



# Cities to Be Tamed? Spatial Investigations Across the Urban South

*Francesco Chiodelli*

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Across the global South, the rapid urbanisation and uneven development that have occurred over the past few decades have brought to the surface a tight connection between social conflicts and urban space. Indeed, the physical conformation of urban space is one of the primary factors that trigger social tensions, with repercussions at the metropolitan, regional and national scales. Such tensions are related to the conditions of social and spatial inequality which characterise many urban areas across the South; they can also be connected to contingent political and institutional orders which find in the materiality of space both the means and the cause of conflicts among different groups, amidst diverging territorial demands and the overlapping of competing struggles for power. At the same time, new possibilities arise in the concreteness of space, including innovative forms of local activism, adapting strategies of self-organisation, and unconventional relations between the 'formal' and the 'informal' city. On acknowledging the multifaceted nature of the urban space, there arises a question which constitutes the core problem addressed by the book: are cities to be tamed? This volume gathers a series of cross-disciplinary contributions on these topics, spanning from architecture and urban design, to planning, social theory and geography. These contributions revolve around two core themes. The first concerns the agency of design in contexts of 'informality' and centres on the missing/unexpected/pursued exchange between projects and realities. The second concerns the complex relationship between spatial planning, politics, and conflicts in contexts characterised by marked ethnic, political, and social tensions.

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