

Call for Papers – Fourth Global Conference on Economic Geography – Financial Economies track

Title: Exploring World Cities under Conditions of Financialized Globalization

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Abstract: World and global cities have since long been key concepts for economic geographers to understand the role of an archipelago of networked cities as centers of capitalist ‘command and control’ over the global economy. Although this perspective remains a crucial entry-point to understand the power configurations that produce deepening uneven development, the exact modes of command and control have been morphed and our conceptualization of world/global cities may need to be augmented as a consequence. For one, the financialization of economies and societies has implied the growing relevance of financial markets and finance capital (and its logic) in global accumulation strategies, as more ‘traditional’ globalization strategies that combine capital with cheap labor appear insufficient to maintain ‘acceptable’ or ‘sustainable’ profit rates. Under these conditions of overaccumulation, it has been hypothesized that the world city archipelago remains an obligatory passage point for the relatively assured realization of capital. More strongly, a complex of advanced producer services (APS), centered on, but certainly not limited to a number of global investment banks and law firms, is now able to appropriate superprofits as producers of co-constitutive monopolistic knowledge on operational and financial firm restructuring, the creation of new circuits of value, and capital switching.

In this session, we intend to corroborate such an augmented world city hypothesis, by gathering empirical, conceptual, and theoretical contributions that – amongst others – explore the following dimensions:

- *The spatiality of the world city archipelago:* How does the world city archipelago “work” throughout the various moments of the accumulation process? How does it insert finance capital (logics) in contemporary economies and societies? What are the empirical and conceptual relations, therefore, with international and offshore financial centers?
- *Power relations:* What is the nature of the power relations within the APS complex and between APS and their corporate, institutional, and sovereign clients? How does structured coherence emerge in nodes undergoing world-city formation? Can we observe new forms of core-periphery formation?
- *Knowledge flows:* How does salient knowledge flow through the APS complex and its changing choreography of project ecologies? How is knowledge monopolized, packaged, and resold? What are the effects on the operations and performance of clients? How is professional expertise constructed and how does it diverge from ‘actual’ knowledge?
- *Methodology and visualization:* Which data sources and methods allow for a critical cartography of contemporary global accumulation strategies and the role APS play therein? What is the potential for mixed-method frameworks in this matter, for instance when drawing on existing models that map and measure the world city network to set up qualitative research designs?

If this session carries away your interest, please send an abstract of approx. 250 words to david.bassens@vub.ac.be and Michiel.vanmeeteren@ugent.be **by 1 April 2015**.

Literature:

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