

COTTONOPOLIS AND CULTURE

Contemporary Culture and Structural Change in Manchester

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I

Cities are difficult to speak about, difficult to see. Taking a perspective positions the observer as much as it organises the city. As we write Bill Bryson's *Notes from a Small Island* tops the book charts, presenting a round Britain trip by an American resident of some twenty years. A valedictory homage to the country he claims to love, in it the towns and cities of Britain appear as ugly, unwelcoming and almost indistinguishable from each other; same concrete monstrosities; same high streets, shops differently shuffled; same lack of restaurants, street life (apart from shopping), and decent hotels. Bryson's book is shallow, cliched and written to flatter, but inadvertently its popularity gives voice to our confusion. Planning and deregulation, modernism and postmodern pastiche, industrialisation and de-industrialisation - all are somehow responsible for the uglification and homogenisation of our towns and cities.

As is often the way with travel books it claims an outsider's perspective: the difficulties faced by the traveller - the lack of restaurants, decent hotels, public benches and green spaces, public transport and spaces of convivial sociability - can operate as a testing of the city space from the perspective of an 'everyman'. As such it has its uses. But people disappear - there are no real encounters other than in the most obvious travellers' business of shops, hotels, pubs, trains etc. The townscapes are mostly deserted. The city as a regular patterning of everyday lives, as a dense network of social and economic ties, as a complex space of image, association and imagination - this has become invisible, unregistered on the photographic plate apart from a few traces slipping between the banter.

These ugly cityscapes stand in for a shared, unspoken sense of social, moral and economic decay. Bryson's apparent unconcern with people is really about his 'insider's' search to connect these ugly cityscapes with his own image of 'Britishness'. Heightened by the traveller's alienation the book is an increasingly frustrated attempt to connect the 'hard' (even harsh) city of buildings with the 'soft city' of memory, imagination, the buried traces of the past. This past is a mythical 'Britishness' given a new spin, conjured through images of a quirky fifties/ sixties consumption - polite/ repressed, underconsuming/ guilty - so distinct from the 'lavish and instant' gratification of the US. It's a wry, American interpretation of 'lost England'.

This 'lost England' is strangely classless, or rather, it is inclusive of quaint South Coast seaside towns and of the great working class cities of the North, now decimated by de-industrialisation and eighties materialism. The sense of confusion and powerlessness, of dying towns, of uncertain futures and unreachable pasts, strikes a real chord, rocks hidden beneath the humour. What is equally striking is the almost total absence of references to contemporary culture; in the desolate cityscapes there are only polite, dispirited shoppers, brief glimpses of threatening, tattooed youths, and 'yuppies'. Nowhere is there any sign of the energy, creativity and re-invention that also marks the (popular) culture of cities and is one of their saving graces. It speaks to a chasm of both loss (nostalgia) and fear (of falling) that deeply marks contemporary Britain and gives us a particular version of the widespread sense of a crisis of discourse about the city and about cultural policy.

A number of times Bryson stops to ask, looking over the rows and rows of houses in towns and cities that seem to have no industry, don't make things anymore - what do all these people do, how do they live? Turning away, neither Bryson nor his readers seem to really want to know.

¹ Bill Bryson *Notes from a Small Island*, Fontana 1996

*A Tale of Two Cities*² does want to know. It stays on where Bryson leaves; it talks to those living the everyday reality of life in the city when the industry that brought them there has mostly gone. It tries to search out and make sense of those traces of the past that Bryson wistfully evokes and link them with this lived reality. Taylor et al attempt this linkage through putting together the results of focus group discussions, where people talk about their everyday usage and perceptions of the city, into some sort of historical perspective. In order to do this they use Williams' notion of 'structure of feeling': "that the definitive cultural character of any one social formation ... could best be grasped in the examination of the routine and taken for granted 'social practices' that characterised that social formation" (p.5). A more particular emphasis is provided by John Urry's work which asserts the relevance of the 'local class structure' which must be understood in terms of "the particular 'industrial history' of a locality" (p.32) - the physical demands of the industries, the gender patterns, propensity for organised labour, the dynamism in labour movements and so on.

II

The general context within which the book is embedded is the 'crisis' in local economies consequent on the shift from a Fordism to 'flexible accumulation' - spelling a demise of Britain's manufacturing industry and their traditional strongholds. *A Tale of Two Cities* powerfully evokes the terrible onslaught on these two city's local economies and citizens in the late twentieth century, within the context of Northern cities in general (whether in Britain, or in the Ruhr on the continent, or in the Rust Belt in America - in Britain, 94% of all job losses between 1979 and 1989 occurred north of a line drawn from the Wash to the Severn, 70% in the manufacturing industry). The two traditional mainstays of these two city's economies - textiles and steel - were badly hit: Manchester's textile industry is now only its fifteenth largest industrial sector and Sheffield's 'catastrophic decline' in steel witnessed 70% of all job losses in the city - nearly 50,000 jobs between 1979 and 1986.

In describing this 'lost world' of heavy manufacturing, the 'shared social memory' of Manchester and Sheffield, the authors argue persuasively that contemporary culture in these two cities is heavily influenced by their past, despite the current claims about dislocated identity floating free in a global economy and mediascape. Attachment to place and locality has not been erased but persists - these local 'structures of feeling' still have a strong effectivity. In particular, they argue that this means the loss of heavy industry and the social and cultural practices supported by it - essentially the hegemonic masculinity based on 'graft' - is now expressed in rather different arenas, but is still prevalent none the less.

Sheffield is described as surrounded by, and indeed built on, hills - as geographically inaccessible, off the beaten track of primary trade routes. Local industry in cutlery appears as early as the thirteenth century, is regulated as early as 1565, and leads to a strong local monopoly of small units of craftsmen - the famous 'Little Mesters' - and an early reliance on cutlery. From this, Taylor et al proceed to describe a "very resistant culture" (p.39) as the industrial revolution shifts up a gear, forming a dual economy of steel and cutlery with very little diversity. These notions of tightly-regulated economic action from within the city coupled with its physical inaccessibility meant that there was almost an 'enclave mentality' in the local structure of feeling. The work, or 'graft' was extremely hard physical labour over 24-hour shifts, leading to a fiercely dominant male working class culture. The indelible imprint on Sheffield's contemporary culture is that of the dual economy of hard graft, now conspicuous by its absence, signified only by wasteland in the East End and unthinking adverts for Stones Bitter.

In much the same way Manchester's local structure of feeling is significantly affected by its better-known history, and it is on this that we want to concentrate.

This structure of feeling is constructed by the authors in such a way that the city feels to be better-placed to deal with long-term structural change than Sheffield and other northern cities. A combination of the rapid pace of change in which the 'shock city' was born, with an early experience of the booms and slumps characterising capitalist market-driven enterprise (recessions in 1819, 1826, 1837, and 1842) imbued the structure of feeling with both a hardy resilience and an expectation of dynamism:

"... local 'Manc' culture (is) relatively attuned to the fast-changing boom and slump of the capitalist business cycle." (p.32)

This is perceived to be lacking in Sheffield, where insularity led to the steep decline of the steel industry being generally ignored as late as 1980. Manchester's economy, though perceived as 'Cottonopolis', was

² Taylor, Ian, Evans, Karen & Fraser, Penny *A Tale of Two Cities: Global Change, Local Feeling and Everyday Life in the North of England*, Routledge, 1996

always more diverse than Sheffield's dual economy of steel and cutlery, and this diversity has perhaps encouraged a more fluid approach to its productive base.

Unpicking the powerful capitalist element in Manchester's political culture as seen in Richard Cobden and the Anti-Corn Law League, the 'Manchester School' and the Free Trade Hall, Taylor et al describe how for contemporary observers Manchester came "to symbolise the promise of 'a new age' of industrial development tied directly to international commerce and trade" (p.52). They develop this theme, investigating the wealthy Manchester business class "dedicated to a version of economic liberalism" (p.53). A key assertion in this book is that Mancunian culture is based on this historical "self-confident and even brash form of classless populism, oriented to the pursuit of wealth and personal success through commercial enterprise and cunning." (p.53):

"The dominant image of the Mancunian of the 1990s, of the street-wise 'scally' (scallywag) doing business across the world or profiting from local initiatives in the entertainment business (the pop groups of 1980's 'Madchester' or the Olympic Bid in 1992), we would argue is no overnight invention." (p.53-54)

The shock city has also left a sense of Manchester as a 'cosmopolitan' city, with high levels of immigration during its lightning growth "overlaying the Manchester area with a sense of cultural and national diversity that is less obvious elsewhere within the North of England" (p.49). This aspect of the city (augmented by its key role as a player in an emergent world market and most visible in the active Chinatown and Gay Village) can be seen in terms of ethnicity, and a useful chapter compares the different responses to a racial Other in Manchester and Sheffield. Moreover, in Manchester, the higher level of non-white population not only contributes to the 'local structure of feeling' but is actually 'used' as a selling point of the city.

So, this sense of openness, whilst rightly tempered with relatively detailed analysis of the grim reality of the 'problems' in Moss Side and the less open responses to gay people within the "inescapable background of the hegemonic masculinist mythology of the old industrial North" (p.180), indicates a willingness in Manchester's structure of feeling to accept examples of the Other socially and culturally and to perceive a global market as part of Manchester's economic remit. Manchester has always reacted against any image of it as a regional outpost in 'London's England' and (like Liverpool, in different ways) has always claimed its right to global trade.

"Manchester was far more than a 'metropolis of manufacturers': it was above all a centre of trade for a whole region, linked with a whole world."³

This point also indicates the important cultural impact of trade and commerce over simply manufacturing. Manchester has been perceived as an important cultural centre - from Charles Hallé settling there from France in 1848 to its current global reputation. This is a firm component of the local structure of feeling - the notion of being "at the cutting edge of change" (p.4) and in particular "the sense of being 'at the centre of things' (historically, in Manchester, in music, media or football)" (p.309). Indeed, the 'structure of feeling' in Manchester is summarised as "cosmopolitan Manchester, the city of commerce and trade" (p.267) and the "general cultural script in Manchester" is that it is "a 'headquarter city' for youth" and that "the city itself is open to Others" (p.268).

Taylor et al highlight the key influences on Mancunian culture as a composite of these historical influences, including the fact that Manchester is represented both as a centre of labour history (Peterloo) and as a centre of capitalist innovation, with all the associated social and cultural effects they imply:

"It is this restless flux of the utopias of organised labour and the utopian dreams of urban fortunes, won through free trade and enterprise, that defines the parameters of local Mancunian 'structure of feeling' - a culture that sees itself as connected up to a larger world and a larger set of possibilities, rather than simply an industrial city caught within a narrow labour metaphysic." (p.59)

Throughout the book one gets this clear picture of elements in Manchester's cultural composition that, despite all the 'problems' mentioned, appear to position the city usefully to meet the challenge of 'new times' for these old cities. Certainly Sheffield is perceived to be lacking in these key components - relatively diverse industry, relative openness to the Other, a history of global economy and dynamic

³ Briggs, Asa *Victorian Cities*, Penguin, 1963

entrepreneurship - due to the 'enclave mentality' fostered by its geographical history and dual economy leading to potentially damaging residual elements in local political culture, material structure and structure of feeling. The regeneration effort in Sheffield is finally summarised as a "rescue-squad ... patching up a badly damaged economic and social body" rather than a proactive "growth coalition" (p.306). This is frequently contrasted with, in AJP Taylor's words, Manchester's historic "restless and dynamic" character (p.75) informing an ambitious regeneration and the authors indeed summarise by stating that "we are suggesting that Manchester is 'better placed' than Sheffield and most other Northern cities" (p.284).

III

This evocation of the structure of feeling in the two cities is thought provoking - (though in the case of Sheffield probably controversial). But the book is deeply problematic. The first, and most striking, aspect is that with such a central focus on 'structure of feeling' there is hardly any discussion of cultural theory, let alone the fittedness of this concept as a methodological or analytical tool. As stated here it is just not adequate for the weight of argument resting upon it. Secondly, the material assembled in the central main part of the book, concerned with 'everyday life in the post-Fordist city', is not informed by the concept of 'structure of feeling' nor does it produce any evidence as to the city's responsiveness (or not) to global structural change. Indeed, the use of focus groups tends to give a very particular kind of evidence ('issue' and 'problem' focused) with no real ethnographic evidence that would make sense of the lived interconnections crucial to the notion of 'structure of feeling'. 'Culture' - Williams' 'ordinary' culture - is absent from the focus groups. Thirdly, Taylor et al have an extreme ambivalence to those in any way connected with the production and consumption of contemporary culture; on the one hand they are invoked as the incarnations of the 'Manc' structure of feeling; on the other they are dismissed as global elites, yuppies, small minorities or, in the case of youth culture, merely the legal tip of a vast iceberg of an informal and criminal economy.

The problematic nature of the book then, we would argue, lies in its failure to address the question of culture head-on. As noted, 'structure of feeling' is hardly discussed; what there is concerns the question of its shift from the national to the local context. After Williams, Taylor et al quote Stuart Hall:

"The purpose of the analysis [must be] to study how the interactions between all these practices and patterns are lived and experienced as a whole, in any particular period. That is its 'structure of feeling'" (p.5).

Williams and Hall were both situated within (and greatly contributed to) that particular British offshoot of Western Marxism, 'cultural studies'. It is an approach that is by no means uncontentious; moreover, the debate and the world has moved a long way over the three decades since the publication of 'The Long Revolution' in 1963. For a start, cultural studies has struggled with the totalising, 'objectivising' tendencies within Marxism, that sense of 'grasping' the interconnections between all the practices and patterns of a 'whole social formation'. One of the key debates within cultural studies and 'postmodern' social science is precisely this viewpoint of the 'outside' theorist/observer - whether this be social scientist, anthropologist or travel writer. Increasingly it is a negotiated ethnographic understanding of the construction of lived meaning that has become more and more crucial, just as it has become more and more fraught by the ambiguous relationship between the observer and the observed. There is no discussion of these questions in a book promoting itself as giving people a 'real voice'.

Related to this is the question of what counts as 'essential' and 'inessential' in this grasping of interconnections. For the authors, in the formation of the 'structure of feeling' the essential is always-already assumed to be Urry's 'local class structure'. Leaving aside the constant tendency of this line of explanation to either tautology or reductionism, it is precisely this struggle with the question of class that has marked the development of cultural studies since the mid-sixties. A foundational role for class within a cultural formation is something which needs to be justified, it cannot simply be asserted - even if we are dealing with Manchester and Sheffield.

But it is not just that the impact of the mass media, the information revolution, the explosion of consumption - and the consumption of culture - has given rise to new concerns, new theories, new academic fashions even. The profound structural shifts to which Taylor et al refer also include a radical restructuring of the process of identity formation itself - 'reflexivity', 'individuation', 'risk' are some of the concepts used to characterise these new conditions. They are serious attempts to deal with the fact that identities are less and less constructed at a collective level. How they are constructed is one of the central concerns of contemporary cultural theorists. These do not get an airing. Moreover, and related to this, these structural shifts have also given rise to a new centrality for culture within social theory and urban

policy. The authors fail to engage with these questions of cultural policy, or indeed the wide, eclectic range of writing on city cultures on which this journal clearly draws.

All this leaves the book without any way of addressing or theorising cultural change. This is damaging because one of the main intentions of the book is to explore how these local 'structures of feeling' help or hinder a response to global change. Writing on Post-Fordist cities has emphasised the increasing importance of culture within this response - and this is not restricted to cultural facilities intended to attract 'footloose capital' but something far more profound.

IV

This failure to engage in debates around cultural theory and policy stems, we would suggest, from a deeper ambivalence towards those involved in the production and consumption of contemporary culture, the cultural industries and the 'cultural intermediaries'. In the introductory sections on local 'structures of feeling' we are presented with a Mancunian culture at home with the demands and opportunities of global change and contemporary culture. When discussing the validity of claims about the strengths of Manchester's economy and the potential for the city within a "common European market and more globally" (p.303), the authors note that: "There is little question that this challenge is quite well understood amongst those employed in the local high-technology and 'cultural intermediary' professional classes in Manchester, particularly we think, in the fast-moving media, popular music, leisure and communication sectors (many of which are dominated by youthful and mobile, international entrepreneurs)" (p.303-304). It is clear that this 'quite well understood' is not restricted to a narrow group of professions and youthful 'international entrepreneurs' but is related to a wider 'structure of feeling': "... many Mancunians ... seemed in the early 1990s to be rather enthusiastically involved in the rapid change and transformation demanded by global change. There was some sense that the idea of change and adaptation was not new - in other words, that the people of Manchester, 'the first industrial city' in England, were in some sense used to being at the cutting edge of change - and that this expressed itself, quite powerfully, in the character of the local culture" (p.4). Thus "the street-wise 'scally' ... doing business across the world or profiting from local initiatives in the entertainment business...is no overnight invention." (p.53-54)

However, not only does the main body of the book fail to pursue these assertions empirically but time and again contradicts itself by the association of those producing and consuming this contemporary culture with a particular class grouping: the 'new professionals', the yuppie, cultural intermediaries as 'global elites'. Despite the opening flurries there is a deep distrust of anything that smacks of 'postmodern culture'. More damagingly, it is continually opposed to the 'reality' of everyday life.

This is especially true of their treatment of 'youth culture' which arguably provides them with their strongest potential link between the new 'high tech' service industries and the wider 'structure of feeling'. But discussions of youth cultural industries are repeatedly juxtaposed with a 'hidden economy' of youth crime or the moral panics surrounding raves, joyriding, and hacking; they are connected to the "larger, equally competitive and precarious, hidden economy of crime" and a "widespread fear of young people" (p.285). Indeed, their principal discussion of the cultural industries is situated within the sphere of "children and young men as the urban other" and "yobs" (p.262-285).

"The emphasis here will be on the close relation between the new local economy of music and cultural consumption, the hidden economy of crime, and the continuing presence of significant numbers of dispossessed young people in public space." (p.264)

This is referred to as a more "contextual analysis" (p.264) than that of the celebratory "essentially descriptive" (p.264) books produced by the Institute for Popular Culture. Indeed, those who direct their attentions to the cultural intermediaries and cultural industries are accused of conniving with an "elite discourse" (Lasch); the authors ask "whether these kinds of cultural studies literature, caught in an admiring circle with leading figures in the cultural industries themselves, are in any sense equivalent to an exploration of the 'structures of feeling' and social behaviours across the social formation as a whole" (p.293).

But in fact, neither this opposition of 'postmodern culture' to 'real life', nor the assignment of those who study it to a conniving, admiring circle really helps us at all; it merely provides an excuse not to study this 'postmodern culture'. This study does not have to be inherently celebratory, nor does it have to be dismissed as the work of some transnational global elite or part of Thatcher's "enterprise culture" (p.271). There is little sense of contemporary culture in the book. This in fact is difficult to get at without continual

and detailed ethnographic engagement, an approach which the book doesn't consider. Voices of contemporary culture are also absent from the focus groups, which don't engage with the issue at all - curious considering it is their central theoretical concern.

Thus the sort of long term cultural shifts noted above concerning individuation, reflexivity and the erosion of collective identity formation appears here as confused and sloppy description of a yuppie/ youth cultural lifestyle; the authors discuss 'alternative lifestyles' of "inverted patterns of work and leisure...postponement of 'parenting'...patterns of consumption of clothing, music and sexuality, and other forms of individual 'desire'", then give us an image of two 'young professional' men dressed in sharp office suits grabbing lunch in a city-centre sandwich bar (p.293).

This lack of investigation of the contemporary production of culture results in a failure to establish a link with the recent past or indeed, with the complex set of institutions within which it is set (a crucial element of Williams' method). Failure to engage with it means that they are unable to get to grips with their central theme - the ability of Manchester to respond to long term global restructuring. Because of their lack of engagement with this culture when it does come to evoking the city's dynamic ability to respond they end up relying on the same hackneyed images that Manchester's corporate publicity machine puts out - Metrolink, concert halls, City of Drama, Olympic bids and Commonwealth Games, and so on.

When it comes to a direct discussion of the cultural industries they rely on two Manchester economists, Peck and Emmerich, who down play their importance in employment terms. These figures are themselves open to serious doubt (as well as their understanding - Mole, 1996⁴) but maybe the authors themselves - faced with a highly volatile and fragmented set of work patterns, a high level of masked activity and career trajectories that cannot be captured by standard 'labour market' models - revert back to the 'local structure of feeling', a "birthright... of a lifetime of hard work (grafting) in the steel industry or other heavy manufacturing" (p.284)

In our view an understanding of the production and consumption of culture, popular or otherwise, is fundamental to the question of the links between local cultures and global change. The cultural industries sector itself represents aspects of those structural changes alluded to in the book: an emphasis on knowledge-intensive industries and 'symbolic specialists'; the importance of flexibility and responsiveness; an ability to creatively link global circuits of symbolic flow to the local context, and vice versa. In terms of how they recruit, how they conduct business, and how they move within and between markets, the cultural industries present a microcosm of those new relations between work, leisure, lifestyle and identity formation to which we referred above. Indeed, we would argue that the cultural industries act as an indicator of the flexibility and creativity of a city as a whole. They are a strongly innovative sector, which, whilst having employment potential also act as catalysts for a wider creative dynamics in the city - in other economic sectors but also within political culture of the city. Relying on dense clusters and overlapped networks these innovative milieus have important implications for the wider question of the ability of cities to learn, to become intentional, proactive. All this is implicitly grasped by the authors but they refuse to examine it in detail.

Manchester's ability to act as an 'innovative milieu' needs careful investigation. One glaring omission in the book is the absence of the 56,000 students in the city, and the supporting higher education infrastructure. How do these impact on the 'structure of feeling' and how did they contribute to Manchester's cultural industries sector? It should also be noted that despite the association of the cultural industries with Manchester's attempt to become a 'European city', it does not have a cultural industries strategy (but then it does not have a cultural strategy) nor does it provide any sectoral support: in a prime example of the negative operation of the 'structure of feeling' this sector is considered flaky, volatile, not involving 'proper jobs' and run by people who don't seem to wear suits - ever!

VI

This opposition of a 'postmodern culture' to 'real life' and its association with a particular class does not just fail to link the contemporary 'structure of feeling' to a possible future (fraught with conflicts and polarisations as it is), it leaves the remainder of the ('real') population sifting through the wreckage of a useless past. The book is as devoid of a sense of the possibilities of contemporary culture as Bryson's. 'Everyday life', separated from the cultural dimension, becomes stunted. The central sections of the book deal with this everyday life as isolated into 'policy issues' - transport, shopping, poverty, ethnicity and

⁴ Phil Mole, 'Fordism, Post-fordism and the Contemporary City' in O'Connor, J & Wynne, D From the Margins to the Centre: Cultural Production and Consumption in the Post-industrial City, Popular Cultural Studies 10, Arena, Ashgate, 1996

gender. In themselves these chapters give a useful picture of the realities of living in the city that contrast starkly with the glossy brochures and boosterism of the city marketing departments. One gets the sense of a feeling of betrayal, exclusion, unwantedness; a sense that nobody cares; a sense that what was once important no longer is, that priorities have changed and they aren't one of them. Like Bryson's book again there is a sense of loss: a loss of the past, a loss of identity, a loss of the ability to tell the story, to pick up the narrative of their lives and how these fit into that of the wider city and the world beyond.

But these do not add up to a 'structure of feeling'. There is an absence of that sense of animated coherence that Taylor et al identify in the industrial cultures of the past. The question was "whether the local structure of feeling' contributes to ... 'local effectivity' in terms of social mobilisation and initiative, whether it is conducive to 'resignation' or whether, indeed, a local 'structure of feeling' may be a kind of sustaining alternative to the benefits of employment in a global free market economy" (p.13). The book doesn't answer these questions; the dismissal of those 'postmodern' theorists who are taken to ignore everyday life in favour of an exclusive concern with the new elites means that complex cultural history of the cities is lost - both in terms of the new 'symbolic specialists' and of those who appear bemused victims of radical change. We end up with is an opposition between a new professional class (sometimes including youth culture, sometimes not) and an expropriated declining working class whose structure of feeling has been ravaged by de-industrialisation and have been expropriated culturally by this new class - who set the agenda for cultural policy and urban regeneration.

V

What Taylor et al fail to do is to show the connection between the two - how the newer incarnations of 'Manc' feeling are related to longer term changes in a 'structure of feeling'. The opposition they set up relates to a more basic opposition between industrial society and culture (stretching from post war Fordism right back to 'shock city') and a post-industrial society which begins around the end of the seventies. This opposition is debatable in economic terms and is certainly unsatisfactory when assessing changed in the structure of feeling. If we look closely at Taylor et al's historical account references to post-war culture are conspicuous by their absence, despite being central to the reminiscences in the focus groups. Many of the changes in culture and lifestyle, the family, uses of the city and so on, began in the sixties.

Thus if we can see in the sixties a belated, nationally orchestrated attempt to restructure Manchester's - and Britain's - industrial structure along Fordist lines, we can also see how it coincided with the promotion of Fordist consumption patterns. If mass production is to be sustained, mass markets have to be assured, not only of individualised consumption but also collective consumption. So we see in the Manchester of the 1960s - as elsewhere - the bulldozing of part of the old city centre to make way for the Arndale centre on Market Street. We see the wholesale clearance of terraced houses and the building of Hulme, Chorlton on Medlock, the Salford housing estates, and high-rise on Manchester's overspill estates in Hattersley and Hyde. These new housing estates were frequently graced by purpose-built primary and secondary schools, the latter replacing the traditional division between grammar and 'modern' with the 'comprehensive', which embodied many Fordist bureaucratic principles, especially those justified by the idea of 'economies of scale'.

The 1960s also saw the beginnings of the construction of motorways into the heart of the city, extending the travel-to-work area, the spread of suburbia and 'out of town' residence and commuting. Meanwhile, the building of Salford University, and the formation of Manchester Polytechnic, added to UMIST and the Victoria University, made Higher Education one of the biggest industries in the city. Local government reorganisation in 1968 tried to put an administrative seal on this 'fordisation', with the creation of Greater Manchester Metropolitan Council

The social and cultural effects of these processes, condensed into less than a decade, were dramatic. For example, Manchester had been known as the night-club capital of the North well before the 1960s; what was the effect of the new housing estates, new roads, new city centre, on this cultural vitality? The brutal modernism of the architecture of the new city sat uncomfortably, cheek by jowl, with the grand Victorian pretensions of the Town Hall and Royal Exchange, Albert Square and Piccadilly Gardens. The Hallé Orchestra at the Free Trade Hall had long been internationally famed, but its fame became increasingly rivalled by the enormous national audiences for Coronation Street just next door, the flagship programme of the infant Granada Television. Mainstream and esoteric popular music, like the Hollies and Northern Soul, created a cultural dynamic in Manchester to rival that on Merseyside.

As Taylor et al's chapter on ethnicity makes clear, like the American cities which had pioneered and exemplified Fordism in the first two decades of the century - Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia - 1960s

Manchester comprised a cosmopolitan population, of diverse origins, creeds and colours. Manchester had, of course, attracted and welcomed migrants from Scotland, Ireland and Europe for more than a century ; but the sixties saw an even more cosmopolitan population emerge with Chinese, Asian and African-Caribbean arrivals. Outside of London, no other British city has had such a diversity of cultures and communities, and no other city - perhaps even including London - has been quite as multi-cultural as Manchester.

This contributed greatly to the social and cultural transformations of Manchester in the late 1960s, which became an ethnic as well as a cultural melting pot, finally breaking many of its links with its nineteenth century (Lancashire) past. Even Manchester's football underwent this change: mass football audiences were not a monopoly of Manchester, nor unique to the 1960s; but the big monies of Edwards and Swales - the one made from mass meat sales to Manchester's schools, the other from electrical retail shops - pushed United and City into the forefront of the 'mass entertainment' industry (and for some leaving football far behind)⁵.

What this suggests is that in terms of establishing a contemporary structure of feeling the opposition between modernity (industrial society) and postmodernity is not as clear cut as Taylor assumes. To quote Hans Mommaas, writing in a Dutch context:

"[D]uring the 1970s and 1980s...changes, which until then were approved of as signs of a harmonious modernisation, seemed to have moved beyond control. Something changed with regard to the wider institutional as well as foundational framework within which former 'modernising' developments were 'contained'. The national-local arrangements in the post-war period erected to de-traditionalise and mobilise socio-spatial conditions and to reintegrate the life thus 'privatised', lost their cultural, economic and political foundation. This resulted in feelings of fragmentation, chaos, collapse and disorientation.... Both the post-war 'modernisation' and the more recent 'postmodernisation' of local socio-spatial conditions can be seen as the result of local attempts to adjust a local spatialisation to a globalising change in economic and political conditions. In the course of this, more and more elements of local life have become 'disembedded' from a former tradition-based spatialisation. However, while the modernising strategies of the post-war period were accompanied by attempts to reintegrate social life within a rationally founded and scientifically controlled range of institutions (the national state, national citizenship, corporatism, the nuclear family, education based mobility, social welfare, individualised leisure provision), until today postmodernising developments seem to lack such a reintegrationist moment"⁶.

That is to say, the burning question of local cultures, a sense of belonging, the ability to feel part of a wider set of institutional, ethical and familial structures, the ability to live within a workable narrative account of our lives and our communities lives - that this is a long term question and cannot be simply reduced to Thatcherism, 'postmodernism' or even 'postfordism'. Our 'structure of feeling' may be in crisis, it may be buckling under the strain of change; our task though is, as Marshall Berman asks, to try and make sense of our modernity, to try and make it work for us. We are not really succeeding at the moment. But only by opening ourselves up (critically) to contemporary cultures, to listen to Berman's (and Joyce's) 'shouts from the street', can we begin to do so. This book, ultimately, has robbed the city of all sense of vibrancy and culture. Like Bryson, in searching through a desolate present for a lost past, it is in danger of losing sight of the future.

⁵ The forgoing section draws heavily on Mole's article above.

⁶ Mommaas, Hans 'Modernity, Postmodernity and the Crisis of Social Modernisation: A Case Study in Urban Fragmentation' in *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* Vol. 20 No. 2 1996

⁷ Berman, Marshall *All That is Solid Melts into Air*, Verso 1982