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## **A 'Substantial' Diversity.**

### **Approaches to the Concept of Suburbia in the Global North**

Suburbia is considered the globally ubiquitous borderland of every major urban settlement. While the debate about specific suburban characteristics has been extensive, it is primarily held under North American assumptions: (slowly diversifying) white middle – class settlements with low – density detached housing.

Harris criticized this Anglo – American – centric approach to the concept of suburbia as mostly self – referential, instead advocating for “a typology to organize [...] the diversity of suburban meanings, worldwide” (2010: 16). Developing a general framework he illustrated differences and commonalities between the Global North and the Global South but forwent a deeper differentiation.

For the case of suburban Germany Burdack and Hesse emphasized its highly discrete characteristics (2006); the suburban France is often described as periurban instead; and the suburban Asia (i.e. Japan and South Korea) seems altogether neglected in international academia. In other words: There is a spectrum of concepts of suburbia in the Global North that is uncharted.

With urbanization as a global phenomenon also came globally understandable aspects of what is considered urban. In a reaction to the debate about ‘planetary urbanization’ as an overly generalizing concept Brenner proposed an engaged pluralism (2018): Incorporating local specifics into a nevertheless ubiquitous phenomenon.

Following Brenner under a dedicated intercultural hermeneutically perspective I will in my contribution use the term suburbia as a basic container. In a comparative meta – analysis of academic literature I will explore how this container is filled with a ‘substantial’ diversity of concept of suburbia in the Global North.

#### **References:**

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