UWS Academic Portal

The policy discourses that shaped the 'transformation' of Glasgow in the later 20th century
Collins, Chik; Levitt, Ian

Published in:
Transforming Glasgow

Published: 18/12/2019

Document Version
Peer reviewed version

[Link to publication on the UWS Academic Portal](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Collins, C., & Levitt, I. (2019). The policy discourses that shaped the 'transformation' of Glasgow in the later 20th century: 'overspill', 'redeployment' and the 'culture of enterprise'. In K. Kintrea, & R. Madgin (Eds.), *Transforming Glasgow: beyond the post-industrial city* (pp. 21-38). Policy Press.
<https://policy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/transforming-glasgow>

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the UWS Academic Portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact pure@uws.ac.uk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Chapter 2

The Policy Discourses that Shaped the ‘Transformation’ of Glasgow in the Later 20th Century: ‘Overspill’, ‘Redeployment’ and the ‘Culture of Enterprise’

Chik Collins and Ian Levitt

Introduction

Discussion of the ‘transformation’ of the first generation industrial cities of Europe and northern America is tightly linked to understandings of their ‘industrial decline’. Commonly, this latter process is presented in terms of the declining ‘competitiveness’ of these cities as the post-1970 liberalisation of international trade, and improving communications, changed the global economic order. With ‘traditional’ industries collapsing, the challenge was for cities to make the ‘transition’ to ‘post-industrialism’, in which the service sector – and particularly, retail, leisure, tourism and the arts and culture – would assume a much larger role (e.g. Tallon, 2013). Crucially, for the purposes of this chapter, this ‘transition’ is commonly seen as one which was fundamentally induced by the force of economic circumstances, rather than being chosen, or driven, by governments.

This chapter provides important context for the rest of this book by showing how significantly Glasgow’s trajectory from industrialism to post-industrial city differed from this ‘standard’ view. It draws on extensive research in government archives, originally conducted to inform a larger project seeking to account for Glasgow’s ‘excess mortality’ (Walsh, McCartney, Collins, Taulbut, & Batty, 2017). The research covered the retained official records of both the Scottish Office¹ and the Cabinet Office of the UK Government, for the period from 1945 until the early 1990s. The evidence from these records shows that Glasgow’s industrial decline and the associated policy responses in pursuit of post-industrial ‘transformation’ were driven, not by the impersonal operation of economic processes associated with ‘globalisation’, but rather by the sustained application of a highly discriminatory policy agenda within Scotland. Glasgow’s industrial decline was in fact actively embraced and accelerated by Scottish policy makers from the early 1960s, as part of a wider regional economic policy agenda seeking ‘development and growth’ *in other parts of Scotland*. This policy agenda was to be largely sustained for decades, and was to have seriously adverse consequences for the city and its citizens. The subsequent embrace by Glasgow’s civic leaders of a post-industrial trajectory reflected their

¹ The Scottish Office was a department of the United Kingdom Government from 1885 until 1999, exercising a wide range of government functions in relation to Scotland under the control of the Secretary of State for Scotland, who sat in the Cabinet of the UK Government. Following the establishment of the Scottish Parliament in 1999, most of its work was transferred to the newly established Scottish Executive, (now officially the Scottish Government).

attempt to work within the parameters of acceptability set by the much more powerful policy makers in Edinburgh. Ultimately, it is proposed that an appreciation of all of this is essential to any consideration of the range of policy responses which would be appropriate in supporting the city and its citizens in the future.

Policy Discourses Shaping Glasgow's Trajectory

The research indicates how three main policy discourses shaped the 'transformation' of Glasgow. First, between 1945 and 1960 there was a regional policy discourse of 'overspill' of population and industry to proximal settlements to assist Glasgow with its problems of overcrowding, health and economic development, and to achieve new industrial development in the vicinity of the city. Second, between 1960 and 1979 there emerged a new discourse, espousing 'redeployment' of Glasgow's skilled labour to more distant New Towns and other 'growth areas', which were heavily prioritised for inward industrial investment. Here, Glasgow and its staple industries were designated as 'declining' and its labour was to be made available for 'redeployment' to the designated 'growth areas' in pursuit of the wider 'modernisation' of Scotland. Crucially, we will show that policy makers soon became aware of the highly damaging effects of such 'redeployment' on Glasgow. Nonetheless, the policy was maintained, with the city receiving only partial mitigation – including, from the mid-1970s, measures badged as 'regeneration'. Finally, following General Election of 1979, a neo-liberal discourse came to the fore. Notwithstanding changes to UK regional policy, in Scotland spatial priorities for industrial inward investment remained unaltered and so population movement from Glasgow to the 'growth areas' continued. This provided the context for the emergence in Glasgow of an early and peculiarly Scottish variant of neo-liberal city regeneration. The later 1980s and early 1990s saw this extended, through a Scottish Office-led 'regeneration' agenda promoting a 'culture of enterprise' and 'personal responsibility'. This legitimated the continuing bias in favour of 'growth areas' and against any comprehensive efforts to address Glasgow's well-documented problems. Thus, the issues facing the city entering the new Millennium were not the result of a spontaneous decline or transition to a post-industrial economy, but of a proactive policy agenda, enforced with some ruthlessness over a number of decades.

The 'Overspill' Discourse

In 1945, Glasgow had the highest density of slums in the UK. An aggressive housing programme was seen by all parties as essential. Yet, expansion of city boundaries to create space was problematic – contiguous areas had objected to pre-war boundary expansion, and there were difficulties with mining subsidence elsewhere (Levitt, 1997). The report of the Clyde Valley Regional Planning Advisory

Committee (see Smith & Wannop, 1985) sought to address the city's problems of housing and health, in tandem with the need for new economic development, through the creation of four proximal new towns (at East Kilbride, Cumbernauld, Bishopton and Houston) to receive Glasgow's 'overspill' of population and industry. These settlements lay beyond the green belt and contiguous settlements, and would accommodate some 250,000 of Glasgow's 1.1 million inhabitants, together with a significant proportion of its existing businesses; they would also, it was believed, attract inward investors, to diversify the economy of the wider region away from heavy industries (notably shipbuilding and associated enterprises) and the "well established" associated "image of the area as militant 'Red Clydeside'" (Firn, 1986, p.107).

Post-war austerity, opposition from city government – Glasgow Corporation – and the election of a new UK government in 1951, ill-disposed to regional policy, made for limited implementation of this plan (Keating, 1988; Parsons, 1988). Only East Kilbride was designated as a New Town (in 1947). By 1955, however, growing pressure to address Glasgow's intense problems led to an agreement between Glasgow Corporation and the Conservative Secretary of State for Scotland, James Stuart, to designate Glasgow's second new town – Cumbernauld.² A vigorous programme for 'overspill' of population and industry to the new towns, and later also to other approved locations throughout Scotland, ensued (Levitt, 1997). The overcrowded central areas of the city were to be subject to a major comprehensive redevelopment plan aimed at removing up to two thirds of their population, with firms offered compensation on the closure of their premises.

Glasgow Corporation engaged in a heavy publicity programme to promote the scheme (NRS, ED48/1530, minutes, 12 June 1958, 17 September 1959, and 20 April 1966). Under the government's 'Industrial Selection Scheme', applicants were invited to register their skills and trade union membership, which, with their housing application, the Corporation sent to the Ministry of Labour for onward transmission to the 'overspill' areas. 'Overspill' authorities (new town development corporations and elected local authorities) retained the right to accept or reject applicants. Industry and commerce, it was anticipated, would also relocate, with UK Board of Trade assistance (Corporation of Glasgow, 1959).

Thus, the *first policy discourse* framed solutions to Glasgow's problems in terms of 'overspill'. The apparent focus was on assisting Glasgow, albeit somewhat paradoxically, for 'helping' would also,

² The Scottish Secretary controlled the public-sector housing 'starts' programme, and would not permit the previously proposed high density schemes within the City.

necessarily, mean 'hurting' Glasgow, through loss of population, which would inevitably be selective, and also industry. This paradox intensified as the target destinations for 'overspill' were widened, in the later 1950s, to include settlements across the length and breadth of Scotland – this being seen as necessary to create space for improved conditions and new development, and to promote growth elsewhere.

The 'Redeployment' Discourse

The *second policy discourse* saw 'overspill' mutate into 'redeployment'. The overt focus shifted from dealing with the problems of Glasgow in a regionalised context, to the pursuit of 'development and growth' to serve the larger goal of 'modernising Scotland' *away from Glasgow*. The change occurred at a time of increasing concern at UK level about problems of regional economic development, and consequent unemployment. In Scotland there was also considerable concern about the loss of skilled labour through emigration. The Treasury's preferred solution was neo-classical – wage levels should fall to attract inward investment (Levitt, 2014). However, the planning elite in Scotland, their memory of the harshness of the inter-war years still very much alive (D. McCrone, 1994), seized upon the then UK Government's review of regional policy. This favoured growth and development in *areas with suitable potential within regions*, as opposed to assistance to *areas of unemployment and decline* within them, or large-scale migration *between* regions. For the Scottish Office, this was an opportunity to pursue inward investment as the basis for 'modernisation', via its own long-preferred variant of regional economic planning (G. McCrone, 1969).

Believing that the indigenous family dynasties who controlled the west of Scotland's heavy industries were unwilling or unable to diversify and change, the Scottish Office focused its modernisation vision principally on inward investment from US and English firms in lighter industries, especially electronics and consumer durables (Foster, 2003). The perspective was formally set out in the Scottish Council (Development and Industry) *Inquiry into the Scottish Economy* (Toothill, 1961), which proposed a radical attempt to overcome Scotland's structural dependence on 'declining' heavy and extractive industries through establishing 'growth points', including further new towns, to which inward investors in newer industries could be attracted. There, those investors would be able to absorb Scotland's unemployed 'labour surplus', and in so doing raise its lagging productivity and rate of growth – thereby also easing recurring problems in the macro-management of the wider UK economy. Official confirmation of this plan came in the 1963 White Paper, *Central Scotland: A Plan for Development and Growth* (Scottish Development Department, 1963).

The plan was presented as an “assumed normative” (Parr, 1999) – a self-evident solution to a pressing problem requiring concerted implementation. In this respect, the ensuing formal designation of Glasgow and its industries as ‘declining’ was more than descriptive – it was *a policy imperative*. Henceforth, the *de facto* policy of the Board of Trade was *not* to operate the UK’s Distribution of Industry policy in Glasgow’s favour. By that time Livingston, much closer to Edinburgh than to Glasgow, had been designated as Glasgow’s third new town (1961) – the Board of Trade providing the crunch argument that inward investors preferred “to recruit Glaswegians outside the Clyde Valley than in it” (NRS SEP15/369, letter, 3 Feb 1961). Soon after, Glenrothes New Town in distant Fife, previously designated for Fife coalminers, also became a destination for Glasgow’s ‘redeployed’ labour. In 1965, Irvine in Ayrshire became the fifth Scottish new town.

The Implications of the Redeployment Discourse for Glasgow

The Scottish Office closely monitored the implementation of redeployment and soon identified a misplaced assumption about the movement of firms. The majority of smaller employers, located in low-cost premises and heavily dependent on local business, had taken the compensation and closed, rather than relocating. Consequently, as early as 1963, responding to ministerial scepticism about the wisdom of the continuation of ‘overspill’, Scottish Office officials placed a heightened emphasis on the requirement for *external* inward investment into the ‘growth areas’ (NRS, SEP4/1974, minutes, 7 and 17 June, 11 July and 1 August 1963). By 1966 it was apparent to officials that, “even with its reduced population Glasgow, on present progress, is likely to have too little and not too much industry” (NRS SEP4/1974, Note, Regional Development Division, 25 Aug. 1966).

Earlier, Scottish Office officials had discussed more general feasibility challenges. The hitherto envisaged scale of overspill from Glasgow (200-250,000) was by then seen as “not enough”. A continuing “marked deterioration in the Glasgow environment” was noted and the envisaged rehousing developments within the city were, warned planning consultants, likely to be “self-defeating” – creating “potential slums of the future”. The consequent revised scale of ‘redeployment’ (perhaps as many as 400,000 people) was seen as necessary to stem emigration of labour and hence help to secure the basis for Scottish economic growth. At the same time, such redeployment would likely occupy the space within the wider region that would be required for the desired economic growth to take place. All of this posed “a serious and urgent challenge” to “planning and housing policy” – though not, paradoxical as it may have been, one not seen to require much further reflection. Rather, the problem was seen to be “so urgent and on such a scale that speed was essential in dealing

with it". In all events, it had become apparent that development was more likely to be sited in the east of Scotland, than in the west (NRS SEP10/278, minutes, 24 May 1965).

Shortly thereafter, it became apparent that redeployment was "creaming off" Glasgow's "best tenants" (see Collins & Levitt, 2016, pp.299-300). This was confirmed by a later review; for every skilled worker moving into the Glasgow area, three were leaving (Forbes, Lamont, & Robertson, 1979). Those remaining were to experience a city affected by a major clearance and redevelopment programme compounded by major motorway construction and road improvement schemes (linked to the wider 'modernisation' agenda outwith Glasgow). Faced with an urgent need to rehouse its retained population, but with a declining tax base, lower priority for central government support, and also having to pay towards the costs of 'overspill' to other settlements (under the terms of the overspill agreements), Glasgow Corporation built 'outwards' and 'upwards' – in extensive peripheral estates and high-rise and systems-built housing developments. These were precisely the developments government officials had been advised would prove "self-defeating". Moreover, with the urgency of the rehousing issue and inadequate resources, the new developments badly lacked social amenities, which left families and communities isolated and alienated in their new homes, many of which soon revealed major defects of condition and repair (Keating, 1988). By contrast development in the prioritised 'growth areas' saw ongoing concern for the provision of good amenities and balanced economic and social development (G. McCrone, 1991). It was also understood that the wholesale movement of Glasgow's population was breaking up families and communities with "disturbing" implications, as a city MP put it, not least for community leadership (*Hansard*, 31 January 1968, cc1334-5). Nonetheless, throughout the 1960s Scottish Office ministers pushed ahead with 'redemption', representing it as essential, both for the city (creating space for housing, recreation and traffic movement, as well as for new economic development), and also, even more urgently, for the wider 'modernisation' of Scotland (e.g. see Scottish Development Department Annual Reports, Cmnd. 2948, 1965, pp15-16, Cmnd. 3209, 1966, pp17-19, Cmnd. 4313, 1969, p.17-19).

Continuing deliberation within the Scottish Office on the impact on Glasgow of this continuing policy has been detailed elsewhere (for sources see Collins & Levitt, 2016). The Conservative Government elected in 1970 sought to *accelerate* redeployment, while also providing for "a programme of general environmental improvement" assisted by an additional £1m grant for a period of five years to make some impact on the city's "squalor". In 1971, clear signs of an intensifying social and economic "Glasgow Crisis", resulting directly from the redeployment policy, were identified. The official view was that "probably no other city can display quite such depressing prospects". Yet with limited "room

for manoeuvre” all that could be offered was an “extension of social needs aid”. Economic growth outside of Glasgow remained the priority, and that meant the continued movement of population to growth areas.

The Scottish Office maintained this position for the rest of the decade. Arguments for shifting spatial investment priorities towards Glasgow were rejected as sacrificing the best opportunities for industrial success for Scotland as a whole. In 1975, analysis of 1971 Census data revealed to government officials that deprivation in Glasgow had become “relatively very much more serious in Clydeside than anywhere else in Great Britain”. It was understood that this was directly linked to ‘redeployment’, but the concern in official circles was to ensure that presentation of the findings was “reconcilable with the good repute of those with past responsibility”. Thereafter, arguments which connected Glasgow’s extreme deprivation to regional policy met with the view that appropriate remedies were to be found at the smaller urban scale. Where the connection could not reasonably be denied, it was to be presented to the public as “a social version of a familiar medical problem, namely that cures sometimes have unwanted side effects”. In due course, the major ‘Comprehensive Urban Renewal Exercise’ (CURE) initiated in Glasgow in the mid-1970s – the Glasgow Eastern Area Renewal Project – aimed to mitigate these side effects, rather than to address their causes. The Project was led by the newly-created government agency, the Scottish Development Agency. At the same time, reorganisation of local government in Scotland introduced a two-tier system of Regional Councils and District Councils. Glasgow Corporation was abolished and replaced by Glasgow District Council, with the much larger Strathclyde Regional Council (covering almost half of Scotland’s population) assuming responsibility for the majority of powers and functions previously held at city level (housing being the principal exception). The established new towns and other growth areas continued to be seen by government and its Agency as the priority areas of economic opportunity.

Finally, towards the end of the 1970s, a new Labour Secretary of State for Scotland, Bruce Millan, also a Glasgow MP, sought to halt new town development and encourage the economic regeneration of the City. Officials advised him that any deviation from the prevailing policy would “endanger the social balance or the economic prospects of the whole region”. While “possible changes in current social policies” could be considered, their success would require an unusually high degree of intervention by the Scottish Office in the running of the City. For the Under Secretary for Housing in the Scottish Office (and Chair of its Urban Policy Group), contemplating “The Future of Glasgow”, these recommendations meant abandoning “the remote likelihood of adopting and implementing the policies required to save Glasgow”; ultimately, however, Millan was obliged to accept them.

Post-1979: Defending ‘Redeployment’ and the Neo-Liberal Policy Turn

In the summer of 1979, the UK faced a government agenda that included forcing of the pace of deindustrialisation (through monetary policy), with a consequent steep increase in unemployment, and sharply reducing financial support for local authority housing. These policies were potentially damaging for cities, and Glasgow was particularly vulnerable (Collins & McCartney, 2011).

Glasgow’s vulnerability was a product of the Scottish Office policies of the preceding decades. Already heavily degraded industries collapsed “with astonishing swiftness” (Devine, 1999, pp.592-593). The mass of poor quality council housing in low-amenity estates was to be further deprived of the resources needed even to ameliorate intensifying problems (Keating & Mitchell, 1987). Policy makers were fully aware of these issues, and indeed of further, related ‘vulnerabilities’ likely to affect the City – its acute deprivation, its unbalanced population structure, its reduced supply of skilled labour, and the damaged fabric of communities (Collins & Levitt, 2016).

Entering the 1980s, however, the prospects for Scotland *outside of Glasgow* were seen in the Scottish Office to be rather better than two decades previously. Development and growth had been achieved and redeployment had proven, it was believed, to have been justified (NRS SEP4/5222, minute, 1 May 1981; SEP4/4604, Scotland and Her Economy, Briefing Note 1, Nov. 1986). Glasgow was understood to be a ‘blight’ on the landscape which required attention. However, the official view remained that remedies could *not* cut across the still-prevailing investment priorities. This was particularly true in light of at least two considerations. First, monetary policy was affecting, not just the older industries, but also some of the inward investment ‘success stories’ of the preceding years (Devine, 1999; Firn, 1986) (NRS SEP4/3487, minutes of Economic Policy Group, 1981-82). Second, the new government was also, like the Conservative Government of 1951-55, publicly hostile to regional policy in a way that might prove problematic for the future of the Scottish Office’s regional economic planning paradigm (Parsons, 1988).

There was also a more local challenge, Glasgow District Council seeking to secure inward investment through its own efforts (NRS SEP4/3487, Economic Policy Group, 10 Feb. 1981), and it was met with a prompt legislative response, prohibiting activities seen to run counter to Scottish-wide objectives.³ At the same time, the primary importance of new towns for the creation of employment and economic

³ Section 7 of the Local Government and Planning (Scotland) Act 1982

growth was restated, as was the need fully to support their growth and development as demographically-balanced, high amenity communities. This would include continuing to receive population from Glasgow, albeit on an 'informal', rather than centrally planned basis. An attempt by Strathclyde Regional Council to partially reverse this population flow with a concept of 'inspill' (as opposed to 'overspill') was "absolutely [and successfully] opposed" by officials in both the Scottish Office and the SDA (NRS DD6/3389, SDD Planning Division 2, minute, 25 Feb. 1983).

Nonetheless, by 1984, a new Housing Plan produced by Glasgow District Council was able to highlight some housing and environmental – though not economic – improvements in the inner city areas, arising from the ameliorative initiatives that had been supported in the previous decade (NRS DD12/3146, 'Glasgow District Plan: First Impressions', 27 Nov. 1984). These included the rehabilitation of older inner city tenement housing through central government funding to smaller 'community based' housing associations (Keating, 1988). The Plan similarly highlighted renewal in the city centre, via SDA-led retail, leisure, tourism and private residential developments. These combined developments provided much of the basis for the famous "Glasgow's Miles Better" public relations campaign, launched by Glasgow District Council in 1982 – an early example in the UK of 'city boosterism' changing the image of declining cities. At the same time, however, the Plan highlighted the troubling deterioration in the circumstances of the city's peripheral estates. It sought central government support – outlining both a 'minimum strategy' and a 'maximum strategy'. The former strategy was assessed as both "relevant and realistic" within the Scottish Office, but also as requiring three times the resources available for the city – which was assessed as "quite unrealistic" (NRS DD12/4081, SDD letter, 20 Aug. 1986, and SDD Planning Division minute on Glasgow District Plan, 28 Oct. 1985).

This scenario of 'lesser eligibility' for government resources, intensifying deprivation and 'city boosterism' provided the context for the emergence within Glasgow in the early-mid 1980s, with much direction and encouragement from the Scottish Development Agency, of a peculiarly Scottish variant of neo-liberal regeneration. It combined public subsidy for private property and service sector developments in the city centre with limited and weakening social amelioration for the retained population in the other parts of the city – via 'trickle-down' economics. This is not how the development was understood by many at the time (though see Boyle, 1989; Boyle, 1993; Keating, 1988). The city leadership saw itself as – and indeed was – battling to 'save' the city from a neo-liberal central government in Westminster, and from Scottish Office planners, unsympathetic to the city for decades. The city leaders were, in Keating's (1988) terms, 'refusing to allow the city to die'. However,

denied the opportunity for a more rounded programme of economic development (including support for both indigenous industry and inward investment), the city leaders, heavily prompted by the SDA and Scottish Office, pursued an inevitably limited policy which tended to create lower-paid and lower-skilled work in the city centre's developing service sector and other existing and emerging tourist attractions. The Council sought to connect these developments to the welfare of city residents, including those in remote peripheral estates. Unfortunately, these estates were linked to the city centre by expensive public transport services. For many such residents, the available opportunities were unsuitable, given their previous work experience – or indeed their history of what was later to be called 'social exclusion'. Nonetheless, for the City leaders, this development was substantial and important, and was improving the city in tangible ways, while they continued to hope for a change in government at UK level, and perhaps also a change in the prevailing policy paradigm for Scotland. What city leaders were at no time seriously prepared to contemplate was any attempt to mobilise the people of the city politically to challenge the policies which prescribed their 'lesser eligibility' – along the lines of what happened, to varying degrees, in other UK authorities in the early-mid 1980s, most notably in Liverpool (Carmichael, 1995).

The conception of the city centre development in 1980s Glasgow, and its relation to the wider welfare of Glaswegians, can be seen as a form of specifically neo-liberal urban policy – albeit one somewhat distinct from the Thatcherite version prevailing south of the border in that period. Indeed, it was seen in this way by the Scottish Office at the time. In 1985, ministers supported the announcement of Glasgow Action, which was "a group of local business leaders ... established to carry forward the Agency's [SDA's] programme of action" for the city centre. The advice to ministers was that this was "wholly in tune" with the recognisably neo-liberal "objective of maximising the private sector contribution to urban renewal and local economic development" (NRS DD12/4081, 'SDA Initiative for Glasgow City Centre: Establishment of Glasgow Action', 3 May 1985). It was also acknowledged that the actual private sector financial contribution to Glasgow Action was negligible – the resources were provided by the SDA. In practice, however, maintaining the appearance of private sector leadership would minimise the scope for the politicisation of the development. In this way, Glasgow provided a key context for the incubation of a model of regeneration for a later stage in the development of neoliberalism (Robson, 1989).

From Dependency to 'Enterprise' and 'Personal Responsibility'

As indicated above, the earlier 1980s saw a robust defence of the policy of 'redeployment' in Scotland, maintaining the priority of the 'growth areas', but also a distinct shift towards a neo-liberal urban paradigm for Glasgow. In the later 1980s these two were to be more specifically connected via a substantially new policy discourse. Here, Glaswegians were to be encouraged to develop the virtues of 'enterprise' and personal responsibility', in place of their what was portrayed as their existing 'dependency' on the state (Kemp, 1993). These virtues were seen to have been at the root the success of the new towns in the preceding decades. This view is well encapsulated in the Secretary of State for Scotland's preface to a 1988 Green Paper entitled *The Scottish New Towns: Maintaining the Momentum* (Industry Department for Scotland, 1988).

The image presented by the new towns – of young, active and caring communities with a high level of skills and commitment to self-improvement – fits very well with the increasingly competitive international market in attracting investment and jobs. Residents in the Scottish new towns have ... developed a spirit of corporate enterprise. The Government wishes to help that spirit flourish and point the way to other Scottish towns.

The view was that government policy could promote the required cultural transition in Scotland's less 'successful' areas – including in Glasgow. Policies were to include the reform of local taxation (the 'poll tax'), transfer of housing from local authorities to other ownership, together with more private housebuilding, and supply-side measures in training and education for work. Progress was to be stimulated through the creation of multi-agency initiatives in designated areas, where dormant 'opportunities' could be linked to local 'needs', local participation and 'self-help' activated, and 'community enterprise' fostered – thus achieving a demonstration effect. In due course, this became the framework for the Scottish 'partnership' approach to the regeneration of deprived housing estates in the later 1980s, under the New Life for Urban Scotland programme (G. McCrone, 1991).

The altered discourse added a further element of moral evaluation to legitimate and reinforce a well-established policy bias. The new towns, on this view, had merited their priority status, embracing modernisation, including its crucial cultural and behavioural aspects, thus allowing them to deliver on investment, jobs and growth for the Scottish economy (NRS SEP4/4605, Draft for Under Secretary's Speech to East Kilbride Development Corporation industrialists' dinner, 9 Oct, 1987). All of this was seen as proving their clear and continuing eligibility for government support. Glasgow, and its many deprived areas, were seen just as clearly as less eligible. While their needs were real and substantial,

their community attitudes were seen to reflect a 'dependency culture'. As one Scottish official noted, this meant that in the absence of the often-elusive co-ordinated strategy for action between relevant agencies, "a great deal of time, effort and money" could, in such areas, be "spent with little prospect of real or lasting success" (NRS DD12/4051, 'Greater Easterhouse: Draft Strategy Document', 4 March 1992)."

Glaswegians were thus challenged to change. Policies in housing, economic development and training, local taxation and urban regeneration would seek to guide the city (and indeed Scotland more widely) towards 'individual responsibility', 'self-help' and 'enterprise' (Kemp, 1993). In this context, the city could have a Garden Festival (1988), and ultimately even become the European City of Culture (1990). However, addressing Glasgow's intense social and economic problems would not be allowed to take priority over what was seen as investing successfully, *outside of Glasgow*, for the future of Scotland *as a whole*. Indeed, by 1992 the Scottish Office acknowledged the impossibility of achieving regeneration on any significant scale in Glasgow's poorest areas within the prevailing policy and resource framework. In this context, as one official put it, any form of phased investment (such as in parts of Easterhouse) would necessarily mean that "some parts of the City" would "suffer in the short-term" (NRS DD12/4051, "Glasgow: Easterhouse", 6 Jul. 1992).

Discussion and Conclusion: Beyond the simplistic view of 'the post-industrial city'

Towards the end of the 20th Century, the promotional 'boosterism' around Glasgow – important as it may have been in changing the view of the city – could too easily obscure persistent problems. As Turok and Bailey (2004) were later to observe, the later 1980s and early 1990s, when 'boosterism' was at its height, were the years of Glasgow's worst relative economic performance in UK terms. Even in the apparently somewhat better circumstances of the late 1990s, the City was still losing population at a higher rate than most other UK cities, and its other most striking features included its high 'worklessness' and mortality rates, and its lagging education outcomes.

Yet, even as Turok and Bailey were writing (in the early noughties), inward investors in electronics and computing were leaving Scotland. Indigenous supply companies closed as they left. This provided the context in which the spatial priorities for economic investment in Scotland were, between 2003 and 2006, finally altered. The 'Cities Agenda', embraced earlier in England, but hitherto received rather coolly in Scotland, was suddenly taken up – as the 'new conventional wisdom' (Turok, 2007). Cities were now to be seen, as a matter of principle, as the 'drivers of economic growth', albeit of a decidedly 'post-industrial' form.

Glasgow and the River Clyde duly became the key focus for a much re-vamped Scottish regeneration policy launched fully in early 2006, linked strongly to a revised economic policy promoting *the growth of indigenous companies* of scale and a broader agenda for ‘public sector reform’ (Collins, 2006) . Premised on the view that economic ‘boom and bust’ was a thing of the past, this agenda was pursued with some zeal by the Labour-Liberal Democrat Coalition governing the still-recently devolved institutions of national government in Scotland in the period 2003-2007. However, the liberalising and privatising implications of the wider agenda of which this was part met with some distaste from voters, who returned a minority Scottish National Party (SNP) administration to the Scottish Parliament in 2007. Within months, customer queues were forming outside of a prominent British building society (Northern Rock), and before the following year was out, in the wake of the banking crisis of 2008, Scotland’s dominant private financial institutions (Royal Bank of Scotland and Bank of Scotland) were effectively owned by British taxpayers. At that point, notwithstanding the new SNP government’s commitment to the regeneration agenda it had inherited from its predecessor in 2007, much of what was called ‘regeneration’ in Glasgow was shuddering to a halt.

Thus, Glasgow found itself in the midst of the ‘great recession’. The city now had some kind of a status in Scottish economic policy, but at a time when the wider economic circumstances could hardly have been more problematic. By that time the city had secured the Commonwealth Games for 2014. It had a developing Urban Regeneration Company focused on the East End of the city, the Clyde Gateway, which would seek to connect to the Games, as well as to the Clyde Waterfront development in the central city. Its city centre more generally had become one of the most significant retail destinations in the UK. Policy makers would seek to make use of these – and other – assets to bring about a new kind of regeneration in the city. As they did so, however, they were seeking to overcome the legacy of a prior *degeneration*, which was a well-understood outcome of a highly proactive and sustained policy agenda. This would have been a very difficult legacy to overcome in the most propitious of circumstances, and it was, after 2008, to be tackled in circumstances which were very far from propitious – the conditions of recession and intensifying austerity.

Finally, our account raises the question of how the City and its economy might have developed within a different policy framework. Such a framework might have sought to preserve and develop key areas of competitive advantage which were, in the post-war decades, still present in Glasgow’s – and the wider region’s – established industries (Foster, 2003), while, at the same time, allowing (and supporting) the city to take some share of the inward investment that was being secured for the

country. Were such to have been the policy framework for the City, then the emerging embrace of leisure, retail, culture, etc. could have been a supplement and a complement to *industrial* development, rather than an alternative and substitute for it – again allowing for greater ‘balance’. On this basis, it is highly likely that inequality in the city would be less extreme than has proven to be the case, for the actual pattern of economic development which was to transpire exacerbated inequality (Glasgow Economic Leadership, 2016). Indeed, such policies would highly probably have been better for the longer-term development of the Scottish economy as a whole, given the aforementioned and widely discussed problems which were to transpire with the durability of the ‘branch plant economy’ (Firn, 1986; Foster, 2003). Similarly, alternative policies for housing development were espoused – challenging both overspill and also the grand schemes for clearance and redevelopment within the city (e.g. Brennan, 1957). Indeed, a commonly held view is that Glasgow “got the worst of both [these] worlds” (Keating, 1988, p.22). Were Glasgow to have been more of an economic priority, moreover, then wider social investment in the city would also have been more of a priority. In keeping with the times in which they were conceived, however, plans were wholesale and extreme.

Thus, across the decades, Glasgow can be seen to have been ‘trapped’ by an evolving set of policy discourses, which, impacting on an already deeply troubled city, precipitated quite sudden and extreme economic, social and cultural dislocations; these, as Polanyi (Kirby, 2006) might have seen it, in turn posed profound challenges to the coherence and sustainability of many citizens’ everyday lives – resulting in pronounced social problems (not least the city’s ‘excess mortality’). Glasgow was not the only city in the UK which faced the challenges of ‘decline’ and ‘transformation’ across these decades. However, it is clear that the particularities of the Scottish context – with a powerful Scottish Office, strongly committed to ‘growth points’ outwith Glasgow, and able to resource and implement its policies in ways not matched in, say, North West England, over the long term – prescribed a particularly unbalanced pattern of development over an extended period, with distinctive, and troubling, outcomes (Foster, 2003; Parsons, 1988; Timpson, 2018). These are outcomes which are all the worse for having resulted, not simply from the impersonal operation of global economic processes, but, as this chapter has shown, from the sustained – and generally quite ruthless – application of a deeply entrenched, discriminatory policy within Scotland. Appreciating this is essential in understanding how Glasgow has come to be the city it is today, and also for considering the range of policy responses which would be appropriate in supporting the city and its citizens in the future. Currently the evidence is that it is not sufficiently appreciated – either in Glasgow itself, or in Edinburgh.

References

- Boyle, R. (1989). Partnership in Practice: An Assessment of Public-Private Collaboration in Regeneration - A Case Study of Glasgow Action. *Local Government Studies*, 15(2), 17-28.
- Boyle, R. (1993). Changing Partners: The Experience of Urban Economic Policy in West Central Scotland, 1980-90. *Urban Studies*, 30, 309-324.
- Brennan, T. (1957). Gorbals: A Study in Redevelopment. *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, 4(2), 114-126.
- Carmichael, P. (1995). *Central-Local Government Relations in the 1980s: Glasgow and Liverpool Compared*. Aldershot: Avebury.
- Collins, C. (2006). 'The Scottish Executive is open for business': The New Regeneration Statement, The Royal Bank of Scotland and the Community Voices Network. *Variant*(26), 10-13.
- Collins, C., & Levitt, I. (2016). The 'modernisation' of Scotland and its impact on Glasgow, 1955-1979: 'unwanted side effects' and vulnerabilities. *Scottish Affairs*, 25(3), 294-316.
- Collins, C., & McCartney, G. (2011). The Impact of Neoliberal "Political Attack" on Health: The Case of the "Scottish Effect". *International Journal of Health Services*, 41(3), 501-523.
- Corporation of Glasgow. (1959). *Industry on the Move*. Glasgow: Corporation of Glasgow.
- Devine, T. (1999). *The Scottish Nation: 1700-2000*. London: Penguin.
- Firn, J. R. (1986). Industry. In R. Smith & U. Wannop (Eds.), *Strategic Planning in Action: The Impact of the Clyde Valley Regional Plan, 1946-1982* (pp. 100-138). Aldershot: Gower.
- Forbes, J., Lamont, D., & Robertson, I. (1979). *Intra-Urban Migration in Greater Glasgow*. Retrieved from
- Foster, J. (2003). The Economic Restructuring of the West of Scotland 1945-2000: Some Lessons from a Historical Perspective. In G. Blazyca (Ed.), *Restructuring Regional and Local Economies: Towards a Comparative Study of Scotland and Upper Silesia*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Glasgow Economic Leadership. (2016). *Glasgow Economic Strategy, 2016-2023*. Retrieved from Glasgow:
- Industry Department for Scotland. (1988). *The Scottish New Towns: Maintaining the Momentum*. Edinburgh: Industry Department for Scotland.
- Keating, M. (1988). *The City that Refused to Die. Glasgow: The Politics of Urban Regeneration*. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press.
- Keating, M., & Mitchell, J. (1987). Glasgow's Neglected Periphery: The Easterhouse and Drumchapel Initiatives. In D. McCrone (Ed.), *Scottish Government Yearbook 1987*. Edinburgh: Unit for the Study of Government in Scotland, University of Edinburgh.
- Kemp, A. (1993). *The Hollow Drum*. Edinburgh.
- Kirby, P. (2006). Theorising globalisation's social impact: proposing the concept of vulnerability. *Review of International Political Economy*, 13(4), 632-655.
- Levitt, I. (1997). New Towns, New Scotland, New Ideology, 1937-57. *The Scottish Historical Review*, LXXVI, 2(202), 222-238.
- Levitt, I. (2014). *Treasury Control and Public Expenditure in Scotland, 1885-1979*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McCrone, D. (1994). Towards a Principled Elite: Scottish Elites in the Twentieth Century. In A. Dickson & J. H. Treble (Eds.), *People and Society in Scotland, Vol. III: 1914-1990*. Edinburgh: John Donald.
- McCrone, G. (1969). *Regional Policy in Britain*. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.
- McCrone, G. (1991). Urban Renewal: The Scottish Experience. *Urban Studies*, 28(6), 919-938.
- Parr, J. B. (1999). Growth-pole Strategies in Regional Economic Planning: A Retrospective View: Part 1. Origins and Advocacy. *Urban Studies*, 36(7), 1195-1215.
- Parsons, W. (1988). *The Political Economy of British Regional Policy*. London: Routledge.

- Robson, B. (1989). *Those Inner Cities: Reconciling the Economic and Social Aims of Urban Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Scottish Development Department. (1963). *Central Scotland: A Programme for Development and Growth (Cmnd. 2188)*. Edinburgh: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- Smith, R., & Wannop, U. (Eds.). (1985). *Strategic Planning in Action: The impact of the Clyde Valley Regional Plan, 1946-1982*. Aldershot: Gower.
- Tallon, A. (2013). *Urban Regeneration in the UK*. London: Routledge.
- Timpson, K. (2018). *Regional and Urban Policy, vulnerability and capacity: using archival sources and a comparison with Liverpool to contribute to the explanation of Glasgow's 'excess mortality'*. (Doctor of Philosophy), University of the West of Scotland, Paisley.
- Toothill, J. N. (1961). *Report on the Scottish Economy 1960-1961: Report of a Committee Appointed by the Scottish Council (Development and Industry) under the Chairmanship of J.N. Toothill Esq., CBE*. Edinburgh: Scottish Council (Development and Industry).
- Turok, I. (2007). Urban Policy in Scotland: New Conventional Wisdom, Old Problems? In M. Keating (Ed.), *Scottish Social Democracy: Progressive Ideas for Public Policy*. Brussels: PIE Peter Lang.
- Turok, I., & Bailey, N. (2004). Glasgow's Recent Trajectory: Partial Recovery and its Consequences. In D. Newlands, M. Danson, & J. McCarthy (Eds.), *Divided Scotland? The Nature, Causes and Consequences of Economic Disparities within Scotland* (pp. 35-59). Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Walsh, D., McCartney, G., Collins, C., Taulbut, M., & Batty, G. D. (2017). History, Politics and Vulnerability: explaining excess mortality in Scotland and Glasgow. *Public Health*(151), 1-12.