## \*\*\*Competitiveness K

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**The competitiveness discourse of transportation infrastructure investment is merely an attempt by policy-makers to market cities and regions into a global era, resulting in policy failure**

**Doel and Hubbard ‘02** [Marcus Doel, Professor of Human Geography at University of Wales,  and Phil Hubbard, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Geography at the University of Loughborough,  “Taking world cities literally: Marketing the city in a global space of flows,” CITY, Vol. 6, No. 3, 2002, pp. 362-364, Taylor and Francis, online, AZhang]

What we are suggesting here—that the city can attend to its own position in a global space of flows—may initially seem confus- ing. This may be clarified if we distinguish between the world city as a site in a world- wide network of heterogeneous flows and the world city itself as a heterogeneous assemblage of practices, materials and actants drawn from within and without the city limits. By taking world cities literally, we arrive at the conclusion that world cities consist of a world-wide network that attends to the relative importance of a particular city in a global space of flows. A crucial component of these networks are the actors who enroll other actors, materials, knowledges and practices into the network. Typically, these actors include those who feel they have a stake in the economic prosperity of a specific city, including some or all of those that Stone (1989) identified in his seminal analysis of regime politics: property interests, rentiers, utility groups, trade unions, universities and ‘local’ businesses. Consequently, it is possible to identify certain ‘local’ institutions and agencies such as the City Corporation, the London Assembly, the London Boroughs, the Cross River Partner- ship and the London Pride Partnership as pivotal in maintaining (and performing) Lon- don’s world-cityness (Newman and Thorn- ley, 1997). But, in the light of our relational conceptualization of world cities, one must follow Cox and Mair (1988) by including groups and individuals who are not necessarily based within London, and who may well be scattered across the globe: after all, network translators may act at a distance. Thus, one must remember that world-city networks may involve epistemic communities, businesses and knowledge-rich individuals that are often disembedded from the cities in which they work, rest and play. Far from being hypermobile, these so-called ‘fast subjects’ necessarily exist in city networks that embody circulation and provide the basis for the creation of new business practices (Thrift, 2000). Yet there is no guarantee that a given city network will provide a successful basis for commanding and con- trolling: the architecture of city networks is often flimsy, requiring constant effort to maintain it. Nonetheless, the agency of the city (i.e. its evidential ability to manipulate and mediate the global space of flows) results from the work performed by this much broader constellation of actors. So, the suggestion that world cities are irreducibly networked phenomena does not mean that policy-makers and politicians can- not influence their city’s fortunes. To the contrary, we suggest that such actors can be pro-active in manipulating the global space of flows to the benefit of particular cities. Yet to do so it is crucial that they replace their place-based way of thinking with a focus on connectivity, performance and flow. Under- standings of both the local and the global need to change, with politicians thinking about how they can extend city networks through time and space to attain (and per- form) world-cityness. As an analogy, con- sider the construction of an airport. From a place-based perspective, building a fully functioning airport might be seen as a means of attracting global visitors and investment. Yet simply to build it is not enough: for it to work one must also attend to and manipulate existing flows of air traffic by establishing flight routes, making connections with inter- national carriers, liaising with air traffic controllers, securing international freight, passengers and transfers, etc. This shows that the work involved in creating global con- nectivity and world-cityness may be widely dispersed. On the other hand, it might not (cf. Thrift, 2000). Our argument, then, is not that work beyond the confines of the city needs to be prioritized over work within. Nor are we arguing for a ‘geographical imagination which can look both within and beyond the city and hold the two things in tension’ (Massey, 1999, p. 191). Rather, we emphasize a need for policy-makers and academics alike to revise understandings of inside and outside, local and global, and near and far. Instead of a place- based politics of competition, we hold to a distributed politics of flow whose degree of concentration, dispersion, consistency and efficacy will be both contingent and context dependent. In this light, the limitations of current entrepreneurial policy are sharply etched: the tendency for policy-makers to pump investment into infrastructure projects can be seen as a sadly parochial attempt to reassert the local in a global era. Even when policy-makers make a more overt effort to market the city externally, through multi- media global spectacles like London’s Millennium Dome, World Expos and Olympic Games, the success of policy is still assessed through studies of local reception and job creation rather than the extent to which spectacles extend the network of the city in space and time (see Loftman and Nevin, 1996). Indeed, the bottom line with any policy designed to enhance a city’s fortunes should not be the extent to which it improves the local asset base, but the extent to which it enables a city to perform world-cityness: to act as a network translator. Developing this argument, one can appreciate why investing locally could be a short-sighted policy: a more successful policy may in fact be to invest elsewhere(e.g. a series of Millennium Domes in Mumbai, Islamabad, Chicago and Beijing might be more effective in enabling London to perform world-cityness than the construction of a Dome on a patch of contaminated land in Greenwich). On the surface, encouraging policy- makers to invest in developments that are not even sited in their locale seems to fly in the face of (capitalist) reason. Yet to make this suggestion is to offer a wider critique of an urban politics obsessed not only with how the city is performing against its ‘competitors’ but also with the petty fear of losing its prized assets and belongings: jobs, capital, people, knowledge, prestige, etc. Needless to say, both of these fuel uneven development insofar as they devalue some places in relation to others. On the contrary, if city governors begin seeing other cities as potential collaborators rather than competitors, then the possibility of a more radical form of urban politics may emerge. Instead of seeing their role as attracting a share of footloose ‘global’ capital to benefit a ‘local’ population (and typically an e ́lite segment of that population), urban policy-makers would be responsible for expanding their city net- works into a multiplicity of sites. Like the flows that make up the global economy, urban politics need to become both truly transnational and fully intransitive.

**Competitiveness rhetoric naturalizes inequality and destroys democratic coalitions**

Sam **Gindin**, MA Economics UW Madison, Prof of Political Science York University, Globalization and Labor: Defining the Problem, Speech at Brandeis 4-24-0**4** http://www.net4dem.org/mayglobal/Events/Conference%202004/papers/SamGindin.pdf

As long as we remain on the **terrain of competitiveness, no effective challenge to capitalism is possible.** Whatever ‘progressive’ face third-wayists try to place on it – as with ‘training’ or ‘industrial strategies’ - the goal of competitiveness is, to begin with, **morally indefensible:** its underlying principle is that access to employment for one group of workers essentially comes from undermining the standards - and taking the jobs - of others. At best, it promises **permanent insecurity** since even ‘winning’ is an inherently temporary and fragile circumstance. And competitiveness is ultimately destructive to building any kind of independent political capacity because the alliances it invites are with ‘our employers’, while **the enemy it identifies is other workers**. Competitiveness is of course more than an ideological construct; it is a real-word constraint. But there is a world of difference between acknowledging a **constraint that we must deal with** in the short run, as opposed to raising it to the status of a **goal by way of the oxymoron of ‘progressive competitiveness**’. The issue is how to cope with this constraint as we move to **limit and eventually eradicate its dominance** over our lives. To reject competitiveness, it is important to emphasize, is not to reject being ‘productive’, but to **distinguish between** being productive **for capital**, and developing our individual and collective capacities to **democratically address the needs we define for ourselves.** On the terrain of competitiveness, the removal of tools and equipment from a community may be rational; on the terrain of democratic capacities this robs workers of their productive potentials. Competitiveness directs training towards teaching workers to adapt to technology; the focus on democratic capacities raises controlling technology. **Competitiveness hoards knowl**edge; a focus on collective capacities looks to **generalize and therefore democratize knowledge.** Any practical challenge to competitiveness necessarily implies challenging the freedom of capital to restructure production across firms, sectors, and borders. The issue of limiting capital’s freedom to ignore borders inherently involves a degree of ‘protectionism’, risking a corresponding national chauvinism. It is therefore crucial, as Greg Albo has insisted, to understand this response in the context of the attempt to create and protect national spaces for democratic experimentation with other ways to organize our lives.3 What we are ‘protecting’ ourselves against is not other societies – whose popular forces also need to develop such spaces – but capital’s unilateral right to decide the allocation of resources, goods, investment and labour. What we are rejecting is not integration into an international economy, but a **particular kind of integration**: one that dominates, and thereby undermines, what we (again the international ‘we’) are struggling to build within each of our domestic spaces. (7-8)

**The competitive framework is the root cause of extinction- simplistic dualistic thinking like competitive/not competitive reduces the world to a set of raw materials for exploitation**

John Mack, MD, Originally published in ReVision magazine Fall 1991, Vol. 14, no. 2, p. 108-110 [www.centerchange.org/passport/blowingmind.html](http://www.centerchange.org/passport/blowingmind.html)

We hear the expression “consensus reality” used more and more often to distinguish the conventional Western/Newtonian/Cartesian world view from other possible philosophies or **frameworks** of thought. The frequent bracketing of these words in writing and conversation implies that there is one accepted version of reality that includes a social agreement about what the mind may or may not legitimately countenance, if its owner wishes to remain within mainstream discourse. Yet there is also a connotation of questioning or doubt in the use of the modifying adjective “consensus,” even a certain defensiveness. It is as if the speaker, who may generally accept the prevailing paradigm, does not completely agree that what we have been acculturated to believe is, in fact, the only reality. In order to carry forward my argument, I will try to define the dominant Western view of reality in my own words, appreciating that this may be an oversimplification. The two pillars of this world view are materialism and mental dualism. According to the materialistic conviction, all that exists outside ourselves is the physical or “material” world apprehended by our senses. Everything other than this “objective” reality is “subjective,” that is, belongs to the realm of feeling, the psyche, the spirit, or something similar. Mental dualism is the ability of the psyche to experience separateness and difference, beginning with the distinction between the psyche itself and the material world. Dualistic thinking is characterized by the dichotomizing tendencies that we take for granted, such as stereotyping, the pairs of opposite words and phrases like good and evil, or black and white, that fill our language, and the insistence of parents that children learn to distinguish what is “real” from the products of their imaginations. The materialist/dualist version of reality has proved useful for Western society in its attempts to dominate the material world, other peoples, and nature. This philosophy has also led us to the brink of nuclear war — the ultimate expression of self-other division — and the extinction of many of the planet's many life forms, as human beings pursue their own material well-being at the expense of weaker humans, other animals, and plants. The Western world view is, however, under assault due to a number of scientific discoveries. These include research that has demonstrated the paradoxical and probabilistic ambiguities of matter and energy at the subatomic level, and contemporary studies of human consciousness that have shown us that what we have previously accepted as “reality” is but one of a virtually infinite number of ways of constructing or experiencing existence. it is a curious fact, perhaps reflective of the operation of some sort of universal intelligence, that the assault upon the Western world view is both scientific and exigent in nature. The Western view is contradicted by new knowledge of the physical world and the nature of the psyche, whereas the simultaneous urge to reject that view is demonstrative of imperative need in the face of the planetary crisis that humans have caused. It is as if our minds are being opened to new realities in some sort of synchrony with the conscious and unconscious, individual and collective, perception that we cannot go on as we have been without destroying life itself. Science, need, pragmatism, and morality have all fused. The established version of reality no longer “works” in all the operational and normative senses of that word. Stated more positively, facts that we are discovering about nature, and ourselves in nature, seem to correspond to the knowledge that will be required to preserve life and well-being on the planet. The new paradigm emerging from the current discoveries of laboratory science and consciousness research is in some ways embarrassingly old and familiar. This model embraces truths known to virtually all past cultures and most contemporary societies, however much the latter may be influenced by materialism and dualism in their pursuit of modernization, political power, and market advantage. How we in the West could have succeeded in forgetting this knowledge is one of the great untold stories of our time.Essentially what we are relearning is that intelligence and connection are pervasive, not only on this planet, but throughout the universe, and that complex relationships exist in the cosmos, ones that we are only beginning to grasp. Whether or not we accept the holographic model (the idea that the whole is contained in each part) of the universe, it seems clear that the universe functions like a vast, interconnected information system, in which an action or thought occurring in one part has an unpredictable effect upon other dimensions of the system. The central tasks confronting humankind at this critical juncture are to limit our destructiveness, to learn to live harmoniously in the natural world, and to discover the appropriate outlets for our remarkable creative energies. We will also need to cultivate, really to liberate, those capabilities of the psyche that allow us to experience the numinous in nature and to perceive realities beyond the empirically observable physical world.(continued)The global crises of the late twentieth century — especially the proliferation of nuclear weapons, ethnic clashes that could escalate to become nuclear disasters, and the devastation of the environment — have all been aggravated by the Western materialistic world view and a rigid adherence to its dualistic economic ideologies, whether socialist or capitalist. The extension of a new world view that derives from our experience of the interdependence and interconnectedness of all living things, together with a recognition of the fragility of the earth's ecosystems, will be an important step in the preservation of the planet.But blowing the traditional Western mind is not enough. Leadership and action on behalf of life and the environment will be required. We will need to take risks and expose our vulnerabilities. Perhaps it has always been so, but I am struck by how many of the political and intellectual leaders I admire, for their efforts on behalf of human life have spent time in prison. Facing up to the established order, taking a stand with one's whole being, exposing one's vulnerability, and risking the loss of personal freedom all seem to inspire both leaders and their followers. Finally, the dissemination of the new world view must be accompanied by the transformation of existing social institutions and the creation of new ones. Schools, churches, corporations, and governments must all change in order to become consistent with a sustainable future. Institutions become repositories of conglomerated power, tradition, and habit. They resist change intensely, sometimes violently, even when many of the individuals involved recognize the institutions' anachronistic nature, In particular, the worldwide military complex has become obviously incompatible with a sustainable future of the planet. Yet wars continue, and arms sales are booming. The mass media, especially television, have been used predominantly to preserve the status quo, but their redirected application can also help accelerate the process of transformation through powerful images that shatter old assumptions and mental structures and allow the creation of new narratives and world views. For instance, films that show the accelerating damage to the Earth's biosystems from the perspective of outer space have been particularly powerful vehicles for the transformation of consciousness about the vulnerability of the planetary environment. Vaclav Havel, president of Czechoslovakia, in his February 1990 address to the United States Congress, was the first world leader to link the various global crises to the need for a change in human consciousness. Without a global revolution in the sphere of human consciousness, nothing will change for the better in the sphere of our being as humans, and the catastrophe toward which this world is headed — be it ecological, social, demographic, or a general breakdown of civilization — will be unavoidable. (Washington Post, February 22, 1990) A growing global community is committed to expediting the revolution in human consciousness described by President Havel.

**Competitiveness is not natural or inevitable- its contingent, it's rhetorical power is a social construct**

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In my own work, I am constantly engaged in discussions of competitive strategy and competitiveness with the people who run firms. In this context I strive to be a critical and detached interlocutor whose job it is to analyse and interpret ± rather than simply report ± responses to my questions. When I'm talking with people about what it takes for them to be competitive in a particular market, or whatever, I am not especially shy about debating the substance of their answers. That is to say, I will argue with them about whether or not a given strategy is a good way of being competitive and what you really need to do to implement it. But that there is some irreducible category called competitiveness, the fulfilling of which, in extremis, over-rides all other considerations ± that I don't argue about. Or I haven't up to now. I have simply accepted the general idea of competitiveness as the ultimate demonstration of the validity of that behaviour. I don't think I'm alone in this. I think it's characteristic of economic geography to assume the categories of competition and competitiveness in order to answer other questions rather than asking what these categories themselves might be about. I think also that an unexamined notion of competitiveness plays an increasingly strong, if not decisive **role in many political and institutional debates with enormous consequences** for real people. So it is important to try to understand why the concept is so powerful that it enjoys a kind of social immunity. You can discuss what is more and what is less competitive, but **you can't call the category into question**. Within the academy, **the power of the discourse of economics has a lot to do with the social power of the discipline**. This, in turn, involves some complicated mix of command over material resources, claims of social utility, a certain amount of proselytizing in other disciplines, asserting a family resemblance with other powerful and `hard' disciplines such as physics by virtue of its mathematized and abstract style of reasoning and so on. Social power, in turn, can be deployed to set a standard of what constitutes `science' in the social sciences against which other forms of social science (e.g., geography) are implicitly or explicitly valued (cf. Clark, 1997). As McCloskey (1985: 82) notes, `The metaphors of economics often carry . . . the authority of Science and . . . its claims to ethical neutrality'. One doesn't have to suppose the least degree of cravenness on the part of other social scientists to imagine that the social norms established in this way gradually become part of the general environment and become more generally valued as they are within economics (Foucault, 1995). Certain practices and **ways of thinking**, as in a Marshallian industrial district, are `in the air' and we are all hard-pressed to avoid inhaling them. The best evidence of this effect within economic geography that I can think of is actually in the writings of the Marxists within the field, especially in the 1970s and early 1980s. There was a time when none of us could write anything without a lengthy introductory section in which we took great pains to demolish the assumptions and analytical tropes of neoclassical economics. We couldn't leave it alone, and I think it must be the case that the long struggle to valorize an alternative world-view and scientific method has left its mark on all of us. But we're marked in surprisingly subtle ways and it takes real work to see the effects. But economics also derives some of its power from being able to deploy concepts such as competitiveness which have **tremendous ideological weight**. Market competition is the guarantor of the fairness of the social system as a whole because markets, by the definition of the discipline, are impartial and competitiveness, though a life or death affair, proceeds on a purely technical basis. That is to say, you are not competitive or uncompetitive because of who you are, but merely as a result of how you respond to market signals that provide the same information to everyone. Further, the idea of economic competitiveness **meshes so perfectly with evolutionary theory** that it takes on exactly the **natural and timeless air that makes it so unarguable**. The discipline that owns such a concept ± whose discourse this is ± **is bound to seem inevitable**. In sum, the social power of economics within the academic hierarchy helps anchor the power of its discourse which, in true virtuous circle fashion, reinforces the social power of the discipline. On top of all this, the discourse is shared with another extraordinarily powerful social group: the `business community'. The problems of competition, competitive strategy and competitiveness are deeply meaningful to people who run businesses. They really see them as authentic life and death issues and, at the limit, they are right. But there is arguably a broad range of issues and conditions in which life and death are not at stake, but competitiveness is automatically invoked anyway as the unchallengeable and `natural' explanation for what is about to happen. The degree to which this is accepted and even imitated by people in other spheres entirely is remarkable. (4-5)

**(Longer alternative)**

**Thus, the alternative is to reject the affirmative’s competitiveness discourse. Only through reconceptualization of competitiveness discourse can economic productivity be socially and environmentally sustainable**

Wilson ‘08[James Wilson, Senior Researcher, Orkestra-Basque Institute of Competitiveness and Lecturer, Deusto Business School, “Territorial Competitiveness and Development Policy,” May 2008, <http://www.tips.org.za/files/Wilson_James_Paper.pdf>, pp. 25-27, online, AZhang]

Viewing competitiveness measures as a subset of the broad range of measures of economic progress enables a useful comparison. In particular, as with all measures of progress, the suitability of any given approach will be dependent on exactly what we are interested in analysing from a policy perspective. As Ketels (2006:116) argues, “the definition of a conceptual term such as competitiveness is never true or false in an absolute sense, but its appropriateness can be judged for a specific research or policy question.” It is clear that the analysis of economic progress is advancing new methods, founded on recognition that it is flawed to assume growth as the objective of economic development policy. Income growth, and thus approaches to competitiveness that emphasise firm-level productivity, will undoubtedly remain a key element needing in-depth analysis. However, following Layard (2006) the inter-relations between different aspects of progress require that policy analysis moves beyond a separate treatment of each element. Indeed, firm-level analysis also suggests increasing recognition of the co-dependence between various aspects of firm and societal progress. Recent work by Porter and Kramer (2006), for example, highlights the inter-relationships between firm and society with regards corporate social responsibility (CSR). They argue that “leaders in both business and civil society have focused too much on the friction between them and not enough on the points of intersection” (84). An analysis of ‘inside-out’ and ‘outside in’ linkages between firm and society suggests the importance of holistic analyses of firm-level competitiveness, in this case through integrating CSR into firm strategy so as to uncover opportunities for benefits that are shared by both firm and society. The challenge of integrating different aspects of progress into a coherent analysis of territorial competitiveness is more difficult because of the variety of different actors involved and the corresponding complexity of synergies and trade-offs. However, work such as that of Porter and Kramer (2006) at the level of the firm provides a basis from which we might build. At the very least, narrowly-conceived territorial competitiveness and related policy should be approached explicitly alongside other elements that are important for a territory’s development, taking care to understand the interactions between them. There is a danger, however, that the dominance of a narrowly productivity-focussed competitiveness discourse among policy-makers will continue to skew policy towards fostering unconditional income growth at a time when interesting alternatives are emerging elsewhere. In this sense the popularity of the language of competitiveness provides an opportunity to positively influence policy debates. A broadening of the concept of territorial competitiveness, in line with the broadening of concepts of economic progress that we see more generally, could provide an effective channel through which concern with other aspects of socio-economic development can permeate development policy. One suggestion is a re-conceptualisation of competitiveness to capture a process of increased firm-level productivity that is both environmentally and socially sustainable at the territorial level. Such a concept might build on the strengths of productivity-centred analysis of the microeconomic fundamentals of firm-level competitiveness to recognise that firms (alongside and in co-operation with other socio-economic institutions) contribute to other elements of socio-economic progress in addition to generating income. The firm (or government) is where most people spend most of their waking hours. In terms of well- being, it therefore plays a key role in society with relation to important issues such as work- life balance, security, health, intellectual and personal fulfilment, and expression of intrinsic creativity. Likewise, the firm (or government) represents much of our socio-economic relationship with the natural environment. In terms of the environmental sustainability of our human activities, therefore, the activities of the firm are critical. Building on these two points, a new conceptualisation of social, sustainable competitiveness should be capable of integrating analysis (and measurement) of performance in terms of productivity and income with analysis of performance in these other dimensions. More ambitious still would be to build on Branston et al (2006) in seeking to endogenise within the concept of competitiveness the process of democratically determining the desired objectives of people within a territory. There are significant challenges in integrating these aspects into the measurement and comparative analysis of competitiveness, so as to provide a suitable guide for territorial development policy. However, progress is clearly being made in analysis that uses the language of economic progress rather than of competitiveness, and this is something that can be built upon to ensure that competitiveness analysis leads the way in addressing today’s most significant economic policy challenges. Indeed, as environmental, social and democratic aspects are increasingly recognised as inseparable from the economic aspects of development, it is imperative that competitiveness analysis moves forward. If not, it will at best become an outdated concept, or at worst obstruct new developments that seek an understanding of economic progress more appropriate for today and tomorrow’s territorial development policy challenges.

## \*\*LINKS\*\*

## Air Infrastructure

**The affirmative’s framing of airport investment creates hierarchies of cities based on accessibility**

**Malecki ’04** [EDWARD J. MALECKI Center for Urban and Regional Analysis and Department of Geography, Ohio State University, Jockeying for Position: What It Means and Why It Matters to Regional Development Policy When Places Compete Regional Studies, Vol. 38.9, pp. 1112, December 2004, http://www.paca-online.org/cop/docs/Malecki\_-\_Competition\_among\_regions.pdf, online, AZhang]

Policy-makers and politicians should ‘replace their place-based way of thinking with a focus on connectivity, performance and flow’, i.e. ‘how they can extend city networks through time and space to attain (and perform) world-cityness’ (Doel and Hubbard, 2002, p. 363). For example, an airport is not enough; also needed are flows of air traffic, meaning airlines and their flights, passengers, and international freight. Airports are an acknowledged aspect of urban ‘foreign policy’. ‘For the last forty years, airports have determined the hierarchy of cities, by determining their accessibility from medium and long distances’. Intermediate cities have developed transversal or non- radial international and interregional connections with other intermediate cities. This has enlarged the action area of business and offered better access to distant markets (Cappellin, 1998, p. 75). Smith and Timberlake’s (2002) analysis suggests that although the air travel network has become more hierarchical, with one pre-eminently dominant city (London), a larger number of cities have become well linked.

## Alternative Energy

**Framing alternative energy as a bolster to economic competitiveness justifies immature policymaking and ignores underlying environmental threats**

**Carley et. al. ’11** [Sanya Carley, Assistant Professor at Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs and Ph.D. UNC at Chapel Hill,

Sara Lawrence, RTI International, Adrienne Brown, RTI International, Andrew Nourafshan, MBA/MEM Graduate at Fuqua School of Business, Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University, Elinor Benami, International Studies and Economics double major, B.A. in Economics, “Energy-based economic development ,” Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews 15 (2011) pp. 285, online, ScienceDirect, AZhang]

After this flurry of activity, the focus on energy policy and planning faded as oil costs normalized and, with no perception of an imminent environmental threat, environmental concerns dissipated. This was the prevailing attitude until the mid-1990s, when the international community began to process issues related to climate change, including the potential economic burden associated with both the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. As the 1990s progressed and a new century began, two additional factors raised the status of energy reform on many policymakers’ agendas: energy fuel price volatility and a growing concern that dependence on foreign fuels was an economic security threat. The coalescence of these three issues—climate change, energy prices, and energy security6—reaffirmed the significant connection, if not reciprocal relationship, between energy development and economic growth.7 With minimal national leadership on energy and climate policy,8 many state and local entities—both governmental and nongovernmental—stepped into leadership roles by initiating efforts to increase diversification of energy sources, increase energy self-sufficiency, or both. Instead of focusing on carbon mitigation policy, many of these energy policy and planning reforms pursued revamped initiatives on economic development grounds [18,19], in pursuit of ‘‘home-grown’’ energy [18] or as a means of diversification of state or regional economies to improve competitiveness. One reason for this approach is that, although alternative energy industries are immature compared with conventional energy industries, they represent opportunities for substantial investment and growth. Thus, many state and local energy strategies are attempts to ‘‘stay ahead of the curve,’’ gain an early market share, and profit from future energy developments. Another explanation, however, is that framing energy reform on economic development grounds makes energy policy inherently less partisan and more politically feasible—rarely do policymakers contend that economic development is an ill-advised objective, but energy for the sake of climate change mitigation or reduced dependence on foreign fossil fuels is not as universally accepted. Furthermore, efforts framed in economic development discourse obviate the need for policymakers and their constituents to agree on which of the many energy or climate change challenges are most threatening; such framing instead provides a platform for energy reform that has the potential to address multiple issues simultaneously, but with the least political tension.

## Bike Paths

**Bike paths are talent attracters to create more economically competitive regions**

**Florida, 2k** (Richard Florida is an [American](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) [urban studies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urban_studies) theorist. Richard Florida's focus is on social and economic theory. He is currently a professor and head of the Martin Prosperity Institute at the [Rotman School of Management](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rotman_School_of_Management), at the [University of Toronto](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Toronto).[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Florida#cite_note-0) He also heads a private consulting firm, the [Creative Class Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Creative_Class_Group&action=edit&redlink=1). Prof. Florida received a PhD from [Columbia University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Columbia_University) in 1986. Prior to joining [George Mason University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Mason_University)'s School of Public Policy, where he spent two years, he taught at [Carnegie Mellon University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carnegie_Mellon_University)'s [Heinz College](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heinz_College) in Pittsburgh from 1987 to 2005. He was named a Senior Editor at *The Atlantic* in March 2011 after serving as a correspondent for TheAtlantic.com for a year ; “COMPETING IN THE AGE OF TALENT: ENVIRONMENT, AMENITIES, AND THE NEW ECONOMY”; January 2000; [http://admin.faulkner.edu/admin/websites/cemerson/documents/AgeofTalent1.pdf)//](http://admin.faulkner.edu/admin/websites/cemerson/documents/AgeofTalent1.pdf%29//) KD

The findings of this study clearly inform one overarching strategic recommendation: The greater Pittsburgh region must make the amenities of the new economy a central element in its ongoing strategy to attract knowledge workers and build a high technology economy. Additionally, the region must endeavor to seamlessly link this amenity strategy to its ongoing economic development and competitiveness efforts. Based upon the results of the regional performance benchmarking analysis, the focus group findings, and the practices of leading high technology regions, the following actions are recommended as steps toward reaching that goal. Integrate amenities and natural assets into all aspects of the region’s economic development, talent attraction, and marketing efforts. Invest in the outdoor, recreational, and lifestyle amenities of the new economy as a component of regional economic development and talent attraction efforts; for example, the creation of climbing walls, mountain bike trails, bike paths, roller-blading areas throughout the city and region. Explore the possibility of bringing outdoor competitions and events to the region such as triathlons, bike races, rowing competitions, and similar efforts.

## Globalization

Viewing Asian growth as a threat creates conflict, ignoring their shared history

Pettman 5 Jan Jindy, Director of Centre for Women’s Studies The Australian National University “Questions of Identity: Australia and Asia” Book: Critical Security Studies and World Politics; Edited by Ken Booth (pg. 168-169)

The prosperity and economic ascendancy that led to a growing cultural self-confidence among East and Southeast Asian elites through the 1980s and 1990s marked "a transformation, but not a cancellation, of the parameters of the discourse of the West versus the rest."38 This transformation from a powerless, colonized Asia to an empowered Asia was often seen as threatening by outsiders. Particular Asian state identities were reconfigured in part through disassociation with the West, reproducing Asian difference through Asian values, or the Asian way. This neo-Orientalism has been played out through complex identity dynamics, as Asian elites and their friends, and bemused Western commentators, searched for the key to Asian success—finding it, often, in cultural values or distinctive relations between state and people and between state and market. These Asian values were posited as communitarian rather than individualist, building on family virtue and individual duty. So, for example, the Singapore government's statement "Shared Value"39 expressed its fears that foreign (U.S./Western) values were threatening Singaporean community values. While distinguishing between different ethnic communities, the statement was especially concerned with distinguishing Asian values as community-oriented, laying the groundwork for articulating a kind of community corporatism that both legitimized authoritarian rule in the name of culture, stability, and order and supported state developmental strategies.40 The dramatic changes in East and Southeast Asia, and the cultural assertions of difference they generated, raised questions concerning the nature of Asian capitalism, that is, whether Asian authoritarian and interventionist states represented an adaptation of Western or global capitalism or a distinctively Asian form of capitalist development. Some claimed that "Asian countries have discovered divergent trajectories of modernisation."41 A study of Southeast Asian modernity identified market corporatism in Malaysia, market socialism in Vietnam, and high-tech developmentalism in Singapore, ing "market fundamentalism" to the emergent middle classes and regime consolidation. Aihwa Ong interrogated narratives of Chinese nationalism and capitalism and notes that "visions of Chinese modernities depend on self-orientalising strategies that critique Western values like individualism and human rights," and saw these narratives as intersecting with counterhegemonic voices raised against U.S. domination of the Asia Pacific.42 Lily Ling labeled the mix of rapid economic growth, Confucist-identified culture, and authoritarian rule as "Asian corporatism."43 Arif Dirlik cautioned against culturalist explanations of Chinese capitalism. He argued that "Chinese culture conceived homogeneously provides an ideological alibi to new developments within [global] capitalism, as well as a means to check the disruptive effects of capitalist development in Chinese societies."44 These studies, while coming to rather different conclusions concerning the relation between culture and political economy, demonstrate how important it is to analyze globalization and social change "as a process of situated transformation."45 Too often, though, Asian difference remains essentialized, resting on "a sharp distinction between East and West and on a generally fixed conceptualization of culture/race, which overlooks the hybrid character of the history of the region."46 The rising wealth and power in the region created considerable alarm in the West, at times exhibiting a kind of colonial/race memory, prompting some to prophesy intensifying civilizational conflicts.47 In turn, Asian assertion of exceptionalism or difference has been articulated as an explicit critique of the West. This critique is counterhegemonic in that it claims both competence (and therefore independence) and suggests reasons for then-perceived comparative Western decline. It was largely directed against the United States, especially by those whose states have most felt the effects of U.S. hegemony: Japan through postwar occupation and reconstruction; South Korea in its client status after the civil war; and those states that had until recently hosted, or still host, a strong U.S. military presence.

**The affirmative’s assumption of infrastructure investment as a means to expand and accelerate capital is the premise of globalization**

**Brenner ‘99** [Neil Brenner, Professor of Urban Theory at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, “Globalisation as Reterritorialisation: The Re-scaling of Urban Governance in the European Union,” Urban Studies, Vol. 36, No. 3, 431-451, 1999    sca.as.nyu.edu/docs/IO/222/1999.Brenner.Urb.St.pdf, AZhang]

For present purposes, the term globalisation refers to a double-edged, dialectical process through which: the movement of commodities, capital, money, people and information through geographical space is continually expanded and accelerated; and, relatively fixed and immobile spatial infrastructures are produced, reconfigured and/or transformed to enable such expanded, accelerated movement. From this perspective, globalisation entails a dialectical interplay between the endemic drive towards time-space compression under capitalism (the moment of deterritorialisation)and the continual production and reconfiguration of relatively fixed spatial configurations—for example, the territorial infrastructures of urban- regional agglomerations and states (the moment of reterritorialisation) (Harvey, 1989a, 1996; Lefebvre, 1977, 1978, 1991). Thus defined, globalisation does not occur merely through the geographical extension of capitalism to encompass progressively larger zones of the globe, but emerges only when the expansion and acceleration of capital accumulation becomes intrinsically premised upon the construction of large-scale territorial infrastructures, a `second nature’ of socially produced spatial configurations such as railways, highways, ports, canals, airports, informational networks and state institutions that enable capital to circulate at ever-faster turnover times. Lefebvre (1977, 1978, 1991, p. 37) locates this epochal transformation “from the production of things in space to the production of space” during the late 19th century in which `neo-capitalism’ and the `state mode of production’ (le mode de production eÂta- tique) were first consolidated on a world scale. Lash and Urry (1987) have described this state-centric con® guration of world capitalist development as `organised capitalism’ andÐ along with many other researchers (see, for example, Arrighi, 1994; Lipietz, 1987; Jessop, 1994; Scott and Storper, 1992)Ð interpreted the global economic crises of the early 1970s at once as a medium and a consequence of its unravelling. I view the most recent, post-1970s round of world- scale capitalist restructuring as a second major wave of capitalist globalisation through which global socioeconomic interdependen- cies are being simultaneously intensified, deepened and expanded in close conjunction with the production, reconfiguration and transformation of territorial organisation at once on urban-regional, national and supra- national spatial scales. Whereas the late 19th century wave of capitalist globalisation occurred largely within the framework of nationally organised state territorialities, the post-1970s wave of globalisation has significantly decentred the role of the national scale as a self-enclosed container of socio- economic relations while simultaneously intensifying the importance of both sub- and supranational forms of territorial organisation. This ongoing re-scaling of territoriality can be viewed as the differentia specifica of the currently unfolding reconfiguration of world capitalism (Brenner, 1998c). Thus conceived, the moment of territorialisation remains as fundamental as ever to the process of capital circulation in the contemporary era. However, the scales on which this territorialisation process occurs are no longer spatially co-extensive with the nationally organised matrices of state territoriality that have long defined capitalism’ s geopolitical and geoeconomic geographies. In this sense, the current round of globalisation has recon® gured the scalar organisation of capital’ s endemic dynamic of de- and reterritorialisation, triggering what Jessop (1998, p. 90) has aptly termed a a relativisation of scaleo : [I]n contrast to the privileging of the national economy and the national state in the period of Atlantic Fordism, no spatial scale is currently privileged The concept of `glocalisation’ , introduced by Swyngedouw (1997, 1992, p. 61) to indicate “the combined process of globalization and local-territorial reconfiguration” , likewise usefully highlights this ongoing, highly conflictual restructuring, interweaving and redifferentiation of spatial scales. The re- mainder of this paper concretises this conception of globalisation/reterritorialisation by examining various ways in which cities and territorial states are currently being re-scaled in relation to capital’s increasingly `glocal’ geographies.

## Generic Links

**Welfare, social, and democratic dimensions are imbedded in competitiveness discourse.**

**Wilson, 08** (James Wilson is a member of Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales - ESTE (Faculty of Economics and Management) Universidad de Deusto and Orkestra-Instituto Vasco de Competitividad (Orkestra-Basque Institute of Competitiveness and Development) Universidad de Deusto; “Territorial Competitiveness and Developmental Policy” ; May 2008; <http://www.tips.org.za/files/Wilson_James_Paper.pdf>) //KD

This paper argues that emerging consensus on the need to move beyond income as the main criteria for measuring economic progress raises significant questions also for competitiveness discourse. The suggestion is not that currently predominant conceptualisations of competiveness become irrelevant; understanding the factors that drive productivity in a territory will clearly remain a key policy concern, just as income growth will remain a core component of what we understand by economic development. However, there is a danger that the dominance of a narrowly productivity-focused competitiveness discourse among local, regional and national policy-makers will continue to skew policy towards fostering unconditional income growth at a time when interesting alternatives are emerging. In this sense we suggest that the widespread use of the language of competitiveness presents an opportunity. It is argued that acceptance of broader conceptualisations of competitiveness can potentially facilitate the integration into policy of those wider concerns characterising much of the debate on economic development. Indeed, within the literature on competitiveness several recent contributions have stressed social, welfare and democratic dimensions in different regards (Aiginger, 2006; Branston et al., 2006; Porter and Kramer, 2006). This paper builds on such contributions, combining analysis of what is a ‘contested’ competitiveness concept with reflection on recent advances in the measurement of economic progress. It proposes the necessary re-conceptualisation of competitiveness for today’s economic development challenges.

**The affirmative promotes economic nationalism, which discriminates in favor of the United States’ own economic competitiveness.**

**Baughn and Yaprak, 96** – Baughn is professor of Management at Boise State University; co-author of *Journal of World Business, Journal of International Entrepreneurship*. Yaprak is professor at Wayne State University and is former dean of research. Ph.D. in International Business, MBA in Marketing and Finance. (C. Christopher and Attila, “ Economic Nationalism: Conceptual and Empirical Development,” December 1996, pages 759-778//***HO***

The cross-national interdependence of economic structures throughout the world is blurring the lines between nations. Coupled with advances in **communication and transportation technologies**, every factor of production-money, technology, factories, and equipment-may flow readily across national borders. Economic nationalism, however, creates barriers which constrain and reshape the direction or nature of trade, capital, and technology flows. Economic nationalism involves discrimination in favor of one's own nation, carried on as a matter of policy. It has come to be associated with a wide range of practices, including protectionism in the form of tariffs, quotas, "voluntary" agreements countervailing duties, and regulatory standards barring foreign products from the domestic market (Reich, 1991). Economic nationalism is also seen in the "dumping" of exported products at prices below domestic prices, provision of government subsidies to domestic firms, forced transfer of property from foreign owners to nationals and counter-trader restrictions. It is also evident in nonobservance of conventional patent rights, ignoring procedures laid down by agreements such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and international law. Discrimination in favor of national workers (indigenization and localization of personnel) and rejection of foreign products by consumers, when not based on quality or technical suitability, have also been cited as exemplars of economic nationalism. While the practices and policies cited above may not necessarily lead to a severing of economic ties, they do make them more tenuous and insecure. Economic nationalism distorts trade and finance relationships and can impede the efficiency of global resource allocation. From time to time, "outbursts of nationalism "whether precipitated by recession or in retaliation for the perceived unfair practices of foreign economic rivals, may occur and may be institutionalized in the routines of public bureaucracy.

## Port Security

Port securitization is part of a larger hegemonic competitiveness discourse that spatially excludes urban populations and posits them as servants to an elite class

**Cowen and Bunce ’06** [Deborah Cowen, Ph.D. Division of Social Sciences, York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and Susannah Bunce, Ph.D. candidate, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. “Competitive Cities and Secure Nations: Conflict and Convergence in Urban Waterfront Agendas after 9/11,” Volume 30.2 June 2006 p. 435-437, International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, http://deb-cowen.net/sites/default/files/ijur\_670.pdf, online, AZhang]

Conflicts and convergences between competitiveness and security are emerging in local planning and development agendas, particularly with regards to which actors each agenda imagines as having a legitimate presence on the waterfront. The intensification of residential and commercial built form as a component of waterfront revitalization projects is an element of the desire for denser infrastructure and more ‘eyes on the street’ surveillance for security purposes. Here, the derelict lands of de-industrializing urban waterfronts are conceived as a potential threat to security. Redevelopment through the creation of high-income residential communities serves as a way to ‘recolonize’ and secure urban waterfront spaces. Indeed, advocates for both port security measures and waterfront redevelopment projects have found common ground in their respective social exclusion practices. In Toronto, a recent provincial planning ruling that blocked the development of a low-income seniors’ housing project on the waterfront utilized security rhetoric to legitimize the decision. In the ruling, it was considered that the seniors’ housing would be made vulnerable if terrorist attacks occurred on key landmarks located near the waterfront: the CN Tower and the Rogers Center, Toronto’s baseball stadium.5 It is important to note here that such a security rationale was not a factor in planning discussions over the development of condominium developments for middle-class professionals in the same area, which suggests that ‘security’ is at least at times used to rationalize social exclusion. Another issue of security was raised in 2002, when both private investors and municipal officials identified homeless people who lived in a squatter community adjacent to the port area as a threat to the establishment of the waterfront as a space for revitalization (Blackwell and Goonewardena, 2004; Bunce and Young, 2004). Both of these examples illustrate the potential for coalition across security and revitalization agendas and help with analyses of the emerging associations between security, built form and spatial practices of exclusion. The port security agenda has the potential to hinder revitalization efforts of new residential and commercial activity on urban waterfronts. The increased presence of policing and security infrastructure, such as flood lighting, fencing and video surveillance of the kind adopted for national security projects, seem far from aesthetically compatible with new ‘family friendly’ waterfront residential communities and recreational spaces. In fact, the securitization of ports has in some cases led to a direct and significant loss of recreation and leisure spaces along the waterfront. In Vancouver, for example, a network of cycling trails and public roads was closed down over the past two years so that access to the port area could be limited to workers who must now use security cards to get into their work site. Cycling paths had previously connected the prime gentrifying areas west of the Burrard Inlet to the downtown core, and were meant to be part of a celebrated and well-publicized national cycling trail. Securitization measures in Vancouver have closed prime port lands to public access thereby removing the very amenity — access to the waterfront — that currently makes waterfront living so desirable. Furthermore, tensions could arise between the overtly political agenda of securitization and public fears about living in proximity to sites targeted for possible terrorist attack as well as the kind of tranquil ‘quality of life’ desires embedded in the development of new residential waterfront communities. This short intervention is clearly investigative in form and content rather than conclusive. We have raised questions about the future of urban waterfront spaces in the context of the colliding agendas of competitive urban development and national security programs. We have highlighted key areas of change and conflict emerging out of this collision, namely, changing relations of power between actors, conflicts between security and economy, changing urban planning practice, and new forms of physical design and securitization. We have also speculated on general tendencies in urban waterfront futures that are emerging out of contemporary conflicts. We have refrained from making more conclusive arguments about the implications of these trends. This is in part because the project is in the early stages of development, but more importantly because of the ‘fast policy’ (Peck, 2002) environment that constitutes port security in North America today. Governments are proposing and implementing new policies and programs in such quick succession that the synthesis and analysis of these rapid changes in regulation is a significant undertaking in itself. An additional and related reason for an exploratory analysis of the kind we present here is the deeply political and contested nature of port securitization. So, for example, rapid changes in port securitization in Vancouver, combined with large-scale resistance by the International Longshore Warehouse Union–Canada has resulted in a very recent decision on the part of the Transport Minister to reconsider the extensive screening of workers and biometric identity cards as recently as late September 2005. We would like to suggest that it is precisely the contested and uncertain nature of these relations and practices that make them so worthwhile for study. It thus remains to be seen how these different actors and agendas will work with or around each other to achieve their goals. Of course, the future will unfold out of struggle and in the context of the histories and geographies of power in particular places. Thus, future research needs to engage in case study analysis of particular port cities in order to understand the manoeuvres of actors and the tactics of competing agendas. Most important for our future research are the implications of the reconfiguration of power and priorities in urban ports for the rights of citizens. Whether urban waterfronts are rebuilt and policed in the interests of national security, local property developers and professional condominium residents, or all of these simultaneously, a large proportion of urban citizens are not a part of that picture. Poor, working-class, and racialized people, the homeless, youth and countless other ‘others’ may only be welcome as cleaners, landscapers, domestic workers, and in other kinds of disciplined, casualized and precarious employment to service the lives of elites. Urban waterfronts may be planned as amenity areas for transnational professionals in a global economy or alternatively as national border spaces in a world at war, or most likely a combination of both, but of central importance is the impact that these agendas will have on spatial justice in waterfront cities.

## Rail Infrastructure

**The construction of railroads for economic competitiveness blindly privileges local elites and hinders true economic growth**

**Maskell and Malmber ‘95** [Peter Maskell Maskell, Professor, Dr.Merc. Centre for Economic and Business Research (CEBR) and Danish Research Unit for Industrial Dynamics (DRUID), Department of Industrial Economics and Strategy (IVS), Copenhagen Business School (CBS), and Anders Malmberg, Professor, Ph.D. Department of Social and Economic Geography, Uppsala University, “Localized Learning and Industrial Competitiveness” BRIE Working Paper 80 October 1995, http://brie.berkeley.edu/publications/WP%2080.pdf, AZhang]

History have taught us not to disregard the tenaciousness of regional capabilities. More often than not the regional capabilities have a potential to be more durable than assets on which they were built: the resources available in the region, the physical structures and the institutional endowment. Regions replace decrepit resources, rebuild obsolete structures and restore outdated institutions. The firms in Detroit has retrieved some of their former competitiveness in car manufacturing and the watch-industry of Switzerland has recovered and even expanded its share of the world market after restructuring from fine mechanics to the world of the micro-chip (Coriat & Bianchi, 1995). Through a perpetual process of incremental replacements the individual assets in the region will be modified over time but the fundamental capabilities are preserved, nurtured and enriched with new dynamism and vigour. Once established, regional capabilities do not vanish easily. This do not signify, however, that localised capabilities on which the firms depend, can continue forever. Capabilities can deteriorate for a number of reasons, thereby undermining the competitiveness of the firm located in the region. A decline in former strong regional capabilities can be the consequence of various specific and local reasons, which can be gathered under the headings of asset erosion (Dierickx & Cool, 1989), substitution (Porter, 1990) and lock-in situations (David, 1985, Arthur, 1989). Asset erosion describe the process whereby hitherto important localised institutions are no longer reproduced in the same pace or to the same degree. The transmission mechanism can be curbed by the redirection of indispensable skills towards other types of jobs, for instance in a swelling public sector, or by changes in attitudes and values away from entrepreneurial activity. The interaction between producers and users can be broken by structural changes (concentration and mergers, buy-outs, closures etc.) thus obstructing the knowledge creation which was based on the specially knowing, demanding and critical customers. The important Danish industrial strongholds in pharmaceuticals (NOVO, Ferrosan, Dumex, Lundbeck, Løvens etc) and medical utilities (hearing aids, hospital equipment) have developed historically in close contact with demanding medical staff in the hospitals. Cuts in public expenditure in the health sector and the present drive towards privatisation could easily strangle this decisive interaction. Asset erosion can also imply the exhaustion of imperative natural resources, the congestion of requisite infrastructure or the obstruction of essential channels of communication in ways beyond repair. Substitution represent a special form of asset erosion where new technology rapidly devaluate former investments in for instance skills, education and infrastructure, thus undermining the region's capabilities. Regions in which the economic development was favoured by massive investments in channels were less fortunate when the technological development lead to the construction of railroads etc. Normally, a region gradually develops its physical, social, institutional and cultural structure in correspondence with the needs of the existing industry. Even if we assume that each round of building new institutions or improving the old is based on and perfectly adjusted to the most advanced technological, organisational or market knowledge available at the time, there is always a risk that the resulting institutional endowment in the long run will turn out to become an obstacle to future development. Such hindrances may be physical, but, perhaps paradoxically, they seem more often to be social and cultural. This phenomenen, that a region over time tends to develop institutions that hinder future success, as result of decisions that were in themselves very advanced in their time, is sometimes referred to as penalities of taking the lead (cf. Veblen, 1939, Gershenkron, 1962). Correspondingly, the fact that a region has previously been lagging behind, and thus has not developed the structures of the "last round of investment, and the ones before", might in certain cases turn out to become an advantage of backwardness. The absence of physical structures and social institutions adjusted to yesterday's level of technological and organisational development may become an advantage when trying to implement those of today or tomorrow. Today's "old industrial regions" are sometimes the "new industrial districts" of earlier phases. Thus, not only firms experience difficulties when they face the need to unlearn former successful routines (see section 3). In regions, the process of unlearning will often necessitate the disintegration and removal of formerly important institutions which now acts as a hindrance to further development. This might jeopardise the interest of some individuals or larger groups with the power to prevent or impede the process, thus leading to regional lock-ins. Friedrichs (1993), in proposing a theory on urban decline, gives several examples of how "local élites", made up by corporate management, trade unions and urban/regional managers or politicians, tend to form alliances that will act to prevent structural change in periods when previously dominating industries decline. By trying to protect their vested interests, they will prolong the period of crisis and delay the efforts to develop or attract new types of economic activity, and thereby to shift the regional economy into a new track. Maybe this is most obvious in traditional "mono industrial" mileux dominated by large firms. In the steel industry, for instance, the "Ruhr patriarchat" in Germany or the "steel aristocrats" in Pittburgh, U.S., have played such roles during an extended period31.

## Travel Time

The affirmative’s focus on shorter travel time is a constructed and fleeting myth— part of a flawed cost-benefit analysis decision-making framework that only increases congestion— turns the case

**Metz ’08 [**16 Apr 2008, David Metz, Centre for Transport Studies, University College London, London, UK “The Myth of Travel Time Saving,” Transport Reviews: A Transnational Transdisciplinary Journal, 28:3, 321-336, online, Taylor and Francis, AZhang]

Travel time saving has been the centrepiece of transport economic analysis for approaching half a century. The idea is simple: there are better things to do than travel, so if travel time could be reduced by improving the infrastructure, then there would be a quantifiable economic benefit to set against the cost of the investment. The lack of empirical evidence for travel time saving is therefore surprising. Travel time saving has the quality of a myth—a traditional story accepted as factual. It is what economists term a ‘stylized fact’, as opposed to an empirical fact. Data from travel surveys show that average travel time is conserved in the long run, at around 1 hour per day. Measurement of short-run changes to travel time following an improvement which has the effect of increasing speed appears not to have been attempted. It was initially assumed that trip origins and destinations could be taken as given, so that savings in travel time when traversing a new or widened link road would translate into overall travel time savings having economic value. Subsequently, it was recognized that in general the pattern of demand would vary in response to a change in the supply of carriageway, which allows the possibility that some of the assumed time saving could be used for extra travel—hence, induced traffic. In the long run, it can be concluded that all the possible time saving is used for extra travel, consistent with the conservation of average travel time. Nevertheless, the absence of empirical evidence for travel time saving is not evidence of absence, and travel time savings are likely to arise as a transient phenomenon. It might be supposed that the possibility of saving time would be an important factor to be considered when the choice of a new travel option presents itself. But once the new route or mode becomes part of an established pattern of daily activity, the benefit may then be perceived as an improvement in access, rather than as a time saving. With the elapse of time (months or years), the improvement in the transport system allows further access to desired destinations, within the more or less constant time people allow themselves on average for travel. Longitudinal studies of travel activity would be valuable as a means of understanding better travel time savings as a transient phenomenon. The traditional focus on travel time savings in economic appraisal, and on the minimization of generalized costs in transport modelling, can be contrasted with the approach of ‘behavioural economics’, which considers the possibility that actors in the real world do not behave as the idealized utility-maximizing participants of standard economic frameworks. Behavioural economics is concerned to identify the ways in which behaviour differs from that of standard economic models, as well as to show how such behaviour matters in economic contexts (Mullainathan and Thaler, 2000; Camerer and Loewenstein, 2004). There is a developing body of transport studies that questions utility maximization as the basis for decisions by travellers (for a recent discussion, see Avineri and Prashker, 2005). While much work in mainstream behavioural economics has focused on finance and saving, one study concerns the behaviour of New York City taxi driv- ers who pay a fixed fee to rent their cabs for a 12-hour shift and then keep all their revenues (Camerer et al., 1997). Their work hours are flexible (they can quit early and often do) and income fluctuates because of the weather, day-of-week effects, and so forth. Many drivers say they set a daily income target (to cover the rental fee, fuel and desired take home pay) and quit when they reach that target. Drivers who set a daily target will drive longer hours on low-income days and quit early on high-income days. This behaviour is the opposite of an income-maximizing strategy over the longer-term. The conservation of average daily travel time suggests that a similar targeting process may be at work with respect to travel time, with an upper bound deter- mined by competition between the various uses of time within the 24-hour day, and a lower bound reflecting the benefits to the individual arising from mobility unlinked to the particular destination (Metz, 2004a). However, the question of such intrinsic utility of travel has been the subject of little investigation and deserves further study. If travel time is conserved rather than saved, then there are implications for investment appraisal, modelling and policy as discussed above. In particular, standard CBA is not a reliable guide to the value of infrastructure investment and arguably should be abandoned; the generality of macro transport models is not based on the authentic behaviour of travellers and cannot be relied on to predict the consequences of interventions; and transport policy-makers need to recognize that interventions that have the effect of increasing speed will promote traffic growth.

## User Fees

**User fees are part of a self-fulfilling prophecy rhetoric that further empowers the wealthy elite and victimizes and traps the less well-to-do parts of society**

**Baeten 2K** [Guy Baeten, Ph.D. from the University of Oxford and currently Professor of Human Geography at Lund University, Sweden, “The Tragedy of the Highway: Empowerment, Disempowerment and the Politics of Sustainability Discourses and Practices,” European Planning Studies, 8:1, pp. 78-81, 2000, Taylor and Francis, online, AZhang]

Neo-classical transport economics has an elegant and seductive argument for explaining current transport problems. The starting point is that there are ‘too many’ of us on the road and that the total volume of road traffic is partly ‘redundant’ owing to ‘incorrect’ pricing policies. The tragedy of the congested highway is that ‘others’ (‘additional road users’ in neo-classical jargon), whose activities are considered to be less necessary than vital economic activities, can make unrestrained use of this scarce public good and therefore unashamedly hinder those who contribute more to society. If this vague category of ‘additional road users’ would be obliged to pay the full price for its mobility, then its road use would certainly decrease, resulting in a more fair journey distribution among members of society. ‘Price’, then, acts as the flawless referee separating road users into two rationally thinking groups, one of which shows ‘willingness to pay’ for its journey while the other does not, after weighing the full price of the journey with its importance. Further, road use is described as being heavily subsidized, since additional road users do not have to pay for their marginal external costs (e.g. congestion, pollution) which they impose instead on others. Therefore, road use cannot be a rational, price-led activity, and, consequently, excessive use results (see for instance ECMT, 1998). By bringing together neo-classical price theory and Malthusian environmentalism, neo- classical economists have produced a straightforward argument, although they do not claim that charging the ‘right price’ on transport is a panacea for current transport problems (see, for example, Proost & De Borger (1997). The idea to make road users pay for the additional cost they impose upon others, is in fact at least 80 years old. Pigou suggested in The Economics of Welfare (1920) that marginal congestion costs should be allocated to individual road users (see Neale, 1995). At that time, it must have been considered as a futuristic fantasy: there were hardly any congestion problems in the 1920s, except for some inner-city streets in big American cities like New York (Hall, 1988). The implementation of tolls as a means to finance road construction is not new (French motorways are a notable example) and it can take various forms. Road pricing, based on allocating marginal external costs to individual road users, was implemented for the 􏱿rst time in Singapore in 1975 and it was to be fully automated by 1997. Hong Kong experimented with road pricing between 1983 and 1985. Outside Asia, only Norway has recently implemented toll rings around the cities of Bergen (1986), Oslo (1990) and Trondheim (1991). These are not real road pricing schemes since these tolls are 􏱿 xed and hence do not truly re􏲀 ect marginal external costs, which should differ over time and space (Tretvik, 1995; Ramjerdi, 1995). Meanwhile, the implementation of road pricing schemes is being discussed in many cities in Europe, Asia and America. In the UK, for instance, as early as 1964, the Smeed Report recommended the implementation of road pricing in order to reduce traf􏱿 c congestion (see Neale, 1995) and recent pilot projects in the city of Cambridge have proven that road pricing is technically feasible (Oldridge, 1995). The idea of road pricing has its roots in Garret Hardin’s 1968 parable The Tragedy of the Commons which was in fact based upon an essay published by the mathematician William Lloyd in 1833. The Tragedy is about common land in a rural community, used by every shepherd to let his cattle graze as much as possible. While the bene􏱿ts of this activity are appropriated by each shepherd separately (the bene􏱿ts are ‘internal’ in neo-classical terms), the costs, namely the infertility of the land owing to its overuse, will be shared by all shepherds (the costs are ‘externalized’ to society in neo-classical jargon). Free access to common goods will lead to a tragedy for everyone. Hardin pleaded for an authoritarian solution, namely the exertion of government control to ensure that nobody would make irresponsible use of the common fields. Contemporary economists seized on the Tragedy to argue in favour of privatization and commodication of the commons. Individual property rights result in individual responsibilities which will ensure that common resources will not devaluate or deplete due to excessive use. The individual allocation of road use costs during peak hours or periods of excessive air pollution would make road users abandon irresponsible use of the commons. The idea to put a ‘correct’ price upon transport and the environment has gained considerable support among transport planners. A ‘free market’ has to be created for common goods such as ‘access to cities’, or ‘clean air’, so that consumers, by means of the price mechanism, can express their individual preferences. The result would be an equilibrium between transport demand and supply needed to fulfill that demand. According to neo-classical economists, consumers are willing to pay for common goods. Interventions in the price of transport (for instance, subsidized public transport or free access to highways) disturb the market mechanism and will, consequently, lead to ‘suboptimal’ prices. Suboptimally, goods will be undervalued (i.e. less than people are willing to pay for them) or overvalued (i.e. more than people are willing to pay for them). In both cases, the market fails. This neo-classical answer to transport problems is based upon assumptions which cast doubt on the policy proposals which are deduced from them. The cry for further com- modification of transport facilities is rooted in so-called methodological individualism (Jacobs, 1994). Economic activity is seen by neo-classical economists as the total sum of economic activities of individual agents. Individuals consume economic goods according to their individual preferences, which are influenced by prices. Price changes, hence, have an effect upon individual consumer behaviour. Jacobs believes that this reasoning is probably valid for toothpaste or tomatoes, but less so for public goods such as ‘accessibility’ or ‘breathable air’. In fact, Jacobs continues, neo-classical economists adopt a strange stance when analysing the allocation of public goods. In the case of markets for tomatoes or toothpaste, they analyse real transactions between producers and consumers. In the case of environmental or transport goods, however, they analyse what would happen if these goods were priced so that consumers could make market choices. Starting from such a strongly hypothetical framework, policy proposals derived from it are not based upon actual preferences but hypothetical preferences that would exist if there would be a market for them in the first place. The question that immediately comes to mind, then, is: why analyse something as if it were something else? The market is only one institution to allocate goods to people. Other criteria for goods allocation can be thought of, for instance, the distribution of goods between different social groups. Particular price settings, irrespective of the ‘real’ price which would internalize all external costs, can guarantee that some segments of society, for example low income groups, have access to transport facilities, irrespective of their ‘willingness to pay’. However, ‘willing- ness’ suggests the possibility of choice, which is a rather irrelevant category in the case of low-income groups. For them, ‘ability to pay’ would perhaps be more relevant. In transport policy terms, taking ‘distribution’ instead of the ‘market’ as the prime institution for the allocation of goods would mean that everyone, regardless of his or her possibilities or preferences, would be guaranteed a basic level of transport opportunities. Another allocation criterion would be the right to a healthy environment or to sufficient transport facilities, whatever the price individuals want to pay for them. That would imply, in policy terms, that governing bodies would have the duty to secure these goods to the public, without monetarizing them. Sagoff (1988, quoted in Jacobs, 1994) doubts whether people actually have individual preferences towards the environment rather than attitudes. The valuation of ‘clean air’, ‘access to cities’ or ‘open space’, is for most people probably not a monetary but a moral consideration: people do not choose for those goods as a function of what their interests are as consumers, but, rather, what they think is right as citizens. To return to Hardin’s The Tragedy of the Commons, the standard critique is that there is an abundance of empirical evidence showing that shepherds in rural communities do not sel􏱿shly consume and exploit common land but actually, as members of the community, cooperate and come to agreements to prevent its damage (Pepper, 1993). The need for a better environment is different from the need for toothpaste or tomatoes: it becomes a matter of moral and social debate rather than a calculation of costs and benefits. Sagoff argues that neo-classical economists simply do not understand how people actually value public environmental goods. However, a self-fulfilling prophecy could grow from the neo-classical dominance of the sustainability debate: people might actually start to think about environmental goods in monetary rather than in moral or social terms or in terms of just distribution or rights (Jacobs, 1994). Evidently, but most importantly, the market mechanism will only satisfy the needs of those who can participate in the market institution, i.e. those who can rely upon sufficient purchasing power. Hence, the introduction of road pricing would enhance the power the rich already exert over transport infrastructures and would disempower those groups which lack sufficient financial means to purchase monetarized accessibility to cities. Road pricing, then, acts as a subtle exclusionary mechanism which victimizes the less well-to-do parts of society and further empowers the affluent classes. The consequences of these twin processes of empowerment and disempowerment, according to Swyngedouw (1993, p. 322), are that: [g]iven the importance and power of mobility, those trapped in place, stripped of their capacity to move across space, will suffer in an age in which mobility has become an even more profitable and extremely powerful commodity itself.

## **\*\*IMPACT\*\***

## Economy

**This marketing of place and infrastructure investment promotes the sharing of codified information among a dominant elite that perpetuates a zero-sum game of globalization**

**Doel and Hubbard ‘02** [Marcus Doel, Professor of Human Geography at University of Wales,  and Phil Hubbard, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Geography at the University of Loughborough,  “Taking world cities literally: Marketing the city in a global space of flows,” CITY, Vol. 6, No. 3, 2002, pp. 359-361, Taylor and Francis, online, AZhang]

Insisting that the dominant mode of thinking about the global economy is as a patchwork of place-based economies in a constant strug- gle for competitive advantage over and against one another—spatial atomism— Amin and Thrift (2002) suggest that a wide- spread reading of urban economic success is that it arises from the spatial agglomeration of know-how and capacity in the city. This is certainly evident in the mainstream literature on the competitiveness of cities, which, via business gurus like Michael Porter, suggests that competitive advantage arises from the strategic manipulation of local assets. For example, and somewhat counter-intuitively, Kresl (1995, p. 54) is adamant that external aspects—both national and international— must be excluded from any analysis of the determinants of a city’s competitiveness. Likewise, he insists that ‘a city’s international competitiveness is quite different from the concept of an international city’. While Kresl argues the latter concerns connectivity (at the international scale), the former concerns only the city in question. In his view, a city can be extremely competitive without being con- nected into a network of other cities, just as a city can be fully plugged into a network without being at all competitive. This is why Kresl (1995, p. 52) sees no contradiction in claiming ‘a city may dramatically increase its competitiveness, even its international com- petitiveness, without being or increasing the degree to which it is an international city’.8 For Kresl and others (e.g. Duffy, 1995; Oatley, 1998), city competitiveness and suc- cess unquestionably derive from the internal characteristics of a city. Deas and Giordano (2001, p. 1413) underline this by insisting that the ultimate source of urban com- petitiveness is the ‘initial stock of assets present in a geographical unit’ and that its outcome is ‘the result of firms’ ability to exploit these assets’. Likewise, in the influen- tial work of Krugman, the notion of global competition disappears to be replaced by the concept of ‘strategic economic complemen- tarity’, where urban and regional success derives from the benefits of untraded inter- dependence at the local scale (see also Storper, 1997; Boddy, 1999). Accordingly, the idea that building up local economic infra- structure is essential for success in a global era is endemic among those practitioners promoting the new entrepreneurial govern- ance: for them, the idea that the creation, manipulation or replenishment of city asset bases might secure an advantageous insertion of the city in the international division of labour allows them to hang on to the idea that local place has become more, rather than less, important in a global era (Swyngedouw, 1997; Jessop, 1998). One obvious symptom of this ‘new local- ism’ is the tendency for urban governors and politicians to forge alliances with local business communities with the intention of promoting the localization, clustering and agglomeration of expertise. Growth coalition theory has been used extensively in the fields of political science, sociology and urban geography to explain the constitution of such alliances (Hubbard et al., 2002). Closely allied to ‘elite’ theories in political science, growth coalition theory suggests that it is urban elites (i.e. coalitions of dynamic busi- ness people, real-estate developers and pro- active city hall politicians, led usually by a charismatic mayor or politician) who trans- form ‘their’ city (see Logan and Molotch, 1987), often ostracizing local communities. Against this, regime theory views power as a diffuse resource and draws upon pluralist traditions in political science that conceive of political power as locally negotiated and dispersed. Here, different ‘power clusters’ are seen to control different spheres of urban life, granted the power to act through pop- ular consent. Grounded empirically in a host of detailed single-city case studies (following the lead of Stone, 1989), regime theory claims to offer a more sophisticated account of urban politics than growth coalition theory. Regime theory acknowledges that urban decision-making is diffuse, fragmented and non-hierarchical, and recognizes that govern- mental and non-governmental actors need to co-operate to create the ‘capacity to act’ (Stoker, 1995). Whether one subscribes to the notion of elitist growth coalitions or more diffuse urban regimes, the conjoint effort of local politicians and business communities in pro- moting ‘their’ city as a favourable environ- ment for business and commerce is perhaps the key characteristic of the ‘new localism’ (see Hall and Hubbard, 1996; Valler et al., 2000). There are often remarkable similarities in the key elements of such promotional policies, leading some to identify a common entrepreneurial approach to place promotion (Gold and Ward, 1994). Indeed, almost every ‘wannabe’ world city now has its requisite series of promotional pamphlets, posters, CD-ROMs and websites communicating selective images of the city as an attractive, hospitable and vibrant international city in which to live and work. This conscious manipulation and promotion of the city, evocatively termed ‘imagineering’ by Ruthe- iser (1996), has been subject to close exam- ination from academics who have pointed out the ways in which city identities are sanitized, commodified and distorted in accordance with the perceived demands of the global marketplace. What is also increas- ingly evident is that this marketing of place seldom restricts itself to extolling the existing virtues of a given city, but seeks to re-invent the city as an innovative, international technopole by providing spaces designed to foster the sharing of tacit and codified knowledge among an intellectual, innovative elite. An essential ingredient of place promo- tion has thus been the construction of new ‘urban quarters’ designed to provide knowl- edge-rich entrepreneurs with living, work and play space. Following the perceived success of the rejuvenation of Baltimore’s inner harbour in the 1960s (Olds, 1995), the names of these monumental spaces and buildings have quickly become synecdoches for the cities in which they are located, and the quintessence of their world-cityness: London’s Canary Wharf, Barcelona’s Olym- picMarina,Paris’LaDe ́fense,Vancouver’s Pacific Place, New York’s Battery Park, Atlanta’s Peachtree Center, Sydney’s Darling Harbour, and so on. Together with mega-events such as World Expos, City of Culture celebrations, and, perhaps most significantly, the Olympic Games (where even the bidding process has become a major marshalling point for urban boosterism and civic peacockery), the trans- formation of city infrastructure has been interpreted as a fundamental means by which city governors have attempted to provide previously industrial cities with a new post- industrial identity geared to the needs of a globalized economy (Short, 1999). To date, academic attention has been devoted to documenting the frequently deleterious social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts of these projects. This critique has, for instance, been articulated in Harvey’s (1989) structural reading of entrepreneurial governance when he talks of the zero-sum game resulting from the drive for place differentiation (via the promotion of local character) versus the standardization implicit in the notion of ‘global’ development. In his estimation, attempts to encourage knowl- edge-rich individuals to cluster in particular metropolitan locales bequeaths no significant competitive advantage to any particular city, merely fuelling further rounds of speculative development while driving a wedge between the new transnational capitalist classes and those who reside in less-affluent residential areas. Of course, this should not overshadow the fact that some attempts at promoting world-cityness through major infrastructure projects have apparently succeeded: Barce- lona has certainly enhanced its reputation as a leading European city through a vigorous strategy of cultural events and spectacular redevelopment, while Baltimore’s much- vaunted regeneration certainly wiped out its reputation as the ‘armpit of North America’. Yet it remains the case that many entrepre- neurial attempts at place promotion have proved financially disastrous, propped up by public money on the (unproven) under- standing that strategic local investment can enhance a city’s competitiveness and trans- form it into a world city (Fainstein, 1994; Loftman and Nevin, 1996; Leitner and Shep- pard, 1999). If only it were that simple. Unfortunately, cities are not self-contained engines of economic growth, and no amount of asset manipulation can guarantee inter- national orientation and world-city status.

**Competitive discourse creates a zero sum economic system where success cannot exist for all regions creating a “compete or die mindset”**

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 In an era of large-scale and rapid shifts in the geography of industrialisation and economic prosperity, the traditional analysis and prescriptions of local and regional economic development policy premised on competitiveness appear increasingly ineffectual. The competitiveness discourse, while still the dominant foundation for policy, can be challenged in several ways: these include at a practical level the failure of such policies to deliver lasting and self-propagating economic prosperity; the paucity of ideas generated by such a development discourse; and the ways in which interlocality competition cannot end in success for all regions. Despite these and other criticisms, the competitiveness discourse remains powerful, there is a compelling brutality to the bleak inevitability of ‘compete or die’. Indeed, so deeply entrenched is the competitiveness mindset that new initiatives and ideas can rapidly be subsumed within it. This article provides a critical analysis of one such instance, where the ideas of eco-industrialism and the eco-industrial park that could, in a different policy framework, offer an alternative trajectory and content to local economic development policy appear to have been deployed largely as another modern iteration of place competition.

Focus on economic competitiveness leads to self-destructive policies that collapse the economy

Posen, 06 – Ph.D. in Economic from Harvard, senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, member of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England Financial Times (“Faddish export promotion is a heavy burden for any economy” Lexis, August 9 2006 // JH)

Yet export competitiveness has little beyond being fashionable to recommend it as an objective for economic policy. Like today's again trendy platform shoes, pursuit of competitiveness gives one a temporary boost that is unstable, untenable and, with repeated use, unhealthy. A dozen years ago Paul Krugman, the US economist, famously called competitiveness "a dangerous obsession" among US policymakers. In fact, in every decade, in all advanced economies, a focus on export competitiveness tends to erode living standards and distracts policymakers from a more beneficial emphasis on productivity. If governments want to increase their economies' share of global production in high-value-added sectors or, better still, create new such products and sectors, then the policy goal should be to increase competitive pressure upon an economy's own businesses. In spite of the frequently cited examples of export-led growth for some developing countries, there is mounting evidence that the benefits to growth of countries' engagement in trade are attributable to openness. These include: the direct benefits of importing lower prices and greater variety; the efficiency gains from challenging (rather than protecting) domestic businesses; and policy choices that contribute to a broadly liberal and market-orientated framework across the economy. Exports taken on their own, the usual narrower target of competitiveness policy, are not correlated with average per capita income growth. A focus on export competitiveness usually leads to actively harmful policies, beyond simply wasted resources and rhetoric. If exports are the public criterion of economic success, policymakers can meet that goal only by self-destructive means: depreciating a country's currency, thus eroding the purchasing power and the accumulated wealth of citizens; depressing wages in export sectors, either directly or through relative deflation vis-a-vis trading partners, thus cutting real incomes and domestic demand; subsidising or protecting exporting companies, thus distorting investment decisions and locking in old technologies and businesses at the expense of new entrants; or promoting national champions, thus increasing both wasteful public spending and the costs to domestic households and businesses.

**Economic competition devastates the planet and increases poverty – ethical imperative to vote negative**

**Costa, 99 –** Founder, Centre for Ethical Orientation, a Toronto-based consultancy working with business, the public sector and non-government groups to foster ethical excellence in operations and outcomes. (John Dalla, “The Ethical Imperative: Why Moral Leadership is Good Business,” May 21, 1999, pg. 60//***HO***

There are several lessons in this. When we workers accuse senior managers of making business decisions free of any moral reference point, we are pointing out not an anomaly in their position but something we share with them. Another lesson, one more difficult to learn, is that the already great and growing investment in the economic dimensions of human life are in many ways abnegating the very meaning derived from spirituality. The compounding worries about protecting jobs and surviving economic upheaval have only intensified the selfishness that most religions castigate and all spirituality opposes. We draw much of our meaning and spiritual awe from nature, yet unrelenting economic expediency is devastating the natural environment. We draw identity, duty and moral worth from social interaction, yet accelerating economic competitiveness causes us to tolerate more and more poverty, inequality and injustice. Johan Galtung describes the culture of homo economicus as a “syndrome” that “not only detaches the individuals from each other by making the single individual the supreme decision-maker (egocentrism), but also detaches the satisfiers (goods/services) from each other as objects to be possessed and consumed one by one.” Though we seek God, we settle for mammon. Though we long for “family values,” we will not devote the time to them. Though we crave for belonging, we opt for the radical individuality of “cocooning.” The lesson is that our obsession for the economic is not something that can be managed apart from or in parallel with our spiritual sensibilities. If they are not integrated, then they are inevitably at odds. If they do not work as complements, then the economic inevitably erodes the spiritual.

## **Environment/ Global Warming**

Prioritizing competitiveness forces developing countries to further damage the environment – that makes solving warming impossible

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This paper argues that climate change is more than environmental degradation but concerns economic security dynamics as well. That is why developing countries are demanding access to the rich world's capital to help pay for anything that is climate related, from sea walls to lighting deforestation to building low-carbon cities with good public transport and efficient buildings. That is also why Singapore has rejected emission cuts unless others do likewise, for fear of losing its competitive edge since emission cuts are costly and would adversely affect its economy, particularly the heavily relied-upon manufacturing sector. Climate change has to be integrated and internalized with the larger development process. The problem we face today is to arrive at a consensus in dealing with environmental problems in a way that reconciles national and global interests. The analysis presented in this paper can be used to highlight the following implications. First, it is evident that a hegemonic power, such as the United States, is no longer able to impose policies on national economies through unilateral force. The United Nations also lacks independent authority, as it depends exclusively on the collective decisions of states. The only effective actors are the multiplicity of nation states, which remain preoccupied with economic growth and committed to putting their own interests first. They may be prepared to record high structural unemployment for the sake of their economic prospects, but not to achieve a better environmental outcome for the citizens of the world. Secondly, an appreciation of the new approach to economic nationalism is useful. This approach suggests that policy change needs to be objectively analyzed in terms of whether it is likely to promote the interests of the nation through active but calculated and selective involvement in global efforts to deal with social dilemmas. While economic nationalism inevitably creates tension among nation states, it is also a reason for embracing a regional and global approach to dealing with climate change and environmental problems. The new approach to economic nationalism serves as a useful framework for explaining the connection between economic growth and environmental protection. Thirdly, it is pertinent and imperative to establish an agreed-upon methodology to measure the relationship between national economic wealth and environmental protection initiatives. Because economic interests matter, it is necessary, at the local and global levels, to ascertain the costs and benefits of' actions in order to devise a win-win situation. Economic motivation requires commitment from developed countries to lead the way, not only in cutting their own emissions levels, but also in offering financial assistance and technological know-how to their poorer counterparts to transit the latter onto the clean development path.

**The affs competitive discourse causes environmental degradation – policy makers view the environment as the ‘business environment’ where competition and growth comes before environment responsibility. Killing long turn sustainability and turning the case.**

**Bristow 10** – Associate Director @ the Cardiff University, Cardiff School of Social Studies for Regional economic development with a BA First Class economic and a Phd from Cardiff. (“Resilient Regions: re-‘place’ing Regional Competitiveness”. Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy, and Society. Pg 161)//AA

The placelessness of the competitiveness discourse also has other signiﬁcant implications—implications which directly threaten the resilience of regions. The discourse of de-contextualised competitiveness fails to address the question of sustainability or the environmental costs of globally mobile ﬁrms and resources (Bristow and Wells, 2005; Hudson, 2008a). In fact, the pursuit of this notion of competitiveness works to constrain the possibility of developing more positive policies in relation to the environment. As Purcell (2009, 145) observes, ‘‘a polity that values the environment, for example, might feel it cannot make a strong environmental policy (e.g. signing on to Kyoto) because it would make the area less competitive. The neoliberal claim is that competition is a question of life and death’’. Regions feel they must be competitive or die. Strategies based on more sustainable development approaches then look very optional in the face of the competitive and global struggle for survival. This reﬂects the economically reductionist conception of development that lies at the heart of the competitiveness discourse. The discourse focuses on the narrowly microeconomic and emphasises the efﬁciency of individual ﬁrms. It also views the production process in a linear fashion whereby ‘end of pipe’ wastes are ultimately to be disposed of as ‘externalities’ (Hudson, 2005). Similarly, the discourse deﬁnes the ‘environment’ in terms of the microeconomic business environment, thus ignoring the broader ecological and material limits and capacities of a region. This creates short-termist, growth-ﬁrst approaches to development creating scenarios whereby a region becomes competitive today by depleting and denuding its physical environment, thereby limiting its competitiveness for tomorrow (Bristow and Wells, 2005).

The necessity to maintain “competiveness” in the green tech sector is a false narrative constructed by failing domestic businesses, framing the climate crisis in terms of economic nationalism makes it more difficult to solve.

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What most commentators fail to appreciate, however, is that this renewed focus on growth and competitiveness is not only misleading the American public, it also poses a profound threat to the world economy and the billions of people who are still struggling to make their way out of poverty. The specter of economic nationalism looms large behind the desperate attempt to reframe the climate crisis in terms of innovation and competiveness. Late last year, Fareed Zakaria compared America's global reputation to "a star that still looks bright in the farthest reaches of the universe but has burned out at the core." Businessweek reported an American CEO as saying that "the rest of the world is chewing us alive," in conclusion to which it argued that the 'might' of the U.S. manufacturing sector has eroded to that of a developing country. Thomas Friedman, in the meantime, is wondering who is asleep now, and has begun publicly fantasizing what the U.S. might look like if it could be China for a day. Across the board, the obsession with the Asian rise to power, and in particular the Chinese challenge to U.S. hegemony (which at times borders on sinophobic tendencies), has gone hand-in-hand with loss of self-esteem and a pervasive sense that everything in the U.S. is going downhill. The conclusion of most Americans is straightforward: "we're not good enough." The solution of most self-proclaimed experts is just as simple: "we need to become better at stuff." This view is not only very self-deprecating - it is utterly misleading as well. America today finds itself in the middle of possibly the most significant economic transformation in its young history: the transition to a clean-energy, post-industrial economy. To judge the solidity of that economy on the basis of outdated concepts like manufacturing productivity entirely misses the point. With the advent of the knowledge economy and the network society, the very nature of wealth creation was radically altered. The future well-being of U.S. citizens no longer hinges on technological advances alone. Human and social capital, rather than the physical capital that underpinned the Fordist assembly lines, have become the crucial determinants of post-industrial wealth creation. Hence, the key investments of the future will be in education, not in manufacturing. Surely we need an unfathomable amount of solar panels, wind mills and electric vehicles to bridge the transition to a sustainable economy and avert the worst effects of climate change. There is a very powerful argument to be made for epic government investment in these sectors, particularly on the level of infrastructure (think smart super grids and plug-in recharge depots, for example). But why does the U.S. necessarily have to engage in a fierce competitive struggle to gain dominance over these sectors, if it might as well let others develop those technologies at cheaper cost? Would it not be a much more logical division of labor if we found a balance between Asia doing most of the manufacturing, and the West continuing to expand on its knowledge economy? There are two groups of people who would strongly disagree here. First of all, the wealthy industrialists who failed to adapt to changing markets - most notably the American car industry - will find their factories either outsourced to foreign countries or taken over by foreign firms, so they have a great stake in a public project to revamp America's flailing manufacturing sector. Secondly, the workers in those factories who are laid off over time and find themselves unable to find a new job in a different sector also have a strong interest in promoting the idea of 'green collar jobs'. Now what pundits like Zakaria and Friedman are doing, is forging an unholy alliance with these failed industrialists and laid-off workers, in order to come to a corporatist, neo-mercantilist compromise that would see the creation of a heavily government-subsidized U.S. manufacturing sector stealing jobs back from China and other countries in the developing world. This has nothing to do with progressive climate politics. It is economic nationalism. Unlike the doomsday theories of those who like to equate China's rise with America's inevitable downfall, the truth is that there is still more than enough money to go round in the United States, and this is unlikely to change anytime soon. American annual GDP per capita sits at $46,400, compared to China's $6,600 (adjusted for purchasing power parity). Yet we somehow have the conceit to challenge this poor country's rise to modernity as a fundamental threat to our 'innovative edge'? Worldwide, billions of people are knockin' on modernity's door, and all we can think of is how to use massive public investments in green-tech to slam the door shut just when they are about to come in? Rather than staging a new global competition with Chinese workers for long-lost manufacturing jobs, Americans would do well to stage a competition with their own elites in demanding a healthier sense of redistributive justice and more investment in public education. This way, workers who lose their jobs due to outsourcing fall into a social safety net rather than into abject poverty, and they can be directly retrained to take up positions in more economically relevant sectors. A more expansive social system that shifts money from the American aristocracy to the American people seems a lot fairer than a form of economic nationalism that shifts jobs from poor Asians to relatively rich Americans. It also seems to be the only way to create the much needed economic breathing space for our brothers and sisters in the developing world to catch up, while simultaneously allowing us to solve the climate crisis in the most cost effective way.

## Imperialism

**Competitiveness mirrors imperialism – the affirmative brackets off non-modern forms of life in the search for a stronger economy**

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It is impossible to avoid the parallels between this argument and the key postulates of modernisation theory whereby development could only be achieved through overcoming the irrational and stultifying eﬀects of ‘traditional’ cultures and social institutions. 30 It also reﬂects the earlier concerns of colonial administrators to reform their subjects in a manner that could summon forth an abstract, liberal citizenry, suitably endowed with rationality in public and private aﬀairs, from amid a sea of suﬀocating cultural particularities and mores. 31 In all three modernisation scripts the central object of reform is constructed as a cultural residue embodied in the resistant yet ultimately malleable subjects of the (post)colonial world. The essence of this project is therefore concerned with disabling ‘nonmodern’ forms of life by dismantling their conditions and putting in place new conditions to produce governing eﬀects on conduct. As David Scott argues, modern power ‘seeks to arrange and re-arrange these conditions (both discursive and non-discursive) so as to oblige subjects to transform themselves in a certain, that is improving, direction’. 32 Yet, despite the omnipotence often aﬀorded to modern power in such readings, it is pertinent to ask why the project of modernisation continually proves to be so fragile. In the provocative phrasing of Dipesh Chakrabarty, ‘Why should modernity still await us in India, more than two hundred years after its career was launched in India by European imperialism? How long does it take for an Indian to become modern?’. 33 As the World Bank is acutely aware, the supposed ‘cultural residue’ of ‘pre-capitalist’ social relations continues to interrupt or pollute the emergence of what the neo-institutionalist framework would term rationally ordered domains of social life. Despite incessant governmental interventions to construct them, the boundaries between ‘economy’, ‘culture’ and ‘politics’ are ambiguous, fragile and repeatedly fractured. Indeed, in moments of crisis, such as the current ﬁnancial debacle, such fetishised social forms collapse, precipitating a raft of discursive and governmental practices to attempt to refortify such distinctions symbolically and materially. 34

The drive for global economic domination is a false necessity enabled by American imperialism that can only result in human annihilation

Mészáros ’03 [1 June 2003, Monthly Review, István Mészáros, Hungarian Marxist philosopher, and Professor Emeritus at the University of Sussex. He held the Chair of Philosophy at Sussex for fifteen years and was earlier Professor of Philosophy and Social Science for four years at York University. “Militarism and the Coming Wars,” http://monthlyreview.org/2003/06/01/militarism-and-the-coming-wars, AZhang]

Here we can see the contradictory relationship between a historical contingency—American capital finding itself in its preponderant position at the present time—and the structural necessity of the capital system itself. The latter can be summed up as capital’s irrepressible material drive to monopolistic global integration at whatever cost, even if it means directly endangering the very survival of humanity. Thus, even if one can successfully counter at the political plane the force of the now prevalent American historical contingency—which was preceded by other imperialist configurations in the past and may well be followed by others in the future (if we can survive, that is, the present explosive dangers)—the structural or systemic necessity emanating from capital’s ultimately global monopolistic logic remains as pressing as ever before. For whatever particular form a future historical contingency may assume, the underlying systemic necessity is bound to remain the drive to global domination. The question is, therefore, not simply the given militaristic ventures of some political circles—militaristic ventures, that is, which could be tackled and successfully overcome at the political/military level. The causes are much more deep-seated and cannot be countered without introducing quite fundamental changes in the innermost systemic determinations of capital as a mode of social metabolic control—of overall reproduction—which embraces not only the economic and political/military domains but also the most mediated cultural and ideological interrelations. Even the expression “military-industrial complex”— introduced in a critical sense by President Eisenhower who knew a thing or two about it—clearly indicates that what we are concerned with is something much more firmly grounded and tenacious than some direct political/military determinations (and manipulations) which could be in principle reversed at that level. War as the “continuation of politics by other means” will always threaten us within the present framework of society, and by now with total annihilation. It will threaten us for as long as we are unable to confront the systemic determinations at the roots of political decision making, which made necessary in the past the adventure of wars. Such determinations trapped the various national states in the vicious circle of politics leading to wars, bringing with them intensified antagonistic politics that had to explode in more and ever bigger wars. Take away from the picture, for the sake of argument rather optimistically, the historical contingency of today’s American capital, and you are still left with the systemic necessity of capital’s ever more destructive production order, which brings to the fore the changing but increasingly more perilous specific historical contingencies. Militarist production, today primarily embodied in the “military industrial complex,” is not an independent entity, regulated by autonomous militaristic forces which are then also responsible for wars. Rosa Luxemburg was the first to put these relations in their proper perspective, way back in 1913, in her classic book, The Accumulation of Capital, published in English fifty years later. She prophetically underlined ninety years ago the growing importance of militarist production, pointing out that, Capital itself ultimately controls this automatic and rhythmic movement of militarist production through the legislature and a press whose function is to mould so-called “public opinion.” That is why this particular province of capitalist accumulation seems capable of infinite expansion (Routledge, London, 1963, p. 466). We are, thus, concerned with a set of interdeterminations which must be viewed as parts of an organic system. If we want to fight war as a mechanism of global government, as we must, in order to safeguard our very existence, then we have to situate the historical changes that have taken place in the last few decades in their proper causal framework. The design of one overpowering national state controlling all of the others, following the imperatives emanating from capital’s logic, can only lead to humanity’s suicide**.** At the same time it must be also recognized that the seemingly insoluble contradiction between national aspirations—exploding from time to time in devastating antagonisms—and internationalism can only be resolved if regulated on a fully equitable basis, which is totally inconceivable in capital’s hierarchically structured order. In conclusion, therefore, in order to envisage a historically viable answer to the challenges posed by the present phase of global hegemonic imperialism, we must counter the systemic necessity of capital for globally subjugating labor through whichever particular social agency can assume the role assigned to it under the circumstances. Naturally, this is feasible only through a radically different alternative to capital’s drive to monopolistic/imperialist globalization, in the spirit of the socialist project, embodied in a progressively unfolding mass movement. For only when it becomes an irreversible reality that “patria es humanidad,” to say it with JosE9 Marti’s beautiful words, only then can the destructive contradiction between material development and humanly rewarding political relations be permanently consigned to the past.

## Nationalism/Global War

The frame of economic nationalism as a justification for policy-making triggers a great power war with Russia and China, global instability, and economic collapse

Patrick ’09 [13 March 2009, [Stewart Patrick](http://nationalinterest.org/profile/stewart-patrick), senior fellow and director of the Program on International Institutions and Global Governance at the Council on Foreign Relations, “Protecting Free Trade,” http://nationalinterest.org/article/protecting-free-trade-3060, AZhang]

President Obama and his foreign counterparts should reflect on the lessons of the 1930s-and the insights of Cordell Hull. The longest-serving secretary of state in American history (1933-1944), Hull helped guide the United States through the Depression and World War II. He also understood a fundamental truth: "When goods move, soldiers don't." In the 1930s, global recession had catastrophic political consequences-in part because policymakers took exactly the wrong approach. Starting with America's own Smoot Hawley Tariff of 1930, the world's major trading nations tried to insulate themselves by adopting inward looking protectionist and discriminatory policies. The result was a vicious, self-defeating cycle of tit-for-tat retaliation. As states took refuge in prohibitive tariffs, import quotas, export subsidies and competitive devaluations, international commerce devolved into a desperate competition for dwindling markets. Between 1929 and 1933, the value of world trade plummeted from $50 billion to $15 billion. Global economic activity went into a death spiral, exacerbating the depth and length of the Great Depression. The economic consequences of protectionism were bad enough. The political consequences were worse. As Hull recognized, global economic fragmentation lowered standards of living, drove unemployment higher and increased poverty-accentuating social upheaval and leaving destitute populations "easy prey to dictators and desperadoes." The rise of Nazism in Germany, fascism in Italy and militarism in Japan is impossible to divorce from the economic turmoil, which allowed demagogic leaders to mobilize support among alienated masses nursing nationalist grievances. Open economic warfare poisoned the diplomatic climate and exacerbated great power rivalries, raising, in Hull's view, "constant temptation to use force, or threat of force, to obtain what could have been got through normal processes of trade." Assistant Secretary William Clayton agreed: "Nations which act as enemies in the marketplace cannot long be friends at the council table." This is what makes growing protectionism and discrimination among the world's major trading powers today so alarming. In 2008 world trade declined for the first time since 1982. And despite their pledges, seventeen G-20 members have adopted significant trade restrictions. "Buy American" provisions in the U.S. stimulus package have been matched by similar measures elsewhere, with the EU ambassador to Washington declaring that "Nobody will take this lying down." Brussels has resumed export subsidies to EU dairy farmers and restricted imports from the United States and China. Meanwhile, India is threatening new tariffs on steel imports and cars; Russia has enacted some thirty new tariffs and export subsidies. In a sign of the global mood, WTO antidumping cases are up 40 percent since last year. Even less blatant forms of economic nationalism, such as banks restricting lending to "safer" domestic companies, risk shutting down global capital flows and exacerbating the current crisis. If unchecked, such economic nationalism could raise diplomatic tensions among the world's major powers. At particular risk are U.S. relations with China, Washington's most important bilateral interlocutor in the twenty-first century. China has called the "Buy American" provisions "poison"-not exactly how the Obama administration wants to start off the relationship. U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner's ill-timed comments about China's currency "manipulation" and his promise of an "aggressive" U.S. response were not especially helpful either, nor is Congress' preoccupation with "unfair" Chinese trade and currency practices. For its part, Beijing has responded to the global slump by rolling back some of the liberalizing reforms introduced over the past thirty years. Such practices, including state subsidies, collide with the spirit and sometimes the law of open trade. The Obama administration must find common ground with Beijing on a coordinated response, or risk retaliatory protectionism that could severely damage both economies and escalate into political confrontation. A trade war is the last thing the United States needs, given that China holds $1 trillion of our debt and will be critical to solving flashpoints ranging from Iran to North Korea. In the 1930s, authoritarian great-power governments responded to the global downturn by adopting more nationalistic and aggressive policies. Today, the economic crisis may well fuel rising nationalism and regional assertiveness in emerging countries. Russia is a case in point. Although some predict that the economic crisis will temper Moscow's international ambitions, evidence for such geopolitical modesty is slim to date. Neither the collapse of its stock market nor the decline in oil prices has kept Russia from flexing its muscles from Ukraine to Kyrgyzstan. While some expect the economic crisis to challenge Putin's grip on power, there is no guarantee that Washington will find any successor regime less nationalistic and aggressive Beyond generating great power antagonism, misguided protectionism could also exacerbate political upheaval in the developing world. As Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair recently testified, the downturn has already aggravated political instability in a quarter of the world's nations. In many emerging countries, including important players like South Africa, Ukraine and Mexico, political stability rests on a precarious balance. Protectionist policies could well push developing economies and emerging market exporters over the edge. In Pakistan, a protracted economic crisis could precipitate the collapse of the regime and fragmentation of the state. No surprise, then, that President Obama is the first U.S. president to receive a daily economic intelligence briefing, distilling the security implications of the global crisis.

## **Racism/Social Inequality**

The affirmative’s narrative of competition spills over to military competition and justifies racism

Saito, 97 – Associate Professor of Georgia State University College of Law (Natsu Taylor, “Alien and Non-Alien Alike: Citizenship, "Foreignness," and Racial Hierarchy in American Law” Oregon Law Review, Vol. 72 Issue 2, Summer 1997 // JH)

The model minority myth has also created a paper tiger, or false threat. The perception of Asians-as-enemy is never far from popular consciousness: [f]rom precipitating the breakup of the Beatles to bringing the U.S, auto industry to the brink of disaster to "sneak attacks" on the Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich's mother to perpetuating revisionist history (gasp) by suggesting that the 25th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki may be something less than an unalloyed moment of joyous patriotism. One pervasive theme in this "enemy" imagery is the conflation of economic competition and military threat. Today’s yellow peril appears "in the threat of ‘Japan, lnc.,' the so-called ‘Pacific Century,' and the rise of the East and the decline of the West.” The danger in creating such a paper tiger is not simply that Asian Americans are, as a result, the target of hostility and resentment. They also become a target upon whom racial and economic tensions can be vented without any real changes being made to underlying racial and economic relationships. Kathryn Imahara has described this process: This country depends on immigrant labor to pick the produce in the fields, work long hours for little pay in sewing factories, wash dirty laundry, care for children, clean homes and hotel rooms, wash dishes in restaurants, and tend gardens. But when the economy goes into a recession, government leaders prefer to see immigrants, most of whom are at the very bottom of the socio-economic ladder, fight amongst themselves for the lowest of jobs because scrutiny is shifted away from inept and racist government policies. Thus, this paper tiger distracts attention from more fundamental problems in our legal, economic, and social structure. Asian Americans have been effectively raced as foreign. This allows them to be used as cheap and disposable labor, turned into an instant enemy, whether economic or military, and held up as a model minority in a way that masks real issues of discrimination and violence and pits Asian Americans against other minorities. These phenomena, in turn, help maintain the racial hierarchy and economic stratification that exist in the United States. While the legal system has aided in the creation of this presumption of foreignness, the discrimination that results from the presumption is often unlawful. The next section examines existing legal remedies and proposes changes addressing their inadequacies.

Competitive discourse is a inscribed in racist assumptions of American superiority and is used by neoconservatives to strengthen tyrannical state power

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It is doubtful whether neoconservatism represents a break from neoliberalism that is significant enough to distinguish the two perspectives within the power bloc. An intrinsic incompatibility is not expressed if, for example, the ideal of the (laissez-faire) state is conceptualized differently in Chicago School economic theory (in which the state's proper role is reduced to maintaining a rudimentary system of rules that can guarantee access to "free" markets) and Straussian political philosophy (which stresses the requirement of a nationally cohesive authoritarian state led by a beneficial tyranny) that must establish a solid moral order and ensure the defense of Western civilization). The relationship between the two positions is revealing in that the chief intellectuals identified with the neocons (e.g., Francis Fukuyama, Samuel P. Huntington, Robert Kagan, and William Kristol), though they frequently disagree in public on matters of philosophy and policy, are united by their enthusiasm for neoliberal economics. Giving continuity to the U.S. ruling class is a belief in a neoliberal market standard of civilization and in the leading role of the U.S. in securing this standard of civilization, by force if necessary. The more brutal and coercive form of capitalist rule that is currently being reconfigured, then, is less concerned with liberal tropes of prosperity, representation, and freedom than with asserting a universal (neoliberal) market standard of civilization. Since the birth of the U.S. state, the central legitimating myth has been the assumption that the U.S. had adopted the mantle of the guardian of Western civilization. The genocides of indigenous populations that enabled European colonization of the Americas, particularly in North America, were committed with reference to a "chosen people" mythology derived from the Christian Bible. Central to this mythology is the idea that the U.S. inherited from the Europeans the guardianship of Western civilization. As Amin (2004: 63) notes, "thereafter, the United States extended to the whole planet its project of realizing the work that 'God' had commanded it to carry out." The chosen-people myth formed the basis of the Manifest Destiny doctrine; it was particularly influential in the post-World War II period, especially in George Kennan's writings. Recent neocon texts express this view, by contrasting the willingness with which the U.S. defends Western civilization with the spinelessness of "old" Europe (see Kagan, 2003). The core legitimating narrative for U.S. imperialism, then, is the claim that the U.S. is uniquely placed to guarantee peace and stability, and to provide leadership for the weak, backward, wayward rest of the world; this "chosen people" myth allows the U.S. to stake claims to global economic leadership and American exceptionalism (Said, 1993: 343-349). The program first set out by the neocon pressure group – the Project for the New American Century – has now been fully realized in Afghanistan and Iraq and has taken American exceptionalism to new heights. Seeking to use a full complement of diplomatic, political, and military efforts to preserve and extend "an international order friendly to our security, our prosperity, and our principles," the program represents a profoundly nationalist stance that expresses U.S. preemptive strategy in terms derived from a "chosen people" myth. Legitimacy for U.S. global hegemony at this juncture is based upon a patriotism that reasserts the U.S. as the guardian of Western civilization. Two features of hegemonic rule, the economy and nationhood, characterize the political moment at the heart of the Imperium that is often "blamed" upon a neocon cabal. It is the neolib economic doctrine, wedded to a strengthening of patriotic allegiances to the United States. This moment of political leadership in the U.S. invokes loyalty to the nation-state as an explicit means of strengthening a particular form of market capitalism and uses the market to strengthen allegiance to particularly violent and authoritarian forms of state power. It seeks a commitment to supporting the coercive responses of national states and the uninterrupted progress of the global market as twin bulwarks against terrorism.

This economic competitiveness discourse of transportation infrastructure widens exclusionary social hierarchies that renders the poor invisible and immobile, vulnerable to domination of wealthy elites

Baeten 2K [Guy Baeten, Ph.D. from the University of Oxford and currently Professor of Human Geography at Lund University, Sweden, “The Tragedy of the Highway: Empowerment, Disempowerment and the Politics of Sustainability Discourses and Practices,” European Planning Studies, 8:1, pp. 83-84, 2000, Taylor and Francis, online, AZhang]

Transport inequalities, transport exclusion and transport poverty are social issues in transport planning which have been highly neglected and underestimated. Transport exclusion implies that the already disempowered segments of society are further disadvantaged by the lack of control they can exert over transport supply (irrespective of transport modes), so that they are deprived of basic levels of transport opportunities. The mobile wealthy, in contrast, see their control over moving across space—and therefore, by implication, their control over socio- economic conditions in society—confirmed and reinforced by the current mobility system. Adams (1996, p. 13) describes the problem of transport inequality as follows: Even when they live in close physical proximity to each other, the mobile wealthy and the immobile poor live in different worlds. The poor are confined by their lack of mobility in prisons with invisible walls. They are continually tempted and taunted, in a way that prisoners confined to cells with opaque walls are not, by the freedom and conspicuous consumption of the affluent. The wealthy can be seen and heard flying overhead, or driving along motorways through the ghetto, or on television, enjoying privileges that remain tantalisingly out of reach. To the wealthy the poor are invisible; because of the height and speed at which they travel, the wealthy tend to see the world at a lower level of resolution. Neither economists nor spatial planners have seriously addressed the matter of socio-spatial polarization between the mobile wealthy and the immobile poor. On the contrary, current transport policy discourses and practices widen the gap between the mobile wealthy and the immobile poor, because they fail to take into account the socio-economic consequences of proposed policy measures. If the proposed restrictions and repressions (like the introduction of road pricing) are to be realized, then the most important consequence will probably be that moving across space will not only be privatized but also that the mobile wealthy will strengthen their grip on the future appearance of the mobility system. The mobile wealthy will be further privileged in their access to transport facilities, without any guarantee that either the congestion or pollution problems will be solved. Nobody will applaud this transport redistribution from poor to rich, but it is remarkable to see how the issue of growing transport inequalities is absent in dominant transport discourses. The mobile wealthy incessantly make their ‘wish-list’ known through the media, lobbying and scientific reports, demanding, for example, mitigation of traffic congestion, traffic calming in residential areas, more traffic safety in the vicinity of schools and impeccable international accessibility of large cities. Transport exclusion does not belong to this hegemonic hierarchy of transport issues. Through it, the immobile poor’s travel behaviour is suppressed, stigmatized or downright forbidden, so that they end up in a disempowering spiral of transport exclusion. In Belgium, and probably in other countries too, the stigma of ‘drinking and driving’ has become so strongly associated with youngsters partying on weekend evenings, that it is difficult to imagine that adults equally drive under the influence of drugs and alcohol during the week. From time to time, the issue of health-tests for the car-driving elderly emerge in the media and in policy recommendations. Poor road safety has incrementally, but very effectively, brought about a so-called ‘back-seat generation’ of children whose independent mobility is systematically postponed. In this way, current mobility discourses and practices lead to a purification of the transport system, wherein the mobile wealthy increase the power they already exerted over transport infrastructures, while others, or them, are excluded through discursive practices, transport policies and subtle but effective financial mechanisms. The mobile wealthy have taken on a revanchist offensive to regain control over congested highways, subsidized transport and unrestrained use of public space and streets. Sustainable transport rhetoric does not address the deeply conflicting character of transport planning. Underneath the surface of planning practices, there is a continuous struggle between opposed interest groups which does not fit into the sustainability discourse trying to reconcile ecology and economy. The harmonizing, con􏲀 ict-avoiding and soothing vocabulary of sustainability is seriously shattered when confronted with real con􏲀ict situations and the exertion of power, resulting in processes of inclusion and exclusion, of empowerment and disempowerment. In the Brundtland report, the introduction of more democratic procedures to address the basic needs of the poor was seen as a necessary condition for the realization of ‘sustainable development’. In sharp contrast with this statement, planners, ecologists and economists alike have developed discourses and practices which contribute to the further exclusion of the already disempowered groups of society. It is time to re-insert these questions of inequality and poverty into transport planning, theory and practice. If questions of social justice in the debate and praxis of mobility are not again put high on the agenda, it may force itself on to the political platform very soon by means other than words. (Swyngedouw, 1993, p. 324)

A competitive view of the world is used to sustain racial hierarchies of superiority, representing the Third World as the losers of the international system

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Another way in which images of broadband as a race have been constructed over the years has been in explicit and broad references to the term ‘Third World’. Such references are interesting because they do not actually point attention to specific places or specific technological infrastructures. Rather, the term ‘Third World’ is summoned as a form of broad and diffuse antithesis: to signify what Aotearoa New Zealand ought not to be and to raise the spectre of a potential ‘backward slide’ that in turn motivates calls to action. Rosemarie Howard, CEO of Telecom’s chief rival, Telstra, used this form of the race metaphor to push her company’s interests: Telecom’s ‘Internet monopoly’ was limiting users to ‘Third World Internet connection speeds.’ ‘If you look where we are in the OECD rankings, that’s where we are,’ said Howard, pointing out that New Zealand was destined to join Mexico as the only OECD country not to open the incumbent telco’s copper loop to competitors. (Griffin, 2004) The clear implication is that falling behind in the race meant being categorized with other ‘losers’ – Third World countries and Mexico, which is clearly not where Aotearoa New Zealand should be. Thus, latently derogatory references to the Third World not only construct broadband development in terms of race, but are themselves raced. Latently racist phobia about the Third World is expressed by a range of actors, who construct the Third World as being technologically and culturally inferior to Aotearoa New Zealand. Such phobia is evident in a range of public debates in the country (Kurian and Munshi, 2006), and is clearly evident in discussions on broadband. For instance, the Telecommunication Users Association of New Zealand (TUANZ) has also repeatedly tapped into Third World phobia in Aotearoa New Zealand. TUANZ head Ernie Newman said in 2007 that ‘the reason that we’ve been getting on to Third-World infrastructure in this industry is that people have not been reinvesting’ (New Zealand Herald, 2007a). Andduring the 2004 Call4Challenge campaign to break Telecom’s ‘monopoly’ of the local loop, which was orchestrated by a number of Telecom’s competitors as well as the TUANZ, Telstra chief executive, Ziggy Switkowski, said ‘the regulator has to make access [to the local loop] available at reasonable rates – New Zealand is left with only two or three Third World economies in not having taken that step’ (O’Sullivan, 2004). Some implications of the race metaphor are in order here. First, taken together, OECD rankings and references to ‘the Third World’ help construct an image of broadband development in Aotearoa New Zealand as an international race, and, in turn, this leads one to the question of what this international race is towards, and what particular problems are solved by the growth of broadband. Raising these questions is not to say that broadband growth is unimportant; rather, they help further highlight how particular sets of commercial interests are able to set up the growth of telecommunications systems as a matter of broad national importance. Second, deconstructing the race metaphor helps in further understanding how metaphors can serve to reify and disguise complexities involved in telecommunications growth. For instance, the fact that OECD rankings are presented and discussed in univariate and linear terms is problematic in that they communicate absolute, rigid and hierarchical differences between countries, whereas there may be little meaningful difference between No. 1 and 4, or 20 and 22 (indeed, the difference between leaders such as Denmark or the Netherlands is marginal). In this way, rankings take attention away from inherent complexities, contradictions and parallels in technology growth, its transformative relationship with culture, and ways in which it alters everyday life and work. Third, and following from the above point, the race metaphor constructs anxieties about national identity by highlighting fictively hierarchical and competitive relationships among nations. The race creates hierarchies by establishing winners and losers, and inferior and superior participants. The OECD rankings pit Aotearoa New Zealand against an inner club of wealthy, developed and largely European countries in which many New Zealanders would like to claim legitimate membership; simultaneously, the rankings also appear as public illustrations that this membership is questionable. Further, the rhetorical construction of Aotearoa New Zealand against the Third World is emblematic of a deep postcolonial insecurity in national identity that continues to otherize former European colonies. After all, falling down the OECD rankings brings Aotearoa New Zealand closer to Third World status. The race metaphor serves as a base upon which more specific discussions about competition, both domestic and international, are built. In a sense, unpacking the race metaphor serves to expose an important motivation for broadband development: the achievement of a secure and prestigious national identity. Thus, the race identifies an important end to which broadband development contributes. However, competition also enters the discussion as the means to that end, but its role is more complex, as we discuss later.

**Competitiveness discourse justifies killing those seen as unfit/unproductive**

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Schoenberger (1998) provides an interesting departure point for the first of these. She argues that the competitiveness discourse has two sources from which it takes its power. Firstly, it is rooted in orthodox economics, in which the market ultimately judges behaviour; thus “competitiveness simply describes the result of responding correctly to market signals” (3), and “becomes inescapably associated with ideas of fitness and unfitness ... ‘deserving to live’ and ‘deserving to die’” (4). Secondly, it is rooted in the business community. Here the term competitiveness is “an essential value and an essential validation” (4), used as an explanation for any strategic action, without which the firm will lose out to competitors and ultimately die. Thus competitiveness is deeply rooted in a dialogue of success and failure, existence and extinction, and by implication direct win-lose competition.

## Securitization

**The rhetoric of competitiveness is a paradoxical fear-mongering construction of imaginary threats that reflects a hegemonic goal to dominate the world economy**

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Roi Abdelaziz, Jeddah, Arabie Saoudite, “Myth And Paradox Of “U.S. Competitiveness” Debate From The End Of World War II To Nowadays,” pp. 19-21, [www.greqam.fr/IMG/working\_papers/1999/99c07.pdf](http://www.greqam.fr/IMG/working_papers/1999/99c07.pdf), AZhang]

The myth, known for long time to the anthropologists, is not subordinated to a logical rule. Indeed, how do we explain that the concerns about «U.S. competitiveness» appeared after World War II, whereas the American economy was undeniably the most prosperous in the world ? What a «paradox» to see the Americans in a state of doubt to maintain their ability to compete precisely just as they have never been in such a powerful position ! The American philosopher George Santayana, Spanish by birth, said that the Americans are not logical people : they subscribe to ideas in accordance to a simple feeling, without certainty or argumentation really logical. A part from this view essentially linked to some psychological considerations, it seems that the Americans had wanted to get frightened and alarm the rest of the world. To remind, virulent criticism of European political leaders towards the huge surplus of the American trade balance. For instance, on the 15th September 1946, Pierre Mendès France declared in “France libre” newspaper : “Today, time has come for the Americans to understand that they have to purchase from the other countries, yet they did not admit that they have to purchase more than they can sell to them”. In this context, the Marshall Plan (1947) and the voluntary appreciation of the dollar (1949) were intended to boost the «competitiveness» of European exportations. From the other side, the foreign direct investments decreased artificially the surplus of the U.S. balance of payments. Besides, the supposed problem of «U.S. competitiveness» must be linked to the lamentations of American manufacturers who as far back as the end of World War II started claiming assistance directly or indirectly from the public, financial, or institutional sectors. Moreover, if we refer to the fact that the debate has been more guided by the indicators than the research of a standard definition, we better understand the controversy over dating the emergence of the concerns about «U.S. competitiveness». In fact, even if there was a register of standard measures, it will be difficult to agree on a «referential» in time and space. Consequently, the debate is necessarily distorted. However, the aforesaid «paradox» gives plenty to think about the lamentations over the erosion of «U.S. competitiveness» that came to justify a patriotic cloak for special political interest. Assuming that the Marxian quotation, extracted from preface of “Capital” (1867, 1975 : 18), “the most manufactured country shows to its followers the image of their own future”, we can see why most of Western European countries wondered about their «international competitiveness». Anyway, the fact that most of countries rushed to know about whether there was a problem of competitiveness is sheer evidence that the subject was not perfectly understood. In the urgent reconstruction of post World War II, we could not think, there is a link between the thought and the time. Thus, the Western European countries let themselves to be trapped by the debate on international competitiveness. In this way, the Americans could use according to their wishes some assistance to their enterprises : sometimes the argument of «national security»21 when it concerned the Soviet Union, and other times the argument of «competitiveness» when it concerned Western Europe or Japan. A number of Americans asserted, indeed, that the «competitiveness» experienced very strongly the influence of the policy led by the State in quoting notably the role played by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry in Japan. To recall, modern protectionism was born in the United States. Alexander Hamilton, who was Secretary of Treasury in the first government of the United States, wrote in 1791 his famous “Report on Manufactures” which is regarded as the first text expressing the modern protectionism theory. Alexander Hamilton seems to have been the first one to use the term «infant industry». As soon as the American products became competitive towards their European rivals, the «infant industry» argument became obsolete. That is why, from 1861 to 1913, the United States resorted to the argument of the American wages protection (Bairoch, 1989). After World War II, the argument of «national competitiveness» came to take over. The lamentations about the decline of «U.S. competitiveness» are a way to rationalize a replacement process of traditional arguments by more adapted instruments to post World War II context. Besides, a such argument imply that in a given time someone else, who can only be the predecessor, is responsible for the decline : it is the strategy adopted by Clinton in his electoral campaign of 1991 against Bush. There is also a motivating aspect : it is necessary to adopt an economic policy which may give “to people its power so that America becomes again competitive and winning”22. However, in the collective imaginary, the Americans remain the champions of free trade. The American competition does not seem problematic : considered as fair and therefore incontestable, it is perceived positively by the opinion. Moreover, the Americans know deep in their hearts that a free competition of markets is not beneficial for them. Talking of that, John Galbraith wrote in the 1950s : “For the Americans, competition is more than a technical concept : it is the symbol of all what is excellent. Even if we know that we cannot survive in a competitive system characterized by a classical purity, we always believe ourselves to bow in front of it altar”23 .

**Empirics prove that zero-sum economics allow elites to justify biopolitical domination in the economy, racism, and power over individual life.**

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The argument in this article, supplementing Foucault’s analysis, is that when we take proper account of colonialism and neocolonialism, it becomes clear that liberal capitalism and neoliberalism are zero-sum-games: in the 19th century, Europe was the ‘winner’ (though massive class inequality remained predominant inside each state, see Engels, 1969 [1887]), while today managerial and wealthy elites across the globe (often in the form of kleptocracies and maﬁa capitalism, Klein, 2008) reap disproportionate beneﬁts from a vaster economy. In ‘Society Must Be Defended’, the politicoeconomic division understood as a zero-sum game doubled as what I would call a politico-ontological division, operated by biopower and the (mutable) ‘discourse of race war’ (2003: 65ff.). Within the frame of biopolitical power, the politico-ontological component of the discourse of power is ﬁgured in terms of racism: In a normalizing society, race or racism is the precondition that makes killing acceptable. . . . So you understand the importance . . . of racism for the exercise of such a power: it is the pre-condition for exercising the right to kill. If the power of normalization wished to exercise the old sovereign right to kill, it must become racist. . . . When I say ‘killing’, I obviously do not mean simply murder as such, but also every form of indirect murder: the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection, and so on. (2003: 256) The latter indicates the elaboration of a new form of power over life, exercised over both populations (migrants, ‘illegal’ refugees, etc.) and individuals (the abnormal, the criminal, the dissident, etc.), a power which has become even more entrenched than it was, institutionalized in new forms of governance and individuation (see Lazzarato, 2009; Terranova, 2009)

**The affirmatives competitive language becomes imbued with the concept of fit to compete and unfit to compete resulting in dying focus (?)**

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The discourse on competitiveness comes from two principal sources and in part its power is their power. In the first instance, it is the discourse of the economics profession which doesn't really need to analyse what it is or what it means socially. The market is the impartial and ultimate arbiter of right behaviour in the economy and competitiveness simply describes the result of responding correctly to market signals. The blandness of this `objective' language conceals the underlying harshness of the metaphor. For Adam Smith, the idea of competition plausibly evoked nothing more disturbing than a horse race in which the losers are not summarily executed. Since then, the close identification of marginalist economics with evolutionary theory has unavoidably imbued the concept with the sense of a life or death struggle (cf. Niehans, 1990). 3 In short, on competitiveness hangs life itself. As Krugman (1994: 31) defines it: `. . . when we say that a corporation is uncompetitive, we mean that its market position is . . . unsustainable that unless it improves its performance it will cease to exist.' As with evolutionary theory, our ability to strip the moral and ethical content from the concepts of life and death is not so great as the self-image of modern science suggests. Competitiveness becomes inescapably associated with ideas of fitness and unfitness, and these in turn with the unstated premise of merit, as in `deserving to live' and `deserving to die'. Secondly, competitiveness is the discourse of the business community and represents both an essential value and an essential validation. More generally, it serves as an allpurpose and unarguable explanation for any behaviour: `We must do X in order to be competitive.' Again, the implied `or else' is death. As hinted, though, the discourse of competitiveness has seeped out beyond these sources and is becoming socially pervasive. University presidents, hospital administrators and government bureaucrats also discourse quite fluently now about competitiveness and its related accoutrements: customers, total quality, flexibility and so forth. It will be objected that competitiveness is a deeply ingrained social category and value in the USA and elsewhere and there is no particular reason to single out economists and business persons as culprits in its dissemination. That objection is true enough, and no doubt contributes to the general power of the discourse since it resonates so well with this broader heritage. But `competitiveness' in the sense of `deserving to live' is not what was commonly meant by this more diffuse social understanding. It is, however, what is meant in economic analysis and business life, and it is increasingly what is meant in other institutional and social settings as well. In my own work, I am constantly engaged in discussions of competitive strategy and competitiveness with the people who run firms. In this context I strive to be a critical and detached interlocutor whose job it is to analyse and interpret ± rather than simply report ± responses to my questions. When I'm talking with people about what it takes for them to be competitive in a particular market, or whatever, I am not especially shy about debating the substance of their answers. That is to say, I will argue with them about whether or not a given strategy is a good way of being competitive and what you really need to do to implement it. But that there is some irreducible category called competitiveness, the fulfilling of which, in extremis, over-rides all other considerations ± that I don't argue about. Or I haven't up to now. I have simply accepted the general idea of competitiveness as the ultimate demonstration of the validity of that behaviour. competitiveness as the ultimate demonstration of the validity of that behaviour. I don't think I'm alone in this. I think it's characteristic of economic geography to assume the categories of competition and competitiveness in order to answer other questions rather than asking what these categories themselves might be about. I think also that an unexamined notion of competitiveness plays an increasingly strong, if not decisive role in many political and institutional debates with enormous consequences for real people. So it is important to try to understand why the concept is so powerful that it enjoys a kind of social immunity. You can discuss what is more and what is less competitive, but you can't call the category into question. Within the academy, the power of the discourse of economics has a lot to do with the social power of the discipline. This, in turn, involves some complicated mix of command over material resources, claims of social utility, a certain amount of proselytizing in other disciplines, asserting a family resemblance with other powerful and `hard' disciplines such as physics by virtue of its mathematized and abstract style of reasoning and so on. Social power, in turn, can be deployed to set a standard of what constitutes `science' in the social sciences against which other forms of social science (e.g., geography) are implicitly or explicitly valued (cf. Clark, 1997). As McCloskey (1985: 82) notes, `The metaphors of economics often carry . . . the authority of Science and . . . its claims to ethical neutrality'. One doesn't have to suppose the least degree of cravenness on the part of other social scientists to imagine that the social norms established in this way gradually become part of the general environment and become more generally valued as they are within economics (Foucault, 1995). Certain practices and ways of thinking, as in a Marshallian industrial district, are `in the air' and we are all hard-pressed to avoid inhaling them. The best evidence of this effect within economic geography that I can think of is actually in the writings of the Marxists within the field, especially in the 1970s and early 1980s. There was a time when none of us could write anything without a lengthy introductory section in which we took great pains to demolish the assumptions and analytical tropes of neoclassical economics. We couldn't leave it alone, and I think it must be the case that the long struggle to valorize an alternative world-view and scientific method has left its mark on all of us. But we're marked in surprisingly subtle ways and it takes real work to see the effects. But economics also derives some of its power from being able to deploy concepts such as competitiveness which have tremendous ideological weight. Market competition is the guarantor of the fairness of the social system as a whole because markets, by the definition of the discipline, are impartial and competitiveness, though a life or death affair, proceeds on a purely technical basis. That is to say, you are not competitive or uncompetitive because of who you are, but merely as a result of how you respond to market signals that provide the same information to everyone. Further, the idea of economic competitiveness meshes so perfectly with evolutionary theory that it takes on exactly the natural and timeless air that makes it so unarguable. The discipline that owns such a concept ± whose discourse this is ± is bound to seem inevitable In sum, the social power of economics within the academic hierarchy helps anchor the power of its discourse which, in true virtuous circle fashion, reinforces the social power of the discipline. On top of all this, the discourse is shared with another extraordinarily powerful social group: the `business community'. The problems of competition, competitive strategy and competitiveness are deeply meaningful to people who run businesses. They really see them as authentic life and death issues and, at the limit, they are right. But there is arguably a broad range of issues and conditions in which life and death are not at stake, but competitiveness is automatically invoked anyway as the unchallengeable and `natural' explanation for what is about to happen. The degree to which this is accepted and even imitated by people in other spheres entirely is remarkable.

## Morality

**Economic competitiveness ignores values in order to avoid competitive disadvantages**

Birch, 06-- Assistant Professor, Department of Social Science, York University, Canada (Kean, “The neoliberal underpinnings of the bioeconomy: The ideological discourses and practices of economic competitiveness”, 2006, http://strathprints.strath.ac.uk/25814/1/neoliberal\_bioeconomy\_GSP.pdf)//GS

Both policy and academic debates define the concept of competitiveness as ‘success’ in international markets. 68 Consequently competitiveness itself represents a discourse that justifies and naturalises the pursuit of specific policies that ensure success in these markets through the (re)constitution of national institutional frameworks. representation of the biosciences as a driver of competitiveness throughout the regional, national and supranational policy discourses can be seen as a process in which biotechnology has been presented as an obvious and perhaps even inevitable solution to such policy concerns. The more recent link between competitiveness and national well-being or healthcare embeds this competitiveness concern in the intrinsic attributes of biotechnology itself so that the previous emphasis on the bioeconomy appears rational and obvious; 69 who does not want better drugs or less pollution after all? Competitiveness can therefore be presented as technologically determined and dependent upon innovation, which leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy as changes made to institutional structures to encourage bioscience innovation benefit all firms and not just national ones. In this way the external threat presented in the competitiveness discourse becomes concrete as external firms can enter newly (institutionally) deregulated markets more easily than firms based in those markets because the latter have to adapt to new institutions whilst the former do not because they have not been embedded in the previous institutional environment. Furthermore the emphasis on the need to continually upgrade technology through innovation in order to compete lead to the gradual expansion and privatisation of global capital as country after country deregulates in order to avoid any form of competitive disadvantage. The policy discourse around innovation and competitiveness has led to the embedding of a number of specific institutional changes in the US bioeconomy that have had enormous influence on other countries. At least three such components to the competitiveness regime have been naturalised as necessary policy changes intend ensure success in the bioeconomy. First and foremost was the ability to capture returns on the new biotechnologies arising out of public and private laboratories. In particular the clarification of whether living organisms could be patented was crucial and had been an ongoing saga between 1971 and 1980 in relation to the Diamond vs. Chakrabarty case. 71 Second, there was a need to enable the capture of public science funded by the US federal government and thereby exclude others from its benefits. Finally there was an increased emphasis on the international dimensions of all these other policies in order to enable the competitiveness of US firms in global markets. Consequently a number of trade-related policies such as the TRIPS agreement at the WTO were vigorously pursued.

## Policy Failure

The affirmative’s competitiveness discourse results in serial policy failure (?)

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Use of the concept of competitiveness in economic policy circles has subsequently seen an explosion, with Porter’s framework developed with respect to smaller geographical units of analysis, including cities and regions(Porter, 1995, 2003). Moreover, given its origins, the popularity of the discourse of competitiveness has encouraged a stress on direct rivalry between territories in economic development processes (Malecki, 2004). Thus Fagerberg (1996,48, emphasis added) suggests that “a consensus definition of international ompetitiveness might perhaps be that it reflects the ability of a country to secure a high standard of living for its citizens, relative to the citizens of other countries , now and in the future.” Furthermore, Bristow (2005: 287) argues that “along with other prominent commentators such as Robert Reich and Lester Thurow, Porter has made a powerful contribution to the sedimentation of the idea that places are equivalent to corporations, competing for market share within an increasingly interconnected and fiercely competitive global economy”. More generally such a perspective has strong links with aspects of the debate surrounding the changing role of the State as processes of globalisation have accelerated (Radice, 2000; Sugden and Wilson, 2005). Authors such as Ohmae (1995), Storper (1997) and Scott (1998), for example, have been influential in emphasising regions as basic economic units in an increasingly globalised world, and trends in globalisation have helped fuel a burgeoning literature in regional studies. 10 Within these debates the concept of territorial competitiveness continues to play a pivotal, though contested, role. While analysis of territorial competitiveness has proved extremely attractive for many policy analysts and practitioners, reflected for example in wide adoption of the terminology and core principles of Porter’s approach, it has raised concerns in different parts of the academic literature. In general the variability in quality of analyses is noted: “serious analyses as well as ideological tracts, low-leve lbusiness school reports, banal data churning, applications of impressive but vacuous formulae, and straightforward ‘bashing-the-foreigner’” (Lall, 2001a: 2).More specifically, criticism has been aimed directly at Porter’s framework and its impacts on policy. Davies and Ellis (2000), for example, review various critiques in identifying a series of specific weaknesses and suggest that “policy-makers are left with a ‘laundry list’ on which to base simple SWOT-type analyses of their economies, but there is no reliable guide to policy”. Reflective of the distance between the economics and business literatures, Lall (2001a: 5) makes a more general point on business school approaches that transpose corporate strategy to the national level: “they often describe what they regard as the (sensible) constituent elements of competitive success (innovation, skills, clusters) without grounding it in theories of markets, market failures and the ability of government to overcome these failures.” Finally, the use of a concept of competitiveness itself has been attacked, criticisms ranging from it being ‘ambiguous’ due to lack of rigorous definition in the early economics literature (Siggel, 2006), to it being fundamentally ‘misguided and damaging’ (Krugman,1994).Krugman’s (1994, 1996, 1998) damning dismissal has been particularly widely cited. However, his strongly-worded call to recognise that “the obsession with competitiveness is both wrong and dangerous” (1994: 44) has neither stemmed the flow of analysis nor put an end to the controversy over its meaning and use. Schoenberger (1998: 3) has since argued that competitiveness has “become truly hegemonic in the Gramscian sense.” In line with some of Krugman’s concerns over the misuse of the concept, she questions whether we can be “sure that the desired objectivity of our research is not subtly undermined by our reliance on a language and a discourse that is not entirely of our own choosing and, arguably, is a language and a discourse that represents the interests of particular social groups and not others?” ( ibid. : 13). Such apprehension is echoed by Bristow (2005) in a consideration of regional competitiveness. In particular, she argues that “policy acceptance of the existence and importanceof regional competitiveness and its measurement appears to have run ahead of a number of fundamental theoretical and empirical questions” (286). Thus, our theoretical understanding of what is meant by competitiveness at a regional scale lags behind its emergence as a “discrete and important policy goal” and the associated proliferation of “indicators by which policy-makers and practitioners can measure, analyse and compare relative competitive performance” ( ibid. : 286). 11 Much of the unease stems from a questioning of the validity of extending, oraggregating, a firm-based concept to the level of a territory. Krugman (1994:31), for example, argues: “When we say that a corporation is uncompetitive, we mean that its market position is unsustainable - that unless it improves its performance, it will cease to exist. Countries, on the other hand, do not go outof business. They may be happy or unhappy with their economic performance, but they have no well-defined bottom line. As a result, the concept of national competitiveness is elusive.” Thus the application of the language of the market is deemed inappropriate to analysing nations and regions in their whole. Nations and regions exist in a system of relations that includes markets, but in which market success alone does not determine their continued existence or extinction.

**The affirmative’s discourse distracts attention from the states own policy failure ensuring error replication.**

**Harrison ’07** [John Harrison, PhD on regional and urban governance, Lecturer in Human Geography at University of Loughborough, “From competitive regions to competitive city-regions: a new orthodoxy, but some old mistakes ,” Journal of Economic Geography 7 (2007) pp. 311–332, online, AZhang]

Adding weight to recent arguments suggesting that ‘the city-region is in danger of becoming simply the latest in a long line of fashionable ideas’ (Morgan, 2006, 1), this article has sought to reinforce how in the most recent economic geography orthodoxies, the same weaknesses appear to undermine their theoretical position. As such, the new city-regionalism has been exposed as rescaling, rather than resolving the weaknesses that signalled the fall from orthodoxy of the new regionalism. Talking up growth, through discourses of regional competitiveness (Bristow, 2005), and through the spatial and scalar reorganisation of the state from one scale to another—in this case from the region to the city-region—merely distracts attention away from the state’s inability to manage the capitalist tendency for uneven development. On this point, Ward and Jonas (2004) are quick to highlight in their critique how the new city regionalism is constructed narrowly around geographies of accumulation and competition, at the expense of knowledge of other kinds of economic geography; those of collective provision, consumption, labour regulation, uneven development, social regulations and so forth. As I have tried to illustrate in this article, the new regional policy of the late 1990s, and now the emerging city-regional policy within government today are both constructs partly of a desire on behalf of the state to find an appropriate scale to perform the same economic growth function. As such, the displacement of the state into ‘politically mediated institutional projects’ (Jones, 2001) is indicative of the crisis tendencies exhibited by the state in maintaining its legitimacy for managing the economy; or what we have come to know in economic geography as the ‘crisis of crisis management’ (Offe, 1984). With the state continuing to direct and steer social and economic activity in the so-called national interest questions, the role of the nation-state, and in particular its relationship with subnational tiers of governance, will continue to dominate debates surrounding the rise of the city-region (Tewdwr-Jones, 2006). To understand the city-region, however, we must also recognise the role enacted by local and regional interests and local and regional states in explaining the rise of city- regionalism. For instance, England’s Core Cities Group is an obvious example of a subnational spatial-political response to uneven development and a perceived disparity between the South East mega-city region and the remainder of England that has helped shape city-regionalism. However, as this article has sought to illustrate, the capacity for self determination in subregional territories continues to be constrained and blunted by the state’s ability to direct and steer these new governance mechanisms towards what is perceived to be in the national interest—at the obvious expense of local and regional interests whose capacity to shape the city-region agenda is constrained by this process. In the longer term, when the time does come to move beyond the new city-regionalism, a more critical stance needs to be adopted within economic geography; such that the inherent lines of weakness that undermined the new regionalism, and are now present in the new city-regionalism, are not merely rescaled or collapsed into a new orthodoxy in economic geography. The challenge that lies ahead is difficult, but it is one that we need to recognise as we move forward in economic geography.

**Competitiveness is a self-fulfilling prophecy justifying radical policy prescriptions**

Bruno, 09 -- French political scientist (Isabelle, “The ‘Indeﬁnite Discipline’ of Competitiveness

Benchmarking as a Neoliberal Technology of Government”, 9/17/09, [http://www.springerlink.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/content/b614244208711277/fulltext.pdf)//GS](http://www.springerlink.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/content/b614244208711277/fulltext.pdf%29//GS)

Issued by the European Commission, this document purported to deﬁne ‘‘the challenges and ways forward into the 21st century’’ (CEC 1993). It laid out the means to fulﬁl the aspiration for reconciling both economic and social goals. The triangle of ‘‘growth, competitiveness and employment’’ was supposed to create a virtuous cycle of mutually reinforcing processes in implementing potentially conﬂicting objectives. The centrality of competitiveness to the European project was defended by Jacques Delors, then president of the Commission, who ‘‘didn’t confront the problems of either the welfare state or the EMS. He explained that the root cause of European unemployment was a lack of competitiveness with the United States and Japan and that the solution was a program of investment in infrastructure and high technology. It was a disappointing evasion, but not a surprising one’’ (Krugman 1994, pp. 28–29). In doing so, he agreed with the various proposals voiced by the European Round Table, an elite club gathering forty captains of industry. 8 Keith Richardson, its secretary-general from 1988 to 1998, testiﬁed that ‘‘ERT staff worked in close liaison with the Commission, ERT ideas were evident in the Delors White Paper on Competitiveness, Growth and Employment, and also in the parallel Action Plan issued by the Brussels European Council in 1993, while the Essen European Council in 1994 formally endorsed the ERT proposal for a high level Competitiveness Advisory Group with powers to lay relevant issues directly before heads of government as well as the President of the Commission’’ (Richardson 2000, p. 8). Directly inspired by the U.S. precedent, such a group was expected to turn ‘‘competitiveness’’ from a malleable and elusive keyword in the public debate into a powerful lever to design and urge policy prescriptions.

## Trade Wars/Policy

The rhetoric of competitiveness threatens the United States— governmental misuse of funds to enhance “competitiveness,” trade war, and destructive public policy.

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THE DANGERS OF OBSESSION Thinking and speaking in terms of competitiveness poses three real dangers. First, it could result in the wasteful spending of government to enhance U.S. competitiveness. Second, it could lead to protectionism and trade wars. Finally, and most important, it could result in bad public policy on a spectrum of important issues. In the 1950s, fear of the Soviet Union induced the U.S. government to spend money on useful things like highways and science education. It also, however, led to considerable spending on more doubtful items like bomb shelters. The most obvious if least worrisome danger of the growing obsession with competitiveness is that it might lead to a similar misallocation of resources. To take an example, recent guidelines for government research funding have stressed the importance of supporting research that can improve U.S. international competitiveness. This exerts at least some bias toward inventions that can help manufacturing firms, which generally compete on international markets, rather than service producers, which generally do not. Yet most of our employment and value-added is now in services, and lagging productivity in services rather than manufactures has been the single most important factor in the stagnation of U.S. living standards. A much more serious risk is that the obsession with competitiveness will lead to trade conflict, perhaps even to a world trade war. Most of those who have preached the doctrine of competitiveness have not been old-fashioned protectionists. They want their countries to win the global trade game, not drop out. But what if, despite its best efforts, a country does not seem to be winning, or lacks confidence that it can? Then the competitive diagnosis inevitably suggests that to close the borders is better than to risk having foreigners take away high-wage jobs and high-value sectors. At the very least, the focus on the supposedly competitive nature of international economic relations greases the rails for those who want confrontational if not frankly protectionist policies. We can already see this process at work, in both the United States and Europe. In the United States, it was remarkable how quickly the sophisticated interventionist arguments advanced by Laura Tyson in her published work gave way to the simple-minded claim by U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor that Japan’s bilateral trade surplus was costing the United States millions of jobs. And the trade rhetoric of President Clinton, who stresses the supposed creation of high-wage jobs rather than the gains from specialization, left his administration in a weak position when it tried to argue with the claims of NAFTA foes that competition from cheap Mexican labor will destroy the U.S. manufacturing base. Perhaps the most serious risk from the obsession with competitiveness is its subtle indirect effect on the quality of economic discussion and policymaking. If top government officials are strongly committed to a particular economic doctrine, their commitment inevitably sets the tone for policy-making on all issues, even those which may seem to have nothing to do with that doctrine. And if an economic doctrine is flatly, completely and demonstrably wrong, the insistence that discussion adhere to that doctrine inevitably blurs the focus and diminishes the quality of policy discussion across a broad range of issues, including some that are very far from trade policy per se.

## \*\*FRAMEWORK\*\*

**They have it backwards- policy driven theory becomes incoherent- K is logically prior**

**Dr**. Gillian **Bristow,** Senior Lecturer in Economic Geography @ Cardiff University, ‘**5** (Journal of Economic Geography 5.3: 285-304, “Everyone’s a ‘winner’”)

Thus whilst the notion of regional competitiveness is firmly ensconced in, and clearly shaping the broad direction of, regional economic development policy, it is a rather chaotic discourse. There are some dominant axioms which collectively define the discourse, notably that regional competitiveness is a firm-based, output-related conception, strongly shaped by the microeconomic business environment. However, regional competitiveness itself can be defined in different ways such that it is not entirely clear when a situation of competitiveness has been achieved. Moreover, there is considerable confusion as to what concrete activities constitute competitiveness and how micro-level competitiveness translates into macro-level prosperity. Insofar as the academic thinking on regional competitiveness is clearly driven by (and conflated with) the discourses of globalisation and the knowledge economy, the regional competitiveness discourse appears to exemplify a wider tendency towards ‘**theory led by policy’** (see Lovering, 1999, 2001). In this case it appears that as a result, its **content is thin and ill-defined.** The next section of this paper aims to problematise the existing discourse and its deficiencies with reference to theory. (291)

This flawed discourse of a “one-size fits all” policy option perpetuates economic underperformance and hinders development of infrastructure capital— that turns the case. A new framework that re-conceptualizes regional competitiveness is a prerequisite for effective policy decisions.

Kitson et. al. ‘04 [Michael Kitson, University Lecturer in Global Macroeconomics, Judge Institute of Management, University of Cambridge, Ron Martin, Professor in Economic Geography in the Department of Geography, University of Cambridge,, and Peter Tyler, Reader in Urban and Regional Economics, Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge “Regional Competitiveness: An Elusive yet Key Concept?” Regional Studies, Vol. 38.9, pp. 995–997, December 2004, online, AZhang]

The broad rationale for government intervention in relation to these drivers is to overcome the market and institutional failures that restrain their contribution to the growth of regional productivity. Thus, according to H. M. Treasury, (2004, p. 14): there are important implications for the design and delivery of regional policy in two respects. First, it is essential that a comprehensive package of policy instruments be in place to strengthen each of the five drivers throughout the UK. Failure to do so would undermine efforts to strengthen individual drivers and overall economic performance. A region’s economic underperformance could be perpetuated if, for example, policy makers failed to recognize the importance of a strong local skills base to the attraction and growth of new businesses. Secondly, it is vital that there is a coordinated approach to the design and implementation of policies designed to raise regions’ productivity and growth. . . . There will be bene- ficial synergies from a coordinated effort to strengthen all of the drivers that may be holding back a particular region’s growth. One problem with this approach is that there appears to be no underlying coherent theoretical justification for the particular choice of ‘drivers’. At best, different theories seem to be implicit in different drivers. The difficulty here, of course, is that several different candi- dates are available as theoretical underpinnings for conceptualizing and devising policy interventions to promote regional competitive advantage, and all have their limitations. Standard regional export-base theory offers far too narrow a view of the nature and determi- nants of regional competitive advantage. Likewise, standard regional growth theory, with its dependence on the idea of a regional production function subject to constant returns to scale, is of very limited usefulness. Much more promising are those approaches that emphasize the importance of increasing returns, since these at least allow for consideration of what was termed above ‘regional externalities’. But even here there is a wide choice: from regional versions of endogenous growth models (Martin and Sunley 1998), through the spatial agglomeration models of the so-called ‘new economic geography’ (Fujita et al., 1999; Fujita and Thisse 2002; Baldwin et al., 2003), cumulative causation models (Setterfield 1998), evolutionary theories (Boschma 2004), to cluster theory (Porter 1998a, b, 2001a, b). In the UK, there has certainly been more than a whiff of endogenous growth theory behind Treasury thinking in this area, while within the D T I Porter’s cluster theory has been highly influential – both in focusing on regional productivity as the key indicator of regional performance and in advocating the promotion of clusters as an integral component of regional strategies. Another problem is that policies – both in the UK and elsewhere – tend to be overwhelmingly supply-side in approach, and little attention is given to the demand side (Fothergille 2004). It is as if a sort of Say’s law of regional competitive advantage is being invoked: if all the ‘drivers’ are in place, then demand for the region’s products and services should follow. As Porter’s work has emphasized, demand for a region’s products is not simply an end result but is itself an important ‘driver’ of a region’s competitive advantage. A low level of local demand tends to dampen local innovativeness and entre- preneurialism, encourages the exodus of skilled and educated workers in search of better employment pro- spects elsewhere, hinders the development of high- quality cultural and infrastructural capital, and generally weakens the competitive dynamics of the area. Tackling the supply side is certainly necessary to foster growth and development, but may not of itself be sufficient. Action may also be needed to help stimulate local demand (on the importance of markets, see Clark et al., 2004). In this context, favourable macro- economic conditions and policies are also important. A third limitation is the ‘universalism’ of many policies aimed at boosting regional or urban competi- tiveness, whereby it is assumed that the same ‘drivers’ are equally important everywhere, and hence the same basic policy model is applicable, the idea being that, in principle, the process of regional economic growth is governed by a series of universal economic rules (on the limitations of such universalism, see Kenny and Williams 2001); thus, if you pull the right levers, the ‘drivers’ will respond in similar ways with similar outcomes. But both history and geography will have a major impact on the relevance of particular drivers and their impact. Thus, investing in ‘innovation’ (assuming such an investment could be adequately defined) may have beneficial effects in one region but have little impact in another. In the absence of a robust theoretical framework that takes account of spatial specificity, it is hard to gauge how policy initiatives targeted on any one specific driver contribute to final outcomes, how the policy drivers work together, what relative weight should be applied to each, and the time it takes for change to occur. Yet a further problem is that alluded to above: namely, that there has been little research into what the appropriate spatial scale of intervention should be. Some processes of regional competitive advantage may be highly localized, while others may operate at a more broad regional scale, and some may be national or global. In most instances, however, polices are pursued on the basis of predefined administrative or political areas that may have little meaning as economically functioning units, and from which policy effects may ‘leak out’ into other regions. At the same time, by following similar strategies (based on similar ‘drivers’) different regions may end up competing one with another over a particular form of growth and develop- ment that has a very specific and geographically restricted form, as in the case, for example, of certain high-technology activities. Thus, many regions crave a biotechnology cluster as a key element to boost their region’s competitive performance. Yet not only do few regions have any potential competitive advantage in this activity, arguably it is a sector that thrives most when concentrated in a limited number of large clusters. In other words, not every region can have a major biotechnology industry cluster, and for each to attempt to nurture such a cluster of its own may simply result in the failure to develop a strong national biotechnology sector at all. The same argument may well apply to other ‘new economy’ type activities, such as information and communication technologies (ICT), creative media, nanotechnology and the like. In short, there is no ‘one-size fits all’ regional competitiveness policy (on this, see also Lovering 1999). To compound this problem, and again related to the question of what the appropriate scale of intervention should be, there is the issue of whether and how far policy should focus on particular localities within the region rather than on others. Is the best strategy one that focuses policy interventions and resources in just one or two growth zones (such as the major urban agglomerations or selected localized clusters)? If so, to what extent will any improvements in competitive performance spread out into other parts of the regional economy more generally? In other words, the focus on regional competitiveness should not ignore or neglect issues of intra-regional inequality. As the European Commission has recognized, social cohesion (the reduction of spatial socio-economic inequalities) should be an integral component of any policy aimed at improving regional competitiveness: indeed, social cohesion should rank equally with productivity and employment in any notion of regional competitive advantage. The issue of ‘regional competitiveness’ is thus ripe with theoretical, empirical and policy debate. In an era of ‘performance indicators and rankings’, it is perhaps inevitable that regions and cities should be compared against each other in terms of their economic perfor- mance. Such comparisons can serve a useful purpose in that they point up the fact that, and call for explana- tions of why, regions and cities differ in economic prosperity. But, to adapt Krugman’s criticism of the idea of national competitiveness, it is at best potentially misleading and at worst positively dangerous to view regions and cities as competing over market shares as if they are in some sort of global race in which there are only ‘winners’ and ‘losers’. This is not to deny the importance of competition. In economic life and beyond, competition is one of the fundamental sources of mobilization and creativity. But there are structural limits to, and negative consequences of, excessive competition as construed in narrow adversarial market terms (Group of Lisbon, 1995). Crucially, it is important to distinguish between ‘competition’ and ‘competitiveness’. As the papers in this issue make clear, if the notion of regional competitiveness has meaning and value, it is as a much more complex and richer concept; and one, moreover, that focuses more on the determinants and dynamics of a region’s (or city’s) long-run pros- perity than on more restrictive notions of competing over shares of markets and resources. It is one that recognizes that ultimately competitive regions and cities are places where both companies and people want to locate and invest in. We are far from any agreed framework for defining, theorizing and empirically analysing regional competitive advantage. But given the current fashion for notions of regional and urban competitiveness in policy circles, the need for such a framework is all the more urgent. Without such a framework, policies lack coherent conceptual and evid- ential foundations, and policy outcomes may as a consequence prove variable and disappointing. The notion of regional competitiveness requires informed debate: the papers that follow are intended as contri- butions to this task.

This competitiveness discourse shapes the way we live in the world and has ripple effects across the economy

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3 What the discourse produces What is the relationship, then, between discourse and our material reality and between discourse and our ability to act in the world ± at least as it relates to the issue of competitiveness? Here are some thoughts The relationship between discourse and material reality/action is mediated by the social power of the discursive agent. The social resources deployed in validating the discourse on competitiveness are really quite impressive. But they can be deployed with great economy or remain entirely latent because of the way the discourse has been successfully naturalized. The beauty of it is that, once the conversation moves on to this terrain, we more or less automatically fall silent of our own accord. This may be a particular instance of Foucault's notion of disciplinary individualism, in which the essence of freedom is voluntary compliance with the rules ± in this case, the established order of a particular discipline (Foucault, 1995; cf. Poovey, 1995). Once the word is uttered, its disciplinary force is made manifest. This isn't meant to imply that we unavoidably end up by simply parroting the economists and business persons. But it does suggest that we may be subtly deflected from certain kinds of questions or challenges to the discourse and the practices associated with it, whether this is in an academic setting or a more general public arena. This rather simple observation has, I want to stress, real consequences for academics and nonacademics alike. For academics, the substance of our questions and challenges is our stock in trade. We get research funds on the basis of them and write articles which will anchor our careers, allowing us to ask new questions to get more funding and so on. Meanwhile we are contributing to the collective construction of a body of knowledge ± an interpretive structure ± which shapes a more general understanding of the world. We make and validate ourselves through our discourse. The silencing and deflecting effect of the discourse on competitiveness can also be seen in various forms of public discourse about any number of issues: the environment, welfare reform, healthcare reform and, more obviously, the competitiveness of the national economy. Again, when all goes well, no specific exercise of overt power has to be undertaken. The disciplining effect of the discourse has been naturalized and internalized, so it is effective even with people whose interests are plainly not served by it. It also makes it all the more remarkable when some undisciplined groups of people do, in the end, fight back.

**Competitiveness is a hegemonic discourse- its power comes from belief, not truth or accuracy.**

**Dr**. Gillian **Bristow,** Senior Lecturer in Economic Geography @ Cardiff University, ‘**5** (Journal of Economic Geography 5.3: 285-304, “Everyone’s a ‘winner’”)

Since the 1990s, in response to the work of authors such as Michael Porter (1990), the concept of regional competitiveness has become a **‘hegemonic discourse**’ (Schoenberger, 1998) within public policy circles in developed countries. Indeed, regional competitiveness has been enthusiastically adopted as a policy goal by the European Commission and by national governments across Europe and North America (ACOA, 1996; De Vol, 1999; Commission of the European Communities, 2000). It has risen to particular prominence in the UK where the national government has explicitly tasked Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) with the responsibility for making their regions ‘more competitive’ and akin to benchmark competitive places such as Silicon Valley (DETR, 1999; House of Commons, 2000; HM Treasury, 2001a). The competitiveness hegemony is such that according to certain analysts, ‘the critical issue for regional economic development practitioners to grasp is that the creation of competitive advantage is the most important activity they can pursue’ (Barclays, 2002, 10). Current policy documents extolling the language of ‘competitiveness’ tend to present it as an **entirely unproblematic** term and, moreover, as an unambiguously beneficial attribute of an economy. Competitiveness is portrayed as the means by which regional economies are externally validated in an era of globalisation, such that **there can be no principled objection to policies and strategies deemed to be competitiveness enhancing,** whatever their indirect consequences. For example, the European Commission (2004, viii) states that ‘strengthening regional competitiveness throughout the Union and helping people fulfil their capabilities will boost the growth potential of the EU economy as a whole to the common benefit of all’. Similarly, theUKgovernment sees its regional policy objective as being one of ‘widening the circle of winners in all regions and communities’ (DTI, 2001, 4), a sentiment clearly absorbed by the devolved administration in Wales which has entitled its National Economic Development Strategy, ‘A Winning Wales’ (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002). The emergence of regional competitiveness as a discrete and important policy goal has spawned the development of indicators by which policy-makers and practitioners can measure, analyse and compare **relative competitive performance**, or find out who is ‘winning’. Various attempts have been made to measure and model competitiveness for European regions (e.g. IFO, 1990; Pompili, 1994; Pinelli et al., 1998; Gardiner, 2003). Furthermore, the European Commission has placed the analysis of regional competitiveness at the heart of its ongoing assessment of regional economic performance (Commission, 1999; 2000). In the UK, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has published sets of regional competitiveness indicators since 1995 (e.g. DTI, 2003, 2004). More recently, efforts have also been made to develop composite indices of regional competitiveness, following similar trends in the evolution of national competitiveness indicators (e.g. World Economic Forum, 2003; see Lall, 2001). These combine relevant indicators into one overarching measure, the results of which can be reported in the form of a ‘league table’ (Huggins, 2000; 2003). This preoccupation with competitiveness and the predilection for its measurement is premised on certain **pervasive beliefs**, most notably that globalisation has created a world of intense competition between regions (Raco, 2002).However, there is some confusion as to what the concept actually means and how it can be effectively operationalised. Indeed, in a manner cognate with debates surrounding clusters (see Martin and Sunley, 2003), **policy acceptance** of the existence and importance of regional competitiveness and its measurement appears to have **run ahead of a number of fundamental theoretical and empirical questions**. The purpose of this paper is to **problematise the dominant policy discourse** around regional competitiveness with reference to theory, to explore how and why a discourse with ostensibly **thin and ill-defined content** has assumed such significance in policy circles, and to consider the potential policy consequences. It is argued that the answer lies within the political economy of economic policy and the **rhetorical power and usefulness of the prevailing competitiveness discourse**. The paper begins by examining the polysemous yet overlapping meanings of regional competitiveness in academic debates. (285-6)

The affirmative’s discourse is a constructed ‘policy analysis’ which avoids ideological orientations and underlying parameters of policy-making. Analyzation is key.

Peck 1– Head of the Department of Geography, University of Wisconsin-Madison (Jamie “Neoliberalizing states: thin policies/hard outcomes” http://spatialfix.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/peck-neoliberalizing-states-2001.pdf ) //AA

Crucially, these neoliberal prescriptions are often elided with, or relabeled as, ‘imperatives of globalization’. As such, they are more likely to be perceived as economically derived rather than politically constructed/mediated pressures. For Beck (2000: 122) neoliberalism is a form of ‘high politics which presents itself as completely nonpolitical’. The deep neoliberalization of the macro policy environment which has accompanied, and indeed has been partly achieved through, the intensification of globalization and globalization-speak can present problems for conventional forms of ‘policy analysis’. Typically, these are confined to the evaluation of state(d) aims, objectives, and ‘outcomes’, rather than excavating the underlying parameters, ideological orientations, and conspicuous silences of the policy-making process. While sometimes analytically perplexing, these latter issues of pretext and subtext in the policy-making process are beginning to receive increased attention in human geography and in the linked realms of political sociology and international political economy, particularly on the part of those concerned to investigate the myriad boundary skirmishes, turf disputes, and institutional struggles that are characteristic of state restructuring processes. One of the strengths of this work is that it conveys an understanding of the state, not as some lumbering bureaucratic monolith but as a (political) process in motion.

**The vision of economic competitiveness is narrow viewed that focuses doesn’t take into account the unconditional growth, and alternate relationships for well being which skews policy making into a narrow sided view.**

**Wilson 8 -** Senior researcher @ the Orkestra-Basque Institute of Competitiveness, a center for analysis on territorial competitiveness in the global environment (James “Territorial Competitiveness and Development Policy” http://deusto.academia.edu/JamesWilson/Papers/208861/Territorial\_Competitiveness\_and\_Development\_Policy)//AA

There are fundamental links between academic treatments of ‘economic development’ and of the popular policy discourse of ‘competitiveness’. Productivity-focused analyses of competitiveness are inherently related to market-centric analyses of development that have economic growth as their objective. However, a consensus is emerging on the need for broader conceptions of economic progress, built in particular on recognition of: (i) the inconsistency of short-term, unconditional growth with environmental sustainability; and (ii) the complexity of relationships between income, other socio-economic factors and actual well-being. This paper argues that moving ‘beyond income’ has implications for competitiveness discourse. Understanding the drivers of productivity will remain a key concern, as income will remain a core component of economic development. However, there is a danger that the dominance of a narrow, market-focused competitiveness discourse will continue to skew policy. The paper argues that the very popularity of the competitiveness concept among policy-makers in fact presents an opportunity: broader conceptualisations may facilitate the integration into policy of wider socio-economic concerns. Analysis of the contested competitiveness concept is combined with reflection on recent advances in the measurement of economic progress in proposing the necessary re-conceptualisation of competitiveness for today’s economic development challenges

**Failure to interrogate competitive methodology allows unchecked racism**

**Van Dijk, 88 -** scholar in the fields of [text linguistics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Text_linguistics), [discourse analysis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discourse_analysis) and [Critical Discourse Analysis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_Discourse_Analysis). Founded six international journals: Poetics, Text(now called [Text & Talk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Text_%26_Talk)), Discourse & Society,Discourse Studies, Discourse & Communication and the internet journal in Spanish Discurso & Sociedad, of which he still edits the last four. (Teun Adrianus, “Approaches to Discourse, Poetics and Psychiatry: Papers from the 1985 Utrecht Summer School of Critical Theory,” January 1988, pages 87-88//**HO**

According to the prevalent norms, ethnic prejudice and racism are valued negatively, and it is especially in the interest of the elite, as the self-defined guardians of social morality, to attribute such attitudes to the ‘others’, using academic or lay versions of a theory of scapegoating. Such strategies derive their plausibility also from the fact that white working class racism often appears to be (made) more visible, e.g. through voting, blatantly racist talk, or ethnic conflicts in poor inner city neighborhoods. Elite racism is often more indirect, implicit or subtle, and not topicalized by research or the media. If it is experienced as such by minority group members, for instance in hiring or renting practices, or in their dealings with civil servants, teachers, or the judiciary, elite discrimination is easier to conceal as a form of institutional routine or “necessity”. In other words, the elite disposes of many ways to transfer, excuse, or conceal its own ethnic prejudice.

## \*\*ALT SOLVENCY\*\*

The logic of competitiveness is not inevitable or natural; solidarity presents an equally effective antithesis.

Solomon, 02 -- Ph. D in Political Science from Syracuse University and Assistant Professor of International Affairs in the Department of Government and International Affairs at the University of South Florida (M.Scott, “Contesting Competitiveness: The Impact of Globalization and Competitiveness Discourse in the Post - Fordist Era” Dissertation, August 2002, Proquest) // JH

By contradictory l don't mean that there are winners and losers (though this is the case) l mean contradictory in the sense identified by Marx and central to historical materialism Additionally, l mean contradictory in the very particular sense identified by Marx in his dual freedom thesis. l believe this account of social relations under capitalism has been insufficiently appreciated by historical materialism and ignored by other traditions. Marx didn`t just see exploitation in capitalism. Rather, he saw capitalist social relations as the central defining feature of modernity, with humans as self-creating beings who are constantly reproducing their world through the production and reproduction of their needs. Though humans are self-creating, they must reconcile the contradictory nature of their existence. One of the ways they do this is by understanding their relations with others as alternately, and in some ways simultaneously, cooperative or conflictive. Gramsci has furthered this understanding by arguing that humans (all humans) draw on the cognitive resources available to them through popular understandings, through "common sense." This is not only a cognitive process, but a material process as well. Gramsci's understanding of common sense, wedded to my reading of the dual freedom thesis, provides a way of understanding the thoroughly contradictory nature of social relations under liberal globalization. l have demonstrated that the dual freedom thesis is useful in understanding how appeals to competitiveness and to solidarity find resonance. l believe it also provides a way to understand the conflict between the differing visions of globalization. As l have argued above, each of the visions I have outlined emphasize one logic of capitalism to the exclusion of the others. It should be apparent that I find the mainstream narrative about wealth, freedom, and opportunity to be naïve at best in its exclusion of social power in the economy. However, I believe this narrative has merit in that it emphasizes the very real juridical freedom and equality to be formed in capitalist social relations. To me, this is a necessary, but not sufficient, component in an analysis of said social relations. Too many critics of globalization miss this characteristic of the spread and deepening of capitalism and capitalist social relations. Yet this is the very process Marx argued would produce the sort of changes in human consciousness that would allow for the transcendence of capitalism accumulation. Are we now witnessing the formation of a potentially transformative political project? lt is much too early to make such a claim. However, the forms of transnational solidarity depicted above, while only in their infancy, may offer a significant challenge to what was only a few years ago seen as a liberalizing juggernaut of capitalist globalization. The contestation of the logic of competitiveness by the logic of solidarity will be critical in determining the outcome of the process of globalization. A social actor's perception of globalization "appears at first sight, a very trivial thing." Like Marx's description of the commodity, these perceptions require a deeper analysis to reveal the contradictory social effects these perceptions entail.

This neoliberal discourse is inscribed in a more eradicatory discourse of congestion encouraging interventions that marginalize and stigmatize the vulnerable. A new framework that brings these discourses together provides actionable solutions.

Miciukiewicz and Vigar ’12[Konrad Miciukiewicz, Research Associate at Newcastle University and Ph.D. in Sociology, and Geoff Vigar, Senior Lecturer at School of Architecture, Planning & Landscape, Newcastle University. Currently he is the Director of [Global Urban Research Unit](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_Urban_Research_Unit) at the university “Transport research and social cohesion in the splintered city: toward a progressive urban mobility agenda for Europe” Urban Studies, XX (X), http://www.socialpolis.eu/uploads/tx\_sp/EF04\_Paper.pdf, AZhang]

Promoting an agenda of social cohesion can be problematic in transport policy and planning. Much urban policy is framed by a neoliberal discourse of economic competitiveness which in the field of transport is strongly attached to discourses of congestion which in turn are backed up by demands for supply- side interventions, themselves bolstered by the disciplines of engineering economics with the „travel time saving‟ put forward as a major objective of urban transport (Metz, 2008). An ecological discourse has been partly ￼successful in getting traction in many urban transport discussions but we do note a gap between rhetoric and action here in many cities (e.g. Low and Gleeson, 2003; Vigar, 2002). Social cohesion issues have benefited a little from being in a win-win coalition with social factors in policies such as ￼pedestrianisation schemes which usually lead to a modal shift from motorised to non-motorised mobility while simultaneously encouraging exchange, conviviality and movement for low income groups. But there is a danger here too. Urban splintering implies that marginalised, mobility-poor groups can become concentrated in particular areas. This can help in targeting interventions in space but such efforts can foster further marginalisation through stigmatisation of the vulnerable as permanent clients of welfare state intervention subject to different networks, practices and experiences (Mackett and Titheridge, 2004). For example, public transport improvements might be more effective if they serve diverse interests and attract both the „mobility privileged‟ and „mobility poor‟, rather than segregate groups into those on premium networks and those left with a residual service. The role of transport researchers lies here in the production of methodologies for investigation of the benefits from social cohesion and providing empirical evidence which might bring together discourses of exclusion and economic competiveness in a closer relationship with one another. Finally, in cases of inherent conflicts of interests, transport research should critically enhance awareness of social impacts of transport systems, advocate for socially cohesive solutions and encourage policy makers to put social cohesion at the forefront of debates where it is all too often crowded out by poorly-evidenced calls for economic factors to prevail.

The re-problematisation of international competitiveness will open up a space for the state to transcend competitiveness, and de-legitimizes attempts to rally citizens behind national competitiveness.

Fougner 6- Tore Fougner holds a PhD in International Relations from Keele University (UK), works as Assistant Professor in the Department of International Relations at Bilkent University (Turkey), is specialized in the field of global political economy, and has published in journals such as Review of International Studies, Cooperation and Conflict, Millennium: Journal of International Studies, and Journal of International Trade and Diplomacy.(Tore, “The state, international competitiveness and neoliberal globalisation: is there a future beyond ‘the competition state’?”, Review of International Studies, 2006, 165-185)//PJT

The basic idea informing this article has been that the transgression of something that is currently conceived as a given ‘fact of life’ can be facilitated by showing both that what is, has not always been and, in consequence, need not always be in the future; and that what is, is internal not to an unchanging nature, but rather to politics or relations of power. In accordance with this, the article has showed that the problem of international competitiveness has a quite specific history of emergence and transformation internal to state and global forms of governance, and that the discourse of international competitiveness is currently at the centre not only of how state authorities conduct their business, but also how their conduct is shaped and manipulated by other actors in the world political economy. The broader significance of this (re)problematisation of the problem of international competitiveness lies in its potential contribution to the opening up of a space of possibility for the state to become something other than a competitive entity. In this connection, the issue at stake today is not so much the absence of state conceptions that somehow run counter to the neoliberal one of the state as a competitive entity, as the hegemonic position of the neoliberal problem and discourse of competitiveness as such. If the latter is left unchallenged, as is the case in much of the competition state literature, then alternative state conceptions will unavoidably be assessed in terms of international competitiveness and, in consequence, stand little chance of prevailing in any but distorted and marginal ways.83 Against this background, the historisation and politicisation of the problem of international competitiveness provided in this article can contribute both to make the concept of international competitiveness fall from its current grace, and increase people’s receptivity to both existing and prospective alternatives to the neoliberal conception of the state. With regard to the prospect of the state becoming something other than a competitve entity, an opening might also follow from how the state has been shown to be constituted as a three-headed troll that is competitive, disciplined and sovereign within the context of contemporary efforts at neoliberal global governance. As sovereign entities, states retain the option to put an end to capital mobility, and thereby both reverse the power relationship that currently characterises their relations with transnational capital, and deny non-state actors the opportunity to act upon and manipulate their conduct at a distance. The key point to note, however, is that the hegemony of neoliberalism as a rationality of government has led states to practice sovereignty in a way that effectively subjects them to such external discipline and governance – this, by engaging in efforts to constitute a global marketplace. Moreover, neoliberal global governance is considered such a precious undertaking today that state authorities have voluntarily, if not proactively, adapted to it by both exercising a high degree of self-discipline, and acting on themselves and their populations as competitors in a global market for investment. While an understanding of the state as an externally disciplined entity has the potential to stimulate popular opposition and resistance to contemporary forms of neoliberal global governance – in part, because many people simply do not appreciate being forced to do things that they otherwise would not want to do – this understanding seems at present to be much less prevalent in the popular imagination than the one of the state as a competitive entity. Given both the seemingly ahistorical and apolitical nature of the problem of international competitiveness, and how the quest for improved competitiveness can rather easily be represented as part of a positive national project, this situation can be claimed to inhibit the emergence of more broadly-based popular resistance.84 Against this background, the (re)problematisation of the problem of international competitiveness provided in this article can contribute to de-legitimise attempts to rally people behind national competitiveness projects, and provide additional stimulus to popular opposition and resistance to contemporary efforts to constitute a global marketplace.85 In the final analysis, however, the possibility for the state to become something other than a competitive entity is likely to depend also on a more general de-hegemonisation of neoliberalism as a rationality of government. The reason for this is that the constitution and governance of the state as a competitive entity is most properly considered as integral to a more comprehensive process in and through which subjects of various kinds are thus constituted and governed in all spheres and at all levels of social life. As of today, economic logic has so successfully colonised human thought and conduct that it seems unlikely that decolonisation related to states and interstate relations can be achieved if the logic as such continues to reign almost supreme in social life more generally. Considered in this broader context, the present article makes but a modest contribution to more comprehensive efforts aimed at enabling individuals and collectivities alike to break free from an increasingly imperialistic neoliberal governmentality.

## \*\*\*AT Permutation\*\*\*

**Perm Fails – Competitiveness subsumes all other discourses when included**

**Bristow\* and Wells\*\*, 05** (Gillian Bristow\* has a **BA (Hons) First Class: Economics**, Cardiff University (1991). **PhD,** Cardiff University (1995). Gillian is Deputy Head of School and Deputy Director of the [Centre for Advanced Studies](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/cass/) (CASS). She is also a member of the ESRC’s Centre on Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance (SKOPE). Peter Wells\*\* has a degree in Geography from Leeds University, and an MSc in Town Planning from Cardiff University, while his PhD (also from Cardiff University) was on the subject of the socio-economic consequences of military R&D in the UK.; “Innovative discourse for sustainable local development: a critical analysis of eco-industrialism”; Innovation & Sustainable Development; [http://www.environmental-expert.com/Files%5C6471%5Carticles%5C14644%5Cart9.pdf)//](http://www.environmental-expert.com/Files%5C6471%5Carticles%5C14644%5Cart9.pdf%29//) KD

In an era of large-scale and rapid shifts in the geography of industrialisation and economic prosperity, the traditional analysis and prescriptions of local and regional economic development policy premised on competitiveness appear increasingly ineffectual. The competitiveness discourse, while still the dominant foundation for policy, can be challenged in several ways: these include at a practical level the failure of such policies to deliver lasting and self-propagating economic prosperity; the paucity of ideas generated by such a development discourse; and the ways in which inter-locality competition cannot end in success for all regions. Despite these and other criticisms, the competitiveness discourse remains powerful, there is a compelling brutality to the bleak inevitability of ‘compete or die’. Indeed, so deeply entrenched is the competitiveness mindset that new initiatives and ideas can rapidly be subsumed within it. This article provides a critical analysis of one such instance, where the ideas of eco-industrialism and the eco-industrial park that could, in a different policy framework, offer an alternative trajectory and content to local economic development policy appear to have been deployed largely as another modern iteration of place competition.