

# URBAN AGE JOHANNESBURG CONFERENCE

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# The global corporate economy

- Multiple often highly specialized, circuits
- A global city is located on many different circuits
- One result: many diverse inter-city geographies
- Thick and thin networks of groups of cities
- Emergent cross-border informal economies: also multiple circuits

# Implications of emphasizing specialized circuits

- It is not all about competition among cities
- Overall indices of participation in the global economy are only partly useful.
- Networks of cities: can we move towards making these into organizational platforms for novel types of global governance
- Seeing like a global firm/seeing like a city

# The spaces of the center

New spatial correlates of centrality:

Beyond the (often reinvented) city center:

Multi-nodal metro areas

Intercity networks (incl. global networks)

Electronic space

Centrality as a space of power vs. space of political making: informal political actors



# Informality: also as an indicator of transitions

- In periods of transition or unsettlement, informality (economic and political) tends to increase. (can be good or bad)
- Spaces of centrality: enable the emergence of the informal as an outcome of transitions (informal economy in NY)
- Also make the informal legible.
- Re-interpreting the informal economy: Emergent political and economic actors

# Re-interpreting the informal

- Emergent political and economic actors at the intersection of often mixed contexts: Formal system and its rigidities; informal vendors supplied by formal sellers (electronics, appliances).
- Violation of law: length of violation can be a ground for legalization (immigrants: amnesty; informal entrepreneurs: legalize)
- Informal political actors: new types of claims

