

Small city urbanism: globalism, translocal worlding and urban experimentation

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Abstract

Over the recent decade or so, recurrent voices in urban studies have argued that the discipline has been discernibly biased towards a limited number of large cities. In contrast, how small and medium-sized cities insert themselves in translocal connections and networks, and how they assemble assets and resources at different scales have not been adequately considered. This presentation argues for the importance of small cities to urban cities. This presentation pays specific attention to three interlocking processes: (1) the ways in which small cities are positioned in globalisation and global aspirations, even though they often have no direct access to global footloose capital but draw more on globally circulated imaginaries, models and policy paradigms; (2) the actual translocal connections and networks that constitute and assemble small city urbanisms, which can be expounded by theories of “worlding”; and (3) locally based economic and institutional experiments that articulate with ideas of being smart, eco, sustainable and innovative.