Phoenix Cities: The fall and Rise of Great Industrial Cities

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A Phoenix is a magical bird

- Constantly renews itself
- Lives for hundreds of years
- Then burns to ashes
- Out of the ashes a new Phoenix rises to start the cycle all over again
“eagle like, with red and gold plumage, it is a symbol of death and resurrection.”
So what are Phoenix cities?

- Majestic, historic magnets in dominant locations
- With vast natural resources
- Spawning manufacturing giants of world class
- That wrecked environments, social structures
- To produce vast wealth
- Alongside inequality, squalor, disorder.
- Troubled progress, self-destructed, recovered?
Historic Bilbao
Bilbao’s Dense Housing
Bilbao’s Protests
Bilbao Recovering
Seven prize examples across Europe:

- Leipzig, Germany
- Bremen, Germany
- Sheffield, UK
- Belfast, UK
- Bilbao, Spain
- Torino, Italy
- Saint Etienne, France
Slow then accelerated decline

- Resources played out by 1980
- Over-sized industries collapsed
- City cores and warehouses fell idle
- People left – empty homes, offices
- Jobs left – devastated communities
- Poverty rose
- Despairing defence of old industries
Belfast’s Trouble Inner Core
Belfast’s Recovering City Centre
Belfast’s Step by Step Progress
But no magic rebirth from the ashes

- Slow, laborious reclamation
- New kind of rebirth through restoration
- Inspired city leadership “born from ashes”
- Turning points on realisation of ‘no going back’
Torino’s Citizen Consultations
Torino’s Neighbourhood Rescue
Torino’s Social Enterprises
Torino’s New Challenges
New approaches

• Land decontamination and recycling
• Revaluation of industrial heritage
• Restoration of public buildings and public spaces
• Innovative small enterprises and new skill
• Neighbourhood renewal and integration
• Rescue and upgrading of infrastructure
• Public transport and investment
• Conspicuous, symbolic projects
Saint-Étienne’s Past Inventiveness
Saint-Étienne’s Recycling
Saint-Étienne’s Investment in Public Spaces
Saint-Étienne’s Workshops
Saint-Étienne’s Neighbourhood Rescue
Saint-Étienne’s Legacy Restored
Strong public backing for cities

- Density of infrastructure and people
- Restored city centres and public transport
- Reclaimed canals and river fronts
- New industries on back of old, e.g. Optics
- University–led innovations and ‘incubators’
- Inward investors attracted by space & workforce
- Re–valued urban assets, environments
- Recovering population and jobs
Bremen’s World Heritage
Bremen’s Port Areas Reclaimed
Bremen’s High-tech Enterprises
Bremen’s ‘Social City’
But recovery shaken by:

- Economic and financial turmoil
- Loss of credit and investment
- Resource constraints, public and private
- Costs of energy, materials, space, capacity
- Wider environmental pressures
  - Congestion, sprawl, pollution, flooding
- New job losses and youth unemployment
- Social inequalities heightened
- Precarious uncertain future
Leipzig’s Legacy
Leipzig’s Reclaimed Homes and Land
Leipzig’s Survivors
Leipzig’s Uncertain Prospects
Model of Phoenix Cities: The Three Stages of Evolution

First Industrial Economy
- Explosive growth
- Social upheaval
- Environmental exploitation

Second Post-Industrial Economy
- Public Infrastructure
- Social Integration
- New economy

Third Resource-Constrained Economy
- Resource saving
- Public transit
- Community resilience
- ‘Green’ Innovation
- A New Phoenix
### Three Scenarios

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

- US and Europe share common challenges
- Shrinking world
- “Necessity is the mother of invention”
- Innovation breaks new ground
- We live in an urban age
- Energy saving easiest in cities
- We can’t plunder the planet for city recovery
- Resourceful cities create third economy
Sheffield’s Troubled Transition
Sheffield’s Central Magnets
Sheffield’s Small Enterprises Survive
Troubling Youth unemployment
Sheffield’s Search for Opportunity
Three Big Questions

- How will struggling cities emerge from financial crisis?
- How will social programmes be funded and neighbourhoods renewed?
- How will cities innovate on back of resource constraints?
THIS? OR THIS?
THIS?

OR THIS?
THIS?

OR THIS?
THIS?
OR THIS?