



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

From CONTESTED_CITIES to Global Urban Justice

Stream 1

Article nº 1-003

**LIMINAL URBANISM
THE EMERGENCE OF NEW URBAN 'STATES'**

PETER HASDELL

LIMINAL URBANISM**The Emergence of new Urban ‘States’**

Peter Hasdell

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, School of Design

Peter@Hasdell.com**ABSTRACT**

‘Liminal Urbanism’ outlines how new urban systems and socio-spatial orders can emerge as liminal *‘states’* when previous orders and stable states are erased or are no longer functional. The contention is that when cities legitimated systems are incapable of dealing with particular contradictory conditions, then liminal states can appear as transitional phenomena that disrupt the quotidian operation of the city. These liminal states manifest in different ways: as intangible, invisible or aleatory phenomena, or, on the contrary, they may be visible and tangible expressions of collective dissent, unrest or desire for change. They give presence to the in-between or the marginalized, emergent conditions, the informal or its suppression, social transformation or civic dissatisfaction, but can they also be intentional, planned and structured.

This paper contextualizes *Liminal Urbanism* relative to city-state and enclave conditions, in which the differentiation of cultures, political ideologies, socio-economic conditions, and spatial realms affect urban conditions with manifold social, territorial and economic consequences. Referencing Hong Kong not only as an extraterritorial enclave and intensely neo-liberal city, but also drawing from its multi-scalar liminality evident in: the influx of refugees; outsourcing of industry; the fear of pandemics or the recent rise of anti-government, anti-Mainland, pro-democracy and pro universal suffrage protests in Occupy Central (2014) as factors creating internal contradictions. This situates some of Hong Kong’s anomalies - Chungking Mansions, Kowloon Walled City, or its external border - as constituent factors in the city’s liminal *‘states’* that indicate the emergence of new spatial orders and systems of urban governance.

Liminal Urbanism therefore can re-conceptualize ways to understand the city as a series of liminal states, questioning what role these city states and states of urban development as spatio-temporal phenomena can have. Further exploring the nexus between planned and emergent urban conditions, as challenges to existing forms of planning, and social change; and how the extra-territorial effects specific locales.

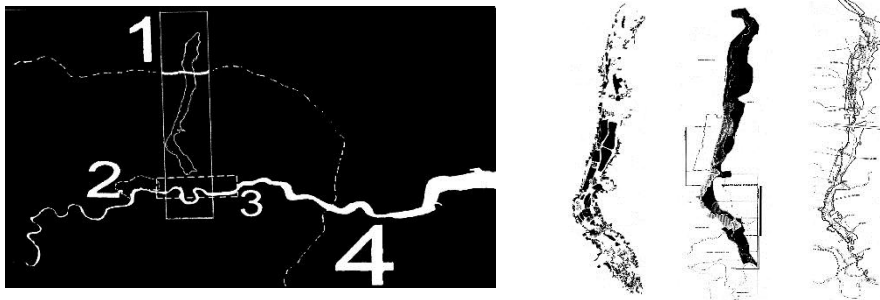
KEYWORDS: Liminality, urban states, spatio-temporal transformation

1. LIMINAL URBANISM

1.1 Liminal Bodies¹

‘Liminal Bodies’ is a concept developed by the author with Chora Institute of Architecture and Urbanism, an integral part of a planning methodology that looked at ‘proto-urban conditions’ in cities. It framed four large-scale entities in London’s urban fabric: London Docklands Development Corporation, The City of London, The Lea Valley and the Thames River, as different types of Liminal Bodies, the study sought to understand what spatial, economic, social or political conditions constructed the Liminal Bodies and their boundaries, making them distinct from their surrounding urban fabric.

Figure 1: Liminal Bodies: London, 1995.



Source: Chora Institute for Architecture and Urbanism.

One of the case-studies focused on the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC). Established in 1981 under the Thatcher government as a special planning body and enterprise zone, it stood outside the normal planning procedures² as a vehicle to fast-track regeneration in the city’s docklands. It led to specific exceptions and a development model that became institutionalised and which arguably is still having impacts today, despite the closing of the LDDC in 2000. It remains as a key example of the policies of deregulated, free-market and neoliberalist thinking and the government of the time was an early adopter of these principles. In terms of its urban impacts, it led to privatized, bounded and highly regulated forms of urbanism that segregated, ruptured and excluded existing local community access and engagement, uneven development through economic differentiation and higher levels of security and surveillance.

Aided by preferential government alignments with infrastructure, tax breaks and investment incentives for corporate clients, it clearly served corporate and macro-economic government policies. City-state is not a new phenomenon, in fact it is Medieval in many ways; the City of London incorporated since 1075 has been operational with a high degree of autonomy from the ruling monarchy or the government (pre-dating the current forms of governance) and is an early mercantile ‘free-market’ city-state, self-governing and answerable to its body corporate and its stakeholders rather than its citizens (in not dissimilar ways to how the current Hong Kong governance works). As Liminal Bodies, their spatialities and autonomies are the complex coincidence and negotiation of diverse factors and the resulting boundaries become contested sites where these differences are manifested.

¹ The author was a research associate and core member of Chora Institute of Architecture and Urbanism from 1994 - 1999. See Bunschoten (2000).

² This period coincides with the removal of the authority of the Greater London Authority (1986) that transferred power and planning authority to the Government. This was rescinded in 2000 with the establishment of the GLA.

1.2 Thresholds between states and hybridity

The notion of ‘*liminality*’ - derived from the Latin word ‘*limen*,’ enfolds a complex etymological web. Linked to notions of the sublime, subliminal, sublimation,³ it diversely encompasses the infinite and the indeterminate, the unconscious, as well as physical state change or phase transformation. As limit, limina, liminoid with associated implications of threshold and passage, connection and separation, liminal is spatial, territorial and architectonic in connotation, with implications for boundary, exclusion and enclave. In temporal terms it implies both spatial transition and transitional states of development or ‘state’ change. Spanning different disciplines it is paradoxically both object and condition, psychological and scientific, anthropological and experiential. At the same time it is able to invoke multi-scalar and temporal phenomena. Clearly liminality in an urban context can be posited as a useful and potent concept, however its multi-valency whilst opening up possibilities can also be a hindrance. This paper draws a thread through these issues in relation to liminal urbanisms and discusses possible modalities that give coherence as a taxonomy of multi-valent urban conditions.

Liminality, as conceptualised by the anthropologist Victor Turner, describes forms of ritual transition, transformation and change (1967). Turner defines a ‘*liminal condition*’ to be when a subject negotiates between states of being, as a *rite-de-passage* and symbolic process of acquiring new identities in a tribal context. This he contends, is a temporary state change where the order of the society at that moment in time is over-turned for the initiates in a liminal period. In this transformation, chaos occurs temporarily between phases of separation and the subsequent reincorporation within stable society. In later work Turner (1969) extended his concept of liminality to the non-secular world, outlining the notion of *communitas* as a non-structured period or a temporary departure from normal civic society, in which a festival, carnival or non-ritualised collective activity takes place: “... *neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremony.*” To explain this Turner developed the notion of the *liminoid* as a temporary or transitional bubble in which these activities take place. This process is not dissimilar to the periodic rituals in ancient and pre-modern cities that symbolically and periodically renewed and remade the city. As a *liminoid*, the *Kumbh Mela* festival⁴ serves to illustrate the conditions of *communitas*, revealing the ephemeral and the transient in which the production of a temporary settlement is an example of liminal urbanism that dwarfs the scale of the settlement it adjoins to.

Figure 2: Urban flotsam: Liminal bodies workshop: 1995.



Source: Chora Institute for Architecture and Urbanism.

³ Sublimation: the state change that goes from solid directly to gas.

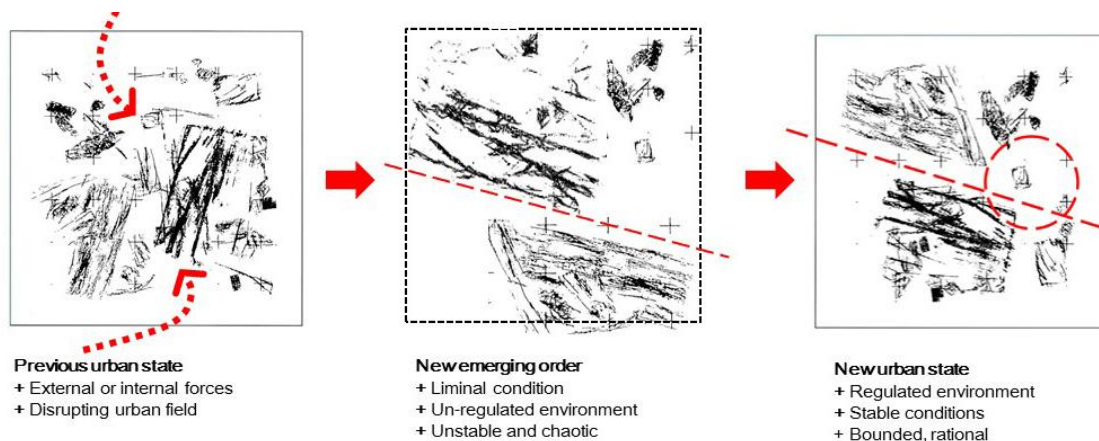
⁴ See Mehrotra et.al. (2015). One of the largest gatherings (over 30 million people) occurring every 12 years, challenging urbanism as social impact, infrastructural dependency, its ephemeral nature and scalar fluidity, as a city without tangible foundation in which the social and its infrastructures are co-dependant and negotiated.

Homi Bhabha (1994), conversely to Turner, posits the theory that liminality as a capacity to subvert the conventional through *hybridization*, arguing that the transformation of identities is not a passage between normative states in a society, it does not revert back after passing through the temporary conditions of the *rite de passage*. Instead the process is a fundamentally transformative one, in which liminality enables the emergence of new forms through the “*articulation of contradictory elements*”⁵ This is a process of differentiation away from the reinforcement of the cultural reinforcement and towards the generation of new hybrid identities. In an urban context from a historic perspective, it is possible to see the ways that immigrant areas that were originally enclaves or ghettos, over time become an intrinsic part of a city. London’s east end or New York’s Lower East Side, for instance, developing new modalities, values and identities that are eventually valued as contributions of difference to a city. Such modalities may not all function as beneficial to the civic society. The G8 meeting in Seattle in 1999 or in Genoa in 2001 in which the temporary cordoning of the city for the summit and the anti-globalisation protests erupted leading to civic disturbance and unrest. Subsequently (pre-9/11) cities used these events as justifications to develop new forms of urban control with security and surveillance measures that further eroded the public realm.

1.3 City / States, loopholes and enclaves

City / state alludes to the limits and intersection of city and state, and the future of polity as cities emerge as centres of social, technological, economic, and cultural movements. If cities are where one experience ends and another begins, then enclaves, exclaves, borderlands, special (military, economic, trade, etc.) zones, slums, and ethnic minority ghettos offer a stark contrast to the city they are located. Examining the phenomena of thresholds, borders, and limits that permeate today’s cities, outlines a framework for discussing liminality in connection to issues of identity, territoriality, mobility, exclusion, economy, state power, states of exception, class, alienation and disenfranchisement, ecology and biopolitics, etc. in urban contexts.

Figure 3: Urban flotsam: Liminal bodies formation: 1992



Source: Raoul Bunschoten / Chora Institute for Architecture and Urbanism.

As Abdou Maliq Simone (2004) has commented: “*urbanism denotes a thickening of fields, an assemblage of increasingly heterogeneous elements into more complicated collectives. The accelerated,*

⁵ Bhabha (1994) p22. This parallels Ed Soja’s notion of *thirdspace* identifying emerging urban patterns and processes as hybrid entities.

extended, and intensified intersections of bodies, landscapes, objects, and technologies defer calcification of institutional ensembles or fixed territories of belonging.” The parsing of the heterogeneous and diverse contra the institutional and bounded is a fundamental issue in cities, that contains many nuances. Heterogeneity as a necessity for urban coexistence is paramount, however these same elements are often disenfranchised from the city itself through the structures of power that institutionalise their control. This incorporation establishes boundaries, demarcating itself and excising itself from the greater urban fabric. As Michel de Certeau (1984) outlines, the strategic is an institutionalised and bounded expression of power that has at its root control, stability and predictability that isolates it from its environment: *“A strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as proper (propre) and thus serve as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it.”* Exemplified as a city, a scientific institution or the political and economic systems of social and civic control and regulation, it contrasts with his concept of the ‘tactical.’ ‘Cracks’ in the city, resonators of larger issues, or hidden emotional conditions, are foundational to his tactical approach to the city: *“Tactics are procedures that gain validity in relation to the pertinence they lend to time - to the circumstances which the precise instant of an intervention transforms into a favourable situation, to the rapidity of the movements that change the organization of a space...”* Tactics invokes adaptation, making-do, bricolage, and an agility to situational and context changes. As a tactical operation, loopholes operate on legal, cultural, social or economic registers, impacting urban and spatial boundaries to bypass restrictions on goods, people and capital. They operate by the circumvention of systems through the production of tactics that take advantage of these affordances, seeking opportunities to avoid delimitation. They navigate the different levels of control, legal, political and security frameworks, and different economic systems.

It follows therefore, that if we assume that liminality in cities is manifested as emerging urban orders, highlighting moments where the heterogeneity cannot be accommodated within these structures, then liminal urbanism can be used to pose critical questions centred on the existing paradigms of urbanism at large - and on the transformative modalities of city-states. For instance: what can be the role of spatio-temporal states, transitional thresholds, states of urban development in which contradictory elements can coexist? Can hybrid conditions lead to new urban states, what can state mean here? as a condition, transition, threshold, state of becoming? And how could these be channelled as forces for constructive of positive change? And who do these changes serve? The dichotomy and threshold between a city and its state alludes to the issues of territoriality, enclave, emergence of urban areas and the relations between cities and citizens or the alienation of these.

The liminal city provides one of the clearest articulations of a city ‘state.’ In different ways and forms, the city state has usually been a strategically positioned settlement, often a mercantile or trading city but also for military and geo-political reasons as well. Throughout history, examples can be drawn from the networks of the Hanseatic cities as a series of mercantile trading partnerships or from the Empires or Colonial periods which established control and trading outposts as extensions or projections of power and dominion. In modern times we can see Dubai, Singapore and other cities show the continuation of this practice which confers certain strategic advantages arising from the disconnection from traditional modes of urban development and evolution and the consequent linkage to the global. In parallel, a nation’s mercantile edge cities that can engage with external trade and exchange reveals a subaltern form of city state. For example, China’s opening and export policy has essentially been dependent on the liminal city and the creation of Special Economic Zones as two way conduits for capital on the one hand and trade exports on the other. These cities include Hong Kong, Zhuhai, Macau, and the various SEZ cities of

Shenzhen, Dalian, Shanghai, Ningbo, Beihai and others, most of which are positioned near to the nations external and maritime borders.

Whether as city-states, areas within cities, or spatial exceptions, the city state, theorised by Sassen, Castells, Esterling, Brenner and others, is a growing tendency. This has resulted in a proliferation of new forms of developments divorced from their context that generate new types of spatial, territorial and geographic configurations. Each of these city-states generate a range of border zones “... *where the old spatialities and temporalities of the national and the new ones of the global digital age get engaged*” (Sassen 2005). New urban practices create exceptions and enclaves that include free trade areas, export processing zone, special logistics area, bonded areas, special economic zone, tax free zone, investment promotion zone and many other forms. In parallel, the rise of the gated community, the business, science or technology park enclave and similar spatial and planning products has been dramatic. This results in increases in fragmentation of existing urban fabrics, as well as political, social and civil society discontinuities, and creates mono-cultural generic or specular forms of urbanity. As part of this process, the development of privatised spatial hybrids and anomalies reveal the legal loopholes and grey zones where legitimacy and accountability do not follow the same systems that occur in the outside world at large. As Easterling (2012) has outlined, formed by constellations of transnational offshore corporations and armed with global capital, they restructure infrastructure networks along the channels of global capital mobility and trade liberalisation. They exemplify asymmetrical urban development that highlights the emerging relationships between architecture and transnational globalisation in the formation of: “*Spatial products that incubate in several species of zone-outlaw enclave formations or "parks" [focused] on the instrumentality of duplicity, the preference for manipulating both state and non-state sovereignties-for alternately releasing and laundering power and identity to create the most advantageous political or economic climate. They are the aggregate unit of many new global conurbations and the mechanism for a mongrel form of exception.*” (Easterling 2005) The development of special economic zones is therefore a form of ‘extrastatecraft’ that produces enclaves, urban anomalies and discontinuities manifested as forms of constructed liminality, and sovereignties of difference that occur not only on spatial levels but on levels of governance, law, socio-cultural exception, finance, and most importantly economy.

As Simone and de Certeau indicate, this must be contrasted with the emergent, the heterogeneous thickening of collectives of elements referenced is intrinsic to concepts of urban diversity and complexity. As an interwoven field of collectives, differences, intersections and interactions this needs to be understood as one of the primary sources of emergent and the tactical tendencies that appear often in opposition to the top down planning and governance systems. These articulate some of the ‘cracks’ that give meaning to collective will to change or critique existing modes of development or urban problematics. Their manifestation as liminal bodies comes not from the expression of power but more from the expression of collective will.

These take many forms. They range from the liminoid type of cultural expression that has over time become accepted by that civic society as a festival, carnival or event; to the collective dissatisfaction and actions this might entail in a city whether it be initiation of bottom-up urbanity, protest, civil disobedience or civil action in any form. They generate spaces and conditions with vastly differing degrees of permanence, temporality and lasting impact.

2. HONG KONG'S LIMINAL STATES

Hong Kong, as a former colonial outpost and presently a Special Administrative Region (S.A.R.), is first and foremost a city state, dependant on global capital and resource flows to maintain an equilibrium that is not as competitive as it once was. Accurately reflecting conditions and urban development history in Hong Kong, in which: “[t]he growing gap between the space where the issues arise (global) and the space where the issues are managed (the nation-state) is at the source of four distinct, but interrelated, political crises that affect the institutions of governance,” Castells (2010) four crises are: the crisis of efficiency, crisis of legitimacy, crisis of identity and crisis of equity. These crises have had long lasting transformative effects on the city and the various scales of liminality from the macro to the micro are - in part - spatio-temporal manifestations of these crises.

2.1 State 1: Territory

HK as a city state is highly contingent on its border with the Chinese Mainland. Once tightly controlled but now increasingly permeable, it separates cultures, political systems, economic systems, ideologies and urban systems. Structuring the ways Hong Kong's enclave condition is framed and influences the ways the city has developed differently from the Mainland, but also revealing a range of cultural, economic and historic ties and cross-border co-dependencies (food, services, utility supply, versus capital, expertise, people and knowledge). The border will cease to exist in 2047, 50 years after the 1997 handover and will end the ‘One Country Two Systems’ policy that tolerates the city's difference. It will mean the dismantling of the Special Administrative Region (S.A.R.) of HK and the adjacent Special Economic Zone (S.E.Z.) of Shenzhen. It will also terminate the British derived Basic Law legal system,⁶ as well as individual rights.

Figure 4: HK city-state border evolution



Source: Joshua Bolchover and Peter Hasdell

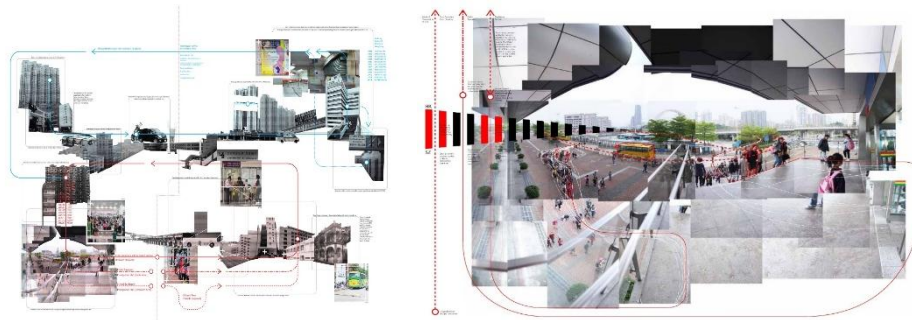
The dependencies and the increasing porosities of the border limit the capacity for autonomy. For instance anti-Mainland tourist sentiment reacts to the rise of Mainland visitors (from 14 million in 2007 to 77 million in 2013) who spend money in the city's retail sector and is linked with the idea to reclaim the city for HK people, however it ignores the financial dependencies that have long existed and the now outsourced industry. Related is the rising apartment cost, fuelled by demand from Mainland investors which is pricing out many residents, whilst the market driven government sanctioned property development processes have contributed to this crisis; the growing inequality evident as the city recently saw some of the highest Gini index ratings of the developed world.

The Peak District Reservation Ordinance, enacted in 1904 was a segregated zoning law, premised on the outbreak of the bubonic plague in nearby Canton (Guangzhou), the ordinance allocated the hillside on HK Island above the 788 foot contour to Europeans

⁶ The Basic Law: www.info.gov.hk/basic_law/fulltext: “Hong Kong has been part of the territory of China since ancient times; it was occupied by Britain after the Opium War in 1840. ... the People's Republic of China will resume the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong with effect from 1 July 1997, thus fulfilling the long-cherished common aspiration of the Chinese people for the recovery of Hong Kong.”

and low lying lands to the Chinese. This had the effect of establishing class, wealth and functional divisions that remain until this day, influencing the consequent development of Hong Kong's dense urban environment on the water edges and green county parks on less dense hillsides. In recent times the collective anxieties to the 2003 SARS crisis or the recent Avian Flu outbreaks focused attention on nearby Guangdong, and responded by limiting cross border mobility of people and goods, thereby utilising HK as an isolation ward.

Figure 5: Cross-border school children, Shenzhen and Hong Kong



Source: Joshua Bolchover and Peter Hasdell

2.2 State 2: Block

The extraterritorial zone known as the Kowloon Walled City, a Mainland enclave within the city's territory, existed from 1950 until 1992. As Lambot (2007) extensively documented, it was the world's densest urban environment, home to over 40,000 people, and populated by waves of Mainland refugees entering HK after the communist government was established in 1950 (also during the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution). Constructed as a three dimensional informal settlement, it internalised residences, schools, businesses, temples and ad-hoc infrastructures that serviced these. This was unique in that its boundary condition as an international border was porous but jurisdictionally functional meaning HK police had no rights within the city, whilst some residents were technically without rights outside of the city itself. A factor inextricable from Hong Kong's status as a city-state.

Figure 5: Kowloon Walled City, Hong Kong



Source: Ian Lambot

Although absent the delimitation of a national border for a site boundary, Chungking Mansions shares some similarities. A high density cultural ghetto of five 17 floor tower blocks with a shared three-level podium, it developed as a low-end series of small shops,

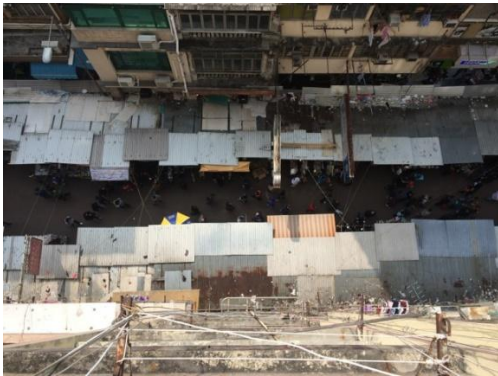
ethnic restaurants, guesthouses and cheap hotels along with other ancillary and grey zone functionalities. This grew into a cultural mix of around 4000 Cantonese, Nigerians, Pakistanis, Nepalese and other minority groups, some of who do not have right of abode in the city. Engaged in a raft of diverse activities and businesses including the bulk buying of second hand phones from Guangzhou and HK for export to sub-Saharan Africa, the selling and trading of parallel (copy) goods or finding legal loopholes through which to make a living. As Mathews (2011) explains, these are processes of cultural hybridization that he terms 'low end globalisation,' in which Chungking Mansions and its inherent adaptability is key to its success. In fact it can be seen to be facilitating some of the transactions that sustain a hidden or emergent part of the global economy.

As liminal bodies both Kowloon Walled City and Chungking Mansions are unique consequences of the city's high density urbanity. In recent years developers have been able to consolidate city blocks into a series of complex large-scale developments that internalise infrastructure, commerce, leisure, workplace and high density middle and upper class residential developments. These seem, at first to draw from the earlier precedents, although they are comprehensively planned. Olympic City for example, points towards a new form of 'concentration city' (Ballard 1957) which internalises the necessary support and structures of that segment of the population into conglomerate typologies and lifestyles or mini-cities. In doing so the external boundaries of these liminal conditions highlight the contradictions which shape its spatial limits in terms of the typologies of exteriorization, constructed forms of spatial production and work, and the transformation of the public to the private and forms of civic commercial hybridity.

2.3 State 3: Street Market

The development of public housing policies resulting from the 1950s refugee squatter settlement fires were an intrinsic part of a HK government policy to encamp the residents into controlled areas and to make them as "uncomfortable as possible" in the attempt to make them return to the Mainland, a policy derived from the Japanese WW2 internment camps policy. Whilst the Chinese occupied parts of Hong Kong have always been crowded, the spatial density of the Mark 1 apartments gave impetus to and established genotypes for the types of urban density that followed in much of Hong Kong's public and lower and middle class private residential developments. Additionally given the British propensity to avoid planning for civic and public space, coupled with the mercantile nature of a city whose primary reason for existence was trade, a critical outcome was that civic life and public space occurred in the streets generating a wide range of street markets and street cultures. This meant that civic and public life occurred on the streets and the over layering and density of interactions precisely meant that socio-cultural space and economic space were largely coincident. The local street markets were a broadly egalitarian form of liminality that also established cultural and community identities in ways its neoliberal replacements cannot.

Figure 5: Sham Shui Po street market, Hong Kong



Source: Peter Hasdell and Kuo Jze Yi

More recently the city, undergoing a top down transition from street culture to middle class consumption has resulted in the erasure of the former street culture as it moves – or becomes internalised in neo-liberal forms of urban development. This has privatized much of the formerly semi-public spaces and market places and has proliferated a rentier capitalist market on commercial spaces and commerce in general. The monopolies that regulate and determine the shopping malls and mega block podium developments strictly control activities, types of commerce, entertainment and users of these places. In recent years parallel or day traders from Shenzhen set up informal markets and use cross border informal networks to capture parts of this sector.

2.4 State 4: Camping

The recent rise of anti-government, anti-Mainland, pro-democracy and pro universal suffrage protests and referendums by Hong Kong citizens target the growing encroachment of Beijing's policies on its civic and cultural life and the growing crisis of legitimacy the HK SAR government faces. These are complex in nuance and suffused with contradictions, for instance the pro-democracy and pro-universal suffrage protests in Occupy Central (2014) also mask the crisis of equity in which many locals feel disenfranchised and cannot foresee that they will have the means to be a stakeholder in the city due to high levels of speculation pushing up property prices and affordability. Occupy Central, also known as 'The Umbrella Revolution' occupied three main streets and transport arteries in HK, one outside the HK government headquarters, and two in the busiest commercial thoroughfares in HK. Some estimated that over one million people actively took part in this large scale civil disobedience, bringing parts of the city to a standstill for 79 days, constructing a range of temporary structures, facilities and encampments in the roadways.

Whilst streets in HK have always been used for a range of different activities, including periodic festivals, events and protest, this was exceptional not only in scope, scale and duration, but also in the magnification of the neoliberal city-state contradictions that are rupturing the city.

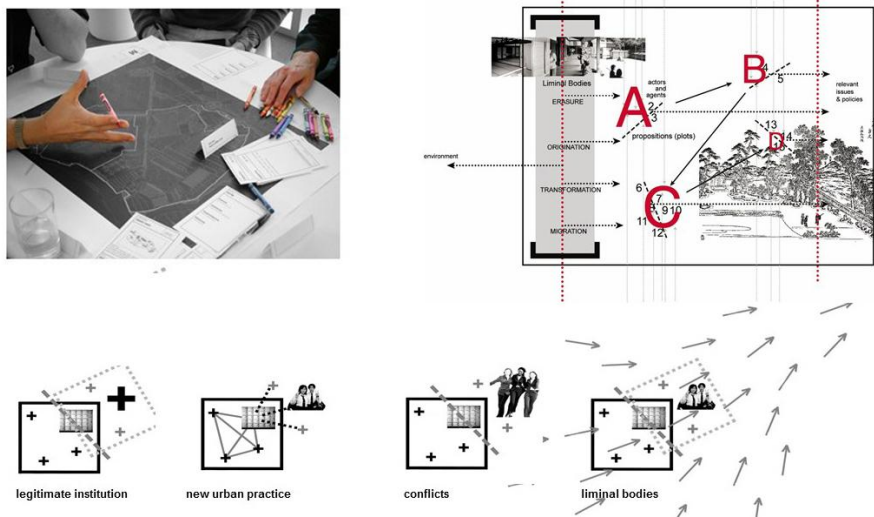
3. CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A TAXONOMY OF LIMINALITY

Conventional discourse on urban environments postulate the city as a relatively discrete, stable entity. An increasingly problematized position, given the emergence of diffuse, heterotopic, unevenly developed and agglomerated urban conditions. The conventional spatio-centric and planimetric logics and their historic developmental models are largely

unable to deal with the emergent, the informal or the unplanned, they have: “... *made the city a thing to be engineered with the aim of containing and controlling social processes. Planning methods, with their strongly utopian antecedents, have often presumed a fixed spatial order underpinning an idealized social stability What we need is a framework for understanding the city in terms that transcend the limitations imposed by static and utopian conceptualisations built explicitly around a principle of urban change*” (Read 2012).

De Landa (2006), has suggested that key spatial or city metrics of ‘*extensivity*’ should be replaced by degrees of ‘*intensivity*’ that are inherently diachronic and variable. The weather pattern-like dynamics of intensivity require different descriptive and planning modalities that are able to encompass change. Furthermore, we can note the inability of the conventional to account for the mechanisms of the remote acting on specific locations in a city, where for example a transnational corporation or global factor may have spatial and urban impacts on that location. Brenner (2014) has proposed ‘*urban hyperobjects*’ or metabolic rubrics acting from afar to reassess the conceptual frameworks for urban developments in ways that can encompass urban dynamics and conditions of global impacts on local conditions.

Figure 8: Liminal Bodies: Tokyo, 1998.



Source: Chora Institute for Architecture and Urbanism.

A taxonomic framework outlining liminal conditions could categories that include the: *Emergent* (inarticulate) / *Bounded* (excluded) / *Intentional* (planned). Other subcategories as sketched out in this paper might include *Loopholes* / Emergent and informal / *Transient Aleatory* and temporary, reflecting the different degrees and types as well as the spatio-temporal basis of liminal states. Could then *Liminal Urbanism* be an approach able to comprehend emerging urban conditions outside of the rational planning paradigm: such as refugee and migration issues, economic transformation, forces acting from afar and disconnected geographies, emergent socio-spatial practices or from alterations to the supply chain distribution systems that constitute that cities position in a globalised infrastructural reticule? Can *Liminal Urbanism* allow for multivalency? Connecting the subjective, the emotional and the concrete? The tactical and the systemic? As an alternative approach it is my contention that *Liminal Urbanism* can facilitate understanding and indicate specific states and modalities of change that are generally not considered to be part of current planning paradigms.

REFERENCES

- Abbas, A., (1998), *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance*, Hong Kong: HKU Press.
- Ballard, J.G. (1957) Concentration City in *Complete Short Stories of J.G. Ballard*: V1, London: Harper.
- Bhabha, H., (1994), *The Location of Culture*, London: Routledge.
- Brenner, N., (2014), *Implosions/Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization*, Berlin: Jovis.
- Brillembourg, A., Feireiss, K., Klumpner, H., eds., (2005), *Informal City*, NY: Prestel.
- Bunschoten, R., et.al., (2001), *Urban Flotsam: Stirring the City: Chora Institute of Architecture and Urbanism*, Rotterdam: 010.
- Castells, M., (2010), "The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance", in *International Communication: A Reader*, ed. Thussu., NY: Routledge.
- Davis, M., (2000), *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the US City*, London: Verso.
- De Certeau, M., (1984), *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. S. Rendall, Berkley: U California Press.
- De Landa, M., (2006), 'Extensive and Intensive' in *Domus*, No 892, 152-53.
- Easterling, K., (2005), *Enduring Innocence: global architecture and its political masquerades*, Cambridge: MIT
- Easterling, K., (2012), "Zone-the-spatial-sofwares-of-extrastatecraft" accessed <https://placesjournal.org/article/zone-the-spatial-sofwares-of-extrastatecraft/>
- Foucault, M., (1986), "Of Other Spaces" trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Diacritics* 16, 22–27.
- Harvey, D., (1985), *The Urbanization of Capital: Studies in History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization*, London: Johns Hopkins UP.
- Harvey, D., (2011), "A conversation with David Harvey" in *Urban Asymmetries. Studies and projects on Neoliberal Urbanization*, eds. Kaminer, Robles-Duran, Sohn, Rotterdam: 010.
- Lévesque, L., (2002), "The 'Terrain Vague' as Material," in *AXENÉO7*, ed Hull, Gatineau.
- Mathews, G., (2011). *Ghetto at the Center of the World: Chungking Mansions, Hong Kong*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Mehrotra, R., et.al. (2015), *Kumbh Mela: Mapping The Ephemeral Megacity*, Cambridge: Harvard UP.
- Lambot, I., ed., (2007), *City of Darkness: Life in Kowloon Walled City*, London: Watermark.
- Read, S., (2012) *Future City*, eds. Read, Rosemann, Eldijk, London: Routledge.
- Sassen, S., (2005), "The global city: the de-nationalizing of time and space" from <http://chtodelat.org/b8-newspapers/12-62/saskia-sassen-the-global-city-the-de-nationalizing-of-time-and-space/>
- Simone, A. M., (2004), "People as Infrastructure: Intersecting Fragments in Johannesburg" in *Public Culture*, Duke University, accessed <http://publicculture.org/articles/view/16/3/people-as-infrastructure-intersecting-fragments-in-johannesburg>
- Soja, E., (1996), *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Turner, V., (1967), *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*, Ithaca: Cornell UP
- Turner, V., (1969), "Liminality and Communitas," in *The ritual process: structure and anti-structure*, Chicago: Aldine.