



# From Urban Entrepreneurialism to a “Revanchist City”? On the Spatial Injustices of Glasgow’s Renaissance

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Recent perspectives on the American city have highlighted the extent to which the economic and sociospatial contradictions generated by two decades of “actually existing” neoliberal urbanism appear to demand an increasingly punitive or “revanchist” political response. At the same time, it is increasingly being acknowledged that, after embracing much of the entrepreneurial ethos, European cities are also confronting sharpening inequalities and entrenched social exclusion. Drawing on evidence from Glasgow, the paper assesses the dialectical relations between urban entrepreneurialism, its escalating contradictions, and the growing compulsion to meet these with a selective appropriation of the revanchist political repertoire.

## **Introduction**

Spurred on by the unrelenting pace of globalization and the entrenched political hegemony of a neoliberal ideology, throughout the last two decades a host of urban governments in North America and Western Europe have sought to recapitalize the economic landscapes of their cities. While these “entrepreneurial” strategies might have refueled the profitability of many city spaces across the two continents, the price of such speculative endeavor has been a sharpening of socioeconomic inequalities alongside the institutional displacement and “social exclusion” of certain marginalized groups. One political response to these social geographies of “actually existing neoliberalism” (Brenner and Theodore [paper] this volume) sees the continuous renaissance of the entrepreneurial city being tightly “disciplined” through a range of architectural forms and institutional practices so that the enhancement of a city’s image is not compromised by the visible presence of those very marginalized groups.

For some scholars, these tactics are further spiked with a powerful antiwelfare ideology, a criminalization of poverty, rising levels of incarceration, and a punitive or “revanchist” political response (cf Mitchell

2001; Smith 1998; Wacquant 2000). Generally, it would seem that these latter features are being imprinted more dramatically upon the urban landscapes of North, Central, and Latin America than on those of Western Europe (Caldiera 1999). Nonetheless, in an era characterized by “fast” policy transfer, and with many European cities suffering widening socioeconomic inequalities and intensified expressions of social exclusion, one key question seems to me particularly axiomatic. This concerns the extent to which a punitive, revanchist vernacular might now form part and parcel of a mandatory political response intended to discipline the deleterious social consequences and the escalating sociospatial contradictions that continue to be generated by a neoliberalizing political economic agenda. Combining theoretical discussion with a West European case study, my paper engages with this question.

I begin by illustrating the principal landscapes of a neoliberalizing urbanism, integrating the themes of entrepreneurial governance, downtown renaissance, and the active systems of surveillance that are intertwined with the advance of a revanchist city. I then highlight how the geographical contours of this emerging urban form are increasingly choreographed through the control over and purification of urban space,<sup>1</sup> which thereby raises important questions about the future expression of citizenship and social justice in the contemporary city. These ideas are then deployed towards an investigation of Glasgow in Scotland, a city regularly distinguished as a successful model of place-marketing and urban entrepreneurialism. I contend that Glasgow’s recent experience offers some powerful evidence about the dialectical relations between urban entrepreneurialism, its internal contradictions, and the compulsion to meet these contradictions with a selective appropriation of the revanchist political repertoire (cf Atkinson forthcoming; Belina and Helms 2001). This said, the city’s inherited political and institutional landscape, allied to some recent policy initiatives, reveals Glasgow’s revanchism to be minor-league in comparison to the perspective’s “home base” of New York. A concluding section offers some reflections about the interconnecting properties between a neoliberalizing urbanism and a revanchist political economy in choreographing the contemporary city.

## **Landscapes of a Neoliberalizing Urbanism**

### *Neoliberalism and the Entrepreneurial City*

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, a number of dramatic transformations punctuated urban landscapes across North America and Western Europe. As city after city endured catastrophic deindustrialization and witnessed the suburban “flight” of high-income earners and an associated concentration of impoverished residents in their inner areas,

enormous stress was placed on urban governmental administrations. This was exacerbated by a decline in national fiscal support, itself illustrative of a general dismantling of key pillars of the Keynesian welfare state. Faced with such enormous challenges and implored to varying degrees by the rising tide of a “roll-back” neoliberal ideology (Peck and Tickell this volume),<sup>2</sup> many city governments moved quickly to reconsider their social bases of support, their architectures of political intervention, and their strategic priorities. A quite discernible shift in the political regulation of cities appeared underway, constitutive and reflective of new moments of “creative destruction” (Brenner and Theodore [paper] this volume).

Over the past fifteen years or so, a number of scholars have come to interpret these features as a generalized transformation from urban managerialism to urban entrepreneurialism. Guided by the axial principles of Keynesian economics and a politics of redistribution associated with postwar Fordism, the managerialist mode had been largely concerned with extending the provision of public services and decommodified components of welfare and “collective consumption” to local city populations (Saunders 1980). In sharp contrast, and in accordance with a neoliberal syllabus, the entrepreneurial regime is essentially concerned with reviving the competitive position of urban economies, especially through the “liberation” of private enterprise and an associated demunicipalization and recommodification of social and economic life (Leitner 1990).

While the literature on the entrepreneurial city has penetrated a range of academic subdisciplines, the Marxian approach developed by David Harvey has proved highly influential. Harvey (1989) views urban entrepreneurialism to be characterized by three principal features. First—and in contrast to the epoch of Fordist-managerialism, during which urban society was steered primarily by elected local government—the new urban political arena is ever more imbued with the influence of powerful business interests, especially through the much-heralded public–private partnership. Second, this business-led agenda is much less concerned with wealth redistribution and welfare than with the very “enabling” of economic enterprise, although the latter *is* viewed to generate societal benefits through the impact of “trickle-down” economics. One particularly notable feature has been the commitment to highly speculative “flagship” projects often enacted to enhance the imageability of the city. However, Harvey is quick to point out that much of the risk encountered in this place-marketing and escalating interurban competition for limited capital is often borne by publicly funded agencies, rather than “heroic” entrepreneurs. Finally, he views urban entrepreneurialism to be driven by a political economy of *place* rather than *territory*: the benefits of flagship projects like convention centers and festivals are often more

readily experienced by those, like tourists and place-mobile capitalists, who live beyond the immediate locality.

The “projected spaces” (Brenner and Theodore [paper] this volume) for many of the flagship schemes so indispensable to this entrepreneurial agenda have been city downtowns, those areas that had suffered so vividly from Fordist deindustrialization. Consequently, locally mobilized public–private coalitions have taken the lead in brokering the regeneration of erstwhile derelict industrial enclaves and abandoned neighborhoods, which have been scrubbed clean and dramatically reinvented as glittering office and hotel atriums, themed leisure zones, upscale shopping centres, gentrified housing, and aesthetically enchanting cultural districts. Some of the most high-profile instances of this include Harbor Place in Baltimore, Fanueil Hall in Boston, Central Station in Chicago, the Merchant City in Glasgow, Canary Wharf and King’s Cross in London, and South Street Seaport, Battery Park City, Grant Central Terminal, Times Square, and the Lower East Side in New York City (Boyer 1993; Boyle and Hughes 1994; Harvey 2000; Katz 2001; Smith 1996; Wright 1997; Zukin 1995).

*Disciplining the Sociospatial Contradictions of Urban Entrepreneurialism: Marginality, Surveillance, and the Revanchist City*

If the renaissance of these tenderly manicured landscapes alongside the active introduction of business improvement districts has done much to recover the exchange and sign value of many city centers, questions remain about the legitimate use-value of such spaces for a wider citizenry (Harvey 2000; Katz 2001). Not least in that the fragile maintenance of value inscribed into this recommodification of space is ever more intricately dependent on a costly system of surveillance—performed through a blend of architectural design, CCTV, private security, and a range of legal remedies—seemingly designed to inculcate “acceptable” patterns of behavior commensurate with the free flow of commerce and the new urban aesthetics. Indeed, a most lively interdisciplinary debate continues to rage over the effects of the new urban architectures and their disciplinary technologies upon the substantive nature of public space (Bauman 2000; Coleman and Sim 2000; Flusty 2001; Fyfe forthcoming).

While I acknowledge that this public-space debate is far from conclusive,<sup>3</sup> I nonetheless find it hard to reason against the view that any conception of “publicness” we ascribe to the new renaissance sites is highly selective and systematically discriminating. For, as with most political-economic expressions of neoliberal hegemony, the new urban glamour zones conceal a brutalizing demarcation of winners and losers, included and excluded. Indeed, in some senses we

might speculate that the lived spaces of the neoliberal city symbolize an astonishingly powerful geographical expression of the erosion of Keynesian ideals of full employment, integrated welfare entitlement, and “social citizenship”<sup>4</sup> (Marshall 1963)—not least in that when compared to many earlier rounds of municipal investment, which sought to engineer projects aimed at a “mass public” (Bianchini and Schwengel 1991:214), the new initiatives appear to be “reclaiming” public spaces for those groups who possess economic value as producers or consumers to the virtual exclusion of the less well-heeled (Amin and Graham 1997).

The political economies enframing such displacements and marginalities are skillfully dissected in Wacquant’s (2000) theorizations on the “penal state,” Mitchell’s (2001) work on the “postjustice” city, and Smith’s (1996, 1998) writings on the “revanchist city.” This latter concept is particularly powerful and derives from the French word *revanche*, literally meaning “revenge.” Smith’s referent here is the right-wing “revanchist” populist movement, which throughout the last three decades of the 19th century reacted violently against the relative liberalism of the Second Empire and the socialism of the Paris Commune. Notably for Smith, as with the new urban politics of the present fin-de-siècle, the original revanchists mixed military tactics with moral discourses about public order on the streets (Smith 1998). The next section highlights what I envisage to be some of the most notable geographical contours of the early twenty-first century revanchist city.

### **Revanchist Urbanism: Toward a Spatialization of Exclusionary Citizenship and the Enactment of a “Postjustice” City**

As noted above, while the political invocation of an entrepreneurial urban agenda offers many inner-city spaces a spectacular makeover, it also risks deepening socioeconomic polarities along social cleavages like class, ethnicity, gender, age, and occupation. And by journeying beyond the overheating downtown, we observe some additional inscriptions of this new urban geography, variously captured in debates around a “dual,” “quartered,” “walled,” or “fortress” city (cf Davis 1990; Judd 1995; Marcuse 1993; Mollenkopf and Castells 1991). These perspectives offer compelling dramatizations about how the contemporary urban form appears to be manifesting as an intensely uneven patchwork of microspaces that are physically proximate but institutionally estranged. In fact, Soja (2000:299) ventures to argue that this splintering “postmetropolitan” landscape

... has become filled with many different kinds of protected and fortified spaces, islands of enclosure and anticipated protection

against the real and imagined dangers of daily life. Borrowing from Foucault, [this] postmetropolis is represented as a collection of *carceral cities*, an archipelago of “normalized enclosures” and fortified spaces that both voluntarily and involuntarily barricade individuals and communities in visible and not-so-visible urban islands, overseen by restructured forms of public and private power and authority.

Notable examples of such “normalized enclosures” include the highly exclusive gated communities that increasingly adorn the suburban landscapes of postmetropolitan regions and the high-rent, design-intensive shopping malls and omnicensers that continually infiltrate urban downtowns (Crawford 1992; Judd 1995). Indeed, one cruel irony pertains in the way that whilst mall designers are being authorized, in architectural terms, to recreate “the street” and an organic “civic” milieu (Goss 1993), so intensifying pressures to maximize the profitability of retail space often leads to a penal exclusion of street people, political campaigners, and independent artists, all of whom might be deemed to compromise the strict ethics of “consumerist citizenship” (Christopherson 1994).

Gated communities, shopping malls, and publicly subsidized corporate plazas thereby represent living embodiments of Flusty’s (2001:659) “interdictory spaces,” designed to “systematically exclude those adjudged to be unsuitable and even threatening, [or] people whose class and cultural positions diverge from the builders and their target markets.” Moreover, their very banality, the extent to which such interdictory spaces have become naturalized—uncritically regarded as a “mainstay” of the contemporary urban environment or, in some cases, even “quaintified” as a positive cultural presence (Flusty 2001:660)—nurtures some profound questions about citizenship and social justice in the city, particularly as these relate to the life chances of those displaced by the unforgiving social Darwinism inculcated through disciplinary neoliberalization. This arises not least in the way that such security-obsessed architectures are increasingly supplemented with authoritarian legal measures and policing tactics designed to regulate the very spatial practices of the displaced urban poor.

Indeed, Smith’s (1996) revanchist thesis derives from his rousing analysis of the battle to stretch the gentrification frontier of Manhattan’s Lower East Side and the brutally repressive policing practices deployed to “take back” Tompkins Square Park; deemed to have been stolen *from* gentrifiers and the wider public *by* the homeless and other victims of real-estate displacement. These vengeful state tactics intensified dramatically under Republican Mayor Rudy Giuliani (Smith 1998). Amid his growing concern about “disorder in the public spaces of the city,” Giuliani identified certain groups—homeless people, panhandlers, prostitutes, squeegee cleaners, and

graffiti artists—as “enemies within” and as instrumental in fostering an ecology of fear among those he considered decent, honest New Yorkers. In response, he ordered New York Police Department officers to pursue with “zero tolerance” those groups perceived to be a genuine threat to the “quality of urban life” for the moral majority (Smith 1998:3, 4).

Nonetheless, the revanchist ethos extends well beyond zero-tolerance policing (ZTP). Indeed, it relates to a whole raft of state policies wedded to a neoliberal antiwelfare ideology and—amid the heightened insecurities fostered by the new economy—a “compassion fatigue,” which alleges a widespread erosion of public sympathy for the dispossessed (Mitchell 2001). Exploiting this purported fatigue, Giuliani endeavored to cut welfare further in favor of “workfare,” to cease public-housing construction, to augment existing anti-immigration legislation, and to wage an ideological and financial attack on the public university system.<sup>5</sup> In this emergent revanchist city, then, Althusser’s (1971) repressive and ideological state apparatuses are folded together in a disciplinary and, at times, penalizing and stoutly authoritarian effort. It is these senses that

[t]he revanchist city is, to be sure, a dual and divided city of wealth and poverty ... But it is more. It is a divided city where the victors are increasingly defensive of their privilege, such as it is, and increasingly vicious defending it ... The benign neglect of “the other half,” so dominant in the liberal rhetoric of the 1950s and 1960s, has been superseded by a more active viciousness that attempts to criminalize a whole range of “behavior,” individually defined, and to blame the failure of post-1968 urban policy on the populations it was supposed to assist. (Smith 1996:227)

It is in these respects, too, that Smith (1998:10) defines revanchism as “in every respect the ugly cultural politics of neoliberal globalization.”<sup>6</sup>

Analogous themes emerge in the work of Mitchell (1995, 1997, 2001). However, Mitchell excavates a deeper cut into fundamental questions about justice, “the public,” and the citizenship rights of the dispossessed.<sup>7</sup> In particular, he asserts that as acute poverty and homelessness intensify across urban landscapes, liberal sensibilities are thrown into confusion by the fact that, denied any permanent private retreat, homeless people are often forced to perform acts like sleeping, toileting, and washing in public space. The response by urban political regimes, preoccupied as they are with fronting an imageable city for global capital and tourists, has been to outlaw these necessary capacities from the public gaze—to “cleanse” public spaces of homeless people by banishing them to the marginal back regions (Mitchell 1995:118). This “annihilation of space” represents a

profoundly brutalizing public sphere that literally destroys lives and, when backed up by a raft of antihomeless laws, reflects

a changing conception of citizenship which, contrary to the hard-won inclusions in the public sphere that marked the civil rights, women’s and other movements in past decades, now seeks to re-establish exclusionary citizenship as just and good ... The rights of homeless people do not matter (when in competition with “our” rights to order, comfort, places for relaxation, recreation, and unfettered shopping) simply because we work hard to convince ourselves that homeless people are not really citizens in the sense of free agents with sovereignty over their own actions. Antihomeless legislation helps institutionalize this conviction by assuring the homeless in public no place to be sovereign. (Mitchell 1997:320–321)

For Mitchell (2001), this punitive approach leaves the aesthetics of place to prevail over all other considerations. It also signals a notable step beyond the “malign neglect” that characterized the liberal era (Wolch and Dear 1993) toward a sadistic criminalization of urban poverty and a war against welfare. Moreover, particularly when allied to the rapid diffusion of “interdictory” privatopias and fortified cathedrals of consumption, this assault on the poorest sections of the urban population appears to be heralding the erosion of spatial justice. An immensely unsettling prospect, and with neoliberalism as its fundamental ideological backdrop, this postjustice city (Mitchell 2001) limits the performative dimensions of societal membership to those capable of confirming a financial “stakeholding” in the new economy of fast capitalism. All of this resonates with sociological work on the “precarious freedoms” associated with progressively more individualized modes of social life and of the new forms of risk absorption and subjectivities characteristic of the postwelfare age (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1996; Keil this volume).

The flip side of these new governmentalities leaves any talk of wealth redistribution to be judged as staggeringly outmoded and to lack political cachet amid the current *fête* of globalization and the disciplinary codes inscribed through “roll-out neoliberalism” (Peck and Tickell this volume). This is the case not least in that, at all spatial scales of government, political endeavors to fully extend social citizenship<sup>8</sup> are continually being trumped by the perceived imperative to appease “business interests” and a related clamor to cut taxes and boast of fiscal prudence. This is a mood of which politicians like Giuliani are only too aware, and the message has been spreading (Taylor 1998). For instance, when returning from New York in 1995, then-shadow UK Home Secretary Jack Straw pledged that a Labour government would introduce ZTP and “reclaim the streets for the law-abiding citizen” from the “aggressive begging of winos, addicts and squeegee

merchants” (cited in Fyfe forthcoming). And prior to the tragic events of 11 September 2001, ZTP and the “cleaning up” of the Big Apple had been “showcased” to the political elites of many European cities (Wacquant 2000)—including Glasgow.

### **Contriving Civic Space, Concealing “Postjustice” Revanchism? Unraveling Glasgow’s Renaissance**

[In] “feeding the downtown monster” ... [e]very new wave of public investment is needed to make the last wave pay off. The private-public partnership means that the public takes the risks and the private takes the profits. The citizenry wait for benefits that never materialize. (Harvey 2000:141)

#### *From “Red Clydeside” to an Entrepreneurial Spirit: Feeding Glasgow’s “Downtown Monster”*

Glasgow’s original wealth emerged from traditional industries like heavy engineering and shipbuilding alongside its mercantilist role as the Second City in the British empire. As the empire waned and as global demand for traditional sectors declined, the fortunes of Glasgow and its metropolitan region of Clydeside experienced steady decline (Gomez 1998). The early twentieth century saw this deterioration being met by robust political struggles, spawning an enduring image of “Red Clydeside.” During the 1930s, with the city facing extreme social disadvantage, the local state began a major physical renewal of inner-city slums alongside the construction of “peripheral” housing estates designed to absorb the displaced population. From this period right through to the 1970s, the city’s Labour-controlled Glasgow Corporation (later District Council) pursued a managerialist mode of social reproduction (Boyle and Hughes 1994). However, following a relentless contraction of its employment base and an externalization of its more affluent population, Glasgow declined to such an extent that by the 1970s it was officially recognized as “the most deprived locality in Britain” (Danson, Johnstone and Mooney 1997:13). Unfavorable media imagery had also rendered the city a byword for industrial dereliction, slum housing, gangland violence, religious bigotry, and hard drinking (Damer 1990).

Then, amid the rampant decline of the city’s industrial base, and following a shocking 1977 defeat by the local Conservative Party, in 1980 the Glasgow Labour group returned to power with a new vision. Alongside its managerialist commitment to social reproduction, in 1981 the Glasgow District Council established an Economic Development and Employment Committee, whose remit was to generate employment and arrest economic decline (Boyle and Hughes 1994). Nonetheless, the council’s intervention never quite stretched to the

insurgent “restructuring for labour” initiatives that were to characterize certain English metropolitan councils during the 1980s<sup>9</sup> (Eisenschitz and Gough 1993). Instead, it became a quick convert to the ethos of place-marketing (Paddison 1993), as exemplified in its 1983 “Glasgow’s Miles Better” campaign and in several arts and cultural projects such as the Burrell Collection. This active coaching of a postindustrial economy was augmented in 1985 following a McKinsey and Company (1994) report commissioned by the Scottish Development Agency (SDA),<sup>10</sup> which also urged the city’s political regime to press for more active private-sector participation (Boyle and Hughes 1994). On this advice, the SDA helped institute a new business-led quango, Glasgow Action, whose aim was “to make the city more attractive to work in, to live in and to play in; to recreate Glasgow’s entrepreneurial spirit; to communicate the new reality of Glasgow to its citizens and to the world” (Glasgow Action Chair Lord McFarlane, quoted in Gomez 1998:111).

Few would deny that this aggressive marketing strategy has succeeded in reinventing the landscape and imagery of Glasgow (Short 1996). Yet, in critically assessing this entrepreneurial turn, there is little doubt that when comparisons are drawn with North American cities—and even some English ones—levels of private-sector participation have disappointed (Boyle 1997). As has been the case with other British cities furiously implored to embrace the “enterprise culture,” Glasgow’s inherited regulatory landscape—combining radical political activism with pragmatic municipal managerialism—was to sit uncomfortably with the emerging trajectory of market-led “roll-back” neoliberalism. Instead, and in accordance with Harvey’s (2000) prognosis, it has been a highly active local state that has borne the main risks in brokering a range of entrepreneurial projects that have helped to (1) establish designer retail developments like Princes Square and the Italian Centre, (2) promote gentrification and café culture within neighborhoods like the Merchant City, (3) foster a thriving hub in the arts and culture, and (4) attract “hallmark” events like the 1988 Garden Festival and designations like European City of Culture in 1990 and British City of Architecture in 1999.

Interestingly, the 1985 McKinsey Report also offered a geographical vision, designed by internationally renowned architect Gordon Cullen to reconstruct and reimagine Glasgow’s downtown and to instill new mental maps for its citizens and tourists. With the main thoroughfare, Buchanan Street, as the focal point, this revisioning included a civic square, cultural venues, and shopping and leisure districts (Boyle and Hughes 1994). While such “projected spaces” rarely manifest in pure form, the fact that Cullen’s vision has been implemented in piecemeal fashion has left certain erstwhile derelict zones to witness an extraordinary reaestheticization. Nowhere is this more in evidence than in

Buchanan Street's north end, which has become dominated by an ultrastylish shopping center, the Buchanan Galleries. Its architectural philosophy boasts of a "sympathetic" structure enabling a "continuation of the street ... to ensure that the transition from external to internal world would be relatively seamless" (Buchanan Galleries 2000). Paying homage to the McKinsey Report, performance spaces have been integrated into the streetscape, and the general transformation of Buchanan Street is alleged to be "making the city centre a better place for everyone [by helping to] develop and enhance [its] civic spaces" (GCC 2000:1). In achieving this—and striking remarkable chords with Goss's (1993) work on the design of postmodern retail environments—"The new-look Buchanan Street removes much of the 'clutter' and replaces it with coordinated lighting, bollards, seating, signage and street café areas, using glass, stainless steel and stone. Clipped lime trees grace the length of Buchanan Street, creating shade and mirroring the great boulevards of Europe" (GCC 2000:1).

In many respects, then, the reinvention of Buchanan Street offers a powerful illustration of Glasgow's renaissance as a postindustrial city and a key node in the intensification of consumerist citizenship. These themes are being further invested in the spectacular transformation of Glasgow's old Post Office Building in George Square, described as a "lifestyle experiment," featuring flagship penthouses at UK£500,000 each, alongside luxurious bars, restaurants, and a five-star hotel (Watt 2001). This is the reimagined, pristine, entrepreneurial Glasgow. And the procession of luxury and performance automobiles that now glide through the city streets is further testimony to the fact that a sizeable bourgeoisie has accumulated considerable wealth out of this transformation.

### *Interdictory Architectures and Spatial Injustices in Glasgow's Renaissance*

Certain developments discussed above, alongside the continued if relatively slow gentrification of Glasgow's Merchant City neighborhood, would appear to offer some version of the "back to the city" movement so readily lauded by the UK government's Urban Task Force and subsequent urban white paper (DETR 2000). Moreover, a succession of hallmark projects and new landscapes of display are offering local citizens and thousands of tourists a fresh impression of Glasgow. A newfound confidence is being asserted around the city's role as a premier-league venue for cultural events and conferences—a confidence only heightened by the cluster of hotels currently under construction on what was previously "derelict" land in Finnieston, just west of downtown.

Nonetheless, if we search beneath the euphemistic hype and superficial glamour—if, in Cindi Katz's (2001) terms, we endeavor to "unhide"

the consequences of neoliberal entrepreneurialism—we gradually unravel some distressing geographies of exclusion. For instance, as Glasgow’s elites have focused sharply on “feeding a downtown monster”<sup>11</sup> (Harvey 2000:141), there is no hiding the fact that, with one-third of Glasgow’s population reliant on state benefits, any purported renaissance is failing to “trickle down” to the wider urban conurbation (Danson, Johnstone and Mooney 1997).<sup>12</sup> This is most nakedly evident in Glasgow’s own “badlands,” the vast “peripheral” public housing estates originally established on the outskirts of the city during the postwar period (Mooney and Danson 1997). Neither is there any hiding what amounts to a major “jobs gap,” since, as in many older industrial cities, the rise in service-sector jobs has failed to compensate for the dramatic fall in manufacturing employment (Turok and Edge 1999). Indeed, successive rounds of underfunded, social partnership-based strategies have failed to raise employment and income levels within large deprived areas, only succeeding as a form of “jobless regeneration” (Webster 2000:44).

In addition, Glasgow’s new civic spaces appear to be concealing more active geographies of displacement and marginality—ones that might just imply the onset of a revanchist urban politics. Immediately opposite the Buchanan Galleries lies the former George Hotel. For years this building served as a cheap hostel for homeless people, particularly middle-aged men. With the opening of the Galleries, the George Hotel and its clients presumably assumed a role as part of Buchanan Street’s “clutter” and were cleared from the civic gaze. Any “sympathy” inscribed into the architecture of the Buchanan Galleries was to appease the pleasures and fantasies of consumerist citizenship, and was not to be extended to those without a permanent home.

In spring 2001, the local media assumed an increasingly vengeful approach to this issue (*Evening Times* 17 April). An editorial entitled “Beggars Are Damaging City Centre” made a “call for concerted action ... involving the police” (*Evening Times* 2001:8) in response to news that Glasgow had fallen from second to fourth in the UK shopping league; and that this was viewed to be a consequence of “Beggars ‘Scaring Away City Centre Shoppers’” (Nicoll 2001:4) Perhaps scenting a hint of local compassion fatigue, the director of the Glasgow City Centre Partnership (GCCP), George Sneddon, used the newspaper interview to advocate “swift action.” Such dynamics underline the media’s long-time role as an “auxiliary player” in growth-machine-oriented discourses (Logan and Molotch 1987) while also illustrating the extent to which an “entrepreneurial” urban politics can open up political spaces for new “primary definers,” such as business leaders, “... to articulate a strategy for urban, social, and political regeneration while simultaneously identifying those who pose a danger to that regeneration. It is within these spaces that notions of the ‘public interest’

are being recast around discourses of crime and insecurity” (Coleman and Sim 2000:632–633).

Not that the necessary equation of a business downturn with crime was particularly new in Glasgow. Back in 1996, similar anxieties led to a blanket ban on drinking alcohol in public spaces (Fyfe and Bannister 1998). Additionally, amid a concern that high crime was leading to “business drift” from the city center, the CityWatch project introduced a necklace of CCTV cameras stretching throughout the city center, and private security now tightly patrols all malls. More recently, uniformed City Center Representatives have offered “an extra pair of eyes and ears on the street” to help channel the spatial practices of tourists (Helms 2001:91). Glasgow’s elites have thus endeavored to fashion a range of interditory architectures and technologies, and the city center now contains “a panoply of human, physical, and technological methods to monitor and regulate the behaviour of its citizens” (Fyfe and Bannister 1998:254).

In Glasgow, as in Manhattan and the downtown of many other US cities (Mitchell 1997; Wright 1997), such disciplinary tactics have affected homeless people most harshly. Indeed, one study reports panhandlers being regularly moved on, arrested, or marched to the nearest charity-collection point to hand over their money (Fitzpatrick and Kennedy 2000). In addition, vending sites for selling the homeless magazine *Big Issue* have been restricted to ten locations, with the behavior of vendors now increasingly monitored, or—we might argue—purified (Atkinson forthcoming). The net effect of these microgeographies is that, in addition to various communities of street people on what remain “marginal” interstices on the north bank of the River Clyde, Glasgow has its very own Skid Row. This is concentrated on one particular mini-neighborhood just to the north of the city center, a zone that, when compared to the rest of the city, is strategically policed with a deliberately light touch.

However, just as in the case of urban America, this spatial internment of intensifying inequality alongside the fundamental contradictions associated with Glasgow’s renaissance will only displace rather than resolve the problem of homelessness. During 2000, at least 25 homeless people died on Glasgow’s streets. Homelessness and street homelessness have reached new heights, and city authorities openly admit that for some time now they have lacked a coherent strategy for tackling the scale of the problem and approaching its intricate association with structural forms of poverty and economic inequality (Scottish Executive 2001). A key product of this has been a chronic crisis in homeless hostels, which are considered to be poorly governed, violent, and unresponsive to the diverse needs of groups and individuals. Indeed, the extent to which certain hostels are merely “warehousing the poor” (Wright 1997) has left some to opt for the streets to be with

their companions, where they might feel safer and cultivate a “sense of community” (Fitzpatrick and Kennedy 2000:39). Political concern is also mounting that plans to “sell off” the city’s public housing stock might only exacerbate the crisis.<sup>13</sup>

In 1990, throughout its year as European City of Culture, Glasgow’s political economic elite stood accused of sanitizing the past by erasing the city’s proud socialist heritage (Boyle and Hughes 1994). Now, over a decade on, in the fanatical search to contrive a sanitized urban landscape (McInroy 2000), the city’s elite appears to be suspending any remaining managerialist commitments to extend social citizenship and spatial justice throughout the wider populace. Indeed far from creating “civic spaces [for] everyone” (GCC 2000:1). Glasgow’s city center is mutating into a plethora of interdictory landscapes contrived in the image of fictitious capital and consumerist citizenship. For unlike vacant property, which (as rent-gap theory informs us) can often be perceived as a space with a potentially higher value (Smith 1996), amid the banality of interdiction and the normalization of postjustice discourses associated with “roll-out” neoliberalism, the question of potential value appears not to extend to homeless people and other displaced groups. Here we might reflect on an argument Mitchell (2000:8) has made in a reference to the very “Culture War” that ensnared Glasgow throughout 1990:

The city-as-landscape does not encourage the formation of community or of urbanism as a way of life; rather it encourages the maintenance of surfaces, the promotion of order at the expense of lived social relations, and the ability to look past distress, destruction, and marginalization to see only the good life (for some) and to turn a blind eye towards what that life is constructed out of.

### *Glasgow: In What Sense a Revanchist City?*

The interdictory architectures of its renovated built environment, allied to powerful discourses about “moral order” on the streets and vengeful media portrayals of street people, would appear to indicate that, in seeking to further augment its entrepreneurial economic strategy, Glasgow bears the imprints of an emerging politics of revanchism. Moreover, following local government reorganization in 1996, Glasgow City Council has been forced to cut £180 million per year in revenue spending and raise council tax 58%. As in New York, the ensuing cuts in services have impacted most deeply upon the city’s vulnerable groups (Webster 2000). It is also worth noting the escalating concerns over cancer care and after-care conditions in the city’s hospitals alongside mounting anxieties about a huge drug-dependency amongst its poorer populations: for these conditions offer just the sorts of circumstances under which middle- and working-class

insecurities might be further fueled and a reactionary response encouraged.

Nonetheless, in making these tentative claims, I fully acknowledge the need for caution when comparing Glasgow with a city like New York. For while Glasgow may be witnessing the routine arrest of so-called “aggressive beggars,” in contrast to New York and indeed certain British cities (Fyfe forthcoming), the Strathclyde Police Force has concluded that zero tolerance offers an inappropriately “short-term” approach to crime prevention. Instead, it has introduced a Street Liaison Team, which, rather than immediately criminalizing street people and prostitutes, aims to cultivate improved relations between those “on the margins of society,” the police, and the wider public (interview, Street Liaison Team, 2001). In addition, a range of interviewees from homeless agencies and public sector organizations were quick to point out that the views expressed by Sneddon of the GCCP (cited above) are out of step with mainstream thinking in the city. Some commitment to a “public interest” would thus appear to remain within certain sections of Glasgow’s political machinery: in part, surely a legacy to its inherited institutional landscape and “constellations of sociopolitical power” (Brenner and Theodore [paper] this volume).

Moreover, whilst Giuliani boasted of demolishing the “last shantytown” in Manhattan and of withdrawing financial support for Manhattan’s homeless agencies (Smith 1998), through its Rough Sleepers Initiative, the Scottish Executive (2001) has committed £16 million. It has simultaneously endeavored to establish the institutional arrangements to address the “structural” causes of the homelessness crisis.<sup>14</sup> Whilst such “active institution-building” may be imbued with a strong dose of compulsion and paternalistic moral authoritarianism—in this sense, it is not dissimilar to the Executive’s Social Inclusion program and many other elements of Blair’s “inclusive” society (Webster 2000)—it would nonetheless appear to be at odds with the repressive moments of vengeance inscribed into New York’s local state strategy. Stretching this a little further, can we point to Glasgow’s gentrification wars (police militia, sweeping helicopters), or its military-style sweeps on quality-of-life offenders and its vengeful political attacks on the city’s universities (cf Smith 1996, 1998)? As yet, the answer to these questions remains a tentative “no”—a response that forces me to acknowledge three important caveats in concluding my discussion on Glasgow.

First, as with the Global City perspective, the revanchist-city framework might stand accused of being a slave to New York (cf Hamnett 1995). However, I would argue that it offers a deeply suggestive heuristic with which to reassess the changing geographical contours of a city’s restless urban landscape. Deeply suggestive, not least in that, as mentioned earlier, far from offering merely a riposte to

zero-tolerance policing, Smith’s revanchist perspective holds within its sharply focused analytical lens a host of dynamic processes: economic restructuring, housing, welfare retrenchment, law and order, education, and counterpolitical resistance. In particular, by stressing the theme of political strategy, Smith’s perspective might help us unravel key moments in the perpetual “creative destruction” of the urban political economic fabric.

Second, I fully acknowledge that in some respects my paper offers merely a snapshot of the political economy of Glasgow. In tune with the first point, then, it becomes patently evident that a fully-fledged analysis of urban revanchism would demand a deeper inquiry into the nature of urban politics, in identifying, for instance, the relative significance of a powerful mayor in shaping a local state strategy. It would also require us to analyze certain spheres of social reproduction, such as health and education, alongside changing patterns of housing, ranging from the implications of the recent sale of council housing stock to the newly formed Glasgow Housing Association to the possible emergence of common interest developments and gated communities.

A third caveat offers a partial response to the question posed in the introduction about the relationship between entrepreneurialism and revanchism. Certainly the evidence from Glasgow would appear to support the argument that, in the wake of the sociospatial selectivities inscribed into an entrepreneurial mode of governance, and amid the tight political grip of a “rolled-out” neoliberalism, the political-geographical contours of revanchism—fiscal retrenchment, interdictory architectures, and authoritarian state tactics—are being “naturalized” within the urban political arena. However, this should of course immediately force us to acknowledge that “actually existing” revanchist political economies will assume different forms in different contexts. To this end, particular studies of revanchism will require much theoretical flexibility to assess the specific structures and mechanisms that lead to certain policy transfers, calls for zero tolerance, and imperatives to “cleanse” public spaces (see Coleman and Sim 2000; Fyfe forthcoming; Lund Hansen, Andersen and Clark 2001). Without wishing to imply some “end state” urban dystopia, then, I would argue that the “fast” nature of contemporary policy transfer allied to the disciplinary fiscal environment confronting all cities should ensure that the revanchist framework offers a powerful conceptual heuristic beyond Manhattan.

### **Uncovering the Revanchist City**

Following on from the caveats outlined above, I wish to conclude with brief reflections about how we might begin to uncover the complex choreography of urban revanchism within particular localities. One useful starting point is Harvey’s historical geographical materialist

method of analysis. At base, Harvey's (1989:5) approach encourages us to consider the "becoming" of cities as constitutive and reflective of "... a spatially grounded social process in which a wide range of different actors with quite different objectives and agendas interact through a particular configuration of interlocking spatial practices." Nothing is inevitable in relation to the characteristics of such actors, nor about what those agendas might be, since they will always be enacted by and inflected through an interlocking blend of agentic generalizing properties and local specificities and the meeting of inherited institutional landscapes with purportedly paradigmatic policy recipes. The Strathclyde Police Force's deliberation with but eventual rejection of zero-tolerance policing offers a useful practical example of the latter.

This unpredictability of the urban form leads on to a second important theme to consider when analyzing the revanchist city. A range of scholars have deployed the theoretical insights of Foucault, Lefebvre, and de Certeau to explore the spatializing practices and "counterspaces" of resistance and transgression that can sometimes unshackle the padlocks of "purified" urban sites and thereby challenge their official, growth-machine-dominated representations of space (Doron 2000; Keil 1999; Lees 1998; McCann 1999; Mitchell 1995; Soja 2000). Smith (1992:59), too, examines the so-called homeless vehicle as a strategy in the "subversiveness of mobility" deployed by homeless people to transcend their erstwhile limits to scale while simultaneously contesting efforts by New York's growth regime to sanction their erasure from the public spaces of the city. Such studies underscore the way in which the current erosion of the urban fabric as a series of "shared spaces" (Amin and Graham 1997:422) needs to be analyzed more earnestly at the level of dynamic social relations. In Sibley's (1995:72) words, we urgently need an "anthropology of space" that emphasizes the rituals of spatial organization: rituals so marvelously captured in Domosh's (1998) work on the "polite street politics" of nineteenth-century New York. Again, an interesting example is presented by the relatively "polite" sociospatial practices through which the Glasgow police force's Street Liaison Team monitors the geography of prostitution in the city center.

All of this illustrates how, in spite of its increased commodification, public space is "always in a process of being shaped, reshaped, and challenged by the spatial practices of various groups and individuals whose identities and actions undermine the homogeneity of contemporary cities" (McCann 1999:168). In accepting this, then, when analyzing the spaces of neoliberalism or a purported generic privatization of urban space, it might be better to conceptualize that very space as negotiated, enacted, performed, lived in and lived through, contested, representative, but also practical. The net outcome of this is that

urban *public* space needs to be thought of, not as a pre-given “ideal” but as a practical moment in the process of becoming (Lees 2001). When allied to theoretically sophisticated accounts of the changing nature of urban politics, such a perspective might readily provide a more fruitful avenue through which to comprehend the processes through which the balance of power between public and private institutions become critical in the articulation of a more or less “commodified” or “municipal” public space (Boyer 1993; Judd 1995; Zukin 1995). Consider how the endeavors by the Glasgow City Centre Partnership to represent a particular image of consumerist downtown space to a range of agents—possible investors, tourists, the local media—directly conflicted with the spatial practices of homeless *Big Issue* vendors forced to earn their living in the frontal spheres of Glasgow’s public spaces.

This reference to the “new” urban political arena leads me to my final point: a plea for an improved critical understanding of the state in examining the current unfolding of a revanchist or postjustice urbanism. It might be stressing the obvious that, in contrast to standard neoliberal rhetoric, many of the processes analyzed in this paper—short-term legal remedies for homelessness, the planning and underwriting of renaissance sites of spectacle—are enacted through the active and sometimes brutal involvement of and penalties incurred through the local and central state. However, if contemporary work on regulation and governance might have opened up some fruitful ways of understanding the changing structures of urban politics, we are still desperately struggling to gain theoretical comprehension and cognitive mappings of the spatializing tactics and strategies of state institutions. In the emerging urban milieu, the proliferation of edge cities, interdictory leisure zones, “dead” plazas, and fortified privatopias are each generating new physical and institutional scales of enclosure, new active progenitors (Smith 1992). As the key legislator of private property, the state is certainly not absent in this. Nonetheless, discourses pertaining to “minimum government” and “private interest” do not pass without material consequences, and it seems to me that much work remains to be done in terms of exploring the nature of this postmetropolitan urban political milieu (Soja 2000). An uncovering of such spatialities might offer critical insights in the search for a progressive, geographically informed urban political praxis.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> I thank Eugene McCann for prompting me on this issue.

<sup>2</sup> Peck and Tickell create a useful analytical distinction between "roll-back" and "roll-out" neoliberalism. The latter describes the political projects (such as Clintonism) that have sought to ameliorate the intense contradictions generated by earlier "roll-back" versions.

<sup>3</sup> Earlier "end of public space" perspectives (Davis 1990; Sorkin 1992) have been followed by those intimating an improved safety for a "pluralistic public" and the possibility of countercultural spaces of representation (Iveson 1998; McCann 1999; Soja 2000). This has led some commentators to talk of the "ambivalent" nature of public space in the contemporary city (Fyfe forthcoming; Lees 1998).

<sup>4</sup> Marshall (1963:74) defines social citizenship as "the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security [alongside] the right to share to the full in the social heritage and live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society." In making this claim, though, I acknowledge that Marshall's schema has been reasonably criticized for heralding "social citizenship" as the highest form, its failure to consider attacks on postwar citizenship rights, and its weakness in analyzing the gender and ethnic inequalities of postwar citizenship (Urry 2000).

<sup>5</sup> It is worth mentioning how this image of Giuliani as both combative and intolerant might seem at odds with the "globalized" figure who, with compassion and in fulsome praise of the city's public services, presided over a devastated Manhattan in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist atrocities of 11 September 2001. Indeed, during those traumatic times, Giuliani was the first to caution against jingoistic attacks on the city's Arab and Muslim communities (Said 2001).

<sup>6</sup> The extent to which the "rolled-out" version of neoliberalism is purportedly articulated through a combination of neoliberalized economic management allied to authoritarian state forms and modes of policy-making "concerned specifically with the aggressive regulation, disciplining, and containment of those marginalized or dispossessed by the neoliberalization of the 1980s" (Peck and Tickell this volume) prompts me to contend that, depending upon the particular spatial context, a revanchist political approach may well represent a key "destructive" and "creative" moment in the move from "roll-back" to "roll-out" neoliberalism (see Brenner and Theodore [paper] this volume:Table 2).

<sup>7</sup> Here it is worth noting that the concept of citizenship encounters a range of positions, one notable tension being "between the neoliberal assertion of the market and the free individual, and the civic republican tradition with its emphasis on participation in a polis fashioned by its members" (Hill 1994:4). More recent discourses have moved from such formal "political" models towards "social-cultural" approaches "wrapped up in questions about who is accepted as a worthy, valuable, and responsible member of an everyday community of living and working" (Painter and Philo 195:115). It seems to me that these latter approaches could prove most instructive in analyzing the current erosion of citizenship rights for marginalized social groups.

<sup>8</sup> Whilst acknowledging the various discriminations that punctuated postwar efforts to extend social citizenship (see endnote 4), it seems to me that some of the ideals of inclusive entitlement inscribed into the Keynesian and New Deal political projects offered a necessary—if hardly sufficient—condition to widen inclusive citizenship. Quoting Hill (1994:4) again: “[P]ossession of civil and political rights without social rights reduces citizenship to a façade.”

<sup>9</sup> In explaining this more consensual mood, it is important to consider the role played by a distinctively institutionalized Scottish policy network and civil society (MacLeod 1999).

<sup>10</sup> The SDA was introduced in 1975 and funded by the Scottish Office (MacLeod 1999).

<sup>11</sup> Some 4,000 acres of land—almost 10% of the city’s area—remain vacant or derelict (Webster 2000).

<sup>12</sup> Life expectancy in the outer housing estate of Drumchapel is ten years below the adjacent suburb of Bearsden, and people in Glasgow live ten years less than those in the South of England.

<sup>13</sup> While this radical move may fit neatly with a post-Thatcherite New Labour ideology, the decision to “rid this monument to municipal socialism” was taken by the Labour pragmatists running Glasgow City Chambers, albeit aided and abetted by a firm prod from the then-Communities Minister in the Scottish Parliament, Wendy Alexander (Hetherington 2000).

<sup>14</sup> Of course, this raises a general point about the qualitative difference the post-1999 Scottish Parliament and Executive could make to the institutional powers of Scotland’s policy network. It also demonstrates how any “locally” inscribed urban political strategy is always embedded within and structured through a multiscaled ensemble of state governmentalities (MacLeod and Goodwin 1999).

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