Introduction

Sophie Body-Gendrot, Jacques Carré and Romain Garbaye

Students of local governance have frequently emphasized the growing influence of business interests in cities. In so doing, they have been led to question the notion of a clear distinction between public policy and private interest, and to redefine the contours of the public sphere in cities. At the same time, the concept of local governance makes it possible to conceptualize a possible renewal or transformation of community participation and citizenship. It provides an analytical framework to understand the conditions that may allow the emergence of new forms of citizenship in the context of evolving modes of government.

The authors of this volume take up these two issues and attempt to deal with them by focusing on governance's taken for granted premise – that current trends are new. The twelve chapters written by French, British and American scholars from four disciplines and two continents defend the idea that private initiative (and chaos) was always mainstream. It was municipal 'socialism' which was the 'orderly' exception. The volume sets out to examine current trends towards the privatization of cities in three countries, particularly in relation to their historical roots. Modern urban theory, often obsessed by quest of the new, tends indeed to ignore the agents of change in the past.

The contributions point to a long and rich history of partnership in British, American and French cities, showing that both private interests and community groups have long been involved in local policies. The British case is a clear case in point, with public-private partnerships a feature of nineteenth-century local politics. In fact, religious organizations preceded local authorities in some policy sectors, such as education.

More generally, private individuals and bodies rather than vestries or even corporations were the driving forces of urban change before the twentieth century. These private agents were often impelled to contribute to urban governance by religious or moral motives, although the pursuit of private interests was also, inevitably, a powerful factor. One well-identified feature of the history of cities in the English-speaking world is indeed that the two motivations were often combined (Weber 1930). Even utopian writers on the city, often suspected of being idealistic, were economy conscious. Victorian social prophets such as Robert Owen and Ebenezer Howard provided elaborate administrative and financial arrangements in order to demonstrate the feasibility of their projects (Owen 1821, Howard 1902). In general, the early private initiatives in urban governance concerned areas untouched by indifferent or inefficient local authorities. In the nineteenth century, with the advent of the industrial city and its growing pains, private interventions tended to be reactive, and to provide tentative solutions to some of the most unbearable living conditions imposed on the poorer urban

residents (Carré and Révauger 1995). The numerous philanthropic networks established then are a good example of such contributions to urban governance (Owen 1960).

Organized, well-funded and interventionist local authorities only developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, then had their heyday between 1945 and 1975. The 1970s, however, saw a major turning point, with the combination of ideological criticism of the welfare state and the economic difficulties which made it less sustainable than before. Private actors of city life, who in earlier centuries had complained about the near absence of local government and had compensated for its inertia, now complained about the failures of public urban policies, and proclaimed the benefits of voluntary action and the third sector (Brittan 1983). Local authorities then started to share the stage again with an array of organizations (see the review by Stoker 1997: 59–63). The 1945–1975 era of strong local government may thus be labeled a 'parenthesis' in a history otherwise dominated by private and third-sector intervention.

The exploration of historical precedents must by no means be limited to the last two centuries. The contrast between the under-regulated city of the eighteenth and early and mid-nineteenth centuries, on one side, and the overregulated city of the twentieth, on the other, should not obscure the fact that in liberal English-speaking societies since 1688 the freedom of initiative of private individuals and bodies has always been a major feature of the polity. Indeed the imprecision of the frontiers between the proper territories of private and public actors has long been a major dilemma of liberal governments. Then as now they have always hesitated about the proper boundaries of state action, and even about the definition of the public interest (Moroni 2004). It seems legitimate, then, to the authors of this book to identify the sources of the privatization of the city in the long historical perspective.

Urban sociologists and political scientists working in a European context in the last decade have emphasized a shift from 'government' to 'governance'. The concept of governance, derived from American studies of local politics, has taken two interlinked meanings in European contexts. First, it is based on a criticism of the traditional object of local government studies, focused on elected local councils and their administrative apparatus. Instead it emphasizes a set of 'new' actors such as private corporations, third sector organizations and non-elected administrative bodies. Second, it operates a shift from the conceptualization of power as monolithic, and based on constraint, to a more organizational and relational conception of power. In the new governance studies that are developed in this book, what is studied is networks, modes of negotiation, patterns of coalition-making between business interests and the local state that make it possible to continue to govern increasingly complex societies.

The originality of the authors' approach is to develop comparative case studies from the US, UK and France regarding six themes: planning, housing, security, health, education and citizenship. Each heading mixes historical and contemporary perspectives in order to evaluate the importance of private and public initiatives, according to long national traditions or time-periods. For instance, the culture of urban planning which marks the early twentieth century

onward does not go much further than the 1970s. The rise of third-sector and for-profit actors in local affairs since then, appears as a return of earlier modes of social and political organization. We share Jane Jacobs' view according to which students of cities should work inductively, starting from empirical observations to gain an understanding of the logics of social, economic and political interactions that take place on complex urban territories and form the fabric of cities.

The book is organized as follows. The first chapter by Jacques Carré deals with the emergence of urban planning as a result of private initiative. Planning is traditionally perceived as the paradigmatic product of twentieth-century welfarist urban government, as a technique of land use that was supposed to wrench cities from the clutches of speculators and develop them, hopefully, in the public interest (Unwin 1909, Abercrombie 1933). It is useful to look at the historical example of planning in London's West End in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in light of the following chapter relative to the World Trade Center's planning after 9/11. The laying-out of Restoration and Georgian London's West End did not emanate from public authorities, but from individuals or associations. It was the result of a series of private developments by aristocratic ground landlords taking advantage of the building booms in that period. It is traditionally analysed as market-orientated, its environmental attractiveness and architectural elegance being seen as features capable of attracting affluent residents to the area (Summerson 1945). Yet, as Carré demonstrates, the new estates were actually designed so as to integrate certain essential functions of cities: squares, markets, churches, workhouses, burying grounds were not only tolerated, but actually provided for by the ground landlords. The various needs of the local residents (social elites as well as their servants and tradesmen) seem to have conditioned the use of space. The geometrical grids of the West End, far from being a formal pattern arbitrarily imposed on faceless people, seem on the contrary to be a reflection of the needs of a society considering itself as both orderly and enlightened.

The contrast with the World Trade Center in the second chapter is not as stunning as might be expected. Analyzing theoretical links relative to private and public approaches to urbanism in Europe and in the US, Robert Beauregard highlights two sets of concerns regarding privatization: one has to do with the lack of social justice and the reinforcement of inequalities, a European concern and the other – the focus of his study – the neglect of serendipity and of different needs addressed to space. For some utopians, the function of space is to link all kinds of city users and of heterogeneous spaces. But is this is not what high modernist urbanism does when it creates spaces for a 'universal resident' and for a white, educated middle-class life-style? What rights do non-conformist people then have in commodified city spaces? Can public culture bloom in such places? Beauregard opposes an idealized version of European urbanism as elaborated by Lefebvre (2003) and redefined by Jane Jacobs (1961) (see conclusion) that is, public space focussing on people and allowing diverse uses, random encounters on sidewalks, street-level particularities and American standardized, controlled, predictable, 'sterile' urbanism. One is unintentional and indigenous and the other is produced by state and capitalist interventions. As an illustration, redesigning the World Trade Center space after 9/11 which is publicly owned has been left

to a public authority, a non-profit corporation and a real estate developer whose visions are 'private' and dominated by commercial and financial interests. By contrast, Battery Park, an example of postmodern urbanism has attempted to replicate a more or less typical New York City neighbourhood, with its apartment buildings, small retail stores, streets and open spaces (Fainstein 2001). Here, as in eighteenth-century London West End, the care for local residents prevails on an abstract vision of visitors, users of office towers, patrons of art, etc. The human factor, the different scales and uses are put forward in an inclusive and heterogeneous conception of urbanism.

The third chapter is devoted to British housing as a thematic follow-up of considerations on urban planning, private/public initiatives. Fée takes the example of housing policy in historical perspective and points at the privatizing trend of the 1970s–1980s. At that time, the tide gradually turned indeed against the enduring supremacy of public power. The intervention of private interests in city governance became much more massive and acrimonious (Imrie and Thomas 1993). The Thatcherian mantra of 'rolling back the frontiers of the state' was of course the signal of this change. The systematic attack against public-sector housing by the Iron Lady is often described as the arch-example of her general encouragement of privatization of many previously state-controlled services and industries. And yet, as Fée brilliantly demonstrates, the apparent triumph of council housing in the mid-twentieth century was more fragile than it seemed. He points out that the so-called consensus on this question was limited to the short period 1939–1956, while it is possible to find a constant appeal to private sector housing in Conservative manifestoes of other periods. More radically, Fée suggests that the rapid demise of council housing under the Thatcher-Major-Blair governments, accompanied by an increasing recourse to the voluntary sector, merely echoes the Victorian approach to social housing (Burnett 1986). The model-housing companies and the philanthropic housing trusts, such as the Peabody Trust, were to some extent the forerunners of the present housing associations.

In the context of later, more conflictual ages, that of the nineteenth-century industrial city, and that of the postmodern late twentieth-century city, the planning of space by private initiatives can again be described less as technical solutions than as the expression of community needs and values. The fourth chapter by Sadoux, Cantaroglou and Gloor shows that the English Garden City movement and the current American New Urbanism movement, both independent from public authorities, were rather utopian in origin, but have led to a few interesting achievements, such as the post-World War II British New Towns (Schaffer 1972). What is most significant about them, as suggested, is that they address some fundamental problems of the societies they seem to challenge. They provide answers first to industrial and then to post-industrial urban problems in terms of way of life and socio-economic organization. They represent an alternative to urban chaos, not an expression of accepted order, as it was in the Georgian city. We find in the cases described here decisive attempts to submit urban space to the specific needs of people in given local contexts. They point to the ability of well-targeted associations to influence urban thinking (Duany 2003).

Concerning the American city, it is important to remember that Lewis Mumford himself as a member of the *Regional Planning Association of America* had been influenced by the English Garden City. The success of his ideas can be explained by the importance given to the 'community', that is, the micro-space model of social organization based on trust, empowerment and cooperation within a green environment. Currently, the success of New Urbanism in the United States is also based on a people sensitive socio-spatial system. But the concept of community is deeply ambiguous and it may refer to the 'Not In my Backyard' phenomenon as much as to progressive grass-roots actions (Body-Gendrot 2000).

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 deal with a new theme, security, in order to pursue the demonstration according to which private initiatives have always been mainstream. Case studies from France and the US examine the links between security, gated communities and law and order. An extreme example of spatial control to the benefit of a restricted number of people is offered by the development of gated communities all over the world. It is currently observed in Latin American, Asian, South African megapolises and it is common in Eastern Europe. Yet as pointed out by Le Goix in the fifth chapter, the United States, and California specifically, led the way, in continuity with the American philosophy linking the right of the people to control their space with their right to security as a dimension of freedom and a good per se. Security is not just a political aspiration, it is considered as a right by the 'haves' concerned both by property value and by the defence of their norms. Another interest of the chapter is to point out at a neglected aspect: French intellectuals so eager to criticize contemptuously American gated communities as an 'urban pathology', a 'social paranoia' and a 'segregationist ideology' have forgotten that in the nineteenth century, when the faubourgs of Paris were developing fast, municipal incorporations of private residential parks occurred, just as is the case currently in Los Angeles. With the examples of Montretout and Montmorency in point, Le Goix demonstrates that former concerns with value property and walls around parks are currently evolving into legitimate claims for safety.

By contrast with Le Goix's approach, Didier Combeau reintroduces the role of the regalian state in drawing boundaries regarding citizens' initiatives in his comparison of space and safety in France and in the US. The contrast between the two countries is again striking, both in the fields of political philosophy and in the involvement of private citizens in the enforcement of law and order. Whereas in a twisted interpretation of the Constitution, some American states have granted city residents an unrestricted right to bear arms, to conduct neighbourhood watches and to self-defend – including the use of deadly force to defend oneself and one's property – such is not the case in France: the use of force by individual citizens has never been considered, at least in the public debate, as an appropriate response to burglary (the UK stands closer to the US than to European laws which ban deadly force to defend property). These differences are obviously related to diversified modes of nation-building, to monarchy and to the state progressively moulding French society on the one hand, and on the other, to self-help being a necessity in the colonies and later, in an entrepreneurial American society. Maxwell Brown,

who examined the history of the US, showed that when perceiving 'a grave menace to social stability in the conditions of frontier life and racial, ethnic, urban, and industrial unrest, solid citizens rallied to the cause of community order. […] Violence was tinctured with social conservatism'. Violence was also on the side of the forces of law and order when confronted to the criminal and the disorderly. Many historical episodes in which nonconformists have been harshly punished by 'solid citizens' seem to give support to the idea of an American exceptionalism (Brown 1979: 31).

It is hardly surprising then due to the instrumentalization of fear against 'Dangerous Others' in a number of states that Florida would legitimize self-defence not only in the home but also in public places perceived both as part of the community and as a sum of private interests (Body-Gendrot, 2002). Another interesting distinction pointed at by Combeau relates to the concepts of person and property. A person is seen as a social entity in the US, and property is a natural right. Consequently, the boundary between self-help and law enforcement is very thin. In France, property is not part of the sphere of the person.

Such differences have obviously an impact on punishment and law enforcement. Criminologist Frank Zimring supports the idea of 'a deeply held American belief in violent social justice'. He points at the Southern communities in the nineteenth century, where a culture of lynching and of vigilantism expressed a mistrust of institutions. He emphasizes the populism of spontaneous and ephemeral mobs, taking the law in their hands and the legitimacy of self-help and of violence against those perceived as a threat to the community. Zimring draws a link between the past and today, explaining that the states which had high rates of (illegal) lynching in the 1890s are those with high rates of (legal) execution behaviours in the 1990s (Zimring 2005) but this last assumption has been contested. In *Harsh Justice*, another criminologist, James Whitman also emphasizes the comparative roughness of American punishment forged in the eighteenth century and reproduced ever since. He blames the absence of aristocratic codes of behaviour which, in Europe, gradually granted offenders the treatment previously reserved for elite offenders and which is largely absent in the US. 'Humiliation and degradation in punishment, he says, are not considered as inegalitarian practices in the US' (Whitman 2003). The legal implication of this trend of thought points at a tight relationship between American culture and punishment. But a timeless cultural explanation for American harshness cannot be sustained in light of cultural changes which occurred over time and space and over specific historical and political events. It would be unfair to compare the worst of American practices, especially in the South, with the best of European ideals and to downplay the importance of contexts and of time periods (Garland 2005). Yet mass incarceration in the late-twentieth century American society provides a feature of US exceptionalism in terms of 'fortress mentality'. Three per cent of the adult population is managed by the criminal justice system subcontracting a number of its prisons to private entrepreneurs. Exclusion strategies link the phenomenon of gated communities ('locking oneself in') to that of prisons ('locking others out') in what J. Simon calls a 'model of exile and exclusion' (Simon 2007: 278–9).

For Franck Vindevogel (Chapter 7) the phenomenon of prison privatization in the US is not a minor phenomenon. The US contains 83 per cent of all existing private prison facilities in the world. These facilities are found mostly in the states which were not part of the first colonies, that is, in the south and the west of the country. Until the end of the nineteenth century, states used to lease contract convict labour to private companies and some of them had transferred the whole correctional function to the private sector. These prisons were supposed to turn a profit for the states. Vindevogel has found that currently five states of the West have a quarter of their inmate population in private facilities. But whereas private policing is hardly a matter of debate (there are three private security guards for one policeman in Los Angeles) profit-seeking prisons have generated controversies: they involve constitutional rights (those of inmates) and the safety issue (that of surrounding communities). The impetus for private prisons is a follow up of the taxpayer resistance to government spending which first emerged in California with proposition 13 and then spread throughout the country, a philosophy boosted by the Reagan Administration. As currently observed in numerous megacities of the South (Johannesburg, Sao Paulo, Mexico City, Lagos), the state has been complacent and taken advantage of huge private companies' appetite for profit. However, disorders caused by inmates' overcrowding and poor standards of treatment as shown vividly in Sao Paulo public prisons, make privatization a necessity when justice systems are unwilling to replace incarceration with alternative sentencing for non-violent offenders. Another linked consideration concerns the inability of Republican states to exert quality requirements on private prison providers: the latter contribute heavily to the Republican party's campaigns. Scandals and negative evaluations have periodically tarnished private prisons' image in the states. But the Federal government's instrumentalization of fear, especially after 9/11, makes massive de-incarceration unlikely. Due to the carceral system cost, Zimring anticipates a 25 per cent decrease in the 25 years to come, but not much more (2005; Simon, 2007).

Chapter 8 introduces a new issue, health, with the cases of California and France, again to understand how much the private sector is comparatively involved vs the public one in the current trends. The case study on AIDS illustrates this differential approach of health in the US and in France. With the example of the California Prostitution Educational Program (Cal-Pep) in the Bay area, Laura Hobson Faure, Carla Dillard Smith, Gloria Lockett and Benjamin P. Bowser provide a brief history of non-governmental response against AIDS in the United States. Due to government inefficiency and mistrust by minority groups, to the reluctance of traditional Black churches to get involved with the AIDS problem and the class bias of some of the civil rights activists, Cal-Pep has worked to change culture and norms among marginalized HIV high risk groups. African-American homosexuals are indeed frequently rejected by their community. With multiple sex partners or as drug users, they are perceived as a risk for community norms and behaviours. In France, the over-representation of heterosexual immigrants in the AIDS epidemic has been ignored for lack of statistics regarding ethnicity, then hidden for politically correct reasons. When the problem was finally acknowledged, it posed challenges to public health officials

who turned to organizations to outreach these populations. The comparison brings two striking differences: one related to the construction of race and ethnicity reveals the influence of this dimension on the public and private modes of intervention against AIDS. The second has to do with the relationship of NGOs and public officials in both counties. According to the authors, in the American case, the officials' reluctance to let Cal-Pep exert its leverage in the way it wished to operate forced the latter to work on its political connections instead of simply do its 'front-line' work. Moreover, perceived as 'private contractor', the staff is evaluated and accountable for its efficiency. In France, despite the centralization of the state, the NGOs have to turn to multiple sources of public and private funding. Yet they only act as junior partners and are cautious not to substitute themselves to the state for service delivery. A major problem is due to the lack of empirical data on the outcomes of funded programmes and of budgetary transparency in the annual activity reports. A third issue is related to the reluctance French officials have at identifying immigrant populations with specific needs, once they are French.

The next chapters focus both on education. While to the public, private schools may appear as new phenomena linked to the 1980s, historically, US schools have been run by private organizations. In Chapter 9 M. Montagutelli remarks that, historically, private companies have been involved in activities related to education and the running of American public schools. In recent years, however, Education Management Organizations (EMOs) have emerged and due to the dysfunctions of public education – and in the case of Philadelphia, the extreme distress in which some of the public schools are – have appeared as a successful option: they brought greater access to computers, the hiring teaching of assistants with college degrees, and the enhancement of the maintenance and repair of buildings. As in the case of private prisons, there are different degrees of involvement and of participation in the public system for these private companies, but due to their very presence, the overlapping of the public and the private sectors has reinforced. The controversy lies around the values of performance standards, efficiency, customer-requirements, etc., which import a market discipline in the urban schools. They may in the long-run alter the nature and long-term objectives of education. On the one hand, the improvement brought by privatization is not conclusive and opponents – some of them launching class-action in the courts – have not relented. It should be fair to say that the nature of the social problems plaguing the schools in very poor areas have their roots outside the schools. Is it then possible to improve the students' scores and moreover, to draw profits from school districts that are already underfunded and in trouble?

The historical example provided by Vaughan in Chapter 10 about the confrontation of certain minorities and underprivileged members of society with established institutions in the late Victorian and Edwardian age emphasizes similar questions. Vaughan studies the unexpected participation of Roman Catholics in the School Boards of Scotland in an age when Catholic schools voluntarily remained outside what they considered to be a Protestant system of education. By a strange process, the Catholic members of School Boards, who saw themselves as unfairly treated by the law, in fact acted as overzealous citizens, serving schools

which their children did not attend. In reality this participation allowed them to make their grievances more public, and certainly contributed to the final equality of treatment of all achieved in 1918.

In the last chapters, which are focused on citizenship – women in government and 'third way' initiatives – the two authors have selected case-studies in the British context. Boussahba-Bravard's analysis of the Women's Local Government Society in Chapter 11 shows how an underprivileged group, that of women, skillfully tried to extend women's participation in local government. The self-confident middle-class ladies of the Local Government Society used existing loopholes in the law, strengthened their position by asking for expert legal advice, and generally demonstrated their contested abilities. Yet they were far from adopting a militantly feminist stance: they concentrated on areas of local government traditionally considered as suited to the female 'character', such as poor relief and education. Furthermore, the members of the Women's Local Government Society remained ostensibly a non-party organization. Thus we find in these chapters how through perfectly legal, and indeed, almost uncontroversial action, underprivileged citizens have made their influence felt on the urban scene.

Finally, Jérôme Tournadre-Plancq's essay traces the origins of the British 'Third Way' approach promoted by Labour Party modernizers to the culture of mutualism and friendly societies that permeated the British working-class until the early twentieth century. For instance, the fascination of authors associated with New Labour for 'social entrepreneurs', suggests, again, that the era of extensive delivery of welfare services by the State may be viewed as a parenthesis, and that it should give way to a greater emphasis on a reliance on local 'leadership' and 'social capital'. In the last resort, the doctrine of the Third Way redefines the state as a social regulator, focused on the management of private and voluntary programmes, and perhaps compensating for the privatization of policies with a renewed ability to set agendas and impose values on its 'partners'.

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