Unequal Neighbourhoods in European Cities: Are there solutions or only problems?

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Why do poor neighbourhoods emerge?

· Urbanisation sifts precarious incomers

· Precarious neighbourhoods emerge

· Economic growth

· Magnet for the ambitious and desperate

· Rapid urbanisation carries high social costs

· Social problems concentrate in poorest areas

· Poorest areas attract little/no investment

The poorest areas of Tarantaize, San Salvario

Why do poor neighbourhoods recreate themselves?

- Intrinsic and acquired characteristics

    - Impossible or very difficult to change

- Intrinsic drivers

    - Location

    - Industry/pollution

    - Physical assets/liabilities

- Acquired characteristics

    - Population

    - Skills/education

    - Economic change

What we know about neighbourhood problems

- Industrial boom > rapid growth and wealth creation

- Social upheaval, dramatic divisions, fear of revolution

- Dense, unplanned additions

- Influx of essential new workers created squalid slums

- Elegant inner and outer suburbs for rich

Unrest

Digging up railways s

Leipzig

Mass housing solutions

- 'Factory' response to social and economic pressures
- Government subsidised/owned homes
- Mechanistic, replicable, unmanageable models
- Factory production methods for housing
- Mono-class, mono-structures, dehumanising
- Defects built in – hard to rectify
- Giant block forms difficult to manage
- Sharp break with tradition
- Costly to government
- Concentrate low-income new communities

Quartier Sud Est: view from the motorway

Original blocks in Quartier Sud Est – still cared for

Park Hill, Sheffield

- Before renovation
- After renovation

Migrants from abroad

- Legacy of depleted inner cities, decayed housing, slums
- Exodus of more skilled workers
- Inflow to fill lowest paid, least skilled, dirtiest jobs
- Crowded into declining, emptying inner cities
- Established workers move into 'mass estates'

San Salvario
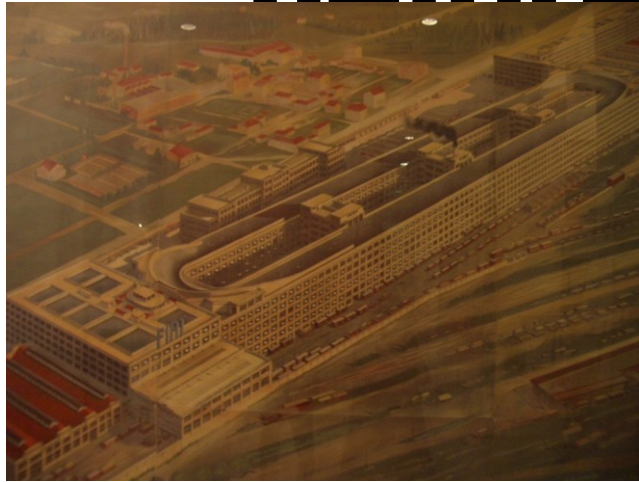## – central immigrant area next to train station

Gröpelingen, Bremen – old port area with many immigrants

Collapse of heavy industry

- European industry loses dominance over 50 years
- Low-income work force loses economic rationale
- Working class neighbourhoods > marginal
- Immigrant communities > target of resentment
- Ambitious skilled young workers leave industrial cities
- Better-off families move out
- Sprawl housing compounds inner city/estate problems
- Mass unemployment > commonplace

Fiat Lingotto Factory: before and after

Mass building, sprawl, abandonment - Leipzig

Legacy of disinvestment

- Changing fortunes of high rise

- Expensive to maintain

- Expensive to demolish and replace

- Increasingly unpopular/popular

- Occupied by marginal groups

- Talk of European 'ghettos' forming

Mass estate rescue – Ostenholz-Tenever

Weak Market Cities recognise neighbourhood problems

- 1995-2005 – decade of targeted effort
- Inner areas and mass estates > focus and draw funds
- Government recognises multiple impacts
- Social, environmental, economic
- EU-driven social cohesion programmes
- Weak market cities attract extra help
- Funds support multi-stranded renewal
- Spread area-based projects
- Social/community enterprises emerge

Porto Palazzo, Torino

Community Enterprises – Sheffield

Lan Ekintza, Bilbao

Community Enterprises – Bremen and Torino

Recovery in dense cities depends on:

- Neighbourhood reinvestment
- Constant renewal of housing conditions
- Social integration/tolerance
- Upgrading poorest areas
- Recognising their physical and social assets
- Counting true costs of demolition
- Limiting sprawl
- Valuing the environment

Community budgeting
– Ostenholz-Tenever

Neighbourhood renewal becomes part of city's recovery plan

- High costs of tearing communities apart
- Need to house minorities
- Cities need low-skill, low wage service workers
- Mass estates prove difficult and expensive to knock down
- Opportunities for social enterprise and skill development abound
- Poor communities fight their corner

Poor communities fight their corner

Belfast Peace Walls

Key methods of renewal

- Physical reinvestment and upgrade
- Environmental improvements
- Resident involvement
- Social and community spaces
- Intensive management of conditions
- Economic development
- Skill and enterprise development

Skill and enterprise

Bochum
– reclaiming industrial reli

Restoring old buildings – Bochum

What works?

- Local management of problems – 'intensive care'
- Giving residents a say
- Activity that brings the community together
- Support for vulnerable residents
- 'Low level' reinvestment
- Greenery
- Children's activities
- Generating pride and loyalty

Moroccan bread-making co-op

Do neighbourhood problems go away?

- If we care for places, conditions hold
- But problems don't disappear
- Many problems are 'intrinsic'
- Inequality is a big long-term driver
- Some problems persist, some recreate themselves
- Have neighbourhood policies failed?
- On the contrary, multiple evidence of progress
- Stalled by economic crisis

Upgrading Mira Fiore, Torino

Belfast – Cathedral Quarter

- Merchant Hotel
- Black Box Cultural Centre

Torino
– Social caretaking

International Slow Food Festival, Torino

2008-11 financial crisis hits low-income neighbourhoods hard

- New threat to Weak Market Cities
- Collapse of special funding
- Big investment plans thrown off course
- Job losses, business shrinkage, public cuts
- Youth unemployment
- Unrest

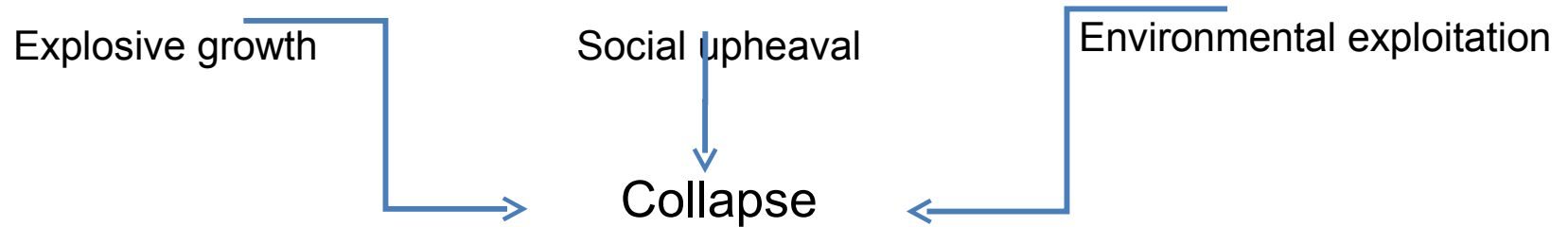# Bilbao's encampment by 'los indignados'

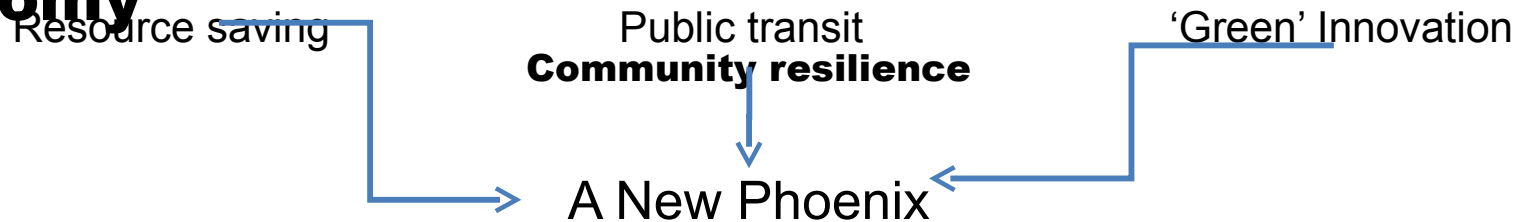# Birmingham – Riots, August 2011

Manchester – Riots August 20

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Three stages of development

First Industrial Economy

Explosive growth

Social upheaval

Environmental exploitation

Collapse

Second Post-Industrial Economy

Public Infrastructure

Social Integration

New economy

Recovery

Third Resource-Constrained Economy

Resource saving

Public transit

Community resilience

'Green' Innovation

A New Phoenix

Scenarios for weak market cities

Scenario I: Hit by further decline	Scenario II: Low level survival economy	Scenario III: New resource-constrained economy
· Follows recovery burst	· Ticks over, on past investments	· Grows within finite energy and material limits
· Current resource use unsustainable	· Recycling helps	· New breakthroughs / research and development
· Loss of public support	· Shaky public support	· High public support
· Rapid de-skilling	· Retraining / rethinking	· New knowledge / skills

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Will green, social innovation help?

- Labour intensive

- Retrofit, repair, recycle

- Potential of bicycles

- Potential of over-cladding

- Reuse of old industrial infrastructure

- New value of old space

- Only game in town