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Abstract

Five years ago Yiftachel (2006) called on planning theorists to focus attention on cities of the global 'South-East' where issues differ significantly from northern contexts – which currently inform much planning theory work. This article asks if any such new directions have emerged in this period. It first reviews recent writings on socio-political and material conditions in these cities and suggests a set of assumptions to inform thinking about planning in these regions. It then identifies and assesses new strands of planning thought (some with older roots), and considers the project of taking forward planning theory-building in the global South-East.

Keywords

Global South-East, societal conflict, insurgent planning, coproduction, informality

Introduction

Some years back Oren Yiftachel (2006) made a call in a *Planning Theory* Essay for new conceptualizations of planning from the 'South-East' to engage with the realities of the various south-east regions of the world.[1] At the time this call was made such a shift was already underway. Lauria and Wagner (2006) had noted that sources for empirical studies in planning theory had expanded geographically over the past decades, and had begun to diversify away from their earlier concentration in the US, the UK and Europe. Other streams of thinking have produced comparative work on planning systems in different parts of the world (for example Friedmann, 2005; Sanyal, 2005) and explorations of the diffusion of planning ideas from one part of the globe to another (Healey and Upton, 2010; Nasr and Volait, 2003).

This article explores emergent thinking in planning theory of a somewhat different kind, linked to Yiftachel's (2006: 213) plea that we develop ideas which are useful in

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contexts characterized by 'stubborn realities' of both a material and discursive nature. He points particularly to contexts where liberalism is not a stable constitutional order; where property systems are fluid; inter-group conflicts over territory inform daily practices and essentialize deep divides around race, caste and ethnicity; where growing economic and social disparities erupt in conflict and violence; and where efforts to plan highlight the conflicting rationalities which inform the actions and attitudes of various actors in urban environments.These include contexts which Bollens (2012: 6) describes as 'polarized', meaning that they are characterized by 'potent political, spatial, and socio-psychological contestation', and they 'contain a depth of antagonism and opposition' beyond that of 'divided cities', a characterization now of almost all cities. Polarized cities are marked by contested political control as identity groups seek to protect their distinctive group characteristics and there is a lack of trust in normal political channels which can easily express itself in aggression and violence.

Building on Brownhill and Parker's (2010) urge to widen the geographical focus of debates on planning (particularly on participation), to meet the challenge of 'seeing from the south' (also see Watson, 2009) rather than continuing to draw ideas and lessons primarily from the global North and West, and to consider that we might now be in a 'post-collaborative era' (at least in theoretical terms), this article finds that there are gradually emerging areas of work that do just this.

The first part of the article considers the extent to which Yiftachel's 'stubborn realities' persist in cities of the global South-East and new dynamics that may be shaping these. This allows the suggestion of a set of assumptions which need to inform thinking about how planning can respond to these issues. The second part of the article explores some emerging themes in the (English language) planning literature which do indeed respond to these 'stubborn realities', as well as ideas from related fields which have the potential to inspire new planning theory work.

The 'stubborn realities' that continue to shape cities of the global South-East

This section of the article provides a necessarily broad overview of the current nature of the 'stubborn realities' to which Yiftachel (2006) refers, and serves to highlight contemporary dynamics. The focus here, as with Yiftachel, is on urban areas in the global 'South-East' rather than those in the global 'North', recognizing the danger of generalization in the use of such regional binaries. Using alternative terminology, the focus here is on lower and lower-middle income countries,[2] those which have a Human Development Index outside of the 'very high' category (UNDP, 2009) and those classified as 'developing' and 'transitional' in the more traditional UN Habitat language (see UN Habitat, 2009). Each of these produces different categorizations of countries and regions, but there are significant areas of overlap. Literature on the socio-economic, political and spatial conditions in urban areas in these south-east regions, coming from a range of disciplinary and institutional sources, is patchy, sometimes contradictory and sometimes prone to generalization across rather different contexts as well.The following indicates that 'stubborn realities' continue but with some significant new interpretations of directions in state-society interactions and processes shaping the urban built environment.

In the last half-decade cities in the global South-East have been economically shaken by post-2008 global financial instabilities and large parts have been politically shaken by citizen uprisings (such as the Arab Spring). Despite economic trends, market-driven urban development (fuelled by shifts to the financial and services sectors, and rapid urbanization) has continued, if unevenly (Theodore et al., 2011). Across the political spectrum, again unevenly, neoliberalized state policies (Purcell, 2009) continue to support developer and market-driven processes of urban land development which focus on the occupation of well-located and serviced space, in demand from both poor communities and private-sector developers. Ongoing imperatives for some cities to aspire to 'world class' status usually result in support for urban projects and urban forms compatible with elite tastes and consumption. Such processes are frequently at the root of growing social and spatial exclusion and they reflect and promote the socio-economic inequalities which seem to accompany processes of globalization and democratization (Holston, 2009). Global and local property finance capital (sometimes aligned) is now shaping informal settlements and slums as much as it is shaping the formal parts of the city (Shatkin, 2008). Slum-resident land owners are also in the market for land in informal settlements, in fierce competition with private/formal developers. 'Slum real estate' (Gulyani and Talukdar, 2008) is a relatively new concept in the urban literature, as are its effects in the form of resistance and conflict as lower income residents, especially tenants, are evicted and displaced or bought out by gentrification processes. Countries in the South-East classified as 'emerging markets' are most likely to portray these features.

Growth of the urban middle class in cities of the global South-East is also attracting research interest: for example, India's middle class (mostly urban) is expected to grow significantly over the next two decades. Simone and Rao (2011), writing on Jakarta, draw attention to the growing population that falls 'in-between the superblocks and the slum', which will increasingly shape urban space in terms of its demands for formal housing and facilities and create excessive pressure for the redevelopment of historic and poorer areas. This, too, is likely to exacerbate urban tensions.

Intensifying competition for urban land in cities of the global South-East has led to research focus in the urban studies field on forms of resistance to exclusionary urban land markets. Benjamin (2008) uses the term '*occupancy urbanism*' (which, he argues, avoids the binary of formal/informal) to refer to contested political and economic land-related processes in Indian cities. Here major infrastructure and urban mega-projects are subverted by alignments of shack-dwellers using their voting power, along with lower level bureaucrats and politicians, and small-scale business interests. Offering yet further terminology, Shatkin (2011: 79) considers how global ideas of city-making are countered by '*actually existing urbanisms*, that are rooted in alternative social dynamics (informality, violence, alternative cultural, and social visions, vote-bank politics), and that resist worlding practice' (italics in the original).

On the political front, pro-democracy and rights-based social movements, often urban-based, have been a feature of the last half-decade, affecting particularly Latin America, the Middle East and parts of Asia and Africa. Variation within these regions of the globe is extensive, as Heller and Evans (2010) show through a comparison of India, South Africa and Brazil. Much depends on the changing relationship between central and

local government, and urban citizens, but in all of these, persistent inequalities continue to fuel political contestation.

A significant trend shaping both state urban policies and citizen response is the spread of countries adopting rights-based constitutions and 'right to the city' movements, drawing on older ideas from Henri Lefebvre.[3] Holston (2009), writing on Brazil, links urban conflict and violence directly to high levels of urban inequality which have been accompanied by democracy and the enshrining of rights in national constitutions. In both Brazil and South Africa the frustration of a promise of rights while inequalities serve to withhold them seems to have given rise to new forms and rationales of urban conflict. Writing on rights-based social movements in São Paulo, Earle (2010) describes how occupations and street protests are 'weapons' of the struggle, and social movements must show daring and strength as the only way to achieve their aims. Men and women in the movement describe themselves as 'fighters' who are 'battling for their rights'. Their anger is directed at the state, which is often referred to as 'the enemy'. Also, and significantly, this politics of rights involves 'the manipulation of rights rather than their realization' (p.21), for the actual realization of a right would have a demobilizing effect and is therefore not desirable. In the process of making claims on the state by invoking a universal right, usually in the form of a positive claim-right, the inherent ambiguity and underlying conceptual dichotomies of rights discourse (individual/group, private/public, natural/legal, claim/liberty, negative/positive) come to aid (yet torment) the insurgent advocates: the right is always kept as a vaguely discernable and tantalizing goal, just out of reach of full comprehension or realization, and more usefully as a mobilizing ideal.

In yet other parts of the global South-East, ethnic and religious conflict continues, sometimes reinforced by partisan and repressive governments. Some cities have failed or collapsed national and local governments, or 'hollowed out' institutions which function as a disguise for very different kinds of activities.[4] Bollens' (2012) case studies (which include some examples from the global North) are all cities polarized by ethnic and religious conflict, where these divisions are often reflected in contested spatial divisions. Such ethnic divides may manifest in uneven service delivery, entrenched by uneven political representation, and can result in impermeable physical barriers (walls, barricades) that become fault-lines of conflict. Bollens (2012: 16) argues that majoritarian concepts of democracy do not fit the reality of large, multi-ethnic cities and other forms of representation and engagement need to be considered to avoid major conflict.

In general, therefore, there is a sense that urban conflict and violence, arising from a range of economic, political and social factors, are becoming a central issue in urban policy debates, although of course cities in all parts of the world have experienced conflict and violence at different periods in their histories. Winton (2004: 165) notes that '[u]rban violence has reached unprecedented levels in many cities of the South, and is increasingly seen as one of the most portentous threats to development on a local, national and international scale'. Reinforcing this, the *World Development Report*: *Conflict, Security and Development* (World Bank, 2011) argues that 'insecurity' has become 'a primary development challenge' in the 21st century, given that1.5 billion people now live in areas affected by fragility, conflict or large-scale, organized

criminal violence. Whereas civil and interstate wars have declined globally, the Report suggests, the newly dominant forms of conflict (crime, the drug trade, religious and ethnic conflicts, xenophobia, land and resource disputes, domestic violence) have permeated daily life in many parts of the global South, and 'everyday violence', or a 'culture of violence' is bound up with general and escalating urban violence. The Report interestingly sees local spatial and urban renewal interventions (amongst others) as having a major role to play in addressing this issue, thus raising an expectation that planning can deliver in this arena.

Hence Yiftachel's (2006) 'stubborn realities' seem set to continue in cities of the global South-East,[5] often arising from new or changing forces and influences, but seemingly (if the World Development Report of 2011 is correct) growing in intensity and increasingly likely to be expressed in urban areas as insecurity, conflict and sometimes violence. Yiftachel's (2006) earlier concern that planning theory needs to both acknowledge and incorporate these issues, and to consider if and how planning can function in such contexts, is even more urgent today.

Situations where conflict and violence are collective, intentional and overt raise issues for planning thought which have not been centrally recognized in current theory work, and it is in these contexts that 'mainstream' collaborative planning ideas will have less purchase (Davis and Hatuka, 2011; Purcell, 2009). New lines of inquiry will certainly need to question a number of the assumptions underlying much of current planning theory. Instead, new work needs to start with the following kinds of assumptions:[6] states which are weak, fractured and probably corrupt, and state functionaries who will seek to use planning systems for financial and political gain; 'civil society' which is not a source of democracy but is fractured by economic and political divisions, may be based on criminal organizations, and functions as an instrument through which claims on the state are directed, sometimes in violent form; community organizations which may choose to engage with the state and assert their demands through court challenges, street demonstrations, and destruction of property rather than through dialogue or collaborative processes; new concepts of citizenship which are based on a sense of entitlement and where there is a consciousness of rights but not of responsibilities; NGOs and social networks which function not so much to build social capital, but rather to serve their own interests of power or profit, sometimes in collusion with state functionaries and property developers;decision-making processes where 'power' cannot be wished away but will be a dominant factor shaping all forms of engagement, and where consensus is a possible but unlikely outcome; processes where participating parties are driven by very different and usually conflicting rationalities which shape expectations and outcomes; and planning interventions where the expertise of professional planners is under direct challenge, where state sources of information (maps, statistics) are treated as suspect and where communities (or elements of these) will want to take control of knowledge and idea production.

The next section of this article argues that there has been some acknowledgement of these new dynamics in recent planning theory work, although not a great deal. Some ideas discussed below are not particularly new and have a longer history in planning theory, but seem to have attracted renewed attention in recent years.

Planning's emerging responses to urban conditions in the global South-East

I now turn to the planning literature and suggest that emerging ideas can be grouped as those which aim to *understand and explain* (South-East) urban contexts from a planning perspective, and those which move to *normative or action-oriented* positions. These ideas all acknowledge the 'stubborn realities' of the global South-East and have been elicited from a scan of planning theory literature since the mid-2000s.This is not a comprehensive presentation of all writings in this area; rather the interpretation and classification of the themes below as significant, coherent and emerging positions is based on the judgement of the author.

These writings adopt varying concepts of planning and planners. Those which focus on state-citizen engagement consider a range of more or less structured and more or less formal ways of doing so. In these approaches, the role of the planner is more likely to be that of an advocacy, radical or NGO-based community-aligned planner (using the categorization offered in Sager, 2011), operating outside of the state, but in some formulations the concept of 'who plans' is broadened to include any person engaged in intentional, goal-directed action ('crypto planners' in Sager's categorization).Other positions accept a relatively traditional and action-oriented role for planners as professionals (although they are more likely to be working in interdisciplinary and multi-stakeholder teams) who make some use of state resource allocation, regulatory mechanisms and service delivery channels. The following sections first consider analytical or interpretive ideas.

Insurgency and insurgent planning

The idea of 'insurgent citizenship', and the spatializing of this term as 'insurgent urbanism', has roots in research carried out in the 1980s in the city of Brasilia by urban anthropologist James Holston (1989). The term insurgency made its way into the planning literature in the mid-1990s in a collection of articles in *Planning Theory* where Holston set out his idea of insurgent urbanism (1995) and issue editor Leonie Sandercock (1995) drew on the concept to develop her later work on multiculturalism (Friedmann, 2011: 221). In a 1999 publication, Sandercock (1999: 39) explains that she is attempting to delineate a radical planning for the 21st century, acknowledging the socio-cultural as well as economic dimensions of globalization and the culturally diverse landscapes these produce. She suggests that in response to globalization new forms of progressive, bottom-up planning have begun to emerge, and these she terms 'insurgent' as they operate in 'the interstices' and 'even in the face of power'.

In a sense, then, a 1980s anthropological critique of modernist planning in Brasilia was drawn in (tamed perhaps) to frame a planning response in cities which had become destination points for global economic migrants from a range of cultural backgrounds, and hence less likely to be in agreement either with each other, or the state, in terms of urban interventions. While Sandercock's work was path-breaking it was subsequently subject to critique particularly from those concerned that her concepts of multiculturalism and insurgency found a difficult fit outside of the context of Western liberal-democratic settings (see Rangan, 1999; Watson, 2002). Holston's more recent work on insurgency (2008,

2009) is based in a time and place (São Paulo) characterized to a far greater extent by organized crime and violence but also by tactics of resistance and appropriation grounded in the manipulation of a rights-based discourse to assert claims to urban land and services. Holston's insurgency now is thus quite specifically Brazilian: citizenship here differs from the North Atlantic variants in being differentiated, that is, it is universally inclusive in membership but massively unequal in distribution, largely due to severe income inequalities.

Holston's (2009) work highlights the territorialization of power and violence along with the new paradigms of citizenship in the urban peripheries, which all impact directly on any form of planning, law and administration. In these new 'hybrid spaces of citizenship' rights talk is used by social movements to achieve political ends, justifying 'illegal' criminal actions and land or building invasions as a legitimate claiming of deserved rights from an 'illegitimate' state which has withheld them. The legal and the illegal thus blur in the moral swamp of rights talk. From his earlier hope for planning that could build on emergent sources of citizenship spatialized as 'insurgent urbanism' (1995), Holston in 2009 makes little reference to the role of the Brazilian state or the kind of planning (if any) that could emerge under conditions such as those he describes. He suggests that urban theory of his kind can help to identify new 'sites of creativity' which indicate 'alternative futures' (2009: 28), leaving planning theorists who wish to develop normative ideas from the insurgency theme rather little to build on.[7]

More recently[8]the notion of insurgent planning has been taken up by a range of other planning theorists, many responding to conflict in cities in the global South-East, but perhaps fuelled as well by Holston's shifting perspectives from his Brazilian research sites. However, interpretations of the term 'insurgent' are so diverse that commonalities are difficult to identify.[9] For the authors below, insurgent planning can be carried out by any agent interested in expressing resistance to socio-political forces and the manifestation of these in the built environment: these agents can be writers and researchers (Sweet and Chakars, 2010), vigilante groups (Meth, 2010) or even mothers (Miraftab, 2009). The range of activities described as insurgent planning is equally wide: from book publication and film-showing (Sweet and Chakars, 2010), to the physical punishment of criminals (Meth, 2010), to resisting eviction for non-payment of rents (Miraftab, 2009), and to community-based organizations drawing up their own spatial plans (Meier, 2005). Both Meth (2010) and Miraftab (2009) include in their definition of insurgent planning a span of agents and activities, ranging from individual actions by 'ordinary' citizens, to collective, organized and purposeful interventions. Sager's (2011) advocacy, NGO-aligned and crypto planners would fit these formulations.The following paragraphs elaborate on these positions on insurgency.

Sweet and Chakars (2010) use the terms *insurgency* and *insurgent planning* to describe what may be termed 'everyday' responses or resistances to urban environments, using the example of Buryat resistance to Russian government centralization and assimilation policies, and efforts by indigenous Baryat citizens to retain and regain land and cultural rights. Resistance to Russian imperialism in the early 1900s took the form of staged protests and congresses calling for reversed land legislation, political autonomy and local language education. Books and journals were published, oral folklore and history were recorded, farm collectivization was resisted, and so on. More recent actions as

resistance to centralization policies are listed as research, conferences, book translation, and showing films on Buryat history. Sweet and Chakars (2010) argue that these actions can be described as insurgent planning in keeping with Sandercock's (1999: 41) definition of this as 'challenging existing relations of power in some form'.

Meth (2010) argues for vigilantism to be regarded as a form of insurgency.Drawing on a South African case where 'insurgent planning practices' can be repressive, anti-democratic and violent, she explores how repressive insurgency and transformative insurgency are not necessarily dichotomous, and can be mutually constitutive and enacted by the same community. In doing so, she also provides a valuable critique of what is often a 'celebratory' attitude taken towards insurgent practices. Her case shows how the role of women in these practices cannot be romanticized and that they too are capable of repressive insurgency as they manage high levels of crime and injustice.

The insurgent actions Meth (2010) describes involve women collectively invading well-located residential land in Durban and resisting state attempts to remove them; women traders illegally sleeping in the Warwick Junction market as they could not afford transport back to their homes; resistance by the Self Employed Women's Union (SEWA) to street-trading bylaws to secure the provision of market stall facilities for their members; forming 'peace committees' which sometimes meted out punishment to suspected criminals, and ad hoc vigilante-type actions against perpetrators, involving women as well as men. Meth (2010: 259) argues that these practices of informal house-building, informal entrepreneurialism and vigilantism 'parody and perform state-like functions through their material provision of infrastructure and services'; and 'regulate space and manage the gendered politics of place, by evicting unwanted criminal citizens'.Insurgent planning, she argues, can be positive and developmental, but also can be violent and repressive.As such, she suggests, 'they differ very little from the more developmental and regulatory elements of formal planning' (Meth, 2010: 259).

Miraftab's (2009: 32) definition of insurgent planning is somewhat different again: it is 'those radical planning practices that respond to neoliberal specifics of dominance through inclusion'; as practices which are 'counter-hegemonic, transgressive and imaginative' (p.33); and as 'purposeful actions that aim to disrupt domineering relationships of oppressors to the oppressed, and to destabalize such a status quo through consciousness of the past and imagination of an alternative future' (p.44).She describes the range of actors that can participate in insurgent planning practices as community activists, mothers, professional planners, or the unemployed. Miraftab (2009) uses the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign (South Africa) to illustrate insurgent planning. This umbrella body for community organizations, crisis committees and resident groups takes action through both legal and illegal channels to counter evictions and service cuts, and removals of shack-dwellers who are in the way of urban development projects.

The language of rights (the 'right to the city') seems to have found its way into insurgence and insurgent planning in some parts of the world but not in others. In both Brazil (Holston, 2009) and South Africa (Meth, 2010; Miraftab, 2009), relatively progressive constitutions have conferred extensive citizenship rights, but in both countries major income inequalities have left lower income groups unable to realize them. Holston (2009) argues that in Brazil insurgence can only be understood in the context of this 'differentiated citizenship'. In fact he suggests that in southern contexts generally the new

equalities of democratic citizenship 'always produce new inequalities, vulnerabilities, and destabilizations, as well as the means to contest them' (Holston, 2009: 17). Democracy produces insurgent action and shapes the form of insurgency, wrapping it in a language of 'rights talk' as justification for what are often violent acts. This is true for South Africa as well (see Miraftab and Wills, 2005), where rights talk has been linked to violent service-delivery protests. By contrast, some insurgent planning is a claim for recognition, political power and resources in a context where constitutional rights have not been secured, and the withholding of planning rights by the state is a deliberate tactic of political exclusion (Yiftachel and Yacobi, 2003). The activities of Buryat resistance (Sweet and Chakers, 2010) in a context of state repression can perhaps also be seen as recognition claims rather than constitutional rights claims. Clearly, insurgence and insurgent planning cannot be generalized across contexts but require specific empirical analysis (Meth, 2010) to understand tactics and strategies within very different political and economic situations.

State-citizen engagement: Civic governmentality and coproduction

In recent years there has been a growing interest in the relatively new and largely NGO-led strategies relating to state-citizen engagement. The work of the NGO network, Slum Dweller International (SDI),[10] has featured most prominently here, but there have been other NGOs as well which have adopted similar approaches.

Roy (2009c: 160) draws on two case studies (one of which is the work of SDI) to explore what she terms as a new 'politics of inclusion', in which social mobilizations are institutionalized in particular ways through the work of NGO-type organizations. Drawing on Foucault, she describes these initiatives as 'civic governmentality' or as 'a spatialized regime that functions through particular mentalities or rationalities'. These rationalities include an infrastructure of populist mediation, technologies of governing (for example, knowledge production), and norms of self-rule (for example, concepts of civility and civicness). The SDI-linked SPARC in Mumbai (concerned with resistance to informal settlement removals and initiation of upgrade processes) and Hezbollah in Beirut (which undertook urban reconstruction projects in Lebanon after the war with Israel in 2006) are both organizations which construct and manage a 'civic realm' while both resisting and complying with 'top-down' rule. Roy notes Appadurai's (2002) celebration of the work of SDI as 'deep democracy', 'rights from below', and 'counter-governmentality', but also questions the strategy of both NGOs,which adopt tactics of negotiation rather than confrontation, and the extent to which these may end up supporting (or failing to counter) a middle-class urban renewal agenda. In cities where NGOs promote tactics of negotiation, the alternative of confrontational mobilization around 'right to the city' claims also presents itself as a possible strategy.

The work of NGOs such as SDI has also attracted attention in the development studies field, using different terminology from that of Roy above. Here 'civic governmentality' is referred to as 'coproduction', the term originally coined by political economist Elinor Ostrom, but taking on a very different meaning in new South-East interpretations. This term, like insurgent planning, has a complicated ancestry. Elinor Ostrom defined coproduction as 'a process through which inputs from individuals who are not

"in" the same organization are transformed into goods and services' (1996: 1073). Her work has strong links to social capital thinking and theories of urban governance from the late 1970s. Her focus is on the provision of public services (sanitation systems, schools etc.) where involvement of the state with communities can create synergies through parties contributing in different but complementary ways: communities (she suggests) have local information, time, skills etc. and the state has resources and technical expertise.

Mitlin (2008), and SDI itself, now use the term to describe their work, but interpret it differently to Ostrom. Mitlin (2008: 340), echoing Ostrom, explains the usual understanding of coproduction as ' the joint production of public services between citizen and state, with any one or more element of the production process being shared'. However, Mitlin (2008) argues, it is increasingly being used by the urban poor in cities of the global South-East as a way of politically consolidating their base and extracting gains from the state, and its use as part of an explicitly political strategy distinguishes it from earlier and northern understandings of the term coproduction. It thus emerges in contexts where states are weak and unable or unwilling to deliver services. Acknowledging that accessing services is often reliant on large-scale capital investments (for example in waste-water treatment), which can only be undertaken by the state, poor communities choose to engage with local government on these issues. Mitlin (2008) argues that coproduction is also different from standard 'participation' or 'partnership' arrangements. It is more effective than 'lobbying' or 'protesting' in terms of actually gaining benefits, the non-violent nature of the process allows greater participation from women, and the chances of securing political gains are higher. NGOs following a coproduction strategy argue that it is more effective to achieve 'rights from below' than to demand rights from above (the 'right to the city' approach). These NGOs are concerned that rights-based organizations expect the state to take on the role of implementing rights and delivering development and once again communities are reduced to secondary partners or passive recipients.

Significantly, the idea of the 'community' contributing information (about their needs, local resources and conditions etc.) has been turned into an empowerment strategy. With examples dating back as far as the 1980s (Patel et al., 2009), poor urban communities in informal settlements in cities of the global South-East have increasingly adopted the tactic of self-enumeration and mapping in order to reinforce and specify their demands for land and services and to increase their 'visibility' to the state. The scaling up of NGOs such as SDI has spread these tactics from their origin in India to informal settlements in other parts of the world. In what could be described as a growing global self-survey 'movement' amongst poor urban communities, these traditional tools of planning – the survey, the map and the plan – have been appropriated and used as a mechanism to further the claims of marginalized groups to urban space (Bryan, 2011; Hassan, 2006; Huchzermeyer, 2009; Karanja, 2010; Patel et al., 2009). Sometimes these strategies have been followed by 're-blocking' in which shelters have been reorganized by their occupants to make more orderly spaces for the insertion of claimed basic services. Usually these processes have been highly contested and conflict-ridden: coproduction (suggesting co-operation and collaboration in Ostrom's writing) has more often been a struggle between marginalized urban residents, property developers and the state.

It would seem that there is fertile ground here for planning theory in understanding these new community and NGO-based strategies (both needs-based and rights-based) in south-east contexts, in considering how they might or might not be progressive and inclusive, and how planners might position themselves in these processes in practical and professional terms. It is important to recognize that the term coproduction as currently used by NGOs cannot be simply categorized as a form of collaborative planning, and its application in the global South-East differs from the way coproduction has been conceptualized in Ostrom's work. Bearing in mind that coproduction depends on certain contextual preconditions (a functioning state and a functioning and democratic community and NGO, none of which may necessarily exist), it could offer the basis for action-oriented thinking at the state-civil society interface, and perhaps a way forward for insurgency theorists.

Informality

Some planning theorists have interpreted the context within which planning operates through an informality lens, but they turn this away from its usual meaning as squatting and street-trading and onto the state where activities of government functionaries can be seen as equally 'informal'.

Yiftachel's (2006) call, which provided the starting point for this article, arose out of his earlier work on ethnically motivated spatial change in Israel/Palestine and elsewhere, and reflects his concern with the scant attention given to ethnicity as an element of urban materiality. His particular concern is with ethnicity 'at home' where ethno-nationalistic states use space and (ethnocratic) planning as a tool of political repression against ethnically marginalized castes, races, religions or cultures: the Palestinians in Israel or African people in apartheid South Africa, for example. In developing this line of argument, Yiftachel (2009) argues that ethnocracy produces 'gray' spaces which only partially incorporate the ethnically marginalized and which lie between the legal and the illegal of formal planning systems. These 'informal' settlements have planning permission withheld as a deliberate tactic of political exclusion: ethnocratic states therefore use and promote informality as a way of containing the 'ungovernable'.

In the context of India Roy (2009b) describes the efforts of government to evade the rigidities of urban plans and approval processes and 'flexibilize' or 'informalize' urban development in order to take advantage of, or accommodate, development pressures. The state itself can therefore be regarded as an 'informalized' entity, that ' actively utilizes informality as an instrument of both accumulation and authority' (Roy, 2009b: 81). Informality allows the state 'territorial flexibility' to confer or withhold 'legality', change land use or launch development projects. For Roy (2009a: 8) informality is therefore a 'mode of production of space defined by the territorial logic of deregulation'. Yiftachel's 'gray spaces' and Roy's informality now drive urban development and its regulation. It also fuels urban conflict as the line between legal and illegal, or any sense of urban order, fades away. Under-capacitated local government (faced with huge development pressures as well as demands from the poor for shelter, land and services) finds it difficult to resist new opportunities for corruption and vote-banking, making any effort at constructive planning engagement and actual service delivery extremely difficult.Planners in

these situations who aspire to act ethically may have no choice but to work outside of the state with NGOs and communities.

Yet further work has shown that the idea of the state acting 'informally' need not always be negative. A case study on urban climate adaptation in two cities of the global South, Durban and Quito (Carmin et al., 2012), shows how, in the absence of formal and institutionalized norms and models to guide action, actors in these two cities were able to initiate innovative policies and plans. The authors use the term *bricolage* to explain the institutional processes in these cities where, in the absence of mandates or policies from external parties, internal actors knitted together existing initiatives and sought creative opportunities to ensure that adaptation planning took root. Whether such informal processes in local government are driven by corruption or positive creativity often depends on the values and energies of particular groups of actors, and can be neither anticipated nor legislated. This example does serve to indicate, however, that such processes need careful unpacking, in context, before generalizations can be drawn.

Urbanisms

These writings aim to make visible 'new geographies' in cities of the global South (Roy, 2011).[11] Yiftachel's (2006) call to balance planning theory's focus on planners and discursive processes with the material realities of the planning context, is pertinent here. In his own work (e.g. Yiftachel, 2009) the political 'gray space' occupied by marginalized social groups translates into the physical 'gray space' of informal settlements considered illegal and under threat of removal. These material manifestations of gray space often exist in limbo between integration and formalization, or extinction, or as Yiftachel (2009: 90) terms it, they remain in 'permanent temporariness', and as a reappearance of colonial relations in today's cities. This in turn serves a purpose of facilitating seizure of land for economic or political purposes, and to enable exploitation. While Yiftachel's work draws on the case of the Beer-Sheva metropolis (within the context of Israel/Palestine), he argues that the playing out of hegemonic forces of neoliberalism and identity construction (racial, religious etc.) are found in other (not necessarily all) cities of the world as well.

From a different starting point and using Henri Lefebvre as a theoretical frame, Roy (2011: 8) calls for urbanism to be understood as four interrelated processes: as the production of space driven by forms of capitalism but also intertwined with local 'projects of space and power'; as a set of social struggles over urban space; as a production of the public apparatus, one element of which may be the planning system, which may be 'implicated in the efforts to constitute model citizens and institute civic norms'; and as a global process. This last process departs from the literature which focuses attention only on world or global cities, and adopts a position (the concept of worlding) which encompasses the full array of urban strategies from whatever source in the city they may emanate. The concept of urbanism put forward here aligns closely with that of authors such as Benjamin and Shatkin (see above) indicating a long overdue connection with the urban studies field of work to understand cities of the global South-East. It is not a specifically action-oriented position, but it offers an important way of understanding not

only the material context of planning but also the role of the planning system (and other actors and groups that plan) in shaping this context.

Local spatial interventions as a response to crime and violence

The only clearly action-oriented ideas are more traditional spatial ones. That spatial planning and design can reduce crime is not a new idea (see Caldeira, 2000; Schneider and Kitchen, 2002), but recent years have seen some important international agency reports which highlight growing concerns with urban violence more generally and which point to local planning-type interventions as a strategy to counter it. UN Habitat has an ongoing Safer Cities programme, and its 2007 Global Report (UN Habitat, 2007) included the role of local spatial interventions, drawing largely on examples from the US and the UK. The recent World Development Report (World Bank, 2011), which argues that conflict and violence have become a permanent feature in 'everyday' life, also prioritizes local spatial interventions.

To summarize the common elements in these sources: there is recognition that local spatial interventions on their own will not be sufficient and that they need to be reinforced with supportive and representative local government (including, for Bollens, city-wide equity planning principles), a range of peace-building initiatives, and close collaboration with community-based organizations. Bollens (2012) points to a broader urban design literature which advocates 'flexible and porous' urban forms, as opposed to the hardening of boundaries which occurs with gated communities and walls which segregate ethnic and religious groupings. The design and use of public spaceis particularly important as it is here that interaction across social divides can occur, and where a sense of safety from crime and violence can be secured. The World Bank (2011) report argues for a range of international, national and local measures to address conflict, crime and violence. The report sees an important role for local (neighbourhood level) interventions, accompanied by coalitions between state and citizens and resources allocated directly to communities to carry out community-driven projects, if necessary with NGOs and international partners.

The Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrade Project (VPUU)[12]currently underway in a poor and peripheral neighbourhood of Cape Town illustrates many of the principles of local intervention put forward in this literature. VPUU started in 2006 with extensive German donor funding, and is aimed at addressing crime and associated violence. Institutionally there is a partnership between the Municipality, a newly created Khayelitsha Development Forum (made up of NGOs, churches, CBOs, local councillors) and a group of experts including donor-appointed professionals, many of them architects and urban designers. The starting point for the project was community-based mapping of crime events, routes and spaces considered dangerous, and areas to be targeted for intervention. Action is primarily focused on the design of public space which aims to 'occupy' the most dangerous locations through physical upgrade which introduces round-the-clock activity and surveillance.Skills training, legal advice and counselling projects parallel the design interventions. Camera monitoring indicates a significant drop in violence in the upgraded areas, but this might have simply shifted to other areas or taken on other forms. This is an innovative project, but the lack of a wider institutional

shift, the continuation of major income inequalities which fuel crime, and the reliance on donor funding put its replicability and sustainability into question.

Local spatial interventions in conflict-ridden environments undoubtedly have a role to play, but advocates agree that they need to be part of a much broader package of actions. More broadly, these positions reflect a faith in the public sphere (spatially and socially) to overcome deep divides and differences: a faith which does not hold in certain parts of the world.

In sum, planning theory interest in the global South-East has certainly been growing and in doing so has made new linkages with bodies of literature which have longer histories in these parts of the world.Of the five positions identified above, four are concerned with a better understanding of the environment within which planning operates and, in the case of insurgent planning, a possible role for planners working outside of the state as well as a far broader definition of who undertakes planning activity. Only the fifth position, on addressing crime and violence, is explicitly action-oriented and is based on a far more traditional concept of planning and planners although the scope of planning work (with other built environment professionals and community groups) is broadened beyond what is often conventionally understood in planning.

Planning theory and the global South-East

This last section of the paper explores the question of taking forward planning theory's still relatively new engagement with the global South-East. The position taken here is that the task cannot be to build 'new' planning theory with universal pretentions; the tendency to do this in the past has left planning theory weakened and open to criticism. Connell (2007) identifies a similar tension in social theory between the 'prestige' of being able to abstract statements to the extent that they can be portrayed as universally true, and the post-modernist counter-position that is suspicious of generalization per se.While rejecting the former, she also warns that the latter 'immobilises us': it shuts down communication, the testing of claims, and the application and building of knowledge. She argues for a deeper understanding of the specific contexts from which generalization grows and to which they are being made, and for theory which will 'illuminate a situation in its concreteness' (Connell, 2007: 207).

Following the arguments of both Connell (2007) in sociology and Comaroff and Comaroff (2012) in anthropology, theorizing planning in the global South-East can offer important perspectives on the workings of the world at large. Connell (2007) insists that working at a world scale (she refers to comparative case study research across the global North and South) avoids generalizing from the metropole and places the relationship between metropole and periphery (still marked, she argues, by processes of colonization) as a central explanatory element. Comaroff and Comaroff (2012: 1–2), as well, suggest that the global South offers privileged insights into the workings of the world at large: while the project of modernity has always been a North-South collaboration, it is in the global South that the impacts of this relationship have been most starkly felt.

Improving the robustness of planning theory everywhere thus requires, as Yiftachel (2006) suggests, engaging with the stubborn realities of the global South East. It requires contextualized and historicized grounded research which also recognizes the location of

any place and process in a system of global relations. The comparative case study research method, tracking common issues (Connell, 2007, highlights the issue of relationships to land) across possibly very different north-south contexts, is one way of doing this. Flyvbjerg (2004) has previously argued that the case research method is particularly appropriate in the planning field, and that a 'phronetic' approach to planning theory through case research can refocus attention onto issues of practical judgement, the values that drive practice and especially onto issues of power. More recently there has been a revival of interest in comparative case research in the urban studies field. McFarlane (2010) refers to comparative urban research across the global North-South divide as a methodology, a 'mode of thought' and a strategy which informs how urban theory is constituted, and how existing theory can be unsettled and destabilized.Robinson (2011) also argues for comparative urban research across the globe which acknowledges how cities are linked together through various global networks, and works towards an international and post-colonial approach to urban studies. Parochial theory which claims universal status can be unsettled through multi-site and multi-directional circuits of comparative theory generation. In essence both authors are suggesting a realignment of the geopolitics of knowledge production by considering all urban places as having the potential to contribute to the pool of potential understanding and theory-building.

In the field of planning theory-building, work already underway on global South-East issues gives direction to research which can be taken much further, with the aim of contributing a view 'from the south' (Watson, 2009).

With much planning literature traditionally being either state or community-centred, less attention has been paid to planning's role relative to the market in global South-East contexts. This requires attention to the increasingly important role of profit-driven land development markets, land ownership and control, and the legal and financial frameworks which shape these. Land has become a central change agent, and often a major source of conflict, in rapidly developing urban areas, emphasizing the importance of understanding linkages between formal and informal land and property developers, the state, and 'community' agents (including criminal elements of these) in growing disputes over land.Shatkin (2011) points to the importance of understanding the 'terms of engagement' between forces of globalization, the practices of local planning actors, and the tactics and strategies aimed at countering or engaging with these. Important here is an understanding of urban regimes as neither coherent nor monolithic: public professionals and politicians involved in urban development processes also have agency, may be part of broader actor-coalitions, or work within a fragmented and possibly contradictory policy environment.

Planning-related research on 'the state' progressed with the 'institutional turn' in planning theory, but largely based on an understanding of northern institutions. In south-east cities the state (and actors which promote their interests through the state) remains a major player in shaping conflict in cities, through either action or non-action, and much of the resistance and insurgency discussed in the articles above is directed at the state, or in response to the state. While some of the work reviewed here explicitly takes the state into account, there is a tendency to regard it as monolithic. In any context, the state comprises multiple actors who have agency and power, who operate within different rationalities, and take positions (individually or in coalition) even within the disciplining

effects of laws, rules and regulations. The informalizing of the state in India described by Roy (2009b) is a good example of this. The fine-grained ethnographic work which has been used to understand insurgence and resistance also needs to be applied to the state in context to understand how it variously instigates and responds to conflict, and how these responses are also shaped by globally circulating policy ideas.

Following on from the above, the same fine-grained ethnographic approach needs to be directed to the instances of direct engagement, or the 'interface', between insurgents (or coproducers) and the multi-faceted elements of the state. This interface between those with the 'will to improve' (Li, 2007), or destroy, and those who resist, is political and shaped by power. My own work (Watson, 2009) has argued for a focus on the relationship between, on the one hand, techno-managerial, modernizing and marketized systems of state planning, administration and service provision, in various forms of alliance/collusion with profit-driven land developers, and on the other hand, marginalized and impoverished urban populations surviving largely under conditions of informality. One way of conceptualizing this tension is as a 'conflict of rationalities', recognizing that none of these are unitary or static categories. But an important driver of urban spatial change (and processes of inclusion and exclusion) is the nature and outcome of power-relationships at the interface between these different imperatives. It is the point at which different rationalities come into clear juxtaposition, engagement and contestation with each other, where further conflict is generated, or where contentious and political issues are 'rendered technical' by the state, or where perhaps real gains can be secured by marginalized groups. Li (2007: 11) uses Foucault's term of 'permanent provocation' to explain the interface, where there is 'reciprocal appeal': a 'perpetual linking' and a 'perpetual reversal', or as Li has it – the relationship between the practice of government and the practice of politics.

Conclusion

This article has explored responses in the last several years to Yiftachel's (2006) call for planning theorists to recognize and consider the 'stubborn realities' which confront many cities in the global South-East. The first part of this article considered some of the recent literature on these contexts to highlight emerging trends in socio-political and material conditions. On the basis of this,I suggested a set of assumptions which planning ideas need to take as a starting point if we are to make sense of these regions for planning.The second part of the paper suggested that there is a growing planning and urban literature on these parts of the world as well and that some interesting new directions are emerging. In some cases these new directions build on older ideas, such as that on spatial and design interventions, and on the idea of insurgency, but new ways of understanding the material reality of south-east cities, their governance and forms of state–community engagement are important directions to recognize and develop. Turning to the issue of Southern planning theory in the last part of the paper I suggest that it is crucial to see this as an opening up and expanding of possible sources of ideas to a global scale: cities everywhere can offer new insights and innovative planning ideas. Using the comparative case study method across north-south contexts (as a methodology and a strategy) would be a useful way of taking the project forward.

Notes

1. Also see Roy (2008) and Watson (2002, 2009).
2. The World Bank classifies countries on the basis of GNI (gross national income) per capita, giving the categories of: low income; middle income (lower-middle and upper-middle); and high income (www.worldbank.org). Recognizing the limiting nature of monetary income as the determining criterion, and its masking of income inequality and poverty, this categorization does provide a sense of the diverse nature of the 'global South-East'. Hence in what might be regarded geographically as the global South-East, large areas such as China, countries constituting the former Soviet Union, parts of the Middle East and much of Latin America are classified as 'upper-middle income' economies, distinguishing them from India, most of Africa and parts of Eastern Europe which are low or lower-middle income countries.
3. There is now an extensive literature on the 'right to the city', but for a more critical piece see de Souza (2010).
4. See Crisis States Research Centre: http://www2.lse.ac.uk/internationalDevelopment/research/crisisStates/Home.aspx
5. It is acknowledged that they may be increasing in cities in the global North as well, but that is not the focus of this paper.
6. These will, of course, vary significantly across the globe. The point being made here is that it should always be anticipated that such features might exist, to be confirmed or refuted by sound research.
7. Interestingly, Brazil's innovative contribution to state-citizen engagement in other parts of the world, known as 'participatory budgeting,' has attracted significant attention in the (English language) political studies and sociology fields (e.g. Sintomer and Carsten-Rock, 2008) but relatively little in the planning field.
8. Although see Meir (2005) for an earlier contribution.
9. See the debate about this in JPER 2011, 31(2): 220–222.
10. http://www.sdinet.org/
11. *Planning Theory* 2011, 10(1) special issue on this.
12. http://www.vpuu.org/ accessed 17 January 2012.

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