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# REVISITING CASTELLS' TAKE ON THE CITY AND THE INFORMATIONAL AGE

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## ABSTRACT

This paper reappraises the two papers of Manuel Castells published in this journal in 1993 and 2002. This appraisal considers the context of his academic career and formidable body of work, the historical period in which the papers appeared and the general discussion on the transformation of cities and societies in academia. Although his legacy is now strongly coloured by Castells' later shift to information and communication, his contributions to cities should not be neglected. Commonalities and differences between the two papers at issue here are summarised. Despite shifts in personal positions of the author and socio-economic positions of the studied cities, commonalities largely prevail. Their footprint in the academic literature is indicated by a discussion of cities and the world economy.

**Key words:** Manuel Castells; Europe; cities; informational age; world economy; multilevel governance

## INTRODUCTION

By the time the second of Castells' two *TESG* papers was published, the author was one of the most cited social scientists in the then-emerging ranking metrics (see Rantanen 2005; Castells 2006). Shortly, after the publication of that paper, he left his professorship in sociology and city and regional planning and moved to one in communication. Although his interest in cities and urban social movements never faded (Castells 2006, 2012, 2021), and his urban work was for quite some time path breaking and tremendously influential (Castells 1972/1977, 1983, 1989), Castells' name is now mainly associated with his work on the information age. In this essay, we revisit the two papers published in *TESG* and discuss their relevance for debates about the ongoing transformations of cities and societies.

## AN ACADEMIC CAREER WITH TURNS

Manuel Castells started his academic career in 1967 in Nanterre, the newly created Parisian university to absorb the growing number of students to the Sorbonne. Born in Spain in 1942, he initially studied in Barcelona but left Franco Spain in 1962 for political reasons. He then studied sociology and urbanism in France where his PhD supervisor was sociologist Alain Touraine, famous for his ethnographic work on the working class. Castells and Touraine were closely involved in the students' protests in Nanterre that led to the May 1968 events. Castells was expelled, like his student Daniel Cohn-Bendit, one of the most famous leaders of the students' movement. Castells was soon allowed to return to France and thanks to Touraine's intervention taught at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes et Sciences Sociales

(EHESS). After the 1968 events both Touraine and Castells continued combining theory and praxis as they concentrated their attention on social movements in contemporary urban societies. Castells developed a Marxist theory of the city as a spatial form, publishing a landmark study entitled *La Question Urbaine* (Castells 1972). The book approaches the urban as a site of struggles about consumption, as well as about housing, public transport and other public goods, and this alongside class struggles at the workplace. The English translation of *The Urban Question* was given the explicit subtitle *A Marxist Approach* (Castells 1977) and was complemented by the publication of a collection of translated essays under the title *City, Class and Power* (Castells 1978).

Long before achieving academic stardom, Castells was already internationally active, conducting fieldwork in many cities and collaborating with scholars and students across the world.<sup>1</sup> During the democratisation period in Spain, he participated politically in the transition. In 1979, he accepted a position at the University of California, Berkeley.

In 1983, he published his first book in English, *The City and the Grassroots*, a monumental collection of studies of urban social movements in different periods and cities. Unlike other influential urban scholars engaging with Marxism when moving to the USA (most notably David Harvey who tried to make sense of the dynamics he witnessed after arriving in Baltimore), Castells crossed the Atlantic as an ex-Marxist, disillusioned by his experience in French academic debates about their ideological character. He had concluded that his Marxist approach was not helpful to make sense of many of the urban struggles he was studying (e.g. the gay liberation movement in the Castro district in San Francisco, see Part 3 in Castells 1983). His trajectory shows some parallels with that of Paul Lazarsfeld (1901–1976) the Austrian American founder of empirical sociology and similar to Castells particularly concentrating on technology and communication problems. His survey research had coincidentally inspired Castells' mentor Alain Touraine. Lazarsfeld used to describe himself as 'a Marxist on leave' after his emigration to the USA in 1933, but Castells insisted he had grown out of Marxism (Rantanen 2005, p. 137).

In Berkeley, close to Silicon Valley, Castells developed the basis of new methodologies and new research on economic innovation, urban development and multimedia. His third major book about the city – *The Informational City* (Castells 1989) – reflects this shift of interest. With his global reputation already firmly established as an urban sociologist, he published his trilogy on *The Information Age* (Castells 1996–1998) that was widely read, translated and discussed. Through these three books, Castells decisively shifted his major focus from traditional core themes in the urban sociology of the industrial age to the emerging type of society based on freshly created digital technologies resulting in new machines, material goods and services.

In 2001, Castells became a research professor at the Internet Interdisciplinary Institute (IN3) of the Open University of Catalonia (UOC) in Barcelona and in 2003, he accepted a position at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles as endowed Chair of Communication and Technology. He published a reworked edition of the trilogy by the late 2000s (Castells 2009–2010). Most of his later work dealt with communication (Castells 2001, 2009), although his interest in counterpowers remained unchanged (Castells 2012, 2021). Cities and urban social movements tended to be backgrounded in his work on the information age (Mayer 2006; Castells 2006).

## TWO ESSAYS ON CITIES: CASTELLS ON TOUR

The two papers under consideration here are essays based on lectures delivered by Castells when visiting the Netherlands. The 1993 paper was the final essay after a short visiting professorship at the Centre for Metropolitan Research (Centrum voor Grootstedelijk Onderzoek, CGO) at the University of Amsterdam. It was published as a CGO booklet in 1992 and reprinted in Deben *et al.* (1993, 2000) and in the *New Left Review* (Castells 1994). The 2002 paper is based on a lecture delivered on 8 October 2001 at the University of Nijmegen in their annual Alexander Humboldt lecture series.<sup>2</sup> On the

first occasion, Castells was an established urban sociologist, on the second occasion primarily a communication scholar. The two papers should thus be situated at the beginning and the end of a remarkable transition.

Both papers carry the fingerprints of their origin as a lecture. On the second occasion, one of us acted as a discussant (van der Wusten 2002). Castells' texts were only slightly revised after the oral delivery and featured only a few references (nine and six,<sup>3</sup> respectively, in a third of cases referring to his own publications). This unusually informal procedure was in line with Castells' lack of attention to notes and references, probably following his immense workload and star status in academia. This contrasts very much with the many tables, maps, notes and references in his most influential books (most notably Castells 1983).

Both lectures aimed at sharing lessons of ongoing work on cities rather than developing a thorough argument or a new theory. They can be seen as companions to the reading of Castells' books. He mentioned explicitly that the first lecture was compiled based on a number of other lectures (1993, p. 248) and that the second one summarises his 'current ideas for research on urban transformation' (2002, p. 548).

In the first paper, Castells (1993) reflects upon the past 20 years of urban sociology – two decades that he himself had strongly influenced. He acknowledges a general shift in the field of urban studies from structuralism to subjectivism. He marks his own attempt as an effort to develop a structural theory of urban change with cultural specifics and actor autonomies in a societal context of capitalist restructuring and deindustrialisation in Western Europe and Northern America. He goes on to identify the major trends affecting European cities like Amsterdam,<sup>4</sup> discussing the technological revolution, the information society, the global economy and European integration as well as social identity, (urban) social movements and marginality. He then turns to the impact of the coming of the informational society on the city and the ongoing spatial transformation of major European cities, foreseeing a dual city and discussing the possible interventions of local governments, provided that they

improve co-operation and connect throughout Europe. He concludes on an optimistic note for cities with a rich old urban tradition (like Amsterdam) to manage 'the articulation between the space of flows and the space of places, between function and experience, between power and culture' (Castells 1993, p. 256).

Ten years later, the second paper summarises his ongoing ideas for research on urban transformations (Castells 2002). He starts with the tension between identity and functionality, the local and the global (i.e. the space of places and the space of flows) in the emerging network society. This new label for what he previously called the information society reflects the primacy of a new form of organisation (networking) over the technological aspects of information technology. Stressing the different manifestations of the spatial expression of the network society, he calls for a theory of spatial forms and processes that can be adapted to the new social, technological and spatial context in which we now live. Castells opens the paper with some musings about new urban forms, considering the local television market to delineate the real conurbation.<sup>5</sup> He reviews current social processes behind the processes of individuation and communalism and the resulting changing nature of public space. Moreover, he discusses the emergence of the network state, the co-operation of local, regional, national and supranational governments as well as NGOs and urban social movements (in other words: multilevel governance).

As building blocks for the much-needed urban theory, he is calling for, Castells offers three complementary axes: function, meaning and form, stressing that cities are torn between two conflicting logics, that of the space of flows and that of the space of places. He worries about 'an urban world without cities' in the absence of a dominant culture. A dominating market transforms different cultures into market niches and only amplifies differences between groups. To counter-multiple fragmentations, he proposes three types of urban interaction: physical (architecture, landmarks), communication patterns in public spaces and new combinations of electronic communication and physical face-to-face communication. An overall process of reconstructing urban life

should result in a reconstruction of the city as a communication system in its multidimensional sense.

A short interlude in the middle of the 1993 paper contains the summary of his tale: ‘*Thread of the new history* – The informational society concentrates wealth and power, while polarizing social groups according to their skills. Unless deliberate policies correct the structural tendencies, we will witness the emergence of a dual city’. In the conclusion, the paper reasserts the continuity in Castells’ work-bridging communication and urban form. He reiterates this point, most recently by reaffirming his interest in power in cities and networks alike (Castells 2021).

### COMMONALITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO PAPERS

As mentioned, the *TESG* papers stand at the beginning and the end of Castells’ transition from urban sociologist to communication scholar respectively. The first (1993) was crafted with the material of *The Informational City* (1989) at hand and the research for *The Information Age* (1996–1998) was underway. The second (2002) was written as the first edition of the Information Age had completely come to fruition. Nevertheless, commonalities between the papers outweigh the differences. Despite the decade that separates them, they reflect on a sustained engagement with the same core research problem: urban transformations in the information age.

Apart from the evolution of Castells’ thinking and his changing institutional embedding, the two lectures/papers can also be contextualised in the social transformations Castells aimed to analyse. Both the predicament of cities and the geopolitical context changed dramatically in that decade. In light of this, the commonalities between both papers are surprising. In the 1970s and 1980s, Western cities had gone through a deep urban crisis, economically, socially, culturally and politically. Cities were losing their jobs and their inhabitants; they were bankrupt and needed the support from national authorities, the built environment was in poor shape, infrastructures were outdated and cities were

widely perceived as ‘problems’. The recollection of that urban crisis transpires less in the 1993 paper than many contemporaries would have it because Castells was rather optimistic about the resources of (some) cities to become nodes in the new spaces of flows and become successful informational cities. However, he did signal ‘a new type of urban crisis’ caused by the destabilising effect of the ‘separation of function and meaning, translated into the tension between space of flows and the space of places’ (Castells 1993, p. 255).

By the turn of the century, the representation of the city in the public debate had dramatically changed: the demographic trend had been reversed, and cities had become attractive to new categories of urban dwellers. Gentrification contributed to the makeover of many derelict neighbourhoods in and around the inner cities, new economic activities were booming, and urban tourism emerged as a game-changer (although the impact of low-cost airlines and online platforms like booking.com and Airbnb had yet to occur). Competition between cities in the global economy was at full speed. Florida’s book on *The Rise of the Creative Class* (Florida 2002) was about to conquer the world of policy-makers fostering great hopes for their cities.

As for the geopolitical context, the emphasis on the end of the Cold War, the division of Europe and the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the optimism about further emerging European integration was overshadowed by the 9/11 attacks of Al Qaeda on New York and Washington, DC. The lecture in Nijmegen was held only a few weeks after 9/11. It was by then clear that global politics were about to dramatically change, for example the US had just launched its military invasion of Afghanistan. Castells did not mention this at all, while van der Wusten (2002) as a discussant reflected on the event and how the attack on NYC as a node in the space of flows of the financial global city had affected NYC as a place.

Despite a considerable shift in his own institutional embedding and in the social and geopolitical contexts in which he then operated, there is much consistency between the two papers. Castells acts both as an academic sociologist concerned with two big concepts and the

changing realities against which he considers them. Evermore people live in urban environments, which are themselves part of ever-larger functional entities increasingly dominated by information technology. In his view, this replaces the traditional industrial sector as the most characteristic and dominant technology. Castells analyses the observable reality of the late 20th century: he is not a post-modernist nor a visionary urban planner or a science fiction writer. Rather, he looks consistently through his lens of the informational age not very much bothered by incidents in other compartments.

In the first paper, he makes a small excursion to the European Union and, in that context, also deals briefly with the variation of governance scales and their reciprocal relations. At the time, the EU was launched in Maastricht. That event in the European integration process is described as a symbolic start of the transfer of all national sovereign prerogatives of member states. This could well be successfully accomplished by 2000. He calls the expected product for the 21st century a Confederacy without further explanation. The word was at the time often used to refer to the decentralised state that had just developed in Spain. It was also in use for the co-operation among German states before the new unification under Prussian leadership in an empire set-up in federal form, and also from much earlier in the co-operation between Swiss cantons that was then transferred in a federal state form in 1848, named *Confoederatio Helvetica* in Latin (and still kept alive on the licence plates of cars as CH), and also in connection with the forerunner of the co-operation with American states under the Constitution and as the form of government among the separated Southern states in the USA in the years of the Civil War (1861–65). All this suggests perhaps a loose form of federalism or may be a federation in its initial shape. Irrespectively, the road ahead was supposed to be tortuous. That was even without any reference to the possibility of expansion to the East or elsewhere, nor to any possibility of participants quitting. In the meantime, both changes have occurred. By 2022, the institutional form of European integration is still difficult to denote accurately, but some

movement in the direction of sovereignty transfers is likely underway. This is obviously not to criticise Castells on this count. It simply underlines the still unsettled nature of the European project as seen from 2022.

Castells attributed the tortuous character of the journey implementing power transfers particularly to political and cultural factors. Even the expectation of a loss of sovereignty for national states would produce widespread nostalgia of national pasts. This would mobilise neo-fascists, communists and fundamentalists against such transfer plans. These transfers would however hardly be abandoned by the political forces that had invested so much in the European project. He saw further cultural-political problems as a result of the influx of migrants, not only from outside the EU but also from other member countries. This would further sharpen nationalist sentiments in the domestic population and give rise to further cultural segmentation with diminishing contacts across the different cultural groups. Many of these problems resulting from immigration would particularly come to the fore at the level of regions and cities. A massive social science literature has been produced around these issues roughly along the lines indicated in these papers. Castells was among the initial wave of authors that established this kind of reading of an evolving present.

Castells' interest in the EU was also more generally aimed at relations between different scales. He considered lower-level governments as more apt than national governments who, in his view, had very much lost touch and whose governing practice had lost legitimacy. That observation seemed at the time mainly based on the American experience where the distrust in the national government was already rampant, a predicament that became later also widespread across Europe. In his characterisation of the near future, national governing institutions would somehow still be in charge, but they would have to work in conjunction with the supranational level of the coming Confederacy and the various governing institutions at the local and regional levels. The states in this set-up would be network states where bureaucratic organisations were vertically linked across levels to achieve coordinated outcomes.

Castells held high hopes for the legitimacy of policies and politics at lower levels.

He recommended government institutions at those levels in particular supporting strong citizen participation. He recognised the problem that these governing institutions levels were only rarely or even not all coinciding with the metropolitan regions that apparently were becoming the functional units of emerging informational/network societies. Nevertheless, he saw these local governments as the more agile and resilient institutions to become engaged in much-needed governance initiatives.

## RECEPTION

The two TESG papers are noteworthy companions to Castells' other research as they offered his ongoing thoughts about urban transformation. As TESG papers they were widely cited, although these citations represent only a modest contribution to the exceptional numbers of citations to Castells' work as a whole.

The citations monitored by the publisher using Crossref are provided on the website of the journal at the bottom of the page of each paper. For these two TESG papers, they show both a significant impact, 53 and 79 cites respectively (of which only one citing both papers, a chapter in a book on maritime governance, Roe 2016), and a sustained interest (with 2 and 6 references in 2021 respectively). The references are spread widely both in terms of disciplines and geographies, although mostly these are publications in English (and some in German) about European cities (but also way beyond the continent including China and South Africa) in journals in the fields of geography, urban studies, transport studies, migration studies and urban and regional planning. Several hits are reported in *Urban Studies*, *Geojournal*, *European Planning Studies*, *Journal of Urban Design*, *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, *Echogeo*, *Belgeo*, *Sustainability* and of course *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* (TESG).

Publications' citation metrics have become a fact of life in academia and unescapable. They have many downsides. Nevertheless, citations overviews provide some indication about

the visibility of work and sometimes a reality check. Reflecting after two decades on *The City and the Grassroots* (Castells 1983), Lynn Staeheli (2006) acknowledged that the metrics made her realize how much more frequently that book had been cited than she was aware. It signalled a curious mismatch suggesting that Castells was not cited by researchers working on the same issues (urban social movements, urban struggles, sexual minorities, gentrification and resistance to it, ...) with very different epistemological practices. With reference to a (possibly under-valued) position of the TESG publications in the metrics of Castells' entire output, geographers and urban and regional planners may more often have referred to *The Information Age* than to the two papers under consideration when they wanted to discuss the impact of the network societies on the urban.

## LEGACY

Castells' work on urban areas is often considered in the context of renewed relations between cities and the world economy that started to emerge in the 1980s.

In 1986, Friedmann published a frequently quoted programmatic paper called the 'World City Hypothesis' (Friedmann 1986). It focused on the distribution of headquarters of the new large multinational companies with their Fordist vertically integrated production chains and, more recently, also organised following the Japanese example of the flexible production variant. Friedmann's hypothesis piece was about the spatial organisation of the new international division of labour. There was no theory yet, nor did he have a generalised picture available of the where, what and why. Friedmann just put forward a set of loosely formulated statements intended as a starting point for enquiry.

Before introducing the gist of his hypothesis, Friedmann brought tribute to Castells and Harvey who in 1972 and 1973 had revolutionised urban studies by linking city formation to industrial capitalism, no longer to the natural forces inherent to the dynamics of nature and space as social ecology had prescribed. In their 1970s writings, cities evolved primarily by the way of class conflict. But in the 1980s,

Friedmann argued that a new perspective had to be introduced: a direct link between cities and global economic forces that more or less overturned national boundaries.

Praised as a hero of a bygone age (these periods become shorter and shorter in contemporary academia), Castells who had moved beyond his Marxist theoretical attempts was however already preparing his contribution to the next one announced by Friedmann. Castells identified global cities as globally networked places within a series of physical cities sharing the same kinds of interests and activities. For instance, financial networks are made up of bits and pieces of different cities across the globe. They share a common space of flows and are therefore part of what Castells called a single financial global city. Later, Taylor (2004) started to call this a single (in this case: financial) 'world city network'. Castells therefore emphasised that it is not 'London' and 'New York' that are global cities, but just those parts of these cities directly involved in financial flows plus numerous other places within other larger urban entities across the world in less central positions in the financial network. Most of London and New York and nearly all of those other cities are at the same time engaged in very local life. This and other spaces of flow around other interests and activities are folded into spaces of places within a large variety of physical cities. Another example would be a space of flows of high-tech places as one high-tech global city containing Silicon Valley, and parts of Helsinki, Munich and other places. With a growing proportion of city dwellers increasingly involved in these evermore dominating spaces of flows and the still sizable remainder of the populations of the physical cities living locally, physical cities default in Castells' judgment as communication devices. This leads to great difficulties in terms of their social integration.

Many more authors attempted to conceptualise the world and/or global cities in the 1990s. In 1995, Knox and Taylor edited an exhaustive overview of the field called 'World cities in a world system', including a wide array of prominent authors. Friedmann was again strongly present with a chapter and his 1986 paper as a general Appendix at the end of the book (Knox & Taylor 1995). Taylor contributed

a chapter on world cities against the background of the world system. Sassen presented her work on the advanced service providers and their networks within New York, London and Tokyo. In Appadurai's playful parlance, complemented by Knox (p. 6), ethnoscapescapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, mediascapes, ideoscapes and commoditiscapes as representations of world cities were covered in the book. As explained in Knox's introductory chapter, the book not only dealt with further work on the hierarchies of world cities but just as well on the networks of the different flows between them; it dealt not only with the headquarters of producers but also with advanced producer services including the variety of institutions of the financial industry; it dealt not only with the economic sector but also with cultural and political institutions and flows; it dealt not only with the global scale but also with a regional and metropolitan scale and their interrelations as part of the world system. An extra opening was made for a separate category called the placelessness scale to deal with cyberspace that had emerged and now needed attention. In a single figure, the multidimensional nature of world cities was tentatively shown. In the book, the world/global city terminology was loosely used, and the overall appraisal of world/global cities was diverse. Following Petrella: 'Rather than an order of nation-states, an archipelago of technically highly developed city-regions – or mass consumer technopoles is evolving' (Knox 1995, p. 6). But there were also dystopic depictions of fast metropolises against slow peripheries containing megacities, with eventually an increasing influx of migrants in the fast metropolises sharpening their internal class structure designated by Ingersoll as infocrats, cyberproletariat and lumpentrash (cited in Knox 1995, p. 15).

Castells had no authorial presence in the book, but his work was by no means absent. In Knox's introductory chapter, he is mentioned in three different places throughout the text. First of all, he makes his presence felt (p. 5) where the new post-Fordist varieties of multinational corporations are introduced, particularly by Japanese management innovations. Here in particular new information technology and communication (telematics) are deemed vital. Second, the particular

placelessness scale (p. 12) appears to have been introduced to accommodate Castells' space of flows, earlier brought up but also mentioned in both papers (Castells 1993, 2002). The information flows are in Knox's reading scaled in the metric of cyberspace (which nonetheless has clear references with the space of the material city parts where the flows are sent and received). And third, the dystopic depiction of the fast metropolis is footnoted by another book he co-edited (Mollenkopf & Castells 1991), focusing on the social problems of New York as dual city.

It looks like Taylor (2004) drew some important messages from his work on this book which he co-edited with Knox. He was won over by Castells' space of flows (Loopmans & De Maesschalck 2004). He then applied it to the categories of advanced producer services that Sassen used for her portrait of the three primordial global cities and developed a useful operational data matrix and technique to produce numerous global city portraits in all kinds of publication formats from then on. In a sense, he conquered the world of the global city with its own tools for which Castells had provided the first inventory. Taylor worked on this task from 1997 onwards within the context of a co-operative body called Global and World Cities (GaWC) research network.

During the same period, Castells furthered his approach to the transformation of the urban folded into ever more invasive and transgressive information networks of global scale that came to full fruition in his trilogy. Most of the trends signalled in the TESSG papers as part of that endeavour are still relevant, although subsequent events shed a different light on them 20, respectively, 30 years later. For example, the technological transformations have been more encompassing than could be imagined in 1993 or even in 2002 (still before the launch of the iPhone, the development of most mobile apps and the general adoption of the smartphone). The Covid-19 pandemic and measures adopted to mitigate it have lately further boosted the role of ICTs (corona-apps, QR codes, remote working and teaching, on-demand television, online shopping and home delivery services, ...). Likewise, the deindustrialisation of Europe and North

America and the delocalisation of production activities in China are viewed in a different light now the workshop of the world is demonstrating geopolitical ambitions on the global stage. Efforts of reshoring or returning delocalisation (with 'upgraded' technology) back to Europe and North America are also in the works.

An enhanced role for local governments, foregrounded in rather vague terms (regarding the scale, the tasks and the legitimacy at which they would function) in both papers, has materialised. Cities are now more often perceived as active actors in policy networks tackling contemporary societal challenges ranging from social cohesion to energy transition (Mamadouh 2018). City networks have proven even more influential in policy networks than anticipated, see the Global Parliament of Mayors, the New Urban Agenda of the UN, and the Urban Agenda for the European Union. Compared to Barber (2013) and his lyrical trust in mayors, Castells offers a broad general outline grounded in real city life and its spatial form and functioning.

Last but not the least, a noteworthy absence in the papers is climate change and its impact on cities. Castells' interest in environmental movements and urban ecology has to be turned in new directions to provide cues for further research on these topics too. The attractiveness of Castells' work was his sensitivity to new research questions and analytical dimensions. His continuing attention to counterpowers (Rantanen 2005, but also Castells 2021) is still a welcome reminder to keep an eye on the grassroots – in cities and elsewhere.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>For a dazzling overview, see his CV on his personal website <http://www.manuelcastells.info/en/curriculum-vitae> or Castells and Ince (2003).

<sup>2</sup>See for an overview <https://www.ru.nl/gpe/research/alexander-von-humboldt-lectures/past-lectures/>.

<sup>3</sup>Some cited books were not referenced such as Habermas's work and a mysterious work by Graham and Mac Mahon on splintering urbanism (Castells 2002, p. 551), most likely he was

pointing at a book with the same title (Graham & Marvin 2001) for which he had provided critical acclaim at the time.

<sup>4</sup>The generic assignment to visiting professors at CGO was to put their own approach to work to reflect on Amsterdam, hence the focus on European cities in general and Amsterdam and the Netherlands in particular.

<sup>5</sup>In a later paper, he refers more specifically to the example of local television networks with 'Your local news. From the Southland' for the southern California metropolis from Santa Barbara to Tijuana across the border (Castells 2010, pp. 2739–40).

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