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Introduction: The Power of Cities in Global Climate Politics

The preceding statements by American President Donald Trump and Bill Peduto, the Mayor of Pittsburgh, capture a theme that now pervades the study of global climate politics. The first is that nation-states (and elected leaders of nation-states) have a “solemn” right to defend their citizens from international agreements and “entanglements” that undermine their national economic and political interests. The second is that cities (and their elected representatives) have a right and responsibility to act on climate change.

Twenty years ago, the idea that a mayor and an elected head of state would be locking horns over their commitment to climate change would have seemed bizarre, to say the least. But in 2017, city leaders around the world are now speaking and acting in the name of the planet—as well as their citizens. According to ICLEI, one of the world’s largest transnational city-networks:

In the United States already, 78 city and state government entities, representing almost 28 million US citizens, are monitoring their emissions reduction efforts through the carbon n Climate Registry. They are contributing to a global commitment to reduce emissions by more than one gigatonne of carbon-dioxide equivalent by 2030 — roughly the same amount pledged by the United States in its Nationally Determined Contribution to the Paris Agreement.¹

In 2017, another city-network representing more than 80 of the world’s largest cities, “the C40”, responded to the US government’s decision to withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement by issuing a petition

In order to fulfill my solemn duty to the United States and its citizens, the US will withdraw from the Paris climate accord...I was elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris.

US President Donald Trump, 1 June 2017 (<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/jun/01/donald-trump-confirms-us-will-quit-paris-climate-deal>. Last accessed 2 June 2017.)

As the Mayor of Pittsburgh, I can assure you that we will follow the guidelines of the Paris Agreement for our people, our economy & future.

Bill Peduto, Mayor of Pittsburgh, later that same day (<https://twitter.com/billpeduto/status/870370288344674304>. Last accessed 2 June 2017.)

Abstract This chapter introduces the volume by exploring the recent groundswell of enthusiasm surrounding the growing prominence of cities and city-networks in global climate politics. It first highlights the principal observations that have been made about the role of cities in global climate politics, highlighting the tensions and debates that are now animating the field. It then provides a roadmap for the rest of the volume, outlining its contribution to our understanding of city involvement in global climate politics.

¹http://citiscscope.org/commentary/2017/06/despite-trump-withdrawal-cities-and-states-will-ensure-climate-action-moves?utm_source=Citiscscope&utm_campaign=80e9d5b717-Mailchimp_2017_06_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ce992dbfef-80e9d5b717-118068273. Last accessed 2 June 2017.

(that was signed by more than 50 city mayors, including the mayors of Accra, Amman, Paris and Toronto), calling upon the G20 heads of state to deliver on their Paris commitments to tackle climate change:

As C40 mayors we will continue to lead on climate action in the most important cities of the world, standing for our people, the planet and global prosperity. Today, we seek to strengthen a pragmatic and positive alliance with you, in the service of our citizens. We look forward to working with you.²

Elsewhere, cities like Portland, Oslo, Medellín and Seoul are pursuing highly ambitious agendas for reducing emissions and vulnerability to climate change. According to the Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA), another repository of information that is operated and maintained by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (hereafter UNFCCC), cities, sub-national governments, regions, investors, companies and civil society organizations accounted for a total of 11,615 climate change “commitments” in 2016.³

In the words of Seoul’s mayor, said Park Won-soon, “local governments are actually leading national governments. They are the driving force” (in the global fight against climate change).⁴

But how do we make sense of these “forces?” And what do they tell us about the contemporary nature of international power?

For some (e.g. Tavares 2016; Barber 2013, 2017a), the growing prominence of cities in global climate politics suggests a fundamental transition from the old pattern of state-centric, multilateral governance that underlies the UNFCCC to a transnational, transformational arrangement that is rooted in the active involvement of sub- and non-state actors, including cities (e.g. Hale 2016). For others (e.g. Sassen 2015; Hickmann 2016; Gordon and Johnson 2017), the apparent transformation adds a layer of complexity and uncertainty to the study of global climate politics, suggesting the need for new theories

and concepts that may be used to understand this process. For others, still (e.g. Davis 2016) the appearance of cities in global climate politics is but a temporary phenomenon that reflects the peculiarities of this particular moment in history.

Whether the “struggle” to craft an effective response to climate change becomes a zero-sum game of actions and reactions between cities and nation-states, the apparent rise of cities suggests a new set of norms and standards that are now being used to define what constitutes city leadership (Acuto 2013; Gordon and Acuto 2015; Acuto and Rayner 2016). Perhaps, the most powerful sentiment of this kind comes from the late Benjamin Barber, whose posthumous editorial in the Guardian newspaper captures the normative and political zeitgeist of contemporary city power:

Because urban citizens are the planet’s majority, their natural rights are endowed with democratic urgency. They carry the noble name of “citizen”, associated with the word “city”. But the aim is not to set urban against rural: it is to restore a more judicious balance between them. Today it is cities that look forward, speaking to global common goods, while fearful nations look back. (Barber 2017b)

Underlying Barber’s comments is a powerful assertion that protecting the global atmospheric commons is an essential part of what it means to exercise political authority, and that cities have a right and a responsibility to intervene in this regard.

However, much remains to be known about the long-term implications of city and city-network engagement in global climate politics. Are cities and transnational city-networks, for instance, driving a coherent agenda that will have a lasting effect on reducing emissions and vulnerability to climate change? Are they legitimate actors in global climate governance? Are they able to provide a meaningful alternative to the multilateral system of nation-states? Above all, how does the growing involvement of cities and city-networks in global climate politics affect our understanding of international power?

²<https://www.change.org/p/g20-leaders-are-you-ready-to-save-our-planet>. Last accessed 4 July 2017.

³<http://climateaction.unfccc.int/>. Last accessed 10 May 2016.

⁴<http://time.com/4140172/paris-cities-states-climate-change/>. Last accessed 6 May 2016.

This book seeks to address these questions.

In doing so, it makes the case that cities have emerged as international actors in their own right, but that their agency has been framed and constrained by the ways in which national governments, multilateral institutions, transnational networks and multinational corporations constitute their behaviour. In what follows, I argue that the power of cities to act and effect change in global climate politics can be usefully framed in relation to four constellations of international power. The first is framed primarily in relation to the formal rules, norms and expectations that are created by states in the context international regimes, in this case, the UNFCCC. The second stems from the constellation of norms, knowledge, ideas and resources that manifest themselves in transnational city-networks. The third lies in the ability of cities to accumulate and attract the labour, resources and capital that enable them to act and exert power at a global scale. The fourth and final form of power stems from the norms (of standardization, classification and evaluation) that render cities observable and comparable in global climate politics.

Understanding the power of cities in global climate politics, I contend, entails an ability to frame and define the ontological nature of cities, to theorize their power of influence, autonomy and agency in international affairs, and to orient these insights into a comparative historical and empirical analysis.

1.2 The Scholarly Terrain

There is now a palpable sense of optimism about the role that cities and transnational city-networks are playing in addressing some of the world's most pressing environmental problems (Barber 2013, 2017a; Tavares 2016). Nowhere was this optimism more apparent than during the run-up to the 21st Conference of the Parties in Paris, where cities were widely portrayed in social and print media as innovators or savours whose actions were instrumental in providing critical leadership in the global fight against climate change (Weiss 2015; Worland 2015).

At the international level, particular attention has been paid to the role of transnational city-networks, such as the Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40), ICLEI and the Global Covenant of Mayors, whose membership activities have entailed advocacy, awareness raising and the dissemination of norms, knowledge and resources aimed at reducing emissions and vulnerability to climate change (Toly 2008; Bulkeley 2010; Gordon 2013; Bouteligier 2015; Bulkeley et al. 2015; Gordon and Acuto 2015; Johnson et al. 2015; Lee 2015; Hickmann 2016; Gordon and Johnson 2017). According to the carbon Climate Registry (Deng-Beck and van Staden 2015), 608 cities, representing 553 million people, have registered commitments for reducing the equivalent of 1.0 GtCO_{2e}, while NAZCA—the Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action established by the UNFCCC Secretariat—reported 11,615 climate change commitments in 2016. Elsewhere, the C40 and Arup (Arup-C40 2015a) report that “228 global cities, representing 436 million people, have set greenhouse gas reduction goals and targets amounting to a cumulative reduction of 13 GtCO_{2e} by 2050”.

At the heart of this transformation is a recognition that global climate governance has shifted away from purely multilateral governance arrangements (where authority derives primarily from the power of nation-states) to a hybrid of transnational (Abbott 2013) and polycentric (Ostrom 2010) governance arrangements, in which a much larger range of actors is now shaping (or at least trying to shape) the “global climate governance landscape” (Betsill et al. 2015). For many cities, Kyoto was often invoked as a source of inspiration (or despair, as the case may be) that urban leaders could use in framing their own climate change initiatives (Bulkeley 2010; Bulkeley and Betsill 2013; Burch et al. 2015; Johnson et al. 2015; Setzer et al. 2015). Indeed, there is now a large body of evidence that many cities used the language of the Kyoto Protocol and of climate change more generally to justify new forms of policy and investment at the urban scale (Bulkeley 2010; Bulkeley and Castan Broto 2012; Bulkeley and Betsill 2013; Bulkeley et al. 2015; Toly 2008; Kern and Bulkeley 2009; Acuto 2013; Gordon 2013; Gordon and Acuto 2015; Gore 2015; Johnson et al. 2015; Lee 2015; Sassen 2015; Setzer et al. 2015; Gordon and Johnson 2017).

Concerns about the inability of national governments and international institutions to achieve meaningful cuts have therefore reinvigorated discussions about the role of cities and transnational city-networks in filling the gap (Tavares 2016; Barber 2017a, b).

Yet, amidst the euphoria, there is also a sense that the power that has been ascribed to—and frequently assumed by—cities has been overstated; that the power of cities to make a difference in global climate politics is not what it appears. Although many cities are now “speaking the language” of climate change, the ability of cities, city leaders, planners and politicians to implement policies that reduce emissions and vulnerability is often highly dependent upon the administrative channels that govern a wide range of sectors, including transportation, water and sanitation, health, housing and emergency services (Acuto 2013; Revi et al. 2014; Aylett 2015; Gordon and Acuto 2015; Johnson et al. 2015; Lee 2015; Setzer et al. 2015; Hickmann 2016; Gordon and Johnson 2017). Indeed, the factors affecting the viability and effectiveness of urban climate policy initiatives (e.g. trade policies, globalization, food and fuel subsidies) are often well beyond the power of any single municipality or local authority (Sassen 2015).

Moreover, the impact of cities and city-networks on urban and international politics remains poorly understood, reflecting the myriad ways in which cities and other urban interests may conceivably interact with global climate policy networks and processes (Bouteligier 2015; Gordon 2013; Gordon and Acuto 2015; Gore 2015; Lee 2015; Johnson et al. 2015; Romero-Lankao et al. 2015; Setzer et al. 2015). By and large, the vast majority of writing about city engagement in transnational city-networks has focused on the efforts of large, industrialized cities to reduce (and advance an international agenda for reducing) GHG emissions (Acuto 2013; Bulkeley and Betsill 2013; Gordon 2013; Gordon and Acuto 2015; Gordon and Johnson 2017). To date, far less attention has been paid to the politics of urban climate policy formation in the Global South (Carmin et al. 2012; Gordon 2013; Gore 2015; Johnson et al. 2015; Lee 2015; Leichenko 2011).

Recent empirical work on the factors affecting transformative climate governance has shown that cities can provide important sites of experimentation, in which new plans, codes and policies have been used

to reduce emissions and vulnerability at the urban scale (Hoffmann 2011; Bulkeley and Castan Broto 2012; Bulkeley et al. 2015; Anderton and Setzer 2017). Bulkeley et al. (2015: 19) define urban climate policy experiments as “purposive and strategic” interventions that are (1) open-ended about the possible range of impacts and outcomes; (2) aimed at reducing GHG emissions or impacts; and (3) “delivered by or in the name of an existing or imagined urban community”. By way of example, they include cases of zero carbon housing, solar thermal heating and other efforts whose impact on GHG emissions and impacts is strategic, yet uncertain.

An important point (of enthusiasm) that emerges from the literature on urban climate policy experiments is that cities can serve as “policy incubators” for testing new approaches, documenting possible outcomes, sharing best practices and envisioning alternative policy futures (Boyko et al. 2012; Bulkeley et al. 2015; Anderton and Setzer 2017). Framed in this way, urban policy experiments provide an important means of challenging existing norms, practices, interests and investments that underlie ecologically destructive path dependencies (Geels 2004; Geels and Raven 2006; Geels and Schot 2007). However, questions can be raised about the extent to which the forces of experimentation and innovation are dependent upon the knowledge, networks and capital that tend to concentrate in relatively affluent urban centres (Florida 2017).

Sustainability transition theories suggest that relatively isolated changes and events can lead to wider systemic changes when they disrupt the dominant sociotechnical and socio-ecological systems that underlie the creation of goods and services, the consumption of resources and the production of waste and pollution (Geels 2004; Geels and Raven 2006; Geels and Schot 2007; Bulkeley et al. 2015). Within this literature, important distinctions are made between “*technological niches*”, spaces of innovation where new and potentially “unstable” forms of experimentation occur; “*sociotechnical landscapes*”, the exogenous environment in which macro-economic, cultural and macro-political developments shape human actions and decisions; and “*sociotechnical regimes*”, the broad constellation of norms, regulations, interests and investments that stabilize and support existing path dependencies (Geels and Schot 2007: 400).

According to Geels and Raven (2006), sustainability transitions occur when niche experiments are able to reconfigure broad sociotechnical landscapes, thereby destabilizing the rigidity and resistance of existing sociotechnical regimes (Geels 2004; Geels and Raven 2006; Geels and Schot 2007). Clearly, transitions theories have strong bearing on the study of urban climate experiments, but they have also been criticized for overstating the transformative potential of technological niches and for understating the agency that critical stakeholders (i.e. corporations and foreign capital) have in effecting sociotechnical change (Benkhout et al. 2004; Smith et al. 2005). Within the urban context, for instance, questions have been raised about the extent to which urban policy experiments are dependent upon the availability of wealth, resources and external investment (Bulkeley et al. 2015).

In short, there is now a growing recognition that cities and city-networks are playing a critical role in governing the politics of climate change. However, much remains to be known about the ways in which and extent to which cities and city-networks are making a discernible difference in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Are cities, for instance, driving a coherent agenda that can facilitate the transition to a low-carbon economy? Or are they simply responding to the norms and practices put in place by national governments and international institutions? Are cities and city-networks providing leadership and representation in multilateral and transnational climate governance? Or do they represent particular cities, groups and interests (e.g. land owners, corporations and political elites) that effectively exclude other important stakeholders, such as slum dwellers, informal labour and the urban poor? Finally, and most centrally, how does the rise of cities in global climate politics inform our understanding of cities, nation-states and international environmental politics?

1.3 Aims, Contributions and Rationale

The Power of Cities in Global Climate Politics is about the ways in which the growing prominence of cities and transnational city-networks in global climate politics informs our understanding of power and politics

in the international system. Drawing upon the extant literature on transnational climate governance, climate mitigation and urban adaptation, it aims to stimulate new thinking about the ways in which scholars are conceptualizing the rise of cities, including the ways in which these insights inform our understanding of power and politics in global environmental governance regimes.

At first glance, the field appears inundated with books and edited volumes about cities, global environmental governance and climate change. Upon closer inspection, a case can be made that the attention that has been paid to the three fields of global climate governance, cities and climate change, and cities and global governance has largely occurred in isolation. Few books about global climate governance, for instance, pay explicit attention to the urban dimensions of mitigation and adaptation (e.g. Biermann and Pattberg 2012; Stevenson 2013; Stevenson and Dryzek 2014). Moreover, many of the books that deal most directly with cities and global climate governance are about Northern experiences in relatively wealthy industrialized countries (e.g. Bulkeley and Betsill 2003; Meyer 2013; Stone Jr. 2012), although Bulkeley et al. (2015) and van der Heijden (2017) are important recent exceptions.

Although there is no shortage of books and edited volumes about the role of cities in global climate governance (e.g. Johnson et al. 2015; Lee 2015; Tavares 2016; Barber 2013, 2017a), many of these are either empirical studies that generate new data about the factors and processes affecting urban and global climate governance (e.g. Tavares 2016) or normative ones that argue in favour of acknowledging or extending the role of cities in global climate affairs (Barber 2013, 2017a). To date, relatively little has been written about the ways in which city engagement in global climate politics affects our understanding of power in global environmental regimes.

In filling these gaps, the book pursues four interrelated aims: first, it brings together the latest theoretical and empirical work on the ways in which cities are now engaging in global climate politics at different scales of analysis; second, it aims to stimulate new thinking about the ways in which city engagement in global climate politics informs our understanding of power and politics in global climate governance; third, it compares the politics of mitigation and adaptation; and finally,

it seeks to identify critical ways of thinking about the ways in which cities and city-networks may contribute to low-carbon development pathways that reduce emissions and vulnerability to climate change.

1.4 Framing the Analysis: The Power of Cities in Global Climate Politics

One of the challenges of theorizing the power of cities in global climate politics is that they lack the sovereignty that is typically afforded to nation-states (Lee 2015). Thinking about the role of cities in global climate politics therefore requires a theory of power that can account for the ways in which states and non-state actors affect the long-term patterns of continuity and change in international politics (Gordon and Acuto 2015; Acuto and Rayner 2016; Hickmann 2016; Gordon and Johnson 2017).

Theoretical approaches to the study of cities in global climate politics are relatively new, reflecting the speed and scale at which cities and city-networks have expanded over the last two decades (Gordon and Johnson 2017; Herrschel and Newman 2017; van der Heijden 2017). According to Bulkeley (2010), early research on the development of urban climate governance dates back to the mid-1990s, and there, the focus was on the internal dimensions of climate policy processes and decisions in primarily Northern industrialized cities. More recently, growing attention has been paid to the “external” orientation of cities, focusing primarily on the actions and decisions of global cities (Lee 2015), city-networks (Gordon and Acuto 2015; Hickmann 2016; Gordon and Johnson 2017), paradiplomacy (Tavares 2016) and international relations (Acuto 2013; Acuto and Rayner 2016; Herrschel and Newman 2017).

A common theme that pervades the study of cities and global climate politics is the notion that city engagement challenges or disrupts the prevailing Westphalian order of nation-states (Barber 2013, 2017a; Tavares 2016; Herrschel and Newman 2017). Within the field of international climate governance, particular attention has been paid to the role of cities and other sub- and non-state actors in “catalyzing” new

agendas for reducing emissions and vulnerability to climate change (Chan et al. 2016; Hale 2016; Anderton and Setzer 2017; Bäckstrand et al. 2017; Bäckstrand and Kuyper 2017; Gordon and Johnson 2017; van der Ven et al. 2017; van der Heijden 2017). By and large, the growing presence of cities and city-networks is seen positively, but questions have been raised about the extent to which cities are able to chart a course that is autonomous and independent of that being pursued by multilateral institutions, multinational corporations and nation-states (Hickmann 2016; Gordon and Acuto 2015; Gordon and Johnson 2017; Herrschel and Newman 2017).

One popular metric that has been used to compare city efforts on climate change (Chaps. 3, 4) is the idea of counting and weighting policy actions and commitments that cities report to third party disclosure platforms such as NAZCA, carbon² and the CDP (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project). To their credit, reporting platforms such as these provide a systematic means of compiling and comparing city actions and commitments on climate change. At the same time, they have been criticized for their relative lack of attention to political interests, processes (Davidson and Gleeson 2015) and policy outcomes (Widerberg and Strippel 2016; van der Heijden 2017).

A second way of understanding city power in global climate politics is to theorize the relative degree to which cities are able to advance a policy agenda that challenges or contradicts other agendas, including those of international institutions, multinational corporations and nation-states. In his recent book on authority in global climate governance, Thomas Hickmann (2016) conceptualizes city-network power in terms of conflictual, complementary and dependent relations, suggesting that city power can be discerned by documenting the extent to which cities and city-networks are resisting, complementing or relying on external institutions and forces. Similarly, the C40’s Climate Action in Mega Cities Report, CAM 3.0, differentiates cities on the basis of whether and to what extent they are able to legislate, regulate and implement policy in the absence of private sector and other actors (Arup-C40 2015). Finally, *Deadline 2020*, also by the Arup-C40 (2016) classifies power in terms of (1) whether cities own and operate the assets and infrastructure that are necessary for implementing climate policy;

(2) whether they set and enforce their own policies and regulations; (3) whether they are able to control their budgets; and (4) whether they are able to set a vision for the city's climate future.

A third perspective suggests that cities can attract and project power by situating themselves within transnational networks that consolidate actors and resources for the purposes of adaptation and mitigation. As noted earlier, transnational city-networks like ICLEI and the C40 have come to play a critical role in pooling resources, sharing ideas and providing critical points of access to finance, technology and expertise used in the development of low-carbon and climate-resilient pathways (Toly 2008; Funfgeld 2010; Romero-Lankao et al. 2015; Gordon and Acuto 2015; Lee 2015; Setzer et al. 2015; Gordon and Johnson 2017). At the same time, city-networks depend on the financial and intellectual contributions of national governments, international donors and multinational corporations, suggesting that their ability to act autonomously in global climate politics may be constrained (Gordon and Acuto 2015; Hickmann 2016; Gordon and Johnson 2017).

If cities and city-networks are dependent upon external actors, how do we make sense of their power? Building upon the work of Ken Abbott et al. (2015) and others working on the politics of transnational orchestration (e.g. Hale and Roger 2014; Chan et al. 2015; Bäckstrand and Kuyper 2017; Widerberg 2017), Gordon and Johnson (2017) make the case that city-network power can be usefully understood as a kind of orchestration that entails city-networks serving as intermediaries in governing a target population (Abbott et al. 2015). In particular, they identify three different forms of orchestration: (1) *complementary orchestration*, in which city action in global climate politics is largely framed and constrained by the power of sovereign nation-states operating within the multilateral regime; (2) *concurrent orchestration*, whereby cities and city-networks are able to undertake coordinating actions and activities that produce collective effects that are not necessarily undertaken “with an eye to the interstate regime” (Gordon and Johnson 2017: 11); and (3) *emergent orchestration*, which implies that power and order are “by-product” of the technical standards, common methodologies and standardized metrics that cities choose to voluntarily adopt when engaging with transnational networks, multinational corporations and the UNFCCC.

Theories of network orchestration offer a potentially interesting lens for documenting and interpreting the kinds of soft power that are now being used to nudge cities and city leaders into acting on climate change (Hale and Roger 2014; Bäckstrand and Kuyper 2017; Gordon and Johnson 2017). However, questions can also be raised about the extent to which orchestration processes are leading to the consolidation as opposed to the fragmentation of city power (Gordon and Johnson 2017). First, conforming to network norms, standards and metrics provide a powerful means by which orchestrators (e.g. national governments, bond rating agencies and international donors) and intermediaries (e.g. ICLEI and the C40) can observe, compare and control the actions and decisions of cities, suggesting a loss of agency and autonomy. Second, and related, being observed, compared and evaluated facilitates access to external resources that can in theory be withheld or denied.

Questions about the relative autonomy of cities and city-networks raise a final set of questions about the ways in which climate policy norms and commitments are interpreted and acted upon at the urban scale (Bulkeley 2010; Chu et al. 2015; Castan Broto 2017). The empirical literature on urban climate policy formation suggests that cities are more likely to emulate and adopt international climate policy commitments when local politicians, city officials, experts and local communities are able to make a clear and credible connection between acting on climate change and generating tangible co-benefits, in the form of ambient air quality, affordable housing and sustainable livelihood (Bulkeley 2010; Aylett 2015; Bouteligier 2015; Burch et al. 2015; Gordon and Acuto 2015; Lee 2015).

Particularly important in this regard is the ability of policy actors and entrepreneurs (Toly 2008) to frame and re-frame policy discourses surrounding the local politics of global climate change (Bulkeley 2010; Aylett 2015; Bouteligier 2015; Burch et al. 2015; Anderton and Setzer 2017; van der Heijden 2017). According to Dryzek, policy discourses are “metaphors and other rhetorical devices that are deployed to convince listeners or readers by putting a situation in a particular light” (Dryzek 2013: 19). Politically and analytically, their importance lies in their ability to convey positive and negative perceptions about the legitimacy of particular groups, issues and policy agendas (Schön and Rein 1994;

Ingram et al. 2007; Dekker 2017), highlighting the idea that certain policies may flourish in an environment that lends a sense of urgency and legitimacy to a particular policy ideal (cf. Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). However, the ability of cities and city leaders to frame climate policy discourses as viable and essential is itself dependent upon the constellation of ideas, institutions and interests that affect the perceived viability and desirability of acting on climate change (Pierson 2004; cf. Davidson and Gleeson 2015; Aykut 2016; van der Heijden 2017).

According to Lukes (2005), power implies an ability to influence actions and agendas through decisions, non-decisions and ideological frames. The “first face of power”, he argues, involves an explicit choice “among alternative modes of action” (Lukes 2005: 22), suggesting “a focus on behaviour in the making of decisions on issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests” (Lukes 2005: 19). The second implies “a means by which demands for change ... can be suffocated before they are even voiced; or kept covert; or killed before they gain access to the relevant decision making arena; or failing all these things, maimed or destroyed in the decision implementing stage of the policy process” (Lukes 2005: 22–23). Finally, a third entails the construction and possible manipulation of ideas, preferences and interests that are used in framing and legitimating particular policy actions and ideals (Lukes 2005).

As we shall see, the power of cities in global climate politics has assumed all three of these guises, providing alternative models of climate governance that are at times highly dependent upon the power of city-networks, multinational corporations and nation-states, and in different contexts liberating cities from the path dependencies of carbon-intensive maladaptive development. By suggesting that cities are “saviours, suppliers and agents of change”, I make the case that cities are under certain circumstances able to wield and project considerable power by leading and influencing international climate policy agendas while in others, they are clearly dependents, whose need and demand for international assistance also constitutes a form of power. The third and final face of power is the idea that cities are also important constellations of actors, interests and institutions, whose underlying dynamics create the conditions for resilient, low-carbon development pathways that extend far beyond the urban scale.

1.5 Outline of the Book

So, how does the book proceed?

The following chapter sets the stage for the rest of the book by situating the rise of cities in relation to the study of international relations, international political economy and global environmental change. In so doing, it makes the case that the growing prominence of cities in global climate politics can be usefully understood in relation to four critical historical junctures:

- The end of the Cold War, which foreshadowed the conceptualization of non-state power, complex interdependence and multilevel governance;
- The globalization of information and communication technologies, which facilitated the rise of transnational networks, global cities and post-Fordist production regimes;
- the re-scaling of global production chains, reflecting the rise of the NICs, the BRICs and other emerging economies; and
- An emerging consensus that human activities have become the primary cause and determinant of global environmental change, introducing a new epoch of the Anthropocene.

After situating the rise of cities and city-networks in relation to these three historical/theoretical transitions, I then make the case that city power can be usefully understood by differentiating the terms on which cities engage with the international system, whose essential characteristics are conceptualized as follows:

1. **Westphalian power**—the notion that city power is framed primarily in relation to the formal rules, norms and expectations that are created by nation-states within the context of the UNFCCC;
2. **Network power**—the notion that city power stems from the constellation of norms, knowledge, resources and relationships that manifest themselves in transnational city-networks;

3. **Corporate power**—the idea that city power lies in the ability of cities to accumulate and attract the labour, resources and capital that enables them to act and exert power at a global scale;
4. **Performative power**—the notion that cities are able to project power by articulating, institutionalizing and normalizing a role for themselves within local and global policy discourses.

Although the ideas and assumptions being used to delineate these conceptual categories are by no means mutually exclusive, they do provide an important heuristic that may be used to pinpoint the different dimensions and mechanisms through which city power is being projected in global climate politics.

Drawing upon this framework, Chap. 3 then explores the ways in which cities have exerted and projected power in the context of global climate mitigation. Central to the analysis is an assertion that the agency of cities in global climate politics has been framed (and in many ways constrained) by the Westphalian power of the UNFCCC. By looking at a number of recent climate mitigation initiatives, the chapter explores the extent to which city-networks like ICLEI, the C40 and the Global Covenant of Mayors have been able to develop a viable alternative to the multilateral framework. Underlying the work of many city-networks is a corporate model of climate governance that entails disseminating and adopting particular standards, metrics and methodologies, suggesting new forms of performative power.

Chapter 4 next moves to the politics of urban climate adaptation, exploring the extent to which cities and city-networks have been able to articulate and negotiate new forms of power by demonstrating the need for the development of industries, assets, infrastructure and human settlements that will facilitate adaptation to climate change. Building upon the previous chapter, I make the case that the politics of urban climate adaptation have occurred in reaction and response to a Westphalian system that effectively reifies the power of nation-states. However, animating, disseminating and in some cases contradicting the politics of multilateral climate governance is a parallel process of network governance and MNCs, whose metrics, indicators and benchmarking exercises provide important forms of performative power that are being used

to organize and orchestrate the ways in which cities, city-networks and corporations are defining resilience, vulnerability and risk in the Paris climate regime.

Finally, Chap. 5 concludes the analysis by highlighting the critical ways in which city engagement in global climate politics affects our understanding of international power. The implications for conceptualizing and theorizing the power of cities are considered, as are the methodologies that may be used in exploring and explaining the changing power of cities in global environmental governance regimes.

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