Nomadic Urbanities: Constant's New Babylon and the Contemporary City

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CONTEMPORARY URBAN environments are characterised by shifting relationships with place. A theoretical understanding of 'place', in the contemporary context, provides opportunities to investigate the conceptual dialectic of nomadity and urbanity. The concept of 'nomadity' includes in its scope both physical and virtual movement; the practice of traversing real space to the capacity of roaming in virtual space. Nomadity, therefore, signifies a dynamic and temporal relationship with locality, characteristic of contemporary urban populations. Urbanity, by comparison, is defined as 'the state, condition, or character of a town or city'.[1] Understood in a contemporary sense, as signifying stasis by being settled in a place, urbanity becomes the antithesis of nomadity. The notions of town or city are often associated with a type of settlement. The historic connotations of the term *settlement* relate to fortification and safety as well as to an urban establishment fixed permanently in a desired place.[2] In this paper, *nomadic urbanities* are introduced to reflect on the rapidly evolving nature of urbanism in today's globalised world. Nomadity, urbanity and travel are modern issues, and may be translated by city dwellers through imaginings, representations or as physical urban environments. This is not necessarily a trend related to specific regions, but can be localised by certain examples. The focus of this paper is the Southeast Asian city and how it is then situated within the global context.

Firstly, the paper considers, Constant Nieuwenhuys' 1960s imaginary city concept of 'New Babylon', which is proposed as a metaphor reflecting the hyper-mobile conditions of the contemporary Southeast Asian city. It is argued that the characteristics of hyper-mobility of the Southeast Asian city contribute to the conceptual representation of a type of nomadic urbanity. Although this argument is not entirely without precedent[3], nomadic urbanities, provide a framework for investigating theories of spatial practices[4] as a means of examining problems within contemporary urban societies. Some pertinent urban problems include: de-contextualisation of place, homogenisation of urban form, loss of identity, privatisation of previously public realms, increasing political and legislative control over urban populations, social space shifting to virtual realms and emphasis of vocational over cultural practices.
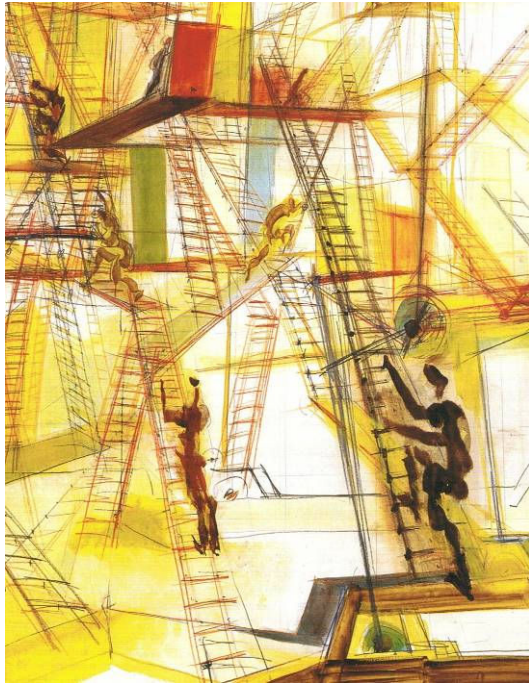
Figure 1: Constant's *Mobile Ladder Labyrinth*, 1967[5]

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The New Babylon concept similarly is devoid of any entrenched identity or sense of place, instead association with a particular locality is achieved by individuals personalising the space they inhabit (see Figure 1). New Babylon dispenses with notions of nostalgia associated with traditional cultures and built environments, and reinstates individuals participating in local conditions through socio-spatial practices to identify with their local context.

Secondly, the paper explores the notion of nomadic urbanities through two Southeast Asian housing projects. Thirdly, the themes of everyday practice;[8] globalisation and virtual space, are discussed and seen as contributing in some capacity to the conceptualisation of New Babylon, as well as acting as vehicles to examine declining social space and cultural practice relevant to the twenty-first century Southeast Asian urban condition.[9] The everyday is examined as a process of becoming, tied to identity formation through local acts; whereas globalisation concerns nomadity and travel, commodity and capitalism, and virtual space relates to high technology and the declining use of physical space.

Finally I draw some conclusions about the insight New Babylon as a nomadic urbanity provides for investigating problems of the contemporary Southeast Asian city. New Babylon represents an expression of urban spatial practices rather than a city as a fixed reality; it is only an imagined entity. The paper links imaginings of the city, and its representations such as New Babylon, to highlight theoretical routes to pursue in future studies for improving the empirical reality of the Southeast Asian city.

New Babylon[10]

Constant Nieuwenhuys' imaginary city of New Babylon was conceived as a radical new way of living. It was not a physical re-interpretation of living but a psychological and ephemeral one. As is the case in a dream, the environment consisted of temporary constructions for dwelling, being made, remade, and shifted about. Relations between people and built form were never fixed, comparative to the relationships cultivated in a nomadic urbanity. The focus of New Babylonian life was the enjoyment of living, and playing out one's desires. The mundane preoccupations of a typical day, such as work, were replaced with exciting prospects of leisure, creativity, and traversal. This latter prospect - traversal, an imagined psychological realm, was achieved on the move—through social contact, unexpected experiences, and momentary encounters with unfamiliar people and situations. In the dream-like world of New Babylon, traversal was the process through which the cultural vibrancy of life was realised. 'The New Babylonian escapes these restraining ties [work, a permanent dwelling space]. His social space is unlimited. Because he is no longer "rooted" he can circulate freely: much more freely since the space he traverses endlessly changes space and atmosphere with the result that is constantly renewed. Mobility, and the disorientation it produces, facilitates contacts between people.'[11]

New Babylon signified a realm for cultural engagement, and the reference to the ancient city of Babylon (sixth century BC), the location of present day Iraq, was not coincidental. Babylon was the leading cosmopolitan, cultural, and civil society of its time, founded by the Sumerians, renowned for their 'warlike [and] nomadic' practices.[12] Sumerian society was characterised by walled cities, at the centre of a small city-state. Control of the city-state of Babylon was originally in the hands of all free citizens, who arrived at important decisions through consultation with public council.[13] Babylon's other reputation, was that of a *city of sin*, in comparison with its neighbouring city, Zion, which was known as the *city of god*. New Babylon re-visits the paradoxical relationships between notions of creative, civilised culture of the metropolis, with no recognised religious institutions, unlimited opportunities for expression of desires and individual control over the urban environment. Constant believed that intangible and atmospheric characteristics of urban life, as well as an individual's sense of political justice, were essential to the vitality and success of urban spaces.

In addition to its historical reference, one of Constant's motivations for New Babylon was the frenetic rebuilding of cities in post-World War II Europe by modernist architects and town planners. Fast-track town planning strategies adopted utopian spatial models which were realised in response to depleted post-war housing stock. The 1933, Athens Charter prompted the reduction of urban planning to the four functions of living, working, transport, and recreation.[14] Constant

criticized modernist urban design methodology for its omission of complex considerations, such as the cultural aspects of city life. However, functional and aesthetic issues continued to dominate planner decision-making into the 1960s, and Constant believed all new modernist urban solutions to be inappropriate, as they consisted typically of generic spatial models conceived independently of their intrinsic socio-cultural contexts.
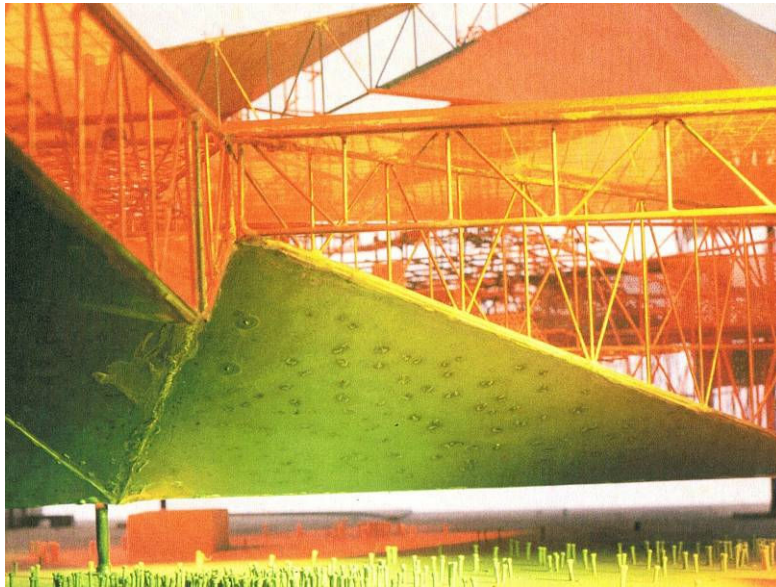

Figure 2: Constant's *Large Yellow Sector*, 1967[15]

In contrast, New Babylon as a nomadic urbanity, presented a radical conceptual alternative to the modernist city. As a theoretical construction, Constant's vision was less preoccupied with pragmatic functions or the aesthetics of the physical environment and more concerned with lively and confronting psychological experiences. Constant believed that developments in automation in the 1960s would eventually render human workers redundant to sophisticated machines. New Babylonians innovatively used machine technology, firstly as tools for production of goods, and secondly as a means for creating spaces for living. An emancipated population would, therefore, be motivated and free to re-instate significant socio-cultural practices to realise a new quality of life. Machine technology would also act as apparatus for the creation of light, sound, and visual effects to aid in constructing individual realms for ambient living (see Figure 2). The creative construction of one's own living environments returned essential spatial and cultural practices to the urban realm of New Babylon. Constant believed that, above all else, living space needed to respond to the individual needs and desires of its occupants. In comparison, the modernist heavy-handed approaches to housing projects, driven by economic and functional rationalism, neglected individuality and favoured uniformity, in the mass production of identical units and the creation of *machines for living*.
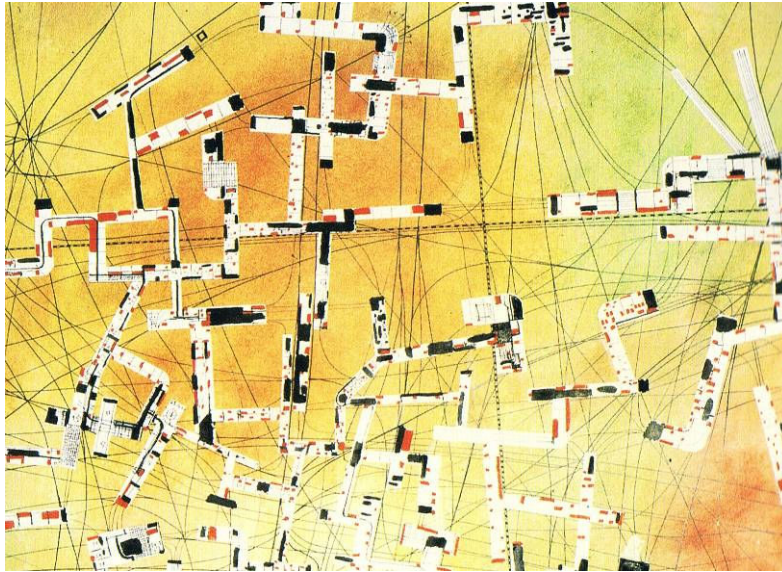
Figure 3: Constant's *New Babylon North*, 1959[16]

The Drifting Situationists

Constant's mission to refocus architectural and urban design around creative values and cultural aspects of life, instead of function and aesthetics, was shared by the Situationists group, of which he was a member. They were a diverse group of predominantly European artists, writers, architects and philosophers who were also profoundly disturbed by 1960s modernist trends in the design of cities. The Situationists had conducted their own investigations into the production of urban space through the practice of *dérive*—a drift or meander that tends to undermine the order of the planned city.[17] Walking in the city revealed residual urban spaces not conveyed on conventional maps, thus a different *psychogeography* or cognitive map was needed to interpret the urban environment (see Figure 3).[18] As individual figures haphazardly traversed space, engaged in sporadic, unexpected contacts, strayed from established paths and routes of the city, the Situationists realised that in mobility they were *outside* established means of conventional political and legislative controls of the city. The conceptual framework of New Babylon originated from these Situationist investigations as it also radically deviated from the established mapped order of the city.

Other urban-utopian representations were also unfolding at this time (see Figure 4 & 9). The 1960s was a period where groups such as Archigram and *Utopie*, re-launched the notion of utopia[19]. Utopian space represented in this context mobility, temporality, an architecture and urbanism of flux to accommodate change envisaged for a revolutionised society. Guy Debord believed capitalist culture promoted non-participatory urbanism, and the Situationists were about recapturing everyday life experience and processes to return to a pleasurable life existence. Imagination, interaction and 'recapturing utopia as a process-of-becoming, but one that is already geographically recognizable within the interstices of everyday urban practice, constitutes precisely the foundation for transformative urban programmes.'[20]
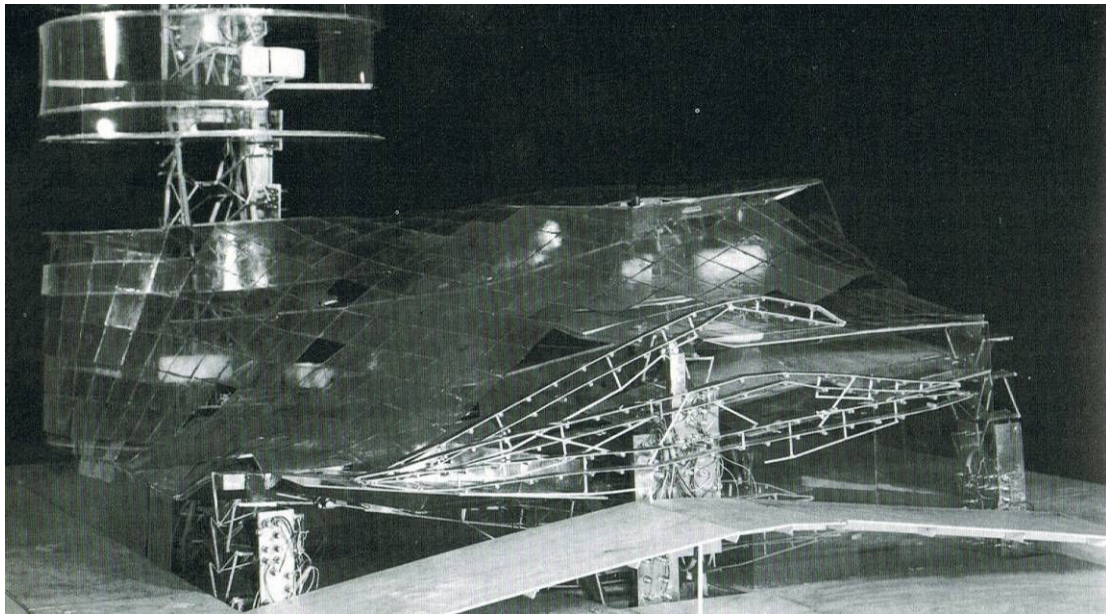
Figure 4: Mike Webb's *Sin Centre Project*, 1958-62[21]

Constant maintained that only by subverting the political processes implemented by modernist planners would the vibrant and interactive life of the city be sustained.[22] New Babylon was, therefore, based on a revival of a creative culture capable of returning to its citizens the joys of urban living. This acted as a theoretical vehicle in which the Situationists methodology could be realised.[23] Once Constant deviated from the theoretical discussions and began to experiment with physical models to implement his ideology, his amicable relationship with the Situationists ended. Fixed representations of psychological space or relations with any concrete institution were too greater a divergence from the Situationists philosophy, which maintained that perpetual exchange and mobility could only be true to its conception if it remained non-tangible, ephemeral, unplanned, and spontaneous in nature.[24]

It is the evocative imaginings of the Situationists which have prompted the re-surfacing over the last decade of ideas such as the Situationist City and related 1960s urban ideological paradigms in contemporary analyses of the city. There exists a comprehensive body of works from scholarly literature to artists' installations and exhibitions[25]. Erik Swyngedouw, highlights however, the Situationists and their conceptualisations have generally been revived with what he terms a 'respectability', quite removed from their 1960s reputation where they purported an anarchist, anti-government, anti-establishment and revolutionary agenda. Swyngedouw states, 'this [refer Sadler (1998)] aestheticised reappropriation of the Situationist legacy reinforces exactly what the Situationists criticised and tried to undermine. At the same time, intellectual and cultural attention is diverted away from the active urban reconstructions that try to confront the totalizing presence of the spectacle and breathe the spirit that Guy Debord and his friends pioneered in the 1950s and 1960s.'[26] Unlike Constant or Le Corbusier, the Situationists had no grand physical models to impose over existing unsatisfactory urban conditions. The salvation of urbanity lay with individual and collective political action and subversion of entrenched capitalist control, through taking to the streets. Therefore, from a contemporary armchair Marxist perspective, Situationist tactics theoretically appears

possible, whereas the grand utopian schemes of the 1960s and the urban spectacles of the 1980s with actual physical dimensions are proven failures.

The value therefore in recalling processes of the Situationists and Constant is in the examination of the political and social-cultural context in which they operated and functioned. It was an environment where utopian imaginings and representations of the city were played out through revolutionary tactics of subversion within the empirical reality of the city. To forget the significance of the reactionary context is to bring about the banal and image focused spectacle which dominates master planning and large scale urban development in Southeast Asia and elsewhere today.

Utopian Possibilities & Southeast Asian Examples
David Pinder highlights it is important not to confuse utopian thinking with what he terms 'utopic degeneration' (i.e. the urban spectacle)[27]. Utopian thinking is related to sustaining a critical and analytical perspective on urban developments rather than surrendering to the option of a banal status quo. While acknowledging utopias in the past have had negative associations, for example when linked to totalitarianism or motivated by authoritarian ideals, Pinder believes, if there is a sustained critique of places and always the desire for 'a better way of being and living through the imagining of a different city and a different urban life,'[28] that utopian thought serves as a useful tool negotiating imaginings (desires), representations (conceptual urban proposals) and the physical reality (status quo and object of critique) of the city.

Historically, urban-utopian schemes have typically originated with an agenda for social change, but once they entered mainstream debates shed such ideologies to gain acceptance[29] (refer Ebenezer Howard's Garden City Movement to Le Corbusier's visions of the city)[30]. Therefore, the shift from ideological grounds to physical representations distinguishes such schemes from Constant's conceptual nomadic urbanity. However, spatial models for towns are easily interpreted by urban administrators, and prioritised, for ease of understanding, over more complex theories of urban space. It is rather simplistic to suggest that by imposing planned order on a previously disordered urbanity that all social ills will vanish.

Yet it was similar thinking which motivated the 1960s Singaporean Government to set up the Housing Development Board (HDB). It became a prime political agenda to move Singaporeans from what was perceived at the time as 'unhygienic, potentially hazardous slums and squatter settlements'[31], which were actually often traditional villages or semi-rural kampongs. These residents were relocated to new public housing facilities which reflected the western archetype of the high-rise apartment buildings. Oriental archetypes or the traditional housing of the kampong were associated with regression, whilst the western alternative signified progress and status, in line with the government's nation building agenda.[32] The mass production of residential tower blocks across Singapore resulted in an urban landscape where social ideology was shed to fix an apparent pragmatic problem, with examples of mediocre architectural solutions which the Situationists and Constant detested. These developments suited the political line, from an economic and social perspective, in advancing Singapore toward its goals of a material utopia. As was infeasible in the *kampong*, residential densities were able to be increased over a reduced land area, giving the appearance of orderly

neighbourhoods, but ultimately freed valuable land holdings for commercial development and profit[33].

Public housing in Singapore currently caters for 84% of the resident population. The current government believes it has successfully distributed social justice and happiness with its urban environment as well as catered for the majorities material needs far more successfully than it managed to do so in the past. Although functionally they have catered to Singapore's expanding population and housing crisis, culturally inherent problems have accompanied the massive scale of urban development. The economic success of Singapore has resulted in an increasing socio-economic division between residents. As well, to make way for substantial housing projects, many burial sites have been sacrificed. For the Taoist religion, tombstones are a material connection between the living and the dead, and the Qing Ming festival honours the dead through families visiting the tombstones, therefore the dead are not exempt from the rebuilding, moving and remaking of modern Singapore.[34]

However, historically Singapore and Malaysia always grew from commercial motivations over cultural and religious ones, unlike other Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand and Cambodia.[35] It is a similar political approach which has been adopted by the dominant political force in Singapore's governance, the People's Action Party (PAP). To foster national identity where economic development is privileged over cultural and social issues was believed to deliver a better way of life to Singaporeans. Therefore, the national focus is geared toward 'becoming' a successful material utopia, the future prioritised the past in the name of economic progress. 'Permanence becomes irrelevant next to the cause of further urban redevelopment of the land,' and so Singapore exists in a state of flux being continually remade and justified to its citizens, as being for the good of the nation state[36]. Nostalgia consists of reflecting upon and lamenting for the past due to a dissatisfaction with the present, while *becoming* involves a transient existence where one is in the process of overcoming the past looking forward to the future. [37] In the sense of *becoming*, contemporary Singapore shares aspects of a nomadic urbanity (through its making, remaking and erasure of history), however on a psychological level, its inhabitants submit to the controls of the state, unable mentally to have any sense of the future. Unlike New Babylonians, they are not given the freedom to impact greatly upon their urbanity, as it is all premeditated by politics.

Tay Kheng Soon's Experimental Housing Project in Cheras, Kuala Lumpur, was realised by the Malaysian Government of the 1970s, for similar reasons to the nationalist line of Singapore. Malaysia's urbanisation was also required to drastically alter its pace of production, due to housing shortages in urban areas, although more than a decade behind Singapore's urban patterns and needs. Malaysia, by contrast, possessed greater land reserves, and therefore was able to increase its densities more gradually. The modernist-inspired new town created in 1976, consisted of 600 units with a density of 60 dwellings per acre, which was the highest density built in Malaysia at that time. Due to cost limitations they were all ground level dwellings with their own garden, rather than the originally proposed four storey walk-up flats[38]. Row upon row of dwellings organised orthogonally with roads between and minimal vegetation clearly represented the ideals of the modernists.

Far from being perceived as a failure or lacking amenity, Tay's housing could not be distributed to willing occupants fast enough. Like Singapore's situation however, these residential compounds were considered modern status symbols and attractive new propositions for living within close proximity to the capital of Kuala Lumpur. They also provivded inexpensive rental accommodation, to further entice. Therefore, given so many external motivations it is difficult to conclusively determine whether the designed environment sold the project. Their success however, lead to proposals for an alternative approach to Malaysian urbanisation, whereby new towns would be created in the countryside, accompanied by social and cultural amenities to stop the rural-urban movement of the population. The comparison which Tay drew was with Le Corbusier's Brasilia, proposing that each resident would have a garden and be within closer proximity of their neighbours therefore fostering community interaction and spirit.[39]

If one is to travel to these towns today, the physical reality is a conglomeration of row housing stretching for long distances, constructed on sites which have been levelled for the convenience of fast-track and efficient building processes. Many sites have been borrowed from previous agrarian land or natural rainforest vegetation; there is substantial topsoil loss in the monsoonal rains, as there are no trees left standing in the wake of the developers bulldozers. New housing developments are characterised by the complete absence of any vegetation. Over time small pockets of vegetation occur, but the available land for planting has been limited by the sheer density of row constructions. Many developments are inadequately maintained, especially if they consist mainly of rental accommodation, and physically resemble over time the unsatisfactory conditions which Tay had set out to prevent resulting in semi-rural dystopian environments.

David Harvey suggests that since the 1970s patterns of urbanisation have changed so dramatically that a general dissatisfaction with urban environments has lead to a greater belief in dystopia. The scale and rate of urbanisation in developing countries has lead to the inability of social and conceptual initiatives to deal with colossal urban problems.[40] Latham and McCormack suggest as urban geographers, an important method which should be adopted to deal with the problems of 'concrete' realities or unsatisfactory real-world experiences 'actually requires a more expansive engagement with the immaterial.'[41] Amin and Thrift 'engage questions of the urban not as a way to return to some sort of "grounded" material reality, but rather as a way to open up and multiply the pathways along which complex materialities of the urban might be apprehended.'[42] Therefore the following themes of everyday practice, globalisation and virtual space are intended only to further contribute to our understanding of nomadic urbanities, the Southeast Asian city and its problems. The emphasis is upon expanding the conceptualisations of the 'immaterial' without posing *real* solutions, which would be the purpose of future studies.

Everyday Practice
In Michel de Certeau's essay 'Walking the City', he notes that the contemporary city, based upon the example of New York, is characterised by a continual remaking, rather than growing from its past.[43] It is clear from the earlier housing project examples, that there is a similar political agenda in both Malaysia and Singapore. As

is also a defining attribute of New Babylon, citizens constantly reshape their environment with temporary constructions. Replacement of the temporary dwelling spaces is deemed necessary either for a change of atmospheric experience, or simply because the occupier moves to another location. Pleasurable experiences are attained in New Babylon through acts of constructing and creating, and not necessarily in the final product. Operations of designing and building are not influenced by attributes of a physical context or historical memories associated with place, but instead by positive and negative experiences of exchanges and interactions, similar to those that occur for de Certeau in walking the city.

The other likenesses in conception between De Certeau's and Constant's theoretical propositions include: influence of Situationist strategies for the city; notions of the voyeur and desire expressed in the city; the role of independent individuals appropriating urban space through traversal; associations of illegibility and un-mappable networks are made with the city; urban space constructed through a series of operations; as well as operational practices prioritised of over design concepts to gain a crucial understanding of the complexity of the city.

De Certeau's teacher, the French urban theorist Henri Lefebvre was closely connected with the Situationist's position and also followed Constant's theoretical work and model production for New Babylon.[44] Lefebvre asserted a citizen's *right to the city* was regained through organised political action and advocated revolutionary tactics proposed by the Situationists (see Figure 5). Constant believed, society needed to radically change, and this would most probably eventuate when efficiencies of automated technology superseded humans in the workforce. Also de Certeau suggested the intricacies of everyday socio-cultural practice were sufficiently subtle to prevent detection by political powers and related forms of state surveillance.[45] Therefore for de Certeau, undercurrents of reactionary tactics were underway in the city and with substantial impact. These two approaches of de Certeau and Constant may be linked with Situationist strategies in the appropriation of urban space rather than motivations for revolutionary action.
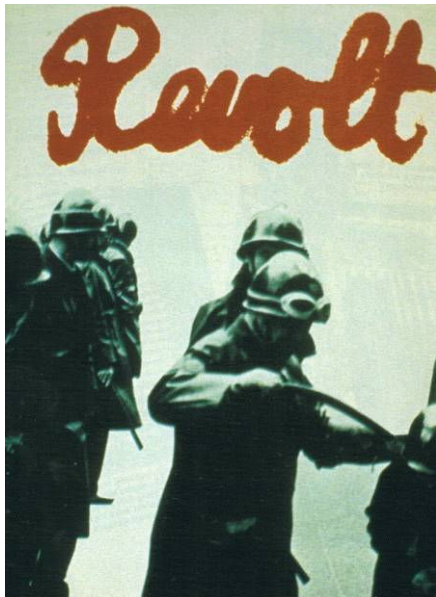

Figure 5: *Revolt!,* 1960s issue of *Architectural Design* (Vol.71, No.3)[46]

De Certeau's traversal takes him above the city, to heights only achievable in the former twin towers of Manhattan, the World Trade Centre. From this voyeuristic perspective looking down on the urban environment, de Certeau no longer identifies with the context of the city.[47] Similarly, New Babylonians realised their identities by participating in the mobile conditions of New Babylon rather than mere observation. Psychological encounters in traversal and temporal place-making processes were of greatest importance to the participator. Constant's provocation was a New Babylon where fantasies could be played out. Desire was seen as a motivating emotion to indulge in a lifestyle of creativity free of vocational aspirations and return satisfaction, fantasy and pleasure to its inhabitants. New Babylon also hosted negative desires, as Constant explained that characteristics typical of human nature such as emotions of aggression, violence, rage and jealousy do not simply dissipate when satisfaction with dwelling space and material needs are met.[48]

What was recognised by both authors was the value of exchange which occurred in social space. Typically, the most evocative encounters occurred within the un-mappable and marginal spaces of the city. Often traversed or occupied by society's minority groups, they were sites where differences of socio-economic, political, cultural, religious or ethnic significance resulted in exchanges of mixed emotions and often conflict. Practices such as the *dérive*, permitted direct visual and physical contacts to occur and a level of engagement necessary to appreciate animated sides of life in the city. Car travel and adherence to planned, controlled routes of the urban fabric obstructed opportunities for personal contact. As is the case in Singapore's HDB flats or Tay's new towns, the erasure of the unexpected and provocative urban spaces reduces life experience to the predictable. De Certeau articulated the role of everyday life of urban dwellers as a theoretical construct, whereby insignificant quotidian practices are seen as appropriating urban space but also challenging institutions of capital and the state.[49] De Certeau believed the urban project could not predict or cater for the multitude of insignificant but habitual acts of the population, which contribute to the essence of urban life. 'Beneath the discourses that ideologise the city, the ruses and combinations of powers that have no readable identity proliferate; without points where one can take hold of them, without rational transparency, they are impossible to administer.'[50] Therefore if the role of the grand urban project prevails in our contemporary urbanities, does it mean practices and qualities of the everyday will be sacrificed?

The impact of large scale urban development on a city and its ability to undermine the everyday, in terms of visual, cultural, political, socioeconomic and aesthetic considerations, varies greatly between cities and groups within that context. Therefore has the quality of everyday life for Singaporeans been substituted for pro-development political agendas as a result of HDB's flats? T. C. Chang believes the already marginalised in Singaporean society, have suffered further isolation as a result of reconstruction and urban development schemes. Erasure of living environments such as squatter settlements has indeed further debilitated these marginal groups, and altered their daily social practices. The psychological legibility of the city for Singapore's disenfranchised has therefore been undermined and altered by contested political practices. The squatters' displacement is then characterised by unfamiliarity, and unlike the New Babylonian experience, it does

not result in inspiring social and cultural exchange, but dislocation and unhappiness.[51]

Psychological spatial experience in New Babylon was typically unpredictable, positive or negative emotively and in turn prompted uncalculated responses. Therefore, legibility was not a priority of the participator, rather getting lost through negotiating the unexpected was the priority. Sporadic interactions and situations contributed to atmosphere creation, and was the challenge which gave New Babylonian life meaning. The impact of psychological space corresponds with De Certeau's understanding of the contemporary city as he writes 'The paths that correspond in this intertwining, unrecognised poems in which each body is an element signed by many others, elude legibility. It is though the practices organising a bustling city were characterised by their blindness. The networks of these moving, intersecting writings compose a manifold story that has neither author nor spectator, shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of spaces: in relation to representations, it remains daily and indefinitely other.'[52] The paradoxical dilemma therefore is that non-representable networks of urban societies are noticeably absent in design projects for the city, yet it is their presence upon which the vibrancy of the city depends. It was the theoretical and psychological aspects of marginal urban space, which New Babylon sought to reflect.

The outstanding difference between De Certeau's interpretation of the city and Constant's is that the former is dealing with metaphors pertaining to a *real* context, that of New York, whereas Constant is engaged in an imagined environment. However, the aspects of his imagined nomadic urbanity may be seen as comparative to physical examples of urban space documented by De Certeau. New Babylon as a psychological concept may also apply to de Certeau's observations of contemporary urbanity, whereby 'a *migrational*, or metaphorical city thus slips into the clear text of the planned and readable city.'[53]

The term *globalisation* has been broadly adopted to represent the ideological expansion and migrational tactics of citizens within a global realm as well as being associated with negative notions of non-place, global city, universal aesthetic, international style and placelessness.[54] However, New Babylon as a nomadic urbanity, is also conceived as a de-contextualised space wherein inhabitants positively create lived space based upon personal preference, a space not established for them prior to occupation. This spontaneous creation poses challenging questions to issues of place identity in the contemporary city, and the dialectical concepts of global and local.

Globalisation

Globalisation is understood in terms of the perpetual movement of information (ranging from people to goods and capital) to any given location on the world map.[55] New Babylon specifically references aspects of globalisation: through issues of travel and the airport metaphor; cybernetics, virtual and de-contextualised space; the emergence of the generic global city as well as in notions of localising. 'Globalisation is a process. It is at once transnational and transcendental. It is a condition of flux rather than stasis. It replaces certainty, stability, order, and equilibrium with uncertainty, instability, disorder, and disequilibrium. It is a process which can be

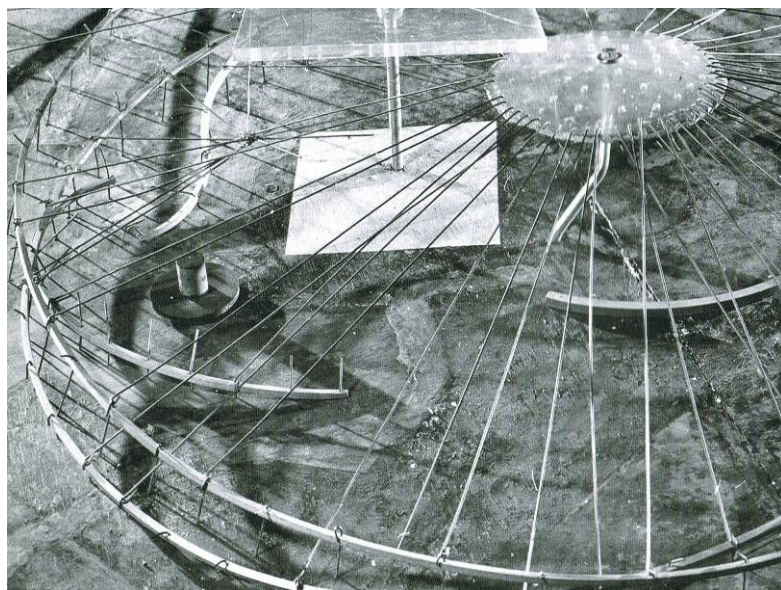described in terms of flows, networks, capacities, distributions, diffusions and movements.'[56]

Figure 6. Constant's *Design for a Gypsy Camp* 1957[57]

The quotidian spatiality of New Babylon was determined by fluctuating patterns of use through the comings and goings of its citizens. Inhabitants of New Babylon only ever resided temporarily in any one location (see Figure 6). Constant likened his conceptual space to the archetype of an airport. An internal realm, typically devoid of any contextual signifiers other than the odd tourist collectable, filled with people in transit, unfamiliar surroundings providing a level of comfort and interest acceptable for short periods. Therefore essentially, an environment which supports and promotes an atmosphere of continued traversal. However, it is also such an environment which caters for unexpected contacts, 'usual norms and standards have lost value, they [the travellers] are displaced and only have each other to turn to. Contacts are made which, in normal circumstances, would be more difficult to establish.'[58] New Babylonians like air travel commuters are also housed within an artificially-controlled internal environment where all natural microclimatic systems are excluded. In the absence of external or natural phenomena, interactive technological systems engendered a *sense of place*. Participators in the interiorised New Babylon space were required, under their own motivations, to create their *patch* for living, sleeping and playing, through technical manipulation of computer-based atmospheric equipment, movable screens and partitions. Sound, air-conditioning, and heating equipment responded to the participator's desired 'ambience'.[59] These effects of atmospheric change may be considered similar to the way tourists contribute to altering everyday practice within previously closed communities. A type of 'internationalisation' takes place where, the previously established set of norms is appropriated to suit the frequent newcomers.[60]

A contemporary means for tourism or travel is via the virtual realm, which operates at far greater speeds than that of modern aircraft. 'Time-space compression' was coined by David Harvey to highlight the speed and flow of information associated with computerised communication systems.[61] As the process of

globalisation has been accorded with periods of history ranging from colonial eras in Southeast Asia to the present, it is important to highlight aspects of globalisation which are most relevant to the case of New Babylon. The group of authors including Castells, Harvey, Giddens and Amin and Thrift argue the globalisation of *time-space compression* occurred around the 1980s[62] and marks a change in understandings of earlier terminology. It can be most appropriately applied to New Babylon. Although New Babylon preceded the notion of time-space compression Constant closely followed the field of cybernetics in the 1960s. The sophistication of New Babylonian systems for the future production of space relied upon information and communication technologies' progressive development.

Perspectives from the globalisation debate range from capital and power being reserved for the key market players, where smaller cities, with limited access to current technology, are excluded from the global markets. The opposing argument suggests the global economy actually permits an emergence of smaller communities as their local goods are now sought after on a much broader scale, which was previously limited to geographical boundaries. 'Although global flows have effectively deterritorialised, they are designed, activated, and legitimated by networks of powerful actors, who are drawing capital, people, information, and culture into specific "social place" and "historical time" to fulfil their goals.'[63] Saskia Sassen suggests, in one sense there is a loss of place experience for some cities as a result of globalisation, but on the other hand, place making becomes an important focus in cities of influence, as all capital, resources and networks descend upon that particular location due to its status within the global marketplace. As the recipient of a pool of resources, the city is then able to reinvest in infrastructure and major building projects.[64] In Southeast Asia, Singapore would be considered to have benefited from globalisation in this way.

The uneven nature of this distribution of capital across nations also has negative effects, typically on the less significant cities competing for a position in the global market place. For example, the State of Penang in Malaysia had established itself until recently, as a base for the manufacture of computer hardware with many of the world's leading computer companies. Hewlett Packard and Dell are only a couple of the large-scale international enterprises who use Penang to build and distribute their technology. Recently, however, Kuala Lumpur has competed for this sector of the global market through economic enticements for companies' relocation to Malaysia's capital. Should the venture succeed the impact upon Penang's once buoyant local economy will be devastating. This strategy, as became evident in the collapse of the regional economies of Southeast Asia in the 1990s, sacrifices traditional neighbourhoods for mega-projects and increases the disparity between the rich and the poor.[65] Critically, New Babylon does not engage these important aspects of the global marketplace, as vocational practices are forsaken for leisure. In doing so, however, it has negated one of the most complex aspects of everyday society, the role of economics, and the supply-demand mentality upon which all historical societies are based. In addition New Babylon also abandons traditional ideas of neighbourhoods for the mega-project.

Another key aspect to this debate, which, continues to examine ideas of place and context, includes notions of global versus local. Michael Peter Smith in his book 'Transnational Urbanism' contests this binary distinction and argues that just as the

larger scale cities participating in the global network are characterised by dynamic flows of different agencies, this pattern has also occurred at the local level for smaller cities.[66] Comparatively, New Babylonians created their own living space at what may be suggested was the local level, but actually operated and connected at global levels in terms of the scope of their mobility. The direct reference to Babylon, also suggests even ancient societies operated at both local and global levels for trading purposes.

Smith challenges the perspectives of Harvey and Castells and their alluding to the local as representing, and limited to, an 'embedded community'.[67] Smith highlights the values of social movements and connections within *local* contexts and suggests that 'since human agency operates at multiple spatial scales, and is not restricted to "local" territorial or socio-cultural formations, the very concept of "urban" thus requires re-conceptualisation as a social space.'[68] Theoretically, Smith is correct here, but in reality there is such a great variation between characteristics of participating cities, from economic and technological resources, status within the global market place, population size and geographic positioning, that prevents such generalities. New Babylon represents, however, a re-conceptualisation of social space and opens up various methods of thinking as to how such psychological space may be achieved conceptually. One such avenue may be through the utilisation of virtual space.

Virtual Space
Virtual technology, since its origins in cybernetics, has been viewed with utopian enthusiasm for its potential to dematerialise physical space and chronological time.[69] Idiosyncrasies of everyday practice have been utilised to parallel the experience of virtual reality, despite the paradoxical position that virtual reality was created as a withdrawal from the real.[70]. Within the globalisation debate it has been suggested that time-space compression[71] has 'reformulated our perception of space and time, so that we experience a loss of spatial boundaries or distinctions, so that all spaces begin to look alike and implode into a continuum.'[72] What is most interesting is that Constant's New Babylon also possessed preliminary explorations of these thematic concepts, prior to established contemporary discussions. However due to the limited technology at the time, the notion of virtual space has been given the least emphasis, but in terms of realising the concept of New Babylon, offers the most opportunities.

M. Christine Boyer's proposed 'Cyber Cities', which are metaphorical entities in virtual space where the computer matrix of data management comes together with the notion of city. Boyer's analogy consists of the ordered matrix veiling the heterogeneous and complex nature of the city.[73] She is interested in how our further retreat into the virtual/immaterial world of computers is affecting or challenging our conceptions of *real* space and how we act within in it. As was discussed earlier, nearly fifty years on from Constant's conception, we have not retreated completely to the virtual or immaterial world, nor does it seem likely.

Figure 7: Stalker *The Surreal Foil*, 2001[74]

Therefore another aspect of study in common between Boyer and Constant, is the reference to 'lag-time places' of Boyer's and *residual space* of Constant's. [75] In both instances these places consist of disenfranchised and marginalised populations, yet interpreted with different emphases. Boyer believes the virtual and technological world excludes particular players and in effect exacerbates their isolation, which to a certain extent negates any contribution. Whereas Constant considers spaces of the marginal communities are essential in their contribution to the vibrancy of the city. New Babylon therefore attempts to replicate experiences of heightened social exchange, typical of these sites (see Figure 7). In addition, in utopian New Babylon, distinctions of socio-economic and political difference disappear over time, as a socialist system prevails. Contemporary globalisation debates, within which Boyer is situated, and which are typically focused around capitalist incentives, are far removed from the motivations of Constant's conception.

It follows therefore, that different political perspectives result in substantially different urban space narratives. It is worth noting that concerns over the quality of urban space, its endurance and its role in sustaining the socio-cultural vibrancy of the city were paramount in Constant's motivations behind New Babylon. Constant believed his *nomadic urbanity*, due to increased mobility or peoples, population growth, the usurping of all natural environments for agrarian production, would mean urbanity would eventually expand to cover the globe, and result in a mega-project for the public realm.

While it is useful to appreciate the parallels between New Babylon as a nomadic city and the capabilities of virtual reality technology, it is perhaps more useful to focus on the networks characteristic of the opportunities of computer technology and behind the endurance of New Babylon in current literature. William J Mitchell highlights it is the networking aspect of spatial relations that is most important for discussion today, and the '*network*, rather than enclosures of virtual reality, are emerging as the desired and contested object'.[76] Constant imagined New Babylon eventually dominating the earth's surface through a series of linked centres, in the same way our contemporary lives are completely dominated by networks (see Figure 8).
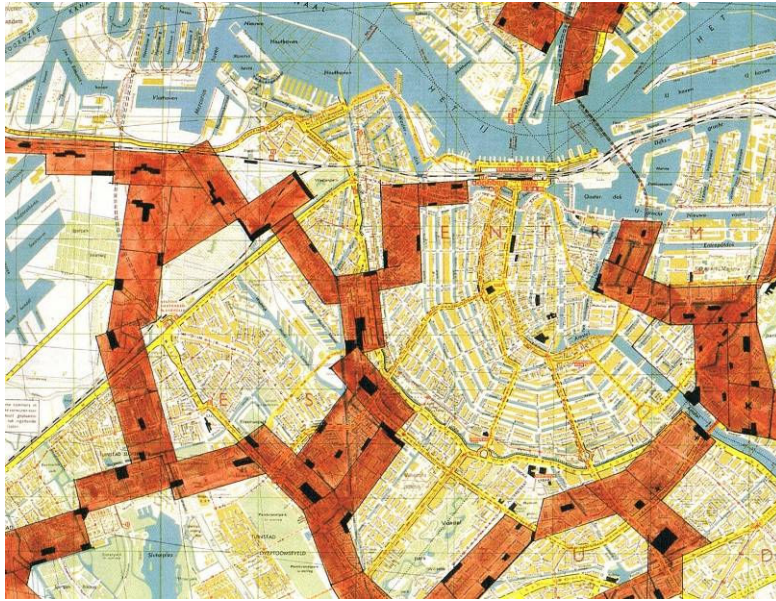
Figure 8: Constant's *New Babylon/Amsterdam*, 1963[77]

In the contemporary city, networks have both negative and positive implications for urban space. Security networks represent surveillance opportunities which are politically legitimised, these may range from CTV cameras to plain-clothed police on the streets. Typically, rather than increasing public confidence through the intensification of surveillance operations, the opposite psychological affect results and surveillance represents a deterrent for the use of public spaces. In the 1960s Constant protested against surveillance measures which were implemented via modernist tactics in the city. Urban morphologies of axial boulevards and open-exposed urban spaces in addition to the privatising of public space, contributed to the depletion of cultural life in the city. Whereas de Certeau believed the pedestrian network challenged all of these techniques for legislative control and instead produced a complex web of individual routes which contextualised the city. So, New Babylon was conceived upon similar strategies. The age old networks of the everyday of de Certeau, as well as sophisticated computerised networking, with objectives for innovative and exciting psychological spatial experience have sustained New Babylon into the twenty-first century.

Conclusions

The paper proposed contemporary urban environments and the concept of New Babylon are considered in parallel and not as static objects but as terrain in a perpetual state of becoming. When the city is considered in terms of a *nomadic urbanity*, for purposes of analysis, rather than as a settlement fixed at any point in time, a level of conceptual complexity is implied in the dialectic terms. Historical connotations of settlements, inadequately define city or town under contemporary influences. Movement of people, goods and information occurs via the virtual realm and other sophisticated telecommunication methods, altering traditional understandings of time and space associated with notions of settlement (see Figure 9). Although this dynamic is not new, the scale and speed of operations is without historical precedent in the twenty-first century, and has psychological as well as physical implications for today's cities.

Other aspects of New Babylon demonstrated as relevant to contemporary understandings of nomadity and urbanity include the three themes of everyday, globalisation and virtual space explored in the paper. Notably nomadity suggests an increasingly individual view of the world, where a nomad's traversal is related to a perception of self, as well as a process of identity formation, as distinctive from the sedentary population for reasons ranging from alienation to preference for a mobile existence.[78]

Michel de Certeau's theorisation of the 'Practice of Everyday Life' was one of the themes explored in relation to the term nomadity. De Certeau suggested there are opportunities offered in physical traversal to subvert controls of public space, in understated but powerful ways. Constant's and de Certeau's theories, based in Situationist experimentations of the meander, offered a means through which life experience could be invigorated despite political impositions on urbanity.

The paper also examined notions of nomadity and mobility in terms of the virtual realm. Virtual space has developed dramatically even in its capabilities over the last decade, let alone since Constant's time. Contemporary computer-literate nomads wander through virtual space as an everyday activity, for communication purposes, instantaneous conversations, video conferencing or emailing from their study or lounge room to any location around the globe. However, despite increasing capabilities of virtual technologies, physical urban environments have not been replaced completely with artificial and virtual computer-generated spaces, nor does this seem likely in our immediate future.

The mechanics of urban life have transformed substantially since Constant's conception, and through the theme of globalisation. The paper explored altered relationships between urbanity, security and place of residence and also looked at how high speed flows of commodities, people and information, affected perceptions and physical form of both historic and contemporary communities in Southeast Asia. The theme of globalisation, also demonstrated a merging of traditional geographical distinctions between notions of non-Western and Western, through the 'internationalisation' of approaches to urbanism. Contemporary conceptions of space are now understood within a global context rather than focusing on specifics of localities, which is key to the conception of New Babylon.

Contemporary discourse on urbanism has returned to writings from the Situationists, Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau, through their insightful perspectives on the production of space in the city. The currency of their ideas is due to the shift in contemporary thinking, which expounded upon traditional spatial understandings to include psychological and physical aspects of urban environments. New Babylon has also been revisited in contemporary literature, as it also interpreted and researched the implications of these philosophies of space, more so than any other project examples of its time.
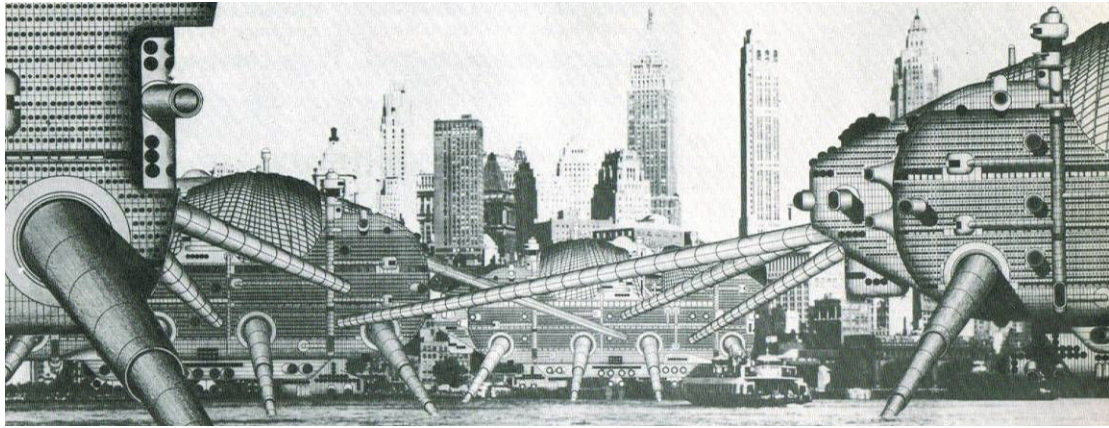
Figure 9. Archigram's *Walking City Project*, 1963[79]

Notably, nearly fifty years on, at a pragmatic level, many of Constant's criticisms of legislative and political controls may be applied to our design processes. For example, when 1960s modernists reduced an understanding of urban environments to a set of functional requirements this is a legacy within which urban planning legislation still operates in Western society and typically by colonial imposition, in non-Western countries such as Southeast Asia. In shifting and expanding upon our conceptual understanding of urban environments, there are also opportunities to reconsider entrenched legislative procedures.

The paper considered the dialectical relationships of *urbanity* and *nomadity*, provided a conceptual framework in which to reflect on issues and problems of contemporary Southeast Asian urban environments. *Nomadic urbanities* were therefore understood as urban populations with shifting relationships with place, and the themes of the everyday, globalisation and virtual space acted as vehicles to further unravel and expand upon this conceptual relationship. The utopian concept of New Babylon, although a naïve representative model, negotiated the complexity of urban life with theories of urbanity and nomadity which have merit for further review.

NOTES

[1] *The Compact Oxford English Dictionary New Edition.* New York: Oxford University Press. Second Edition, 1989-2002. p.2202.

[2] Ibid., p. 1724.

[3] Andy Merrifield, *Dialectical Urbanism: Social Struggles in the Capitalist City.* Monthly Review Press, USA, 2002.

[4] 'Spatial practices' are defined here as any of the following activities conducted by individuals occupying public or private spaces. These practices may include small idiosyncratic acts to cultural, ritualistic, artistic or social inhabiting of space. The individual may occur only briefly and temporally or remain in situ for some hours. Spatial practices of individuals are an act of identity formation and are not reliant on the physical materiality of the surrounding environment.

[5] Iain Borden & Sandy McCreery (eds.), *New Babylonians*, John Wiley & Sons Ltd: London, (2001), p.17. highlights the multiple levels of the conceptualised and complex structure of New Babylon, modes of access begin at the ground plane and level of the traditional city, via ladders. This image emphasises vertical traversal, although horizontal transgression was also encouraged, it was envisaged by Constant, New Babylon would eventually cover the earth's surface with population expansion over time.

[6] Andy Merrifield, *Dialectical Urbanism: Social Struggles in the Capitalist City.* Monthly Review Press, USA, 2002.

[7] 'Spatial practices' are defined here as any of the following activities conducted by individuals occupying public or private spaces. These practices may include small idiosyncratic acts to cultural, ritualistic, artistic or social inhabiting of space. The individual may occur only briefly and temporally or remain in situ for some hours. Spatial practices of individuals are an act of identity formation and are not reliant on the physical materiality of the surrounding environment.

[8] Michel de Certeau. *The Practice of Everyday Life.* Translated by Steven Rendell. University of California Press, Berkeley, California, 1984.

[9] Rafael E Pizarro, Liang Wei, and Tridib Banerjee. 'Agencies of Globalisation and Third World Urban Form: A Review,' *Journal of Planning Literature* 18, 2 (2003), pp.111-30 and M. Christine Boyer, *Cyber cities: Visual Perception in the Age of Electronic Communication.* Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 1996. For further reading see Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society. Vol. 1, the Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture.* Blackwell, Cambridge, MA, 1996.

[10] Constant's New Babylon and its thematics have been revisited repeatedly in scholarly literature and artist exhibitions on cities and the urban condition, over the last decade. Its revival has occurred both in relation to the Situationist City and ideas of the Situationists, as well as an independent revolutionary concept. In addition to the sources quoted in the text, also see the following sources: For recent architectural, artistic and contemporary conceptual interpretations of New Babylon see, Iain Borden and Sandy McCreery, Eds. *New Babylonians*. Architectural Design. John Wiley & Sons. London, 2001. For an insight into the production of New Babylon concept through drawn and model representations see, Catherine de Zegher and M. Wigley, eds, *The Activist Drawing: Retracing Situationist Architectures from Constant's New Babylon to Beyond.* the Drawing Centre/MIT Press, New York City, 2001. For comparison with other urban-utopian concepts of mobile cities see Alan Latham and D.P. McCormack, 'Moving Cities: Rethinking the Materialities of Urban Geographies.' *Progress in Human Geography* 28, 6 (2004). pp.701-24 and R. Banham. *Megastructure:Urban Futures of the Recent.* For critical theory see Hilde Heynen, 'New Babylon: The Antinomies of Utopia.' *Assemblage*, 29 (1996), pp.24-39, and Hilde Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity: A Critique.* MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachussetts, 1999. For the key ideas and thematics linked to Situationist thought see Iain Borden, 'New Babylonians: From the Avant-garde to the Everyday.' *The Journal of Architecture* 6 (Summer) (2001), pp.129-33. For the conceptual ties to other theorists work such as Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin see R. Lucas, 'Inscribing the City: A Flâneur in Tokyo.' *Anthropology Matters Journal* 6, 1 (2004), pp.1-11. Refer also to the lists of sources indicated with the Situationists section in this paper.

[11] Constant Nieuwenhuys, 'New Babylon: Outline of a Culture 1960-1965', cit. Mark Wigley. *Constant's New Babylon: The Hyper-Architecture of Desire.* 010 Publishers, Rotterdam, 1998. p.164.

[12] H.W.F. Saggs. *Everyday Life in Babylonia & Assyria.* Jarrold & Sons Ltd, London, 1965. p.28.

[13] ibid.

[14] Constant Nieuwenhuys, [original in Dutch] *'Unitair-Urbanisme'*, unpublished manuscript of a lecture held at the Stedelijik Museum, Amsterdam on 20 December 1960. Translated by Robyn de Jong-

Dalzeil cit. Mark Wigley. *Constant's New Babylon: The Hyper-Architecture of Desire*. 010 Publishers, Rotterdam, 1998. p.131.

[15] Mark Wigley, *The Hyper-Architecture of Desire*, 010 Publishers: Rotterdam (1998), p.183. This image represents his impression of one aspect of a nomadic urbanity and thus a supposed contrast to the cities of the Modernists which he was criticising. However, the image demonstrates, his physical conception did not vary greatly from extravagant and monolithic schemes which he critiqued. Note, in particular the scale of people (on the ground plane) relative to the excessive mass of built form looming overhead.

[16] Wigley, p.117., demonstrates in two-dimensional form, the planning of such a structure, in its haphazard and irregular nature, did not lend itself to mass production. This image identifies one of the sectors of Constant's imagined city, with the movement channels between areas signified by the weaving black lines, the intention being a myriad of possibilities for traversal and means for investigating New Babylonian urbanity.

[17] ibid., p.12.

[18] ibid., p.17. For further reading Guy Debord, '*L'architecture et le jeu*', *Potlatch*, no. 20 (30 May 1955). Translated by Gerardo Denis as 'Architecture and Play', cit. Andreotti and Costa, *Theory of the Dérive*, pp.53-4.

[19] Cooke (1999) & Dessauce (1999) cit. Swyngedouw, p.155.

[20] ibid., p.161. See also Lefebrve (1989) & Harvey (2000).

[21] Reyner Banham, *Megastructure Urban Futures of the Recent Past*, Thames & Hudson: London, (1976), p.92. Throughout this paper, the examples of Constant's painted, drawn and sculpted representations, relating to his imagined nomadic urbanity. Constant experimented with various mediums from model and three-dimensional sculpture to oil painted canvases, in order to move his concept beyond simply the imaginary to a physical realm. Constant's scheme reflected a genre of work emerging from contemporary artists, architects and writers of the 1960s preoccupied with the mega-project, increasingly mobile citizens and high density built form to address urban conditions. Mike Webb's Sin Centre Project cited was a similar investigation, although focused upon the underworld nature of the city, an idea with which New Babylon also dabbled.

[22] ibid., p.12.

[23] ibid., p.9.

[24] ibid., p.33. Refer also Unsigned, 'Unitary Urbanism at the End of the 1950s,' cit. Sussman, *On the Passage of a Few People*. p.144.

[25] Blazwick (1989), Bonnett (1989), Sussman (1989), Various (1989), Plant (1992), Jappe (1993; 1999), Andreotti and Costa (1996), Pinder (1996; 2000), Edwards (2000), Beaudrillard (2001) cit. Erik Swyngedouw, 'The Strange Respectability of the Situationist City in the Society of the Spectacle.' *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 26.1 (March 2002), pp.153-65. See also Lucas (2004), Pinder (2002), Wollen (2001) in addition to numerous other sources too extensive to list here.

[26] ibid.

[27] David Pinder, 'In Defence of Utopian Urbanism: Imagining Cities After the "End of Utopia".' *Geografiska Annaler 84 B*, 3-4 (2002), pp.229-40. 'Urban spectacle' has been widely quoted in Situationist literature, which refers to the spectacle of commodity and capitalism. It represents the superficiality of contemporary life in its preoccupation with consumerist and material culture. Erik Swyngedouw states, 'The "society of spectacle" of the late 1980s and 1990s, the spectacular theme-park urbanism and economies of signs that shape the contemporary urban process are only a small, if significant, part of the commodity-as-spectacle.' Swyngedouw, p.159.

[28].ibid., p.230.

[29] ibid., p.233.

[30] ibid. See also Fishman (1982); Hall (1984, 2002) cit. in Pinder.

[31] 'HDB's Beginnings' *Housing Development Board's Website*. 2005. URL: http://www.hdb.gov.sg: para 1 cit. W. K. Goh, W. C. Lim, et al. 'Time and Housing in Singapore: Becoming, History and Nostalgia.' *University Scholars Programme.* A. P. A. Namazie, D. M. A. Thwin and D. A. Leng. National University of Singapore, Singapore, (2005), pp.1-23.

[32] ibid., p.2.

[33] *Kampong* refers to 'traditional' notions of an agrarian-based village, usually occupied by peoples of Malay heritage, in the Malaysian examples. However Malaysia has consisted, historically of a cultural mix of peoples, so there are many exceptions to the previous statement. Houses, typically consist of

timber-construction on stilts and are organised informally along traffickable routes in the village. Densities differ between villages but are substantially lower in comparison to Tay's new urban towns.

[34] Goh., pp.18-19.

[35] H.-D Evers and R. Korff, *Southeast Asian Urbanism: The Meaning and Power of Social Space.* Lit Verlag/St Martin's Press, Germany/USA, 2000, p.26.

[36] Yeo (2003) p.247 cit. Goh. p.9

[37] ibid.

[38] K. S. Tay, 'Cheras and Setapak Jaya: Two Experimental Housing Projects in Kuala Lumpur.' *Large Housing Projects: Design Technology and Logisitics. Designing in Islamic Cultures 5*, Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, Cambridge, MA, (1985), p.12.

[39] ibid., p.13.

[40] Pinder, p.231. Some of the colossal urban problems include: increased marginalisation and dislocation with new housing programmes, increased socioeconomic divisions in society, environmental, social and health problems due to large scale deforestation, human rights abuses, increased automobile reliance, sprawling cities—which by no means represents an exhaustive list.

[41] Latham and McCormack, p. 701.

[42] ibid., p.705. 'Such an engagement draws further support from the vigorous and growing literature on materialities of the city in disciplines such as sociology (Clark, 2000; Beckmann, 2001; Katz, 1999; Sheller and Urry, 2000; Urry, 2000; Wachs and Crawford, 1990), anthropology (Augé, 1995; Miller, 2001; Shields, 1998), history (Fischer, 1992; holtz Kay, 1997; Sennett, 1994; Schivelbusch, 1979, 1988; Sachs, 1984; solnit, 2001; Wollen and Kerr, 2002; Worpole, 2000) and architectural theory (Lerup, 2000; Biemann, 2003; Borden, 2001; Borden et al., 2001; Meurs and Verheijen, 2003; Prigge, 1998), in addition to human geography (amin and Thrift, 2002; Dowling, 2000; Gandy, 2002; Graham and Marvin, 2001; Latham, 1999a, 1999b; Merriman, 2003; Swyngedouw, 1996, 1999; Thrift, 1996, 1997a, 1997b, 1999; Whatmore and Hinchcliffe, 2003).' pp703-04.

[43] De Certeau, p.91.

[44] Henri Lefebrve. *Everyday Life in the Modern World*. Translated by Sacha Rabinovitch. 3rd ed. Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, USA, 1994. See also Henri Lefebrve. *The Production of Space*. Blackwell, Oxford, UK., 1991.

[45] De Certeau in Michael Peter Smith. 'Power in Place: Re-theorising the Local and the Global in Urban Studies.' *Unpublished key note address* (2001), p.11.

[46] Iain Borden & Sandy McCreery (eds.), *New Babylonians*, John Wiley & Sons Ltd: London, (2001), p.88. This volume of Architectural Design Magazine explores various contemporary applications in literature and artistic expressions of the Situationists and New Babylon. This poster demonstrates the themes which were adopted by the Situationists yet essentially developed earlier by Karl Marx and Georg Lukàcs (1968). Swyngedouw, p.155.

[47] De Certeau, p.92. For further reading Tim Cresswell and Ginette Verstraete. *Mobilizing Place, Placing Mobility: The Politics of Representation in a Globalized World (Thamyris/Intersecting 9)*, Rodopi, 2003.

[48] Constant, 'New Babylon,' p.163 cit. Wigley. p.69.

[49] Smith, p.11.

[50] De Certeau, p.95. For further reading Iain Chambers. *Migrancy, Culture, Identity*. Routledge, London, UK, 1994.

[51] T C. Chang, 'Place, Memory and Identity: Imagining "New Asia".' *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* 46, no. 3 (2005), pp.247-53.

[52] De Certeau, p.93. For further reading Francesco Careri. *Walkscapes: Walking as an Aesthetic Practice*. Aleu SA, Barcelona, 2003, see also Dean Forbes, *Asian Metropolis: Urbanisation and the Southeast Asian City*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne, Australia, 1996.

[53] ibid. see also Stanley Milgram. 'The Experience of Living in Cities: A Psychological Analysis.' *Science* 167 (1970), pp.1461-68. and Johnathon Raban. *Soft City*. Harvill, London, 1988.

[54] Marc Augé. *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity.* Translated by John Howe. Verso, New York, 1995. also see R. Benedict & O'G Anderson. *Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* Revised second edition ed. Verso, London, New York, 1991.

[55] Pizarro, p.112. Further reading David Held, Anthony McGrew, D Goldblatt, and J Perraton, eds. *Global Transformations: Politics, Economies and Culture*. Polity, Cambridge, MA, 1999.

[56] ibid.,p.113. see also Richard J Barnet, and Ronald E Muller. *Global Reach: The Power of Multinational Corporations*. Simon & Schuster, New York, 1974.

⁵⁷ Wigley, p.80. The initial ideas for New Babylon, came out of Constant witnessing the mobile, social practices of the gypsies.

⁵⁸ Wigley, p.200. see also Marc Askew, and William S. Logan, eds. *Cultural Identity and Urban Change in Southeast Asia: Interpretative Essays*. Deakin University Press, Geelong, Victoria, Australia, 1994. and James Clifford. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1999.

⁵⁹ Constant Nieuwenhuys, [original in Dutch] *'Unitair-Urbanisme'*, cit. Wigley. p.134.

⁶⁰ 'On Travelling,' original published in Dutch, *'Over het reizen'* was read to the BNA (Society of Dutch Architects) on the occasion of the realisation of the new Schipol Airport Building, April 1966. It was published in Dutch in *Opstand van de Homo Ludens* (Bussum: Paul Brand, 1969) cit. Wigley. p.201.

⁶¹ Pizarro, p.113. see also David Harvey. *The Condition of Postmodernity*. first ed., Basil Blackwell Ltd, Oxford, 1989.

⁶² ibid. See also Manuel Castells. *The Rise of the Network Society. Vol. 1, the Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture.* Blackwell, Cambridge, MA, 1996. also Anthony Giddens. *The Consequences of Modernity.* Polity, Cambridge MA, 1990. and Ash Amin, and Nigel Thrift. 'Neo-Marshallian Nodes in Global Networks.' *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 16, no. 4 (1992), pp.571-87.

⁶³ ibid., p.114. see also C. Hamnett. 'Social Polarisation in Global Cities.' *Urban Studies* 31, no. 3 (1994), pp.401-24.

⁶⁴ Sassen cit. Pizarro p.119. see also Saskia Sassen. *Globalisation and Its Discontents*. New Press, New York, 1998. also Saskia Sassen. *Global Networks, Linked Cities*. Routledge, New York, 2002. and Saskia Sassen. *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo,*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1991.

⁶⁵ Pizarro, p.116. see also Beng-Lan Goh, *Modern Dreams: An Inquiry into Power, Cultural Production and the Cityscape in Contemporary Penang Malaysia*. Ithaca, South-East Asia Programme, Cornell University, New York, 2002.

⁶⁶ Michael Peter Smith. *Transnational Urbanism: Locating Globalisation*. Blackwell, Oxford, UK, 2001.

⁶⁷ Smith. p.1 see also Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture: Equality and Diversity in the Global Era*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, N. J., 2002.

⁶⁸ ibid., p.9.

⁶⁹ M. Christine Boyer. *Cybercities: Visual Perception in the Age of Electronic Communication*.: Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 1996, p.18.

⁷⁰ ibid., p.7. see also M. Christine Boyer, *The City of Collective Memory: Its Historical Imagery and Architectural Enetertainments*. MIT Press, Massachussetts, 1994.

⁷¹ 'Time-space compression' is terminology used to describe the period in the 1980s [which a number of authors (Castells, 1996; Harvey, 1989; Giddens, 1990; Amin & Thrift, 1992)], when it is argued that 'true globalisation' started. This is when there was so-called 'fusion of telecommunications and information technologies'. Pizarro, p.113.

⁷² Boyer, p.19. see also Colin Fournier, 'Webbed Babylon'. *Architectural Design* 71, 3 (2001).

⁷³ ibid., p.9. see also Stephen Graham, *The Cybercities Reader*. Routledge, New York, 2004.

⁷⁴ Borden & McCreery, cover page. Stalker group, are active in Europe currently, publish literature, engage in art installations and Situationist type activities in the city, rigorously defending the reactionary works of the Situationists and attempt reclamation of urban spaces for various events. This image demonstrates one of their contemporary interpretations of New Babylon-type space.

⁷⁵ ibid., p.20. see also (GUST), Ghent Urban Studies Team, Dirk De Meyer, and Kristiaan Versluys, eds. *The Urban Condition: Space, Community, and Self in the Contemporary Metropolis*. 010 Publishers, Rotterdam, 1999.

⁷⁶ William J. Mitchell, *Me++: The Cyborg Self and the Networked City*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2003. p.10.

⁷⁷ Wigley, p.150. This image demonstrates the practices in which Constant and his Situationist colleagues indulged, in displacing segments of conventional maps across a canvas and creating a new 'psychogeography' of the city. In this case was Amsterdam. They 'cut and pasted' all their favourite areas of the city, usually the most animated spaces and connected them, but left void spaces in between.

⁷⁸ Tim Cresswell and Ginette Verstraete. *Mobilizing Place, Placing Mobility: The Politics of Representation in a Globalized World (Thamyris/Intersecting 9)*: Rodopi, 2003. p.201.

⁷⁹ Reyner Banham, *Megastructure Urban Futures of the Recent Past* Thames & Hudson: London, (1976), p.85. 'The designs for the Walking City (by Ron Herron in 1964) are perhaps among the most well-remembered and widely publicized visions of this utopian urban form. Utopia here was not only about

the production of a new fixed space, but about a space that embodied and nurtured change, movement and temporality. These designs were bold, imaginative, unashamedly utopian, yet immediately recognizable.' Swyngedouw, p.155.