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What is This?

The entrepreneurial city: new urban politics, new urban geographies?

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Over the last two decades, urban geographers have been seemingly preoccupied with theorizing the apparent transformation of western cities. Particular attention has been focused on the way in which previously rigid structures and social divisions have been revised and redrawn as technological innovations have eliminated traditional industries and thrown up new industrial spaces in unforeseen locations. Such changes in processes of urbanization, often theorized as representing a transition from the era of industrial cities to postindustrial cities, have posited fundamental challenges to the way that geographers conceptualize the urban, undermining the neat models of urban social structure and residential segregation that have dominated urban geography for over 50 years (Cooke, 1988; 1990; Knox, 1991; S.J. Smith, 1994). More fundamentally, perhaps, the debates surrounding the changing nature of the city have not only drawn attention to the fact that contemporary cities look different from their predecessors but have also suggested that there has been an important shift in the way that western cities are governed. In essence, it has been argued that there has been a reorientation of urban governance away from the local provision of welfare and services to a more outward-orientated stance designed to foster and encourage local growth and economic development. These profound changes in the way that cities operate have seen the public sector taking over characteristics once distinctive to the private sector – risk-taking, inventiveness, promotion' and profit motivation – leading many commentators to term such modes of governance as *entrepreneurial* (Mollenkopf, 1985; Harvey, 1989).

However, while this acknowledgement of a 'new urban politics' (Cox, 1993) has ushered in a new academic vocabulary, of cities as 'growth machines', of city advertising as 'place marketing' and of redevelopment as 'revitalization', it is less than clear as to how fundamental this shift to entrepreneurialism has been. At the time of writing, the literature on the entrepreneurial city, although sizeable, rests on theoretically and empirically

impoverished grounds, with little agreement as to the defining features of urban entrepre-
neurialism nor its relations with the dynamics of advanced capitalism. In particular, while
some commentators have forcibly argued that the emergence of a new sphere of urban
politics is intimately connected to a transition to new regimes of capital accumulation (e.g.,
Swyngedouw, 1986; Harvey, 1989; Soja, 1989), a lack of empirical evidence makes it
difficult to state with any certainty how entrepreneurial modes of governance succeed in
mediating local capital–labour relations in a manner conducive to such regimes. Fur-
thermore, it is evident that there is little consensus as to how effective new modes of city
government are at alleviating the fiscal and social problems associated with the modern
'urban crisis' and the growing social polarizations evident in many cities in the advanced
capitalist world (Gottdiener, 1986). Clearly, then, this shift in urban politics poses
questions of fundamental importance for both academics and policy-makers alike as they
struggle to come to terms with the changing nature of urban experience against a backdrop
of economic, social and political change.

It is against this backdrop that this article seeks to consider the ways in which
geographers are attempting to make sense of the role of the new urban politics in the
transformation of the city. In doing so, it is hoped to demonstrate that concern for urban
entrepreneurialism should not be restricted to researchers of urban political geography,
but that the term encompasses a range of issues of broader relevance in contemporary
urban geography. Obviously, it is not possible to do justice here to the broad range of
substantive and conceptual issues raised by the burgeoning crossdisciplinary literature, yet
by exploring many of the central debates surrounding the entrepreneurial city, it is hoped
to indicate the way in which geographers need to adopt new theoretical and conceptual
frameworks as they strive to study the interplay of culture and capital against a backdrop of
urban change.

I   Changing modes of urban governance

Although the study of urban governance and politics has always constituted a major theme
in urban and regional studies, there is no question that this study has been reinvigorated by
the perceived shift to entrepreneurial modes of governance. In simple terms, such 'new'
modes of governance have been characterized by the promotion of local economic
development by urban governments, typically in alliance with private capital (Logan and
Molotch, 1987; Cox and Mair, 1988). Such local economic development is essentially
concerned with the prosperity of local economies and their ability to attract investment
and jobs. As such, entrepreneurial governance is less concerned with the provision of
welfare, services and collective consumption (which had traditionally been posited as the
major role of city politics – see Castells, 1977; Pinch, 1985) than with attempts to secure
the prosperity of the locality in general (Wolman and Goldsmith, 1992). In essence, the
whole terrain of thinking about urban politics has been shifted, with urban politicians and
governors increasingly arguing that cities can benefit not only from 'conventional' welfare
measures or land-use planning but also by mobilizing local resources in the scramble for
rewards in an increasingly competitive free market (Duncan and Goodwin, 1988). Civic
entrepreneurialism has thus fostered a speculative and piecemeal approach to the
management of cities, in sharp contrast to what Cox (1991) refers to as the 'class-based
politics' of old in which the local state managed the city through bureaucratic means.

It can therefore be argued that the new urban politics is a term used to distinguish the

fundamental difference between a politics of income redistribution and a politics of growth, though it is by no means clear as to the extent to which urban governments can pursue both objectives in tandem or whether both modes can coexist. Indeed, an objective assessment of the extent of this transition is difficult, if not impossible, given the empirical silences that permeate work in this field. Certainly, many commentators take for granted that local governance prior to the early 1970s was dominated by managerial politics, to the extent that this has attained the level of an assumed axiomatic truth among writers on the entrepreneurial city (Carley, 1991; DiGaento and Klemanski, 1993). This serves to mask the fact that city governments, to a lesser or greater extent, have always pursued entrepreneurial strategies and played a crucial role in local economic development (see Ward, 1988). Indeed, although Saunders' dual theory of the state has generally been interpreted to suggest that the politics of production is normally controlled at the level of the nation-state, with the politics of consumption more localized (Saunders, 1986), it is possible to suggest that the role of city governors has always been to promote production as well as to ensure a satisfactory level of consumption for citizens. Moreover, it is important to note that such attempts at civic boosterism by the local state have frequently been in alliance with the private sector. Writing of the territorially bound 'class alliances' which have historically characterized many cities and regions, Harvey (1985) has argued that urban governors have always been the most important actors in such alliances by virtue of their authority and ability to create local coherence through institutions of law, governance and political participation. In this sense, the role of the local state in actively promoting conditions favourable to capital accumulation within its territorial boundaries should not be considered exclusively as a recent phenomenon – rather, it might be suggested that entrepreneurial forms of governance are merely the latest in a long line of political strategies which have attempted to create conditions conducive to the economic success of cities.

Clearly, then, it is difficult to assess whether the shift to entrepreneurial modes of governance is supplanting or merely supplementing traditional 'managerial' approaches. None the less, the weight of empirical evidence does suggest that more initiatory and proactive roles are being adopted by local governments throughout the advanced capitalist world (see Judd and Parkinson, 1990; Keating, 1991; Goetz and Clarke, 1993). More importantly, perhaps, it is also apparent that the new urban politics has reconstituted the traditional relationships between community and state at the local level. The notion of partnership is implicit in entrepreneurial governance, with the speculative projects and initiatives that inevitably accompany entrepreneurial policies being underwritten by the private rather than public sector (Deakin and Edwards, 1993). Increasingly, then, the line between the private and public sectors has become blurred, and public policy is becoming more reliant on private funding (equally, of course, the converse is true, in that many private sector businesses are now reliant on public money – a process of inverse leverage). This convergence of private sector (typically business and property) interests and the public sector has inevitably undermined working-class constituencies, and resulted in a heightened control of the polity by new bourgeoisie and property interests, almost exclusively consisting of business*men* (Savage and Warde, 1993; Peck, 1995).

In the face of such shifts, the application of regime theory has been regarded as a particularly appropriate means for interpreting the changing complexion of urban politics (Stone, 1989; DiGaento and Klemanski, 1993). From the perspective of regime theory, the ability of city government to shape urban futures and development needs to be understood in terms of the social production of governance. Central to this perspective is

the notion that urban governments do not need to exert total power *over* the city's population to act effectively (i.e., whether through the ballot box or other means), but rather that they merely need the power to act. The formation of coalitions or partnerships is thus one of the principal means by which city governments achieve this capacity to act. From the perspective of regime theory, the crucial question in urban politics is not 'who governs?' but 'who has the capacity to act and why?' (Leitner, 1992). Hence regime theory transcends the simplistic views posited by élitist and pluralistic theories of urban governance respectively (Hoggart, 1989).

Researchers who have sought to understand entrepreneurial governance from this regime perspective have therefore suggested that such urban coalitions typically consist of loose or informal partnerships of a multiplicity of interest groups which function together in order to make and carry out specific governing decisions (see Leitner, 1990; Harding, 1992; Lawless, 1994). Such coalitions of interest, which exist across institutional boundaries, rely on a tacit understanding of both the objectives as well as the means needed to achieve those ends. The goals of such coalitions are usually to achieve specific concrete solutions to particular urban problems, inevitably with the avowed intention to increase the prosperity of the city by attracting investment and spending (Mollenkopf, 1983). Perhaps significantly, such coalitions are nearly always formed around the idea of achieving visible concrete policy results within a limited timespan. The short-lived Olympic bid partnership in Manchester is one such example, where local business and property interests co-operated with local politicians in an attempt to attract the Olympics for 1996 (Robson, 1989). Likewise, the Glasgow Action group, formed by influential business representatives, met between 1986 and 1990 with the specific goal of promoting the city internationally (Boyle and Hughes, 1995). Although other partnerships have been characterized by relative longevity, the ephemeral nature of many coalitions tends to result in a piecemeal approach to urban development that lacks strategic foresight or long-term planning.

Regime theory thus provides a valuable corrective to the view that contemporary urban politics are dominated by monolithic interest groups who gain leverage only by virtue of their electoral power (for a review of such élitist perspectives, see Wolman and Goldsmith, 1992). However, while urban regimes or coalitions can potentially consist of a multiplicity of diverse interest groups, the main players in such regimes (besides the local authority or city government itself) are typically property interests, rentiers, utility groups, universities, business groups, trade unions and also the local media (Carley, 1991; Imrie *et al.*, 1995). The regime approach thus adopts what has been termed an élite pluralist position that recognizes that access to local politics is uneven, so that certain groups enjoy more favourable terms (Peck, 1995). Such groups typically represent a limited range of interests and have very partisan interests in the type of projects and redevelopment carried out in the name of local economic development. Despite this fact, the ability of a coalition to act depends on its seeming ability to act in the interests of the majority of the urban population. Borrowing from Gramsci's (1971) notion of cultural and political hegemony, researchers have begun to examine how these regimes succeed in mobilizing popular support, to determine how this élite constellation that speaks for the city comes into being (Judd and Parkinson, 1990). Clearly, the notion of consensus is, to some extent at least, forged around the seeming commitment of these coalitions or regimes to 'value-free' development, which, despite the obvious benefits to particular sections of the community, is claimed to be in the interests of all.

Researchers adopting a perspective derived from regime theory are thus beginning to

furnish us with a broad overview of how urban governance is shifting at the grassroots level, with the forging of (sometimes durable) local alliances as a means to pursue particular political goals. In particular, research has highlighted the international differences in the nature of these urban regimes, and also illustrated the dangers in (uncritically) importing formulations made in a North American context to the UK city (Boyle, 1995; Boyle and Hughes, 1995). In North America, the formation of urban 'growth coalitions' has been evident for a number of years (Logan and Molotch, 1987), with the regeneration of Detroit, Toronto, Vancouver and especially Baltimore in the 1960s and 1970s frequently cited by Thatcherite ideologues as 'successful' examples of the way in which state and market could co-operate. This notion of cities as growth machines was not only seized upon by UK politicians but also by a number of academics who sought to document the rise of similar growth coalitions in the UK (e.g., Lloyd and Newlands, 1988; Bassett and Harloe, 1990; Harding, 1992). Yet in the USA, city governments *had* to recruit business leaders as coalition partners because of the inherent fiscal weakness of the local state. Subsequently, key figures in the business community have frequently played the co-ordinating role in North American growth coalitions, with rentiers, landlords and utility companies often crucial players (Mollenkopf, 1983).

In the UK context, however, the emergence of entrepreneurial modes of government cannot be viewed in isolation from the sea change that was occurring in urban policy under the Conservative government in the 1980s, with an increasingly emphasis on 'enterprise' as a means of urban regeneration (Robson, 1989; Deakin and Edwards, 1993). The political rhetoric of the 1980s clearly positioned the private sector as the key actor in city rebuilding, with public–private partnerships presented as the way forward. These policies, coupled with the tightening of local government expenditure, produced a situation where there was little alternative for declining UK cities than to compete for private sector capital rather than to expect additional central government support. None the less, case studies of many UK cities indicate that the key, co-ordinating role in many of the resulting urban regimes was taken by the local authorities themselves (Harding, 1992; Hubbard, 1995), essentially because of their local expertise, a preponderance of bureaucratic professionals and a superior financial position relative to their USA counterparts. In these cases, the local state has not been 'captured' by coalitions of private capital, but continues to take ultimate responsibility for local economic development (Meegan, 1993).

Therefore, although the Thatcherite rhetoric surrounding the incorporation of business interests into local regeneration posited the 'maverick entrepreneur' as the driving force behind such initiatives, Peck (1995) has suggested that the reality has proved much more mundane, with local business leaders co-opted into local politics through their individual incorporation on to the boards of new nonelected local agencies (local enterprise agencies, locally managed trusts, TECs, UDCs, etc.). In this way, it might be argued that the forging of a new urban entrepreneurialism at the local level in the UK is much less about rolling back the frontiers of the state than a restructuring of the local state apparatus in the interests of the central state (Tickell and Peck, 1992). The selective incorporation of business interests into urban regimes thus represents an attempt by *central* government to redefine both the institutional form and policies of the local (welfare) state (Imrie *et al.*, 1995). In this sense, despite the seeming prominence of local business representatives in the new urban politics, it is clear that the 'voice' of the business community is still carefully circumscribed by both central and local government in the UK, with the power often attributed to the private sector in urban coalitions frequently more apparent than real.

Yet in seeking to generalize across national experience, it is clear that many researchers

have neglected to focus on one of the most important aspects of urban regimes, that is to say, the way in which their composition, orientation and objectives vary according to local cultural, social and political characteristics. As Stoker and Mossberger (1994) point out, the adoption of a regime perspective necessarily requires an in-depth analysis of the constitution of these coalitions at the local scale, with particular attention being given to the leadership capacity evident in each case. The range, stability and formality of the local mechanisms and alliances which underlie entrepreneurial approaches to governance clearly vary considerably, and the capacity of the regime to act effectively depends on its ability to reconcile the demands of the different interest groups which it represents. It is acknowledged that this regime capacity varies considerably given differing organizational resources, leadership skills and, more fundamentally, institutional relationships at the local level, factors overlooked in many studies (Leitner and Garner, 1993). Frequently, the coalition of interest proves to be a brief encounter, as the collapse of the property market in the 1990s demonstrated only too vividly (Harding, 1992). Coalition partners frequently become disillusioned, marginalized or redundant as the cohesiveness of regimes varies. In this sense, Harvey (1985) has argued that it is only by generating sufficient leadership capacity that such regimes can maintain their coherence in the face of the threats of overaccumulation, class struggle and technological obsolescence which characterize the capitalist mode of production.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the political orientation and objectives of these urban regimes is much more variable than is often suggested in the literature. Case studies in the southwest UK, focusing on Cheltenham, Swindon and Bristol, have suggested that urban regimes are not all 'growth orientated', but in fact may favour 'growth management' strategies (Cowen et al., 1989; Bassett and Harloe, 1990; DiGaento and Klemanski, 1993). Such strategies are designed to control the rate of growth, maintain property prices and focus on attracting certain types of investment, typically in high-technology industries, by creating an attractive residential environment for professional and managerial workers. On the other hand, the experiences of a number of previously affluent industrial cities, including Glasgow, Birmingham and Sheffield, suggest that rather than supporting market-led growth policies, entrepreneurial strategies were adopted which were envisaged as alternatives to the Thatcherite vision and strongly espoused social reform (see Seyd, 1990; Boyle and Hughes, 1991; Carley, 1991; Goodwin, 1993). Clearly, then, detailed empirical studies of the way that political conflicts are played through differently from city to city are vital if any meaningful conclusions are to be made as to the extent of the apparent transition from managerialism to entrepreneurialism (see Boyle and Hughes, 1995). In this respect, considering the inherent differences evident in the type of regime politics being pursued in different cities, it might be argued that the imposition of a stereotypical 'growth coalition' model of entrepreneurial government actually obscures more than it reveals.

II   The local and the global

In seeking to explain the rise of entrepreneurial modes of urban governance, most commentators have sought to consider the new urban politics as the byproduct of broader forces of national (and inevitably international) social and economic transition. In this respect, most theories of the transition to entrepreneurial governance are clearly rooted in the political-economy approach. In part, such perspectives have been prompted by the

acknowledgement that cities do not operate as discrete localized economies, but that their economic fortunes are increasingly tied to global economic trends. Hence, although there is much discussion as to what the term means, *globalization* is frequently identified as the major factor underlying the transition to entrepreneurialism (e.g., Robson, 1989; Knox, 1991; Short *et al.*, 1993). This process, whereby all countries (and, by inference, all cities) have become incorporated in a global capitalist economy, has been facilitated not only by improvements in communication but also by the activities of transnational companies and institutions which are able rapidly to switch capital investment between countries and regions (Lash and Urry, 1993). This globalization of production, characterized by an accelerated mobility of investment, has intensified the rapid switching of investment between different regions, with disorder, rapid change and uncertainty as the hallmarks of the contemporary economic landscape (Harvey, 1988). This has not only involved the transformation of some cities into major 'world cities', specializing in service and technology-based activities, but has also witnessed the viability of many previously prosperous cities being undermined as their economic roles become less secure.

Such globalist perspectives, exemplified in the functionalist arguments of world-systems theory (Kearns, 1988), might be interpreted as suggesting that urban economic fortunes are determined entirely by trends in globalized capitalism. Following this logic, some commentators have suggested that urban regimes are not formed voluntarily by assenting partners but are structurally determined as city governments and private business interests are forced to make 'space' for international capital investment (Dicken and Tickell, 1992; see also Amin and Thrift, 1992). In this sense, changing modes of governance can be seen as reactions to global forces. Although such ideas are intuitively attractive, they are, however, clearly erroneous, as cities are not the helpless pawns of international capital but have the capability to mediate and direct their own destiny by exploiting their comparative advantages over other cities in the international battle for 'jobs and dollars' (Soja, 1989; Judd and Parkinson, 1990). That cities and their agents are active constituents, both 'mirror' and 'mould', of global processes, has been long recognized by commentators on the city, particularly the 'new city' (Meinig, 1979; Harvey, 1987; Knox, 1991). The notion of the 'sociospatial dialectic' (Soja, 1980) is particularly relevant in this context. Indeed, one major consequence of international restructuring is that urban élites are becoming more acutely aware of the competition with other places for highly mobilized capital, and the need to distinguish the social, physical and cultural character of places so that they might be more attractive to international investment. From this vantage, Cox and Mair (1988) have outlined the importance of locally dependent interests in urban entrepreneurialism and highlighted the fact that it is mainly locally based businesses, rather than multinational corporations, that form the principal collaborators in urban regimes.

Probably the most thorough exploration of the transitional to entrepreneurial urban governance has been by David Harvey (1987; 1989; 1993), as part of his ongoing consideration of the role of urban processes in the historical development of capitalism. By placing contemporary urban politics into broad spatial and temporal contexts, he has sought to draw attention to the role of urban politics in resolving the contradictions resulting as time-space compression threatens local distinction and people's identity with place. In doing so, Harvey appears to suggest that globalization has actually heightened the salience of territorial politics as place becomes more, rather than less, important, even though space is of diminishing importance as a boundary to exchange and capital mobility. In terms of effecting the transition to advanced capitalism, Harvey thus postulates that entrepreneurial politics play a role in perpetuating unequal development while reproduc-

ing local social relations which are conducive to flexible modes of accumulation. In this sense, Harvey makes the point that the new urban politics and the aspirations of urban regimes should be seen not so much as a reaction to global forces but rather as a trigger to new forms of competitive capitalism (and as Lovering, 1995, contends, potentially contribute to their own problems).

Not withstanding Harvey's careful elucidation of the role of entrepreneurialism in relation to geographical-historical materialism, it appears that the literature on the new urban politics overwhelmingly exhibits a crude conception of the relations of local and global. Reiterating many of the well rehearsed arguments emanating from the globalization literature, discourses surrounding the entrepreneurial city stress the way in which the locality is individual, contingent and particular, while the global is abstract, social and general (Senbenberger, 1993). This dichotomous view of local and global implies that cities are 'fixed', waiting for 'mobile' capital and waves of economic change to ebb over them, disregarding the potential autonomy of cities or their potential actually to shape global circuits of capital (Robson, 1989). This is exemplified in Massey's (1984) oft-cited geological analogy, in which the way layers of global investment impinge on the locality is seen to be dependent on locally contingent factors such as industrial relations or political culture. Cox (1993) has picked up on this unconvincing articulation of local–global relations, suggesting that such theorizations seriously overgeneralize the mobility of capital at different scales, ignoring the fact that much capital is fixed (in the form of productive facilities and built environment) while human resources (local governments and workers) are inherently mobile. In the face of the lack of empirical evidence for the hypermobility of capital (though see Soja, 1989), Cox goes on to argue that it is the possibility, rather than the actuality, of hypermobile investment capital that is providing the impetus to entrepreneurial government. Clearly, a more sophisticated conceptualization of local–global relations is necessary by both academics and policy-makers alike, one which pays serious attention to issues of the local dependence of capital at a variety of scales.

In this sense, adherents of regulation theory have sought to propose a more holistic interpretation of the role of urban politics in relation to the international circulation and accumulation of capital which appears to offer a more promising avenue for theorizing the entrepreneurial city, one which is by no means incompatible with regime theories (see Jessop, 1990; Painter, 1991; Goodwin et al., 1993). Deriving from the work of French Marxists in the 1970s, regulation theories have been adopted in a number of different ways by urban geographers and political theorists, to the extent that it no longer makes sense to talk of a single regulation theory but rather of a generic regulationist approach. Despite this fact, which has lead to some fundamental misconceptions about the approach (Dunford, 1990), the essence of such a perspective is that the inherent contradictions of the capitalist system are ameliorated and stabilized by particular modes of social regulation which are spatially and historically variable (Aglietta, 1979). From such a perspective, the role of the state is seen as legitimating the social processes, mechanisms and institutions which regulate particular relations of production and consumption. This view reinforces the point that the hegemony of capitalism is never guaranteed, but needs to be secured through the reproduction of social and cultural relations which are conducive to its survival.

Although there appears to be a widespread belief that regulationist analysis is strongest in dealing with the national-state (e.g., Flynn and Marsden, 1995), many researchers are beginning to use the concepts and terminology of regulation approaches to interpret changes in urban governance, considering the local state as both a product and an agent of

regulation (e.g., Mayer, 1991; Goodwin, 1993; Peck, 1995). Far from being unwittingly caught up in wider changes, such accounts depict the local state as playing an active (if not always deliberate) role in forging new social, economic and cultural relations at both the local and global level (Saunders and Stone, 1987). This point has also been made by Harvey (1985) in his discussion of regional class alliances, where he suggests that the state plays a key role in legitimating specific regimes of accumulation at different spatial scales, and that the processes at work under capitalism would create modes of social regulation conducive to its continual reproduction if they did not already exist. In a manner that is clearly compatible with Harvey's ideas, regulationists view the changing nature of urban politics as merely one aspect of the shift in social regulation associated with the transition to new regimes of accumulation, albeit a crucial aspect. This does beg the question, however, as to whether current modes of social regulation (which are taken to include entrepreneurial forms of governance) merely represent a transitory period of crisis between periods of stability within a Fordist regime of accumulation, or whether they mark the advent of a fundamentally different (but inherently stable) post-Fordist regime. As yet, this debate is unresolved (contrast Amin and Thrift, 1992, with Mayer, 1995), but there is an emerging consensus that modes of regulation cannot simply be 'read off' from an analysis of economic dynamics, and that different modes of social regulation can exist within a given regime of accumulation.

Viewed in this manner, the regulationist approach stresses the need to link economic changes to changes in society and politics at other than the general or abstract level. The literature on the entrepreneurial city has thus served to indicate that localized relations of production and consumption are crucial to uneven development but, more importantly, that the switches to new modes of regulation at the local scale are part and parcel of switches in the mode of regulation at the international scale also. As Goodwin *et al.* (1993) suggest, a whole series of strategies of regulation can thus be discerned at overlapping scales, although it should be stressed that variations should be regarded as variations within an overarching regime of accumulation rather than between different regimes. Clearly, then, the regulationist approach does not privilege the examination of social relations under capitalism at the global scale any more than at the local level. As Cox (1993) thus argues (albeit from a different standpoint), the new urban politics needs to concentrate not only on the role of the local state but also on the role of the state as a whole as an arena for the politics generated by the mobility of capital at that scale. Such perspectives begin to suggest a move towards a framing of the politics of urban development within a coherent framework which acknowledges the importance of difference or specificity yet does not preclude the possibility of generalization and synthesis.

III   Art, artifice and the entrepreneurial landscape

No matter what form the new urban politics takes at the local scale, it is certainly clear that most cities are paying closer attention to notions of 'place marketing', with increasing budgets set aside for image construction and advertising (Paddison, 1993; Gold and Ward, 1994; Page, 1995). This commodification of the city is now considered a requisite strategy in local economic development to lure external investment into the city. Rather than simply extolling the virtues of a given city, current approaches to place marketing typically try to reimage or reinvent the city, promoting locally rooted traditions and weaving place

myths in an attempt to stress their uniqueness. This conscious manipulation and promotion of city imagery, and the (ab)use of local cultures, have been the object of considerable attention by geographers (see, especially, Bird, 1993; Kearns and Philo, 1993), with much cynicism evident as to the arbitrary and selective way cities are promoted.

In relation to the preceding discussion, it is important to note that this manipulation of image is not only an attempt to make the city more attractive to external investors but also plays a role in a 'social control' logic, convincing local peoples as to the benevolence of entrepreneurial strategies. City images, cultures and experiences have become every bit as important to the accumulation of social and political power by hegemonic groups as more traditional material concerns, with the careful orchestration of city image designed to foster civic pride and galvanize local support (Hall, 1995). As Goodwin (1993) contends, culture is used as an instrument of false consciousness by the élite in the advancement of their own (entrepreneurial) interests. It is here that the literature on the entrepreneurial city exhibits more awareness of the importance of culture in economic restructuring than was the case in the 'localities' literature (for a 'cultural' critique of the localities debate, see Jackson, 1991). Contrary to Taylor's (1993) claim that the incorporation of culture in the study of urban politics overshadows the *real* differences in material interests between localities, much of the literature on the entrepreneurial city seeks to explore the relations between the political economy of place and the cultural politics of place.

The strategic manipulation of image and culture clearly provides a strong base for coalition building, although it should be noted that the attempt to construct a new urban image is seldom limited to the launch of a new advertising campaign. Instead, such place marketing goes hand in hand with the creation of a new urban landscape, which can therefore be seen as both an expression and a consequence of attempts to reimage the city (Short *et al.*, 1993), playing a crucial role in the entrepreneurial 'selling' of cities. New urban forms, such as shopping malls, cultural centres, heritage parks, conference centres and science parks, are characteristically emerging in many cities, offering a concentration of entertainment and leisure facilities, tourist attractions and business services. These urban settings, geared towards consumption rather than production, are designed to provide previously industrial cities with a new economic infrastructure geared to the needs of a deindustrialized economy, and to secure new economic roles for the locale. In this light, the transformation of former industrial areas and declined districts into 'spectacular' areas of (and for) consumption, as exemplified by the transformation of London's decayed dock area into a major office and high-class residential district, has been central to entrepreneurial modes of urban governance (Harvey, 1989).

In this respect, Crilley (1993a; 1993b) has argued that while researchers have considered the images of the city as promoted in advertising and the media, they have been more reticent in investigating the image promoted *by* the city. None the less, there has been a growing awareness of the importance of the 'flagship' developments (large-scale prestige projects such as marinas, conventions centres, heritage parks, etc.). Such renewal projects clearly play a crucial symbolic role in marking out change for a locality, and their design is not coincidental in this process (Bianchini *et al.*, 1992). Examining the redevelopment of London's Docklands, for example, Crilley (1993b) claims that there is nothing random about the iconography of the new developments, which are unashamedly postmodern in design. According to Crilley, the carefully planned 'scenographic enclaves' of Docklands, which made reference to the maritime heritage of the area, posited the public as the consumers of a new prosperity for the area, deflecting debates surrounding the actual

desirability of redevelopment (see also Brownhill, 1993). Similarly, Hubbard (1995) and Hall (1994; 1995) have examined the way in which the 'repackaging' of Birmingham's past, particularly the reappropriation of its industrial legacy, was crucial in legitimating the inherently speculative developments of the city council. This cultivation of a new urban aesthetic which blended the past, present and future also appeared to be crucial in the transition from an industrialized to a deindustrialized landscape in Syracuse, NY, where a landscape of production was converted into a landscape of consumption through the activities of a public–private partnership (Roberts and Schein, 1993; Short *et al.*, 1993).

Research is therefore beginning to examine the way that entrepreneurial landscapes – both real and imaginary – are ideologically charged and, moreover, to consider how urban regimes are capable of organizing space and mobilizing its meaning so as to give a semblance of democratic legitimacy to their activities. As Harvey (1989) suggests, entrepreneurial urban landscapes can both 'divert and entertain', distracting from the social and economic problems that threaten the coherence of these newly formed urban regimes. It is here that there is considerable overlap with the debates over the nature of postmodern architecture. Adapting Jameson's (1984) ideas, Dear (1995) argues that this new entrepreneurial landscape might be considered as symptomatic of a new 'pure' form of global capital, one in which capitalism has colonized culture as well as society. In much the same way as postmodernism has been described as the cultural clothing of advanced capitalism, much of the literature seems to suggest that it too is the cultural logic of urban entrepreneurialism (see Knox, 1991; Crilley, 1993a).

This preoccupation with theoretical issues of representation has marked out some important directions for researchers exploring the nature of the entrepreneurial city, but such work exhibits some crucial silences, glossing over important debates about the relations of culture and capital. The three most apparent omissions have been the failure to link narratives of place promotion to earlier forms of civic commemoration, celebration and promotion; the failure fully to articulate the implication of local narratives of place in relation to wider systems of cultural space; and, finally, the failure of such work to bridge the gap between the representation and experience of place (Savage and Warde, 1993: 132). These silences, which have tended to render much work in this field as overly descriptive and theoretically impoverished, have generated a series of misleading mythologies which are worthy of further consideration. These will be dealt with in turn.

First is the impression conveyed by much of the literature that the promotion of place is an entirely new phenomenon, uniquely associated with entrepreneurial forms of governance. Although there is a clear link between contemporary promotional strategies and regimes of local governance and control, the promotion of place has a long history which few commentators have explored (though see Gold and Gold, 1990; 1994; Ward, 1988; 1990; 1994). The failure to consider contemporary place imagery in its historical context therefore not only weakens the deconstruction of such images but also masks the entrepreneurialism of earlier civic regimes. This has resulted in a gap in the literature linking narratives of place promotion to other, earlier, representations of place, process and community, as exemplified in traditions of civic statuary and architecture. Attempts to situate contemporary place-promotion strategies within the wider context of civic representation would appear to be particularly important given the way that these representations either celebrate or obfuscate local traditions, identities and practices.

A second weakness discernible within the literature on entrepreneurial city imagery is that much work has fallen into the trap of assuming a myth of spatial autonomy with regard to place promotion. It is widely acknowledged that the manipulation of place imagery

involves attempts to position places centrally on 'stages' at various spatial scales: the regional, the national, the international and the global. Such imagery thus presupposes a particular arrangement of places in the world order, and posits particular systems of cultural space. However, only a few commentators have, either implicitly (Eyles and Peace, 1990; Short *et al.*, 1993) or explicitly (Hall, 1994), explored the construction of these cultural systems of space with which these narratives engage. This omission has lead to the fetishization of individual place and promoted a myth of spatial autonomy. It is apparent that cities, within networks of interurban competition, not only operate *against* the images promoted by their opponents but also *within* the identities they are ascribed by virtue of their location within external systems of cultural space.

While such omissions are limiting, there is evidence of an emerging literature that is beginning to engage with these silences (see especially the critical essays in Kearns and Philo, 1993). However, a third, and possibly more fundamental, oversight in the literature on the promotion of entrepreneurial cities has been the failure of many commentators to examine how such representations have been received and interpreted at the local level. The limited engagement with Lefebvre's (1974) project to bridge the gap between representations and experiences of space is perhaps symptomatic of this (see also Shields, 1991). The consequence has been a failure to link representations of urban entrepreneurialism with the realm of experience, either generally (Jackson, 1993) or with specific reference to place (Savage and Warde, 1993). Although some have been critical of such an omission (e.g., Ley and Mills, 1993), there appears, as yet, little evidence of any significant empirical move beyond the current position. The work that does, however, offer some promise in this direction is that which focuses on the differentiated and fragmented consumption of image at the local level. It is this literature that will be referred to in the following section.

IV   The cultural politics of exclusion and resistance

Although the consideration of the role of culture in urban entrepreneurialism opens important research avenues at the interface of social/cultural and economic/political geographies, it is important that such consideration pays more than lip-service to the notion of culture, and explores the way that cultures are negotiated and contested at the local level. This implies a move away from a totalizing view of urban culture towards a fragmented, problematized, notion of different cultures, all competing for dominance or hegemony. It is here that Harvey's (1989) treatment of culture in the context of urban political change has come in for specific criticism. Ley and Mills (1993: 258), for example, draw attention to the way in which Harvey's reading of the redevelopment of Baltimore Harbour as the '. . . carnival mask disguising the alienations of commodification' is both empirically and theoretically shallow. They contend that, while Harvey alleges the social control of consciousness, he fails to demonstrate this, with the strategic silences of his account denying the possibility of differing reactions from differently positioned social groups or considering the possibility of cultural opposition of domination. This theme has been taken up in Ley's own work investigating how the use of public spectacle in Vancouver's World Expo was crucial in fostering local support. Rather than positing the local community as being 'duped' by the spectacle, Ley and Olds (1988) identified a multiplicity of readings, suggesting that although it was organized by a political and

economic hegemony, Expo wielded a fractured and negotiated power that was never absolute.

This more critical consideration of culture has been particularly promoted by Jackson (1991), who has demanded that studies which consider the importance of local culture in economic restructuring display more sensitivity to 'everyday' cultures and demonstrate the way that culture is contested and negotiated between different social groups. With respect to urban entrepreneurialism, it is important to note that the hegemony of the urban regime is never complete, but is always contested; while researchers have often ignored the role of the public in relation to urban regimes, the grassroots reception of local development strategies is essential for their survival; people do not always accede to the selling of place or the trajectory of development espoused by the élite coalition (Goodwin, 1993). Nevertheless, opposition to urban regimes is carefully circumscribed by the local state, with many critical decisions moved out of the realm of public politics and separated from community pressures (Imrie *et al.*, 1995). Thus the new urban politics is frequently depicted as a politics of exclusion which ignores and marginalizes 'other' voices (Sadler, 1993).

This is not to say that there is no possibility of transgression or opposition to entrepreneurial strategies. Diverse oppositional cultural politics of place have been documented in many localities threatened by redevelopment or regeneration. Such oppositional strategies often develop in opposition to what has been perceived as being '. . . the appropriation of one people's history by another' (Harvey, 1987: 281), and hence often derive from the problematic coalition of culture and social and community identity, which is strongly rooted in place. By exposing entrepreneurial strategies as imposing a shallow, 'facsimile' culture, such oppositional groups usually seek to reassert more deeply rooted 'organic' cultures (Cusick, 1990). The means by which such groups attempt to do this vary markedly, but forms of opposition have been diverse, and have included the deployment of agency in marches, pickets and demonstrations (as exemplified by the 'People's Armada' of Docklands' residents in 1984 – see Rose, 1992; Brownhill, 1993). Not all forms of protest rely on such overt or visible means, however, and the articulation of history, belonging and sense of place is often expressed through engagement with development by means of official or semi-official forums, as well as through articulation of opposition in the media and arts, including poster campaigns, newsletters and graffiti (Rose, 1992; Dunn and Leeson, 1993).

The nature, scope and organization of oppositional groups have been similarly diverse, ranging from well organized and funded groups such as Birmingham for People to more specialized interest groups such as Worker's City in Glasgow (Boyle and Hughes, 1991). Many such groups have been able to mobilize the talents of a diverse range of people, as was the case in London Docklands, where a group of local artists launched a high-profile community poster campaign and Art of Change initiative (Bird, 1993). Other groups may be more informal and spontaneous in nature, formed to protest against specific redevelopment proposals – an example, again from London Docklands, was the Save Spitalfields from the Developers group (Keith and Pile, 1994). Also prominent in protest have been other longer-established social movements representing particular 'marginalized' communities. For example, Brown (1995) documents the activities of several voluntary groups which sought to expand the horizons of Vancouver's political élite beyond issues of local economic development to consider the needs of the city's gay community. Radical political voices, represented in the UK by Class War and the Socialist Workers' Party, have also

been involved in protest against entrepreneurial strategies, though their participation has not always been welcomed by community interests.

Assessing the impact of oppositional groups is extremely difficult, as their relationships with developers and authorities range from the close consultation and involvement characteristic of groups such as Birmingham for People, to the violently confrontational tactics utilized by groups such as Class War. Likewise, the demands of these groups are diverse, ranging from outright denunciation of developer's objectives and calls for the dismantling of the structural forces of late capitalism through to demands for the provision of facilities for particular communities or social groups. While it is clearly dangerous, and perhaps misleading, to generalize, it would appear that, in most cases, the impact of oppositional groups, both on specific developments and the wider processes in which they are implicated, has been marginal, even negligible. For example, Beazley et al. (1995) have traced the patterns of community resistance to entrepreneurial developments on both sides of the Atlantic, articulating the largely silent discourses of resistance to four megaprojects: Expo '86 and Pacific Place in Vancouver, Yerba Buena in San Francisco (see also Hartman, 1984) and the International Convention Centre in Birmingham. In each case resistance was extensive, yet remained disadvantaged by a hostile political context, a shortage of resources and expertise, and a lack of support from an uncritically boosterist local media. Other studies have shown that, in some cases, the close consultation of oppositional groups with local politicians and business élites has merely served to legitimate the activities of entrepreneurial élites (see Fainstein and Fainstein, 1985; Robinson and Shaw, 1991).

This co-option of oppositional discourses by urban regimes, particularly the appropriation of social and community history, has therefore been postulated to be a crucial means by which entrepreneurial élites attempt to legitimate their activities and the accompanying transformation of the city. For example, the development of the International Convention Centre, Birmingham, was accompanied by a diverse portfolio of public art works which projected favourable, supportive notions of civic heritage and identity (Hall, 1992). Likewise, the Birmingham Heartlands Urban Development Corporation, which was effectively imposed on three distinct areas in the east of the city (Nechells, Bordesley and Duddeston), employed historical imaginations of community to legitimate the establishment of the UDC. A project and exhibition of oral and social history organized by the local history unit of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery invoked specific episodes from the area's history to create an identity of Heartlands, established in 1987, which could be traced back to the Doomsday period. This identity was reinforced through the establishment of an oral history archive, an educational resource pack for local schools and the production of new local history books (see Frostick and Harland, 1993). Such representations were therefore used to diffuse potential opposition to the imposition of Heartlands upon the uneven cultural topography of east Birmingham, legitimizing the Heartlands identity through the construction of an 'imagined' community.

Clearly, a more critical awareness of local responses to entrepreneurial policies is vital to appreciating how newly formed urban regimes are able to maintain their hegemonic status. Certainly, although Bianchini and Parkinson (1993) have argued that the use of cultural strategies, because of their relative novelty, are an unconfrontational means of urban regeneration, the empirical evidence considered here indicates that lines of opposition and resistance are beginning to crystallize. Identifying the nature of such oppositional discourses, and the way they are both excluded and appropriated by urban regimes, appears to be an important avenue for research. However, such explorations of the

changing cultural politics of place which accompany entrepreneurial forms of governance inevitably demand reconsideration of questions of social justice in the city.

V   Social justice and the entrepreneurial city

While studies of the cultural politics of the entrepreneurial city have drawn attention to the unequal distribution of power inherent in regime politics, particularly focusing on the exclusion of groups defined by virtue of their 'other' race, gender and sexuality (see Keith and Pile, 1994), geographers have been remarkably reticent in identifying the social inequalities resulting from such policies. Instead, debates about the effectiveness of entrepreneurial policies in regenerating the city and improving the living conditions of its citizens are dominated by the hollow rhetoric of politicians and policy-makers (Leitner and Garner, 1993). Despite the perceived success of Baltimore and Detroit in securing the revitalization of their downtowns through prestige development, it is becoming apparent that in many cases, entrepreneurial strategies are attracting little new inward investment or having any discernible impact on job creation (Barnekov *et al.*, 1988). Many of the image-enhancing schemes which have been promoted as profit making have turned out to be loss making. This was vividly illustrated in the case of Sheffield's 1991 Student Games, which burdened the local population with a large long-term debt repayment to be met from council taxes (Goodwin, 1993; Lawless, 1994). Such examples reinforce the point that the policies pursued by the regimes are inherently speculative, with the collapse of the property market demonstrating how fragile the basis of regeneration can often prove (Turok, 1992; Imrie and Thomas, 1993). Furthermore, as Harvey (1989) points out, with all cities competing in the same global market, there are bound to be winners and losers. As he contends, just how many successful marinas, conventions centres or heritage centres can there be?

Even when such speculative policies do succeed in attracting investment, within the 'successful' cities there will be many communities that continue to find themselves disadvantaged. It is these negative impacts of entrepreneurial policies within cities that have exercised most commentators. Logan and Molotch (1987) have baldly stated that as entrepreneurial strategies generally favour development and growth over the redistribution of wealth and opportunity, the result can only be a net transfer of wealth from the less well-off to urban élites. Similarly, Harvey (1989) has suggested that entrepreneurial policies constitute a subsidy for the affluent at the cost of welfare for the poor. On the other hand, few are prepared to suggest that such policies have no trickle-down benefits whatsoever, and Fitzgerald *et al.* (1990) claim that in many cases indirect jobs are often created for the poorest urban groups. Yet, according to one of the rare independent studies which has attempted to assess the distributive impacts of entrepreneurial strategies (Loftman and Nevin, 1992; 1994), while Birmingham city council succeeded in creating a limited number of jobs through its prestige development programme, these were primarily poorly paid or part-time positions in service sector employment. Furthermore, spending on these entrepreneurial policies was seen to detract from welfare and education expenditure, with dire results for the least well-off in the city. This phenomenon has also been noted in a number of USA cities, where entrepreneurial strategies have been implicated in the creation of a new urban 'underclass' (Hambleton, 1991; Galster, 1992), resulting in the so-called 'dual' city (Mollenkopf, 1985).

The failure of urban entrepreneurialism to alleviate the social and economic problems of

many cities, and in particular its neglect of issues of social equity in favour of the prosperity of certain élite groups, has therefore been argued to have exacerbated social and territorial inequalities in the city. Recently, Goodwin (1995) has argued that the sharp social polarizations in London are evidence of the failure of entrepreneurial governance to ensure adequate regulatory capacity at the local level, implying that the current mode of regulation will ultimately prove unsustainable. Yet in the short term, as S.J. Smith (1994) has contended, a principal characteristic of entrepreneurial policies is that they have produced a new urban geography steeped in the ideals of economic growth rather than the principles of social justice. In this sense, the ideals of neoliberal economics which underlie entrepreneurial strategies consider that the free market is as efficient and as just as state intervention in delivering goods and services to citizens. In this light, S.J. Smith (1994) argues that rather than simply investigating the impacts of entrepreneurialism at the abstract level, the changing governance of the city demands a re-engagement with questions of social justice, and a consideration of whether entrepreneurial strategies produce a fair and defendable distribution of benefits and burdens in society. The difficulty, of course, arises when it is realized that there are as many views as to what constitutes social justice as there are people, ranging from utilitarian liberalism to social egalitarianism (see D.M. Smith, 1994). In an era where the relativist thinking character- istic of postmodernism tends to preclude the establishment of universal rules or principles of social justice it is perhaps not surprising that geographers have shied away from such issues.

Again, it is Harvey (1992) who has offered the fullest exploration of such ideas in the context of contemporary urban geography, in his reinvestigation of *Social justice and the city* (Harvey, 1973). Although he acknowledges the disparate discourses of justice and equity emanating from diverse interest groups, he does not regard this as a sufficient justification for geographers to back away from issues of inequality and maldistribution. Instead, drawing on Young (1990), he argues that geographers should confront the social processes which produce those different conceptions of social justice in the first place. Based on this, Harvey develops a series of propositions which could be applied to any political decision or planning policy, namely, that they must minimize exploitation, liberate marginalized groups, empower the oppressed and seek nonexclusionary forms of social control. By focusing on the mechanisms, rather than the outcomes, of urban policies, Harvey thus suggests a framework whereby the inherent fairness of entrepreneurial strategies may be assessed.

This call for a re-engagement with issues of social justice, looking beyond distributive issues to examine the way in which entrepreneurial politics are implicated in the construction of marginal identities, has as yet to attract sustained empirical investigation (though see Laws, 1995). A notable exception here is the growing literature on the role of the new urban politics in the construction of 'other' sexualities, particularly in the perpetuation of straight/gay dichotomies (Bell, 1995; Knopp, 1995). For example, Brown's (1995) aforementioned study of Vancouver's entrepreneurial politics identified an exclusion of gay voices from the discourses of redevelopment in Yaletown, an area of the city that was the urban regime's focus of redevelopment but also the centre of the gay community. Such research is doing much to extend the boundaries of urban political debate beyond its preoccupation with issues of class, and also poses important questions about the way in which the local state plays a role in defining citizenship (Smith, 1990).

Such studies also bring into question whether it is possible to have truly inclusive urban regimes or, as Young (1990: 16) puts it, '. . . real participatory structures in which actual

people, with their geographical, ethnic, gender and occupational differences, assert their perspectives on social issues within institutions that encourage the representation of their distinct voices'. The possibility of a progressive urban regime which is locally responsive and extends community rights has been suggested on many occasions (e.g., Clavel, 1985; Ley and Mills, 1993), but even where urban governments have been at pains to stress the improvements in social equity that may occur as a result of their entrepreneurial activities, there is little evidence of the rhetoric being matched by reality (Leitner and Garner, 1993; Imrie *et al.*, 1995). Given the exclusionary political tactics pursued by many entrepreneurial coalitions, and the increasing 'quangoization' of the state (Peck, 1995) which has lead to a divorce of urban entrepreneurial policy from democratic structures, it is hard to envision how such an inclusionary regime may come about. Although there is no reason why quangos and other nonelected subnational agencies could not attempt to be locally accountable and representative, given their remit to provide streamlined local delivery of particular services, it is seldom that anything more than lip-service is given to issues of local accountability and democracy (see Blair, 1991). None the less, this does not preclude geographers identifying linkage mechanisms and distributional measures that could increase the equatability of existing entrepreneurial strategies. Healey's (1995) considera-tion of how forms of discursive democracy might come about under entrepreneurial forms of governance is a good example of the way geographers might contribute to policy debate. Certainly, as Beauregard (1988) has argued, it must be considered as important that research on urban entrepreneurialism produces concrete research outcomes which are applicable in practice.

VI   Conclusion

At the beginning of this article, an attempt was made to define urban entrepreneurialism in terms of shifts in city governance, although it has subsequently become apparent that it encompasses far more than the transformation of the local state. Taken overall, this brief review has sought to demonstrate the way in which urban entrepreneurialism has ushered in a whole range of changes in the way in which the city operates at all levels, changes that can only be comprehended with reference to the changing nature of the social, economic and political processes which are operating at both the global and local level. These changes are being felt at the level of experience, as the new urban politics forge a new cultural politics of identity at the urban level, changing the ways in which the peoples of the city see themselves and others. New group factions and interests are being thrown up as entrepreneurial policies exacerbate existing social divisions in the interests of the minority. Furthermore, the social inequality resulting from entrepreneurialism is mirrored in territorial inequalities as all sorts of urban spaces are opened up to new types of development.

In a broader sense, then, entrepreneurialism has become a convenient catch-all term used to describe a number of distinctive changes in the working of the city. The crucial question here is whether these changes represent a fundamental transition in the way urban processes are implicated in the production and reproduction of capitalist society. As yet, this issue remains unresolved. In many ways, it is apparent that the new urban politics is not so different from the old. After all, the selling of the city is as old as the city itself, and the city has always been a site where culture has been mobilized in the pursuit of profit. Yet, in other ways, this review suggests that recent times have witnessed qualitative and

quantitative changes in the way the city operates which demand a revised conceptualization of the links between social and political relations and the everyday experience of the city. If this demands new urban geographies that become blurred with economic, political and cultural geographies, then all the better, as the best of the literature on the entrepreneurial city seeks to demonstrate that the political economy of place and the cultural politics of place are intimately intermeshed.

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