Beyond Entrepreneurial Cities? Towards a Progressive Urban Politics of Climate Change and Resource Constraint

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Introduction – the entrepreneurial city.

This paper examines what recent concerns with climate change and with looming ecological overshoot mean for urban political economy. Conceptions of 'urban entrepreneurialism' (Hubbard and Hall 1998; Oatley 1998) emerged through the urban crises of governmentality and stagflation after the 1973 oil shock as the post-war Keynesian settlement began to unravel and be challenged by a new right committed to the 'rolling back' of the state (Peck and Tickell 2002). Cities must now compete for mobile capital in an environment where cheap communications technologies and fuel meant that capital could increasingly seek a 'spatial fix' to problems of profitability by moving to places where labour costs are cheaper and levels of labour and environmental regulation lower (Harvey 1992). Often the perception that capital can move if its needs are not met is enough - no threats need to be made, no often expensive and locally integrated plant dependent on local supply lines actually uprooted and moved. Politicians, local and national, connive in this discourse of powerlessness, arguing that they can't stop firms moving. All they can do is make the transition from industrial to post-industrial economy as smooth as possible.

For cities, this has meant that according to this discourse they must make themselves as attractive to footloose international finance as possible, forgoing any 'costly' social programmes likely to be seen as a burden on business (Peterson 1981). They have to follow the logic of urban competition by making their labour costs as competitive and regulations as light as possible, providing infrastructure, and making administration business friendly. Business competitiveness, rather than social justice and citizenship, is the logic of entrepreneurial urbanism. Inward investment is privileged above endogenous growth from existing businesses. The image of the city is changed to make it as attractive as possible for business (Roberts and Schein 1993; Short, Benton et al. 1993), or, more recently, for the new 'creative class' who, through cultural innovation, are seen as the drivers of postmodern, information based capitalism (Bianchini and Parkinson 1993; Florida 2004; Peck 2005). 'Difficult' conceptualisations of urban identity, for instance, that of the unruly, probably criminal scouser, would be occluded (Boland 2008). Cities have to be change agents, not just social structures (Cox and Mair 1991).

Consequently, a major role in urban governance, in the US especially, is given variously to land-based 'growth machines' focussing on the realisation of the maximum return from downtown urban real estate (Logan and Molotch 1987; Lloyd and Newlands 1988; Cox and Mair 1989; Harding 1991; Jonas and Wilson 2000) or to more diffuse urban 'regimes (Stone 1989; Lauria 1997; Ward 1997; Stone 2001; Dowding 2002) which are able to develop a consistent urban narrative of place and a governing coalition enabling it to be successfully delivered. In the UK, cities have seen a greater involvement of business 'movers and shakers' in urban governance (Peck 1995; Peck and Tickell 1995; Bennett 1998; Wood, Valler et al. 1998; Valler, Wood et al. 2000; North, Valler et al. 2001). A number of initiatives from Urban Development Corporations (Imrie and Thomas 1999), companies and

partnerships all aimed to inject private sector influence in urban policy making (Mackintosh 1992; Hastings 1996). Urban entrepreneurialism is now ubiquitous (Kenny 1995; Bassett 1996; Cochrane, Peck et al. 1996; Hubbard 1996; Quilley 1999; Quilley 2000; Ward 2003). Even late starters like the city in which I live and work, Liverpool, a city whose Militant-led council that in the 1980s symbolised the antithesis to the entrepreneurial these (Parkinson 1985; Taafe and Mulhearn 1988), have now engaged with the new de rigour through its status as 'capital of culture' (Jones and Wilks-Heeg 2004).

While ubiquitous, the paradigm is not without its critics. It has been objected that multinational business is more locally embedded and less mobile than it says it is (Cox 1997; 1998). Better welfare outcomes might be generated by concentrating on developing endogenous business than providing corporate welfare to multinationals who provide relatively few jobs (Scott Cato 2004). What happened to cities that tried to compete and failed? Sheffield, for example, found that winning the World Student Games in 1991 was a mixed blessing, while its museum of pop music failed. Failed companies, perhaps, can disappear, but cities cannot, and it is simplistic to assume that a city can be conceptualised as 'competitive' or not in the same way. Urban strategies, focussing on welfare, social inclusion or the environment, are sidelined by an unelected urban elite. Real problems, poverty, job creation, would be displaced in the public imagination (Mooney 2004). Rather, John Lovering (1995) famously argued that all entrepreneurialism generated was vacuous mission statements about place that could not be differentiated from each other (Griffiths 1998). Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell (1998) pointed out that the real generators of urban strategies remained local authorities, with local business elites being deployed strategically to provide an illusion of partnership and consensus around local strategies

But in its own terms, the entrepreneurial thesis did seem to revitalise the cities in which it was deployed, if by revitalisation we mean providing jobs in the finance and knowledge economies inaccessible to those who had lost them in manufacturing (Harvey 2001) or by increasing visitor numbers and the perception of cities as having 'turned a corner'. But part-time minimum wage casual jobs replaced full-time unionised jobs. Many poorer parts of the city were passed-by through these processes of uneven development (Boyle and Hughes 1994; Smith 1996; Beazley, Loftman et al. 1997; Mooney 1999; MacLeod 2002), or worse, saw social investment in their services decline to pay for new conference centres and capitals of culture. Places bypassed by revitalisation would be subjected to social control to civilise or weed out those who do not fit the new expectations (Coleman and Sim 2000; Ward 2003). Some communities did challenge the new urban logic, organising to defend their community services (Ferman 1996; Mooney 2004; Mooney and Poole 2005), but credible alternatives seemed to lack the same plausibility in the eyes of urban leaders, if they were held in higher esteem in the academy (Imbroscio 1997; Peterman 2000; DeFilippis 2004). The local socialist and progressive urban strategies of the 1980s (Boddy and Fudge 1984; Clavel 1986; Mackintosh and Wainwright 1987; Alcock, Gamble et al. 1989) were eclipsed and neoliberal urbanism seemed dominant. The advent of the credit crunch of mid-2007 and the following recession if anything made the re-ignition of urban growth a priority.

Cities, climate change and the ecological crisis

If the crises of stagflation and urban governmentality did seem to some extent seem to have been overcome by the entrepreneurial conceptionalisation, two new urban crises

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have more recently emerged – climate change and ecological overshoot – which challenge the perception that 'growth' should uncritically be the object of urban strategies if it leads to unsustainable levels of greenhouse gas emissions or is dependent on resources that are being unsustainably depleted.   While a poor environment and dealing with wastes has been a problem since the dawn of urbanisation, anthropogenic climate change emerged more centrally as an issue through the 1990s as global long-series temperature readings and observable extreme weather events all suggested that the planet is warming (Lynas 2007), perhaps dangerously heating (Lovelock 2006). The International Panel on Climate Change (2007) suggested that there is a consensus about the dangers of dangerous climate change. It became clearer that emissions of greenhouse gasses need to be cut by at least 80% over coming years: what would be the implications of this for an urbanism that stressed global urban competition based on externalised greenhouse gas emissions? This is a problem at a higher level than protecting or enhancing urban environments and handling the disposal of wastes: it goes to the heart of the long-tem viability of human civilisation.

If there was a consensus on the danger of runaway climate change, another set of problems began to emerge on which there was less consensus. Ecologists had long argued that there were 'limits to growth' in a closed ecological system like the planet Earth (Meadows 1974), while critics argued that technological progress would enable growth to continue (Cole, Freeman et al. 1973). By the turn of the twenty-first century, 'limits' theorists argued that the planet was finally coming up against some of the predicted limits (Meadows, Randers et al. 2005), while theorists of ecological footprints argued that the ecosystem was unable to provide resources for and absorb the wastes from a lifestyle as resource intensive as that in the global North if it was adopted by everyone on the planet

(Wackernagel and Rees 1996). 'Peak' theorists (Heinberg 2004; Roberts 2004; Kunstler 2006; Heinberg 2007) argued that the planet did not have the resources necessary to power carbon-based growth indefinitely, and that we were close to the peak of production for oil in particular. Peak theorists did not argue that key resources would soon be completely unavailable, but that they would soon be scarce and that their price would therefore rise. For a time in 2007, with oil hitting $147 a barrel, 'peak oil' was highly relevant, although the subsequent crash of the oil price to below $40 a barrel as a result of a number of factors (geopolitical, increased refining capacity, the global recession cutting demand) took peak oil out of the headlines. Despite this, peak theorists continue to argue that the underlying conditions are unchanged, and that price volatility is to be expected (Heinberg 2008). Some peak theorists expect that resource constraints mean that complex carbon-based resource intensive forms of society do not have a future: they will inevitably unravel (Homer-Dixon 2006; Greer 2008). We have two options as a society: to prepare for life post-oil which could be more enjoyable, ecologically sustainable and inclusive than growth-based urbanism (Astyk 2008; Hopkins 2008; Murphy 2008); or enter a new age of conflict over resources and of increasing global inequality.

Both these problems are fundamental challenges to entrepreneurial urbanism based on and underpinned by externalised greenhouse gas emissions, and cheap fuel and communications technologies. Sustainability in terms of ecological limits was not a concern, as long as growth was sustainable in terms of being maintained over time. Entrepreneurial urbanism assumed that manufacturing would be outsourced to places in the global South with lower environmental standards, and the carbon embodied in goods produced elsewhere would not be considered. Emissions as a result of transporting goods to the

North were ignored, as were those of businesspeople and citybreakers flying to cities to partake of the cultural festivals generated by the new urbanism. Airports would be expanded, travel made easier. The fundamental tension between urban strategies built on carbon intensive travel and consumption, with emissions externalised and fuel cheap, and ecological limits was not recognised at all. Few cities have engaged with the implications of climate change for local economic development sustainability in a meaningful way, although some are a little more progressive than others (While, Jonas et al. 2004). Even fewer have engaged seriously with the implications of peak oil (Lerch 2007).

There are a number of conceptualisations of how cities should adapt to the climate and ecological crises. Conventional discourses of sustainable development growing out of the Brundtland report look to balance economic growth with social inclusion and environmental protection (Gibbs 2002). More thorough transformation is envisaged through ecological modernisation, where the economy is *switched* from an industrial to an ecological mode which pays attention to its resource base through the diffusion of clean technologies (Gibbs 2000). The third wave conceptualisation of 'smart growth' looks to identify ways to grow economies that are emissions light (Krueger and Gibbs 2008). More grassroots approaches such as localisation, 'low carbon communities' and transition towns look to build more convivial, localised, small-is-beautiful local economies. Critics debate the extent that capitalism can be greened: for some it includes the seeds of its own destruction in its capacity to destroy the environment on which it depends (Foster 2002), while others have more faith in what even Marx celebrated as the creativity of capitalism. For them, solving problems associated with climate change and resource crises will become a new accumulation strategy underpinning continued capitalist development (Buck 2006).

However, relatively little attention has been paid to what climate change and resource crises, as opposed to environmental protection, means for local economic development strategies. The urban or regional scale is relatively little theorised. Ecological modernisation, for example, focuses on the private sector acting autonomously to secure future rounds of accumulation, or perhaps on national regulation as seen in, for example, Germany or Denmark. The local is little thought through (Gibbs 2007; Krueger and Gibbs 2007; Krueger and Savage 2007). Thirdly, apart from David Harvey's (1996:401) engagement with ecological modernisation and environmental justice little thought has been given to how climate change and peak oil might be integrated into progressive local economic strategies in ways similar to those in which social justice was at the core of progressive local strategies adopted by some local authorities in the 1980s. Environmentalists have campaigned for decades about local environmental problems, and the environmental justice movement has worked to connect environmentalism and social justice at the urban scale (Cole and Foster 2001). But little thought has been given to what progressive urban economic governance strategies would look like were greens or other progressive forces concerned with climate change and resource crises to win power locally. This paper aims to fill that gap.

The nature of the problem.

First it is necessary to understand the interconnectedness of the climate change and resource constraint issues: they are normally examined separately. Many technologically - advanced solutions to climate change may come up against resource limits: for example, supplies of lithium for electric car batteries, uranium for nuclear power stations. An

economy collapsed as a result of having run up against fundamental resource constraints, rather than a lack of credit, might not be the best form of economic organisation to facilitate the generation of solutions to climate change. On the other hand, peak oil can be assuaged by accessing unconventional hydrocarbons or through biofuels, but the result is higher carbon emissions. The two problems need to be seen as intertwined: resource constraints suggest that the ecosystem is reaching limits to the quantity of inputs it delivers to our economies, while climate change is the result of the planet being unable to absorb the waste products of complex urban society. Resource constraint means we may not have the hydrocarbons we need to power our cities as they are currently organised, while climate change means we can't continue to emit as many greenhouse gasses as we do. Any urban progressive urban strategy must understand this.

The second problem is one of scale. Which initiatives at an urban scale can be taken will make a difference to what is a planetary problem, and which are likely to prove to be irrelevant or merely cosmetic? On one hand, all greenhouse gasses are emitted somewhere, so it obviously makes sense to limit them at source – locally (Agyeman and Evans 2004). Cities are sources both of emissions *and* innovation, as the status of many cities as beacons for environmental innovation attest. Cities can inherently be very sustainable, cutting transport as a result of proximity, and able to provide high quality public services that enable quality lifestyles to be enjoyed without the need for individual consumption. On the other, local action suffers from the free rider problem and from the tragedy of the commons. Olson's free rider problem of collective action (Olson 1965) suggests that the costs of successful collective action – here limiting consumption, perhaps generating fewer jobs or limiting growth - are paid only by those who engage in collective

action. The benefits of successful direct action – here a sustainable economy with dangerous climate change avoided – will be shared by all, irrespective of whether they paid the costs of participating in collective action or not. So it is in my interest not to limit my own personal consumption, as the strategy will not succeed unless enough people do participate. If enough people do participate, I can free ride. If not enough people participate, and the movement does not succeed, then I will have paid the costs and get none of the benefits. I will have forgone consumption, but dangerous climate change is not avoided. Secondly, the well-known tragedy of the commons also applies. I get all the benefits from consumption, while the disadvantages are shared by all, until the whole system collapses. If I refuse to fly, I pay the costs and seem to get few benefits. At the level of the urban system, an urban leader who thinks that by forgoing consumption he is likely to pay the costs of collective action while perceiving no benefits, and will have to defend not creating jobs, will find the prospect unattractive.

Local action therefore needs to be collective, not individual, and alongside action at other scales. Currently, scale is little conceptualised in climate change politics (Bulkeley 2005) or policy seen as a policy black box cascaded down from higher scales to be implemented unconditionally at a local level with no attention to local needs and conditions (Bulkeley and Betsill 2003). Radically cutting or avoiding consumption very locally with no attention to unsustainable practices at other scales and in other places seems at best misplaced, at worst can seem like the problem is being addressed locally while local effects are wiped out elsewhere. Climate and resource politics needs to engage with local urban politics and global negotiations, with inequalities between places and with the right to development in a resource constrained world (Baer, Atanasiou et al. 2007). It needs to

understand the relation between places and economies, and responsibilities between local places for global problems (Massey 2004). For example, action to mitigate oil shortages in the global North through the development of biofuels and ethanol had catastrophic repercussions for global food prices. Cool northern latitudes might be short term winners from global warming, while some for some vulnerable communities in the global South climate change is not a problem for the future, but a survival problem for today. Local action therefore needs to be balanced with a geography of responsibility, an understanding of the effect it has on people far away and in the future.

The third problem for developing a progressive urban politics of climate change and resource constraint is one of measurement and temporality. How much climate change is mildly beneficial, how much catastrophic? What do we have to stop doing to avoid the catastrophic, and is catastrophic heating of above $2^{o}c$ or CO_2 levels of more than 350, or 450 ppm? How difficult are things likely to get? Climate science suggests that there are 'tipping points' when climate processes change radically, literally in months, from one state to another (Lynas 2007; Pearce 2007). How do we know if we have avoided tipping points, given that some commentators argue that there is evidence that some tipping point triggers (Greenland ice sheet and Siberian permafrost melt) have been activated by warming to date. Given that we know that considerable warming is inevitable as it is still in the system but has yet to be experienced, how much of a change should we make and when – and how will be know, locally, if what we are doing is enough? Measuring the unmeasurable and unpacking local from global effects is difficult and problematises the development of urban strategies which we can be sure are making a real difference, as opposed to feel good gesture politics which covers up the fundamental unsustainability of contemporary

urbanism (Blühdorn 2007). While we can count emissions and allocate carbon budgets, it is difficult for any one actor to know if they are doing enough, in relation to what everyone else is doing. Without equality of effort and sacrifice, just sustainability, there will continue to be a perception that those in the global South who have little historical responsibility for in-the-system warming and who are sometimes suffering from the effects of climate change now are expected to forego development. Any progressive strategy must ensure equality of contribution to maintaining the global environmental commons (Agyeman and Evans 2004:160-161).

Adapting to the inevitable or mitigating the worst excesses?

Secondly, any progressive strategy for dealing with climate change must include both adaptation (adapting to changes that are inevitable given warming that is already in the system) and mitigation (minimising the amount of warming in the future). Adaptation can be addressed in a number of ways, from technical adaptation of the existing urban form handle higher expected summer temperatures, storms and floods through risk and disaster management to psychological adaptation to what an uncertain future might hold for residents. Is their home likely to flood or be storm damaged? If so, can they get insurance, or will they have to abandon it eventually? What might the implications of continuing high oil high prices and scarcity be for their jobs?   Consequently, Hodson and Marvin (2009, forthcoming) argue that 'ecological security' will become the touchstone for urbanism in an era of climate change and resource constraint.

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So what should be a progressive conceptualisation of adaptation and security? Perhaps the paradigm of the *un*secure city would be New Orleans. The state did not maintain the levees. When Katrina hit, citizens were left fend for themselves. Those with private transport survived, those without were left die, perhaps later to be shot as looters if they were black. Then the disaster was used to to clear out the undesirables and rebuild the city for the wealthy with privatised urban services. A progressive strategy, working from an environmental justice perspective, would recognise that the most vulnerable citizens socially are often the most vulnerable environmentally, and specifically ensure that class and race is not a predictor of who is likely to survive disasters. People should not be left to adapt their homes and communities for new climatic and resource conditions, make their own preparations for disaster, and repair the damage within their own limited private resources.   Adaptation should be social and collective, not individual. It should be comprehensive, planned and state-led through active urban management, not privatised, piecemeal and dependent on ability to pay and individual decisions about how to respond to risks.

Secondly, a progressive conceptualisation of adaptation should balance the need for a city to pay attention to its own resilience with international responsibilities. Some more wealthy cities in ecologically favourable locations might well be able to handle their adaptation needs quite easily, whereas a city with a poorer social and economic inheritance in a more vulnerable location should not be left to cope alone – redistribution from favoured to less favoured places would be necessary. This is an issue both within geographically uneven nations, and internationally. Further, a progressive strategy of adaptation would discourage cities from thinking of themselves as lifeboats, meeting their

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own needs (food, power, water) as locally as possible with no concern for how less well endowed cities might cope. Climate change will lead to population movements: better endowed cities will need to absorb environmental refugees, not secure their own future and leave the less fortunate to get by as best they can (Hodson and Marvin 2009:18). This obviously has implications for urban politics and for social cohesion, with the far right likely to feed off of fears associated with migration. It might also mean that limits can be put on the right to travel and migrate, and justified ecologically. This, coupled with surveillance over and regulation of individual consumption habits could be a recipe for an authoritarian ecological urbanism.

The third issue for a progressive urban politics of climate change and resource constraint would be the trade off between adaptation and mitigation. The concern is that focusing on adaptation to the exclusion of mitigation can lead to a politics of quietism, fatalism and passivity. Focussing on adaptation alone assumes that present day consumption patterns are likely to be maintained, and that there is no appetite for large scale cuts in consumption or changes in urban socio-economic systems. Growth-based capitalism has no real alternatives, urban citizens will continue to consume, to drive private cars and fly, and that any urban politics that does not provide for economic growth or which restricts consumption will be electorally unpopular. The hard issues must be avoided, and all we can do is prepare for the inevitable. A progressive politics must argue for more open and progressive conceptualisations of urban futures, and challenge systems of domination that prop up unsustainable practices, including conceptualisations of urban entrepreneurialism based on unsustainable levels of travel and consumption by elites serviced by armies of poorly-paid casual service economy workers.

Mitigation must therefore be a key element in any progressive response to climate change. Economic development must be decarbonised. Here we can point to two conceptualisations of post-carbon urban futures founded on differing perspectives of the likelihood of and the attractiveness of technological urban futures - ecological modernisation and localisation. The Stern Review (2007) famously argued that there is no trade off between growth and dealing with climate change. New businesses and jobs can be developed to solve climate change problems through new technologies and through adapting our urban fabric. Dongtan and other eco-cities provide visions of the high technology green city. Here there is no change from urban entrepreneurialism: cities will specialise in the development of the new technologies and green collar jobs, with urban leadership acting to facilitate private sector- led development through ecological modernisation and smart growth. The regime of accumulation will continue to be based on inter-urban competition, with ecological technologies (rather than the creative sector) providing the focus for urban strategies and sustainability as the accumulation strategy. Winning cities and regions will almost certainly be those which currently have strong high technology sectors, and the entrepreneurialism that delivered current technologies can be harnessed to 'fixing the climate' (Friedman 2008). From a progressive standpoint, it can be objected that not every city is able to specialise in quite a limited set of technologies and that some will be better placed to do this than others. The number and range of quality jobs that could be generated through environmental technologies is likely to be as limited as were generated by the creative industries, although the number of jobs in the engineering and construction sectors to adapt our urban fabric to climate change is likely to be large, and they are likely to accessible to those with industrial and manual skills.

A progressive conceptualisation of ecological modernisation would focus on local state funding and leadership through a Green New Deal (NEF 2008) or Apollo project (Nordhaus and Shellenberger 2007), to ensure that the local economy is transformed onto a post-carbon basis (it cannot be assumed the private sector will do this autonomously) and that the fruits of ecological modernisation are widely shared within an overall conceptualisation of environmental Justice (Harvey 1996:401). Local strategies for environmentally just urban ecological modernisation and smart growth could be drawn up by progressive authorities that might look quite like the strategies for 'local socialism' or 'restructuring for labour' developed by the progressive urban regimes of the 1970s and 1980s. Not only would the focus be on developing new technologies within the logic of a capitalist urbanism, but attention would be paid to the sorts of livelihoods generated, supporting democratic and inclusive economic forms like co-ops and worker-controlled businesses, developing alternative plans for currently unsustainable or questionable forms or business (car companies make buses, arms companies make windmills etc) and developing public and community-controlled sustainable urban services. The climate and resource crises might be seen as a way to harness new environmental technologies for the construction of a more convivial, democratic and inclusive post-capitalist economy (Murphy 2008; Neale 2008). Rather than lecturing citizens about their individual responsibility to cut consumption while providing flights at a fraction of the costs of train travel or poor levels of public transport such that people need a private car, the city would be organised so that a low carbon lifestyle was obvious, easy to achieve, and enjoyable. A progressive politics of climate change would focus on the power of ordinary citizens to create their own futures, focussing on developing what Holloway calls their power 'to' create their world rather than power 'over' then held by elites (Holloway 2002).

A progressive urban politics of climate change and resource constraint might well include more local production of things that can be produced locally (food, goods to meet basic needs, power) in order to reduce emissions from transport. Things would be produced where it makes most sense from a perspective of economic efficiency *and* social and economic justice, not just where they can be produced the most cheaply, subsidised by cheap fuel and externalised emissions . Localisation would mean that avoidable emissions through transporting goods that could just as easily to produced closer to where they are consumed would be saved, and must be part of any progressive strategy. Cities and regions would become more integrated economic spaces minimizing wastes and transport costs, developing interdependent networks of enterprises that collaborate, exchange resources, recycle, and use each other's waste as inputs (Hudson 2007). Local economic welfare would focus more on quality of life, good, wholesome food, time for family and friends, and providing low-carbon homes, very much the perspective of the degrowth and 'slow city' movements of continental Europe (Fournier 2007; Pink 2008). However, attention would need to be paid to questions of justice and redistribution between places with different economic and ecological endowments in order to avoid the problems associated with uneven development. It would be important from a progressive standpoint to maintain the benefits of fair trade and of international connection, if transport could be justified with ecological limits – this again is a technological issue. It would also be necessary to recognise that some places might be better placed to produce certain goods and export them, that there are limits to what can be produced very locally (for example, windmills, photovoltaics, electric cars, tidal barrage power stations) and that consumers do appreciate a diversity of consumption choices. As long as the cost of transport are bearable within carbon budgets

or ecological limits, localisation need not mean autarky (Lang and Hines 1993; Hines 2000; Woodin and Lucas 2004).

A less optimistic reading would be that given the need to cut emissions and supply constraints associated with peak oil mean it will not be possible for current levels of connection to be maintained, and that a more localised economy is inevitable as well as desirable (Heinberg 2004; McKibben 2007; Hopkins 2008). Here organising against unsustainable practices makes no sense as they are doomed anyway. Under this scenario, the issue for progressive politics is to ensure that a transition to a localised economy is planned and seen as an opportunity, and a decent into tribal balkanisation is avoided. Marxist-inclined critics argue that barbaric forms of localism are more likely than more the optimistic visions of localists (Neale 2008) and that it is important not to underestimate the capacity of humanity as a species and capitalism as a productive system to reproduce itself through technological innovation (Albo 2007). Breakdown is neither inevitable or to be welcomed.

Conclusion: Getting there - the role of urban leadership

This paper has examined the extent that climate change and resource constraints represents a fundamental challenge to the entrepreneurial cities conceptionalisation of urbanism. Founded on cheap fuel and externalised carbon emissions, entrepreneurialism based on inter-urban competition for footloose capital, with the prizes going to those cities able to present themselves as the most competitive, seems not to have a future as currently conceptualised. Resource constraints and the need to cut emissions to avoid dangerous

climate change mean that we cannot focus uncritically on instantaneous and cheap transport and communication, and need to rethink 'growth' in ways that reduce carbon. It could be that new urban regimes of accumulation based on new environmental technologies could emerge, but the progressive nature of such a settlement can be challenged. A progressive urbanism of climate change and resource constraint would ensure that low carbon futures are democratic and inclusive, keeping communication and openness where possible, but having an understanding of the need to live within ecological limits, seen as technologically mediated.

The climate change focused social movements are arguing for new forms of economy based on more convivial, localised economies, but there are fundamental academic concerns about the ability of citizen based action to challenge the power relations that underpin modern capitalist local economies (Albo 2007; Trapese 2008). Citizens do not control the productive forces in local economies – they are in private hands. It would be romantic to assume that this process would be unchallenged, given that local authorities, as well as citizens, do not control the local means of production, as the radical authorities of the 1980s came to realise (Eisenschitz and Gough 1993). This process would need to be in tandem with social movement mobilisation to challenge local power relations opposed to such a transformation, but in this case it would not be possible for one locality to go it alone. To avoid romanticism here, local strategies would need to be generalised into a much wider movement seeking fundamental change (Neale 2008), assuming, that is, that those transitioners who foresee the unravelling of complex industrial society in the face of climate change and resource constraints are wrong.

What could be the role for an urban leadership growing from or sympathetic to their aims, that wanted to develop an alternative to unsustainable urban entrepreneurialisms? The city could be ecologically modernised much like it was modernised in the 19th century as drains, gas, electric and mass transport were introduced. Local economic development agencies could promote low carbon economies by minimising wastes, cutting use of hydrocarbons out of industrial processes, and shortening supply lines. As discussed above, the social economy and a whole range of livelihood alternatives would be supported, as would developing local resilience in food and power. The problem here is that since the heyday of the urban socialisms, and in many ways because of them, the space for an independent local politics of economic development has been severely restricted in the UK, if there is more space in the US. Its role has been reduced to facilitating the private sector and spatial planning. Any progressive local economic strategy will need to see a reskilled urban leadership able to link climate change and resource depletion to a progressive politics of local economic development. In this case, sustainability would need to move from its subaltern position in relation to 'hard' economic development, generating growth and thus jobs and businesses. A progressive local economic development would look to develop more than jobs, businesses and growth, but sustainable and convivial *livelihoods* in a resilient low carbon economy.

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