

Alan Mabin (School of Architecture and Planning, Wits University)

think *métropole*: memory, citizenship and futures in São Paolo, Paris and Johannesburg*¹

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In a world populated by so many acronyms, GFIP makes a good example of a 'technical' name given to a megaproject with potentially wide social effects that remained submerged for most of its life. It might have slumbered on as a non-issue, but instead exploded into consciousness as something scary and threatening in 2012. GFIP turned out to be an idea whose meaning, shaped over more than a decade, surfaced under the new brand of 'e-toll'. Leaping from the unknown to ensuing and entertaining controversy, e-toll suddenly filled newspaper columns, talk shows, TV screens, tweet space and occasional court rooms. Contrast e-toll with another project from the same stable: one that has involved summary dismissal of hundreds if not thousands of workers over the same months during which e-toll turned from elegant branding to nightmare for some. This second project has failed to reach completion in anything like the projected time span, sees hundreds of almost-empty, expensive bus trips every weekday, is allegedly being sued by at least one elite institution - yet hardly ever receives any press or other media exposure, except of celebratory kind. Its conception and execution remain largely in the shadows despite costing the public purse something like R35 billion. These two megaprojects – e-toll and Gautrain – are both about mobility. Missing from public discussion seems to be how we can understand the direction of massive resources to them, rather than to other causes. In both e-toll and Gautrain cases, a rather large question seems to be: How did we get here? This is the question, in the e-toll case, to which the North Gauteng High Court has ordered an answer.

The reason for opening with these megaprojects is of course that they attract interest to this rather tentative and experimental paper. More widely though, they have cousins in other city regions around the world; and along with such relatives they form windows (or prisms, or lenses) through which large and complex city relationships can be viewed. In the large city, even when its population is much more dense than is typical of most South African places, access to diverse opportunities mostly depends on mobility systems. Thus mobilities hold a special place in how the city is understood and claimed by many city inhabitants. The e-toll controversy could be construed – indeed has been construed – as a consequence of many causes: an arrogant chief executive of the central state agency in the saga; paralysis of action on the part of national government; poor financial modeling; class wars around mobility expressed through freedom of the highway; and much more. I want to suggest that e-toll

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conflict can be analysed in quite different ways, alongside many other megaprojects in big cities. Perhaps it can be thought of as a collision of aspirations in the fracturing circumstances of something rather clumsily referred to as a 'city region' in formation. It can be teased into being as a seam running through the geology of the messy and complicated, fractured metropolis.

Some authors call for attention to be paid to 'ordinary cities' (eg Robinson 2006, 2008, following Amin and Graham 1997). Such places are not on the map (or at least the conceptual map) of Saskia Sassen's 'global cities' (1992). 'Ordinary' cities do not have to pretend to the size, concentration of wealth and linkages of power of the metropolis, and the idea helps deter over-concentration on 'global cities', 'world class cities', and other much-punted phrases. But I remain more interested in the metropolis, impelled as perhaps Fritz Lang was in the twenties. That is partly because I happen to live in one, an elusive one according to Mbembe and Nuttall (2008), and one that certainly eludes easy definition – even geographically.

What does the physical location of many millions of people in large cities mean for society? This is the central question of 'urban theory'. In his rather structuralist period, seeking to project an image of what was then perhaps a dying phase of state-led capitalist urban development, Manuel Castells ended up dismissing the 'urban question' and arguing that it was not distinct from the general quest to understand society. Perhaps for subjective reasons most 'urban scholars' clearly did not accept that view, and indeed Castells went on to use the city as significant concept in works such as *The City and the Grassroots*.

There is persistent resurgence of questions about cities and society and the magnitude of the literatures is far too large to attempt to condense here (a recent and useful compendium is Bridge and Watson 2011). The contemporary urban scene is much too complex to be captured by one perspective. Of course the city-society question can be posed from myriad angles – through distinct disciplines, for example – what are the economic meanings, the political meanings, the anthropological meanings of city life? Urban theorizing is also torn between analytical and normative exigencies, to pose the matter dichotomously. I am particularly interested in how inhabitants of cities represent the city to themselves and to others. City people include professionals and politicians, students and streetsellers, flaneurs and fashion models, workers and writers, new arrivals and those passing through ... there is no end to a list. Impossible as it is to achieve anything comprehensive, especially for one researcher, I want to explore convergences and divergences in thinking the *métropole* across at least some social situations.

The reason why I have worked in this arena is that, as Tajbaksh put it in his wonderful review of urban theory over a decade ago, 'cities offer the promise of communities built around multiple spaces, supple boundaries and hybrid identities ... these resources can deepen connections between democracy, difference and social justice' (2001). The difficulty is that it seems rather rare for many citizens in large city settings to realize the promise of which Tajbaksh wrote. Much of the urban cacophony in media and professional circles is about

the material conditions of cities, rather more than it is about the social promise of the city. 'Development' is generally not a discourse or project which places realization of this promise very high on its jargonistic 'agenda'. At the same time there are aspects of material conditions closely linked to the social 'promise' of the city.

Getting from place to place is essential to making boundaries more supple, opening the multiplicity of spaces to people, and shifting identities. Thus mobilities hold a special place in how cities are experienced, how city imaginations are expressed, by many city inhabitants. There are large literatures intersecting with these matters, and several major projects around the world in the field. It's not the purpose of this paper to engage directly with those (for which see inter alia Offner 1993, Thrift 2004 and Bridge and Watson 2011b).

Growth, connection/interconnection, networks, circulation, flows, movement, communication, all these are concepts which resonate with the city as the site of mobility and mobilities. ... mobility/ies are central to understanding the ways that cities have developed since their origins ... but the concept as a framing device has not been typically deployed in urban literature and analysis until recently. At the same time, the converse of this is equally pertinent, thus cities are also about the regulation of movement, control, segregation, exclusion, discipline, immobility, restriction ... Bridge and Watson 2011b p. ?)

In slippery ways, mobility infrastructures alter how the city is lived and thought. At moments when mobilities come under debate, at moments when enormous projects seek to 'develop' mobility, windows open into the kaleidoscopes of how the métropole is thought by its inhabitants. Noise around e-tolls and other mobility related issues (taxi routes, parking, bus transport) is presently particularly apparent in Johannesburg and Gauteng. I cannot claim to exhaust this obviously complex terrain; so in this paper I have chosen to focus on one element accessible to me: how some professional and political views of the large city and its future gain strength and pass into concrete forms through mobility projects, with potential to disrupt not only other ways of seeing the city but to destabilize or at least shift modes of being in the city.

What is 'really' going on in the metropolis eludes easy apprehension. Part of the dissonance around mobility megaprojects seems to arise from how city inhabitants do, and do not, apprehend 'what is going on'; how control is developed and exercised around these spheres and how that affects people's lives. Here I am touching on the contrast eloquently represented by De Certeau (1980, 1984) between the tactics of city dwellers as they use what I term the mobility infrastructures of the city environment, and the strategies of institutions and structures of power who produce – and make 'real' - maps that represent the city as unified whole. I am of course not suggesting that all mobile behaviour is determined by the powerful. Rather I suggest that ways in which people react to mobility infrastructures and projects providing both opportunities for and constraints on movement, can open ways of seeing city relationships in new ways. The proposition is that elements of means of

engaging these questions can be glimpsed from time to time and mobility megaprojects provide moments at which those flashes occur. In such moments how people 'remember' the city's pasts can appear as a powerful element. Memory can be mobilized towards framing images of the future as more or less desirable and appropriate – contested as these notions always are.

Very large investments in mobility systems and infrastructure form a sensitive focus in many large cities, generating vast archives of discussion and contest. Such projects intertwine with debate and organizing around forms of government of the extended city space. How can citizens relate to the scale of the mobility megaproject? In many ways this is a subset of the question, how can citizens relate to the scale of the enormous city region, to the city as Leviathan (as Davis 1994 labelled Mexico City)? Starting here from Gauteng, and looking for meanings of experience in this 'city region' of about 12 million people, I move on to learn from events in São Paulo and Paris, the other huge urban places I've had the opportunity to work in over some years. These two cities appeal to me among all the other possibilities because they are – like Gauteng – at the centre of national political economy – have much wider roles – and are places of democracy in which deep anxiety about past, present and future are openly expressed, all the time. The character of each is presently contested, around forms of government and its territories. And I have built up my access to those cities through networks of colleagues and friends and contacts, as well as to the dominant languages of those places. This access is not entirely satisfactory but I claim that it offers at least some points of listening, if not by any means a complete basis for method. In all three cases I am looking for ways of making some sense of 'how we got here'. My work in two other cities has shaped the ways in which I think and represent the experiences of Gauteng.

The paper offers stories from the three cities. First I pick up from São Paulo and examine contrasting representations of material and social transformations experienced by inhabitants over recent decades, and how they intersect with trajectories of political power and mobility megaprojects. A second story concerns recent and ongoing debate in Paris (and of course its region) about the nature of the city and its forms of government, and contests over mobility projects in its urban spaces. The third story returns in much more detail to Gauteng's history to cast recent events in a different light. These three stories are quite different: but contain some elements which lead me to venture some concluding remarks on how they might affect and reshape answers to the 'urban question', how they might reveal some new pieces of the jigsaw of social life in the city. I offer the present version of the text for responses, commentary and suggestions on how the elusive question of the city may be approached in these times, and thank you for reading it.

São Paulo: moving on

In returning to São Paulo, for some time in mid 2011, one of the questions I pursued related to how shifting political power in the city and its region intersected with social life and change. Things had changed quite a bit since I

first visited São Paulo for three weeks, 20 years before. Symbolic of much greater ease of dealing with this second Latin American urban leviathan, one can now obtain a sense of the city from rail transport map. In Paris (or London etc) just about everyone is familiar with diagrammatic maps of the metro or underground. In 'Sampa' it makes sense for the first time to use the map, for there really is a system and one which people want to use – despite horrible overcrowding at some times and places. Availability of a web site for the publically managed (part privately owned) bus system, reputedly the world's most complex and largest, which allows even a visitor (admittedly with some knowledge of Portuguese!) to figure out how to get between any two points in the city, on which buses and using what stops, is another way of illustrating that the city has moved along (www.sptrans.com.br). Equally symbolically, the big news magazine *Veja SP* in mid 2011, picked up the theme of '*de volta au centro*' [return to the centre]. While the old centre of the city is certainly not as it once was and never will be, there has been in recent years 'a substantial change in comfort using the area – for all!'. In my view this is correct, in turn captured by the numerous cultural centres sponsored by the big Brazilian banks in their old headquarters buildings and galleries and cafés accessible to many.

Like Johannesburg, São Paulo is globally infamous for crime, violence and danger, and for its 'gated communities', high walls and security elements. One of the best known scholarly studies of the city over the past two decades is titled, what else, but *City of Walls* (Caldeira 2000). Like South Africa emerging from its 'forty lost years', Brazil had emerged from its military dictatorship a few years before I first got to São Paulo in 1991. Mayor Erundina of the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (PT, or Workers' Party), had been in office in the city of São Paulo since the first democratic municipal elections in 1988, and several neighbouring municipalities in the city region of '*Grande São Paulo*' (GSP) also had PT mayors. Exciting attempts to shift the path of city development were in train, facing enormous problems that seemed to parallel many South African (and global) challenges.

In 1991 new kinds of projects were bravely being tried out, initiated by local governments to achieve *a cidade para todos* (the city for all -the slogan which Erundina made São Paulo's). To what extent could public action mould large and unequal, growing cities in the context of powerful economic and social changes? At that time São Paulo bore the marks of decades of massive population growth, with a large part of its population living in three kinds of informality – favelas, irregular subdivisions, and cortiços or overcrowded and deteriorated zones of older housing types. Municipal projects both in the city itself and neighbouring municipalities with PT mayors were targeted at improving living conditions in these zones. They related to an inversion of priorities that the PT insisted upon, and were hotly contested by established powerful classes and parties. They also involved social movements in their conception and often included elements of *mutirão* or collective self-help. Such projects were being driven forward in a situation where middle class people had been relocating for some time to high rise concrete forests of apartments, which capture the eye of every visitor. There was tremendous excitement as activists and young professionals grasped opportunities that the election of Erundina had opened. But Erundina's party

lost the next election, and to the horror of the left, elite regimes which had connections to the military past returned to power in the city – even if for some time the PT retained control of some neighbouring municipalities.

What has happened to São Paulo since? As with Johannesburg and Gauteng, it has long been fashionable among both local and northern academic authors to suggest that São Paulo is hell on earth for most, or at least a large proportion, of its population - to insist that things are getting worse in São Paulo (see for example Murray 2005, Deak and Schiffler 2007).

Yet there is a paradox somewhere in these accounts. Can it really be that despite a quarter century of democracy and several progressive, or at least well meaning, regimes in many municipalities in GSP including the city itself, not to mention a decade of control over national government on the part of the 'left', that city conditions show a total failure to improve? Do city-society relationships carry such a deadweight that social structures seem immutable? Cautious as I am about seeing nirvana achieved for all under conditions of unbridled capitalism, I find it most interesting that many Paulistana/os have begun to express, on the contrary, the view that life has improved for many. In this view, GSP is as remarkable for its positives as it has long been for its gigantism and problems. Insecurity, misery and immobility continue, certainly, but all show great improvements in this assessment.

Such an assessment is strongly contested of course. Leading Brazilian urbanists do maintain the view that the cities continue to be fundamentally in crisis and that things are becoming more and more problematic for many. But they also provide cases of rapidly increasing complexities (cf. Teresa Caldeira's work in progress <http://www.gf.org/fellows/17172-teresa-caldeira>). For Caldeira there are 'worlds set apart' in the city (Caldeira 2011). Yet even if their view remains one of profound fractures, some of those who provided foundational analyses in the eighties and nineties and played central roles in urban reform over several decades, do see elements of advance (Maricato 2001, 2008). In that they follow a path mapped by Milton Santos (1991), that wonderful Brazilian scholar, who called São Paulo a 'corporatised and fragmented metropolis' – yet he harboured an optimism that it would see better futures in democracy – and it would be simply churlish not to look for improvements twenty years after he wrote. Among particularly striking changes, I see in new and improved parks, on bikeways, and sidewalks, people in public places enjoying the city and its neighbourhoods in relaxed ways that I generally did not observe in 1991. There are certainly also housing, land, favela improvement and other shifts to note. In this paper, of course, I make some comments on contests over mobility megaprojects – those that have made the maps of the system actually useful, and at least one other. If this assessment holds value, the question of why or how these better city circumstances have come about deserves attention.

One facet is undoubtedly the success of the PT in shifting the agenda in national and city politics and programmes (Hunter 2010). That has occurred through electing many mayors and some state governors, and in winning the national presidency in three successive elections (2002-2010). Nevertheless, change has

often been a matter of negotiation, pressure, lobbying - and reversal. Symbolic of the situation is that the PT has only 17% of the seats in the national Congress; the party has seldom achieved a majority in local elected assemblies; and given the direct election of mayors, governors and presidents in Brazil, coalitions have been the habitual order of politics.

Lula (Luis Ignacio Lula da Silva), elected president in 2002 after several attempts, inherited a government and an economy already more stable, and growing, than at any point in at least several decades. After military dictatorship ended in 1986, a succession of setbacks including rampant inflation, impeachment, recession and more receded into memory during the centrist FH Cardoso presidency (1994-2002). Cardoso himself, and his political allies positioned to the right of the PT, are inclined to claim that the positive changes of the Lula period were mostly (or even entirely) due to the previous regime's policies (e.g. *O Estado do São Paulo* (abbreviated here as ESP) 03.07.2011 p. A10, interview with Cardoso). That claim, based on the currency stability achieved during Cardoso's presidency and the beginnings of more rapid economic growth, ignores a variety of innovations adopted during Lula's two terms, the most significant of which is perhaps the Bolsa Familia, a key redistributive, social grant programme which is responsible for helping to move millions of Brazilians out of dire poverty, whatever its complexities may be (Bastagli 2008). During Lula's presidencies the Brazilian economy grew at rates up to 7,5% per year. In just a half a decade, more or less coinciding with Lula's first term of office, Brazilian income per capita rose by something like 75% (2002-2007). GSP's population growth is now fairly slow (in the one per cent range). The distribution of income growth has reduced inequality, according to almost every observer, rather substantially.

The major implication of these patterns from the point of view of the changing city are at least two fold: declining unemployment in Brazilian cities especially São Paulo and rapidly increasing tax bases, allowing public authorities especially municipally to expand their impact on their material circumstances. A re-widening of wealth and income gaps is entirely possible. The extraordinary concentrations of wealth that have marked GSP show no sign of abating.

It was, of course, in conditions of crisis and misery as well as substantial wealth and the consolidation of democracy that city policy and planning underwent extraordinary change, in the city of São Paulo and some of its neighbours in GSP, starting roughly twenty years ago. An 'inversion of priorities' took place under PT mayors – and the constitutionally required plano direito prepared by each of these municipalities underwent a 'conceptual revolution' (Antonucci 2002). But electoral politics can be fickle. 'Inversion' by the first PT regimes in GSP (including Erundina in SP) was massively contested by conservative, indeed reactionary, forces. The result of non-flexibility was electoral loss. and Erundina was followed by a completely different period when Maluf – who had been appointed under the military as mayor of São Paulo in the seventies – was elected for the period 1992-1995. This regime and some of the subsequent ones have had the implicit and sometimes explicit goal of reasserting the power of more traditional elites in the city – and surrounding jurisdictions have similar

tales to tell. Whilst the histories of diverse municipalities in GSP are far from identical, one can discern a general trend across the area. As Déak and Schiffler (2007) put it, 'planning became ever less ambitious to the point of becoming self effacing'. According to Caldeira (2004 p. 236) the groups that seem to have used the new structures of democracy the most are from the middle classes. It was not until Marta Suplicy of the PT was elected in 2000 that visible change again picked up. This second PT regime was possible not only because of centre-right political division, but also because of capturing a chunk of the middle class vote. That did indeed mean offering things to the middle: to car owners for example, in the form of attempting to improve traffic flow on legendary congested routes. But it meant, much more, projects with social orientation such as community centres linked to schools (which are run by the municipality in Brazil). And it meant a megaproject out in the open for improving, to a remarkable degree, the bus system in the city, linked to related initiatives on neighbouring jurisdictions. Reserved bus lanes and dramatic elevated busways provide illustrations of what happened, less visible but as effective being the management project which led to the website described early in this section.

It's not, however, only municipal government that has engaged in such activities. Indeed, especially when the city of São Paulo has been in the hands of its two PT regimes, state government has competed strongly for legitimacy as the agent of change in the city and its surrounds. Two critical instruments for doing so have involved mobility megaprojects. One is the metro system, largely underground, in the throes of ambitious extension over the past decade. The other is vast improvement in the existing, state-operated 'ordinary' railway system. These projects, which have allowed the utility of the system map with which I opened this section, cause substantial friction with the city. And indeed, they cause dissonance given two other possible directions of spending – even if we limit that terrain to mobility projects. One of those more recent ideas – a little like Gautrain in a more familiar case in Joburg – is for a new and in part parallel railway system with 'high speed' trains to connect the centres of GSP – to link places such as Santo André to central São Paulo for example. In June 2011 Serra as governor announced 6 billion reais (over R25 billion) for a package of these plans including the new parallel lines ... (*ESP* 15.06.2011 p. C1). And the other is the potentially highly disputed but already partially completed, massive ring toll road around most of the enormous GSP area – the *Rodoanel*. Both are State of São Paulo projects. Both are now associated with the name of the governor of the state.

the state governor, Serra, followed Marta Suplicy as mayor of the city, when her programme failed to retain enough of the middle class vote for a second term of office. Serra adheres to the 'more acceptable' centre in Brazilian elite politics, organized in the PSDB – descended from the MDB rather than the military supporting party of the later dictatorship. Yet, observing the volatility of municipal politics, Serra saw greater prospects in the governorship. His term there, after a truncated period in the city, has been marked by a remarkable resurgence of efforts to promote the legitimacy of these centrist elements in the political terrain. One could mention distancing from the military period (via support for the Memorial de Resistencia museum for example; through the

mounting of a major exhibition on São Paulo history by the largest newspaper, *O Folha do São Paulo* (about which I will write on another occasion). When Serra went on to the governorship he was replaced by Kassab, appointed city mayor for two years as Serra's successor; and then elected in 2008. All this has meant a relative rightward shift in the politics of GSP as Serra has consolidated his position (although losing the national presidential election after Lula); and Kassab has in turn developed national political stage ambitions (See eg *O Estado do São Paulo* 27.06.2011 p. A4 on 'new' PSD with Kassab as leader).

Yet at the same time citizen organization has found it extremely difficult to build organization capable of engaging state projects – capable, in other words, of engaging at the scale of the metropolis writ large. Establishment of a *Forum Social de São Paulo* in late 2010 whose launch I had the privilege to attend was perhaps progress for moving debate on the 'city for all' to new levels – but using that base to go beyond the city limits and engage at the scale of GSP proves much more difficult. Paralleling intermunicipal competition (of which Klink 2011 writes), engaging the terrain of new mobility megaprojects is another story. The difficulties of building alternative conceptions of the city at the full scale of the 'leviathan' and placing the experience of most people at the centre of understanding has so far proved impossible. What has civil society contributed? Probably keeping the focus on 'the city for all' rather than the city for some. The struggle against doing things behind closed doors and in the old hierarchies (or new ones), for civil society in its overlapping forms with political parties and institutions has engaged public policy and more on many fronts – in 'multiple arenas' as Dagnino (2002 p. 27) puts it.

If São Paulo's self-representation as a global city is a 'myth' according Whittaker Ferreira (2007), it is nonetheless a confident, growing, increasingly well managed city in which some major projects which have made real differences to daily life. against the backdrop of a second Brazilian economic miracle and extremely positive politics despite corruption etc.

There is a kind of slow inevitability about mobility megaprojects in São Paulo, viewed from afar. Inability of other actors to produce a conceptualization of the region leaves the field to much narrower forces. Competition for decades over how scarce public resources should best be invested, covering of course competing interests in benefiting from contracts. Growth of the economy has altered the scene.

I left São Paulo with a sense that the urban question can change. I left it with my own new questions about ways in which political power is exercised in relation to the city; ways in which the city's pasts are represented and relate to legitimacies; ways in which economic change alters society-city connections. I left it noticing that contest over mobility megaprojects in fluid settings lead not necessarily to explosions but potentially to constant renegotiation in which many and diverse actors may be involved. I left it with a sense that despite ... all this seems to parallel and yet contrast with some of the experience of Johannesburg and Gauteng. My need to examine interplay between history,

democratic forms and planning for the future was fed by my observations in São Paulo. Contemplating how these elements link takes me back to Paris.

Moving around Paris

Paris doesn't figure on Sassen's list of the most weighty cities of the globe (1992). But Paris is the most written, the most represented of all cities. In particular its histories are invoked at every turn. How do its own inhabitants and its own professionals, politicians and powerful [as well as people less visible] imagine or at least represent the city? *What Paris is* figures as a central and contested question in many conversations, debates and arguments of the recent past and present. What Paris may *become* is a centre of anxiety and political contest, mobility figuring large in arguments about - and proposals for - the future. These are issues which I sought to unwind during extended visits there over many recent years.

Soon after I arrived for a long stay in September 2010, I saw an exhibition called variously '*150 ans des 20 arrondissements parisiens*' and '*1860 - agrandir Paris*' [150 years of the 20 districts of Paris: 1860 - expanding Paris]. The exhibition, curated by historians of the city, Florence Bourillon and Annie Fourcault, mobilised history in much more than antiquarian or pedagogic fashion. The left-socialist mayor of Paris, Bertrand Delanoë, had been persuaded to support the idea, coming, the city's 'committee for the history of Paris' (one of his own creations), that the city celebrate its last moment of expansion a century and a half ago. In 1860, 'Paris' expanded from its confines behind old fortifications (*les fermiers généraux*). The city's jurisdiction much more than doubled in size, to take up all the space inside newer walls of Adolphe Thiers built in the 1840s. Today the line of the Thiers fortifications, which included a 250 meter wide largely vacant 'zone', is marked by the *Péripherique*, the highway which circles the city and links to the autoroutes which radiate in all directions. Inside the *périph'*, city, local administration was reorganized into the 20 *arrondissements* or districts of the city, which remain intact today. The process involved incorporating several neighbouring *communes*² into Paris (bringing familiar names to Paris neighbourhoods of today - Auteuil, Passy, Les Batignolles, Montmartre, La Chapelle, La Villette, Belleville, Charonne, Bercy, Vaugirard and Grenelle). It also split some communes as half-in, half-out of the 'city' (such as Montrouge, half of which today makes up much of the 14th *arrondissement* or Montparnasse south and the other half remains outside Paris 'proper'). Outside the *périph'* live perhaps 80% of today's population of the city region: in other communes, collectively referred to as *la banlieu*, a word which defies translation into English, but which is sometimes rendered rather unhelpfully as 'suburbs' (see Appendix for some paragraphs on this subject).

² A commune is France's smallest administrative unit, headed by a maire and a conseil municipal. There are 36,000 nationwide ranging from Paris (one commune) to tiny hamlets. The city regions are made up of many communes, for example Paris is surrounded by a continuous urban area of hundreds of communes, or even well over a thousand, depending on definition.

The key figure in 1860s imperial reshaping of the city was of course 'Baron' Georges-Eugène Haussmann. One could imaginably have chosen to celebrate a century and a half in different ways. After all Haussmann, appointed in 1853 as Préfet of the Seine Département of which Paris was part, came to his position thanks to Fialin (Persigny), a key supporter of Napoleon III and indeed a plotter for the restoration of the empire. Dangerous as historical parallel may be, it is hard to avoid a sense today that the recently ended presidential regime of Nicolas Sarkozy engaged in a similarly massive project of reorganization and restructuring of French society, including its cities, as it went about 'dismantling the republic plank by plank'.³ Perhaps Delanoë's initial reluctance to mount the '150' exhibition sprang from hostility to celebrating Haussmann's top-down, elite-favouring, approach.

Indeed more conservative elements reacted to the city exhibition with a completely different take, in a competing exhibition not very many blocks away from the City's own gallery. This second treatment of 1860's significance to the city went under the title '*Paris avant-après: 1860-2011*' (before/after), shown in the sumptuous spaces of the institute of architects off Place des Vosges in the highest priced real estate one can imagine (€16000/m²), sponsored by the property arm of major bank BNP Paribas. The message of this version was that Haussman's brilliantly directed and centrally planned expansion of the city, fostered wonderful property development in the newly included areas, to the greater glory of what had been, in this account, awful 'faubourgs'. In this view the expansion of Paris was part of creating new spaces (along the boulevards especially, as well as on incorporated territory) for successful accumulation and its supporting architecture. And, of course, the mobility afforded by the boulevards was something to celebrate – not the policing and military potential which these thoroughfares infamously provided. The technique of the exhibition was to show pairs of photographs comparing 'before' and much later. The message was pretty clear (and see Moncan and Merville 2010) though I have not researched how that message may or may not have spread. One might, however, claim that it represents a dominant view. That those in this lineage should have a cavalier approach to history just as Thiers did, does not mean they fail to convince.

After 1848, Thiers obsessed over preparing to defeat the next uprising, and his walls [and forts outside it – most of which are still there today and still in the hands of the military] – could serve better to imprison the city (the siege of the Commune of 1871) than to defend it. With Haussmann's boulevards to aid the re-invaders, his tactic succeeded against the Commune of 1871: the troops of the establishment left the city to the Communards only to come back well prepared, not to mention savagely, eight weeks later. Mobilisation of other versions or histories is deeply etched in the present struggle over meanings of metropolitan in the Paris region. Representation of relations between Paris and many of its neighbours

³ Phrase of the late Michel Coquery, Malakoff, June 2010.

Several strategies were central to the city's own '150' exhibition but none more so than sensitively treating change in relationships between Paris and its neighbours. That went along with ten years of transformation of Paris-banlieu (or other communes) relationships, during the two terms of the first left-wing mayor of Paris since the 1871 Commune. The '150' exhibition formed part of a series of events in which changing relationships among residents, authorities, professionals and more, were addressed by the City of Paris. The programme around the exhibition included a 3 day conference from which a book is due to be published, a 10-lecture series in prominent public venues, and a series of walking tours. These last were each repeated three times; each specifically started from the pre 1860 boundary, traversed a section of the territory included in 1860, and continued into a neighbouring commune or two. Good publicity meant that the series of events was well-communicated in various media – along with the exhibition and much more.

I find the map used for the 'promenades urbains' (the walking tours) a most compelling image. It represents Paris as something larger than its present legal form, and its routes loosely tie what are actually different jurisdictions together, whilst still conveying a sense of locality and difference within the overall territory.

Each day-long tour (of course with a long lunch stop) could be called a "transect walk" that provide[d] a sense of how former suburbs have been absorbed into the city and become urbanized, and suggests how current suburbs may evolve over time.' That comment could be interpreted in either of the modes of the two exhibitions: but comments by over 150 participants recorded by the 'promenades urbaines' team reveal that thirst for enriched understandings of this complicated history trumped the idea of Haussmanien success in creating new terrains of accumulation. In addition to general excitement at 'discovering unknown localities', the comments include 'above all I learnt to see my surrounding urban universe differently'. And numerous participants spoke enthusiastically along similar lines – of discovering 'complementarity between Paris and the banlieue' – gaining 'another view of the banlieue, valuing them more highly' - of learning a lot about the banlieue, as one pre-school teacher, 54, put it, 'where I never go'. Overcoming insularity was exactly the purpose of the city-linked events around '150 years' of Paris boundaries. One participant wrote that the walking tour 'gave access to a collective vision of the city'.

Similar comments were recorded by viewers of the '150' exhibition in the *livre d'or* (comment book). While some found it an 'Expo sans relief ... AB' [exhibition without let up – date between 07 and 16.09.2010) others provided deeper reflections. Some captured how the expo intersected with the murky underworld of planning for the future of the Paris area: and noted that indeed much of that planning was hidden: 'belle expo, sur un sujet loin de nos preoccupations habituelles. Donc instructif et interessant. [great exhibition, on a subject far from usual preoccupations – thus instructive and interesting] - Eln? ? 4 or 5.09.2010). others pointed to how the event questioned whether 'Le nouveau projet sur le "Grand Paris" est-il realiste et realizable? La question se

pose, après la visite. [is the new project of 'Grand Paris' achievable? The question arises after viewing] - 23.09.2010 N Lemartelle).

The image of Paris and its history potentially created by the exhibition, the tours and other events, matched that presently being promoted by a coalition that links many communes (now over 190) and Paris into a common framework, called '*Paris Métropole*'. This organization has been built on the initiative of the left regime in Paris itself, reaching out to other communes as a confederation, and to provide a platform for new kinds of projects and perhaps, new forms of 'governance' and government.

The communes which make up the Paris area fall into *départements*, a little like the scale of counties in England but with a special twist – in France these critical Napoleonic subnational government units are still ruled by the *préfet*, an official appointed by and responsible to, national government. Whilst the wandering boundaries of France have altered the number of *départements* and there have been significant changes affecting the Paris city region, the essential building blocks are still in place. The big change which affected wider Paris government under De Gaulle's presidency (1965) was the reorganisation of *départemental* government. The old *département* of Seine was split into four – Paris itself became a single *département*, uniquely in France – with three others surrounding the city. The big change which affected the scale and mobility of the city region was the construction of the RER 'regional express' set of railway connections across (and under) the city – a network which provided radial mobility for the majority of the population living in the banlieu but did not provide connections between the growing centres of employment outside the boundaries of the city proper – such as La Défense – requiring very large numbers of people to travel through the city to reach places of work, education, and relaxation. And investment in the transport system failed to match the growth of the city region for the next few decades.

For a time there was no governmental organization covering even half of the area of the whole city region. Further reorganization in the early 80s brought the creation of France's 30 plus *regions*, one being *Île-de-France* which includes almost all of what many would regard as the city region around Paris. Increasing powers for the region have produced diverse centres of power, at least national government, the region, departments, the communes including the city ... a complicated patchwork. And in human terms, one rather difficult to move around to access what some would regard as 'the right to the city'.

The city's project to change relationships between itself and other local areas began with the election of Delanoë a decade ago. It involves building relationships on more equal terms with and between the surrounding jurisdictions, and politically it requires a different imagination of what the city is. Two of the surrounding *département* councils – Val-de-Marne in the east and south-east, and Seine-St Denis in the north-east and east – are in the hands of the left. The communist party connection in both has various results (including the Joburg relationship with Val-de-Marne). The other, Hauts-de-Seine, to the south-west, west and north-west – is in the hands of the right. Each has dozens of

communes within its territory. Some of those have their own contractual relationships with one another, one type called 'communautés des communes'. In some cases this means a shared planning office for example between several communes.

Present result of the past decade of patient work led initially by Paris deputy mayor Pierre Mansat is the existence of a 'Syndicat' - an Association called *Paris-Métropole*. Its formal role is presently to undertake studies of the area and to encourage increasing collaboration - about 200 communes as well as the départements are now members and the presidency is presently held by the conservative mayor of a commune to the east (Nogent-sur-Marne). In 2010 Paris Métropole ran a competition for innovative projects 'Initiatives Métropolitaines' which would materially support closer connections between communes which attracted scores of proposals and resulted in some collective actions being agreed across boundaries with long term negotiation about distributions of resources across multiple communes becoming steadily more common (<http://initiatives.parismetropole.fr/>). For the left the complication of this growth in adherence means many right-wing-run communes are members - making things of course more complex. Some think the association will eventually lead to a new demarcation and form of government in the area. A step in that direction was taken as Paris Métropole agreed on 17 June 2011 to prepare a green paper (livre vert) on future metropolitan government - not meaning a single entity but, more likely - as Pierre Mansat puts it, 'a federal metropolis' (see www.pierremansat.com). [The livre vert will be published within a week or two of the discussion of this paper at WISH seminar.]

Some of the members of Paris Métropole are outside the three départements which surround Paris the city - they are in the next 'ring' of four départements, the grande couronne, which together with Paris and the inner three (the 'petite couronne' or little crown or ring) make up the area of the région - the Ile-de-France - one of the 30 plus regions into which France has been electorally as well as administratively demarcated since 1982. The région has a council and a president (also socialist - JP Huchon - reelected in 2010 - perhaps one could say more conservative socialist).

As a facet of decentralization, the région has brought the former national government planning agency (created by De Gaulle) for the greater Paris region under its aegis - the IAU-IdF (formerly IAURIF) which prepares the Schema Directeur of the region IdF - the SDRIF - or strategic plan. The SDRIF is a mostly spatial document - maps and explanations - linked to a range of targets in housing and other terms. The région's council adopted the plan in 2008 after years of preparation involving hundreds of public meetings; but because it has been rejected by national government it is not in force - thus the 1994 plan is still in force (which means that building permits issued by the mayors of communes on the advice of their planning offices are supposed to comply with the 1994 plan - very unlikely to be completely the case). In fact it took until October 2010 (over two years!) for the national President - Nicolas Sarkozy - to submit the SDRIF to the Conseil d'Etat, a required step, for its comments; in early

November 2010 the Conseil rejected the SDRIF. A new version is now being prepared ...

In this context there is a large politics of the future in which relationships of scale and of mobility have special resonance. As noted above, travel is critical to (especially) working life in the banlieu. The 2008 SDRIF therefore contains proposals for many public transport improvements – extensions of lines and more; as well as a proposal for a new set of metro lines in several ‘arcs’ (mostly with a range of alternative alignments) which together make up a circuit in the petite couronne not far outside Paris. The vehicle for mobility infrastructure and operations created under Huchon has the delightful title STIF (...). But its ability to pursue mobility megaprojects is limited by its dependence on national funding.

One reason why the ‘state’ (by which the French mean the national government) has not approved the SDRIF is that the president of the republic, Nicolas Sarkozy (UMP – right wing), seized the political initiative in relation to the Paris region in 2007 and to some extent maintained it for the rest of his term, using the resources of the state to do so. The means he chose were to grab the phrase ‘Grand Paris’ as his own, and to set up a process of professional discussion and keep that in the spotlight, front and centre stage.

‘Grand Paris’ transliterates as ‘Greater Paris’ and happens to pun with ‘*grand pari*’ which means a big bet. And Sarkozy placed his bet, with state funds to the tune of several million euros, on a string of actions designed to seize and keep control of debate and interaction. He set up a commission on reform of subnational structures of government (Balladur commission, see below); he initiated a huge project conducted by ten enormous teams of big-name architects and others to investigate ‘Grand Pari(s)’ and propose ideas and images for its future; and had a team start planning a state alternative to the Ile-de-France transport plan.

When it came to ‘Grand Paris’, a further law passed after much debate in June 2010 provided for ... setting up a public company (Société de Grand Paris) to drive new transport and other arrangements in the region. The company has been given large powers, for example, to plan and acquire land around new stations to be built if and when new rail systems come to reality. This is a crucial point, for it means that this company is intended as much as anything else to do something which Haussmann did – to create new spaces of accumulation: not really new ‘localities’ in traditional senses of the term.

These events have led to extensive public debate, some of which is within official structures, and some of which is totally informal, as well as many points between. This debate goes on under various names – ‘Paris métropole’ chosen by the city and some of its neighbours; ‘Grand Paris’ cleverly grabbed by national President Nicolas Sarkozy; and ‘Ile-de-France’ sometimes tepidly pursued by the region. The underlying question of course, is whether there will be a change in government forms and geography, as well as the more explicit issues around massive new public transport investments.

From the end of September 2010 until January 2011 a very large and official part of the contest took place in a so-called public debate ostensibly concerning, on one hand the Région's Arc Express project, a proposal made in the strategic planning process which resulted in the SDRIF document of 2008 not approved by national government. This provides for a new metro type rail system in a ring roughly parallel to the périphérique highway and about two kilometres in radius larger than that ring. On the other hand, national government proposals for a more extensive system in part similar and at the same time longer and more expensive took on the powerful Grand Paris title. [more popularly known as the Grand Huit (the big 8 for the apparent shape of the system) or the 'double boucle' (the double girdle)]. All of the events in the public debate (and there were about 40 of them) can be seen, heard or read on the internet. Something like 20000 people attended in total (!). Many more watched live on the internet with just a few questions being posed online during live debates; it would be hard to say how many have viewed the recordings or looked at transcripts and summaries.

And of course many issues surfaced in the debates, not only those about transport; plus on the sides, blogs, letters to editors, columnists and more, as well as endless conversations in private and elsewhere, illustrate that the current issues exercise many, many people in the city region. For most participants in most localities, when they actually had the chance to be heard (more on the process another time) many of the issues they raised were about the futures of their localities in relation to plans, projects, new stations ... and fears of dismantling lives as new spaces of accumulation controlled ultimately by the central state shone through.

In this wildly complicated terrain of debates on government, mobility and the future in Paris and its surrounds, the thought which emerged for me more than anything else, the significance of the contest over history in the course of claiming power over the future. A simple conclusion – knowledges of pasts in the city can have substantial power in the present. Obfuscation of the past – forgetting and memory – are issues which require close attention if conceptual answers to urban questions of the present are to be deepened. I brought this simple but powerful thought back to Gauteng.

Moving Gauteng

'Driving the city' (Thrift 2004) is perhaps the quintessential experience of Gauteng as a very large urban space. Not that all those on the road are driving of course. But rather than De Certeau's 'walking the city' (1984) as the defining experience (even though millions most certainly do, invisibly to many drivers), it's being in the taxi and the car that shapes much city experience. One could digress into the wonders of the contemporary redesign of the car (as Thrift does) or into the marvels (and perils) of collective taxi 'systems' which make this city possible. Here the focus will remain on mobility megaprojects and how they have emerged.

To grasp the mode in which those responsible for mobility megaprojects have become accustomed to operate requires going back decades. Ruptures there certainly have been, between the 'before and after' of the negotiated end of apartheid. But continuities abound. And one is in the arena of the unbroken culture of pursuing mobility megaprojects.

Typical claims for such projects is that they bring greater wealth to the city (and the nation), are green friendly, and even address poverty. Then chief executive of the South African National Roads Agency (to which we return below), Nazir Alli, in 2009 claimed

Coupled with reducing the direct cost of travel and minimising environmentally-unfriendly driving practices caused by stop-start traffic flow, GFIP will alleviate the current Gauteng problems and will become the catalyst for substantial economic growth and job creation ...

SANRAL recognises the role that a safely engineered, comfortable and reliable national road network plays in advancing South Africa's global competitiveness, the economy, tourism and social upliftment as well as the contribution a superior road network makes in pushing back the frontiers of poverty ...

According to this view, investing billions in 'freeway improvement' would also change everyday life for the better.

The most significant contribution the investment will make to ordinary citizens is the improvement of their quality of life and family time that an upgraded road infrastructure will deliver (all above from http://www.nra.co.za/live/content.php?Item_ID=260 dated 01.07.2009 viewed 10.05.2012).

Over several decades the nature of such claims grew in extravagance, but they began long ago. The immense importance of road planning in shaping the geography of Gauteng is obvious today. Some hundreds of kilometers of freeways and tollways provide major structuring elements in any view of the region, and in large measure, resulted from planning in the 60s and 70s. Conceptualisation and crafting of Gauteng's regional space moved decisively from general spatial planners into the hands of road planners – traffic and transport engineers - in the 1960s (Mabin 2012). A key feature of transport planning has been the intimate connection of the latter to funding which could actually make major changes in the space of the region. Since the creation of consolidated townships along Mentz committee lines (Mabin 1993, Hendler 1992), road planning has formed the strongest element of spatial structuring in Gauteng.

A need for new major roads had been stated by many observers from the mid-fifties at least. Fair and Mallows (1959 pp. 135-6) elaborated that idea:

the familiar phenomena of growing congestion at the centre and rapid growth on the periphery with the attendant transportation, financial and administrative problems are here in an equally acute and characteristic form. These two forms of growth particularly at each of the hubs have tended, on the one hand, to break the free flow of road traffic along the East-West axis with the result that the need today is for routes of the freeway type permitting fast and continuous movement to serve this mining and industrial belt. On the other hand, the problem associated with North-South movement is to break through the urban and topographic barrier of the central Witwatersrand by a similar freeway system.

The idea of freeways connecting and serving major existing centres was effectively overruled by national road planning which was vigorously pursued through the 1960s. Its roots went back to 1945 when a senior engineer on the staff of the then National Roads Board (NRB), PA de Villiers, first mooted a ring road around Johannesburg (Floor 1985). The NRB worked with the Transvaal Townships Board and the Government Mining Commissioner to initiate a 70 metre wide road reserve for the future ring road during the forties, and in at least one stretch between today's Gillooly's and Geldenhuis interchanges, succeeded in starting to reserve land for the future freeway ring on the ground. In 1948 NRB gave way to the National Transport Commission (NTC). It took De Villiers several more years to convince this successor body to begin planning for a national freeway system. As in other countries, discussion was influenced by Germany's autobahnen, but more so by a key study visit led by De Villiers in 1957, which observed the beginnings of the massive US Interstate Highway system. Upon his return, the Johannesburg ring road scheme was revived and detailed planning of that and other routes began in 1958. Largely hidden from view, this planning and purchase or reservation of land accelerated through the sixties, in an era when state resources burgeoned. By 1965 the Transvaal Roads branch had appointed 'throughway commissions' and finalised the recommendations of four of them. Routes rapidly developed in detail (para 6.1 in TPA 1966). As the provincial roads department became more enthusiastic about the NTC vision, a first contract for what is now the N3 from Buccleugh to the M2 was let in 1966 (though only completed in 1978). 'Towards the end of [1966] the majority of the most important routes were determined' (TPA 1968 p. 9). Detailed planning for the 'western bypass' or N1 as part of the ring around Joburg commenced in 1965 with completion in 1983. The NTC and Transvaal roads branch expressed their work as being 'the planning of a modern through road system which must for many years satisfy the demands of the Province' (TPA 1968 p. 9). Modernization was the watchword. Massive suburbanization – already underway in part (Mabin forthcoming) – was the result.

The first entirely new alignment national freeway was built in Gauteng between Halfway House and Pretoria as part of a new N1, and opened in 1968. The road was designed to link Pretoria and Johannesburg – but under the NTC's planning, it was not to be built into the city centres. Instead, it would connect ring roads or bypasses to one another. The NTC pressed on with a new vision of a future Gauteng in which freeways ran far from existing city and town centres – the

Joburg ring road, the N1 around Pretoria and what are now N12 and N17 on the east rand (Ekurhuleni) being clear examples. The NTC decided in 1967 that additional funds would no longer be made available for freeways in the cities. Neither Germiston nor Pretoria could continue with freeway plans, and Johannesburg's western M2, not to mention a planned M3 to the northwest, were not built. Instead the NTC and former Transvaal province focused on roads outside then-municipal areas.

Vastly more money was spent on ring and bypass freeways than on links to existing centres, which became a mobility megaproject. To what extent military and security considerations entered the planning mind remains to be examined as archives become available, but one can guess that these factors were just as significant as they were in Eisenhower's national system of 'interstate and defense highways' in the USA. But it is clear that a coalition of agencies led by the NTC began a substantial reconceptualisation of Gauteng, which became a physical reality from the late sixties onwards: they mapped in plan form and then created a new map of the 'city as whole'. This form of planning completely reconfigured the map of public investment in the city region and its trajectory remains very powerful today. Road planning was led largely by engineers; very substantial human resources were committed to it; finance was closely connected to it; and it continually involved 'conduct [of] lengthy negotiations with public and private bodies in order to reconcile conflicting interests' (TPA 1968 p. 9), perhaps a euphemism for continual lobbying. All this implied that road or transport planning developed a distinct and practical politics, working to realise the vision of the engineer-planners in a new and important manner.

Of course, these new routes opened up extraordinary possibilities of changed perceptions of space, new centralities, and new prospects for profitable property development in zones which would have been remote without the new road system. In the long run, shopping centres, office parks and other developments would spring from the freeway reshaping of space, from Menlyn to Southgate and from Eastgate to Fourways. In sum, road planning had taken off dramatically during this period as the key form of mobility structuring. Not a single significant addition to the extensive previous backbone of transport – the rail system – was realized through several decades. Traffic engineers had laid the foundations of a thoroughly modernised Gauteng, potentially altering movement patterns for many whilst leaving formal segregation untouched. A period of rapid economic growth provided both 'need' and funds for realising this planning. The framework within which other new concepts and practices of space in Gauteng emerged was set by the new freeway system, in the context both of rising state control – and of challenges to it. Perforce, the frame created set only slightly porous parameters for inhabitants of the region.

By the early seventies the outlines of the road-created spatial structure of GCR were well established and celebrated by the TPA Road Department. The way was open for a still more comprehensive approach to the future. Each annual report of the TPA roads branch for the early seventies repeats the mantra that 'the task of planning a proper main road network for the ever-increasing traffic needs of the province was again carried on with unabated zeal ...' (TPA Roads

1973 p. 9). And as that proceeded the powerful strategic nexus around it adapted and developed new forms.

Although the relevant public bodies (NTC and TPA) had significant planning capacity on their staff, they also expressed mounting concern at a lack of human resources to do everything they wished, and annual reports also reflect growing use of consulting engineers. That complaint eventually became the justification for appointment of a large private sector consortium to do major new planning. The consortium's remarkably powerful role can be traced back to 1969, when the Transvaal executive committee, without any tender process, appointed Mr A van Niekerk of Van Niekerk Kleyn and Edwards consulting engineers, as the leader of a 'proposed consortium'. Oversight was to be provided by an 'interdepartmental committee' including the directors of roads branch and local government; and a representative of the (national) department of planning and environment (PWV Consortium 1973 p. 1, referring to Tvl Exec Cttee resolution 935 of 25.03.1969).

By 1973 the consortium had been more firmly established (res 548 27.03.73 TEC). The provincial administration appointed five consulting engineering firms as members of the group; Van Niekerk continued as leader (PWV Consortium 1973 pp 1-2).

The consortium's driving force resided not with provincial administration, but with the engineering firms. An intriguing bias developed:

For the successful economic and social development of the PWV region it is necessary to plan for and satisfy the transportation needs of the region as far as possible. The regional study is necessary because of the very important interaction between the metropolitan areas within the PWV region. The study is therefore directed more towards inter-metropolitan travel than intra-metropolitan travel ...(PWV Consortium Transportation Study Design August 1975b volume – pp. 1-2).

Predictable oddities of the time crept in. For example, HM van Rooyen, describing the technical modeling methods used, stated 'Due to differences in travel patterns of White and Non-White the two groups will be treated separately as far as transportation models are concerned' (PWV Consortium 1975a pp. 19-24). The result was a series of reports on Gauteng which resulted in the demarcation of a veritable spaghetti of proposed freeway routes, that were given numbers in a 'PWV series'. Thus PWV-9 came to refer to a proposed freeway intended to connect Mabopane in the North to Randburg in the central Witwatersrand, while PWV-16 referred to a route from south of Randfontein to North of Nigel. The impact of these route demarcations was to sterilise some areas of land and to imply favourable location in others. Over time a number of sections of road have actually been built according to these alignments, (such as the Mabopane-Pretoria road following the PWV-9 alignment, and the Randjesfontein-Olifantsfontein road following the PWV-5 alignment). However, the larger proportion of the proposed freeways have (not yet) been built, and the specification of 'K' routes – intended to be four-lane roads at lower standards

than the freeways - has had more concrete impact on the PWV. In all cases, consulting engineers and construction companies which formed a kind of tight knot, made rather large profits from their involvement.

The road network plans, a very long term mobility megaproject, led to organised reaction. Many property owners and developers reacted negatively, in the first instance. At a seminar organised by the SA Property Owners Association (SAPOA), PWV Consortium representative Dr PWB Kruger presented the plans as rational responses to growth: 'it is the task of the study to plan for coordination between land development and the transport system' (SAPOA 1975 p. 25). But the chairman of SAPOA's Transvaal townships committee and representative of developer Glen Anil, John Barrie, responded that 'the PWV road grid plan is [like] a CIA plot', reported 'many complaints about freezing areas of land and the consequences of cost', and concluded 'it is totally indefensible to apply this freezing concept over a vast area such as the PWV' - 'the parameters of this plan are far too wide' (SAPOA 1975 pp. 34-36). Opposition proved rather fruitless and road expansion moved on.

The PWV road network plans of the mid seventies were important for three reasons. The first was conceptual – for the conceptualisations of Gauteng to be found in the PWV consortium plans became very powerful; second, in practice, they created not only a new conception of the region but a new material geography of Gauteng; and thirdly, underlying that impact, the plans and their partial implementation indicated the extraordinary power associated with the transport/traffic engineering/construction nexus – which requires much more investigation than is possible in the present paper. Overall there is no doubt that transport planning was based on a deeply entrenched apartheid model, intended to service a continuation of that spatial structure: enough, surely, to lead to some questions about its predominance.

The view that, by agreement or other means, came to predominate was that transport, especially road planning, would be the leading force in shaping the spatial form of Gauteng for a long time to come. How did this come about? A central factor may have been the consortium's access and capacity to engage frequently and substantially with many actors, including 'various authorities, the Department of Planning and Environment, South African Railways ...'. Such capacity was not enjoyed by parallel planning processes, which allowed transport planning to take the leading part. And certainly at least as important was the fact that road planning connected directly to government budgets – national and provincial, and local too – in a manner entirely different from other policy work.

The transport landscape of Gauteng had been massively reshaped by freeway building in the 70s and 80s. At least as important was the rise of collective taxis. During the negotiation period, and reflecting some of the changes which came about in the Gauteng environment after 1990, the TPA Roads Branch had once again appointed a consortium of professional firms to update the 1985 roads plan between 1991 and 1993. A new departure was its particular focus on public transport in the region, motivated initially on the grounds that buses and

taxis would be increasingly important road users. This work was conducted under the banner 'Vectura', and as in previous phases, given the prospect of shaping major infrastructure investments in roads and other facilities, its documents seem in retrospect to have enjoyed extraordinary (if not magical) power. Having largely confirmed the long term road network plans, Vectura turned its attention to introducing implementable proposals for enhancing public transport. To that end, the Vectura Consortium stayed with the long-established road planning concept of a focus on intrametropolitan corridors rather than corridors within metropolitan areas 'as this responsibility was considered to lie with local government and as such did not form part of the PWV regional study.' Ten corridors were identified and analysed in terms of land use, available route capacity and transfer and terminal facilities (Vectura 1993 or 4 p. 68).

By far the most significant component of this spatial conceptualisation was the identification of 'Corridor 3: Pretoria- Johannesburg ... [which] is regarded as an important development area in the PWV, being situated between Pretoria and Johannesburg and containing residential land uses and a mixture of business, commercial and industrial activities ... (pp. 91-2). Vectura's recommendations were far-reaching, even if stated in terms different in the early nineties from those which would later emerge as massively important to the spatial structuring of Gauteng:

corridor 3 ... is one corridor where a high order public transport facility such as light rail, though expensive, could act as an important development instrument towards an improved urban spatial structure ... the potential exists to align a future light rail system so that it links existing activity nodes at both ends (Johannesburg and Pretoria) and in between notably the Midrand and Verwoerdburg central areas [emphasis added].

Noting municipal public transport planning happening simultaneously, the report added that the envisaged rail line in the core area 'should also link with the proposed Masstran system' in Johannesburg – a light rail or tram system developed as a substitute for long-wished underground rail system planned in the early seventies (pp. 103-4). By contrast, very little indeed was said about the existing rail system – a persistent tendency.

Having surveyed how mobility planning and its road megaproject became key to Gauteng's citiness, let us now become just a little more specific about where the more recent e-toll and Gautrain megaprojects came from.

With the shift of much of the old TPA roads branch into a new Gauteng roads and transport department, which dubbed itself 'Gautrans', the provincial government continued energetically to develop transport thinking in a number of directions, the space having been opened by the short term 'coalition' government of 1994-96. During that time powerful former TPA National Party politician Olaus van Zyl, himself a transport engineer by background, led the creation of the new

department in the province. Its first focus seems to have been to make sure that the power of road planning continued. By the end of the nineties, continuing work in Gautrans (and the new South African Roads Agency Limited – SANRAL- which replaced the NTC) had suggested that freeway improvements would require new forms of financing and had identified tolling most of the existing network as the means to that end (Gautrans 1998), a development with not inconsiderable impact more than ten years later. Major roads would remain the main target of investment, even if that meant more focus on existing than the massive network on the drawing boards.

Transport planning had been closely informed by international developments and techniques from the 1950s. The diplomatic reopening of South Africa to the world allowed entirely new forms of drawing on other parts of the globe. In Gauteng one of the more significant examples emerged as the Vectura notion of a possible railway between Johannesburg and Pretoria through Midrand gained momentum:

When the first Premier of the new Gauteng Government visited Germany [in 1995], a Twinning Agreement between Gauteng and the State of Bavaria was signed. During the first meeting, the Gauteng Rail Link was identified as one of the first opportunities for co-operation. At a discussion late during 1998 between representatives from Gauteng and the Bavarian State Government, it was agreed that the Bavarian Government would appoint independent German consultants to undertake a Pre-Feasibility Study of this project ... The main aims of the pre-feasibility study were to determine:

- “whether or not the implementation of a new rail system in this corridor is justified and feasible”, and
- “whether further investigations on the basis of a comprehensive feasibility study need to be done” (GPG 2000 p. 7).

The pre-feasibility study was completed during September 1999. New centralities – especially that of Sandton as a major economic node in the overall space of Gauteng, but also those of Midrand, the international airport, and indeed the often-neglected major city centres of Pretoria and Johannesburg – were long observed more in the breach than in public investment. These anchor points of the ‘triangle of opportunity’ at the heart of the city region now received direct and favoured attention. The study concluded that

Even the construction of a new toll road in this corridor (the PWV-9 road between Johannesburg and Pretoria, west of the N1) would not solve the transport problem for the future. It is, therefore, indispensable to complete the existing transport system by means of a public transport system that would be independent from the existing road network ... As shown in the pre-feasibility assessments, Alternative 3 (a route from Sandton to Pretoria) is likely to yield coverage of the total operating costs and part of the investment costs of a new rail system by fare revenues ... Taking into account the economic and environmental benefits accruing usually from implementation of mass transit systems in highly loaded

corridors (savings in travel time, accident cost, private vehicle operating cost, air pollution, noise) the rough financial evaluation ... indicates that in all probability the railway project is feasible in economic terms ... Moreover the anticipated railway project would strongly support individual economic zones in the context of the Spatial Development Initiative ...' (GPG 2000 p. ?).

The transport planners were able to translate the pre-1994 idea of a new railway route into a context of national excitement about 'spatial development initiatives' and the prospect of substantial national government financial support. With its premier picking up on the idea of Gauteng as a global city region from 2004, the provincial government sought and obtained support for the first real departure of the democratic era from old spatial concepts of Gauteng – yet a departure rooted in the old forms of power seen in a history of mobility megaprojects. World Cup hype in part legitimated the process. Within a few years, construction work on a completely new railway system had begun: one of two ultimate mobility megaprojects in Gauteng. Despite the need to repay substantial loans for years to come, and all manner of other controversial elements, the new train system has managed to avoid controversy to an remarkable extent. That is of course no guarantee of a quiet future for the 'G-train'.

For the first time since freeway building got under way in earnest over forty years ago, however, the latest incarnation of the road megaproject could not avoid problems. The flaw appears to have been the planned imposition of direct costs on those using the roads – a break from past 'freedom' of the roads, whose history involved creation of a massive dependence on 'driving the city' – indeed, roads whose history contributed to fundamental reshaping of the urban experience around automobility. Social organization, political deal and court case prevented electronic tolling from its start-up on the former freeways of Gauteng, as extensively reported in many media over recent months. A long-running, largely-hidden mode of producing mobility megaprojects has been partly embarrassed. As a result, a mix of wisdom and the trite has poured out on the subject. Even when commentators are able to note that 'E-tolls are an issue of power, not democracy' (Richard Calland in M&G 04.05.2012 page 30), their lack of historical grounding leads to odd conclusions. Thus 'the government needs to stick to the e-tolling policy.' The alternative 'would ... be ... a betrayal of ... government commitment to sustainable development. We need fewer cars on the road, not more. Tolling drivers is a way of controlling car use. It is a necessary measure.' Of course what this author misses is that the project is about building more roads for more cars, not less. That has materially been achieved. And the motivations of the projects are much more murky than noble 'commitments' sound. I have been able to demonstrate at least that how power has been exercised around mobility megaprojects projects makes for interesting study. Thus the contrast:

SA has to pay if it wants the magnificent kind of world-class road network that Sanral, under [Nazir] Alli's leadership, has delivered to the urban conurbation of

Gauteng (Graham McIntosh, 'A man of integrity', *Financial Mail* 216 (7) 18.05.2012 p. 6)

In the absence of any credible evidence to the contrary, the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project appears to have been ill-conceived from the beginning. It would be interesting to know who conceived it (letter in *The Times*, Ken Stacey, Cinda Park, 10.05.2012)

I am not sufficiently knowledgeable to identify all who benefit directly. Changes in the clothes worn and labels pinned on by such groupings are legion. Engineering consultancies such as Van Niekerk, Kleyn and Edwards became first VKE, then VelaVKE. Firms with new names reveal characteristics of persistent patterns of power. Perhaps the coming court-ordered enquiry will expose and even up-end some of these patterns - perhaps not. GFIP and Gautrain spent billions in any currency, of taxed and borrowed, publically-guaranteed money on the chimera of a 'magnificent' and 'high speed' pair of 'world-class' mobility projects. Gautrain created an urban railway which rolls on – connecting elegant parts of the city region in part, and until 8.30 in the evening. Its impressive contribution to changing city experience and behaviour, not to mention urban property values, remains to be assessed. E-toll reached an impasse – although the material reality of GFIP is there to behold. More than the trains and roads, the meanings of these projects lie in how city and society can be connected – intellectually, and in the lives of the *citadin(e)s*, the conscious city-dwellers of the epoch.

I have told part of the tale of recent mobility megaprojects in Gauteng: they have immense bearing on daily life and long term organization of existence in the city region. The story is one of contested professional conceptions of this sprawling urban space, and how some of those found sufficient political connections to rocket them into new material forms, including the two biggest mobility megaprojects which came to fruition in the past few years.

Nothing is settled. My experiences in Paris showed me that nothing about the future of Paris is settled. Indeed nothing about the past of Paris is settled. We contemplate the same conditions, but usually less explicitly, in Joburg and Gauteng. To keep up with thinking about the future in more subtle, more complex, more deliberate ways, it could be helpful to insert our past in a *longue durée* inviting degrees of complexity and variety of voices that that history deserves. I have tried to do a little of that job for Gauteng in this part of the paper. The urban question posed in this way, in this city and region, can partly be answered by suggesting that power to shape mobility can be reserved to a particular nexus of interests for a long time – more than a generation, perhaps. But, in the longer run, it is also possible that such reservation of power runs into the same problems of overreach – expressed in the media perhaps as the 'arrogance' of some of the people involved – that characterize the looming end of many other comfortable relationships between society and city. Certainly there are alternative ways of understanding and representing the nature of Gauteng's urbanism and there is much opportunity to do more in this terrain. 'Ordinary' constructions of the city will not be completely framed by the exercise of power;

but they can be shaped – sometimes for decades – by the results of rather peculiar constellations of strategic power.

Some thoughts, in peroration

Amin and Graham (1997) wrote they they wanted ‘to develop an alternative perspective on the city based on the idea that contemporary urban life is founded on the heterogeneity of economic, social, cultural and institutional assets.’ I have pursued some similar but distinct lines in my recent work, developing alternative perspectives on the city, based on contemplation of moments of contest and representation in three major places.

Cities are products of their societies. The ways in which cities are built and their inhabitants build their lives, shape the ways in which societies develop. All this is sufficiently obvious to most, even if from time to time it takes an Ed Soja to write a series of books to point to the connections, and to provoke arguments about the relative weight of the two directions of influence. (He errs I think in the direction of ‘space shapes society’). Experience in São Paulo, Paris and Joburg shows that none of the links are simple. Contingent on so much, these relationships will continue to intrigue and deny formulaic solution. A city is a very complex and messy object to contemplate. Untold numbers of authors have tried to grapple with ‘understanding’ cities, to represent their impossible diversity and wildly varied characters within the pages of almost infinite numbers of texts. I am engaged in a search to express what seem to me some vital features of the urban question in these times. This ambitious project is still in process and this paper reflects my continuing struggle with the question. At this point, though, the ‘promise of the city’ of which Takbaksh wrote in 2001, remains elusive, as the contests and projects of which I have written in the paper seem to take us further away from ‘communities built around multiple spaces, supple boundaries and hybrid identities’ and to subvert rather than ‘deepen connections between democracy, difference and social justice’.

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Appendix: la banlieu parisienne

Three points on the banlieue among many which could be made. First, in external images and perhaps in the Paris-centric imaginary, deprivation, riots and no-go zones predominate. There is reason for this portrayal, with violent confrontations between 'youth' and police continuing (see for example, June 2011 in communes including Grigny and Villiers-le-Bel http://www.lepoint.fr/societe/echauffouree-entre-jeunes-et-policiers-a-grigny-dans-l-essonne-14-06-2011-1341701_23.php). As then chief editor of *Le Monde* Luc Bronner noted (*Le Monde* 16.07.2011 p. 18) the 'crisis' has developed over 30 years. In his analysis it continues because the 'French political class – male, old and white – remains depressingly closed to elites from [these areas] and to diversity. On the left as well as the right.' Observation demonstrates the verity of deep cleavages. Part of the politics of the future of the Paris region is about how these divisions are handled. The image of the future portrayed by those in power in the state is one of token diversity. Contrast that with the commune La Courneuve, infamous for the huge Corbusien 'Cité de 4000' quarter which has seen rehousing, deterioration, dramatic youth unemployment, violence – the Mairie promotes the idea that the future of France is already present in La Courneuve under the slogan 'l'avenir ... ???'.

Yet at the same time, secondly, the banlieue in the sense of the hundreds of communes that make up most of the city region are the home of at least three quarters of the population – or 80% depending on the area considered. And the consequence is the third point - so large a population ranging across every social class and category imaginable means that the banlieue are in every respect extremely varied. La Courneuve includes much more than the '4000'. As an undefined whole the banlieue range from the wealthiest communes like Neuilly, where Sarkozy was mayor from 2004-2007, through an extraordinary range to the least-resourced – which in turn are spread across the whole region from Chanteloupe-les-vignes in the north west to Grigny in the south east. Conflict over portrayals of the banlieue is inevitable – and complex (for example historian Fourcaut 2008 criticises Benguigui 2008 for being ahistorical – indeed, for falsifying history - about the Seine-St Denis département and its cités or older housing projects, whilst Benguigui believes that the cleavages are simpler than allowed by her critics, who she views as imbued with a traditional republicanism). That difference echoes the divergence in urban theory between many recent authors (Davis, Waquant, Graham and Marvin??? among others) who 'like to polarize the capitalist city into the marginal and privileged zones, arguing that neo-liberalism has deepened this social and political divide, segregating people in new and complex ways' (to cite Bank's characterization – 2011 p. 241). The *banlieu parisienne* defy any simple characterization – whilst there is plenty of social distress, youth anger, and more, it's much harder to find simple lines of segregation or division than the impression left by many external authors (including the sensitive and interesting Dikec 2007, who wrote about Lyon in fact, not Paris).

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