

## CHAPTER 4

# UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT, CITY GOVERNANCE, AND URBAN CHANGE— UNPACKING THE GLOBAL- LOCAL NEXUS IN DUBLIN'S INNER CITY

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### INTRODUCTION

The city can be read as the nexus of global change and daily life—a site of contestation in the flux of economic imperatives, urban policymaking, and local needs and values. Just as importantly, the key general processes at work—economic restructuring, flows of capital through the built environment, and the like—have proceeded most unevenly, as reflected in local problems of job loss, displacement, poverty, and a whole range of attendant urban struggles and social tensions. In particular, the processes of uneven development and globalization in the city have generated new and complex patterns of growth and inequality, raising important analytical and policy challenges. For example, recent years have seen the realignment of the state and the evolution of new forms of urban governance under conditions of flexible production, international competition, mobile investment, the restructuring of global commodity chains, and emergent consumption trends and lifestyle changes. All of these issues are relevant across different regions worldwide and at different points on the global urban hierarchy (from so-called world cities to “ordinary” cities), and thus remain the subject of important theoretical and political debates. Specifically, we are faced with conceptual and empirical questions about the processes and contradictions of this current period of flux, as well as practical questions about how societies and states should most effectively deal with the resultant social tensions and economic challenges.

Dublin City, Ireland, offers an important and instructive case study of these complex global-local processes owing both to its position geographically and to its recent efforts

to deal with a period of rapid economic and social change. Dublin can be seen as an "ordinary" city in global terms, one that functions as a gateway on the edge of the European Union, while, at the same time, it is in a central position nationally (as a dominant and capital city). Moreover, the city has undergone rapid and intense transformation over recent decades, generating considerable economic opportunities but also deepening patterns of inequality and conflict. Notable trends include the erosion of the traditional economic base, the emergence of new commercial and financial spaces, the large-scale construction of private apartments and enclaves for middle/upper income households, and the adoption of an increasingly flexible approach to urban policy by the local state. The inexorable logic of these trends has led to the exclusion of local populations from access to both jobs and housing and the emergence and continuation of an inner-city crisis.

This chapter first explores some critical theoretical readings of uneven development, city governance, and the global-local nexus to provide a framework for the discussion. It then offers an empirical exploration of the recent reorientation of urban planning systems in Dublin under conditions of entrepreneurial governance. Particular emphasis is given to the resultant pressures in a number of working-class locales, drawing from recorded experiences and unfolding resistances that have emerged at the grassroots level. These local experiences are more broadly instructive, providing insight into the progress and contradictions of urban social change in the city under conditions of global economic pressure, the neoliberal realignment of urban governance, and deepening social and spatial inequalities.

#### A NOTE ON SOURCES AND METHODS

In the main, this chapter is based on primary data (interview material, documents, participant observation) from various research studies that the authors have undertaken since the late 1990s, as well as a number of ongoing action-oriented projects. This work revolves around a common, if broad, theme about the changing relationship between capital, the state, and the grass roots in the city; examining in particular the socioeconomic and political impacts of economic development processes and public policies on disadvantaged urban communities and the emergence of bottom-up responses and resistances. While set within the established parameters of academic discourse, some of the more recent research has also involved active engagement in community research programmes and oppositional movements to neoliberal urban policies, reflective of a move toward more activist and action-oriented research (Ward 2005). More specifically, this chapter draws on the work of Punch (2000, 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2005), who has undertaken extensive qualitative research on uneven development and grassroots organizations in Dublin. It also draws from Redmond's (2001, 2002) explorations of the issue of tenant empowerment on social-housing estates and his analysis of the relationship between the local state and tenant movements. A more recent action-related research has involved all three authors in a community research project that is examining the issue of urban regeneration and exclusion in an inner area of Dublin (Punch et al. 2003a, 2003b, 2003c). The recent work of Kelly (2004) (see also Kelly and MacLaran 2004), examining gentrification and community change in inner Dublin, is also employed in this chapter.

#### THEORETICAL CONTEXT: UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT AND LOCALITY

This section constructs a theoretical framework in order to contextualize the detailed explorations of a changing city entered into later. The simultaneous processes of globalization and localisation have been important themes in recent work in critical social and

spatial theory, raising many complex problems. These include, for instance, concerns with local "rootedness" and identity, the global mobility of capital, the (uneven) power geometry of time-space compression, the upward and downward shifts in power presaged through the "globalization" of political economy, the global restructuring of capitalism and Fordist/post-Fordist regimes of accumulation, and the implications of all these processes across different social and spatial locations (see, for instance, Harvey 1989a; Massey 1995; Amin 1994; Bauman 1998; Beck 2000; Swyngedouw 2000; Perrons 2004).

The problematic of inequality and uneven development is central to many of these critical readings of the global and the local, with regard to questions of both culture and political economy. For example, taking a lead from Bauman's (1998) work on translocal cultures and lifeworlds, Beck (2000, p. 55, emphasis in the original) argues that globalization and localization are not simply two moments or dimensions of a single phenomenon; but "... driving forces and expressions of a new *polarization and stratification of the world population into globalized rich and localized poor.*" In a recent formulation, Eagleton makes a similar point, which has considerable resonance for the empirical and experiential analysis presented in later sections of this chapter:

The problem at the moment is that the rich have mobility while the poor have locality. Or rather, the poor have locality until the rich get their hands on it. The rich are global and the poor are local—though just as poverty is a global fact, so the rich are coming to appreciate the benefits of locality. It is not hard to imagine affluent communities of the future protected by watchtowers, searchlights and machine-guns, while the poor scavenge for food in the wasteland below.

(2003, pp. 21–2)

In a related vein, political-economy explorations of the global-local nexus frequently emphasize the mode of integration/disintegration of different places/social groups within the broader structure of capitalism through processes of uneven development (see, for example, Smith 1984; Massey 1995; Harvey 1996, 2000). This dialectical approach involves a reading of the dynamic restructuring of economic space and the general processes and forces generating change, while also allowing for the specificity of place (Massey 1993). It brings to the fore the central facts of economic power and the spatial organization of social relations, reflected in class, gender, and ethnic divisions as well as regional, urban, and local differences and variations. Importantly, these general and local dimensions of society and space are not seen as static or fixed (as, for example, a received or "finished" urban system), but as dynamic and contradictory, constantly unfolding and subject to change or, at times, violent disruption.

For Smith (1984, 1996), these uneven patterns and rhythms of sociospatial change are underpinned by a simultaneous process—the equalization and differentiation of levels and conditions of development. General processes such as capital accumulation (reflected in the uneven spatial and temporal patterns of investment and disinvestment) impact more or less everywhere (equalization), but the outcomes vary dramatically across a diverse existing landscape of resources, earlier rounds of investment, and sociocultural characteristics (for instance, levels and traditions of labor organization, the role and strength of civil society, "local" trade skills, etc.). This emphasizes the important point that it is not just a matter of the general (or global) acting on the local, but a complex dialectical tension between particular places (at whatever scale—regional, urban, local) and the broader structures and processes of economy and society. As Massey notes, "The point is that there are real relations with real content, economic, political, cultural, between any local place and the wider world in which it is set" (1993, p. 66). And this is a two-way

street—the global and the local are mutually constitutive, and the differences between places can be disruptive of general economic processes, thereby impacting on the outcome. This is a central tenet of economic geography—the importance of difference, place, locality, unevenness, etc. (Massey 1995). In other words, increasingly global forces are working through at every geographical scale but constantly coming up against the obstinate variation of place, context, and resistance. In a globally interdependent system, economic activity is embedded in and disrupted by the geographies through which it takes place; practice and instance matter (Lee 2002).

Of particular importance for this research is how these formulations can be applied to urban analysis. At a general level, the movement of capital through the built environment in search of surplus value (through investment in industrial production, services, or real estate) is a primary general force underlying the restructuring of both the urban economy and the urban environment. This tendency toward equalization is offset by the highly differentiated outcomes across a variable physical and social landscape. For instance, the general processes of investment and disinvestment, boom and slump cycles, stop-go development patterns, growth, and decay can be recognized in every city, but the effects across a highly variable and dynamic surface of ground rent and land uses are unpredictable and sometimes surprising. The well-recorded cycles of inner-city underdevelopment and disinvestment (creating a rent gap) and, at a later point, reinvestment and recommodification lead to the local social effects of middle-class colonization and working-class displacement. However, the patterns vary and the end product is far from certain. For example, the nature and level of involvement of central and local state as an agent of such development cycles (e.g., by providing tax breaks or necessary collective consumption, which is beyond the logic of capital to provide) can vary temporally and spatially. Moreover, all of these projects are subject to contestation and resistance, and therefore remain, at least in theory, radically evitable. However, in many respects, the possibility of proposing and implementing alternative strategies seems ever more remote in a globalized era of interplace competition and neoliberal orthodoxy. Nevertheless, on the margins or beyond state and capital, resistances occur, and very local and contextual urban struggles complicate the story, depending on the balance of power and levels of militancy evident between different interests (city boosters, local development capital, neighborhood councils, grassroots coalitions, etc.). The narrative of urban social change is not simply scripted by the top-down, general forces and imperatives of capital in the built environment; rather it may also be colored and redirected by a complex of contextual factors, historic built forms, and the relative balance between resistance, consensus, indifference, or despair emerging at a local level.

This raises the important analytical question of the role of the state—and more specifically in recent years, the shifting tendencies and practices of urban governance—in regulating or influencing the broad patterns of uneven development and responding to the most overt contradictions and conflicts (Hall and Hubbard 1998; McLeod et al. 2003). Urban governance regimes variously emphasize economic priorities such as growth, competing for investment, city boosterism, etc., or social priorities such as public-housing programmes, social protection, services for vulnerable residents or the marginalized, and amenity provision (Harvey 1989b). Thus, a central question for the analysis of urban change and globalism relates to the balance of priorities, strategies, and policies adopted by city authorities to deal with the complexities and challenges of globalization at a local level. Perhaps, more importantly, we must ask, what are the consequences of all of these tendencies for different communities and locales (or for “these people in this place,” to use Raymond Williams’ formulation)?

In this regard, particular attention has been paid in the recent literature to the influence of neoliberal ideologies and practices in the arena of urban governance. Deriving from the conservative Anglo-American policies that gained momentum through the 1980s, which affected everything from welfare provision to the structural adjustment programmes imposed on the poorest, underdeveloped countries, the neoliberal orthodoxy is the doctrine of privatization, market approaches, deregulation, reducing social protection, and, effectively, promoting the interests of capital. At the city level, this has often translated into a withdrawal from an (essentially Keynesian) urban project based on considerable collective consumption provision (public services, social housing, etc.) and a reorientation toward marketized urban policies and entrepreneurial planning. In essence, this latter concept denotes a strategy of “selling the city” under conditions of increasingly mobile capital, whereby the neoliberal local state acts as agent rather than as regulator of the market (Smith 2002). Spatial policies such as urban renewal, fiscal incentives, microarea planning, and flagship projects are among the typical initiatives deployed, often alloyed with a conscious attempt to “reimagineer” run-down areas for high-grade functions and bourgeois consumption. In this manner, the local state becomes locked into a progrowth agenda, while privatizing many social services and retreating from direct public action as a means of influencing city futures and promoting more equitable outcomes. The new politics of urban governance and the role of planning within this institutional setting have been explored by a number of commentators (e.g., Brindley et al. 1996; Newman and Thornley 1997). Key concerns include the disempowerment of the local state and the reorientation of policy priorities within entrepreneurial urban regimes, characterised by public-private partnerships, appointed quangos, alliances with nongovernment actors, and “commercialized” public initiatives (Peck and Tickell 1994; Lovering 1995; Wilks-Heeg 1996; Edwards 1997).

The main dimensions of the theoretical discussion are summarized diagrammatically in figure 4.1. One analytical challenge is to engage with the operation of a number of global processes, principally, capital accumulation (the apparently ceaseless drive to make money out of money) and the related imperative, to seek out more profitable forms and patterns of investment (Harvey 1989a). This is one core force behind recent patterns of economic restructuring that have impacted at every scale. It is equally necessary, however, to explore the interpenetration of such processes with different individual biographies and different local environments with their own characteristic landscapes, histories, cultures, economic livelihoods, and social worlds. Taking a lead from Raymond Williams’ cultural materialism (1973, 1977), the important point is the whole structure of feeling—a process of change and an unfolding collective experience that is immediately both general and particular—that defines “these people in this place” as part of a known and felt community and locale. In many respects, it is this complex social and cultural meaning that attaches to “places” that forms the generative basis for urban social movements, community mobilizations, and other forms of grassroots interventions. The policy environment raises a third problem for analysis, as we need to look at how the state intervenes at different spatial scales through various forms of public investment, regulation, place-promotion, incentivization, and social protection. Finally, in analyzing these mutually constitutive levels of the global-local nexus, it is important to remain sensitive always to the manifold inequalities, contradictions, and tensions in the global restructuring processes at work as well as in the responses (in the shape of formalized governance regimes and informalized grassroots resistances) that unfold at national, regional, urban, and local levels (see figure 4.1).

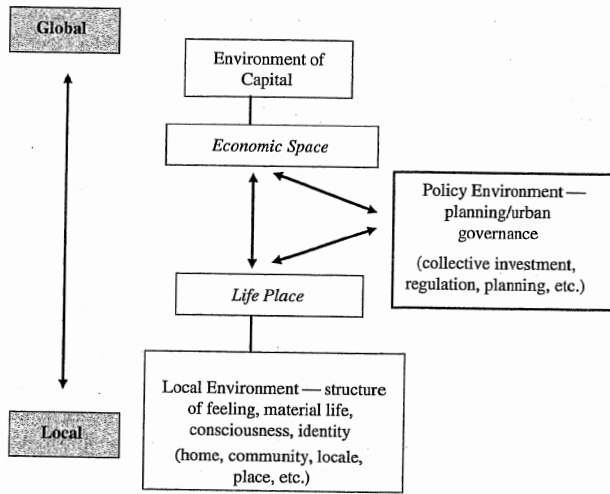


Figure 4.1 The global-local nexus.

#### CHANGING URBAN GOVERNANCE REGIMES: ENTREPRENEURIAL PLANNING IN DUBLIN

The rest of this chapter offers an empirical and experiential exploration of governance and conflict in Dublin's inner city, with a particular emphasis on the entrepreneurial realignment of planning and the contradictory results of this shift. The broader economic backdrop to this narrative can be sketched briefly. Arguably, Ireland's integration with an international capitalist system only approached maturity in recent decades, which witnessed a rapidly changing political economy, as global influences worked their way through various regions and urban areas with differential sociospatial effects. These changes were linked to (and in some respects were actively facilitated by) a particular kind of development model (essentially constructed from the late 1950s onward) founded on neoliberal export-led industrialization, which emphasized principles of free trade, free enterprise, foreign direct investment, and low levels of taxation on capital (O'Hearn 1992). The well-publicized economic boom of the late 1990s was driven by such policies, allied with a social partnership model of negotiating wage agreements (thus engendering some typical aspects of both American and European modes of regulation). This period also saw the reinforcement of Dublin as the main population and commercial center and as an emergent global site for back-office functions (particularly, financial services), electronics and computer software manufacturing, and personal and professional services. At the same time, much of its older manufacturing base eroded rapidly, with traditional, indigenous industries generally going into decline. In part, as a result, the boom years involved a process of deepening uneven development, characterized by rapid economic growth, considerable dependency on multinational (predominantly U.S.) capital, and social polarization (O'Hearn 2001; Kirby 2002; Punch 2004).

A number of analysts have traced the development of an entrepreneurial approach to planning in Dublin since the mid-1980s against this general backdrop of global economic restructuring, neoliberal macroeconomic policies, and local problems of urban decline (McGuirk 1994, 1995, 2000; McGuirk and MacLaran 2001; MacLaran and Williams 2003; Bartley and Treadwell Shine 2003). This research seeks to update these accounts with specific reference to the impact of entrepreneurial strategies on the regeneration of disadvantaged inner-city areas that have high levels of social housing present. In doing so, this research also aims to make a contribution to the broader international debate on entrepreneurial cities as exemplified by the recent work of Ward (2003).

Most of the above accounts are in general agreement with regard to the evolution of entrepreneurial planning in Dublin, its rationales, and its impacts. They develop a similar narrative showing the emergence of fairly crude market-led approaches to urban renewal in the mid-1980s and the early 1990s, based essentially on the introduction of tax incentives applied to a number of designated areas. The rationale for the introduction of this approach centered on a critique of existing local government policy and practice, which, it was argued, were reactive and had an antidevelopment ethos. Consequently, the new urban renewal policies sought to bypass established procedures through a mixture of fiscal incentives and the establishment of special-purpose planning and development bodies, which would operate outside the local authority structures. The net effect of such measures was to introduce significant risk reduction for private sector development interests, ensure far greater certainty in obtaining permission to develop, and fast-track bureaucratic procedures. The main consequence has been large-scale property development, the physical renewal of the inner city, and significant transformations in social geography. Since these schemes began in the mid-1980s, almost 17,000 new apartments have been built in the inner city, representing a massive physical but also social and economic transformation in inner Dublin (Kelly and MacLaran 2004).

After a decade of tax-led development from 1986 onward, this market-led approach was strongly criticized because of the absence of any local or community input into policies and the consequent negative social impacts, particularly for poorer city residents (Department of the Environment 1996). Indeed, this intense development has led to rapid land price increases, stimulating speculation in property, and to a local crisis of access to housing and the displacement of valuable low-grade community functions. Moreover, such an approach also substantially lessened the level and degree of local democratic or political accountability. The result, as McGuirk (1994, 1995, 2000) demonstrates, was the effective enfeeblement of the local authorities and the erosion of their powers and legitimacy. Indeed, evidence from McGuirk's research demonstrates that planners themselves became increasingly facilitative of development interests and began to assume a more entrepreneurial attitude to development proposals. While this approach certainly delivered some very substantial results in terms of extensive residential and commercial investment, official evaluations were critical of this marketized approach to planning as it was almost entirely property-led and either ignored or sidelined the need for socioeconomic renewal of local communities (Department of the Environment 1996).

As a reaction to this criticism, central government instituted, in 1998, collaborative or integrated approaches to urban regeneration, which, it was argued, would address community demands and thus generate local benefits and planning gain (McGuirk and MacLaran 2001). Five Integrated Area Plans (IAPs) were formulated for inner-city locales, which had a strong community emphasis with, in some cases, specific community-gain targets (MacLaran and Williams 2003). On the face of it, these plans were a significant

reversal of earlier urban regeneration policy and suggested a new approach that would deliver elements of social renewal as distinct from purely physical-property renewal.

The more recent work of McGuirk and MacLaran (2001) and Bartley and Treadwell Shine (2003) is generally positive with regard to the potential of integrated planning and the possibility of community gain accruing. However, they also argue that local integrated planning can be manipulated as part of a neoliberal agenda and practice. In this regard, Bartley and Treadwell Shine (2003) argue that the Dublin City Council has in fact become an enthusiastic advocate of neoliberal entrepreneurial approaches, to such an extent that it is seen as being more enthusiastically probusiness than the Dublin Docklands Development Authority (one of the special-purpose agencies responsible for the redevelopment of the docklands area). McGuirk (2000) has claimed that the entrepreneurial approach to planning, which necessitated fluid relations among a variety of stakeholders, might allow the local authority room to generate positive social outcomes by taking a more central role in the new governance regime, whereas previously they had been excluded. However, while it seems that the local authority has become a stronger player in the new paradigm of urban governance, it is by no means clear that it has used this new situation to pursue social-inclusion aims. Rather, as the remainder of this chapter seeks to demonstrate, the local authority seems to have embraced a prodevelopment agenda, which looks likely to encourage the transformation of working-class and industrial parts of the city into overwhelmingly private enclaves, displacing an indigenous population with a long historic connection to the city in the process.

#### IMPACTS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL GOVERNANCE: THE CASE OF THE LIBERTIES-COOMBE

In distinction to previous phases of urban renewal, the current "integrated area planning" has specifically focused on the revival of some inner-city areas with significant levels of poverty and other social distress. The changes affecting most of these areas in inner Dublin since the late 1990s have followed a broadly similar pattern. In short, the promise of a community-oriented planning has been abandoned by the local state, with a strong progrowth and development agenda taking over with potentially calamitous impacts on local disadvantaged communities. What has gone wrong? The next section explores the implementation of the Liberties-Coombe IAP and identifies issues of concern for the local indigenous community relating to recent urban change, precipitated, at least in part, by the implementation of the IAP.

The Liberties-Coombe area takes in, broadly, the southwest quarter of Dublin's inner city and is renowned for its rich historical, architectural, and archaeological heritage as well as its complex and vibrant social fabric. There has long been a close organic interconnection between the indigenous working-class communities and the local industrial economic base. Traditional local industries included textiles (woollen and silk), iron works, brewing, distilling, printing, baking, shoe making, tanning, and furniture making and restoring. Until the 1970s, the Liberties area was a labor-intensive industrial locale with closely knit working-class neighbourhoods serving as a cheap and reliable resource for manufacturing (Aalen 1992; MacLaran 1993; SWICN 1999). However, the area was particularly adversely affected since then by economic restructuring (closures, decentralisation, technological change), resulting in the loss of labor-intensive indigenous manufacturing jobs. These trends resulted in the specter of mass unemployment and the serious fracturing of inner-city communities that were becoming increasingly marginalized, demoralized, and welfare dependent. Over the same period, urban policies favoured

peripheral residential development rather than inner-city regeneration, and public and private disinvestment, along with road-widening schemes, created considerable urban blight. Such conditions created the typical environment for problem drug use, and a heroin crisis, which took hold in the early 1980s, has further devastated many neighbourhoods (Punch 2005).

Nevertheless, the area has seen considerable levels of vibrant grassroots organization and opposition to the contradictions and negative local impacts of economic change and urban policy priorities and to the changing "place" of such inner-city locales within the broader structure and processes of capitalist globalization. The community sector of the southwest inner city has a tradition of drawing up local plans that are sensitive to the needs of inner-city residents and neighbourhoods. These bottom-up community-based plans include the "Back to the Streets" initiative developed by the South Inner City Community Development Association in the early 1990s and the "Area Action Plans" devised by the South West Inner City Network (SWICN, 1999), an umbrella network involving over 50 local community groups. The 1995 plan provided much of the basis for the 1998 Liberties-Coombe IAP. This IAP was initiated by Dublin Corporation (the local authority changed its name to Dublin City Council in 2002) and developed in close consultation with the SWICN, local representatives, local businesses, schools, and voluntary and statutory agencies. The IAP seeks to achieve sustainable urban regeneration through a three-pronged approach of economic, social, and physical renewal, and its stated vision is to "reinststate the dignity of the Liberties-Coombe as a living working locality fully participating in Dublin's entry into the next millennium" (Dublin Corporation 1998, p. 7). The objectives and renewal strategies contained in the IAP seek to attract significant investment to underpin this renewal (through the development of new industry locally), encourage the provision of a range of housing types and a variety of housing tenures, and improve educational and recreational facilities and the quality and appearance of the built environment (through a mixed land use policy, infill development, reinforcement of the coherence of streetscape, and the restoration of the civic character of a number of key urban spaces).

In line with the formal commitment to "integration and equity," the structures for implementation required the establishment of a cross-sectoral steering group "to guide the implementation" of the IAP (Dublin Corporation 1998). The steering group was subsequently changed to a monitoring committee in 1999. The monitoring committee originally comprised nine members—three from the local authority, three from community organizations (representing over 90 groups), one business representative, one trade-council representative, and one representative of architectural, historical, and conservational interests. A fourth community representative was subsequently added to the monitoring committee in 2001. A multidisciplinary project team and a project manager were responsible for the IAP's implementation and administration in consultation with the committee. To date, a key issue for the committee and for the community sector in particular has been the securing of community gain.

In order to qualify for tax incentives on designated sites, each development must contribute "community gain" to the IAP area. The Liberties-Coombe IAP stated that "a development levy of 15 per cent of the site value would be attached to key development sites [exceeding 350 sq. m. in gross floor area] designated for tax relief" (Dublin Corporation 1998, p. 109). To date, a total of 100 sites have been designated for tax incentives in the plan area. Types of community gain include the allocation of a percentage of residential development for social and/or affordable housing, a financial contribution based on a percentage of the current site value, and provision of facilities/opportunities within the physical

development (e.g., play areas, youth club facilities, etc.) and/or the development itself, as in, for example, the preservation or restoration of a building of historical or architectural merit (Dublin Corporation 1999). Importantly, the local authority—Dublin City Council (DCC)—outlined in an annual report on the Liberties-Coombe IAP that the nature and amount of community gain to be extracted were *negotiable* with developers (DCC 2000).

The amount of revenue generated through the tax-incentive mechanism and the imposition of the community-gain levy had, by April 2004, yielded only 1439,000 (less than the cost of two new one-bed apartments!). Furthermore, the acquisition of social-housing units for community gain has, to date, not been realized. Housing needs in the Liberties area have been highlighted repeatedly by community groups and organisations (see SWICN 1999), and the failure to secure social-housing units as community gain from the IAP has compounded the housing crisis in the area. The crisis has worsened as other policies of social mix, public-land sales, and the redevelopment of social-housing estates through public-private-partnership models have served further to reduce the current stock and potential future stock of social housing. There is also evidence to suggest that some developers are not availing themselves of the tax incentives provided under the IAP in order to avoid involvement with a “community gain” clause. The failure to realize significant community gain and key social and economic objectives outlined in the IAP has been and continues to be a source of considerable frustration among community representatives on the monitoring committee and has served to undermine the implementation of the plan as agreed in 1998.

Another serious source of contention surrounds the recent granting of planning permissions for mixed-use developments on a number of sites. The design of the developments frequently runs contrary to the Urban Design Framework for the Liberties-Coombe IAP and, in some cases, to the recommendations of planning appeal inspectors. This seemingly contradictory outcome of microarea planning is explained by a senior planner in the DCC who, in describing the realignment of the operational activities of the local authority, suggests that “the potential of the entrepreneurial approach to enable planners to implement the social dimensions of planning schemes is compromised by a prodevelopment local authority corporate vision at the managerial level” (interview quoted in McGuirk and MacLaran 2001). This contradiction is manifested in the confusion surrounding the precedence of conflicting guidelines and plans, with the IAP guidelines, the Dublin City Development Plan (Dublin Corporation 1999), and central government’s Residential Density Guidelines (Government of Ireland 1999) causing particular discord (for a more detailed discussion, see Brudell et al. 2004).

Criticism has also been directed at the implementation and monitoring mechanisms established by the local authority. Community and local elected representatives have pointed to a lack of clarity surrounding the agenda, with a blurring and confusion of roles and issues to be negotiated by the monitoring committee and the project team. No detailed guidelines or terms of reference have been devised as to the role and decision-making power of the various groups involved in the implementation of the plan. The SWICN (2002) suggested that the “precise provision and power vested in community representation should be formalised, if such representation is to extend beyond token.” Other inadequacies with the implementation and monitoring mechanisms of the IAP, identified by the SWICN, include the weak links between the monitoring committee and the project group, the failure to “inform” and to “resource” the community representatives, and the insufficient frequency and duration of meetings of the monitoring committee. One community representative highlighted the broad frustrations in describing his experience of the monitoring committee as “the only group that I have ever been a part of that I feel excluded from” (personal interview).

The lack of progress in achieving the social and community aims has generated considerable conflict between the state and the community, leading to the resignation of two of the leading local representatives from the monitoring committee in November and December 2002. At the time of writing, the remaining two community representatives are refusing to sign off on the IAP’s *Annual Report*, as dissatisfaction and frustration with the manner in which the regeneration is being implemented—and with the failures of the monitoring mechanisms to address these issues—continue to grow. Repeated appeals have been made to the city manager, the minister for the environment and local government, and to the European Commission to review and rectify the implementation structures and mechanisms. In his letter of resignation, a community representative illustrates the level of local frustration and discontent with the manner in which the plan is being implemented:

Little did I, or my community, realise that the IAP would be implemented in a manner which would attribute wholesale precedence to market interests over the legitimate social and economic rights of the resident community. Little did we realise that . . . the maximum benefit of the urban renewal of a heretofore ‘unfashionably’ deprived area would accrue not to the deprived inhabitants of such areas but to the representatives of private capital who are moving in and reclaiming that land in their droves on the back of Government approved tax incentives. I am sorry to have to say that the last opportunity to do something helpful for the Liberties-Coombe area has been lost forever, in order to pander to the avarice of the private sector in the shape of developers.

This letter of resignation points not only to the general lack of progress on the IAP’s social inclusion aims, but to the production in fact of opposite and exclusionary effects. This can be seen, for example, in the changes in the land market in the Liberties with dramatic increases in local property and land prices since the mid-1990s. For example, one-bedroom apartments experienced price increases of between 300 and 400 per cent from 1995 to 2003 (Kelly 2004; Kelly and MacLaran 2004). The IAP policy seems to be contributing to inflated property and land values with further pressure emanating from a proposed “Digital Hub”—a new cluster of digital media activity.

Although this research is at an early stage, it can be argued that the regeneration that has occurred in Liberties-Coombe so far, through the promotion of private capital as the sole motivator for regeneration, has proven insensitive to a procommunity agenda. While there has been a significant influx of private (and often gated) apartment complexes, the area has simultaneously experienced a reduction in social-housing units through the sale of public housing, the transfer/privatisation of social-housing estates and public land, and an increased number of vacant units in the remaining public stock (see Kelly and MacLaran 2004). Gentrification and social segregation have been facilitated and encouraged through past urban renewal schemes and are now being legitimised via quasi-participatory microarea planning mechanisms under the guise of “encouraging a variety of housing tenures.” Where before, in terms of the structural requirements of capital, the most important local resource was a pool of low-skilled labour, now the prime resource of the Liberties-Coombe area is the land itself.

## CONCLUSIONS

The analysis presented here represents only a small example of a general shift in urban governance priorities and strategies currently emerging in Dublin with potentially far-reaching consequences and many risks and unknowns. It would appear that much more is to come. In a broader sense, experiences in Dublin provide a telling insight into many

dimensions of the uneven development of the contemporary city. The most important aspect of this is the movement of capital through the built environment, driven by the accumulation imperative (the global motive force at work), and this chapter has shown how urban policies have been reoriented away from social priorities and toward the "enablement" of this economic process. The effect has been to disadvantage and disempower working-class life places in the city, initially through the loss of the older industrial base as the city's role in the global division of labor changed, later through the recommodification of nonmarket spaces for bourgeois consumption. In short, the local state is now heavily involved in preparing and selling the city for capital. As a result, the inner city and indigenous working-class communities are under severe pressure from powerful economic forces and the increasingly neoliberal priorities of urban policymakers, which are translating into a revanchist strategy of land and class clearance.

The research presented here provides some important insights from an "ordinary" smaller city undergoing rapid social and economic transformation, in part under the influence of an urban governance regime more attuned to economic than social priorities. Arguably, this tendency can be seen as a reflection of a broader developmental model pursued by the Irish state that has put considerable emphasis on issues of competitiveness, openness to foreign investment, and the search for new roles in the global division of labor (as older indigenous industrial sectors have fallen into decline). It is readily apparent how a policy emphasis on place promotion, tax incentives, and the transformation of decayed urban locales could come to dominate urban interventions in such a context. Moreover, as a capital and dominant city, the experiments carried out in Dublin have perhaps been pursued with particular gusto, almost as flagship projects, while the city remains particularly susceptible to intense cycles of private and public sector disinvestment, urban decay, social degeneration and (eventual) reinvestment, regeneration, and cataclysmic physical and social change.

In short, Dublin has essentially been a laboratory for a raft of marketized policy experiments since the mid-1980s, as well as an urban arena that has been substantially rescripted through the uneven flows of capital and the shifting priorities and practices of urban governance. It provides some critical lessons regarding the tensions consequent upon these processes of uneven development and urban intervention, which seem to have impacted cities almost universally (albeit in different ways and to various extents). Importantly, the shortcomings of the social agenda within the Liberties-Coombe IAP have already generated grassroots unrest and emerging opposition, and the progress of community movements and resistances of this kind will be instructive for urban analysis but (more importantly) potentially decisive for the possibility of exploring and implementing genuinely socially inclusive policies that might ensure a more egalitarian and sustainable city future.

## CHAPTER 5

# URBAN GOVERNANCE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

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### INTRODUCTION

To begin to comprehend the massive changes taking place in cities of the developing world, we need to start with some large demographic numbers. As the world moves inexorably toward the day when the majority of humankind will be living in urban areas (which will be some time during 2007, we are told by the United Nations), the fastest and most breathtaking population increases are taking place in the developing world: in Latin America, in Africa, and in Asia. Indeed, during 2000–2030, almost all the projected aggregate growth of the world's *total* population will be absorbed by cities of the less developed regions (United Nations 2004).

The aggregate figures on global urbanization set out in Chapter 1 hint at a more complex, regional story. Between the years 2000 and 2030, Africa's urban population is projected to grow at an average annual rate of about 15.1 million (a compound annual average rate of growth of 4.39 percent); Asia's at 42.2 million (an average annual growth rate of 2.22 percent); and that of Latin America and the Caribbean at an average annual rate of 7 million (a compound annual average growth rate of 1.42 percent) (United Nations 2004). And in these regions, it is generally in the poorest countries that urbanization is proceeding most rapidly. In Ethiopia, for example, a country with a per capita average income of \$90 in 2003 (World Bank 2005), the rate of urban growth from 2000 to 2005 is projected at 5.75 percent per year. In Honduras, with a per capita average income of \$970 (one of the lowest in Central America), the rate of urban growth from 2000 to 2005 is estimated at 3.25 percent per year. And in Asia, Cambodia, with a per capita average income of \$310 in 2003, has a projected urban growth rate during the 2000–2005 period of 5.50 percent per year. Against typical European annual urban growth rates of 0.24 percent for France, 0.38 percent for the United Kingdom, and 0.32 percent for Spain, these growth rates are massive—between 10 and 20 times higher than in Europe.