Predatory Capitalism, Human Migration & Habitat Loss in the 21st Century

Saskia Sassen
Columbia University
Data presented come from: 
*Expulsions* (Harvard University Press)

“A Massive Loss of Habitat: New Drivers for Migration”
http://socdev.ucpress.edu/content/2/2/204

“Who Owns the City”

AND IF U LIKE FAIRY TALES—here is that version..A MONSTER ENTERS THE CITY
BEFORE METHOD

The fuzzy edges of paradigmatic knowledges

Analytic Tactics
Analytic Tactics

• Destabilizing stable meanings

• In the shadows of powerful explanations

• When territory exits conventional framings: it becomes institutionally mobile, nomadic and can alter the meaning

• EXPULSIONS

• The making of it all
we make...
Exhibit 5.11. Extent of Surface Melt over Greenland’s Ice Sheet, 2012

THE POWER OF KEYCODES AND AGGREGATIONS

• Keycode: a sort of DNA that is written/made (finance’s “risk”-models; VW cheat software)

• Just a bit of code can achieve enormous effects: scale-ups and massive aggregations – the crappy keycode time 12 million cars, 14 million mortgages

• We need to develop a craft of writing keycodes for new scale-ups and modes of aggregating and deploying the power of aggregation.

• SOURCE: Sassen and Koob-Sassen “COLONIZING THE SCALAR NICHE”
WHAT IS THE STEAM ENGINE OF OUR EPOCH?

THAT WHICH CAN MAKE A NEW ORDERING.

WHAT IS IN AND WHAT IS OUT?
Rising risk

The credit default swap market nearly doubled each year from 2001 through 2007.

Value of credit default swaps outstanding

$919 billion

2001

$8.4

$17.1

$34.4

$54.6

$62.2 trillion

2008 Q2

SOURCE: ISDA
TWO RISING URBAN FORMATS
BEHIND EACH OF THESE TWO RISING FORMATS...
ARE SPECIFIC PRACTICES AND LOGICS
### TOTAL (NATIONAL AND FOREIGN) INVESTMENT VOLUMES
**EXCEPT DEV. SITES, Q3 2013 – Q2 2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>METRO</th>
<th>VOLUMES (US$)</th>
<th>GROWTH*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York Metro, United States</td>
<td>55,438,566,041</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Metro, United Kingdom</td>
<td>47,253,731,038</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokyo, Japan</td>
<td>35,466,760,763</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Metro, United States</td>
<td>33,058,667,672</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>San Francisco Metro, United States</td>
<td>23,788,360,196</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paris, France</td>
<td>22,668,417,844</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago, United States</td>
<td>14,379,076,128</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington D.C. Metro, United States</td>
<td>14,353,183,299</td>
<td>-29.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dallas, United States</td>
<td>14,076,849,569</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hong Kong, China</td>
<td>13,725,693,505</td>
<td>-28.9%</td>
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</tbody>
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TOP CITIES FOR TOTAL (NATIONAL + FOREIGN) PROPERTY INVESTMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Beijing</td>
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<td>Melbourne</td>
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<td>Philadelphia</td>
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<td>San Diego</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cushman & Wakefield, RCA
### TOTAL FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN PROPERTY (Q3 2013 – Q2 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>VOLUMES (US$)</th>
<th>GROWTH*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 London Metro, United Kingdom</td>
<td>29,370,466,865</td>
<td>37.67%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 New York Metro, United States</td>
<td>11,364,607,926</td>
<td>68.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Paris, France</td>
<td>11,057,422,477</td>
<td>47.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Shanghai, China</td>
<td>10,039,035,493</td>
<td>150.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Sydney, Australia</td>
<td>6,660,953,814</td>
<td>75.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Los Angeles Metro, United States</td>
<td>5,994,728,581</td>
<td>65.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Shenzhen, China</td>
<td>4,968,623,569</td>
<td>426.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Tokyo, Japan</td>
<td>4,632,840,984</td>
<td>66.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Amsterdam/Randstad, Holland</td>
<td>3,991,616,088</td>
<td>248.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Melbourne, Australia</td>
<td>3,603,892,879</td>
<td>80.01%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TOP CITIES FOR FOREIGN PROPERTY INVESTMENT

London
Paris
New York
Sydney
Tokyo
Los Angeles
Melbourne
Washington D.C.
San Francisco
Dubai
Dublin
Amsterdam
Chicago
Boston
Hawaii
São Paulo
Madrid
Berlin
Brisbane
Hong Kong
Seoul
Frankfurt
Manchester
Barcelona
Miami

Annual Volume to June (US$ bn)

Source: Cushman & Wakefield, RCA
TOP 100 CITIES (BY PROPERTY INVESTMENT) ACCOUNT FOR:

- 10% OF THE WORLD’S POPULATION
- 30% OF THE WORLD’S GDP
- 76% OF PROPERTY INVESTMENT
WORLDWIDE REAL ESTATE ASSETS ARE NEARLY 60% OF THE VALUE OF ALL GLOBAL ASSETS, INCLUDING EQUITIES, BONDS AND GOLD

US$217,000,000,000,000

SOURCE: SAVILLS WORLD RESEARCH, 2016
WHAT DOES THIS ALL LOOK LIKE?
THE PROPOSED ATLANTIC YARDS RESIDENTIAL TOWERS IN BROOKLYN

IMAGE: AP

SITE DEVELOPMENT.
FOREIGN INVESTORS PUT IN US$5BN

THEY NOW OWN THE SITE.
TENTATIVE NEW NAME:
PACIFIC YARDS.
LONDON PROPERTY PURCHASED BY OVERSEAS COMPANIES: 2005-2014

IMAGE: PRIVATE EYE
In 2014, 54% of sales over $5 million in Manhattan were to shell companies.
122 of the 192 condos are owned by people who used shell companies that hid their identities.
57% of condos are owned by shell companies
THE PLAZA

69% of condos are owned by shell companies
IN THE SHADOWS OF URBANIZATION MORE EXPULSIONS
One instance of what we measure as development but is actually a massive expulsion

- From 2006 to 2010: 220 million hectares of land in Afri, LatAm, Cambodia, Ukraine etc bought/leased by rich governments, firms, financial firms

- The land is now more valued than the people or activities on it
- The active making of surplus populations
- Novel assemblage of Territory/Authority/Rights
Number of hectares (millions) cross-referenced

Number of hectares (millions) reported

Africa | Asia | Latin America | Europe | Oceania | World
---|---|---|---|---|---
34.3 | 28.6 | 6.3 | 1.5 | 0.1 | 70.9
134.5 | 43.4 | 18.9 | 4.7 | 0.7 | 203.4
MORE LAND GRABBING BECAUSE MUCH LAND IS BEING KILLED
Northern hemisphere: Land Area with Hot, Very Hot, and Extremely Hot Temperatures, 1960-2010

Source: World Bank (2013) *The Heat Turn Down: Why a 4C Warmer World Must Be Avoided*. Figure 18: Northern Hemisphere land area covered by hot (>0.43σ), very hot (>2σ) and extremely hot (>3σ) summer temperatures, accessed on June 26th 2013.
Exhibit 5.8. Water Already Limiting Agricultural Productivity, 2009

Exhibit 5.12 Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions With Full Implementation of Agreements, 2010-2020

A MASSIVE LOSS OF HABITAT

• THIS, IN TURN, CONTRIBUTES TO A WHOLE NEW KIND OF MIGRATION.

• THIS IS A MIGRATION FOR WHICH WE HAVE NO LAW – NEITHER NATIONAL LAW (AS IS THE CASE FOR REGULAR MIGRATIONS) NOR INTERNATIONAL LAW (AS IS THE CASE FOR REFUGEES).
MYANMAR (BURMA)

• THE ROHYNGIA
• NOW PERSECUTED FOR BEING MUSLIM
• BUT WHY NOW. THEY HAVE LIVED THERE PEACEFULLY FOR CENTURIES.
WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING IN MYANMAR?

• MASSIVE LAND GRABS, WATER GRABS, MINING,..... ALL LEADING TO MASSIVE EXPULSIONS OF LOCAL RURAL PEOPLE (BUDHISTS)
LEAVING MYANMAR: ESCAPE ROUTES 2015

- Migration by boat
- Migration by land

Migration by boat

Migration by land

600 km

Mass graves discovered in Wang Kelian

Mass graves discovered in Songkhla province

Migrant camp populations:
1. Lhokseumawe: 246
2. Kuala Cangkoi: 332
3. Bayeun: 433
4. Kuala Langsa: 246
5. Kuala Simpang: 48
6. Langkat: 96

Migrants that make it to Australia can be shipped to an Australia-funded detention centre in Nauru, and from there to Cambodia.
Migrant movements

Estimated number of Rohingya and Bangladeshi migrants who left Myanmar and Bangladesh on smugglers’ boats.

Q1 2014: 11,159
Q2: 12,031
Q3: 9,415
Q4: 30,988
Q1 2015: 25,753

Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

W. Foo, 18/05/2015
Rohingya Migrant Trafficking Routes

88,000 Migrants since Jan. 2014
25,000 Migrants first 5 months of 2015

Source: NYT, BBC, CNN, IOM
Credits: Eleanor Albert, Julia Ro
UNACCOMPANIED MINORS FROM CENTRAL AMERICA – GUATEMALA, HONDURAS, SALVADOR

• WHY ARE THEY LEAVING, CROSSING THE WHOLE OF MEXICO WITH ALL THE RISKS...

Apprehension of UNACCOMPANIED Undocumented Migrant Children (2009-2016)

- Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection, “Southwest Border Unaccompanied Alien Children.”
Figure 1: Apprehensions of Unaccompanied Migrant Children

BUT IS VIOLENCE IN ITSELF ENOUGH TO EXPLAIN THIS MIGRATION?

• WHAT ABOUT MASSIVE LAND GRABS IN RURAL AREAS, PLANTATION AGRICULTURE THAT KILLS THE LAND, EXPULSIONS OF SMALL HOLDER AGRICULTURE, DEAD LAND..
NEW SYSTEMICS?
A LOGIC OF EXTRACTION
AND PREDATORY FORMATIONS
GDP per capita 2007-2013, select European countries (2008=100)

Exhibit 2.1.a: Corporate Profits after Tax in the US, 1940s-2010s (in billions)

Source: FRED Economic Data, St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank. Published 2012 on http://research.stlouisfed.org/fred2/graph/?s[1][id]=CP#
Exhibit 2.1.b: Corporate Assets in the US, 1940s-2010s (in billions)

Exhibit 2.1.c: Central Government Debt (% of GDP) in Fourteen Countries, 1980-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1[^a]</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>97.6[^b]</td>
<td>108.9</td>
<td>147.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>103.6</td>
<td>109.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>106.1</td>
<td>183.5[^d]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>61.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD Stat Extracts and World Economic Outlook Database of the International Monetary Fund, accessed on January 3\[^{rd}\], 2013.

Notes:  \(^{[a]}\) Data for 1984.
        \(^{[b]}\) Data for 1993.
        \(^{[c]}\) Data for 1991.
        \(^{[d]}\) Data for 2009.
Income Share of top 10% earners, USA 1917-2005

*Income is defined as market income but excludes capital gains
% Growth in After-Tax Income, USA 1979-2007
Exhibit 2.2.e: Ratio of 1% Wealth to Median Wealth, 1962-2010

UNSTABLE MEANINGS

• Given all these negatives.....
• more and more expulsions from increasingly scarce livable space?
• GROWING inequality
  Rapidly growing population of refugees and internally displaced – about 60 million +

• ALL OUR LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES HAVE INSTITUTED PARTIAL SECURITY EMERGENCIES WHICH ALLOW THEM TO VIOLATE THEIR OWN LAWS REGARDING CITIZENS

...........WHO ARE WE THE CITIZENS?
INVENTING NEW HOUSING MARKETS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Nationalities</th>
<th>Minimum Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monaco</td>
<td>Russian, CIS, UK, Italian, Scandinavian, Swiss</td>
<td>$18.9m (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Russian, CIS, Middle Eastern, Italian, French, Benelux, German, UK, US</td>
<td>$8.8m (95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>Russian, French, South African, Italian, Indian, UAE, Greek, Australian, US, Canadian</td>
<td>$15.9m (85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dubai</td>
<td>African (Kenyan, Somali, Tanzanian), Saudi Arabian, Russian, Indian, Iranian</td>
<td>$8.0m (60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>UK, French, Italian, Spanish, Mainland Chinese, Singaporean, Australian, Brazilian, Argentine, Canadian</td>
<td>$10.0m (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanghai</td>
<td>Hong Kong, Taiwanese, US, Canadian, Korean, Singaporean, Australian, Japanese, Malaysian, German, French</td>
<td>$6.4m (10%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INSIDE A DERELICT MANSION ON LONDON'S BILLIONAIRES ROW
PHOTO: GUY GRANDJEAN AND ROBERT BOOT, THEGUARDIAN.COM
INSIDE A DERELICT MANSION ON LONDON'S BILLIONAIRES ROW
PHOTO: GUY GRANDJEAN AND ROBERT BOOT,
WHY DOES ALL OF THIS MATTER?
THE CITY IS ONE OF THE FEW SPACES TODAY WHERE THOSE WITHOUT POWER GET TO MAKE A HISTORY, A CULTURE, AN ECONOMY
THERE ARE MOMENTS IN THE DAILY ROUTINES OF A CITY WHEN WE ARE ALL URBAN SUBJECTS

....WHEN THE CITY CAN HACK ALL THE OTHER, MORE SPECIFIC SUBJECTS WE ALSO ARE.
RUSH HOUR AT KING’S CROSS STATION
IMAGE: DAN KITWOOD/GETTY IMAGES