Urban Problems: Port of Spain

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Hebe Verrest- University of Amsterdam
Caribbean Cities
Outline

• Theory:
  – Urbanisation
  – Caribbean urbanisation and cities

• Case: Port of Spain
  – Urban inequality
  – Urban governance
THEORY: URBANIZATION
Defining the city

• Demographic and morphological definitions
  • “For sociological purposes a city may be defined as a relatively large, dense, and permanent settlement of heterogeneous individuals” (Wirth 1938)

• Functional definitions:
  – role in context of region/hinterland -> political/administrative, economic, cultural, religious functions

• Definitions:
  – number of people; economic basis

• Definitions vary widely by country – comparisons difficult across national boundaries!!
Urbanisation and Urbanism

Urbanisation

– Increase in share of population living in urban areas
– But also
  • Rural urban migration
  • Larger share of service sector in economy
  • Increasingly ‘western’ norms, values and attitudes;

Urbanism

– Wirth (1938)
  • “the urban way of life”- sociological perspective on the city
  • Development of “urban” patterns of social interaction
  • Processes of increasing heterogeneity
Urbanization

• More than half of world population lives in cities (as of 2008)
• 7 out of 10 urban dwellers live in cities in developing countries
• Global population growth (2.3 bln) till 2050 will be in urban areas, particularly in global South
• 60% in cities <1mln: by 2050 47% in cities> 1 mln
Urbanism

• Urbanism as ‘a way of life’ (Wirth);
  – cosmopolitanism (Sassen)
  – Poverty issues ‘planet of slums’ (Davis)

• Urban as process rather than place:
  • Focus on social relations; symbols, political economy, urban metabolism (LeFebvre, Brenner, Swyngedouw)

• Cities as spaces of heterogeneity;
  – sites of creativity and new ideas

• Cities as spaces of opportunities and constraints
“Global Cities”

• Cities important for the world economy (Sassen)

• Hierarchy based on criteria:
  – Economic: MNCs, Fin Inst, Stock exchanges
  – Political: influence participation and world affairs
  – Cultural: institutional, pilgrimage, Football events

• Ordinary City Idea
Caribbean Cities
Caribbean cities

- Colonial Cities:
  - Externally initiated growth
- “global cities”:
  - Urban networks and flows, multi-ethnic
- Islands cities:
  - Harbours, rivers, mountains;
- Fragmented Cities:
  - Formal and informal;
- Primate cities:
  - Economically, politically and socially
- ‘small cities’
- “ordinary cities” or ‘cities off the map’ (Robinson 2006)
Historical context

- Shape and Function embedded in colonial past
- Function:
  - External Defense
  - Internal control/ exploitation hinterland
  - Commercial node/ connection motherland
  - Social and political centre
- Shape: cities for defence
  - Fortress in easily defendable harbour
Caribbean urbanisation

• Depending Urbanisation:
  – Not as a result of industrialisation
  – As a result of colonialism/mercantile capitalism
  – Integration Caribbean in global economy- shipment of resources and trade goods
  – Cities as nodes for trade, linking hinterland and metropole
  – Orientation Western European economies, monoculture
  – One urban area, connected to the metropole
Historical Development

Stage 1
PLANTOPOLIS
(1750s -)
- Relatively independent plantations
- One main town: trade, service and political control function

Stage 2
EMANCIPATION
(1833 -)
- Relatively independent plantations
- One main town: trade, service and political control function
- Small/marginal farming communities, clustered around the plantations: practising subsistence agriculture & supplying labour to the plantations

Stage 3
THE MODERN ERA
(1950s -)
- Relatively independent plantations
- as above: some intensification (e.g. banana production)
- The main urban-suburban-tourist zone: with some enclave industrialisation: modern retail development: elite residential enclaves
- Strong symbiotic flows between town and country
The urban Caribbean

• Dramatic rise in cities and city size from the 1950s:
  – 1950: 7 cities larger than 100,000 → 1970: 12 → mid 1980s: 24

• Cities larger than 1 mill. inhabitants
  – Port au Prince
    133.000 (1950) → 700.000 (1980) → 987,000/2,6 mil. (2015)
  – Havana
  – Santo Domingo
  – San Juan
    400.000 (1950) → 2,1 mill. in urban agglomoration (2010)
## Primate cities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Popul.</th>
<th>Popul.</th>
<th>Aggl.</th>
<th>% total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Port of Spain (Trinidad)</td>
<td>40,000 (2000)</td>
<td>37,000 (2011)</td>
<td>550,000 (2010)</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingston (Jamaica)</td>
<td>237,000 (1943)</td>
<td>380,000 (1980)</td>
<td>670,000 (2011)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paramaribo</td>
<td>70,000 (1950)</td>
<td>236,000 (2012)</td>
<td>354,000 (2012)</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgetown (Guyana)</td>
<td>317,000 (1980)</td>
<td>310,000 (2011)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgetown (Barbados)</td>
<td>96000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belize city (Belize)</td>
<td></td>
<td>65000 (2011)</td>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castries (St. Lucia)</td>
<td>38,000</td>
<td>22,000 (2010)</td>
<td>66,000 (2011)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. George (Grenada)</td>
<td></td>
<td>33,000 (2012)</td>
<td></td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rural-Urban Migration

Push factors:

- Rural poverty
  - Marginalized and insecure life small farmers (*peasants*)
- “stigma” rural life

Pull Factors

- Soc- econ opportunities
- Urban facilities and infrastructure
- Symbol of progress
Urban living environments

- Concentrations of opportunities
  - Economic, social
- Concentrations of vulnerabilities
  - Economic, Social, political, environmental
- Inequalities
- Fragmentation
Spatial inequality

- Presence of difference
  - Categorization
  - Construction of difference (*othering*)
  - Inequal power relations
  - Spatial distribution of difference AND of benefits, resources and risks
Globalisation and Caribbean Cities

- Flows of people, money, products, ideas
- Migrations: intra-urban, intra-Caribbean, international
- Social, cultural and economic networks
- Incoming flows: “McDonaldization”, tourism, media
- Outgoing flows: globalization in reverse, diaspora, media
Urban Inequalities: Trinidad
Port of Spain-Trinidad and Tobago
Urban Images
History
Inequality: Living conditions
Living conditions
Two visions on culture
Two visions on culture
Social Issues

• Ethnicity
• Gender
• Education

• Crime/ Violence
Trinidad and Tobago-economy
Economy

• 2000s high economic growth

• Human Development Index: 65 (high-2016)
  – Economic performance better than education and health
  – Inequality- index- 15% loss, mainly income and health

• Reduced inequality…..but…
Port of Spain: inequality and informality

• Social-spatial inequality
  – Strong spatial inequalities: Behind the Bridge
  – Housing conditions
  – Stigmatisation, inequality

• Sociaal-economic inequalities
  – Education, employment
  – Crime

• Informality
  – Political decision making
Who has access to Port of Spain’s sea?

Caribbean Urban Planning, governance and Spatial Justice
Introduction (1)

• Urbanization and cities
  – Cities as nodes of opportunity /engines of growth
  – Cities as local of extreme inequality and social exclusion

• Planning and Spatial Development
  – Megaprojects and Global Cities

• Urban Governance
  – Analytical and Normative
  – Models to understand cities’ management

• Caribbean Cities
  – Small cities
Introduction (2)

• How does urban governance in planning work in the Caribbean work?
• How does it relate to spatial justice?
Concepts

Urban Planning

• Global Cities
  – Icon cities/central nodes in econ/political/social terms (NY, Shanghai, Rio, London)

• Megaprojects

• Waterfront
  – Bring back grandeur
  – Old glory

• Privatization of planning

• Alternative visions

Spatial Justice

• Inclusive city idea

• Outcomes: equal geographical distribution of society's wants and needs, e.g. job opportunities, access to health care, housing, air quality etc.

• Process: issues of representations of space, of territorial or other identities, inclusion of all interest groups.
Approach

• **Who?**
  - Which actors are involved?
  - Who do these actors represent?
  - What relations do these individuals have with each other?
  - What do they contribute/when/how?

• **Process?**
  - Procedures and steps taken
  - Spaces for participation and consultation
  - Power in governance and OVER governance
  - Informal processes

• **Outcome?**
  - Buildings, spaces and places
  - Labour and involvement
  - Who can use these?
THE INTERNATIONAL WATERFRONT CENTER
Port of Spain

- City proper: 40,000 people
- Urban East West Corridor: 500,000 people
- Bordered by sea to the South and mountains to the North
- Spatial inequality/fragmentation
- Downtown city:
  - Port
  - Government offices
  - Retail function
Changing City Scape
The Waterfront
The IWF- Port of Spain

• Hyatt hotel (22 stores)
  – Government owned
    (franchise)
• Two 26-story government
  offices
• Promenade
• Femmes du Chalet (aka
  Breakfast shed)
• Land Port Authorities
  (donated to the Central
government)
Process: The lead up

• T&T booming economy, self confidence

• Ambition to become
  – become “HD country by 2020”
  – regional financial capital
  – house for Free Trade Area of the America’s (FTAA)

• Host of the summit of the America’s (2009-> Obama visit)

• Ambition to become a regional/global city
Process: Not part of a bigger plan

- Government campus opposite site
- Parking and roads problematic
- Cramped in between
  - Cruise terminal (no access)
  - Ferry to Tobago & San Fernanando
  - Port
Process: Not part of a solid plan

- No financial assessment
- No needs assessment
- No space for alternative development plan
Realisation: Who was involved?

**Included**

- Prime Minister: “one morning the prime minister woke up and decided....”
- Calder Hart (UDECOTT)
- Foreign contractors
- Close relationships (political alliances, friends, family)

**Excluded**

- Port of Spain City Corporation
  - Not on their property (none of waterfront)
  - Informed
- Town and Country Planning
  - (pressured to approve plans)
- Local contractors (Invaders Bay)
- Public (labour/consultation)
Realisation: process

• Informal
  - Few things on paper
  - Most through media
  - Decisions formalized in meetings but taken/prepared outside

• Networks
  - Political linkages
  - Interest/like minded
Governance: how about the public?

• No consultations/plans etc (no invited space)
• Breakfast Shed (claimed space)
  – Long tradition local food provision to workers and visitors
  – Had to be removed
  – FIERCE public protest resulted in relocation
  – Poor working conditions and more expensive food, different women out
Outcomes in terms of inclusion

Who has access?

- Offices: partly filled
- Restaurant (BS): people from outside, mixed (not steady)
- Hotel: functions, foreigners, middle class
- Boulevard: quiet but mixed: children/lovers lane/families (events?)
- No residential/no retails

Who was involved in process

- Government
- State companies
- Political alliances
- Foreign actors
- Exclusion of local contractors, public, local business
Outcome: spatial representations

- **City Image:**
  - No discussion on city image included
  - The inclusive city (poverty/equality liveability)
  - The global city
  - Half/no master plan

- **Needs and Wants**
  - Labour, housing, recreation, consumption
Conclusions: Governance IWF

**Governance IWF**
- Was about *individuals* more than institutional actors
- *Central government* takes a very directive role
  - not local government
  - Not private sector: state companies
- *Power ridden*
  - In: Interactions between actors (T&C-planning vs UDECOTT)
  - Over: who was involved and who not: exclusion local contractors, labor, public consultations
  - As: connections and links between actors, very powerful bonds

**Spatial justice**
- Excluded
  - What
    - Visions/plans
    - Beliefs and ideas
  - Who
    - Local contractors
    - Public
    - Labour
Conclusions (2)

• Caribbean planning and urban governance
  • Modernistic but no big plans
  • Exclusion of planners. Public, alternative visions
  • Ppp detected by the central state
  • Individuals with strong connections: urban regimes

• Is this Caribbean?
  • Yes, small societies, informality
  • No, global phenomena

• Problematic?
  • Small cities, vulnerable, super dominant
  • Developing alternative view with room for alternative ideas