Peripheries are processes and places in which conditions and actors constantly shift. The contingent forms of peripheries in this book are assembled around embodied identities and are rooted in specific genealogies: peripheries as urban fringes, periphery countries in the modern world-system theory, and peripheral urbanization. Through these genealogies, the heterogeneous forms of peripheries acquire layered meanings that decenter urban theory. Since no form can exist outside historical relations of power, it is critical to apply methodological approaches that can address the political agency emerging from embodied identities.

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Giuseppina Forte

A word of acknowledgment

This book is about peripheries and the embodied identities in peripheries. As a multidisciplinary publication, it gathers scholarly contributions from architecture, urban planning, anthropology, sociology, and ethnic, gender, photography, music, and performance studies. *Embodiment* and *peripheries* rarely appear jointly in academic inquiries, and their juxtaposition in the call for papers appealed to scholars researching different histories and geographies. In particular, we prioritized highlighting the work of young scholars. In this sense, this book is semi-peripheral to mainstream academic publishing: early-career scholars have edited and written it, and a non-Anglo-American press has published it.

Embodying Peripheries has been conceived and written from the many lands where the authors live, research, and work. I wrote this piece from the land now known as "Manhattan," which is part of the traditional territory of the Lenni-Lenape called "Lenapehoking," specifically by those who spoke the Munsee dialects. During the colonial era and early federal period, many were removed from the west and north, but some remained among the enduring historical tribal communities of the region. I acknowledge the Lenni-Lenape as the original people of this land and their continuing relationship with their territory.[1] However, as a settler and scholar at a settler institution, I am aware that land acknowledgment is only the first step toward decolonial practices that include "Indigenous relationality, land pedagogy, and accountability to place and Native peoples" (Stewart-Ambo & Yang, 2021, p. 41).

I am grateful to this book's authors for their hard work despite multiple disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. They worked from various locations while researching remote sites, often at the expense of interrupting their fieldwork. We decided to slow down the book's production to acknowledge the unequal burdens the authors and reviewers bore during the breakdown of social networks. Those who lost loved ones or fell ill with COVID-19 are the ones who mainly carried this load. Most of all, the pandemic emerged as an additional layer atop existing structural inequalities, impacting specific populations, many of whom live in the peripheries of the global South.

[1] I draw on the Land Acknowledgment by the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation (https://nlltribe.com/land-acknowledgement/) and the map by Native Land Digital (https://native-land.ca/).

We ran a double-blind two-round review involving mid-career and senior scholars. All reviewers contributed to making this book better, as did the guidance of our academic advisors, Teresa Caldeira and Winnie Wong. Their time and dedication were valuable in putting together disparate writers' works. I would like to acknowledge the Global Urban Humanities Initiative at the University of California, Berkeley, which created an exceptional context for this publication, providing logistical and financial support, as well as the Joan E. Draper Architectural History Research Endowment, which funded major copyediting of this book. Finally, I am deeply grateful to AbdouMaliq Simone, Teresa Caldeira, and Greig Crysler for their helpful comments on this introductory chapter. I also thank Stathis Yeros and Ralf Korbmacher for their generous remarks.

Heterogeneous peripheries

I was sitting at a table just outside Oscar Niemeyer's iconic Copan building in downtown São Paulo with my colleagues from the Instituto Pólis. We had just attended a seminar on "Intervening in Favelas" by LabLaje, which aimed to bridge the gap between university education and the ways to study and intervene in Brazilian favelas. I asked my colleagues, "Are favelas considered peripheries?"

Various answers surfaced and coalesced into four general categories. First, peripheries are material and imagined geographies located far from a historical, expanded, or financial center and its conditions of centrality—connected, serviced, and with a vibrant life. However, one of my colleagues stated that, according to this definition, the favela of Paraisópolis can no longer be considered periphery due to its developed infrastructure and services. Additionally, she observed that many peripheries in São Paulo have become centralities of cultural initiatives that advance aesthetic and political concerns. Second, peripheries include favelas, as well as irregular and illegal settlements, which may present various degrees of socio-physical vulnerability and precarity. Third, the Brazilian *periferia* is a stigmatized expression that the elites use for urban areas they associate with violence and moral degradation. Finally, *periferia* is also called *quebrada* (meaning "fractured," considering the uneven shape of its streets) by cultural activists as a space from which they articulate race and gender politics. While these four categories were certainly applicable, they failed to catalyze a definitive answer. In the end, my colleagues retorted, "When you discover what peripheries are, please tell us!"

It was then that I wanted to understand better what peripheries were. I realized later that this question precluded the possibility of approaching peripheries as dynamic processes. Often described as "informal" or "illegal," peripheries are instead processes and places in

which conditions and actors are constantly shifting (Caldeira, 2017). This book aims to elaborate on the heterogeneity of the peripheries to complicate them as objects of urban studies. It does so by disarticulating them into a plurality of embodied identities emerging within uneven geographies.

Peripheries as a problem space

The different connotations of peripheries analyzed in this book confirm the polyvalence of this concept. Peripheries are urban fringes, peripheral countries in the world-system, Indigenous lands, occupied territories, or "peripheries of geographies of authoritative knowledge" (Bhan, 2016, p. 15). What makes all these instantiations simultaneously possible? Foucault (1984) used "problematization" as a method of analysis not to find a univocal understanding of a subject matter. Rather, he employed it to examine how a problem is constructed as an object of thought and then analyzed and regulated under specific circumstances. Therefore, problematizing peripheries (considering them as a problem space) means exploring their potential as objects, sites, and substances of thinking (Rabinow, 2008, pp. 43-44).

In this book, peripheries are a question, not a given, the answers to which are contingent forms assembled around embodied identities. Each form advances specific political work. We are interested in this work because no form can exist outside historical relations of power enacted through knowledge, money, laws, and regulations. If framing a process shapes how we think about it (and often act afterward), what does it mean to frame different processes through peripheries as a problem space? How are peripheries produced as a specific field of knowledge, and what are its effects on political and ethical practices? I have addressed these questions after introducing the multiple peripheries in this book. However, my answers have, in turn, led to further questions.

Multiple peripheries in this book

The title of the initial call for papers was *Embodying the Periphery*. Subsequent discussions, however, indicated that *Embodying Peripheries* would better grasp the heterogeneity of the authors' contributions to the theme. Four tracks organized the call to be published around analytics, which could be considered open questions. In the tracks, the periphery emerged as a topographic anchor for decentering urban theory (*within*, *in between*) and an urban process (*peripheral urbanization*, *cityness*). Implicit in these tracks were colonial, postcolonial, and neocolonial relations of power and global macroeconomic dynamics grounded in the modern world-system theory.[2]

[2] I will discuss these topics in further detail following this section.

Embodying the periphery "within"

As practices deemed peripheral unfold in the center, they also raise questions about the (in)visibility of peripheral cultures, the fluidity of urban practices, and the temporal aspect of embodied identities emerging in the center. Through the politics of bodily presence in the center, peripheral subjectivities articulate claims such as the right to centrality (Lefebvre, 1968), advance social projects, and express fragmented dissent. Papers and projects in this track explore the embodied identities in inner cities, the so-called "ghettos," townships, banlieues and housing projects (Balibar, 2007), districts, spaces of urban decay, occupied buildings and infrastructures, homeless camps, and ruins, among others.

Embodying the periphery "in between"

A periphery can be a space between neighborhoods, cities, urban/rural areas, and nations. It can also be a border area, a margin, or a peripheral frontier exposed to massive migratory movements (Marques & Torres, 2004), a place where most migrants end up living in conditions of residential illegality and infrastructure deprivation (Holston, 2009). Papers and projects in this track investigate, among others, embodied identities in peri-urban areas, peripheral frontiers, urban/rural translocal topographies, borderlands (Anzaldúa, 1987), cultural contact zones (Pratt, 1991), refugee camps, sectarian frontiers (Akar, 2018), zones of dispossession mapped onto "bodies-in-place" (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013), and "hyper-peripheries" where socio-residential inequalities overlap with environmental vulnerabilities (Torres & Marques, 2001).

Embodying "peripheral urbanization"

In this mode of production of urban space, which prevails in the global South, residents of the peripheries build their houses and neighborhoods on their own while transversally engaging with institutional modes of spatial production, including state directives, lawful tenure, and formal employment (Caldeira, 2017). The political significance of these practices is manifold and concerns residence, the right to the city, citizenship, everyday life, and aesthetic choices, among others. Papers and projects in this track examine the embodied identities around self-building in *colonias populares*, favelas, settlements, urban peripheries, refugee camps, and public spaces, among others.

Embodying "cityness"

This track explores the embodiment of "cityness" as the intersection between people, resources, places, and ideas, which is invisible to formal rendering (Pieterse, 2010; Simone, 2010). Cityness denounces the fallacy of the coherent traceability of movements and behaviors within urban spaces. Papers and projects in this track analyze embodied identities in economies of affect, networks of communication and exchange, spaces of expectation and anticipation, circulations, rituals of transgression, "infrastructures of people" (Simone, 2010), areas of deprivation and insecurity, fuzzy circuits of association, geographies of the new precariat, and urban undergrounds, among others.

We conducted an initial reading of the book through these provisional tracks: embodying the periphery "within" (Àjàdí, Cannella, Stevens), embodying the periphery "in between" (Kimmel, Baumann, Pasta, Minami, Khare), embodying "peripheral urbanization" (Richmond & Kopper, Novacich), and embodying "cityness" (Exumé, Caro). However, multiple specificities and tropes of investigation emerged from these analytical concepts, offering different reading itineraries across the authors' contributions. These itineraries included race and ethnicity (Exumé, Baumann, Àjàdí, Kimmel, Novacich, Pasta), conflict and violence (Àjàdí, Baumann), cultural practices (Exumé, Caro, Kimmel), technologies of segregation (Richmond & Kopper, Baumann), forced movements and stases (Baumann, Àjàdí, Exumé), settler colonialism and Indigenous lands (Baumann, Àjàdí, Minami), gender politics (Cannella, Novacich), peripheralization (Pasta, Khare), and urban contestations and bodily transgressions (Stevens, Novacich, Baumann).

I invite readers to find other connections between the chapters and essays. We decided not to sort them into distinct parts so that you could follow your preferred itineraries; we did, however, juxtapose the essays according to the cities of the global South and the global North, including Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Porto Alegre, Abuja, East Jerusalem, Istanbul, Naples, Marseille, Gurgaon, Hong Kong, California City, and New York.

Some authors included images in their texts, while others developed photographic essays. Without photography, ethnographies of peripheral cityness are difficult to conduct (De Boeck, 2016, p. 21). However, providing visibility does not imply repair and recovery. Sometimes, remaining invisible is critical for people living in peripheries. How, then, do we negotiate the visibility and invisibility of peripheral practices in a way that forecloses processes of extraction and dispossession in the afterlife of colonialism? This remains an open question.

The different contributions (long, short, and visual) allowed us to tap into multiple archives that sometimes are not immediately available to researchers. While the long chapters present

a more traditional structure, the short essays bring us directly to various contexts through ethnographic accounts. When not specified otherwise, the reader is free to assemble the theoretical, methodological, and analytical approaches behind these micronarratives. If Kuan Hwa's introductory essay developed an overview of the pieces in relation to "embodiment," what follows is an overview of the contributions regarding "peripheries."

Samuel Novacich examines the spaces and practices of makeup artists and their clients in and around the favela of Mangueira in Rio de Janeiro. In Rio, the term "periphery" originates from the vernacular word *periferia*, which describes the city's socioeconomic conditions and often overlaps with its geographical features. Novacich draws connections between the aesthetic practices of makeup and *marquinha* and the politics of inequality in the *periferia*. As these practices configure sensibilities that compete with central ones, they become more than status symbols. They have a material and intimate impact on gender relationships and negotiations. The people living in Rio's urban periphery manipulate the surfaces of their bodies in ways that amplify and reflect the dynamics of their daily lives and build novel conceptions of race, gender, and sexuality.

Matthew Aaron Richmond and **Moisés Kopper** focus on the dynamics of walling—the division of residential areas through physical walls—in the peripheries of Brazilian cities as places with socioeconomic inequalities and low-income housing. Similar to how walls separate elite enclaves from poor neighborhoods, segregation also occurs in low-income communities. The authors analyze forms of mediated citizenship in São Paulo, Porto Alegre, and Rio de Janeiro through technologies of segregation and surveillance, the movements they inhibit and enable, and, ultimately, the meanings attached to them by peripheral dwellers and the othering that they engender. Based on the concepts of "walling" and "porosity," the authors maintain that walling does not indicate the decline of communitarianism in the peripheries. Instead, they understand it as a socio-material process that conflicts with forms of social differentiation and affinity at various levels.

Jeroen Stevens captures different peripheral spaces within the city center of São Paulo. The occupation of the central buildings and public spaces by the houseless people in the city is a form of presence that claims the right to shelter and the right to the city. Photographs in this essay focus on the houseless movements struggling for inclusion in the production of urban spaces in central urban areas. The author develops a broader argument about the importance of the center in 21st-century urban movements that engage

in social justice. Their spatial practices include encampments and more structured occupations and practices of resistance, which suggest new models of collaborative urban transformation and collective life. Interactions between human and nonhuman actors are essential in distinguishing the land occupations in São Paulo from reclaiming the vacant urban spaces in the city center.

Bringing conflict and urban studies together, **Stephen Àjàdí** challenges the Eurocentric understandings of the center and the periphery. The author starts from the Durumi camp in Abuja, Nigeria's capital, to develop a spatiotemporal analysis in the context of conflict. Àjàdí captures the various levels of peripherality in the camp in relation to the other regions of Abuja and within the camp itself. At the same time, the author reconnects the internally displaced persons living in the region to broader historical genealogies of displacement in the area. In so doing, Àjàdí contributes to the field of urban geopolitics by considering how conflicts unfold in cities on a daily basis rather than by viewing this process from a bird's-eye view. Even as recently as January 2021, Abuja was adamant about forcing the Fulani, an ethnic majority in the Sahel and West Africa, into the rest of the country, especially southwest Nigeria. Because of this, the farmers and the Indigenous residents in the Southwest were murdered and kidnapped. Today, Abuja remains the center of the nation, with conflict-ridden peripheries all around and within it.

Hanna Baumann's concept of periphery is multifaceted; it encompasses parts of East Jerusalem that are nominally included in the municipality of Jerusalem—a precarious *de jure* inclusion—but spatially excluded through a nine-meter concrete wall, such as the Kufr Aqab and the Shuafat refugee camps. Furthermore, the Palestinians living in Jerusalem are "permanent residents" but not citizens, and most of them are stateless. In an exchange with this book's editors, Baumann asked whether the enclaves are being redefined from "ghettos" (spaces that are marginalized yet included within state institutions) to "frontiers," spaces where the state bears no responsibility for the residents, resulting in higher rates of violence. For Baumann, the body is not the periphery itself, but the Palestinians might appear to belong to a distinct ethnic group. They occasionally shape the boundaries of who is "in place" and who is "out of place" in a particular locality. While physical movement restricts the Palestinians to the geographical periphery of Jerusalem, leisure mobility disrupts these boundaries, opening the imagination to different futures.

Francesco Pasta studies the *gecekondu* areas (former illegal/irregular settlements that may still present some degree of irregularity) in Istanbul, a city caught between its integration into the global economy and territorial exclusion. Fikirtepe is a site at the crossroad between migration and capital flows that is currently being erased by urban redevelopment. When the recent economic crisis that started in 2016 brought urban projects to a standstill, Fikirtepe became an interrupted utopia. Here, the shattered simulacra of development coexisted with the very spaces and practices they had to erase in order to exist. The "illusory dream images" of development were haunted by the re-peripheralization emerging from the ruins of neoliberal speculation. Concurrently, Fikirtepe's "return to the periphery" opened opportunities for the peripheral populations to settle there. The immigrants from Syria and Central Asia who work in construction and garbage collection conferred new spatial and temporal meanings on their neighborhoods.

Fabrizia Cannella examines the relationship between the peripheral identities and the peripheral spaces in Naples, the largest city in southern Italy, which is still associated with poverty, crime, and disorder when compared to the "advanced" North. In Naples, the *quartieri popolari* (low-income historic neighborhoods) are notorious for their substandard housing conditions, joblessness, and crime. Living there is the *femminiello*, a quintessentially Neapolitan non-binary subjectivity with fluid sexual identities that first emerged in the historic inner city. The periphery cannot simply be reduced to oppression, marginalization, and subalternity; instead, it often represents a site of possibility where subjectivities assert their right to signify from the margins of hegemonic institutions. Through the voices of CiroCiretta, Tarantina Taran, and Loredana, three *femminielli*, Cannella unpacks multiple peripheries in relation to space, identity, and culture.

Anna Jayne Kimmel studies how the 2017 Festival de Marseille reconstructed cityscapes by placing the people of the periphery at the center. By reinscribing new boundaries within the urban center and destabilizing rigid constructions of national identity, the festival impaired the ephemeral offering of the performer, who is too often pushed to the periphery or essentialized but never allowed full placement. Through its dispersed crowd of audience and performers, venues, funds, and publicity, Kimmel argues that the festival refused the center-periphery divide that is not exclusively about location. Identity politics continue to haunt this divide through embodied movement. When the scope of the festival's performance was reoriented beyond the proscenium, the focus was redirected from the staged bodies of the marginalized communities to a new politics of inclusion

and exclusion created by and for immigrants. As its participants embodied new positions, the festival altered the embodied imaginary of Marseille, allowing fluid interplays within its architectural boundaries.

Diego Caro takes us to the underground spaces of Hong Kong music, where he actively participates as a musician in the band Cracklebox and as a graphic designer for different music organizations. In a bureaucratic society of controlled consumption, some young artists in Hong Kong oppose the commodification of creativity, speculation, and even Chinese political oppression. Their frequently hidden, inaccessible, and small venues form a scattered periphery within the center, where a small minority of the participants gather. These underground spaces add to the creative venues while also constraining their expansion. The artistic appropriation of these diverse spaces has been reappropriated by monopolistic capital through the "busking experiences" and the "picnic music weekends" sponsored by global corporations. The underground spaces of Hong Kong music have become ephemeral under government control and the threat of real estate speculation.

Sarth Khare's visual essay captures the transformation of peri-urban Gurgaon in northwest India through creative destruction and accumulation, including the uneven integration of agrarian classes into the emerging real estate markets in urban villages. India's dazzling urbanization of the millennium city reproduces issues of othering as it pushes the low-income populations to the "outside," and the "heterogeneous beyond" is blamed for the city's ills. The periphery in Gurgaon is a patchwork of pockets of poverty and prosperity, undergoing uneven agrarian transformations. Among them are the slums of Gurugram, where migrant workers from the hinterlands live and are subjected to discrimination on the basis of caste and gender. While the communities of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Muslims are pushed farther to the peripheries, the women face a lack of privacy, inequalities in wages, and various forms of violence, including sexual harassment.

Noritaka Minami's photography renders the Mojave Desert on the periphery of southern California's developed lands and public consciousness. Throughout history, deserts have offered a blank canvas onto which people have projected their beliefs, plans, and desires. In the Mojave Desert, Nathan Mendelsohn, a sociologist at Columbia University, developed the master-planned community of California City. Mendelsohn believed that humankind could create a living environment that would provide all the essentials of modern life, even in harsh deserts. As a utopian project, the plan remained on paper, while the Mojave Desert

has served various purposes, such as being a rangeland, a battleground, and the site of off-road motorized recreation. The appropriation of the Indigenous lands by Western-centric imagination and consumption has left imprints of seizure and wheels on the desert sands.

David Exumé examines the experiences of Haitian immigrants in New York who moved from the periphery to the center during the 1980s. He considers how radio played a significant role in cultivating the communities from the diaspora, in addition to facilitating resistance against the Duvalier regime. According to the author, diaspora is not only configured as a phenomenon of physical displacement; it is also articulated by the information channels that facilitate a connection with the homeland and other people in the broader diaspora. The transnational radio programs produced by the Haitian immigrants in Brooklyn provide peripheral spaces within the prevalent U.S. media landscapes. Along with complicating national boundaries, they also contribute to the Haitian culture's distinctiveness, which is often reduced to the stereotypical conceptions of Black identity.

Worlding peripheries

As intimated earlier, peripheries as a problem space transcend territorial locations to encompass translocal and transnational processes. However, the worlding of peripheries—their worldliness, or the "art of being global" (Roy & Ong, 2011, pp. 1-23)—is a compelling task that entails translating cultural forms from one context to another.[3]
Subaltern histories are fundamental to each worlding of peripheries, often identified as spaces of subalternity.[4] The Third World and subaltern subjects are signifiers in neo-Marxist accounts that consider capitalism and colonialism to be the two shaping forces of homogenized global conditions (Spivak, 1985). However, such practices of worlding run the risk of neglecting historical and geographical heterogeneity while being committed to the global status quo (Roy & Ong, 2011, p. 3). Peripheries must instead be reduced neither to processes shaped only by global capitalist and colonial dynamics nor spaces inhabited by working classes, subaltern people, and postcolonial subjects.
Similarly, if scholars of postcolonial studies have analyzed peripheries of the global South as sites of inventiveness and politics, they have sometimes confined such agencies to the realm of subaltern urbanism, often romanticized as "localized otherness" (Sheppard et

[3] Spivak (1999) drew on Heidegger's worlding (*Being and Time*, 1927, and "The Origin of the Work of Art," 1971) to describe how the Third World is brought into the world (Sheppard et al., 2013, p. 897).
[4] Subaltern studies draw on Gramsci's concept of "subaltern" to uncover the histories of subordinate agents—"in terms of class, caste, age, gender, and office or in any other way" (Guha, vii)—in colonial and nationalist archives, particularly in South Asia. Cf. Gramsci, 2016; Guha, 1988; Chakrabarty, 2000; and Spivak, 2015, among others.

al., 2013, p. 5).[5] Undoubtedly, to achieve specific political goals, subaltern groups may intentionally tone down their complex identities into homogenous ones. Nevertheless, this form of "strategic essentialism" (Spivak, 1984) might obscure the diversified nature of subaltern politics.

How, then, can we move away from peripheries as sites and processes where subaltern agency conflates with a unified "habitus of the dispossessed" (Roy, 2011, p. 228)? One way, I believe, is to understand how specific genealogies of worlding can ground peripheries into specific histories and processes that are, at the same time, capable of re-signifying the global. What follows are three possible genealogies of worlding to help position the various forms of embodiment in this book.

Genealogies of (worlding) peripheries

Urban fringes

Scholars have analyzed the complexities of what are considered peripheries in globalization processes, postcolonial studies, and ethno-racial and gender politics. In urban studies, the term "peripheries" has predominantly come to indicate developments at the urban fringes, including poor settlements, middle-class areas, gated communities, small towns, and rural hinterlands (Herzog, 2014; Ren, 2021). As urban fringes, peripheries have helped interpret post-industrial growth in metropolitan regions. After World War II, the peripheries of European cities indicated areas with social housing where poor and immigrant people lived. If some of these areas have been gentrified, most of the world population still lives in urban peripheries under conditions of socio-racial exclusion, infrastructure deprivation, and illegal or irregular residency (Holston, 2009). In the aftermath of colonialism, the economic crises of the 1970s and the early 1980s, the World Bank's structural adjustments, and democratization processes led to urbanization dynamics that have produced worldwide peripheries wherein 1.6 billion people live in inadequate housing, one billion of whom reside in slums and informal settlements (UN-Habitat, 2005, 2016).

These peripheries are often spaces of insufficiency that depend on the support and guidance of a center but are not shaped by its logic (Simone, 2010). Still, the center-periphery dichotomy risks spatially reifying massive peripheral urbanization as a one-sided territorialization of urban processes (Guney et al., 2019, p. 46). The dualization of a city, which sees the centers as the radiating cores of city life and the peripheries as repositories of social vulnerabilities, fails to grasp the historicity of urban dynamics and obscures possibilities for social

[5] Cf. Guha, 1982; Chatterjee, 2004; and Bayat, 2007 about the peripheries as sites of inventiveness and politics and Roy, 2011 and Jeffrey, 2009 for agency confined to the realm of subaltern urbanism.

transformation.[6] Furthermore, if the analytics of poverty, exclusion, deprivation, and dispossession, often associated with peripheries, help denounce urban inequality, they simultaneously reproduce the fallacies of hegemonic frameworks (e.g., marginality, informality, and illegality). They dismiss on-the-ground processes that exist outside of official recognition, as well as creative resistance to oppressive norms.

Thus, how can we consider peripheral forms of dispossession as generative of political responses to normative ways of being in the world (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013)? How do we write about people from peripheries without essentializing their identities or confining their agency within informal or subaltern urbanism? How do we account for peripheral histories not being outside the logic of the center, which is supposedly planned, formal, and legal? To avoid the center-periphery dichotomy, in this book, we consider peripheries as the *constitutive outside* of variously defined centers—be they metropoles, core countries, urban downtowns, or settler outposts—as centers of city and political life, service, infrastructure, knowledge production, planning, and finance. Investigating the constitutive outside does not mean focusing on dualism but rather on the historical co-constitution of centers and peripheries, which helps avoid fixing people and spaces into pre-formed identities.

This would, however, contrast with the concept of a wholly urbanized planet (Lefebvre, 1968) where there is no bounded spatial unit like a city (Brenner & Schmid, 2015). No cities, no centers, and no peripheries. By considering urbanization as different degrees of capital accumulation, concentration of people, and circulation of goods (Angelo & Goh, 2020), the *urban without an outside* approach (Brenner, 2014) challenges rural/urban divides and liminal spaces like peripheries. However, feminist, poststructuralist, and postcolonial perspectives insist on contemplating the outside, whether "the periphery, the rural, the agrarian question, the hinterland, or the colony" (Roy, cited by Lancione and McFarlane, 2021, p. 26), to analyze historical differences, processes of expropriation and extraction, and social struggles and transformations (Ruddick et al., 2018). We draw on this scholarship to retain the generative role of the peripheries as such an outside for critical inquiry.

At the same time, Harris & Vorms stated that "peripheries" is mostly a term that experts, planners, and administrators use to articulate the overall characteristics of specific areas and formulate public policies (Harris & Vorms, 2017, pp. 10-16)—this is not the case in Brazil, where activist groups from the peripheries profusely use this term. According to the authors, people from various regions of the world do not use "peripheries" as an

[6] Cf. Pereira, 2005; Marques & Torres, 2004; Tanaka, 2006; and Barone, 2013.

umbrella term, much less in opposition to centers; instead, they use many words to indicate the fragmentation of socio-spatial processes and forms. Thus, choosing peripheries as a problem space means being in dialogue with a specific scholarship that consider them as contingent forms distributed over urban regions, fragmented and dynamic.[7] "[T]he standard geographies of core and periphery are disrupted and dislocated" (Roy, 2009, p. 828); this is true within the global South as well.

Other scholars have tackled this fragmentation under the "suburbanization" framework. Harris and Vorms analyzed linguistic imperialism by observing whether different urban and more-than-urban forms are brought into the world as either urban peripheries or suburbs (Harris & Vorms, 2017, p. 6). I selected the term "peripheries" over "suburbs" because suburbanization grounds urban sprawl in Anglo-American urban histories, thereby tapping into genealogies of middle-class neighborhoods. Instead, peripheries in this publication encompass favelas, *gecekondular*, *quartieri spagnoli*, squatted buildings, Indigenous lands, refugee camps, underground spaces, and ethnic enclaves, whose histories have been shaped by colonialism, settler colonialism, neocolonialism, and militarism. This brings us to the genealogy of the peripheries rooted in global macroeconomic dynamics. In this context, Latin-American dependency and world-system theories have been essential for understanding how capitalist globalization and geopolitical forces have unevenly impacted contemporary peripheries.

Periphery countries in the modern world-system theory

According to modernization theories of the 1950s and '60s, Third World countries would develop through stages of technological and cultural advancement along the temporal lines of Western civilization and progress (Rostow, 1959; Hoselitz, 1960; Parsons, 1964; Lerner, 1958). These theories valued the global forms of economy while marginalizing other forms that were equally important in terms of city economies and everyday livelihoods, especially the informal sector. In the 1970s, scholars from Latin America challenged post-war development modernization by claiming that underdevelopment was an integral part of development. Central countries needed to extract cheap labor and natural resources from peripheral ones (Dos Santos, 1970; Quijano, 1977; Bambirra, 1983). Dependency theorists insisted on the mutual constitution of development and underdevelopment within the center-periphery model, a dynamic termed "development of underdevelopment" (Frank, 1966).[8]

[7] Cf. Roy, 2009, p. 825; Caldeira, 2017; and Peeren, Stuit, & Van Weyenberg, 2016.

[8] Cf. Kaplan, 1972; Schteingart, 1973; and Rofman, 1974 regarding the mutual constitution of development and underdevelopment within the center-periphery model. Cf. Vegliò, 2021 for a detailed analysis of Dependency Theory.

While Castells (1973) applied the center-periphery approach to the urban question through the framework of "dependent urbanization," others blamed local socio-political structures for underdevelopment while advocating for the transformation of national economic structures, such as import substitution industrialization (Cardoso & Faletto, 1979). Wallerstein (1974) further theorized two interrelations of macro-regions constituted by core and periphery countries, each based on a different production model: labor-intensive at the periphery and capital-intensive at the core (Goldfrank, 2000). The unequal exchange of surpluses occurred between the labor-intensive sectors on the periphery and the highly technological, industrialized core (*Ibidem*). The semi-periphery countries served as a buffer between the core and the periphery as sites where a mix of activities and institutions unique to those areas occurred (Skocpol, 1977). Within the modern world-system, Brazilian scholars referred to the urban fringes as the "peripheries of capitalism" (Maricato, 1966; Bonduki & Rolnik, 1982).

Scholars of global cities built upon the world-system framework, reading worldwide urban peripheries of the global South as products of global capital restructuring and international migration of labor (Sassen-Koob, 1980, 1983; Amin, 1997). However, by considering peripheries as homogeneous repositories for the poor, these scholars often fixed peripheral subjectivities socially (the working class and precariat) and spatially (urban informality). Following these lines of inquiries, in the form of slums, peripheries have been analyzed as spaces of surplus humanity resulting from the retreat of the state and shrinking urban economies (Davis, 2006). This account risks neglecting historical and geographical contexts and differences, including race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. It has been through these differences that forms of oppression and liberation have been historically constructed in peripheral spaces and processes.

In urban studies, the reading of urbanization in the global South through the Third-World framework led to dismissing "cities off the map" as being critical to global dynamics. Southern cities were studied through the lens of development *versus* modernity (Robinson, 2002). They were spaces in need of reforms and diagnostics (Roy, 2011). Building on Clifford's (1997) study, Robinson proposed a discrepant cosmopolitan approach to urban studies to shift the focus from the city center to the urban edge, from global cities to ordinary cities and rural hinterlands (Robinson, 2002, p. 532; 2013a). These studies opened our understanding of modes of non-Western-centric urbanization as separate models informed by colonial histories (*Ibidem*), as well as revolts, detachments, withdrawals, and parallel formations. To complicate this framework, I am adding two additional theoretical anchors advanced by scholars of the global South that we used in the original call for papers of this book: peripheral urbanization and cityness.

Peripheral urbanization and cityness

According to Caldeira (2017), the term "peripheries" refers to spaces produced by "peripheral urbanization" in the global South. This mode of producing urban spaces is characterized by the residents of peripheries, who build their houses and neighborhoods on their own while transversally engaging with institutional forms of spatial production, such as state directives, lawful tenure, and formal employment (*Ibid.*, p. 7). Rather than referring to a location in the city—its margins—peripheral urbanization refers to a method of creating space that can be anywhere. Spaces are not peripheral because of their geographical location but rather because of the processes by which the residents are the agents of urbanization instead of simply being the consumers of spaces produced and regulated by others (*Ibid.*, p. 5).

In the global South, peripheral urbanization takes on different forms depending on the context. These modes of articulation involve a wide range of actors, sectors, and places whose identities and meanings are not always easily translatable across different situations. Here, the embodiment does not only pertain to individuals or even households but to lateral connections of mutual entanglement—how one thing connects to another in terms of social and material networks. This framework unsettles our understanding of self-built ("autoconstructed") peripheries as those informally produced by the urban poor. Furthermore, it reveals how self-building ("autoconstruction") produces both improvements and inequalities (*Ibid.*, p. 9). The transverse nature of these interactions means that inequalities cannot always be mapped based on simple, dualistic oppositions such as "regulated versus unregulated, legal residences versus slums, [or] formal versus informal" (*Ibid.*, p. 7). Consequently, these categories become unstable.

In peripheral urbanization, the geographical, economic, political, and cultural relationships between peripheries and their mutually constituted centers have spatial and material implications. Peripheral spaces may be characterized by specific material and ecological conditions: self-built dwellings, infrastructure precarity or exclusion, underground materiality, interstitial openings, technologies of separation, environmental pollution, hazards, and scarcity of resources and mobility. As such, many authors in this book address the very materiality of peripheries and its entanglement with embodied identities.

The second framework I want to recuperate is cityness, which, as stated before, signifies peripheral practices that are systematically erased or silenced. Originating from the concept of the ordinariness of all cities (Amin & Graham, 1997; Robinson, 2002, 2013a; Pieterse, 2010), cityness refers to the practices of inhabiting the city that cannot be grasped by official accounts of analysts and policymakers. The term pertains to those interactions between people, spaces, and things (Simone, 2010) exceeding attempts to regulate them. Left out of

the analytical picture, assemblages of discrepant movements and economic activities are characterized by unanticipated interactions and flexible outcomes. Although deemed peripheral to urban life, these practices are nevertheless essential to it (*Ibidem*). However, to avoid romanticizing cityness, I want to situate it in everyday geographies and regimes of coloniality. In this context, cityness becomes a political space in which new forms of collective life unfold (Bhan et al., 2020) while, at the same time, different forms of oppression reproduce the "coloniality of power" (Quijano, 2000, 2007).

Coloniality of power

Due to unbalanced relations of power between Europe and the (post)colonial Other, the worlding of cities has traditionally relied on a core-periphery model of globalization, both in neoliberal and postcolonial frameworks (Roy, 2009, pp. 824–825). Beginning in colonial times and extending into the present, the "coloniality of power" entails the logic, culture, and order of the modern world-system. It includes forms of oppression such as racism and heteropatriarchy (Quijano, 2000, 2007; Quijano & Wallerstein, 1992; Lugones, 2007, 2016). Therefore, we cannot study peripheries without addressing questions of postcolonial status, gender, sexuality, and ethnic-racial oppression feeding urban apartheid, forced migrations, gentrification, and environmental racism. These conditions make urban spaces and practices peripheral within colonial histories of extraction.

Modern architecture and planning played a critical role in framing development discourses, shaping the Third World as periphery, and administering the European colonies through urban plans and housing programs (Muzaffar, 2007). For example, in the French colonies, the reorganization of bidonvilles by displacement, restructuring, or assimilation constituted the first stage of the cultural modernization of the Natives. In the U.S., the United Nations Housing Town and Country Planning section created multiple missions to produce master plans in Singapore, Kabul, Beirut, Lima, and Lagos. They set up conferences, planning bodies, research centers, and architecture schools in countries undergoing decolonization. Peripheries represented laboratories for experiments to manage local populations and feedback loops on the organization of the metropolis (Rabinow, 1995). Today, many cities of the global South remain laboratories to experiment with policies and planning interventions that can go wrong (De Satgé & Watson, 2018; Simone, 2010, p. 46).

European colonialism and postcolonial affiliations within the global South have operated through institutions and powers that do not have the interest of the general urban population in mind (Simone, 2010, p. 18). Policies have been punitive toward certain

practices and livelihoods, subjecting people to displacement when they do not conform to regulations. People living in peripheries are subject to forced migration and temporary arrangements due to conflicts. At the same time, newly defined zones of environmental preservation and geotechnical risk result in evictions of squatters and slum dwellers. These people become deprived of shelter, livelihood, property, infrastructure, basic services, and the right to the city.

Evictions are embedded in the logic of racial banishment as "state-instituted violence against racialised bodies and communities" (Roy, 2019, p. 227). Within these legal geographies of colonial domination and racial exclusion, the erasure of Black places and histories often causes civil and social death, as noted in McKittrick's notion of "urbicide" (McKittrick, 2011, pp. 950–953). However, between the ethnocratic logic of "Blackness" of eviction/destruction/death and "Whiteness" of legality/approval/safety, gray spaces are positioned at the "periphery of the periphery" (Yiftachel, 2009a, p. 89; 2009b, p. 247). Additionally, evictions result from the financialization of the housing sector intending to "unlock" land values in cities (Rolnik, 2019). Who owns and can claim home and land? Who regulates such claims, and how? In peripheral capitalism, land occupies a central position for urbanization: mechanisms of land transformation and capital accumulation create highly speculative housing markets.

Beyond evictions and housing speculation, *foreclosure* refers to the negation of certain representations within valorized spatial practices and discourses (Hesse, 2014). However, since the colonial-racial foreclosure is never fully realized, what has been foreclosed constantly threatens the norm. How can radical performances unsettle normative discourses and practices and reopen previously foreclosed spaces and processes? Thinking from peripheries may contribute to answering this question.

Thinking from peripheries

Studying peripheries means not only focusing on the geographical South but also shedding light on relationships of power and knowledge by which alternatives to central (Northern-centric) spaces, practices, and histories have been foreclosed or constructed as unsound. When we consider the South as an embodied relationship between knowledge and power, questions can be posed from any periphery in the world, also in the geographic North. The South can be seen as a set of moving peripheries from which to challenge authoritative knowledge—the "peripheries of geographies of authoritative knowledge" (Bhan, 2016, p. 15; Bhan, 2019, p. 642 citing Comaroff & Comaroff, 2015).

In this regard, thinking *from* a place does not mean merely producing knowledge from where we live, as this does not necessarily lead us to embodied knowledge production. Mbembe, for

example, insisted that African scholars have also written about Africa as an object apart from the world, disengaging from the "exercise in writing the worldliness [...] of contemporary African life forms" (Mbembe, 2004, p. 347). Thinking *from* a place rather than *about* a place requires that we ask certain questions first (Bhan, 2017, cited in McElroy & Werth, 2019). Therefore, we invited the authors in this book to engage with deep ethnography or collaboration with activist movements instead of only presenting analytical or historical work. We looked for ethnographies that could ensure long-term commitments, contextual knowledge, and slow thinking while fully attending to how changing environments are reshaping knowledge production (Günel et al., 2020).

In this sense, the question about "embodiment" that this publication poses helped assemble accounts from the ground as opposed to the "context-less, abstract universalisms of many northern theorists" (De Satgé & Watson, 2018, p. 17). We asked, "How do peripheral structures serve a constructive purpose of affirming ways of life by supporting various bodily practices? What are the bodily challenges peripheral subjectivities pose against their urban conditions? How does embodying peripheries for cultural survival become a radical political practice?" By addressing these questions, the authors of this book tackle political structures emerging from bodily practices that challenge normative notions of subjectivity. The aim is to learn from the realities that peripheral dwellers face by using the body within available models of comportment (Simone, 2010, p. 58). This is critical if we consider that we ought to assemble a self that makes sense while considering what is possible under peripheral conditions (Mahmood, 2005, cited in Simone, 2010, p. 58). Even when people move from peripheries to centers, their bodily, gendered, and racial identities shape new spaces of adaptation and reconstruction.

If thinking from peripheries helps us focus on inequality, then it also triggers questions on resistance, agency, and counter-practices to normative ones. On the one hand, by recognizing forms of dispossession and deprivation in peripheries, we denounce structural racism and heteropatriarchy. On the other hand, it is critical to learn from practices of resistance and activism emerging from noncentral notions of history and spaces. Peripheries are often seen as spaces of potential creativity, innovation, and adaptation—it is precisely the peripheries' generative role that is usually overlooked in predominant approaches to urban life (Simone, 2010, p. 41). Being peripheral gives access to networks of provisioning, spaces, and infrastructures outside central norms. For some scholars, "the emancipatory potential of the urban planet lies in fact in the periphery" (Keil, 2018, p. 1594), an outlook which—yet again—runs the risk of essentializing peripheral politics and subjectivities but has potential for decentering urban theory.

Conclusion: decentering urban theory

Decentering refers to the process of diverting from an established center, thus departing from existing assumptions about origin, priority, or essence. *Embodying Peripheries* may contribute in many ways to "decentering urban theory" (Caldeira, 2009). As a multidisciplinary publication, it offers different perspectives on peripheries that challenge disciplinary silos. By tackling embodied identities, it exposes political structures emerging from spatial practices that are considered peripheral by mainstream urban theories. Additionally, by providing on-the-ground accounts, the book decenters urban analyses as "views from nowhere" (De Satgé & Watson, 2018, p. 21).

In this introduction, I have argued that thinking from peripheries does not mean analyzing them as embodying localized otherness; rather, it entails investigating practices grounded in peripheral histories and sites capable of re-signifying the global. I drew on scholarly debates that aim to complicate the two universal principles of globalization—capitalism and colonialism—that risk confining peripheral identities and agencies to outcomes of universal laws. What seems to be critical is to reconnect the peripheries with genealogies of worlding that position them as processes, topological sites, and embodied relations of power.

Approaching peripheries as a question rather than as a given helps defamiliarize known and, most of all, univocal articulations of the concept. I suggested that many answers to this question are possible because peripheries as a problem space are not only the objects and sites of thinking but also their substance. We collected many articulations of this framework constructed on different sites and connected to various histories. Each periphery emerging from the authors' accounts does different political work. As the South cannot be defined *a priori* but must be understood relationally (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2015), the relationship between peripheries and centers as constitutive outsides is constantly shifting. There are centers in peripheries, peripheries in centers, and peripheries in peripheries. For all of these contexts, I still refer to processes, central or peripheral.

Scholars of the global South suggest that studying peripheries asks for specific methodologies and ways of seeing and knowing. To articulate peripheral cityness means to create specific archives. It implies the cross-fertilization of ethnographic texture, semiotic and topographical patterns, linguistic and spatial practices, and interpretive metaphors (Pieterse, 2010, p. 217). It also demands reformulating research questions as new empirical evidence emerges since peripheries always change and present various temporalities (Robinson, 2013b). Finally, decentering not only involves urban theory but also investigating conditions of heterogeneity, difference, and emergence simultaneously *within* peripheries. I hope that these approaches will create new opportunities for further research.

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