frank Beckenbach, "Social Costs in Modern Capitalism." *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* 2 (1987):109-122.

32 Barry Commoner, *Making Peace with the Planet* (New York: New Press, 1992) 46-55.

33 Elmar Altvater, "The Global Order of the Societal Relationship with Nature" Trans. Stefan Kipfer, *Political Ecology: Global and Local Perspectives,* David Bell, Leesa Fawcett, Roger Keil, Peter Penz eds. (McGill-Queens University Press, 1995) forthcoming.

34 Thomas Jahn, 1993, 6.

35 Stuart Hall, "The Problem of Ideology – Marxism without Guarantees." *in Marx: A Hundred Years On.*

36 Robert Cox, Production, Power and World Order (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987). Alex Demirovic, "Die Hegemoniale Strategie der Wahrheit: Zur Historizität des Marxismus bei Gramsci" *Argument Sonderband* 159 (1989): 69-89.

37 Alex Demirovic, "Ecological Crisis and the Future of Democracy." *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism,* 59

38 John Logan, and Harvey Molotch, *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place* (Berkeley: California Press, 1987).

39 Stephen Gill and David Law, "Global Hegemony and the Structural Power of Capital." *International Studies Quarterly* 33(1989):475-499.

40 Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: London, New York, Tokyo,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); Stuart Hall, "The Problem of Ideology – Marxism without Guarantees." *Marx: A Hundred Years On,* 57-86.

41 Elmar Altvater, "The Global Order of the Societal Relationship with Nature" *Trans. Stefan Kipfer, Political Ecology: Global and Local Perspectives. David Bell, Leesa Fawcett, Roger Keil, Peter Penz (eds). (McGill-Queens University Press, 1995) forthcoming:* Alain Lipietz, "A Regulationist Approach to the Future of Urban Ecology." *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* 3.3(1992).

42 Roger Keil, 1995, forthcoming.

43 Elmar Altvater, *The Future of the Market: An Essay on the Reproduction of Money and Nature after the Collapse of Actually Existing Capitalism,* Trans. Patrick Camiller, (London: Verso, 1993); Philip McMichael, "The New Colonialism: Global Regulation and the Restructuring of the Inter-State System" *A New World Order? Global Transformations in the Late 20th Century.* Jozsef Böröcz and David A. Smith, eds. (Westport: Greenwood, 1995) forthcoming.

44 John Friedmann and Goetz Wolff, "World-City Formation: An Agenda for Research and Action" *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 6 (1982):309-44.

45 Saskia Sassen, 1991.

46 Roger Keil, 1995, forthcoming.

47 Kipfer, Stefan, "Globalization, Hegemony and Political Conflict: the Case of Local Politics in Zurich, Switzerland" *A New World Order? Global Transformations in the Late 20th Century,* Jozsef Böröcz and David A. Smith eds. (Westport:Greenwood, 1995) forthcoming.

48 Roger Keil, *Weltstadt – Stadt der Welt: Internationalisierung und Lokale Politik in Los Angeles* (Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot, 1993).

49 Roger Keil, 1995, forthcoming.

Images from *The City* by Frans Masereel, originally published in Germany as Die Stadt in 1925 by Kurt Wolff Verlag AG, Munich.