

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMAGES AND REPRESENTATIONS OF URBAN
CHILDHOOD IN GLASGOW'S GORBALS NEIGHBOURHOOD IN THE 1960S.**



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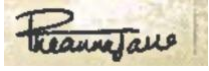
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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that this dissertation has been composed by me and is based on my own work.

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ABSTRACT

Since the mid-nineteenth century, certain areas of cities have increasingly been subject to stigmatisation through collective representations (Larsen and Delica, 2019; Slater, 2017). Existing literature suggests that photographs provide powerful representations of place, shaping public beliefs and 'imagined geographies' (Schwartz and Ryan, 2003). Moreover, research indicates that representations of urban childhood interact with images of the city and perceptions of place (Horschelmann and van Blerk, 2011: 39). This study aims to explore representations of children from Glasgow's Gorbals neighbourhood in the 1960s, specifically considering a selection of photographs taken by the late documentary photographer Oscar Marzaroli. Building on existing work surrounding photography and representation, it asks: 'What do Marzaroli's images signify, how do they intersect with wider contemporary discourses, and what do they represent about the 1960s Gorbals?'. In this context, *representation* is defined as "the use of language, marks and images to create meaning about the world around us" (Sturken and Cartwright, 2018: 18).

Based on a review of literature on place image and urban childhood, visual interpretation of Marzaroli's photographs was conducted by exploring meanings embedded in photographs and reflecting on how that meaning was produced. Alongside visual interpretation, discourse analysis was carried out by looking for connections between images and texts across various archives and sites (Green, 1990: 3). Analysis has demonstrated that Marzaroli's depiction of the Gorbals is complex, but his 1960s photographs overwhelmingly seem to provide an alternative representation of a place otherwise condemned and stigmatised. Interpretation indicates that Marzaroli's repeated selection of children as subjects might work to emphasise the vitality and life in the Gorbals through the effect of juxtaposition against the derelict urban landscape. This study highlights how photographic representations of children have the power both to exacerbate and challenge the stigmatisation of place.

Key Words: Gorbals, Glasgow, representation, stigmatisation, slum, children, play.

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Aim and Questions

Research Aim:

To explore how photographic representations of urban childhood might interact with place image.

Research Questions:

- I. What do Marzaroli's 1960s Gorbals photographs represent, and what might they signify?
- II. How has the Gorbals been represented in wider discourses, and in what ways do Marzaroli's photographs support and challenge these meanings?
- III. How might Marzaroli's photographs of children influence the representation of the urban place of the Gorbals?

1.2 Welcome to the Gorbals: a brief history

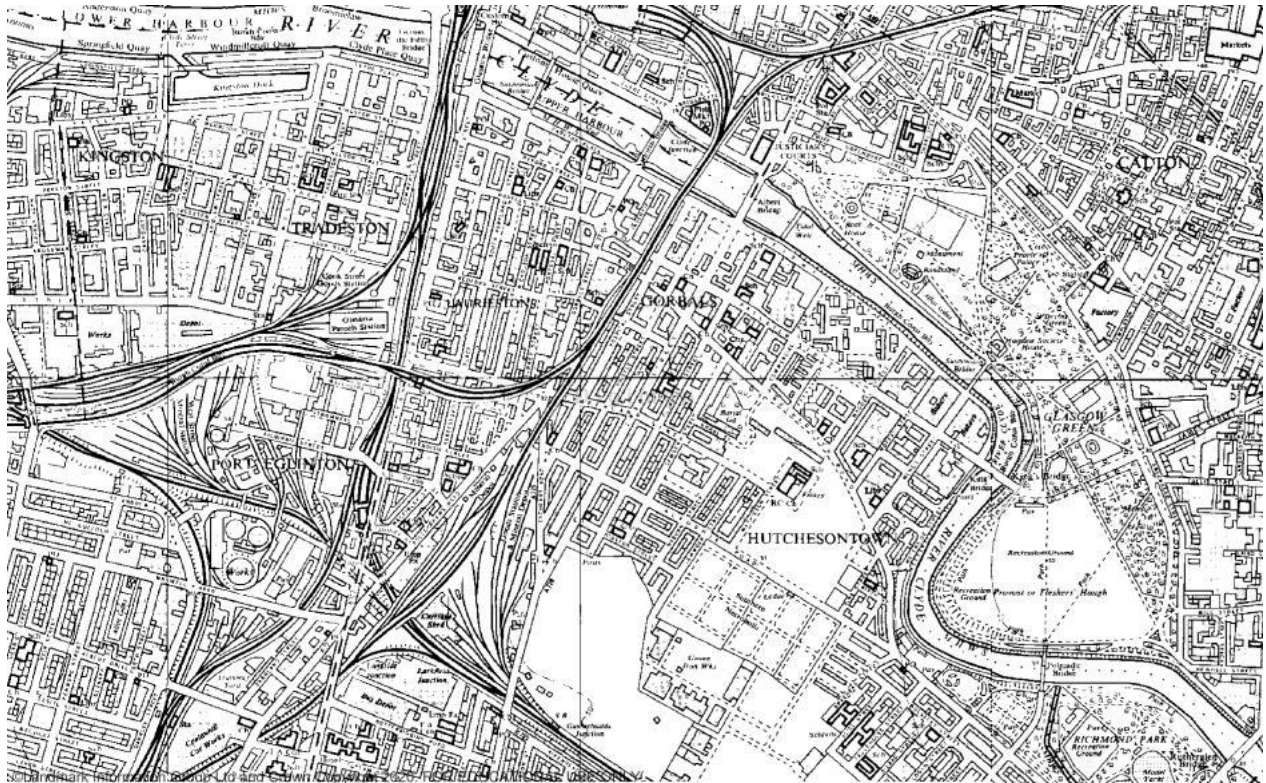


Figure 1.1. 1960 map of the Gorbals and its surrounding areas (EDINA Historic Digimap Service, 2020).

The Gorbals is situated on the south-east bank of the River Clyde in Glasgow. The story of the Gorbals - one of Glasgow's most infamous areas - goes back to the early nineteenth century when poor health associated with lack of sanitation and substandard living conditions encouraged city authorities to make some significant changes (Boyle and Rogerson, 2006). In 1866, following the City Improvement Act, a scheme of slum clearances and subsequent redevelopment was implemented, resulting in the construction of new buildings and wide streets in a grid-iron layout (Reed, 1999: 9).

Despite these changes, unsanitary conditions and overcrowding issues continued. Indeed, from the 1930s to 1940s, there were extreme housing shortages, with residential densities averaging at “458.6 persons per acre” (Boyle and Rogerson, 2006: 218) and “over 90,000 people” in need of public housing (Thompson-Fawcett, 2004: 181). It was at that time the area became renowned as a ‘slum’ (Ibid: 183).

By 1950, after two world wars and years of neglect, the Gorbals deteriorated to a point the Glasgow Corporation deemed critical (Feliciotti et al., 2016). Consequently, in 1957, the Gorbals and Hutchesontown area was approved for demolition following the implementation of a new scheme of slum clearances in 29 Comprehensive Development Areas (Boyle and Rogerson, 2006: 217). However, communities were torn apart as Victorian tenement housing was destroyed (Worsdall, 1990). Indeed, the population of the Gorbals and Hutchesontown fell from “45,000” to “19,000” between 1961 and 1971 (Ross, 2013: 111). The houses, churches and schools of the ‘old’ Gorbals were replaced by what has since been described as a “barren”, “dehumanised”, and “soulless landscape” (Boyle and Rogerson, 2006: 207; Worsdall, 1990: 11). Architects Sir Basil Spence and Sir Robert Matthew were contracted to design new social housing with a “modern aesthetic” to replace the slums (Clark and Wright, 2018: 53). New homes were offered in tower blocks and outlying housing estates, including Pollok, Castlemilk, Easterhouse and Drumchapel (Boyle and Rogerson, 2006: 217; Ross, 2013: 111). Interestingly, these new peripheral housing estates were soon vacated and demolished during another phase of redevelopment in 1989 (Feliciotti et al., 2016: 67).

1.2 Introducing Oscar Marzaroli



Figure 1.2. *Oscar Marzaroli, Aberdeen, summer 1960 (Marzaroli, 1960).*

During the 1950s and 1960s, late film-maker and documentary photographer Oscar Marzaroli (1933-1988) captured the buildings and people of the ‘old’ Gorbals. The area almost entirely disappeared through the 1960s, and consequently, his images have been described as an “absolutely invaluable record” (Oliver, 1984: 13). Originally from northern Italy, the Marzaroli family moved to Glasgow’s Garnethill area in the mid-thirties when Oscar was two years old (Ibid). Perhaps it was this unique insider-outsider position that allowed him to photograph both the people and place of Glasgow in equal measure (Ross, 2014). Records and writings of the time suggest that Marzaroli had an “unobtrusive nature” and did not seek out his subjects’ identities (Carell, 1984: 3). He took single shots at each location, “waiting for the magic” to appear in life’s moments (Marzaroli, 2013: 11).

Like many other street and documentary photographers, Marzaroli took to photographing 'weans' (the Glaswegian term for children) amongst the deteriorating urban environment; the significance of this will be explored throughout this dissertation.

1.4 Justification for project

It was at the exhibition Oscar Marzaroli exhibition at Street Level Photoworks in Glasgow last February (2020) that I came to appreciate the extent that children feature in Marzaroli's photographs. While the exhibition featured a range of Marzaroli's photographs and films from the 1950s to 1980s, I decided to focus my research on the 1960s as it marked a time of great transience in the Gorbals. The exhibition itself came after over 50,000 of Marzaroli's photographs, never developed or seen before, were donated to the Glasgow Caledonian University Archives (GCU Foundation, 2019). GCU is currently in the process of raising £200,000 so that the whole Marzaroli collection can be preserved and digitised (GCU Foundation, 2019). Therefore, conducting an analysis of his work seems to be of particular relevance at this exciting and culturally significant moment.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

There is a lack of existing geographical research exploring photographic representations of the Gorbals and its children in the historical context of the 1960s. As such, the purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with an overview of existing literature on this dissertation's key themes: representation and photography, place image, and urban childhood. I first discuss literature surrounding photography as a form of representation before considering how photographic representations can influence place image and territorial stigmatisation. Next, I explore key findings from geographical research into urban childhood, class and spaces of play. Finally, I focus most narrowly on the small amount of research on representations of the Gorbals children that has influenced and shaped my work.

2.2 Representation, geography and photography

2.2.1 Representation

Much has been written about *representation* in human geography over the past three decades, a concept defined as “the use of language, marks and images to create meaning about the world around us” (Sturken and Cartwright, 2018: 18). There are a variety of representational mediums through which thoughts, feelings and ideas can be

communicated, including, but not limited to: written words, gestures, sounds, objects and visual images (Hall, 1997). Western society has been described as “ocularcentric” due to the centrality of the visual to everyday interpretation (Kavanagh, 2004). Photography is one mode of visual representation that uses “images on light-sensitive paper” to convey meaning about a subject, whether that be an individual, a group of people, or an event (Ibid: 5).

2.2.2 Photography as objective?

In the mid-nineteenth century, amidst positivist thought, geographers perceived the camera as the “eye of history” (Ryan, 1997: 16). Photography was considered an “objective” and unbiased way of recording and making sense of unfamiliar people and places in an age of expeditions and colonialism (Hall, 1997; Hall, 2018; Mitchell, 1992; Rogers et al., 2013; Sturken and Cartwright, 2018). However, the way geographers regard photography has changed significantly in the past few decades (Rogers et al., 2013; Schwartz and Ryan, 2003). A shift in thinking came about during the “visual turn” in cultural and historical geography, which was part of the broader “cultural turn” of the human and social sciences in the 1980s and 90s (Hall, 1997; Hilander, 2016; Schwartz and Ryan, 2003: 2; Rosati, 2017). The cultural turn was underpinned by an understanding of the world as a text that needs interpretation (Hoggart et al., 2002: 22). Accordingly, it is thought that meaning is not simply “found”, but must be “read” to be understood (Cosgrove and Jackson, 1987; Hall, 1997: 32; Tagg, 1988).

Following the cultural turn, there has been an increasing acceptance of the downfalls of

the positivist view that deems photographs as neutral 'historical documents' or transparent reflections of 'reality' (Rose, 2007; Rowe and Margolis, 2020). In line with Daly's (1994: 176) discussion of the contentious nature of 'Absolute Truth' in which he suggests that the world cannot ever be shown "as it really is", critical geographers have demonstrated that photography is intertwined with politics and competing discourses (Cosgrove and Jackson, 1987; Howes and Classen, 2014; La Grange, 2005). Significantly, these discourses tend to originate from "particular (and limited) positions", and thus images should be seen as human constructions and as mechanisms of representation (Robins, 1996: 167). Indeed, according to the 'social constructivist approach', it is widely acknowledged that photographs are ideological constructions, embedded amongst specific social, cultural and historical contexts (Flowerdew and Martin, 2005; Hall, 1997: 5; Rose, 1997; Rowe and Margolis, 2020; Scott, 2007: 133; Sekula, 1983; Tagg, 1988). In sum, geographers have become more attentive to the cultural and symbolic meanings of photographs (Ryan, 2003).

2.2.3 Ways of Seeing

Like other representational devices, photographs can be viewed from two perspectives. Firstly, from the perspective of the photographer creating the image, choosing who and what to include in the frame (Hall, 1997; Szarkowski, 1980); secondly, from the perspective of the viewer or audience, who bring their own interpretive 'gaze' to the ways they make sense of images (Hall, 1997; Hoggart et al., 2002). As Rose (2007) suggests, it is not only how representational devices look but also how they are looked at that is vital in the production and reproduction of meaning. This notion that different viewers

assign alternative meanings to those given by the photographer or other viewers recalls Berger's (1972) stance that there are multiple different '*Ways of Seeing*' the same thing. Furthermore, interpretations are never conclusive but precede infinite different interpretations (Hall, 1997).

In *Camera Lucida* (1981), Barthes discusses photographic meaning and our interpretation of images. He distinguishes between two separate elements of photographs; the 'studium' and the 'punctum'. Barthes suggests that the 'studium' indicates a broader set of historical, social or cultural meanings that guide our interpretation (Ibid). The 'punctum' refers to the personal and emotional effect that photographs have on viewers; Barthes describes it as "that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me)" (Ibid: 27). He argues that while "the *studium* is ultimately always coded, the *punctum* is not" and that the viewer must reject all contextual knowledge to allow it to affect (Ibid: 51). Moreover, Barthes (1981: 76-81) alludes to the paradoxical nature of photography insofar as it is simultaneously considered an objective and emotional practice.

2.2.4 Documentary

The genre of documentary photography perhaps best exemplifies this "grey area between objectivity and subjectivity, information and interpretation" (Abbott, 2010: 1). The binary meaning of the term 'documentary' comes from its affiliation with both the production of clear-cut, factual information (it confirms that the subject did exist), as well as the notion that it is tied up with human "emotion and experience" (Abbott, 2010: 9; Price, 1983: 23;

Sturken and Cartwright, 2018). Therefore, while documentary photography is often associated with straightforward and accurate depictions of people and place, Newhall (1938) reminds us that the documentary photographer impresses their personal viewpoint and historical knowledge on the act of framing. This notion explains his claim that “documentary is an approach rather than an end” (Ibid: 5).

2.3 Photography and the stigmatisation of place

2.3.1 Place Image

A number of authors suggest that discourses and external representations influence and shape public perceptions of place (Larsen and Delica, 2019; Shields, 1991). As Cresswell (2019: 14) argues, places are produced through representations; they are both “representational” themselves and are “represented” in various ways. Moreover, Pollock and Paddison (2014: 87) put forward that perceptions of place tend to be based on three factors; firstly, on an area’s physical environment, secondly, upon the people who live there, and thirdly, on the meanings attached to it. Photography is understood as a significant way in which meaning about the world is produced (Cresswell, 2019), and there has been increased geographical research considering the historical role of photographic representations of place. Indeed, Schwartz and Ryan (2003: 57) argue that photographs have been integral to the construction of place image as they carry meanings that may influence public attitudes, beliefs and ‘imagined geographies’.

2.3.2 Photographing the slum

It is thought that early photographic representations of dark, mysterious places deemed 'Other' are connected to depictions of inner-city 'slums' and their inhabitants (Crossley, 2017; Mayhew, 1861; Lund, 2017; Gaskell, 1990; Stedman Jones, 1974). The term 'slum' was coined in 1880s London and became a significant 'imagined geography' for the Victorian bourgeoisie (Crossley, 2017; Rose, 1997: 280). Several authors have proposed that the slum was constructed as a place of crime, moral decay, disease, pollution, delinquency and degenerate slum dwellers (Lund, 2017; Rose, 1997: 280; Stedman Jones, 1976). Examples of nineteenth-century slum photographers include Thomas Annan in Glasgow; Thomas Begbie in Edinburgh; Jacob Riis in New York; and John Thompson and Henry Mayhew in London (Rose, 1997: 280). In sum, existing literature suggests that early photographers took great interest in impoverished areas of cities deemed slums.

2.3.3 Territorial Stigmatisation

Despite certain areas of cities long having been denigrated and associated with negative attributes (Larsen and Delica, 2019; Slater, 2017: 113), a previous study by Hastings (2004) claimed there was a lack of research into the causes of place-based stigmatisation. Nevertheless, several researchers have recently demonstrated that the stigmatisation of place is often exacerbated through repeated negative stereotypes, prejudices and collective representations produced and circulated through images (Clark

and Wright, 2018; Slater, 2017; Larsen and Delica, 2019; Wacquant et al., 2014; Watt, 2006, Watt, 2019). This research built upon Wacquant's concept of "territorial stigmatisation", which he formed by fusing Bourdieu's (1991) idea about "symbolic power" with Goffman's (1964) theory of stigma as "spoiled identity", manifesting in what he called "blemish of place" (Wacquant, 2007; 2008; 2019: 40). This phenomenon refers to the ways areas become "nationally renowned and denigrated" resulting in "spatial disgrace" (Slater, 2017: 115). A growing body of work suggests that the stigmatisation of place, often given credence through photographs of the area, is used to justify urban regeneration schemes and interventions involving the demolition of houses and the scattering of residents (Jones, 2013: 2; Slater, 2017; 119). In short, it has been acknowledged that photographs are sometimes entangled in the widespread condemnation of particular places (Slater, 2017).

2.3.4 Narrowing it down

In recent years, a considerable amount of literature has been concerned with Glasgow's stigmatisation and collective denigration. For instance, research has discussed the persistence of negative place-images of Glasgow and the associated urban regeneration schemes (Clark and Wright, 2018; Johnstone, 1992). Moreover, through his account of a stigmatised housing estate in Glasgow, Damer (1992: 43) demonstrates how the media often exacerbates places negative reputations. Furthermore, a significant body of work has explored Glasgow's Gorbals neighbourhood's stigmatisation, discussing the repeated pattern of slum clearances and the subsequent impacts on the community (Boyle and Rogerson, 2006; Feliciotti, 2016; Pollock and Paddison, 2014; Thompson-Fawcett, 2004).

This literature has informed and shaped my work.

Moreover, Rose's (1997) study of representations of white working-class women in London's 1930s East End has been especially informative for the purposes of this dissertation. With the theoretical grounding that a photograph is a "cultural text", Rose explores how documentary photographs and family snapshots of inhabitants of the 1930s East End interact with stigmatising narratives and discourses constructed about the area (Ibid: 277-295). Moreover, she discusses documentary photographs taken in the Borough of Stepney, commissioned by the council prior to the area's demolition. Despite the context in which they were taken, she suggests the compositional framing and perspective brings order to the slum area (Ibid: 294-6). In a similar vein, I consider how Oscar Marzaroli's documentary photographs of working-class children might influence representations of the 1960s Gorbals. Before doing so, I must first explore the meanings associated with urban childhood.

2.4 Childhood, morality, and the street

2.4.1 Innocent vs Deviant Children

Within geographical literature, childhood is broadly accepted as a "social construction" (Matthews and Limb, 1999: 68). Childhood is a concept thought only to have emerged in nineteenth-century Europe, which has gradually become associated with specific attributes and qualities (Boyden, 1991: 34). Consequently, Jenks (2005) suggests that

two opposing ways of thinking about childhood have formed according to 'Apollonian' and 'Dionysian' understandings. In the Apollonian view, children are depicted as "little angels", symbolising innocence and purity; by contrast, in the Dionysian view, they are represented as "little devils", seen as "inherently naughty" and immoral (Holloway and Valentine, 2000a: 2; Valentine, 1996).

Valentine (1996: 587) argues that ideas about children's innocence and deviance are "articulated in and reproduced through space", according to categories of social difference. One space in which meanings surrounding childhood have been explored is in poor urban areas regarded as slums (Birch, 2004; Blaikie, 2006; Cresswell, 2019). Existing geographical literature has demonstrated that slum children were popular subjects of documentary and street photography projects in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Slum children were photographed in derelict urban spaces, portrayed as "ragged", "street urchins", characteristically pictured wearing ill-fitting clothing and shoes (Blaikie, 2006: 207; Ryan, 1997: 167). It has been suggested that images of slum children as ragged and unclean were associated with the supposed immorality, defilement and degeneracy of the urban poor (Blaikie, 2006; Sibley, 1995: 67).

2.4.2 Class Distinctions

Research indicates that representations of working-class children are intertwined with discourses surrounding the slum (Price, 1983). Finch (1993) has explored how the category of 'working class' was formed against the comparable 'middle class' category in the nineteenth century. She explains that the working-class category is a "discursive

construct” that emerged from middle-class conceptualisations as a way of marking difference and reinforcing their position and status in society (Ibid: 144). Members of the middle class emphasised alleged group differences through “spatial metaphors and imaginary geographies” leading to representations of the working class as distinct ‘Others’ (Crossley, 2017: 15; Skeggs, 1997: 4).

2.4.3 The Street as a classed space

When considering how members of the middle class distinguish themselves from the working class, ‘the street’ is one important area of research within the city. Crossley (2017: 55) has suggested that “there are few more symbolically powerful or evocative geographies – real or imagined – than ‘the street’”. The street is said to encompass “all public outdoor places...such as roads, cul-de-sacs, alleyways, walkways, shopping areas, car parks, vacant plots and derelict sites” (Matthews et al., 2000). Relevant to my research is the notion that the street has typically been constructed and imagined as a space of play stereotypically inhabited by working-class children (Holloway and Valentine, 2000; Ryan, 1997; Skelton, 2000). In accordance with this, in his extensive study of urban childhood, Ward (1978: 32-4) proposed:

“you can usually deduce your fellow-Britons class status from the way he regards the street...The average working class house is a small and inconvenient place. Nobody wants to put up with the noise of children in it more than they have to – out they go then, into the street...a most characteristic working-class scene: crowds of kids flying here and there across the road; boys and youths by the shop

windows and the corner-ends...These people live in the street”.

2.4.4 Age and Public Space

Existing geographies of childhood research suggests that ‘imaginary geographies’ surrounding age and access to public space mean the presence of young urban children in the street is often constructed as “discrepant and undesirable” (Matthews et al., 2000: 54; Valentine, 1996). In Western society, public space is often considered a distinctly ‘adult’ arena, where unaccompanied young children should “do not belong” (Valentine, 1996: 216). Children are “expected” to be in an organised space such as the playground, the home or the school (Cresswell, 2019: 45). Such conceptualisations may be related to social constructions surrounding the city and ideas about places as either “pure or defiled” (Jones, 2000: 26; Sibley, 1995).

As has been previously reported in the literature, the city is often represented as a threatening, corrupt place (Boyden, 1991: 3), which has the power to “pervert the innocence of children” (Horschelmann and van Blerk, 2012: 26). As such, children’s potential exposure to both physical and moral dangers is concerning (Boyden, 1991; Horschelmann and van Blerk, 2012; Valentine, 1996). Therefore, young unaccompanied working-class children seen to inhabit public space in the city are often represented as feral, dangerous and deviant as they disrupt middle-class adult moral codes and values (Cresswell, 2019; Horschelmann and van Blerk, 2012: 16-27; Reynolds, 2014; Valentine, 1996). In short, it is thought that constructions of children as innocent are rooted in adult middle-class values (Reynolds, 2014), and working-class children who do not conform to

those values may, in turn, be represented as 'deviant'.

2.4.5 Alternative Conceptualisations of The Street

In contrast to narratives about the street as dangerous, research carried out by Matthews et al. (2000) demonstrates that the street holds immense social and cultural importance for young working-class children, a place of freedom where boys and girls can socialise with others outside of the house (Ibid). Consequently, they term the street the “thirdspace of urban youth” (Ibid: 61). Moreover, Thomson and Philo’s (2004: 116) study into children’s play in Livingston affirms Matthews et al.’s (2000) contention that the street is a crucial space of play for urban working-class children. Indeed, their empirical findings indicate that the working-class children of Livingstone had greater freedom to create autonomous and informal spaces for “socialising, chatting, hanging out”, away from those designated and constructed by adults (Ibid: 126). Therefore, there exists a small amount of empirical research demonstrating that the street is a space that facilitates self-expression, freedom, and communication for children.

2.4.6 Narrowing it down

One particularly informative piece of research surrounding themes of photography, representation and urban childhood in the Gorbals neighbourhood of Glasgow was conducted by Blaikie (2006). Here, Blaikie explores photographic representations of the Gorbals street children as slum-dwellers and discusses the juxtapositions between the spaces of poverty and play that they inhabit (Ibid: 203). While Blaikie’s (2006) work is the most similar in subject matter to my own, it differs in that I am concerned with

representations of place in the 1960s rather than social remembrance and nostalgia in the 1940s.

2.5 Chapter Summary

Overall, there is now a substantial body of human geography literature examining how childhood and play are understood in relation to place, class, age and social difference (Matthews and Limb, 1999; Matthews et al., 2000; Thomson and Philo, 2004; Ward, 1997). In contrast, only a small amount of literature has discussed how representations of childhood intersect with images and representations of place (Blaikie, 2006; Horschelmann and van Blerk, 2011: 25). Following Horschelmann and van Blerk's (2012: 39) recommendation for research examining how children are represented and how those representations influence place images in various cultural contexts, my dissertation aims to explore how Marzaroli's 1960s photographic representations of children might influence the Gorbals place image.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Valentine (2001: 43) suggests that research methods should “flow conceptually and logically from the research questions” and reflect “the sort of information you want to generate”. As such, this study combines qualitative approaches of visual interpretation and discourse analysis to explore secondary data surrounding the images and representations of Glasgow’s Gorbals neighbourhood in the 1960s.

3.2 Visual Interpretation

The process of selecting photographs for visual interpretation has been extensive. Firstly, I used the Google search image function, typing in key terms such as ‘Oscar Marzaroli, Gorbals’, ‘Gorbals children, 1960s’, ‘Marzaroli collection’ and so on. Secondly, I earmarked potentially relevant images in photo books with coloured post-its. As the research process developed, I refined my final selection according to the images I deemed the most appropriate. To do this, I made sure to refer to the criteria I set out repeatedly; photographs needed to have been taken by Oscar Marzaroli in Glasgow's Gorbals district between 1960 and 1970. More specifically, I focussed on Marzaroli’s photographs of the urban landscape and children.

The method of visual interpretation involves looking at a particular photograph and making

inferences about what that photograph means. During the interpretation process, I tried to examine photographs with an 'eye' to how certain motifs recur and how photographic meaning has been constructed through composition, execution, exhibition, publication. Therefore, interpretation involved consideration of both internal and external elements of Marzaroli's photographs. As I applied the structure for visual interpretation outlined by Rose (2016: 25), I considered the four sites at which she suggests cultural meaning is inscribed in images: "the site(s) of production", "the site of the image itself", "the site(s) of circulation" and "the site of audiencing". At these four sites, Rose considers the "technological", "compositional" and "social" perspectives, or "modalities" as she terms them (Ibid). The technological modality refers to the equipment and apparatus needed to produce and exhibit an image; the compositional modality encompasses the specific "material qualities" of an image, and the social modality refers to a variety of social, economic and political structures in which an image is produced and viewed (Ibid: 25-9).

While it is important to be aware of these various sites and modalities, Rose advises focussing on some more than others to avoid "analytical incoherence" (Ibid: 49). Accordingly, a key focus was on the site of the image itself. Here, Rose (2016: 374-5) proposes questions such as; "what is being shown?", "what are the components of the image?", "how are they arranged" and "where is the viewer's eyes drawn to in the image?". The practice of describing how a particular image looks - compositional interpretation - provides a way to explore images "content, colour, spatial organisation, light and expressive content" (Ibid: 84). However, looking at images solely for "what they are" ignores the specific ways they are "produced and interpreted" via social practices (Ibid: 57).

In order to avoid missing meanings inscribed at the site of production, I analysed images with consideration of when, where and by whom the image was created (Rose, 2016). Moreover, as technological factors used to create and display images influence how they look, I investigated what kind of camera and film Marzaroli used (Ibid: 27). Furthermore, following the suggestion that social factors also influence the components of the image, I have conducted research into what Marzaroli's intentions might have been, where his photographs have appeared in terms of exhibitions and publications, as well as into the viewers themselves and any contemporary reviews of photographs. Flowerdew and Martin (2005: 268) highlight that limitations arise here as one cannot conclusively determine which images have been viewed, who has seen them, nor how they were viewed.

3.3 Discourse Analysis

Alongside visual interpretation, I have employed Rose's (2016) method of 'discourse analysis'. The term 'discourse' is well known for the "messy multiplicity of meanings associated with it" (Dittmer, 2010: 3). Nevertheless, discourses are generally understood as "groups of statements and practices that structure the way we think about things" (Flowerdew and Martin, 2005: 262). They are made up of "frameworks that embrace particular combinations of narratives, concepts, ideologies and signifying practices" (Barnes and Duncan, 1992: 8). The variety of ways in which discourses can be expressed means that paying attention to 'intertextuality' is crucial (Rose, 2016: 187). This involves considering how the meanings inscribed in the image or text in question are related to

broader meanings inscribed in a range of sources and all forms of discourse (Rose, 2007: 142; Johnson and Sidaway, 2015). As discourse is intertwined with representation, discourse analysis seems to be the best approach to address my research questions.

According to Schwartz and Ryan's (2003: 7) suggestion that images and photographs should be analysed alongside other images, texts and forms of "material evidence", I have considered a plethora of sources in my analysis. However, Rose (2016) has warned of practical problems in selecting data and determining when to stop making intertextual connections. Moreover, she suggests that analytical difficulties arise in ensuring that these connections do not become too broad and "tenuous" (Ibid: 217). As such, I have kept in mind that it is not the quantity of material analysed that is significant in discourse analysis but the quality (Tonkiss, 1998). In sum, due to the "wealth of sources" surrounding the 1960s Gorbals, I selected those which appeared the "best suited to the purpose in hand" (Baker, 1997: 236).

Lees (2004) points out that conducting discourse analysis for the first time can be problematic as there is a lack of detailed description of how to undertake it in previous research. The lack of clear direction is due to the inherently unfixed nature of the method, which has been deemed somewhat of a "craft skill" (Hoggart et al., 2002: 165). In a similar vein, Dittmer (2010: 10) cautions that amateur researchers might struggle with the haziness of concepts, the time-consuming nature of the method and the "fluidity" of the findings. Furthermore, Flowerdew and Martin (2005: 268) suggest the relationship between images and wider sources is "metaphorical at best", and conclusive relationships

cannot be determined. Some have critiqued the use of such impressionistic and subjective approaches for lacking the rigour of more systematic methods like content analysis which is based on a “taxonomic and counting” system (Rowe and Margolis, 2020: 452). Nevertheless, although there is no clear-cut structure or stopping point when conducting discourse analysis, it may be precisely its unfixed and fluid nature that produces the most compelling observations (Flowerdew and Martin, 2005: 268; Lees, 2004).

Other than Marzaroli’s photographs themselves and the captions accompanying them, I looked for depictions of the Gorbals in 1960s newspaper articles. Relevant material was found via a range of electronic archives, including The National Library of Scotland and The British Newspaper Archive (BNA). The BNA search engine allows users to refine their search by applying specific filters such as ‘date’, ‘place’, ‘newspaper’, ‘article type’ and so on. It also enables users to search for exact words and phrases. I started by typing: ‘Gorbals, Glasgow’; ‘Gorbals tenements’; ‘Gorbals slums’; ‘Gorbals children’; ‘Gorbals weans’, adapting my searches as the findings developed. However, Rose (2016) raises concerns about using ‘keyword’ searches in online archives. Firstly, not all relevant documents and images are catalogued and tagged appropriately and in the same way (Ibid: 197). Moreover, she suggests that keyword searches almost go against the nature of discourse analysis as it rests on the assumption that the researcher already knows what they are looking for (Ibid). Furthermore, she warns that although digitised archives capture most of the visual information of images and texts, aspects are sometimes “transformed or lost” (Ibid).

As well as online newspaper archives, I looked to other cultural texts such as contemporary literature, poetry, artwork and short film clips. In addition, I touched upon documents produced by the government, such as Census data and 'Reports of the Medical Officers of Health' (RMOH). I then explored commonalities and recurring themes that might indicate how the 1960s Gorbals was discursively constructed. Understanding the "interpretative context" of these sources was crucial for connecting the content to the "social setting", which significantly influences meaning (Lees, 2004: 104; Tonkiss, 1998). Therefore, gathering information from such a wide and varied range of sites has been essential in understanding the "meaning, provenance, and the history" behind photographs (Rowe and Margolis, 2020: 444).

3.4 Positionality

Haraway (1988) argues that knowledge production is a 'situated' social practice. Accordingly, I must reflect upon my own positionality as a researcher and recognise that my own "biases and preconceptions" are deeply intertwined in the research process (Hoggart et al., 2002: 24). Reflecting upon and challenging the claims and suppositions made throughout the research process is referred to as 'reflexivity' (Ibid). My status as a white, educated, middle-class woman means I come from a position of great privilege and am not attempting to produce 'inside' knowledge about the individuals and community discussed in my work. Thus, I recognise that my personal experiences are integral to the types of questions I ask, the images and texts that I draw on, and the subsequent inferences I make in this paper (Rose, 2016).

CHAPTER 4 – PICTURING PLACE: THE GORBALS PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores representations of the 1960s Gorbals, drawing upon literature concerning place image and territorial stigmatisation. A selection of Marzaroli's photographs are interpreted, paying attention to recurring motifs, reflecting upon how urban place is established through composition, execution, exhibition, publication. Interpretation of photographs will be carried out with consideration of broader narratives and discourses surrounding the urban environment of the 1960s Gorbals. Following this, it discusses how Marzaroli's representation of the Gorbals physical environment and conditions might reflect and reinforce place image.

4.2 Interpretation

4.2.1 Representations of Glasgow's physical environment



Figure 4.1. *Sleet in Camden Street, Gorbals, 1968* (Marzaroli, 1968).

Figure 4.1 captures a couple walking through diagonal rain at a Gorbals street corner. The dark stone building wall is covered in graffiti and ripped, tattered posters advertising various political parties, concerts, and football teams. The building's upstairs window is

smashed, and in the background, piles of debris can just be made out before the tenement houses. Although it is daytime, there is not much light, and the scene appears overcast and gloomy. The pale, misty grey tone is typical of Marzaroli's photographs, which portray an image of the Gorbals as a dark, smoky and gritty place. This dark representation might convey wider sets of meanings surrounding decaying slum areas of cities (Crossley, 2017; Rose, 1997). Images of deteriorating tenement houses, smashed in windows, crumbling walls, broken down buildings, graffiti, boarded-up shopfronts, faded signs, rubble, construction sites, and scrap heaps are recurring in Marzaroli's Gorbals photographs (Figure 4.2). This notion mirrors Marzaroli's biographical account of the 'old' Gorbals; he stated, "*The old tenements were decrepit, there were no inside toilets, and I've stumbled over more than one rat going up a close*" (Renton, 1986).



Figure 4.2. *To the steamie*, 1968 (Marzaroli, 1968).

Marzaroli's photographs are situated amongst a wider body of material representing Glasgow's deteriorating urban environment in the twentieth century. Here, it would be an oversight to not mention artist Joan Eardley, who took great interest in painting the city's run-down back streets, tenement housing, graffiti and chalk covered walls. Many parallels have been drawn between Marzaroli and Eardley's work, both representing the dramatic transformations taking place in the city (Morgan, 1984; Jones, 2016). The two creatives were friends, and Marzaroli acknowledged that Eardley had "influenced" his photographs "more than anyone" else (Renton, 1986). Examples of Eardley's work include *A Glasgow Tenement, c.1959-62* and *Glasgow Tenement and Back Court, c.1959-62* (Figure 4.3). These pastel drawings depict a dark picture of Glasgow's gothic architecture. The tenements block out the skyline as they loom above the tiny figures in the back courts.



Figure 4.3. Pastel drawings of Glasgow's tenement housing (Eardley, c1959-62).

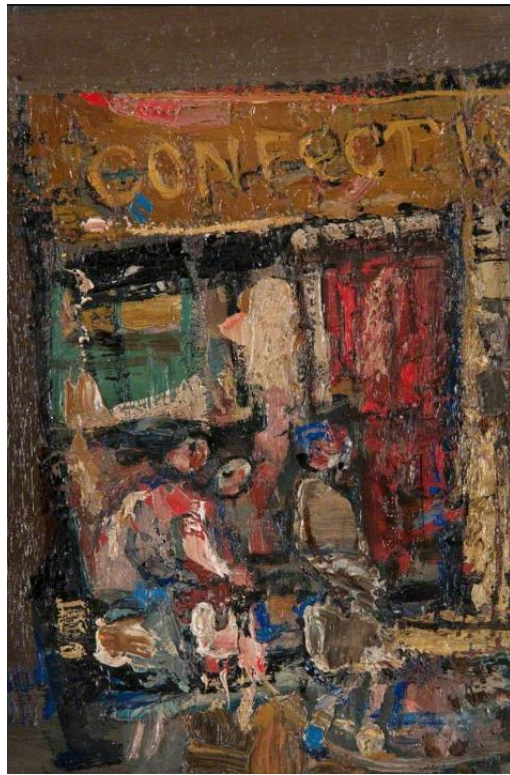


Figure 4.4. *Sweet Shop, Rotten Row, 1960–1961* (Eardley, 1960).

As well as Glasgow's dark tenements, Eardley painted the dilapidated shopfronts; for example, *Sweet Shop, Rotten Row, 1960–1961* (Figure 4.4). Edwin Morgan refers to this image in his poem '*To Joan Eardley*' (1962), which begins:

“Pale yellow letters
humbly straggling across
the once brilliant red
of a broken shop-face
CONFECTIO
and a blur of children

at their games, passing...”

This passage is from Morgan’s poetry book *‘The Second Life’* (1980: 29), in which he makes multiple references to Glasgow’s deteriorating urban landscape and tenement houses. Morgan (1984: 15) later reflected that “writing in Glasgow suddenly came alive” in the 1960s, with various authors compelled to record the changes in the city. However, much 1960s-literature conveyed Glasgow in a rather dismal light. For instance, Archie Hind’s novel *‘The Dear Green Place’* (1966: 11) begun with descriptions of the “crumbling”, “derelict area” of “brownstone tenements”. Such depictions of Glasgow resemble imagery in Scottish poet and novelist Edwin Muir’s *‘Scottish Journey’* (1935: 123-4), in which he wrote, “the houses have a rotten look, and send out a complicated bouquet of mingled stenches”. Moreover, “the whole soil for miles around is polluted...a debased landscape in which every growing thing seem[s] to be poisoned and stunted” (ibid). Language such as “polluted” and “poisoned” directly recall slum discourses in literature such as William Booth’s *‘In Darkest England, and the way out’* (2014: 14), in which he suggests that “the foul and fetid breath” of Britain’s Victorian slums was similarly “poisonous” as the swamp of “darkest Africa”. This imagery goes beyond describing physical decay and builds on a literary tradition that conjures ideas about disease and contamination of poor urban slum areas, which would likely have contributed to stigmatisation (Price, 1983: 20).

Furthermore, suggestions that media representations contribute to the stigmatisation of place (Larsen and Delica, 2019; Slater, 2017) certainly seem to ring true to 1960s

Glasgow. This is exemplified by an article entitled 'THE VICIOUS CIRCLE' in *The Illustrated London News* (December 9th, 1967), which quotes a government report: "closes, staircases and backcourts were revolting and inhumane...gutters choked with refuse of every description". The government text in question described the "physical squalor" in Glasgow's tenements as so "appalling" and "atrocious" that it should "shock the national conscience" (Cullingworth et al., 1967: 22). Furthermore, it described the environmental issues of "burst and choked drains; heaps of uncollected garbage and rubbish; pools of stagnant and foul smelling water..." (Ibid: 36). In addition, Glasgow was named "the most deprived city in Britain" by a 1971 Department of Environment Study (Damer, 1990:16). Despite the nationwide issue of poor housing conditions, the report emphasised Glasgow as a problem area, perpetuating existing stereotypes and ideologies (Ibid).

4.2.2 Representations of the Gorbals physical environment

Within Glasgow, the Gorbals neighbourhood was subject to disproportionate levels of condemnation and stigmatisation (Clark and Wright, 2018; Pollock and Paddison, 2014). While it was undoubtedly an area of impoverishment and housing deterioration, it was not the only place in Glasgow or even the UK to experience these issues (Clark and Wright, 2018; Whitham, 2010). Despite this, slum discourses surrounding the Gorbals were pervasive; it was renowned across Europe as "one the worst and most dangerous slums in Britain" (Felicetti et al., 2016). The stigmatisation of the Gorbals may have been partially attributable to its portrayal in texts such as McArthur and Kingsley-Long's *No Mean City* (1935), which had been sold over "500,000" times by the 1970s (Bartie, 2010;

Clark and Wright, 2018: 52; Pollock and Paddison, 2014). The novel is renowned for its depictions of the area as riddled with squalor and violence (Damer, 1990). One resident commented, “ever since *No Mean City* was published, every Tom, Dick and Harry has jumped on the band-wagon of having a go at slating Glasgow, and in particular the Gorbals...why not publish some facts about the more pleasant aspects...” (*Illustrated London News*, December 16th, 1967). The lasting impact on the area’s reputation should not be underestimated; indeed, as recently as 2010, an article stated that “...‘No Mean City’ still haunts Glasgow seven decades after the novel’s publication” (Graham, 2010).

Moreover, the press seemed to play a prominent role in the collective denigration of the Gorbals (Clark and Wright, 2018). For instance, a drawing by artist Juliet Pannett of *The Gorbals Slum Clearance* which appeared in *The Illustrated London News* (February 22nd, 1964) depicts old falling-down tenement buildings with numerous smashed windows. The crumbling brick walls stand before new high-rise tower blocks (Figure 4.5). The accompanying text reads, “the Gorbals of Glasgow has been one of the most pitiful slum areas of all of Great Britain. The houses, dirty and without adequate amenities, are being demolished...”. Many other contemporary newspapers referred to Gorbals as a slum; due to the negative connotations associated with the term, describing the Gorbals using this language would likely have reinforced stereotypes in reader’s imaginations.



Figure 4.5. *The Gorbals Slum Clearance* (Pannett, 1964).

Further examples of local and national newspaper articles condemning the Gorbals include an extract in *The Aberdeen Evening Press* (July 30th, 1964) entitled ‘Families flee terror street’, and an article entitled ‘Gorbals slums appalling, says Brown after tour’ published by *Birmingham Daily Post* (October 27th, 1969). Moreover, the place name Gorbals seems to have been a byword for a crowded and deteriorating slum area in several articles (e.g. *Birmingham Daily Post*, March 7th, 1968). The content of these newspaper articles draws attention to the media’s role in constructing the 1960s Gorbals place image. This recalls literature suggesting that territorial stigmatisation is “superimposed” upon areas through everyday discourses and media representations

(Slater, 2017; Larsen and Delica, 2019; Wacquant, 2007: 67).

Video clips provide further insight into the production and circulation of stigmatising images about the 1960s Gorbals. A video from the Huntley Film Archives entitled *Glasgow* (1967) repeatedly draws attention to the poor conditions of the buildings and tenements in the 1960s Gorbals. The narrator talks of the “slow, sad disintegration into squalor”, the “crumbling front exterior[s]” and the “revolting and inhuman conditions” of tenements. Moreover, the National Library of Scotland Moving Image Archive contains numerous films featuring the Gorbals in the 1960s. In *Slum Housing and Poverty* (1963), the narrator describes the “cavern-like courts” and “alleys” of the Gorbals. Therefore, it seems that a dominant and stigmatising narrative was established about the area, condemning it as destitute and without hope.

Overall, like Henry Mayhew’s imagery of the urban poor in London (1861) and Jacob Riis’ depiction of the New York tenements (1890), twentieth-century representations of Glasgow and the Gorbals tended to focus on the squalid, overcrowded conditions of the working-class slums (Blaikie, 2006; Damer, 1990; Sibley, 1995). The increasingly unfavourable representations and “narratives of urban decline” (Watt, 2006: 780) reinforced across literature, images, newspaper articles, documentary videos and government reports manifested in a stereotypical place image of the Gorbals and the wider city of Glasgow as “filthy, slum-ridden, poverty-stricken, gang-infested...” (Damer: 1990: 5). Therefore, the area became symbolic of a deteriorating slum environment, home poverty, and various social issues in the British social imagination.

4.2.3 Marzaroli's photographs: support or challenge?

When considering how Marzaroli's 1960s photographs intersect with such negative representations of the area, they undoubtedly include recurring signs of dereliction and physical decay. However, it is crucial to differentiate between texts and images referring to the crumbling and dilapidated environment versus stigmatising depictions of the area as a sort of diabolical 'hell on earth'. Indeed, although Marzaroli's photographs feature urban decay, it is rare to find a picture without a human figure in the frame. Additionally, his photographs seem to bring an element of structure through geometrical composition. As such, while Marzaroli's photographs represent the Gorbals' poor physical conditions, condemnation does not seem to be his focus.



Figure 4.6. *Back court, Gorbals 1963 (Marzaroli, 1963).*

Figure 4.6 is a sharp, clear photograph of a four-storey Gorbals tenement housing block and back court. The bright sunlight illuminates the building's weathered stonework. The crumbling stonework and roof tiles, the smashed windows and the blackened closes amalgamate in an image of deteriorating housing stock indicative of material deprivation. The distance between Marzaroli and his subjects here is typical of documentary photography (Rose, 1997). The high-angle vantage point and the sharp vertical lines mean the eye is drawn down the building's face towards the back court as the focal point. Here, the physical decay is juxtaposed by the clean washing hanging from the triangular line, which marks out the women and children, symbolic of life.

While the black-and-white colour scheme depicts the Gorbals in dark tones, it also accentuates the "striking" and "formalistic" composition, highlighting the geometry and lines of buildings, streets, alleyways and backyards (Rose, 1997: 282). Therefore, in a similar vein to what Rose (1997) suggests about 1930s photographs of Stepney Borough slum housing (Ibid), Marzaroli's compositional framing might impress structure and order on an area largely represented as dilapidated and degenerative. Marzaroli's use of black-and-white film was a compositional decision as colour film was available well before the 1960s. Literature indicates that while colour photography historically represented indulgence and luxury, black-and-white photography has typically been associated more with authenticity and humanistic journalism (Hall, 1997: 10; Scott, 2007: 58). In an interview with Jennie Renton (1986), Marzaroli addressed this point, saying, "they're not rosy pictures in beautiful Technicolour. They're black and white and they are what they

are, a happening in time which was quite authentic". This indicates that his compositional choice to use black-and-white film was intended to represent the area in a genuine manner.

The captions accompanying photographs provide some indication of Marzaroli's desired representation of the area. Rather than using terminology such as 'slum', 'poverty', 'polluted' and 'poisoned', his captions are more descriptive; 'rubble', 'back court', 'street'. Moreover, Marzaroli's biographical account is telling; he claimed, "when I got back to Glasgow in 1959 the city was changing and I wanted to get it in the can...I had no commissions to take pictures of Glasgow" (Renton, 1986). While Marzaroli's photographs did appear in newspaper articles, the suggestion that he was never commissioned to photograph the Gorbals implies that his composition and execution of photographs was not motivated by fulfilling an outside agenda. Damer (1990: 7) reinforces this point, claiming that while Marzaroli's photographs "immediately signify the city", photographer Colin Baxter's commissioned pictures reflect the intentions of the "miles-better Glasgow" campaign for social change. Thus, while Marzaroli's photographs reflect imagery surrounding the neighbourhood's poor physical condition, by considering wider spaces of representation and sites at which meaning is inscribed in photographs, a more nuanced picture starts to emerge.

4.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter has demonstrated that Marzaroli's 1960s photographs include recurring motifs of neglected, run-down tenement houses, streets, and shopfronts. Such imagery points to broader sets of meanings surrounding Glasgow's Gorbals as a derelict slum area. To some extent, Marzaroli's 1960s photographs might reinforce perceptions of the Gorbals as physically dilapidated. However, Marzaroli's compositional decisions do bring some geometrical structure to a place associated with chaos and disorder in the public imagination (Rose, 1997). Therefore, although Marzaroli's photographs of the Gorbals include physical dilapidation, they do not seem to condemn the area as squalid, poisonous and decaying in a way typical of nineteenth and early twentieth-century slum discourses (Boyle and Rogerson, 2006; Muir, 1935; Sibley, 1995). As perceptions of place are influenced not only by representations of the physical environment but also by the people who live there (Pollock and Paddison, 2014), the next chapter will discuss how Marzaroli's photographs of children might influence representations of the Gorbals.

CHAPTER 5 - REPRESENTATIONS OF URBAN CHILDHOOD: ATTIRE, CLEANLINESS, AND HEALTH

5.1 Introduction

The following chapter explores what Marzaroli's photographs represent about the Gorbals children. More specifically, it is concerned with what images signify about the children's attire, cleanliness and health, reflecting on values attached to those categories and, consequently, how Marzaroli's representations of the Gorbals children might support or challenge wider mythologies and ideologies.

5.2 Interpretation

5.2.1 Glasgow's slum-dwellers: representations of attire and cleanliness



Figure 5.1. *Golden-Haired Lass, Gorbals, 1964* (Marzaroli, 1964).

Figure 5.1 is one of Marzaroli's best-known photographs in which the *Golden-Haired Lass* is pictured wearing a tattered floral dress, her bare, muddy legs and tiny wellington boots on display. Marzaroli took this photograph at the child's level, capturing her striding confidently down the street. The blackness of the alley is ominous, and the chalk covered walls that loom above the curly-haired wean point to the deteriorated nature of the

landscape. The girl's appearance recalls MacFarlane's description of a Gorbals child wearing a "cheap-looking, soiled floral dress" in his memoir *'Gorbals diehards: a wild sixties childhood'* (2010: 11). Here, MacFarlane explains that a child wearing "wellington boots" was an indicator of "real poverty" in the Gorbals (Ibid). Therefore, Marzaroli's photograph of the 'Golden-haired lass' in her wellington boots might posit meaning about her social class.



Figure 5.2. *Children, Gorbals 1963* (Marzaroli, 1963).

Marzaroli's photograph *Children, Gorbals 1963* shows a small group of bare-legged children behind a barbed wire choked palisade fence. This photograph was taken from above, looking down on the children behind the bars of the fence. The framing of the children might evoke a sympathetic response in the viewer as the children appear almost imprisoned, trapped behind bars. This notion of entrapment recalls Muir's (1935: 121) claim that Glasgow's "slum-dwellers are not condemned to death...but merely to lifelong imprisonment". Perhaps then, this photograph is symbolic of the children's lives trapped in a run-down urban area from which they cannot escape. The focal point of the image is the little girl staring directly at the camera. The girl's grubby fingers clasp the stakes of the fence, and her face appears to be unclean. This might point to broader sets of meanings about dirty children being emblematic of working-class slum areas of cities (Sibley, 1995). Cresswell (2019: 36) notices that "dirty" street children living in overcrowded and ramshackle homes are a prominent theme in Jacob Riis' (1890) photographs of the New York slums. Moreover, Melbourne slum children photographed by Barnett (1933) were described as "a dirty, filthy, rough little group", who experienced negative physical and moral impacts from living in the slum (Birch, 2004: 8).

After examining a range of Marzaroli's photographs, the Gorbals children's scruffy, unclean appearance is a recurring theme. They are repeatedly pictured wearing ill-fitting shoes and clothes; their bare legs are often exposed whatever the weather. Marzaroli's photographs are situated amongst a broader set of images and texts depicting the

Gorbals children as stereotypically dishevelled and dirty. Further visual representations include Joseph McKenzie's 1960s photographs, which show the Gorbals children wearing oversized clothes, often pictured with muddy knees and bedraggled hair. These images point to broader ideologies about Glasgow's slum-dwellers. For instance, Muir (1935: 104-125) described "people who no longer take the trouble to keep up appearances", people with "shrunken bodies" and of "stunted naked boys bathing in filthy pools, from which rose a smell of various acids and urine". Similarly, the 'Scotland's Older Houses' report suggested Glasgow's tenement population were unhygienic, claiming "neglect is contagious, with seemingly little attempt being made by individual tenants to retain a decent standard of cleanliness..." (Cullingworth et al., 1967: 37). These texts highlight that environmental decay is often associated with stereotypical urban 'types' (Ryan, 1997).

Considering this, Marzaroli's photographs may reflect nineteenth and twentieth-century discourses surrounding dishevelled slum children as unkempt and unclean. In turn, the Gorbals children might become "signifiers of collective mythologies" surrounding the area's unsanitary and deteriorating state (Larsen and Delica, 2019: 550). As a result, Marzaroli's photographs may contribute to the Gorbals' defamation due to broader views that uncleanliness is a signal of immorality (Sibley, 1995). This might have been especially true amongst 'middle class' viewers, who have been said to judge their own social position according to images of the urban poor (Price, 1983).



Figure 5.3. *Glasgow Children, 1958* (Eardley, 1958).

Representations of Glasgow's children as scruffy and unclean are also visible in Joan Eardley's 1960s paintings. Eardley's work portrays the children's grubby hands and faces and shows them wearing ill-fitting clothes. In her oil painting *Glasgow Children, 1958*, Eardley depicts two children wearing oversized, dishevelled looking overalls with

crumpled sleeves, their bare legs poking out underneath (Figure 5.3). Her images of the Glaswegian ‘street urchins’ have been said to highlight the children’s “knobbly knees emerging stalk-like from wellington boots” (Blaikie, 2006: 208). Such representations may build upon stereotypical images of deprived urban areas, which historically accentuated the “gaunt feral look” of children as an indication of poverty (Ibid: 59). Therefore, Eardley’s paintings seem to reflect wider narratives about the substandard health of Glasgow’s urban poor in the 1960s.

5.2.2 Glasgow slum-children: representations of health



Figure 5.4. *Red Haired Girl* (Eardley, c.1960).

Eardley repeatedly painted the Samson family's children, including one who had a squint in her left eye, which is visible in a number of her works, including *Child before Tenement Window*, c.1958-60, *The Green Scarf*, c.1960, *Red Haired Girl*, c.1960 (Figure 5.4), *Girl in Orange Jumper*, c.1961-62 and *Children and Chalked Wall 2*, 1963. Interestingly, after the girl's squint was fixed, Eardley reportedly claimed, "Oh hell! She won't be much use to me now" (Oliver, 1988 cited in Blaikie, 2006: 208). The girl's squint is visible in Marzaroli's photograph of the Samson children (Figure 5.5), which shows the siblings lined up in Eardley's studio. The Samson children are pictured with missing teeth and tousled hair, their crumpled clothing hanging loosely around their skinny bodies and bare legs. The children all have cheeky grins on their faces, except the little boy pictured staring innocently to the left. This photograph conjures a sense of closeness and solidarity between the siblings, who appear to be jovial despite their circumstances.



Figure 5.5. *The Samson kids in Joan Eardley's studio, Townhead 1962 (Marzaroli, 1962).*

Before discussing how categories of social difference are expressed through images depicting health issues (Sibley, 1995), it is essential to recognise the existence of fundamental health issues associated with poor services in neglected neighbourhoods like the Gorbals (Boyden, 1991; Crawford et al., 2007). However, real health differences should be distinguished from the metaphorical transfer of meanings whereby the poor were associated with diseases themselves. As Sibley (1995: 55) suggests, throughout the nineteenth century, the urban poor became metaphorically polluted and polluting, a threat to the middle classes, as real and existing health differences were exaggerated and altered in ways that conjured distorted mythologies. Put succinctly, the urban poor were seen as “a source of pollution and moral danger” (Ibid). Such pathological discourse reflects associations made between the slum, dirt, disease and immorality (Hastings, 2004; Sibley, 1995: 56).

There exists a number of sources denoting the poor health of Gorbals residents. The correlation between the poor condition of housing and Gorbals residents' ill-health is visible in the RMOH as far back as the “late 1800s” (Thompson-Fawcett, 2004: 181). In addition, the RMOH produced by the Corporation of the City of Glasgow between 1960 and 1966 documented the high rates of infant deaths. These findings are significant as infant mortality rates are often used to indicate the general level of health of a place (Sartorius and Sartorius, 2014). In 1960, Glasgow's IMR stood at ‘32.2/1000’ births, with prominent causes of death owing largely to respiratory diseases, “mainly pneumonia and bronchitis” (RMOH, 1960: 10). As well as high rates of infant mortality, illnesses such as

tuberculosis were prevalent, and the Health Authority identified a large number of children suffering from rickets; indeed, there were over 38 cases of rickets in 1964 alone (Blaikie, 2006; Clark and Wright, 2018; Johnstone, 1992: 364; RMOH, 1964: 77). More recent government reports such as 'Will Glasgow Flourish' (2007) reiterate the increasing public concern about the "alarmingly poor" standards of citizen's health in the twentieth century (Checkland, 1982: 28).

Alongside government documents, the local and national press regularly published articles on the Gorbals children's poor health in the 1960s. One example is a *Sunday Mirror* article (October 6th, 1963) based on the case book of a doctor working in the Gorbals. Underneath a photograph of the doctor is written, "The doctor leaves. The crisis, for the moment, is over. But the problem of the Gorbals remains, to flare up once more...". Later in the article, under the heading 'KILLERS', the doctor recounts the case of a "neglected" Gorbals child suffering from pneumonia; he laments that the child's sibling had previously died of the same cause. Interestingly, in MacFarlane's memoir, he describes a 1960s-newspaper article on the "poor standard of public health of Glasgow", suggesting "the piece made Glasgow out to be some sort of living hell" (2010: 80). While there was undoubtedly significant deprivation in the Gorbals according to modern standards, owing to high rates of infant deaths and prevalence of physical health problems including "rickets and tuberculosis", it was not the only area to experience these issues (Clark and Wright, 2018: 52). The wealth of accounts of this nature would likely have ensured the persistence of stereotypes about the ill-health of Gorbals children. Since cleanliness and health have often been associated with morality, these stories may

reinforce pathological mythologies about Gorbals residents (Hastings, 2004).

5.2.3 Marzaroli's photographs: support or challenge?

While Marzaroli's photographs undoubtedly include images of thin 'weans', he does not seem to select subjects to exaggerate Glasgow's notoriously poor health. Perhaps in contrast to the work of Diane Arbus, who has been critiqued for her uncompassionate photographs of marginalised groups, depicting them as "strange or flawed" 'others' (La Grange, 2005: 35; Sontag, 1977), Marzaroli does not seem to make the children caricatures of illness. I suggest there is a greater degree of sympathy to his photographs, which is visible in details that Barthes calls the 'punctum' such as the tiny wellington boots of the *Golden-Haired Lass*, the eye contact with the little girl in *Children, Gorbals* and the cheeky grins of the Samson children. The humanity depicted in Marzaroli's photographs means viewers may be inclined to empathise with subjects, rather than seeing them as 'less than human' others. Oliver (1984: 13) proposes that there is "no other photographer" to have "caught the look and the life of Glasgow with comparable accuracy and sympathy". Significantly, Marzaroli suffered from intermittent illnesses throughout his life and recovered from tuberculosis in 1955, just before taking these photographs. His widow Anne reflected that "this early brush with death left him always anxious about his health" (Marzaroli, 2013: 12). Marzaroli's personal experiences may have informed his portrayal of the state of the Gorbals children's health; indeed, he decided who and what to include and exclude from the frame.

5.3 Chapter Summary

Overall, this chapter has suggested that Marzaroli's photographs of the Gorbals children include signs of urban poverty regarding their clothing and hygiene. Such images might recall discourses surrounding slum children, thus reinforcing mythologies about the area. However, in contrast to dominant narratives, Marzaroli did not seem to especially focus on or exaggerate the children as diseased or polluted. Instead, his focus seemed to be on capturing photographs of the Gorbals children at play; this will be the theme discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6 - 'WEANOPOLIS': PLAY AND PUBLIC SPACE IN THE GORBALS (Crawford, 2013)

6.1 Introduction

In the following chapter, I assess Marzaroli's photographs of children at play in the Gorbals, considering what images represent, what expressive values are implied, why photographs might have been taken, and what narratives and broader sets of beliefs they fit into or perhaps challenge. To do this, I look to a plethora of sources to grasp understandings of children, class and spaces of play in the 1960s. Finally, I reflect on how Marzaroli's photographs of children might represent the urban place of the Gorbals.

6.2 Interpretation

6.2.1 Informal Space



Figure 6.1. *Gorbals Children at a construction site, 1964* (Marzaroli, 1964).

In the foreground of Figure 6.1, three boys are pictured amongst scrap materials of metal, wood and wires. In the image background, piles of rubble and debris are visible before a large stone building. The two boys to the right are pictured glancing towards the camera with straight-faced expressions. The light illuminates the children's faces and the white legs of the boy in the middle emerging from his shorts. The photograph is taken close-up

from a low vantage point, as though Marzaroli was amongst the children playing. The children's eye contact and facial expressions evoke a sense of innocence, while the location of their play points to their resilient nature. This photograph, among others, bears out Ward's (1997: 86) claim that "children will play anywhere and with anything". Indeed, Marzaroli repeatedly pictured the Gorbals children playing at construction sites, playing football in the street and building toys out of cardboard while playgrounds remain empty (Figure 6.2).



Figure 6.2. *Playground, Rotation Road, 1964* (Marzaroli, 1964).

It is important to reflect on the wider set of discourses and narratives that Marzaroli's photographs are situated amidst surrounding childhood, play, class and morality. As aforementioned, existing research suggests that the spaces of play children inhabit reflect class distinctions (Philo and Thomson, 2004; Ward, 1978; Matthews et al., 2000; Skelton, 2000). Due to adult beliefs that young children's visibility in public space is undesirable, the Gorbals children represented in Marzaroli's photographs might be seen to "transgress the bounds of bourgeois moral geographies" (Cresswell, 2019: 45). Indeed, Marzaroli's photographs show young, unaccompanied young children occupying public space and informal areas of play (Matthews et al., 2000). In this sense, the spaces of play the Gorbals children inhabit might have connotations for the 'sort of place' the 'old' Gorbals was in the public imagination.

6.2.2 Gorbals Street Children



Figure 6.3. *Street games, back court, Gorbals, 1964*

(Marzaroli, 1964).

Figure 6.3 depicts a group of little boys playing on a rubble-strewn Gorbals street. It is an action shot that captures two of the boys kneeling, taking aim with imaginary bows and arrows; two others stand alongside them, laughing. The children's body positions and facial expressions evoke a sense of mischief and fun. Marzaroli used small handheld 35mm film cameras from brands including Rolleiflex, Leica and Nikon, which explains how he was able to produce such candid 'snapshots' of subjects. The period in which Marzaroli photographed the Gorbals children marked a pivotal time for documentary photography as cameras became smaller, cheaper and more readily available, and film had become highly responsive to light (Abbott, 2010; Rose, 2016). Unlike older cameras, these newer, more portable forms of equipment allowed photographers to work quickly and inconspicuously to capture pictures of moving objects and people (Cresswell, 2019: 40). Marzaroli himself commented, "you wait for your golden moment, quickly bring it to the eye, take the snap and put it down..." (Renton, 1986). Understanding that the equipment Marzaroli used shaped his representation of this moment demonstrates how the site of production influences meaning at the site of the image itself (Rose, 2016).



Figure 6.4. *Boys in high heels*, 1963 (Marzaroli, 1963).

In another action shot (Figure 6.4), we see three boys playing in an empty Gorbals street. They are all wearing shorts and, perhaps more surprisingly, oversized high heeled shoes. There is a symmetry to this photograph; the middle boy is the central focus, framed by the two bent over on either side of him. They stand near a street corner in front of a dark building, its windows boarded up, the sign for 'PROVISIONS' is faded. The building across the street is in a similar state, and most of the street is cast in shadow. The shadows and dark tone of the buildings, combined with the boarded-up window fronts, elicits a feeling of gloom and destitution, juxtaposed by the rather humorous image of the boys playing in heels. This photograph conveys their spirit and creativity, which might undercut middle-class adult mythologies that working-class street children are somehow

deviant, immoral or dangerous (Jones, 2000; Valentine, 1996). It was the inspiration for Liz Peden's iron sculpture of the 'High-heeled Boys', constructed in the Gorbals in 2002.



Figure 6.5. Gorbals children playing (McKenzie, 1964).

After analysing a range of sources, it is apparent that images of working-class children playing on the street were widespread in and around the 1960s. Indeed, Eardley's paintings similarly portray working-class Glaswegian children unaccompanied in public space, often pictured against graffiti and chalk-scrawled walls. Examples include *Girl and Chalked Wall*, c.1955-60; *Two Children with Graffiti*, c.1960-63; *Two Children before*

Lettered Wall, 1963; Children and Chalked Wall 2, 1963; and Children and Chalked Wall 3, 1962-3. Moreover, Joseph McKenzie's 1960s photographs mirror Marzaroli's in their depictions of Gorbals children playing outside, in the street, in the backcourts, often using scrap materials as props in games (Figure 6.5). Such images were not confined to Glasgow or even the UK and seem to be part of a more general paradigmatic trend in twentieth-century documentary and street photography. For instance, images of street children feature in Martha Cooper's 1970s photographs of New York City's Lower East Side, in which city kids are represented in public space, playing on scrap heaps or with car tyres, making use of their physical environment (Dunn, 2016). Therefore, the values attached to Marzaroli's representations of the Gorbals children reflect broader representations of street children, both locally and globally.

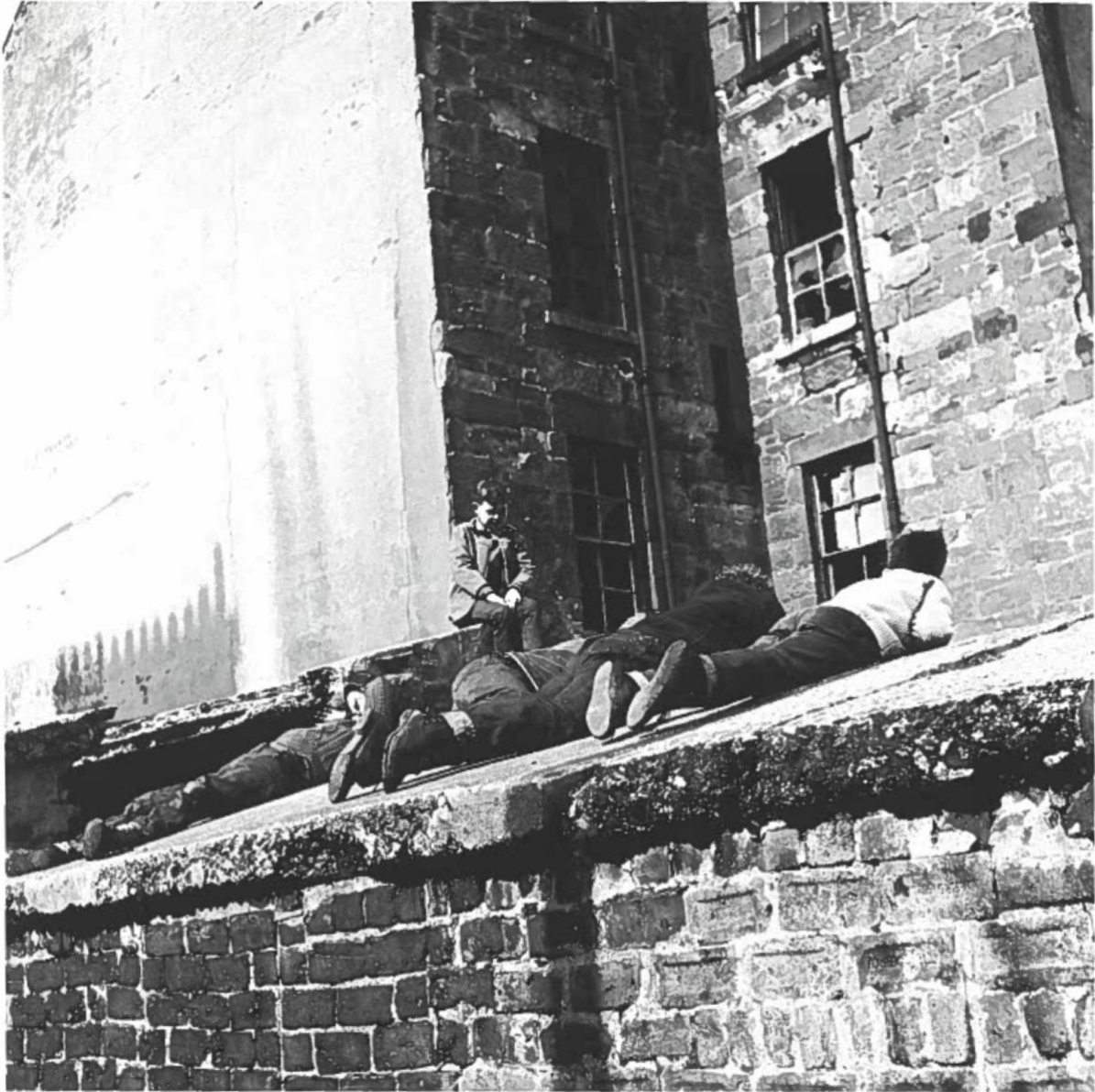


Figure 6.6. *Back court street games, Gorbals 1963 (Marzaroli, 1963).*

Figure 6.6 depicts a group of boys immersed in some sort of street game (as the caption tells us). The smashed windows and uneven stonework indicate the neglected nature of the tenement building behind them. The walls, buildings and shadows create sharp lines and angles, with the children at the centre of Marzaroli's shot. This image might reinforce

the notion that the Gorbals children were left free to play and explore unaccompanied. Furthermore, it recalls Ward's (1978: 89) suggestion that children use diverse parts of the city to play, including walls for ball games, gutters, kerbs and changes of level in the urban landscape. Contrary to narratives about the street as a place of corruption and danger, Marzaroli's' repeated representations of the Gorbals children's engagement in various street games seem to reinforce research suggesting the street is a socially and culturally important place for working-class children (Matthews et al., 2000; Thomson and Philo, 2004).

6.2.3 Marzaroli's photographs: support or challenge?

In contrast to wider ideologies surrounding urban children in public space as "little devils" (Valentine, 1996) or "feral, evil vermin, playing strange, dangerous games" (Jones, 2000: 30), Marzaroli's photographs evoke the vitality and carefree nature of the children. Morgan (1984: 17) reflects that "children are everywhere" in Marzaroli's Gorbals photographs, "climbing and playing among the crumbling walls and abandoned tenements with every appearance of enjoyment". They might be represented as mischievous scallywags, but they simultaneously bring playfulness and spirit to the deteriorating Gorbals slums. Perhaps then, the crumbling walls, waste littered streets, and general destruction have an effect of a juxtaposition, emphasising the vitality and life of the Gorbals children. His photographs seem to signify hope; they depict the Gorbals children's resilience and creativity, emphasising humanity, community and friendship against the backdrop of physical dereliction. Thus, in a similar vein to Rose's (1997) work in which she challenges stereotypes of an area as deprived through family snapshots and

images of women, Marzaroli's photographs of children might undercut dominant stigmatising narratives established about the 1960s Gorbals.

6.2.4 Wider Spaces of Representation

The idea that Marzaroli's representations of the Gorbals children positively influence representations of place is reinforced when looking at wider sites at which meaning is inscribed in images. At the site of production, Marzaroli made decisions about who and what to include and exclude in the frame; after all, documentary photographs have been said to reflect the photographer's intentions as much as the subject matter represented (Hall, 1997; Szarkowski, 1980). Marzaroli had fond feelings towards the Gorbals and, as aforementioned, was "never commissioned" to take photographs for some social reform project (Renton, 1986). Therefore, perhaps Marzaroli's selection and framing of the Gorbals children as subjects was intended to portray the area positively. This notion recalls Damer's (1990: 7) description: "there is a sense of vitality to Marzaroli's photographs, and a sense of commitment to his subjects...his photographs are in good faith". In a similar vein, Blaikie (2006: 208) suggests Marzaroli's selection of "children as subjects" might have been motivated by his desire to emphasise "the vibrancy of collective life" in a run-down and derelict urban landscape.

Moreover, Rose's (2016) notion that the spaces in which photographs are displayed and viewed influence meaning must be considered. Marzaroli's Gorbals photographs have been displayed at several exhibitions over the years, the first large one being *One Man's World, Photographs 1955-84* (1984), which took place at Glasgow's Third Eye Centre

four years prior to his death. Later, in 1990, *All The World's A Village: Oscar Marzaroli 1933-1988* was put on at Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum. This included his photographs of "Glasgow street life and cityscapes" and reportedly "remains one of the most popular exhibitions to have been staged there" (Robinson, 1990: 64; English, 2014). Furthermore, his photographs were published in several photobooks such as *Shades of Grey* (1987), as well as for an article entitled 'The Changing Face of Glasgow' in the *Scottish Field* magazine (October 1968). However, Marzaroli was not commissioned by *Scottish Field*; rather, his images were intended to demonstrate the profound changes that had taken place in the city (Renton, 1986). Therefore, examining spaces Marzaroli's photographs were displayed in the twentieth century reinforces that Marzaroli's images of the Gorbals children do not conform to stigmatising discourses and narratives about the place.

It is important to consider that the interpretation of Marzaroli's photographs is also influenced by the positionality of the viewers (Rose, 2012; 2016; Hall, 1997). Throughout history, documentary-style photographs taken in marginalised places such as the slum have often been viewed and consumed by stereotypically "respectable", middle-class individuals (Cresswell, 2019: 33). This recalls the critique of documentary photography as exploitative (Rosler, 1989; Sontag, 1977) since powerful photographers take pictures of relatively powerless subjects in places deemed 'Other', and these photographs are then viewed and consumed by another powerful group (Ibid). By contrast, Marzaroli's exhibitions were not necessarily exclusive middle-class events. Indeed, his widow Anne reportedly remarked that Oscar: "was delighted that wee women with shopping bags were

coming up from the Gorbals to the Third Eye Centre and asking where they could see the photos” (English, 2014). This indicates that Marzaroli’s photographs were viewed by the people who lived in the ‘old’ Gorbals, thus influencing meaning. His photographs appear to act as a record for Gorbals residents as much as anybody else.

Crucially, the time at which the audience views a photograph also influences meaning as there are multiple associations and ways of seeing depending on context (Berger, 1972; Blaikie, 2006: 60; La Grange, 2005). Since his death, Marzaroli’s family have donated a large body of his work to the Oscar Marzaroli Collection and Archive, making his photographs available as resources for social and cultural history projects. Alongside this, the Street Level Photoworks exhibition in Glasgow (December 2019-2020) displayed a range of Marzaroli’s films and still photographs of Glasgow and the Gorbals from the 1950s to 1980s. Carole McCallum, GCU archivist, commented that the photographs could be used for “learning, teaching and research” and to “inspire and create a sense of community” (2020). In this sense, the “space of representation” has been altered, “its meaning has been reinvented, and relocated, through different discourses and different effects” (Rose, 1997: 289).

6.3 Chapter Summary

In conclusion, Marzaroli's representations of unaccompanied young children playing in the street might evoke meanings about their deviance due to embedded Western, middle-class ideologies and norms surrounding age and visibility in public space (Cresswell, 2019; Horschelmann and van Blerk, 2012; Matthews et al., 2000; Valentine, 1996). However, by looking beyond the content of photographs and considering what might be called the "punctum" (Barthes, 1981), or "expressive content" (Rose, 2016), a more nuanced picture comes across. Overwhelmingly, Marzaroli's photographs seem to represent a sense of fun, mischief and carefree play in the Gorbals. This feeling is elicited through the camaraderie of the children playing in groups, often pictured laughing and smiling despite substandard living conditions. This notion is reinforced when considering the wider sites at which Rose (2016) suggests meaning is inscribed in photographs.

CHAPTER 7 – CONCLUSION

This dissertation has examined a specific set of photographs taken by Oscar Marzaroli in Glasgow's Gorbals neighbourhood in the 1960s. The purpose has been to understand what Marzaroli's photographs might signify and gain insight into what discourses and narratives are reinforced or otherwise. Critically evaluating Marzaroli's photographs relates to broader concerns about how certain places are condemned through stigmatising images and representations. Drawing attention to the power photographic representation holds over place-image has perhaps never been so relevant with more images shared in sixty minutes today than produced throughout the entire nineteenth century (Sturken and Cartwright, 2018: 3).

Employing visual interpretation as a method has enabled me to deduce representations embedded amongst photographs (Rowe and Margolis, 2020). Based on Rose's (2016) analytical framework, I have made inferences about meanings inscribed at the site of the image itself, but with some consideration of the sites of production and audiencing, keeping in mind the technological, compositional and social modalities. Rose's suggestions helped guide my analysis of photographs in order to address research questions concerning what Marzaroli's images of children signify, how notions of class and social difference are conveyed and, in turn, how these images of children interact with representations of place.

The information gathered through discourse analysis has been vital for understanding the context and meanings surrounding the 1960s Gorbals and how Marzaroli's photographs reflect those meanings. By interpreting Marzaroli's photographs using discourse analysis - paying attention to the importance of intertextuality - I have been able to contextualise his work and infer how his photographic representations might support or challenge broader mythologies and ideologies surrounding the area.

Analysis has highlighted that meanings inscribed in Marzaroli's photographs seem to support narratives about the Gorbals as a deteriorating urban environment. Moreover, analysis suggests that Marzaroli's photographic representations of the Gorbals children as scruffy and dirty might recall meanings surrounding slum-dwellers. However, Marzaroli's depictions of the children at play signify life, vitality and community. Consequently, the argument I put forward is that Marzaroli's 1960s Gorbals photographs overwhelmingly challenge deprecating narratives, providing an alternative, more favourable representation of a place so widely disparaged in popular narratives and imaginings through photographs of children. This demonstrates that photographs of children have the power to both exacerbate and challenge dominant stigmatising narratives.

As discussed in Chapter 3, it is essential to recognise the limitations of my research. The subjective nature of these methods means that my positionality heavily influences how I view and interpret photographs. As a young woman living in Edinburgh in 2021, I have impressed my personal and specific worldview upon my interpretation. Viewing these

images from a different time, context, or positionality would undoubtedly render different insights. I am not from Glasgow and cannot talk from a position of familiarity about the Gorbals and am, therefore, totally removed from the situation and context I have discussed. As such, I recognise the limited scope and the specific circumstances that have produced my findings.

Moreover, the restrictions resulting from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic meant that certain materials were not accessible, and I had to rely upon digitised sources, which Rose (2016: 197) warns can lead to aspects of materials being “transformed or lost”. If I had more time and access to more resources, I would have visited physical archives to gather a wider pool of texts and sources, with the potential to make further meaningful intertextual connections. Nevertheless, I was able to work around these restrictions and contribute knowledge to the field. There will be an exciting opportunity for future research on this topic to incorporate novel material once the GCU has reached the £200,000 target needed to develop and digitise all 50,000 of Marzaroli’s negatives. Thus, there is potential for far more to be learned from Marzaroli’s photographs once they become accessible in a new format as social and historical resources.

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