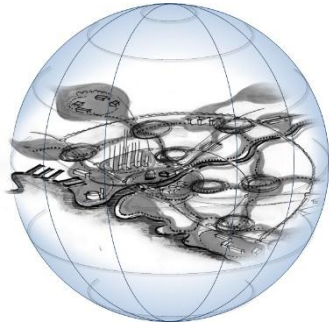




## Deeper City

*collective intelligence and the pathways from smart to wise*



4-8

## City-wise dynamics & pathways

**EXTRACT – NOT FOR PUBLICATION**

It seems cities are not only grey areas on the map, but a process of co-evolution, a 'drama in time' ...<sup>1</sup> Here the dynamic cycle of renewal seems useful.<sup>2</sup> Most urban planning is geared up for growth or stability, but this lasts only until the next phase of decline and/or crisis. Such problems are then put into another section, for 'crisis management' or 'regeneration', often with controversial and disruptive re-location, re-structuring, re-branding and many other 're-' words.

Such dramas are sketched on **CITIES-III** upper left **a)**, as a *Mode-I* and *Mode-II* urban change. We start with rapid expansion on a profit-seeking resource-intensive model, as seen in 19<sup>th</sup> century Manchester, now in Dubai or Shanghai. This tends towards climax and conservation, where urban form expands to the optimum – maybe a sustainable balance, more likely a fragile *ancien régime*, the Roman city of bread and circuses. Sooner or later, just as in a forest, there is a release/crisis/tipping point where changing conditions cause sudden collapse or forest fire, leaving empty structures and stranded communities. The 'shrinking city' took extreme forms in Detroit, Leipzig, Chelyabinsk, Liverpool wherever a single industry dominates at the cost of diversity and resilience.<sup>3</sup> In the later stages of the cycle comes 're-organization', as seen in typical waterfront gentrification behind security fences where entrepreneurs are in the loop, while the unskilled are hostages to extractive labour markets or abusive welfare systems.

Figure 4-8

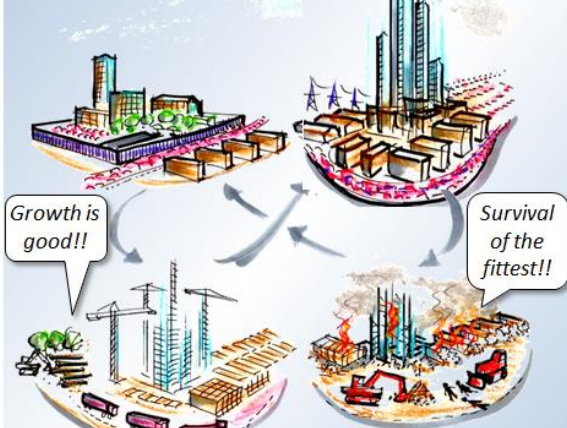
# CITIES-III

Putting it together: the dynamic cycle, urban connexus & synergistic pathways

## a) SMART / UNSMART URBAN CYCLE

**4) RE-ORGANIZATION :** Gentrified enclaves, exclusion of vulnerable

**2) CLIMAX / CONSERVATION** surface growing stability & tension



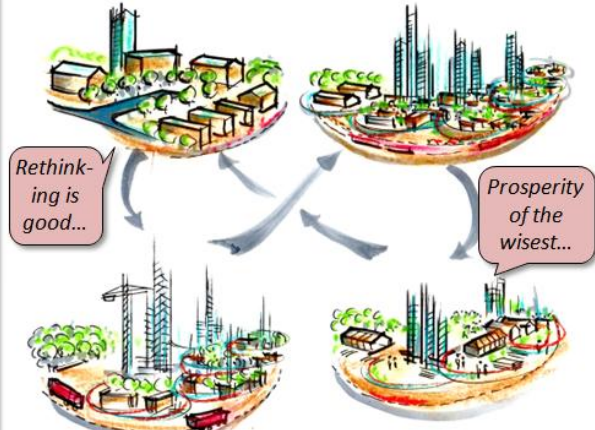
**1) GROWTH:**  
Hyper-expansion of material development

**3) RELEASE / CRISIS:**  
Disruption, collapse, obsolete structures & lives

## b) 'WISER' URBAN CYCLE

**4) RE-ORGANIZATION:** creative DIY zones for ideas & enterprises

**2) CLIMAX / CONSERVATION** Stability & resilience in diversity

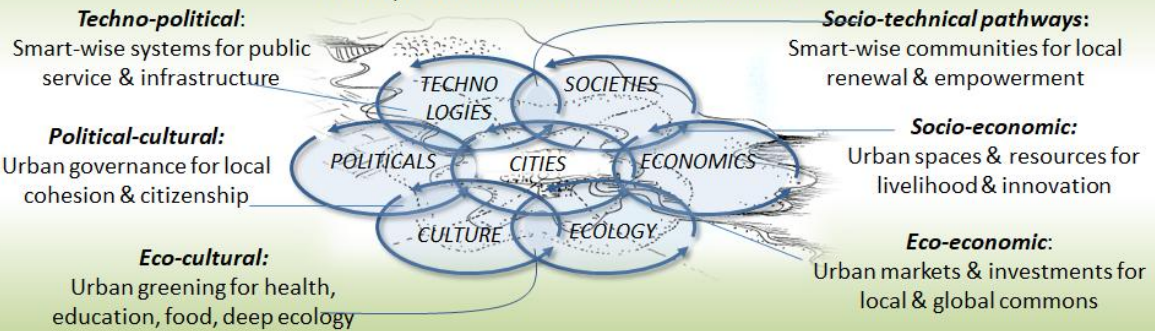


**1) GROWTH:**  
Diverse, inclusive, regenerative development

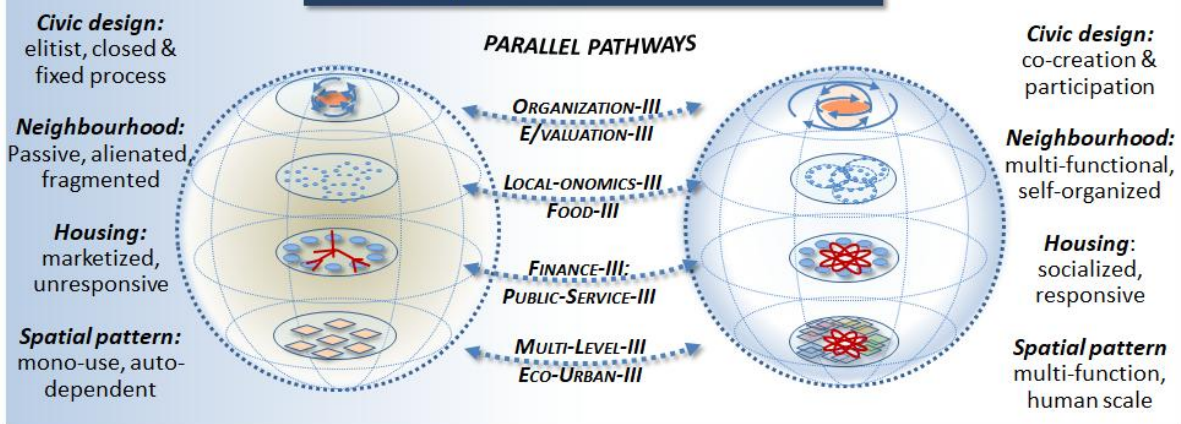
**3) RELEASE / CRISIS:**  
Managed adaptation, demounting, recirculation

## c) CITIES-III CONNEXUS

Pathways on the interconnections between domains



## d) CITIES-III PATHWAYS



By contrast there's a more synergistic cycle sketched at upper right **b)**. Here the growth is diverse, creative, inclusive and regenerative: at the climax and conservation phase, the city retains its multiplicity and resilience. So when the crisis comes,

communities and enterprises can adapt, structures are demounted for re-use and the vulnerable are protected. The conditions are then ripe for a strategic re-organization, rebuilding the social and economic fabric. This is the real meaning of ‘sustainable regeneration’ – not a return to an extractive and exclusive marketplace – but a ‘bounce forward’ towards a *collective urban intelligence*. While urban change is a fact of life, we can shift from a *Mode-I* and *II* evolution with ‘creative destruction’, towards a *Mode-III* co-evolution with ‘creative transformation’.

So our pathways here follow the logic of the dynamic cycle for growth (urban development): and reorganization (urban regeneration).

### Urban development pathways

Faced with a blank sheet or empty landscape, how to build a city? This classic agenda of utopian planners and architects often ends up with ‘design determinism’, by assuming that a physical template is enough to generate a many-layered community. New cities such as Chandigarh or Brasilia, or recent eco-smart prototypes such as Masdar or Songdo, often turn out myopic and mono-functional.<sup>4</sup>

In historic times there was a geographical ‘reason for being’. A natural harbour or river crossing would emerge as a trading hub, which over time would grow industry and services and populations. In an era of global chains and networks, the dynamic ‘reason for being’ is much more volatile and vulnerable, reaching for intangible quality-of-life factors for mobile professionals or eco-chic consumers. New urban settlements are dictated by economic or political imperatives, and the dynamics of social aggregation/segregation (i.e. location based on proximity to the like-minded). In the crowded UK new settlements or urban extensions are basically political games, searching for openings in a highly regulated game of land, permissions, finance and infrastructure. When the gates finally open in a growth area, 5000 or 10,000 new homes are suddenly dumped into a sensitive landscape, against strong opposition, and with little chance of a co-evolution process. Could there be other ways to do physical development, to better enable self-organization of local livelihoods or cultural enterprises? This suggests that the physical urban form needs its own inbuilt capacity for self-organization and adaptive renewal, as seen with cultural townscapes and historic buildings, learning and adapting and maturing with a time-depth over decades.<sup>5</sup>

With that in mind, basic pathways can be sketched, not for ‘place-making’ (as if designers parachuting in could make places), more like ‘place enabling or co-evolution’.<sup>6</sup> **Urban societal pathways** (*with social-spatial synergies*), start with social hubs, the primary schools, shops, charity shops, bars and hairdressers, and then work with the demographic trends, not for retirement enclaves, but for inter-generational links between young and old. For seniors we look towards co-housing communities, with integrated live-work-care, but for the younger generation there is great flux and insecurity in jobs or housing. So we aim for **urban developmental pathways**, (*with a spatial-economic logic*), for multi-functional youth hubs, creative zones, mixed and

short life tenures, live-work-event warehouses and workshops, pop-up shops and fairs, cultural arenas or peri-urban eco-villages.

## Urban regeneration pathways

Sooner or later, every city goes through some kind of crisis and restructuring, but the standard response is often messy and conflicted. Urban decline was previously framed as a 'market failure', needing large public interventions, targeted on areas of multiple deprivation: but without recognizing the structural causes, such interventions can be high-cost and high-risk. The policy framing then shifted to a free-market small-state approach, where 'sustainable regeneration' fixes a localized decline in real estate values, with just enough intervention to get back to free-market development. In this way regeneration is basically a political agenda with technical inputs, more than a technical planning process with policy decisions.<sup>7</sup>

*Deeper City* helps to enlarge this frame with a synergistic view. We see areas with multiple scars and traumas, both economic and social/cultural/psychological, from decades of de-industrialization, cultural deracination, hostile welfare systems, loss of respect and 'depressive hedonism'.<sup>8</sup> In extreme cases, outrage and trauma can build up to lethal proportions, with the radicalization seen in *SOCIETAL-III* (Fig.10-1) (and the current populist wave seems very likely to exacerbate the traumas of the left-behind). Either we ignore the human dimensions and force communities into a free-market mould, or we find better ways to work with the human resource and potential.

And so a more synergistic *Regeneration-III* emerges in *CITIES-III*, upper right **b**). Here, in crisis or release, diversity builds resilience to change, buildings and industries are demounted, the most vulnerable take priority, and in the re-organization, creative DIY zones emerge with social-cultural spaces and enterprises. *Regeneration-III* calls for not only renewal of the physical fabric but the human resources and social-economic fabric, as a 'foundational economy' or 'deep place'.<sup>9</sup> This inspires some colourful pathway images:

- **'Urban gardening' pathway:** planting of seeds, incubation and cultivation to enable the natural growth and self-organization of a diversity of habitats and ecosystems, human and natural.
- **'Urban cooking' pathway:** intentional assembly of ingredients and resources, into synergistic combinations, to create experiences which by nature are shared.
- **'Urban weaving' pathway:** gathering the threads with a tapestry of collective imagination to form more meaningful and liveable pictures.
- **'Urban therapy' pathway:** a dysfunctional and disconnected urban fabric is in many ways similar to post-traumatic syndrome, so we draw on insights from psycho-therapy, counselling, mindfulness and conflict mediation.<sup>10</sup>

## Towards the urban *connexus*

So as these pathways multiply up, can they fit together? Actually there's no master blueprint or supercomputer with The Answer – any claims for the ultimate 'theory of the city' or 'urban model' have a very simplistic view of complexity. But there are ways of working with the *deeper city mind* which are more collaborative and co-evolutionary, looking beyond today's problems to tomorrow's transformation. This all shows up in the *connexus* in the centre **c**), the cognitive/conscious version of the *nexus* which first appeared in the **CITIES-LANDSCAPE** (Fig.4-1). The pathways here emerge from the overlaps or 'trading zones' between the domains: socio-economic 'livelihoods', political-economic 'institutions', eco-cultural 'green thinking' and so on. And the principles then point towards practical projects or actions, such as 'intergenerational exchange', or 'low-carbon finance', or 'green-space partnerships'.

On this picture we can overlay the pathways from 'syndromes to synergies' for each of the themes in the chapter, shown in the lower part (**d & e**). (To recap: a 'pathway' is a bundle of visions and goals, value-added chains and loops, learning and skills, resources and enablers, based on some form of *collective urban intelligence*). And then, each pathway seems to involve other parallel pathways from other chapters. If the first gap is money then we look at new directions in **FINANCE-III** (Fig.5-5) or **ENTERPRISE-III** (Fig.5-4). If it's about government hierarchy and inertia, we draw on **MULTI-LEVEL-III** (Fig.8-2) or **PUBLIC-SERVICE-III** (Fig.8-4). If the root problem is hierarchy and corruption, we look to **EQUALITIES-III** (Fig.8-5). If we aspire to a new world order we can look towards the ideas of **CO-OPOLISM-III** (Fig.8-6) for further debate ...

If it wasn't clear already, let's put it in bold – ***the first enabler of a Deeper City is the creative energy of the people***. So, in practice we look for spaces and resources for social groups, adventure playgrounds and outdoor classrooms, senior artist zones, holistic health-hubs, give-boxes and care exchanges. Every city needs 're-homing zones' for people in vulnerability, to build or borrow low cost, temporary or portable, self-organized shelters, tiny-houses and their support systems.<sup>11</sup> Every city needs some kind of 'reciprocity zone', arenas and hubs of mutual aid, care and exchange, linking needs with resources. (This also works at other levels, of creative entrepreneurs and investors, but they are already well catered for). The physical built environment is only one layer of this picture, but an essential one. At the micro-scale we look for 'home-zone' streets and social-hub shops, and at the macro-scale, a synergistic city-region, with spaces for diverse cultures, creative enterprises and mutual communities.

### (Box 4e) Examples: collective urban intelligence

*For city greening, we look for human 're-wilding zones' and creative frontlines and constructive resistance in the inner cities and peri-urban fringes: from the New York 'High Line', to the Canadian greenbelt campaign, the Global Anti-Aerotropolis Movement, and the urban 'Incredible Edible' grow-zones.<sup>12</sup> New forms of mutual finance, collateral, ownership and stewardship are emerging: so we look for urban 'co-investment zones', with social crowd-sourcing for*

*equity finance, focused on social or eco-innovation.<sup>13</sup> For new enterprise we look for incubators, warehouses, platform areas, with access to temporary buildings and land, experimental living labs, mind-labs and fab-labs, as signalled in 'Barcelona 5.0'.<sup>14</sup>*

At this point practitioners might well ask – ok, so where to start on a Monday morning? The short answer: gather people around tables, debate and draw maps of the problem, zooming in or out for detail, then explore changes and uncertainties in motion. Bring together creative visions for new synergies and opportunities, then turn it towards action with pathways and strategies.

**Table 4-1: Cities-III: Summary and self-assessment**

	<b>Mode-I Linear</b>	<b>Mode-II Evolutionary</b>	<b>Mode-III Co-evolutionary</b>
	<b>'CLEVER': complex</b>	<b>'SMART': emergent complexity</b>	<b>'WISE': deeper complexity</b>
<b>'WIDER': (actors/factors)</b>			
<b>Neighborhood</b>	Local functions	Local asset values	Local quality of life
<b>Housing</b>	Housing as units	Housing as markets	Housing as communities
<b>Retrofit</b>	Low-carb reduction	Low-carb markets	Low-carb livability
<b>City-region</b>	Linear urban expansion	Adaptive growth	Synergistic development
<b>Anti-city-region</b>	Green-belt policy	Rural-urban markets	Integrated 'eco-belt'
<b>City-making</b>	Command regulation	Competition-based policy	Co-learning & co-creation:
<b>DEEPER: (domains)</b>			
<b>Social</b>	Social units	Social networks	Social intelligence
<b>Technical</b>	Mono-functional	Multi-functional	Integrated systems
<b>Economic</b>	Industrial production	Extractive capital	Holistic livelihoods
<b>Environment</b>	Ecosystems functions	Ecosystems markets	Ecosystems in society
<b>Political</b>	Institutional structures	Power & incentives	Strategic intelligence
<b>Cultural</b>	Urban niches	Cultural hubs & quarters	Urban civilizations
<b>Spatial</b>	City as machine	City as jungle	City as multi-versity
<b>Myths &amp; archetypes</b>	<i>Economic &amp; population &amp; space growth</i>	<i>Capitalist evolution &amp; suburban way of life</i>	<i>System transformation &amp; 'quality of life'</i>

The self-evaluation summary in *Table 4-1* could be useful. Sketch it on flipcharts with blank spaces and ask the people ('stakeholders') to mark up their problems, anything from lack of housing, to youth crime, to liveability. Then debate and overlay with arrows and circles, 'what's coming' in the future; 'what's possible' in visions and ideas; and 'what's to be done' for action tomorrow or next year. If we can find useful indicators to fill the table, then we can visualize with the Synergy-Scan tool, as demonstrated in *DEVELOPMENTAL-III (Fig.10-2)*.

All this is **NOT** guaranteed to solve all problems in a 10-point checklist ... It should help to combine with other tools (hi-tech/low-tech, people-centred or analysis centred, local/global and so on). And it should be of practical help in mapping, sense-making and navigation of the turbulence ahead ...

## Notes

---

<sup>1</sup> Welter 2003

<sup>2</sup> Gunderson & Holling 2001

<sup>3</sup> Martinez-Fernandez et al 2012

<sup>4</sup> Cugurullo 2013

<sup>5</sup> Fusco Girard & Nijkamp 2011

<sup>6</sup> Rudlin 2014

<sup>7</sup> Deakin 2009

<sup>8</sup> Fisher 2009

<sup>9</sup> Lang & Adamson 2014; Bowman et al 2014

<sup>10</sup> Mishra 2017; Zukin 2010

<sup>11</sup> Mitchell 2014; Heben 2014

<sup>12</sup> Ravetz 2015

<sup>13</sup> Lewis & Conaty 2014

<sup>14</sup> Batalla & Ribera-Fumaz 2015