



# The Rise of Advanced Marginality: Notes on its Nature and Implications

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The resurgence of extreme poverty and destitution, ethnoracial divisions (linked to the colonial past) and public violence, and their accumulation in the same distressed urban areas, suggest that the metropolis is the site and fount of novel forms of exclusionary social closure in advanced societies. This paper essays an ideal-typical characterization of this new, rising regime of urban marginality by contrasting it with selected features of urban poverty in the postwar era of Fordist growth. Six distinctive features of advanced marginality are proposed: the growing internal heterogeneity and desocialization of labor, the functional disconnection of neighborhood conditions from macro-economic trends; territorial fixation and stigmatization; spatial alienation and the dissolution of place; the loss of a viable hinterland; and the symbolic fragmentation of marginalized populations. The paper concludes with a discussion of the implications of the rise of advanced marginality for social analysis and policy, including the need to break out of the market-and-state paradigm and to sever the link between work and subsistence via the institution of a citizen's wage.

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## **1. 'Underclass' and 'banlieue': faces of the new marginality**

Over the past decade or so, the self-image of First World societies as increasingly pacified, homogeneous, cohesive, and egalitarian – 'democratic' in Tocqueville's sense of the term, 'civilized' in Nobeert Elias's lexicon – has been shattered by virulent outbreaks of public disorder, mounting ethnoracial tensions, and the palpable resurgence of inequality and marginality in the metropolis (Wacquant 1994a). Two parallel debates have thus developed in the United States and Western Europe around the intersection of poverty, 'race' (or immigration) and urban decline as persistent joblessness, social deprivation, and ethnoracial conflict rose in unison in cities on both shores of the Atlantic.

With the accelerating dislocation and degradation of the metropolitan core, American social scientists and public policy experts have grown

alarmed about the emergence and hardening of a so-called black 'underclass' said to be entrapped in the urban core and increasingly isolated from the broader society.<sup>1</sup> In France and several other Western European countries, a veritable moral panic has broken out over the rise of 'new poverty', the consolidation of 'immigrant ghettos', and the menace that these represent for national integration and public order, as working-class boroughs witnessed a deterioration of social conditions while former 'guest workers' and their children became an increasing and permanent component of their population.<sup>2</sup> On both sides of the Atlantic, the theme of the dualization, or polarization, of the city has taken center stage in the most advanced sectors of urban theory and research, as the extremes of high society and dark ghetto, luxurious wealth and utter destitution, cosmopolitan bourgeoisie and urban outcasts, flourished and decayed side by side.<sup>3</sup>

Together, these developments would seem to point to an epochal transatlantic convergence in patterns of urban marginality. Yet close analysis of the ecology, structural location, composition, and organizational make-up of long-standing or newly emerging territories of exclusion in the Old and New Worlds suggests that European regimes of urban poverty are *not* being 'Americanized'. Contrary to first impressions and superficial, media-driven accounts, the changeover of the continental metropolis has not triggered a process of ghettoization. That is, it is not giving birth to culturally uniform sociospatial ensembles based on the forcible relegation of stigmatized populations to enclaves where these populations evolve group- and place-specific organizations that substitute for and duplicate the institutional framework of the broader society, if at an inferior and incomplete level (Wacquant 1991).

A paired comparison between neighborhoods of relegation in Chicago's 'Black Belt' and the Parisian 'Red Belt' shows that the declining French metropolitan periphery and the Afro-American ghetto remain two sharply distinct sociospatial constellations. And for good reason: they are heirs to different urban legacies, produced by different logics of segregation and aggregation, and inserted in different welfare state and market frameworks, all of which result in markedly higher levels of blight, segregation, isolation, and distress in the US ghetto. To put it crudely, 'exclusionary closure' (as formulated by Parkin (1978)) and sociospatial relegation to the American Black Belt operate first and foremost on grounds of 'race',<sup>4</sup> bolstered by state structure and policies and aggravated by class divisions. This is not so in the French Red Belt where sociospatial extrusion is driven chiefly by class factors, partly exacerbated by colonial immigrant status and partly alleviated by the (central and municipal) state. Correspondingly, the US ghetto is a racially and culturally monotonous universe characterized by low organizational density and state penetration (and therefore high physical and social insecurity), whereas its French counterpart is typically heterogeneous in both ethnonational and class recruitment, with a comparatively strong presence of public institutions and far-reaching state penetration (Wacquant 1992b).

The differential 'stitching together' of color, class, and place on both sides of the Atlantic does not, however, obviate the possibility that the recent transformations of the US ghetto, the French *banlieue*, and the British and

Dutch 'inner cities' might herald the crystallization of a novel, still inchoate, yet *distinctive regime of urban marginality*, different from both America's traditional ghetto (Trotter 1993) and the twentieth-century European 'worker's space' (Verret 1979; Thrift & Williams 1987). Viewed from this admittedly prospective angle, the 'return of the repressed' realities of extreme poverty and social destitution, ethnoracial divisions (linked to colonial history) and public violence, and their accumulation in the same distressed urban areas, suggests that First World cities are now confronted with what we may call *advanced marginality*. Such new forms of exclusionary social closure and peripheralization have arisen, or intensified, in the post-Fordist metropolis as a result, not of backwardness, but of the uneven, disarticulating, mutations of the *most advanced sectors* of Western societies and economies, as these bear on the lower fractions of the working class and on dominated ethnoracial categories, as well as on the territories they occupy in the divided city (Sassen 1991; Mingione 1991; Thrift 1993).

The qualifier 'advanced' is meant to indicate that those forms of marginality are not *behind* us and being progressively resorbed, whether by 'free market' expansion (i.e., further commodification of social life) or through the arm of the welfare state, but rather that they stand *ahead of us*. There is an urgent need for the elaboration of novel forms of political intervention to check or redirect the structural forces that produce these forms of marginality including polarized economic growth and the fragmentation of the labor market, the casualization of employment and autonomization of the street economy in degraded urban areas, mass joblessness amounting to outright deproletarianization for large segments of the working class (especially youths), and state policies of urban retrenchment if not outright abandonment. If new mechanisms of social mediation are not put in place to reincorporate excluded populations, one can expect that urban marginality will continue to rise and spread, and along with it the street violence, political alienation, organizational desertification, and economic informalization that increasingly plague the neighborhoods of relegation of the metropolis in advanced society.

## 2. Some distinctive properties of 'advanced marginality'

An ideal-typical characterization of this new marginality *in statu nascendi* may be provisionally attempted by contrasting it with selected stylized features of urban poverty in the postwar era of 'Fordist' growth and prosperity (1945–1975). Ideal-types, it may be recalled, are not purely analytical, 'synthetic constructs', but sociohistorical abstractions of real instances of a phenomenon (Weber 1949: 86–92). They assist us in the process of hypothesis formation and comparison; they offer a baseline for identifying significant variations and their possible causes. As heuristic devices, however, ideal-types are not covered by criteria of truth or falsehood.

The summary characterization of 'advanced marginality' that follows is offered with reservation, knowing full well that, as Wittgenstein once warned (1977: 55), 'concepts may alleviate mischief or they may make it worse; foster it or check it'. Binary oppositions of the kind fostered by such conceptual exercises are prone to exaggerate differences, confound descrip-

tion and prescription, and set up overburdened dualisms that miss continuities, underplay contingency, and overstate the internal coherence of social forms. With these caveats in mind, six distinctive features of advanced marginality may be singled out for scrutiny.<sup>5</sup>

*Wage-labor as part of the problem*

Whereas in the decades of Fordist expansion or 'organized capitalism' (Lash & Urry 1988), the wage-labor relation offered an efficient solution to the dilemmas of urban marginality and social destitution, it appears that under the ascending new regime, it must be considered as (also) part of the problem.

By becoming 'internally' unstable and heterogeneous, differentiated and differentiating, the wage-labor contract has turned into a source of fragmentation and precariousness rather than homogeneity and security for those held at the border zones of the employment sphere.<sup>6</sup> Witness, among other signs, the growth of part-time, 'flexible', variable-schedule positions with fewer benefits, negotiable extension and benefit clauses, revised wage scales, and the various avenues pursued to evade the standard, homogenizing effects of state regulation of wage work (e.g., France's aborted attempt to create a subminimum wage for unskilled youths under the Balladur government in the spring of 1995). The resurgence of sweatshops, piecework and homeworking, the development of teleworking and two-tier wage scales, the outsourcing of employees and the individualization of remuneration and promotion patterns, the institutionalization of 'permanently temporary' work, not to mention the multiplication of 'make-work' formulae (such as 'workfare' forced labor in the United States and cheap, government-sponsored, 'public utility work' in France) imposed as condition of access to public assistance: all point to the rampant desocialization of wage labor.

In addition to the erosion of the integrative capacity of the wage-labor relation, each of the elements of security granted under the Fordist-Keynesian social contract (Standing 1993) has been undermined or is under frontal attack: labor market security (efforts by the state to reach full employment), income security (through social provision, jobless benefits, and incorporation into unions), and employment security (the reduction of capitalist command over terms of hiring and firing). All in all, the structural roots of economic uncertainty and precariousness have ramified and extended in reach as well as depth.<sup>7</sup>

*Functional disconnection from macro-economic trends*

Advanced marginality is increasingly disconnected from short-term fluctuations in the economy so that expansionary phases in employment and consumption have little durable effect upon it. Social conditions and life chances in neighborhoods of relegation in Europe and the United States changed very little, if at all, during the boom years of the 1980s and early 1990s, but worsened noticeably during recessionary phases. Thus youth joblessness kept rising in the Parisian Red Belt under the Rocard administration, breaking postwar records in one working-class municipality after another, even when strong growth had momentarily checked the onslaught of national unemployment. In Chicago, nearly 80 per cent of

ghetto residents reported a deterioration of their financial situation after four consecutive years of buoyant economic growth under Reagan and most felt that their neighborhood was firmly set on the path to further dilapidation (Wacquant & Wilson 1989: 21–22).

Considering this asymmetric relation between national and even regional aggregate unemployment and labor market trends on the one hand, and neighborhood conditions on the other, and given current levels of productivity increases and emerging forms of ‘jobless growth’, it would take miraculous rates of economic expansion to absorb back into the labor market those who have been durably expelled from it. This means that, short of actually guaranteeing employment, social policies premised on boosting the absorptive capacity of the labor market have every chance of being both costly and inefficient, since their benefits will ‘trickle down’ to the new urban outcasts last and only after every other more privileged group has benefited from growth.

#### *Territorial fixation and stigmatization*

Rather than being diffused throughout working class areas, advanced marginality tends to concentrate in well-identified, bounded, and increasingly isolated territories viewed by both outsiders and insiders as social purgatories, urban hellholes where only the refuse of society would accept to dwell. A stigma of place thus superimposes itself on the already pervasive stigmata of poverty and (where applicable) of race or colonial-immigrant origin, as these ‘penalized spaces’ are, or threaten to become, permanent fixtures of the city and as discourses of vilification proliferate about them (Wacquant 1993a).<sup>8</sup> In nearly every major First World metropolis, a particular urban district or township has ‘made a name for itself’ as that place where disorder, dereliction, and danger are said to be the normal order of the day. The South Bronx and Brownsville in New York City, Les Minguettes and Vaulx-en-Velin near Lyons, London’s Brixton and East End, Gutleutviertel in Hamburg, Rinkeby on the outskirts of Stockholm, and Neue West in Rotterdam — the list gets longer by the year. On this level, whether or not those areas are in fact dilapidated, dangerous, and declining matters little: the prejudicial belief that they are suffices to set off socially detrimental consequences.

Living in the (sub)proletarian housing projects of the periphery of Paris creates a ‘muted sentiment of guilt and shame whose unacknowledged weight warps human relations’ (Pétonnet 1982: 148). People commonly hide their address, avoid having family and friends visit them at home, and feel compelled to make excuses for residing in an infamous locale experienced as inferiorizing and a blotch on one’s self-image. ‘I’m not from the *cité*, me myself’, insists a young woman from Vitry-sur-Seine, ‘I live here because I have problems right now but I’m not from here, I have nothing to do with all those people from over here’ (Pétonnet 1982: 149). Similarly, inhabitants of Chicago’s ghetto deny belonging to the neighborhood as a criss-crossing network of mutual acquaintance and assistance, and they strive to distance themselves from a place and population they know are universally reviled: ‘Hell, I don’t know what people [around here] do, I guess I’m pretty much on my own. I don’t ‘sociate with people in the neighborhood’ (Wacquant 1993a:

369). All too often, the sense of social indignity can be deflected only by thrusting the stigma onto a faceless, diabolized Other – the downstairs neighbors, the foreign family dwelling in an adjacent building, the youths from across the street who ‘do drugs’, or residents over on the next block whom one suspects of illegally drawing unemployment or welfare.<sup>9</sup>

*Territorial alienation, or the dissolution of ‘place’*

The obverse of this process of territorial stigmatization is the dissolution of ‘place’, that is, the loss of a locale that marginalized urban populations identify with and feel secure in. Theories of post-Fordism intimate that the current reconfiguring of capitalism involves not only a vast reshuffling of firms, jobs, and people *in space* but a sea-change in the organization and experience of *space* itself (see especially Harvey 1989; also Soja 1989 and Shields 1991). This is consistent with the change of both ghetto and *banlieue* from communal ‘places’ suffused with shared emotions, joint meanings and practices and institutions of mutuality, to indifferent ‘spaces’ of mere survival and contest.

The distinction between these two conceptions or modes of appropriation of the extant environment may be put roughly thus: “Places’ are ‘full’ and ‘fixed’, stable arenas’ whereas ‘spaces’ are ‘potential voids’, ‘possible threats’, areas that have to be feared, secured or fled’ (Smith 1987: 297). The shift from a politics of place to a politics of space, adds Smith, is

encouraged by the weakening of territorially-based communal bonds in the city. It is also fostered by the tendency to retreat into the privatised household and by the strengthening of feelings of vulnerability arising in the course of the pursuit of fulfillment or security.

One must be careful not to romanticize conditions in the proletarian neighborhoods and segregated enclaves of yesteryear. There never was a ‘golden age’ when life in the American ghetto and the French *banlieue* was sweet and social relations therein were harmonious and fulfilling. Yet it remains that the experience of urban relegation has changed in ways that make it distinctively more burdensome and alienating today.

To illustrate briefly: until the 1960s, the black American ghetto was still a ‘place’, a collective *oekoumène*, a humanized — though brutally oppressive — urban landscape with which blacks felt a strong positive identification, as expressed in the rhetoric of ‘soul’ (Hannerz 1968), and over which they desired to establish collective control — such was one of the goals of the Black Power movement. Today the ghetto is a ‘space’ and space is no longer a common resource that Afro-Americans can use to shelter themselves from white domination. It has become, rather, a vector of intracommunal division and an instrument for the virtual imprisonment of the urban subproletariat of color, a dreaded and hated territory from which, as one informant from Chicago’s South Side tersely put it, ‘everybody’s tryin’ to get out’.

Far from providing a measure of protection from the insecurities and pressures of the outside world, the space of the ‘hyperghetto’ is now a perilous battlefield (Wacquant 1994b) on which a four-cornered contest is waged between organized and independent street predators (gangs and hustlers) who seek to plunder whatever riches circulate in it, local residents

and their grassroots organizations (such as MAD, 'Mothers Against Drugs', on the West Side of Chicago, or block clubs and merchants' associations where they have survived) who strive to conserve the use- and exchange-value of their neighborhood, surveillance agencies of the state entrusted with containing violence and disorder within the perimeter of the racialized urban core, and outside institutional predators (realtors in particular) for whom converting fringe sections of the Black Belt for middle class use can yield phenomenal profits.<sup>10</sup>

### *Loss of hinterland*

Adding to the erosion of place is the disappearance of a viable hinterland. In previous phases of modern capitalist crisis and restructuring, workers temporarily rejected from the labor market could fall back upon the social economy of their community of provenance, be it a functioning working-class borough, the communal ghetto, or a rural village in the backcountry or in the country of emigration (Kornblum 1974; Lipsitz 1989: Chapters 1, 3; Sayad 1991).

When they were dismissed from the factories and foundries, mills and car shops of Chicago where they toiled on account of a cyclical downturn in the industrial economy, residents of 'Bronzeville' relied on the support of kin, clique, and church. Most inhabitants were wage earners and a densely knit web of neighborhood-based organizations helped cushion the blow of economic hardship, while 'shady enterprises' ramifying across the class structure supplied precious stopgap employment (Drake & Cayton [1945] 1993). By contrast, a majority of the residents of today's South Side are jobless; the area has been virtually emptied of its means of collective sustenance; and bridges to outside wage work have been drastically narrowed by the outright deproletarianization of large segments of the local population: sisters, friends, and uncles are hard pressed to help one find employment when they are themselves jobless.

Nowadays, individuals durably excluded from paid employment in neighborhoods of relegation cannot readily rely on collective informal support while they wait for later work which, moreover, may never come. To survive, they must resort to individual strategies of 'self-provisioning', 'shadow work', underground commerce and quasi-institutionalized 'hustling' (Gershuny 1983; Smith 1986; *Inchiesta* 1986; Pahl 1987; EEC 1989; Wacquant 1994b; Bourgois 1995), which do little to alleviate precariousness since 'the distributional consequences of the pattern of informal work in industrial societies is to reinforce, rather than to reduce or to reflect, contemporary patterns of inequality' (Pahl 1989: 249). The character of the informal economy has also changed in many cities. It appears to be increasingly disjoined from the regular wage-labor sector and its parallel circuits offer fewer entry points into the 'legit' occupational world, so that youths who engage in underground work often have every chance of being durably marginalized.

### *Symbolic and social fragmentation*

Advanced marginality also differs from its predecessors in that it develops in the context of class decomposition (Azémar 1992) rather than class formation

or consolidation, and under the pressure of *deproletarianization* rather than proletarianization (Sugrue 1993). It therefore lacks a *language*, a repertoire of shared representations and signs through which to conceive a collective destiny and to project possible alternative futures. Aging industrial laborers and lower-level clerks made expendable by technological innovations and the spatial dispersion of productive activities, human rejects of the social services and criminal justice systems, long-term recipients of public aid and the chronically 'homeless', disgruntled offspring of the declining fractions of the working class faced with the unexpected competition of youth from racially stigmatized communities and new immigrant inflows: how may a sense of common condition and purpose be forged when the press of social necessity is so diversely configured?

This absence of a common idiom by which to unify themselves symbolically accentuates the objective social dispersion and fragmentation of the new urban poor. The perennial organizational instrument of collective voice and claims-making for the urban proletariat, namely, trade unions, is strikingly ill-suited to tackle issues that arise and spill beyond the conventional sphere of regulated wage work, and their traditional defensive tactics seem only to aggravate the dilemmas they face.<sup>11</sup> The nascent organizations of the dispossessed (such as unions of the unemployed, homeless defense groups, and grassroots associations protecting the rights of 'the excluded') are too fragile and have yet to earn recognition on the political stage to exert more than intermittent local pressure.

### 3. Implications for urban theory and research

If a form of advanced marginality of a 'third kind', coterminous with, but different from, those embodied by the historic American Black Belt and the traditional French Red Belt, is indeed incubating in the post-Fordist city, two challenges arise, the one intellectual and the other political, that call for a serious *revamping of inherited modes of social analysis* and political action when it comes to issues of urban inequality.

For social research, each of the ideal-typical features of advanced marginality outlined above supplies a topic for empirical investigation.<sup>12</sup> In what ways exactly has the nature of the wage-labor relation and its effects upon life strategies changed, and for whom (Mingione 1991; Castel 1995)? How does the erosion of the 'social worker' relate to the internal diversification of the working class and to the distribution of socio-economic redundancy across groups and areas (Cross & Waldinger 1992)? How do aggregate trends in employment, flexibility, productivity, pay and benefits concretely reshape the labor market(s) faced by poor urbanites (Gordon & Sassen 1992, Freeman 1993)? Is it the case that economic growth is largely without repercussions in relegation neighborhoods and that the tightening of the labor market, when it does occur, does not re-proletarianize their residents (Osterman 1991; Engbersen et al. 1993)?

Is territorial stigmatization simply a subtle modality of racial discrimination in disguise or can one muster data demonstrating that it exerts real – and deadly – effects independently of, and in addition to, invidious ethnoracial or ethnonational distinctions, including *within* the same group

(Wilkinson 1992; Bobo & Zubrinsky 1995)? Is the loss of a sense of place in territories of urban exile an artefact of distant observation or is it a deeply felt reality, and if so, how does it differ from the experience of deracination in previous eras of working-class formation and transformation (Thrift & Williams 1987; Sayad 1995)? What languages do the new (sub)proletariat(s) of the dual city borrow from or forge anew to make sense of their situation and to (re)articulate a collective identity (Bourdieu et al. 1993): one that reconnects them to the working class from which they issue, pits them against the state, or turns them onto one another? And how do state structures, policies, and ideologies impact on the social, spatial, and symbolic transformations of which neighborhoods of relegation are the result?<sup>13</sup>

One of the main tasks of future research on advanced marginality will be to establish how each of these variables or processes presents itself differently in different countries and/or types of urban environment. Note that these questions have immediate policy relevance in that it seems hard to tackle many of the concrete manifestations of the new marginality unless we first arrive at an empirical assessment of its distinctive features and of the ways in which these features render traditional modes of policy remediation inefficient and sometimes even counterproductive.

For social theorists, *fin-de-siècle* urban dualisms raise in a pointed manner the question of the adequacy of the concepts, theoretical frameworks, and approaches inherited from an era of capitalist organization that may be drawing to a close. Should France's 'excluded' and America's 'underclass' — to the extent that these preconstructed categories have stable empirical referents<sup>14</sup> — still be considered part of a 'working class' when that class itself is agonizing, indeed fast disappearing in the form in which we have known it for much of the past century? Do they stand at the fringe of the service (sub)proletariat in an entirely new class constellation? Or are residents of neighborhoods of relegation located 'outside' the class structure altogether, having fallen into a zone of social liminality wherein a specific social tropism operates that effectively isolates them from others around? Similarly, have not the categories of 'race', 'minority' and 'immigrant' been rendered analytically problematic, perhaps even obsolete in their current conformation, by the fact that their empirical contents have become internally differentiated, unstable, and dispersed, referring to widely dissimilar classification grids, social positions and experiences across groups and over time?<sup>15</sup>

Finally, if *citizenship*, and not class, income, employment status, or 'race', is becoming the central pivot of exclusionary closure and of entitlement to transfers, goods, and services from the national collectivity, then we stand in dire need of an adequate sociological understanding of this institution, central to modernity yet still relatively marginal to social theory and research. Models of the new sociospatial order of cities would gain greatly by drawing on and building upon recent sociological studies of citizenship that have labored to revise the overly evolutionary, progressivist, and consensual model inherited from T. H. Marshall.<sup>16</sup> In turn, rethinking the mechanisms that link group membership and advanced marginality will require to examine up close what 'mediating institutions' (Lamphere 1992) need to be invented to 're-solidarize' the city and beget the social integration

that previously resulted from incorporation into a class or a compact ethnoracial community. All of which suggests the need to go beyond the rudimentary 'state-and-market' paradigm that implicitly undergirds much of current thinking in social science and social policy.

#### 4. Towards a revolution in public policy

At the political level, the onset and spread of advanced marginality poses formidable dilemmas and demands a radical questioning of traditional modes of state intervention. If bringing people into the labor market can no longer be safely relied upon to reduce poverty in the city, as is clearly indicated by the continuous inflation of the ranks of the 'working poor' in the United States as the labor force expands to record numbers along with substandard employment slots, because the wage-labor relation itself has become a source of built-in economic insecurity and social instability, then straightforward 'social democratic' modes of state intervention are doomed to stall, disappoint, and eventually undermine themselves.<sup>17</sup>

If it is true that the functional linkages between economic growth and employment, and between employment and individual and household subsistence strategies via the 'family wage', have been substantially loosened, nay severed (Offe 1993), then social policies aimed at combating advanced marginality will have to *reach 'beyond employment' and outside the market paradigm* that upholds it for efficacious solutions (Offe & Heinze 1992). Because of the ever-tighter constraints of global interdependency, generalized 'reflation' of the economy is now beyond the means of any one country and job-creation schemes are clearly not sufficient to make a sizeable dent in structural and disguised unemployment (this much the French experience of the past decade has taught us). The low-level service jobs route taken by the United States promises only to spread poverty around and to generalize insecurity (Freeman 1993), as does the labor flexibility option favored by employers the world over for all too obvious reasons.

There seems to remain only one viable solution: in the short run, to re-establish or expand state services so as to guarantee equal provision of basic public goods throughout urban areas and immediately alleviate the hardship created by the *social disinvestment* caused by the retrenchment, partial (in continental Europe) or wholesale (in the United States), of public institutions in territories of relegation over the past decade (Wacquant 1993b). And, in the longer term, the obligation of wage labor must be relaxed and social redistribution enlarged so as to: (i) reduce the labor supply, and (ii) to restructure and stabilize anew the system of strategies of household reproduction and mobility.

Forsaking the highly dubious assumption that a large majority of the members of advanced society can or will see their basic needs met by formal employment (or by employment of members of their households), public policies designed to counter advanced marginality must work to facilitate and smooth out the severance of subsistence from work, income from paid labor, and social participation from wage-earning that is already happening in a haphazard and uneven manner:

If the labor market cannot generate income security, as presumed in the creation of the postwar social consensus, then, to allow the 'labor market' to operate efficiently, social policy should *decouple income security from the labor market*. (Standing 1993: 57)

This can be done at once by instituting a guaranteed minimum income or 'basic income' plan, that is, by granting unconditionally to all members of society on an individual basis, without means test or work requirement, adequate means of subsistence and social participation. Rich capitalist societies have the means to do this; it only remains for them to develop the political intelligence and will.<sup>18</sup>

Whether it is done incrementally by piecemeal expansion of the reach of currently existing income support programs, or through some 'big-bang' creation *ex nihilo* of brand new sets of redistributive programs, instituting a 'citizen's wage' is a tall order that requires a thorough revision of our accepted conceptions of work, money, time, utility, welfare and justice. Van Parijs (1992: 7) rightly sees in it 'a profound reform that belongs in the same league as the abolition of slavery or the introduction of universal suffrage'. Yet, however unpalatable, costly or unrealistic it might appear today, one thing is certain: as persistent and acute marginality of the kind that has plagued American and European cities over the past decade continues to mount, strategies for the 'government of misery' (Procacci 1993) will have to be reorganized in ways so drastic that they can hardly be foretold today.

Before the French Revolution, the idea of overturning the monarchy was properly unthinkable, for how was a child-people to live without the guidance of their fatherly king (Hunt 1992)? And yet 1789 came, and came by storm. The institutionalization of the citizenship right to subsistence and well-being outside the tutelage of the market might well be the Bastille of the new millenium.

First version received October 1995  
Final version accepted January 1996

### Acknowledgements

A preliminary version of this paper was prepared for the Experts' Meeting on Distressed Areas in Cities and Suburbs, OECD, Paris (March 1994), and presented to the Seminar on Comparative Macrosociology, Department of Sociology, University of California-Los Angeles (January 1995). Critical comments and reactions from both of these audiences are gratefully acknowledged. Specific suggestions by Janet Abu-Lughod, Peter Marcuse, Moishe Postone, George Steinmetz, Thomas Sugrue, Ronald van Kempen, Eric Wanner and Bill Wilson were helpful, even when I chose not to heed them.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Notable studies on the topic include Glasgow (1981), Wilson (1987, 1993), Harris & Wilkins (1989), Katz (1989), Jencks (1991), Massey & Denton (1993), Devine & Wright (1993) and Moore &

Pinderhughes (1993). For a critical analysis of the 'invention' of the demonic myth of the underclass, and of its ideological and political functions in the intellectual and political-journalistic fields, cf. Wacquant (1992a, 1996). Perceptive discussions of its analytical and policy liabilities, respectively, include Marks (1991) and Gans (1991).

<sup>2</sup> See for example Dubet (1987), LePuill & LePuill (1990), Paugam (1991, 1993), Jazouli (1992), Dubet & Lapeyronnie (1992), Lapeyronnie (1993), Brun & Rhein (1994), Vieillard-Baron (1994). See Wacquant (1992b) for an analysis of the diffusion of the 'moral panic' of *cités-ghettos* in France and its social bases and meaning. For a panorama of issues at the forefront of the broader European debate, and transatlantic comparison, consult Rex (1988), Dahrendorf (1989), Negri (1989), Allen & Macey (1990), Leibfried (1991), Heisler (1991), Cross (1992), ADRI (1992), Guidicini & Pieretti (1993), Engbersen et al. (1987, 1993), Silver (1993), Godard (1993), Hein (1993), McFate et al. (1995) and Mingione (1996).

<sup>3</sup> For instance, Castells (1989), Davis (1990), Mollenkopf & Castells (1991), Fainstein et al. (1992) and, for caveats, Marcuse (1993).

<sup>4</sup> Meaning the peculiar dichotomous 'black/white' opposition instituted in the United States as the historical legacy of slavery, a division admitting of no mediating term that is unique in the world for its rigidity and persistence (Davis 1991) and by reference to which the position of other groups (Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, persons of mixed descent, etc.) is defined.

<sup>5</sup> These features comprise processes, trends, and outcomes as well as proximate causes and propitiating factors. This is by design. It would premature at this stage to attempt to separate these. As Robert Merton is fond of saying, one must 'specify the phenomenon' before attempting to explain it.

<sup>6</sup> And for growing numbers closer to the core. 'Since 1985', notes Paul Hirsch (1993: 144–145, 154–155), internal labor markets based on 'long-term reciprocal commitments, careers within companies, attractive wages, and job security' have 'come under attack from opinion leaders in both academe and the business press'. With the decline of such markets as the result of corporate downsizing (now christened 'rightsizing'), even the employment environment of 'the managerial class begins to look much more like [that of] labor'. And 'as the management class begins to see itself as more and more like labor and less like capital, the polarization of society may increase'.

<sup>7</sup> On the 'disorganization' of wage labor, see Ebel (1985), Lash & Bagguley (1988), Pollert (1988), Boyer (1988), Burtless (1990), Beaud & Pialoux (1991) and Freeman & Katz (1994). McLeod (1995) draws a vivid, ground-level, portrait of structural disorientation and dereliction in the new low-wage labor market in a northeastern American city.

<sup>8</sup> For a more detailed analysis of the weight and effects of territorial stigmatization in neighborhoods of relegation in France, see Pétonnet (1982), Avery (1987), Bachman & Basier (1989), Paugam (1991) and Dulong & Paperman (1992).

<sup>9</sup> Sad to report, social scientists have often added to the burden of urban disrepute by concocting pseudo-scholarly notions that dress

up newer prejudice in analytical garb. Such is the case for instance with the prefabricated category (in the etymological sense of 'public accusation') of 'underclass areas' (Ricketts & Sawhill 1988).

<sup>10</sup> Two paradigmatic examples of external, profit-oriented, intrusions into the ghetto are perennial attempts by the City of Chicago to disperse and reconvert the Cabrini Green project on the Near North Side, within a stone's throw of the opulent Gold Coast, and efforts by the University of Chicago to close down and 'renovate' the dilapidated public housing concentrations of the adjacent areas of Oakland and 63rd Street in Woodlawn. The complexities of new struggles over turf in the fragmenting metropolis are brought out in full view in the study by Abu-Lughod et al. (1994) of the transformation of New York's Lower East Side.

<sup>11</sup> This happens, for example, when unions relinquish hard-earned collective rights in order to ward off mass layoffs or concede the institution of two-tier wage systems as a means of protecting their eroding membership.

<sup>12</sup> The few selective references that follow are inserted to indicate existing work which provides possible models for further analysis or baselines and clues for comparison and critique.

<sup>13</sup> One particularly important variable here is the folk theories that state and urban elites develop to describe, explain, and control urban degradation – or those who are made to bear its burdens. Recent research on urban marginality is of little assistance here since it focuses almost exclusively upon the poor themselves. A notable and stimulating exception is Bourdieu et al. (1993: 219–247, 261–269, 927–939).

<sup>14</sup> My position, it should be clear, is that they do not. These half-scholarly, half-commonsensical categories are what Kenneth Burke calls 'terministic screens': they hide more than they reveal and constitute yet another obstacle to an adequate understanding of the reconfiguring of marginality in the post-Fordist city.

<sup>15</sup> Lest this be mistaken for a 'postmodernist' call to cast off the indispensable instruments of a critical and 'concrete science of empirical reality' (Weber), and with them the least imperfect intellectual weapons we have at our disposal in our effort to understand and change the world: to recognize that the concepts of class and race should be revised and modified, perhaps even overhauled, to increase their cognitive potency is not the same as saying: (i) that they are worthless; (ii) that objective class divisions and ethnoracial cleavages have suddenly vanished in thin air, or (iii) that they exist only in the guise of local, ever-changing, highly malleable and almost fugitive 'discursive' achievements, as some radical (de)constructionist approaches would have it.

<sup>16</sup> Among the many works that partake of the remarkable flowering of citizenship studies over the past few years, Heisler (1991), Turner (1992), Roche (1992), Brubaker (1992), Morris (1993), Janoski (1993) and Soysal (1994), and the papers presented at the session on 'Citizenship: Conceptual Links to Racism and Ethnic Conflict' organized by Czarina Wilpert at the 1994 World Congress of Sociology in Bielefeld, Germany.

<sup>17</sup> Conservative policies of *laissez faire et laissez passer* need not

detain us here since *causes* of advanced marginality can hardly be counted upon to provide remedies.

<sup>18</sup> The excellent collection of essays by Van Parijs (1992) argues the case for (and against) basic income on grounds of liberty, equality, economic efficiency (defined as the ability to reach a target goal or to foster growth) and community. See also *Theory and Society* (1985), Brittan & Webb (1990), and the research amassed by the Citizens' Income Study Centre in London; and compare with assessments of the first three years of France's RMI, the (means-tested) national guaranteed minimum income plan, in Castel & Laé (1992) and Paugam (1993).

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