



Sharon Zukin, Philip Kasinitz, and Manganin Chen (eds.), *Global Cities, Local Streets: Everyday Diversity from New York to Shanghai*, London: Routledge, 2016, 221 p.

Reviewed by: Merve Aygün

The powerfully evocative chapters in *Global Cities, Local Streets: Everyday Diversity from New York to Shanghai* take you walking on the streets to be familiar with the various stories of shopkeepers, stakeholders and narratives of upscale and downscale urban formations in everyday lives of local shopping streets in six different cities. Sometimes as a tourist or just someone eyeing the merchandise, but mostly as a familiar neighbor, you will be appropriating the special but global taste of each public streetscape through the ethnographic data that the editors provide in the book. In this sense it is not inaccurate to say that *Global Cities, Local Streets* thus appeals not only to urban studies audiences, but also beyond an academic readership to public intellectuals. Divided into eight chapters with six case studies ranging from gentrification, globalization, market dynamics, immigration policy and rules governing real estate, role of local government in urban renewal and consumption, *Global Cities, Local Streets* intends to charter a path and define a role for local streets as critical ingredients in the cultural ecosystem that undergird cities' sense of globality. In this sense, editors in *Global Cities, Local Streets* view local shopping streets as not simply about the exchange of money for goods and services, but extol these districts as spaces of where we experience everyday diversity. At the core of their framework lies a unique picture of how the course of gentrification and globalization manifested in the local streetscapes of New York, Shanghai, Amsterdam, Berlin, Toronto, and Tokyo and the lives of its residents. In broad terms, editors argue that there is a dilemma between being global and staying local because what makes a place global is its uniqueness, but then what makes this place vulnerable to standardization are the same forces that are brought by its global fame.

@ PhD Student, Yıldız Technical University. aygunmer@gmail.com



© İlmî Etüdler Derneđi
DOI: 10.12658/D0187
insan & toplum, 8(4), 2018, 203-206.
insanvetoplum.org

In terms of the methodology, the three editors of this volume, sociologist and urbanist Professors Sharon Zukin and Philip Kasinitz of the City University of New York (CUNY), and Trinity Collage Professor Xiangming Chen utilize a comparative approach between twelve streets, one is upscale and the other is downscale in six cities. They employ a variety of quantitative and qualitative techniques along with surveys, statistical data, in-depth semi structured interviews and participant observation. In each chapter, there is a compelling narrative about a particular case, accompanied by photos of the site and a map showing the location that reveal the context of the city. Interviews conducted by a research team in each city with shopkeepers, community leaders, and other stakeholders; inventoried types of businesses and their cultural identifiers; and investigated municipal plans enhance the multi-perspective quality of the research. The 'thick' ethnographic description in each chapter gives a coherent picture and a deep ethnographic understanding of those places concerning everyday life rather than tending to focus on abstract concepts.

In their introductory chapter, editors attempt to outline a framework for the rhetoric of urban growth in line with the two inevitable forces that the local streets are facing: globalization and gentrification. They refer to gentrification as a concept working like a code that could lead low-income and migrant clusters to ghettoisation, or become tourist attractions by introducing the ABCs of gentrification: art galleries, boutiques, and cafés. After laying the ground for the upcoming chapters, the editors focus on the extra-economic functions of the local shopping streets. In this context, streets are referred to as habitats and ecosystems creating a unique identity through the social interaction. By giving reference to Lefebvre's (1991) and Jacob's (1961) vision, they urge us to think that local streets establish moral ownership, place attachment, urban sociability and everyday diversity.

In the next chapters, two seemingly different streets evolving through time are presented. In Chapter 2, editors focus on Orchard and Fulton Streets that were historically labeled ghettos with their ethnic affiliations to illustrate the divergent ecosystems that they form in New York City. Editors point out how the gentrification process reshapes the streets' ecosystem. Ethnographic data shows that the remaining 'black neighborhood' image of Fulton street has been branded by promoting its traditional African-American identity as a taste of a close-knit social community, while Orchard Street's gentrification created an upscaling look that attracted affluent white groups and sparked the symbolic loss of moral ownership.

In Chapter 3, two commercial districts – Tianzifang and Minixnglu Street in Shanghai are compared by focusing on the bottom up development process as a

crucial element of Shanghai's urban history. Two shopping streets are strikingly different in significant ways. Tianzifang is generally high-end or upscale and a 'cultural destination street', while Minxinglu is low-end or downscale in terms of its locally oriented shops and caters exclusively to local residents. However, despite all these differences, both shopping streets depend on commercial development from below which distinguishes Shanghai from most other global cities. Because bottom up development is a local government policy of the flexible and limited local state in Shanghai.

In Chapter 4, social diversity in two commercial streets in Amsterdam – Utrechtsestraat and Javastraat is discussed. Amsterdam is presented as a global city which has become more ethnically diverse in recent years. However, as the editors argue, cultural differences and economic inequalities create tensions around the national policy of social integration. By and large, in Javastraat which is more densely populated by migrated groups, state-led policies of urban renewal are primarily based on building 'an aesthetic and not ethnic the diversity' intended to displace ethnic shopkeepers, while Utrechtsestraat remains a cozy, convenient, and inconspicuously luxurious cosmopolitan middle class district against gentrification.

In Chapter 5, editors present a picture of urban regeneration on two streets – Karl Marx in Neuhoelln and Muellerstrasse in Wedding in Berlin. They examine how gentrification has resulted in a stark paradox between the expectations of policy-makers and those of local store owners. The case reflects the lack of solidarity among shopkeepers with a high turnover of shops. The displacement of local shop owners in the course of gentrification, who used to live above or near their shops, diminished the sense of community and shared concern to form an association by local state representatives together with shopkeepers for a better future.

In Chapter 6, editors attempt to explore the process of gentrification in the Mount Dennis and Bloordale Streets of Toronto, and examine how the municipal government support the vitality of local shopping streets as a state policy with the BIA (Business Improvement Area) model. We see how Toronto is increasingly polarized in general both demographically and socio-economically into several parts. Therefore, it is possible to see how celebrations of 'diversity' become a part of the state-led redevelopment plan in both streets, and how it takes the form of neighborhood branding that seeks to commodify ethno-cultural differences.

In Chapter 7, editors present the fact that local shopping streets – Shimokitazawa and Azavu-Jubanis in Tokyo are rich in traditional aesthetics but flexible

in the products and services they offer in terms of global capitalism. In Japanese city-planning policy, shopping streets are often considered to be historical and cultural landscape that represents a typical Japanese character, but also reflect freely mixed, borrowed, and blended elements of foreign cultures. *Global Cities, Local Streets: Everyday Diversity from New York to Shanghai* is a persuasive book comprising of a clearly defined research paradigm in urban studies. However, the book impasse lies with its well-intended but uncritical choice of methodological framework – a model which is the lack of a grounded theoretical perspective. Although the editors retain the required knowledge and experience, they somehow refrain from using an analytical perspective, therefore, we hardly get a taste of how spatialization of capital and labor –built, commercial, and community history of an urban place plays out in the course of the cities’ urban renewal and everyday living of the residents. My critique aside, *Global Cities, Local Streets* is a welcome edition as a dedicated book handling the challenging task of comparing and discussing six different cases that are relevant in a transnational context. For that matter, the book not only deserves credit for the academic wit it offers, but also for the vast amount of labor it preserves in an immaculately designed and executed fieldwork.

Kaynakça | References

Jacobs, J. (1961). *The death and life of great American cities*. New York: Random House.

Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The production of space*, D. Nicholson-Smith (trans.). Oxford: Blacwell.