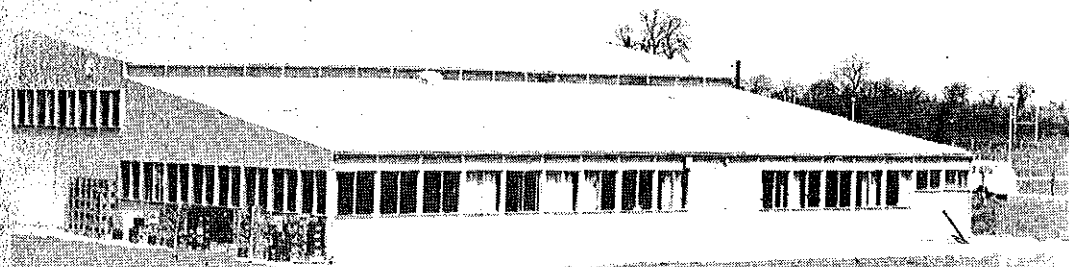


# MILIEU '81





# The Students Union Your Union

## CONTENTS

Foreword	
Editorial	
Geography Society Report	
*Jim Walsh: Creating the Myth	1
Colm Regan: On Geography and Development	4
Val Nwakibu: Politics Of Development, The Myth Of Aid As An Agent of Development in The Third World.	5
Mary Ryan: Development In China	7
Ann Dack: Development Experiences Of China	9
Deirdre Heancy: The Cultural Landscape of the Navajo Indian And Of Contemporary Rural Ireland	11
Beth Rossi: Air Pollution Control	13
Michael Gallagher: The Problems Of The Last Interglacial In Ireland	15
E. Vol-Ution & Alan D. Scape: Contributions	16
Michael Healy: Pre-Capitalist, Capitalist and Socialist Cities	17
Bubble And Squeeke McGorragh: New Approaches to Geography in Maynooth 1972-78.	19

\*Extracts from paper presented to Geography Students' Congress, N.U.U. Coleraine, 1981.

# FOREWORD

The 1981 *Milieu* goes to press with a range of articles which once again indicate the diversity of undergraduate interests in the discipline and the breadth of the subject in general. Good geographical writing is based on the acquisition of information, statistical and otherwise, the processing and ordering of that information by a trained mind, and ultimately the synthesising of it into an acceptable interpretation, tested and forged by experience. It is the primary purpose of an undergraduate education in geography to develop within students an experience of scholarly appraisal and techniques of analysis, as well as a breadth of knowledge to permit them to gather, evaluate and translate into geographical study a wide range of information. Without accurate and up to date factual data, however, many geographical studies are seriously impeded and so it is with considerable interest that geographers have monitored the administration within the last two years of two national population censuses and an agricultural census. The data gathered by the enumerators will greatly expedite detailed geographical analysis of the rapidly changing demographic, social and economic bases of Irish Society and no doubt future issues of *Milieu* will reflect these new sources in student writings. As a record of the present, a basis for future planning and research, and a link with the past the national census is of inestimable value and for this reason professional geographers were prominent in the activities of the Census Users Committee established after the 1971 census. No doubt their advice was of considerable use to the designers of the questions to be asked in the 1981 census and one would hope that their professional advice will be sought again in the future. Given this input into the design of the census and the use to be made of it by geographers it is somewhat disconcerting to see the position accorded the discipline in the classification of skills. One hopes that this position will be righted before the next census in 1991 and the reality of the nature of modern geography publicly recognised.

W.J. Smyth  
Professor, Dept. of Geography



## EDITORIAL

This, the 7th edition of *Milieu* again demonstrates the scope and potential of geography. This year also sees less of a concentration on Ireland, not just in the fact that 3 of the articles are written by overseas students, but also in the large section devoted to the vital question of world development. Each paper deals with specific aspects of this area and it is hoped that they will illustrate the complexity of the subject and also indicate the role that geographers can play in developing explanations for, and answers to, the problems of underdevelopment. This latter point is well represented by Colm Regan in his introduction to the section. That geographers have a contribution to make was seen in the extent of participation by geography students in the organisation of the recent Third World Week and it is to be hoped that this active involvement will continue.

Apart from development other topics are very adequately dealt with, reflecting the major areas of study within the discipline. Any project of this nature obviously requires a large amount of co-operation and commitment and these have been more than forthcoming from the various contributors, many of whom have had to work to very tight deadlines as the publication is running slightly late this year.

Congratulations are in order for Tricia Gorman (B.A.) on her fine achievement in taking fourth place with the paper she submitted to the Geographical Societies Congress in Coleraine this February. Finally thanks are due to the Geography Department and to Mick Melvin for their co-operation and to you, the reader, for your interest.

Bob Kenny



## GEOGRAPHY SOCIETY REPORT

Yet another year has passed during which the Society has been active as ever in presenting a varied programme on geographical perspectives. The year began with the Society taking its place at the Societies Fair held in the Aula Maxima (Oct. last). Our display of maps, newspaper clippings and magazines did not pass unnoticed, attracting a record crowd of new members to the Society, even many non geography students.

Mr Sean Mc Garry of I.D.A. set our programme for the year in motion speaking on 'Developing Inner City Dublin' (Oct. 21st '80). In the course of his talk he outlined the major problems of inner city Dublin viz, on-going trends spatial and structural, the decentralisation of industry and high level of unemployment. His conclusion focused on some of the aspects of a programme drawn up by the I.D.A. to counteract the decay and social malaise of the inner city core. And of the need for better liaison between government departments and semi-state agencies.

Our Inaugural Lecture was held in Theatre 2 (Nov. 6th '80). There was a large attendance. Dr. Edward (Ted) Relph of University of Ontario, author of Place and Placelessness, addressed the Society on 'The Making of the Modern Landscape'. It was a well illustrated lecture, his discourse centering around the aesthetic transformation of the landscape (particularly the urban landscape) to the moulding of a landscape characterised by modernity and functional utilitarianism.

'Ethnic Segregation — Chicago a Casestudy' was the title of our next lecture delivered by Dr. Fred Boal, Queens Univ. Belfast (Nov. 25th '80). Dr. Boal categorised the functions of ethnic segregation under the following criteria,

- (1) Physical defence.
- (2) Avoidance of cultural interaction.
- (3) The preservation of an ethnic identity.
- (4) The idea of a self contained, spatially confined community.
- (5) 'The Attack Function' involvement in urban politics.

It was informative and enlightening.

On Dec. 9th '80, Dr Annegret Simms U.C.D. spoke on 'Aspects of Poland's Historical Geography'. The theme of her lecture was the origin and development of Polish cities incorporating a temporal

and spatial dimension. She then went on to emphasise the need for the preservation of an urban landscape as well as the need for more positive and systematic planning strategies, viz, the historical building fabric should serve as a guideline for future development.

Our next event (Dec. 11th '80) was explosive! Michael Gallagher, an overseas student from Washington, U.S.A. with first hand information, produced an upsurge with volcanic effect when he delivered a talk on 'The Story of a Volcano, Mt. St. Helens, Washington — Before and After'. A reaccount of the violent eruption of the volcano (last summer, twelve months), and of its devastating impact on the surrounding landscape was given.

Events for the new year started on Jan. 21st when Professor William Loy of Oregon Univ. Eugene, on sabbatical at Trinity, addressed the Society on the geography of 'Coastal California and Oregon'. It was a well illustrated lecture.

In conjunction with geography societies of U.C.D., T.C.D. and the Geographical Society of Ireland, Dr. Denys Brunson of King's College, London, delivered the Geographical Societies joint lecture on 'Geomorphology in Practice' on Feb. 5th '81, the event being hosted by Maynooth. It was a well illustrated lecture during which Dr. Brunson outlined the applicability and practicality of a knowledge of geography to current daily situations, with specific references to the construction of the Khorakorum highway running between Pakistan and China, to land reclamation and building construction in Bahrain and Suez. Our lecture was followed by an enjoyable wine reception.

The week-end Feb. 22 '81 witnessed the hosting of the Geography Students Congress by N.U.U. Coleraine. A delegation from Maynooth attended and the College was well represented by Patricia Gorman on 'Intra Urban Variations in Respiratory Disease Mortality. Dublin 1972-75' and Jim Walsh's paper on 'Tourism: Myth and Reality' as well as by Mike Gallagher's paper on 'Mt. St. Helens Volcano'.

Our final lecture of the year was delivered by Dr. John Gunn U.C.C. who addressed the Society on the physical geography of the 'Cuilcagh mountain region in Fermanagh-Cavan' in which he referred to his studies carried out in the field.

At our AGM it is hoped to air new ideas thus ensuring a continuous interest and growth in the Society's activities, not just solely among the Committee but also among society members by and large.

A word of thanks is extended to everyone who helped make our functions possible and successful during 1980-81. We are indebted to Fran Walsh who acted as liaison officer between Society and Department.

Also many thanks to Prof. Smyth, John Sweeney, Colm Regan and P.J. Duffy for attending our lectures; and to you, especially the students for supporting our events and eating our biscuits and drinking our tea!

Brendan Fleming (Auditor).

### Geography Society Committee 1980-81

Auditor	Brendan Fleming
Secretary	Sean Cassidy
Treasurer	Michael Ryan
P.R.O.	Bob Kenny
Representatives	Patricia Maher
	Vincent Carey
	Gerard Toal
	Brendan Fox

"Deep in the dark discotheques of Chile's Vina del Mar, native women in wild costumes called Stuvens, Cassinis and Dions dance La Cueca 'till dawn.

And drive men mad.

The young love goddesses of Rio dress in quaint tribal outfits called bikinis and worship the sun along the beaches of Copacabana and Ipanema.

Clever little devils. Some of them even speak English".

(Lan — Chile Advertisement).

"It's green. It's green from the top of the highest mountain to the verge of the sheertest cliff . . . It's an old country. Incredibly old . . . It's a chain of unforeseen moments. Going into funny little shops . . . Geese parading across the village green . . . Seeing donkeys. Sipping Irish coffee. Being away from everyone. Tapping your foot to traditional country music. Spreading butter and honey on brown bread . . . It's discovering you have a second home. It's Ireland."

(Irish Tourist Board,

Discover Ireland brochure, 1979).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the generation of the myth of 'Irish uniqueness' within the context of the image produced by the Irish Tourist Board. Furthermore I wish to explore the historical roots of this myth and elucidate its unforeseen side effects on the general public conception of the West of Ireland as a 'problem'/underdeveloped region.

The global growth of tourism has been one of the major economic developments of the last two decades. It is estimated that, on an international scale, there were 250 million travellers in 1980. This boom has not ignored Ireland, where the respective tourist numbers and revenue have increased from 1.4 million and £40 million (1960) to over 2 million and £400 million (1979). The latter financial revenue plus the number of jobs created (around 100,000) have merited the setting up of a state sponsored company (budget of £20 million in 1980) and more recently, the enumeration of tourism as a specific part of a senior ministerial portfolio.

## 'CREATING THE MYTH'.

It is not however the economic benefits which are the focus here, rather the motivation for tourists coming to Ireland initially. What is it that attracts them to Ireland, or conversely, in what manner is Ireland sold abroad as a tourist destination? For the tourist industry depends on the production of images to sell its commodities like any other industry. In essence, what we seek to discover is the ideology behind Irish tourism.

Nineteenth century tourism was motivated by the idea of visiting the metropolitan capitals of Europe. It was essentially an aristocratic occupation, almost a compulsory pre-requisite for entry into the upper circles of society. The notion of exploring the other 'advanced' milieux is best summed up in the concept: 'The Grand Tour'. It was less an escape or adventure into the unknown, rather more a ritual excursion and display of wealth or at best, a desire to keep up with the latest in European 'high culture'. Latterly however, this ideology has been replaced by a far more mercenary one. Herein, the motivation is primarily a negative one — escape — whereby one attempts to gain

"a temporary release from the stringent demands of a highly developed consumer society".

(Turner and Ash. p.91)

The escapist ideology assumes two forms: the escape from restrictions and taboos into a sunny paradise with distinct sexual undertones, or, less titillatingly, an attempt to experience what the simple life was like before urban industrial 'modernisation' arrived. In sum,

"what was originally a culturally motivated tourism has become, in some ways, anti-cultural — a flight from civilisation and progress in search of a 'world of pleasure'."

(Turner and Ash p.49)

These paradises of escape are referred to as "The Pleasure Periphery".

These two 'escapologies' are adroitly presented in the quotations at the start of this essay. While radically opposite on a surface level, they both have remarkably similar features and assumptions when closely examined. They are both basically caricatures or myths of reality, emphasising the motif of novelty, escape, adventure and initiation.

These advertisements are the images by which the various tourist boards (120 in the whole world) sell their respective 'products' on the global market and attract the tourists and their money to their lands.

Having established the importance and type of ideologies in vogue today, I now propose to examine how these myths are produced and what, for Ireland, are the historical roots of the prevalent image. The production of the myth or what has been described as the mythologising process is one whereby

"things (e.g. commodities) are separated from their real context and become carriers of new meanings within the structure of the myth" (Overton, p.13)

This myth then becomes the spectacle/image which the tourist 'consumes'. What occurs in the Irish context is that features of the West of Ireland 'scene' are identified which can serve, in a paradoxical manner, to attract tourists. These aspects — lack of affluence, rurality etc. — are given in an absurd turn about of perceptions, a certain attractive and therefore 'use' value. Other features — speech, folklore, scenery — are also invoked, in a highly selective manner, to present in total, a romanticised and idealised image of the rural life. This image is then presented as an object for contemplation, admiration and photography. It is a static, superficial and mystified world, a human museum. However, you dare not come too close or enter — tourists stay in luxurious hotels and never wander too far from the 'security' of the bus — or else the spectacle will collapse as a stack of cards.

In order to present this spectacle, advertisements are all important. A whole range of words are developed, specifically imbued with the necessary connotations of romanticised rurality. The outcome is a distinct language 'game' or world, wherein all words are imbued with a specific motif and range of meanings. For tourism, some of the terms are: rustic, natural, donkey, brown bread, moon, maiden. All these words convey a specific meaning with the 'game' of Irish uniqueness and tradition.

At this stage it must be noted that when the terms myth, image, spectacle and illusion are used, it is not implied that there is a mass conspiracy or

deception afoot. This interpretation of the modern tourist ideology would be all too simplistic and naïve. Likewise viewing advertisements as a con-job overstates their power and ignores how they incorporate new elements within an already existing ideology. Thus the myth of Irish uniqueness and idealised rural living as used by tourism has an already broad base in Irish life with the general glorification of rural Ireland as the source of the true Irish identity. As such, it represents a coherent and elaborate method of reading and interpreting reality. It is also linked to the widespread repulsion and alienation today associated in the popular mind with urban industrial life. The tourist spectacle is thus part of a wider ideological ensemble, related to the needs of humanity today for escape from consumer society. That this myth has a material force is evident from recent 'propaganda' in the media encouraging cleanliness, friendliness (even godliness!!). This reaches its heights (depths?) in a Bord Failte publication which considers

"the possibilities of a national campaign to keep Irish people smiling and taking things easy"

as "intriguing". Tourism becomes a justification for saving or fossilising culture. That people don't/can't want to live in a land of leprechauns where donkeys are the sole mode of transport and local 'friendly' shops overcharge is irrelevant.

Previously it was mentioned that the tourist spectacle is but a part of a broader ideological ensemble. It is from this base that the tourist myth springs and gains its inspiration and meaning. Therein lies the historical roots of Ireland as being unique, as a last outpost of the rural, idyllic way of life. It is this ideological base that will now be examined.

The cult of romanticism has had a wide circulation since widespread and perceptible changes occurred in the social order of 18th Cen. and 19th Cen. Europe. The emergence of urban industrial capitalism taxed the minds of social scientists as they attempted to describe and account for the change. Invariably this task was couched in evaluative terms, all models being underlain by a deep longing for the past, especially when people observed what the change brought about. In a classical case of sentimentality, the past was idealised and romanticised in the face of the present, all suffering and pain entailed within it being infused with an aura of simplicity and naturalness. The basic models elucidated to illustrate the

change polarised the old and new society, the classic being Toennies' *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* characterisation. At its most banal it juxtaposed traditional and modern, rural and urban. This dichotomy on a global scale, contrasts Ireland and the Western World, while nationally, the comparison is the west of Ireland and the east of Ireland. As a consequence of this dualism, reaction to advanced capitalist living immediately locates one in the traditionalist/rural camp. So the distinction between tourist and academic is often blurred as both seek to explore their unspoilt and natural heritage.

In Ireland, this ideological polarisation was injected with specific nationalist undertones. In the post-independence period, the attempt to create a national identity to bond the country resulted in an equalisation of the rural pastoral scenario with the 'real' Ireland. It was a negative, essentialist definition, in reaction to anglicisation which was equated with urban living. Terence Brown summarised it as

"where rural life was a condition of virtue in as much as it remained an expression of an ancient civilisation, uncontaminated by commercialism and progress. In doing so, they (poems) helped to confirm Irish Society in a belief that rural life constituted an essential element of an unchanging Irish identity" (p.84).

Thus the rural, peripheral region of Ireland assumed the mantle of authenticity and became the "primal source of the nation's being" (ibid, p.96). On a national level, this was elaborated into an image of Ireland as being unique and distinctive, a country set apart on the fringe of Europe. This image had an infinite and static quality, as if 'Irish life' was some once and for all absolute state. And so, the historical ideology was born that still dominates today. Its influence is evident no more clearly than in the nature of utopia and visions of the future Ireland. This thought seems only to be able to reproduce a model of society that emphasises the rural past. De Valera's ideal of a "people who were satisfied with frugal comfort and devoted their leisure to the things of the spirit" is today presented by his descendents in a caricatured form, who survive politically on an old reactionary nostalgia that mythologises rural Ireland.

The coalescence of the aforementioned ideologies represents today the well-spring of the tourist myth. A populist ideology, given credence and force

in literary and academic circles (including geography) remains largely unchallenged (Inishkillane, by H. Brody is an obvious exception). But what of the consequences of such ideology? There are three main outcomes of this distorted conception of Irish reality. The first relates to the interpretation of the West of Ireland. Herein, owing to the infusing of specific traits of underdevelopment with romantic qualities, the reality of life there is ignored. By incorporating the vestiges of poverty, decay, demoralisation, oppression and decrepid housing into the language and ideology of naturalism, simplicity, lack of corruption, and authenticity, the reality can be glossed over. What is being marketed is the heritage of centuries of underdevelopment. But the obfuscation does not stop there. It extends to the whole of Ireland whereby the emphasis on our distinctiveness expropriates the challenge to Irish men and women to reflect seriously on their own reality. And while we raise our heads to admire the halo surrounding this island, a halo fed by abstractions such as Sovereignty, the Faith, Republicanism and the Language, poverty and oppression continue on. This is not to deny however that the ideology serves specific class interests.

Such ideology remains in vogue while on the economic front, we are being daily more integrated into the capitalist world system. Concomitant with this unquestioned and implicit acceptance of the Western economic growth model, is a creeping consumerism and materialism which threatens to engulf the country. This of course is the antithesis of the nationalist ideology and while we imagine we are distinctive, the reality is otherwise. In fact, such is the uniformity now between Europe and Ireland that Brown, in a recent analysis of Irish society, argues that unless we face up to this growing 'westernisation', in the years ahead we shall have to recreate not discuss, a new Irish identity.

A final consequence of the predominance of the ideology of rural superiority is that those who do realise the impoverishment of urban life as witnessed today, can but revert to rural life for a change. None emphasise this limited polarisation more than geographers who identify the problem as being of a spatial not social nature. The predominance of historical/rural geography in Ireland, which often tends to glorify the artifacts of a particular rural Ireland, serves only to strengthen

this belief. The return to Arcadia, in the guise of rural Ireland, as an escape from the present urban environment is of course a solution that is the very basis of Irish tourist ideology. However this dichotomy is a false one, both choices avoid the essential core of the problem. We must realist, with M.D. O' Higgins.

"the dangers of exploiting the rural/urban divide as an exaction of the real conflict in Irish society between the speculator — rural and urban — and the exploited" (Irish Times 15/4/81, p.11).

In conclusion, there is a grace need to identify the false nature of the Irish tourist spectacle. To do so means linking the myth with the broader ideology that is expounded in Ireland. The reality must be faced, the contradictions of our present economic development uncovered. We follow an economic path that churns out poor as well as rich and slowly smothers any identity we may have or wish to have with an all-encompassing consumerist uniformity. But to reiterate, the present nostalgia is one that has a concrete base in the human predicament, it cannot be dismissed as a deceptive fad. The challenge is to identify the real causes and offer viable alternatives, not escapes.

Present day Irish tourism inhibits the uncovering of reality by mystifying and obfuscating the true causes and sources of peoples oppression. Furthermore, as a manifestation of global capitalism, it is part of the force that created the West of Ireland 'problem'. It offers not so much an alternative to capitalism, rather it is an extension of it and helps prolong its existence through offering a false alternative. The ultimate paradox is that tourism, based on diversity, is now that very force that entwines us more securely into the homogenous gloss that is liberal consumer capitalism. The uniqueness of Ireland is not that it offers an effective escape from industrial society, rather it is that Irish people still believe it does.

Jim Walsh  
(with apologies to Bord Failte)

#### Bibliography



- Brown, T. *Ireland, A Social and Cultural History*. Fontana, London 1981.  
Overton, J. "Promoting 'The Real Newfoundland': Culture or Tourist Commodity". Unpublished manuscript, St. John's 1980.  
Turner, L & Ash, J. *The Golden Hordes*. London 1975  
Irish Times  
Bord Failte/Irish Tourist Board Publications.

#### LEINSTER ARMS

Luncheons daily 12.30—2.30  
Snacks served all day

Back Lounge open all day for  
anyone wanting a quiet drink

Pool Hall open upstairs  
6.30 — 11.30

Tourament going on at the moment  
for a holiday for two in sunny Spain

Proprietor  
JACK McELINNEY



In 1974 the geographer Keith Buchanan characterised the concept of development as a "dirty" word. Surveying the world scene in 1981 only serves to reinforce this belief. Despite two development decades, the existence of foreign "aid" and the supposed emergence of a new International Economic Order, for the majority of people in the Third World, development remains a nightmare. Within the "developed" world, recession, de-industrialisation, pollution and medical and social problems generated by affluence, have led many people to question the "miracle" of economic development. This reality has forced many changes in the development literature, changes which have also been heavily influenced by events in Cuba, China, Korea, Tanzania and, perhaps less obviously, by more mundane processes throughout Latin America, Asia and Africa.

Since the 1960's the various western models of development (stage theory, modernisation and diffusion theory, growth centres etc.) have been challenged, have been found to be seriously flawed and have been ultimately rejected. In their place we have witnessed the emergence of dependency theory, the re-adaptation of classical marxism to the Third World context, the articulation of various models of African socialism and, in a slightly different context, the growth of liberation theology. These models have not only challenged the practice of much of economic development strategies but also the basic assumptions upon which they are normally based. The notion of development as a technical problem has been rejected and instead development as liberation has been highlighted.

Unfortunately the history of the discipline of geography was intimately connected with the process of colonial expansion and consequently the practitioners of an "alternative" development geography were few and far between. Historically, for example, the names of Knopotkin and Reclus stand out and more latterly those of Lattimore, Buchanan, Blaut, Brookfield and Santos, to name but a few. Perhaps the best appreciation of how geographers should examine development is contained in Buchanan's justly famous work *The Transformation of the Chinese Earth* (1970).

Some of the essays which follow in this particular edition of *Milieu* briefly introduce some of the arguments which represent the beginnings of a long drawn out and often painful re-evaluation of the theory and practice of development. The political, economic and cultural aspects, as well as the spatial, are seen to be of importance. Specific areas with which geographers should be concerned, but which are not considered here include human land relations and how they have become mediated through private property, the domination of people and land in the western model of growth, political ecology, uneven regional and national development, resource exploitation and cultural imperialism. Clearly many of these issues have direct relevance to what most people consider to be some of the core concerns of geography. These issues are now beginning to creep, rather silently and belatedly, into even orthodox development geography textbooks such as Maboqunge's *The Development Process: A spatial Perspective* (1980).

Despite Ireland's traditional contacts with many Third World countries through missionary activity, through development workers and through aid agencies, our writing and thinking on the subject has been conspicuously Eurocentric, paternalistic and often, racist.

Geography has been particularly bad in this respect with courses, textbooks and seminars representing the most conservative view of the orthodox western world. Eurocentrism and a technological fixation underlie much of the secondary school curriculum, even in the minimal space it accords to Third World studies.

Recently many of the Third World agencies in Ireland have emphasised the need for development education and are beginning to devote a high percentage of their resources to this task. Their activities have involved them in criticising geography and courses and textbooks have come in for particular attention. It is a poor reflection on ourselves as geographers that it needs to be pointed out to us that we have lost an appreciation for the different cultural, historical and social histories of other world societies and that our remedies for under-development are based on a rather simplistic spatial

model derived from western orthodox economics. One can only hope that such criticism will act as a spur for change. One hopeful sign on the horizon is the service course organised by the Department of Education for geography teachers on Third World problems to be held in Limerick in July of this year.

In this context perhaps the final word should go to planner Mahbub al Haw;

"At stake . . . it sometimes, more than a war over words; the battle over lines are drawn between two conflicting interpretations of historical reality, two competing principles of social organisation. The first values efficiency and social control above all else, the second social justice and the creation of a new person".

Nothing less is at stake!

Colm Regan  
(Dept. of Geography)

#### Bibliography:

- Buchanan, K. (1970) *The Transformation of the Chinese Earth*. London, Bell.  
Maboqunge, A. (1980) *The Development Process: A Spatial Perspective*. London, Hutchinson.

For a useful review of the geographical dimension of the development debate see Slater, D. "Geography and Underdevelopment" Part I in *Antipode*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (1973) and Part II in *Antipode*, vol. 9, No. 3 (1977)

## POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT: THE MYTH OF AID AS AN AGENT OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE THIRD WORLD

### INTRODUCTION:

One of the most pervasive concepts of our time is the concept of foreign aid. It is one of those tranquillising myths contrived by this generation or age to justify its inequities.

The notion was conjured up some 30 years ago when the colonial masters began to hand over the colonies to the colonised. As an earnest of goodwill between the colonisers and the colonised, the technical expertise needed by the newly independent nations would be provided through the generosity of the colonisers' loans and grants, since such skills were only available from the mother-countries. This gesture of goodwill was greeted with gratitude, for as most of the new countries found out, they were desperately short of the indigenous skills needed to develop their material resources.

However, it was not long before disenchantment with the whole system crept in. The notion of foreign aid is very widely criticised today. "Conservatives condemn it as a big boondoggle, a socialist giveaway, and the biggest fraud since money became a medium of exchange. Liberals blast it for proping up military dictators . . . or not doing what they think it was supposed to do".<sup>1</sup>

Most importantly, foreign aid is criticised for being a sophisticated instrument of control in disguise. Many serious writers today would readily agree that bilateral public aid has political conditions attached to it. The UN recognised this when it stated that "the allocation of public money for aid is determined by political factors".<sup>2</sup>

Against this background, it becomes necessary to counter the popular beliefs, especially in rich developed countries, that they were contributing lavishly to the development of poor nations, that their (rich nations) financial contributions to developmental efforts constitute a major portion of the money poor nations spend on development, and that these foreign funds are absolutely crucial.

### DEFINITION OF TERMS:

We shall endeavour, at this stage, to define the two key terms in our investigation. They are "Development" and "Aid".

**Development:** The term "development" does not seem to lend itself to

any clear-cut definition. It is a term that can be used both in absolute and in comparative terms.

In the absolute sense, a country can be said to be developed if a particular standard of living is attained such that starvation is not experienced at any level within its rank and file.

On the other hand, development can be used in a comparative sense for a country. This assumes an international index or standard by which such development is measured. It was on these grounds that Nigeria's former Head of State, Lt. General Obasanjo, once remarked that "the development objectives and achievements of Nigeria (and the rest of the developing countries) cannot be viewed in isolation . . . but in the context of the internationally acceptable definition of development".<sup>3</sup> Here, Gross National Product, style and standard of living, industrialisation, are some of the yardsticks for measuring development and economic growth of a country.

As it were, some writers have come up with models in which development is divided into stages (Rostow's Development Model). These models divide countries into those that are developed and those that are underdeveloped. The former are characterised by a high-level of technology and industrialisation, urbanisation etc. The latter are essentially rural and traditional, and technologically primitive.

Implicit in these orthodox theories of development is the assumption that the census of underdevelopment are internal and not external. As it were, the adherents of this theory maintain that development must be a matter of internal change with external aid.

**Aid:** In their book, *Rich and Poor Countries* Hans Singer and Javed Ansari point out that "aid implies the idea of a gift, of assistance rendered, of unilateral transfer, of a quid sine quo".<sup>4</sup> However, they observed that not everything which results in transfer of resources could be referred to as aid. For example, private foreign investment, export credits, and public loans at commercial rates of interest are not regarded as aid.

Aid can take different forms. It could be given in the form of "hard" cash, loans or grants, in the form of security assistance i.e. provision of military hardware and personnel. Aid is often made available through development assistance, and/or on purely humanitarian grounds.

However, it may be pointed out here that a great deal of confusion surrounds the coordination, integration and distribution of aid because of "the political reasons for giving aid on the one hand and the economic interest of the donor or lender on the other".<sup>5</sup>

### AID - AN AGENT OF DEVELOPMENT OR A MEANS OF CONTROL?

"Aid must not be seen as a temporary self-liquidating, stop-gap measure. Instead, it must be frankly recognised that aid, as we know it, ought . . . to be a permanent feature of the process of international resource allocation".<sup>6</sup>

"This aid to the Third World is not gratuitous generosity, and it would be childish to deny the political, or commercial motivations of what is variously called aid, technical assistance or cooperation. . . . A glance at the map will show that nations without strategic importance got less than others".<sup>7</sup>

The quotations above state clearly the two opposing objectives of foreign aid to the Third World. The former, it appears, represents the principle upon which aid is given while the latter appears to be what upholds in practice.

It was pointed out earlier that one of the purposes for setting up the aid programme to the colonial world was to transfer the skills and technology required for development of material resources of these countries. Another primary objective of aid allocation policy was the reduction of the ever-widening gap between the rich and poor countries.

Contrary to expectations, it had been observed that aid and development programmes in the last decade or two have actually widened the international gap between the rich and the poor. A Wall Street banker rightly remarked that "in the face of all our foreign aid efforts, that disparity has been growing and it will continue to grow". Thus, he concludes that it is only "with luck the poor will get richer, but the rich will, in absolute terms, get richer much faster".<sup>8</sup>

Sadly enough, the function of foreign aid had been not to develop but to underdevelop the recipient countries. It barely served to maintain

unchanged the infrastructure required for efficient neo-colonial exploitation. The colonial empires were merged into a single colony within which exploitation was carried out as a collective enterprise by the benevolent Western governments and their Multi-National Corporations.

There is enough evidence to conclude, therefore, that aid is nothing but a disguised means of control, a form of neo-colonialistic gesture. They are used to acquire prestige and profit. President J.F. Kennedy summarised this point well when he remarked that "foreign aid is a method by which the United States maintains a position of influence and control around the world, and sustains a good many countries which would definitely collapse, or pass into the Communist Bloc."<sup>9</sup>

#### SOME EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE FOR BOTH THE RICH AND THE POOR

It goes without doubt that the stability of the world order as we know it depends crucially on the way this problem of the ever-widening gap between nations is handled by the International Community. According to U.N.'s Kurt Waldheim, a new international economic order would be the price for world peace.

It would be appropriate, at this juncture, to call on both the givers and the receivers to undertake some overhauling of their aid and development policies.

The rich nations must realise that the problems of the poor countries cannot be solved by calculated dollops of foreign aid. Their needs are so great that all forms of bilateral or multilateral aid will always be inadequate. Perhaps, there is a lesson to be learnt from the old Asian proverb which says: "Give a boy some fish to eat and he will assuage his hunger for a day, but teach a boy to catch a fish and he will never be hungry."<sup>10</sup> In other words, the contribution of a rich economy towards the development of a recipient country is highly unlikely to be very fruitful if it is not addressed to the long term needs of the recipient country. The contributions must be geared to the development needs of the latter and not to the interests, both political and economic, of the rich developed countries themselves. Most development projects in the 3rd World have failed, for example, mechanisation of peasant agriculture, not because of the

ignorance of the peasants but because of their perspicacity.

The poor countries themselves must look anew at their goals and realise that they will never be able to develop the kinds of consumer societies that Europe and America have become. As it were, they must discard the pursuit of the "pie-in-the-sky" Western level of affluence. They must strive to adhere to the concept of "minimum needs".

The developing nations must re-define for themselves the process of development they want to adopt. It should be borne in mind that rising G.N.P. does not mean corresponding rise in standard of living. Their development programmes must seek to eradicate the worst forms of poverty rather than to increase their G.N.P. For, as Mahbub ul Haq pointed out, "the problem of development must be defined as a selective attack on the worst forms of poverty".<sup>11</sup> The Chinese have shown that this strategy pays off too well. Foreign aid, therefore, should be applied to the most sensitive parts of the overall development programme.

In conclusion, therefore, in order that aid be truly seen as an agent of development, aid allocation must be carried out through a mechanism which should minimise the political control of the aid donors and allocates assistance strictly in accordance with development criteria.

VAL NWAKIBU

Second Arts

#### Bibliography

- Jalee, P. *The Pillage of the Third World* (Monthly Review Press, N.Y. 1968)  
 Magdoff, H. *The Age of Imperialism* (Monthly Press N.Y. 1969)  
 Singer, H & Ansari, J. *Rich and Poor Countries*  
 Peet, R. *Radical Geography* (Maaroufa Press Inc. Chicago, 1977)  
 Weissman, S. *The Trojan House* (Ramparts Press Inc. San Francisco, 1974)  
 "Newsweek International" (August 27, 1979)  
 "Spotlight on Nigeria" (April-June 1978)

1. Weissman, S. *The Trojan House* (Ramparts Press Inc., San Francisco, 1974) P.11
2. "U.N. World Economic Survey", 1962 quoted in P. Jalee, *The Pillage of the Third World*, p.63

3. "Spotlight on Nigeria". April-June 1978. p.4
4. Singer, H & Ansari, J. *Rich and Poor Countries*. p.149
5. Jalee, P. *The Pillage of the Third World* (Monthly Review Press, N.Y., 1968) p.61
6. Singer, H & Ansari, J. Op. Cit, p.142
7. Jalee, P. Op. Cit, p.61
8. Weissman, S. Op. Cit. p.13
9. J.F. Kennedy quoted by H. Magdoff in *The Age of Imperialism* (1969, N.Y.) p.117
10. Varindra Tarzie Vittachi, "The Mythology of Aid". *Newsweek International*, August 27, 1979. p.4
11. Mahbub ul Haq quoted in Peet, R. *Radical Geography* (Maaroufa Press Inc., Chicago, 1977), p.336

## DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA

"Development" is defined by the Chambers 20th century dictionary as "the state of being developed; a gradual unfolding or growth; evolution; new situations that emerge". Underdeveloped countries (UDC's) receive aid from many sources to bring about this development. Fundamentally, aid is seen in the form of bringing developing nations "up to the standards of developed nations", i.e. Europe and USA. We, the developed world, who have the "ideal system" which all UDC's should aim for, establish the needs and means to solve the now accepted problems of UDC's. In economic terms this westernisation concept implies that aid should take the form of monetary investment and the introduction of modern technology. In political terms it means the preservation of human rights and the autonomy and self determination of nations.

Foreign aid and investment is administered through lending agencies. The two principal ones being the World Bank (W.B.) and the International Monetary Fund (I.M.F.). The W.B. and I.M.F. all agree that aid should be used to

- 1) Create financial stability and eliminate import restrictions and price control.
- 2) Persuade the government to adopt a particular policy directly connected with one.
- 3) Limit central operations through money supply.

Those who contribute the most to the W.B. and the I.M.F. have the greatest say e.g. the USA has 23% of voting power in the W.B. and because of the consensus voting this constitutes an effective veto.

The idea of modern technology being the answer to UDC problems is essentially a myth. To avail of technology we need a literate population highly attuned to scientific needs, e.g. in N.E. and W. Africa — nearly 80% of the population is illiterate, S.W. Asia — 50%-80% of the population is illiterate and in S.E. Asia and the northern part of South America the figure is 30-50%;

(P. Cavatine "Get off their backs").

The whole idea of modern technology as foreign aid underlines the falseness of our belief that the UDC's should adopt their own concept of a technologically orientated society.

In most cases the developing nations are areas of great primary resources e.g. Brazil. To maintain a situation where

these resources are at the disposal of the developed nations means in most cases a maintenance of the status quo. Not only do developing nations have to be wary of aid from the West

"Foreign aid is a method by which the USA maintains a position of influence and control around the world and sustains a good many countries which would definitely collapse or pass into the communist bloc

(President Kennedy 1962)

China, the third largest country in the world with a population almost that of the USSR and USA combined, is a very important model for developing countries today. It is a country which has suffered much in famine and rebellion. China is the only underdeveloped country with a population increase below 1% in the last decade. China faced, and still faces, many of the problems common to UDC's. She is a country which only received aid to develop sectors of the economy which benefited the donors, the problem of trying to establish a market in an already established market. Perhaps the greatest problem of all is the potential blockade by the dominant powers that all nations face when they seek an alternative way of development.

China is a vast country, but much of its land is inhospitable to human life, only 10% of its land is cultivated, ¼ of the world's population inhabit a mere 7% of its land area. It is estimated that in 1978 the population passed the 1 billion mark, approximately 85% of these people live in rural areas. Nevertheless China still has 13 of the 50 most populous cities in the world.

China was composed of many small city states and it was only in 221 BC that the empire was unified. The great wall was started in this era.

The religions of China very much influenced and affected the consciousness of the Chinese people. Buddhism stressed that man should live apart from the world in a state of purity and simplicity, Taoism stressed that "the way" was to be found in understanding the way the universe works. One was to fit into nature's pattern by rejecting civilisation, ambition and striving, evil was to be overcome by passivity. The most influential figure of all was Confucius who stressed proper human behaviour in which everybody knew his or her place and there existed a comprehensive system of duties and uncon-

ditioned obedience. Withdrawal from the human struggle and inertia in the face of human wrong which these religious encouraged must be blamed in part for the Chinese apathy and tolerance of bad conditions. It is no mean achievement of the Peoples' Republic that the Chinese today are renowned for their solidarity and willingness to take command of their own lives.

In the 18th century 70% of the population was made up of landless peasants. The Opium War (1839-42) reduced China to a mere colony, providing raw materials, and led to the breakdown of the old economic and social order.

In 1946, troubles and unrest which had continued since the 1911 revolution finally ended with the Kwomintang (KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) face to face. An attempt at coalition failed and civil war broke out in 1946. In 1949 the CCP using the cry "The Land to the Tiller" swept to power. The Red Army (the Peoples' Liberation Army) established the Peoples' Republic in Peking on October 1st 1949.

For the first time in Chinese history, a strong central government was established with the ability and the will to take control of the nation's resources and policy. The Party represented the masses and wanted thoroughgoing economic development in order to improve the lives of almost everyone. The primary objections of the Agrarian Reform Law of 1950 were to eliminate the feudal landlord system in the countryside, improve the lives of the poor and develop agricultural production as pre-conditions for China's industry. The peasants were encouraged to seize land, in doing so they formed groups and pooled their resources.

As the need for irrigation works and other projects became more pressing, groups of people joined together and carried out these works. The first commune was formed in April 1958. The basis of the commune is the production team which is the smallest group containing around 15-30 families; who live close together and are the basis of the sound unit. This group is responsible for the day to day running and planning of the commune's activities. Above this is the Production Brigade, several teams of 150-500 families who are responsible for the projects and finally the commune of 10-30 Production Brigades, 10-50,000 people, which

is concerned with overall planning.

The first five year plan (1953-7) had as its main aim the increase of agricultural production which would generate investment in heavy industry. The plan was largely a failure and contains an important lesson for other potential developing countries. Before the Industrial Revolution, Britain had increased agricultural production by 40% giving a surplus, and a bourgeois class also existed. China had neither. It became increasingly clear that a policy which catered for simultaneous development for both agriculture and industry was needed. The policy of "Walking on Two Legs" was devised and agriculture became the basis of the new industrial expansion. The communes represent a means for mobilising the enormous talent productivity represented by the under-employed masses of rural China. With labour and agriculture as the base value of harmonising large scale modern enterprises and smaller traditional enterprises, labour for the latter and resources for the former became scarce. Communes began to be as self-sufficient as possible in every respect.

The second plan (1958-62) faced many problems. The 1960's had some of the worst harvests ever. Up to 1960 the Chinese had been receiving a great deal of help from Soviet Russia. There had been a great exchange of students and the Soviets were providing the plans and means to build and finance many projects. However in 1960 due to Chinese condemnation of the rising Soviet bureaucratic system and other disagreements the Soviets withdrew completely from China, even taking away the blueprints of many half completed projects. These actions forced the Chinese to become self-reliant, they had to rely on their own ingenuity, in fact they finished the oil field at Tapehing using only their own methods. The new policy of industry and agriculture developing hand in hand led to deurbanisation. China has overcome the problem of many developing nations which face a mass exodus from rural to urban areas.

In 1949 80% of the population was still illiterate, there was a great drive to get the people involved in decision making and the running of their own lives. This was achieved through struggle - criticise - transformation meetings. People, through them, became more educated, informed and most importantly are motivated to work as a collector for the betterment of all. The Chinese today view education as a

life-time process and almost everyone is involved in some study group, be it in the factory or in the commune. Teachers have tried to teach children to respect and emulate hard work, self reliance and dedication to the revolution. Above all people are taught to have pride in themselves and their ability to take charge of their own lives.

Many condemn the severe lifestyle and sacrifices of the Chinese people yet conveniently forget the great amount of suffering during the Industrial Revolution. China started her economic take off, relying almost totally on its own resources. It utilised its one greatest resource, labour, and this along with agriculture became the basis for its industrialisation policy. The Chinese people have become renowned for their great solidarity and willingness to cooperate for the good of all. The position of women has improved at a fantastic rate, from a position of second class status to equal status. To the Chinese what should be aimed for is a meagre and modest level of living - no-one rich, no-one poor. Contained in this vision of development is a sense of human solidarity which is a powerful motivating force. Once the basis has been established, one can start building from this on - the Chinese have always been a patient people and so can wait for more "luxurious" times.

The Chinese experience while providing a guide to development cannot be taken as an example for other developing nations. It is a unique adaptation of doctrine to many different problems. Its solution of these problems which are common to other developing nations emphasises the fact that there are ways to develop other than the capitalist and soviet models for nations. Maoist strategy, as a whole, probably has very little relevance for the governments of most developing countries today, since it involves breaking the power of ruling classes and their foreign supporters and opting for socialism and eventually communism over capitalism; for full scale industrialisation over trade, commerce and agrarianism and for continuing revolutionary activity over orderly procedures. For many nations dependent on the international capitalist system this would be too great a break, apart from the fact that the USA as the leader of global capitalism has to prevent such breakaways through some combination of economic aid, military aid, counter-insurgency, cultivators of domestic elites and force.

China has shown how to bring about

industrialisation based on agriculture and utilising a large labour force. It has prevented a rural/urban, peasant/worker split. It has transformed rural areas into self-reliant, industrial, cultural local economies which are attractive places to live in and can become at least partly independent of higher political units including the state. China has shown how to industrialise without generating social problems that threaten to blow a society sky high. Its example has demonstrated the importance of raising work motivations and ways to achieve this; altering peoples' work environment, changing their incentives and providing them with education, good health and technical training. It is possible to achieve greater increase in the overall production of peasants and workers by establishing less alienating work environments. China offers other lessons too, how to adapt education to the needs of an industrialising society, how to achieve economic development without inviting foreign capital into a country; how to maintain stable prices over long periods of time; and so on. The "barefoot doctor" solution to the medical problem, the work study method approach to education are examples of China's unique solution to various problems. Keith Buchanan in dealing with education says

"The intellectual emancipation is perhaps the greatest single event of contemporary China (Transformation of the Chinese Earth Ch 15 p. 310).

China certainly has many valuable solutions to problems and is most important as a different path to development. "China's principal lesson for underdeveloped countries, however, is the need to break out of all dependency relationships with advanced industrial countries and to pursue the course of self-reliance, at both the national and local level" (Gurley China's Economy and this Maoist strategy. p.262 Ch 5, Monthly Review Press, New York and London, 1976).

Mary Ryan  
Third Arts.

#### Bibliography

Buchanan,; The Transformation of the Chinese Earth 1970 London, G.Bell.  
Gurley J; China's Economy and the Maoist strategy, Monthly Review Press, N.Y. and London, 1976.

## DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES OF CHINA

during the years following the Communist parties struggle of the 1920's. But the total elimination of the traditional system could not truly be achieved until the establishment of the "Peoples Republic of China" in 1949.

In 1947 a draft agrarian law had been passed to proclaim the end of the feudal system and 5 types of people were classified (a) Landlord (b) Rich Peasant (c) Middle Peasant (d) Poor Peasant (e) Tenant Farmer. Land was accordingly redistributed among these groups. Some 46.6 million hectares were distributed among 300 million landless and land poor tenants.

By 1952 a complete reform of the agrarian system had been accomplished. Traditional structures were destroyed and favourable conditions were created for the transformation of China's Rural Society.

In the years 1952-1958 China changed from a small peasant economy to collective agriculture. This was accomplished in four stages (a) Mutual Aid Teams. Here 6 to 10 households grouped together and shared their implements and animals. By the end of 1952 40% of China's households had organised themselves into 8 million permanent and seasonal Mutual Aid Teams with this system, natural disasters could not be coped with and large projects or the purchase of tools could not be undertaken. Naturally the peasants involved had the desire to complete their own work first.

In 1953 the semi-socialist "agricultural production co-operative" tried to overcome the failings of the first phase. The land was now pooled for productive co-operation and collectivisation. Approximately 60-70% of the income was distributed on the basis of work done, and the other 30-40% was distributed as dividends. In these co-ops membership was voluntary and both land and membership could be withdrawn at any time. Each year an elected committee was put in charge of management. By 1955 about one third of all peasant households had formed approximately 633,000 of these elementary co-ops.

The next stage was the Advanced Producers Co-operatives, which were an amalgamation of 10 to 20 elementary co-ops with a population of 1,100 to 3,000. Here the entire income was distributed on the basis of work done by the members. These co-ops covered between 300-800 hectares. With this

system greater capital was available, large irrigation and flood control plans could be undertaken, and small scale rural industries established.

There were a few important conditions necessary before collectivisation could commence. The first was the redistribution of land and another was support from the government. This the government gave by their sharing of all available resources - industrial, financial, technological and planning skills.

The results of these efforts were on the whole very positive. By the end of 1956 88% of the total peasant population and by summer 1957 97% had been organised into 740,000 advanced co-ops.

The transition to collectivisation wasn't as streamlined or unproblematic as it may sound. Some middle farmers were better off with their own implements and lands and others in remote areas could see prospects of enlargement by buying up the poor peasants.

Mass political campaigns accompanied the efforts to organise co-ops. Capitalism, waste and bureaucracy were fought. Adult Education was organised on a large scale. Greater political awareness and acceptance of the new schemes were promoted.

The advanced co-ops still did not satisfy the Chinese. They felt the need to develop schemes that would go beyond agriculture and into administration. They achieved this by combining the co-op with the Hsiangs and so forming communes. This amalgamation was probably too quick, because by 1958 the 26,000 communes were subdivided into 74,000, administration possibly being too difficult.

Since her liberation China's per capita income in real terms has doubled and her share of industry and transport in total gross national product has risen from 20-25% to 45-50%. Very few developing countries have done so well for such a long period of time. Total grain production has more than doubled between 1949 and 1975. Unemployment is virtually non-existent. Her population growth has slowed to a rate of 1.7% and perhaps even lower.

According to most of the geographers writing on the topic the Chinese now experience a greater sense of security, they no longer live in fear of natural disaster, now are they at the mercy of landlords.



China's development isn't just agriculturally geared; it combines both industry and agriculture i.e. "walking on two legs". Industry is state controlled and has less been developed with the help of soviet aid taking different forms. The "great leap forward" in industry was set for 1958-1960. Enormous efforts were made and in some cases the plan was achieved by 1960. The leap was criticised by some Chinese, Westerners and Soviets as being too early and too ambitious. In 1960 with deteriorating relationships the Russian technicians and engineers were withdrawn, taking with them vital information. This coincided with a series of natural disasters, but China had learnt the value of self-reliance and her technicians put into practice what they had learnt from the Soviets and carried out the plan, better suited to their own conditions.

Through Western eyes China's development plan has been seen as too inward looking. Mao's Cultural Revolution is seen as disastrous and Teng is seen as the saviour of China. But what Westerners fail to see is that the path successfully followed by Mao was the only one open to her given conditions in China when he came to power. Maybe we can all look to China enviously "standing today alone, standing self reliant in a world which believes development without foreign aid is impossible, it is with their own strength and with this alone that the Chinese people are engaged in the immensely long and arduous task of building a new world."

Keith Buchanan "Transition of the Chinese Earth".

ANN DACK  
Third Arts.

#### Bibliography

- K. Buchanan - *The Transformation of the Chinese Earth*. Bell, 1970.  
J. herdan - *Introduction to China* (Modern China Series 1976.)  
S. Aziz - *Rural Development* Learning from China Macmillan Press 1978.  
A.J. March - *The Idea of China*. David & Charles 1974.  
N. Maxwell - *Chinese Road to Development*. Pergamon Press, 1978 2nd Edition.  
True Life Magazine. Jan 1st 1979.

---

FOR BEST DRINKS AND DELICIOUS PUB GRUB

**P. BRADY**

MAYNOOTH, CO. KILDARE. Phone: 286225

SOUP, SANDWICHES, COFFEE, MEAT PIES ALWAYS AVAILABLE

Lounge Bar, C.I.E. Bus Stop.

---



## THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF THE NAVAJO AND OF CONTEMPORARY RURAL IRELAND.

Our social organisation of animate and inanimate objects in the environment is what we can call the cultural landscape, the variety of which shows the degrees of human interference with the natural landscape. Generally the more technologically advanced the society the greater the interference. I propose to evaluate the imprint of humans on the contemporary Irish rural landscape affected by relatively advanced technology, and on the reservation landscape of the Navajo Indians which shows little use of technology.

The Irish landscape shows a good deal of the control man can exert over the environment. The enclosure of fields by hedges and ditches fixed the previously temporary boundaries and also showed the growing capitalist mentality of the people. During the enclosure period people were becoming aware that the environment could be exploited more fully with private ownership. The spatial variation in the shape and size of the fields contribute much to the distinctive character of the landscape in different parts of Ireland. The Navajo landscape has no such distinctive features with very few permanently bounded fields. Much of the rural landscape of Ireland today is a result of the estate system.<sup>1</sup> Old demesnes remain in numerous places and contribute to the variety of the rural scene.<sup>2</sup> The big houses were the symbols of power in the locality and the landlords controlled the laying out of the field pattern. These improving landlords felt that they were bettering the environment by imposing order on it.<sup>3</sup> This belief that man can control the landscape is still evident in Ireland.

At present Ireland is in a period of fairly rapid cultural change, this of course being reflected in the landscape. The tractor calls for larger and more regular fields as the average farmer is no longer content to merely subsist off nature's bounty. Instead it is thought that the land must be used to make the maximum profit. There is a growing tendency to subordinate nature's beauty to the need to show a profit from the land. This can also be seen in the inferior position given to the dwelling house in today's Irish landscape. Years ago the isolated dwelling house stood out among several small sheds. Nowadays, however, the house is swamped by large barns and animal sheds.<sup>4</sup> Thus farm business and equipment is seen as more important than the dwelling place.

There are now many isolated factories situated at the edges of villages all over Ireland as part of a government programme to keep young people from moving to the cities in search of work. They also help to supplement the incomes of farmers whose holdings are too small to provide what they see as a reasonable standard of living.<sup>5</sup> This policy has wrought significant changes in the cultural landscape - it is not only beginning to look more urbanised, but the valued of the people are also becoming urbanised. This can be seen in the increasing amount of electricity and telephone cables criss crossing the countryside. What were once luxuries are now seen as necessities.

The cultural landscape of the Navajo despite its differences is in some ways similar to that of rural Ireland. Both are based on the exploitation of the land. The Navajo differ in that they lack much of the technology that allows exploitation in Ireland to be economically effective. The landscape is thus simpler consisting of large expanses of waste land interspersed with small lots of agricultural land and rough huts. A large growth in population has led to over-stocking and erosion of the soil as plant cover can be endangered by repeated heavy grazing. This results in lower water retention so only the tough weeds can continue to grow. As the Navajo are close to the land they employ simple technology and therefore physical elements play a more important part in determining their landscape than is the case in Ireland. The exploitative attitude is there but they lack the technology to regulate it and prevent soil erosion.

In some Navajo areas considerable progress has been made with the aid of government grants and this is increasing affecting the landscape. Ditch irrigation, allowing a greater variety of crops to be raised<sup>6</sup> means more variety in the landscape. These changes are occurring mostly in areas close to white owned territory but the changes have not yet reached the interior.

There is a great difference between Irish and Navajo housestyles. The Navajo house is called a hogan and is rounded in shape.<sup>7</sup> It holds a dominant place in the landscape and is not simply a place to sleep in, as in Ireland, rather much of the work of the family takes place in or around it. It is the social focus of the landscape whereas in Ireland the pub and hotel take much of the focus away from

the home. It is also the centre of religious worship, the idea of a common church only existing where white missionaries have made an impact.

Unlike Ireland it is uncommon to find only a single hogan as the nucleus of the Navajo settlement.<sup>8</sup> It is not only the centre of all activity but also the largest building in the settlement with auxiliary buildings being smaller. However in areas close to the railroads cabins following the white prototype are increasingly being used. The hogan is in little danger of being replaced as it is an excellent adaptation to the environment. Temporary dwellings are also a feature of the landscape, important because during the summer the Navajo practise transhumance. The fact that their pastures can't support a sheep herd all year round is an indication of the lack of control which they have over their environment. In contemporary Ireland many farmers take as many as three from a field in a single year, indicating greater control over the environment.<sup>9</sup>

The communication systems of Ireland and the Navajo show marked contrasts. Ireland has a relatively developed and extensive network of tarred roads. In many parts of the Navajo reservation this type of road system is not needed and a dirt track suffices. Again at the edges the influence of white people is being felt in the development of roads.

Industry is almost totally lacking in the Navajo landscape, whereas that of rural Ireland shows an increasing amount of small scale factories. There is some industry in the midlands where exploitation of the peat bogs is taking place on a large scale. The Navajo reservation contains large tracts of hard and soft woods and much of this resource could be used to add to their income and relieve some of the pressure on the land. Under white influence the forests are being carefully managed along the lines of Irish forest exploitation.

In other areas white influence is coming to be felt with schools, hospitals and other services being set up with state aid. These all exert a westernising influence. In many ways the Irish rural landscape was like that of the Navajo with subsistence agriculture and little industry. Already the Navajo have begun to change, seeing change as being in their interests. At the moment white influence is not very strong with the people still seeing nature as being

stronger than they are.<sup>10</sup> This contrasts with the contemporary Irish view which sees nature as a malignant force which must be adapted to suit the needs of people. These two views are reflected in the respective cultural landscapes. The Navajo unlike the Pueblo Indians do not see the need to keep on the old ways simply because they are part of tradition. Thus it appears that they will eventually follow the same path as Ireland has followed with change spreading in from the areas bordering the white owned territory. Ireland itself is still travelling along the road followed by much of Europe and North America and it seems that it will go the full way. At the moment it would seem that all three are at different stages in the same process. This growing landscape similarity of the Navajo, to outside areas, undoubtedly reflects a homogenisation of socio-cultural manners, a consequence of the incorporation of the Navajo into the Western "melting pot".

Deirdre Heancy 1st. Arts.

#### Bibliography

1. E. Estyn Evans — *Irish Folk Ways*. 1957, p.213
2. *Ibid* P.214
3. F H A Aalen — *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*. P.211
4. *Introducing Cultural Geography*. p.210
5. J. M. Hauston ed. — *The World's Landscapes*; Ireland. P.171
6. Kluckholm & Leighton — *The Navajo* p.48
7. *Ibid* p.87
8. *Ibid* p.90
9. *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*. Op Cit. p.220
10. The Navajo Op Cit p.156

#### Also consulted

- (1) Brock & Webb — *A Geography of Mankind*. Mc Graw Hill, 1968
- (2) Russell Kniffen & Pruitt — *Culture Worlds*. Mac Millan, 1969
- (3) Wagner & Mukesell — *Readings in Cultural Geography*. University of Chicago Press, 1962.

## SEAN'S

Greenfield Estate  
Maynooth

CARDS — Greeting cards for all occasions

TAPES — The best in 4-track cassette.

PAPERBACKS — "Strumpet City" — all the best sellers.

MAGAZINES — The best selection in town.

---

# CASSIDY'S

## The

# Roost Inn

TOASTED SANDWICHES

SOUP, SNACKS & COFFEE

SERVED ALL DAY

LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU

ANNE & NOEL

## AIR POLLUTION CONTROL

In 1971, the United States set national standards for six pollutants. These six are: particulates, sulfur oxides, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, photochemical oxidants and hydrocarbons. To safeguard against these dangerous substances, two sets of standards are used: primary standards, designed to safeguard human health, and secondary standards, which aim to prevent damage to materials and the environment. The secondary standards are either equal to or stricter than the primary standards.

A set of reports on these six pollutants was published in 1969 and 1970 by the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Although more recent reports have slightly extended and updated the material, each report discloses in detail the main findings on the effects of the pollutant on man, animals, vegetation and materials. The physical and chemical properties of the pollutant, its sources and method of measurement are described.

Air pollution is caused by different modern day activities, even before what is termed modern, if primitive man and his use of fire is a significant consideration. Today wood burning, coal burning, slightly exposed dumping grounds, and motor vehicles are regulated because they are sources of extra emittants to the air. It is part of everyone's knowledge that big industry is the major source of air pollution. Awareness for the environment began in the 1960's and public involvement brought about government policies to protect the world we live in. Still, the inner workings of these bureaucratic organisations struggle with the precedents of industry and the fallible technology installed by man. Man's beneficial economic scheme to mass produce items — for the biggest to smallest want — has created by-products harmful to human beings.

A way to protect the environment from further air pollution is through technology. Oftentimes, the most that is required of a small operating industry with a burning unit as its worst form of pollution is a height regulated smoke stack with an after-burner. The after-

burner reduces the burned material's particulate size; otherwise, it escapes into the atmosphere. The height of the smoke stack must be tall enough to carry away the emissions and disperse them. If there is no air pollution control equipment used, then the given quantity of fuel burned, on a certain weight of produce manufactured, emits a much greater form of pollution. For example, for every 1000 gallons of fuel oil containing 3 per cent sulfur the uncontrolled emission would approximately contain 450 lbs. of sulfur dioxide, 100 lbs. of nitrogen oxides, 8 lbs. of solids and 500 ug of carcinogen benzo pyrene.

Fortunately such escalated figures would not be allowable according to standards. The technology to reduce such emission is available and factories are obliged to use it. Some of the modern equipment to remove dusts and solids from chimney gases is extremely efficient and in some cases can remove up to 99.9 per cent of solid particles.

With the use of such delicately precisioned air pollution control apparatus, there are still malfunctions. The inoperativeness occurs because, as with everything which is designed, there are flaws in the machinery. These quirks do not show up on the drawing board. In some cases, a slight change in the efficiency of the equipment can have a drastic effect on the amount of pollution discharged. A drop in efficiency from 99.9 per cent to, for example, 99.4 per cent actually means that four times more pollution is being allowed to enter the atmosphere. 0.4 per cent of the pollution reaching the device is passing through it instead of only 0.1 per cent.

The best feasibility is to keep concentrations of all airborne contaminants as low as practicable. A single toxic substance may have both immediate and long term effects. The immediate and most harmful effects are usually caused by exposure to a high concentration of a substance. After breathing straight benzene vapours, a subject would be dizzy and nauseous. A different effect occurs after long term exposure to a less concentrated amount.

This is a chronic effect which is less likely to be obviously related to known health damages. But, a long period of exposure to lesser concentrations does impair health, especially to people with low thresholds of tolerance. Not much animal research has been done in this area to confirm this, basically because experimentation for long time spans is costly. Often the effect chosen is the death of defenseless animals. How are these relevant when human beings are rarely exposed to concentrations of pollution that will kill them in a few days? They are more likely to be faced with lower levels that will either produce less drastic short term effects or serious illness after continual exposure.

It would be an ideal situation if the air pollution investigators could take charge of a factory which is polluting and shut them down. How are companies made to comply with standards? Pollution control inside and outside factories attempts, not to eliminate toxic substances, but they are kept at low concentrations experimentally proven to be harmless. Government standards do not usually, try to give absolute protection. It takes into account, the cost of controlling pollution when setting limits. The standards may allow some risk to health if the cost to industry of avoiding it is too great.

In the United States, procedures to enforce rules are given a time span which allows industry enough time to correct the problem. First, either warnings or fines are given and if the industry neglects its responsibility, court action is taken. In the courtroom big business is favoured rather than have an economic misfortune to contend with. Small businesses which sometimes can't afford the necessary new equipment are also given much leeway. The Environmental Protection Agency, which is the Federal Government branch of air pollution control, is compensated through a higher marginal cost of production imposed on the companies. This is an added cost of production. The marginal cost is higher because more money is spent for air pollution clean-up.

Air pollution can be associated with observable short term effects. A dosage of toxic substances builds up in the atmosphere; eventually excess pollution arises because of the over use of the natural waste disposal processes of the atmosphere. Human reliance of this vast resource has effected it as it infects all animals and plant life. To think, that man values materialistic items rather than esthetic beauty is sad. There are companies employing the most efficient machinery for chemically correcting substances. Others find means of escaping regulations. As a result, the environment suffers.

The problem of air pollution is handed to future generations. Even today new speculation on world climate problems does little to spur solutions. It is a continuous struggle. Perhaps coal will be used for an alternative energy source. Soft energy is the best answer to the energy problem. Right now, President Reagan cuts government spending starting with the Environmental Protection Agency. Their operations for land, air and water will be curtailed to ease the economic strain on business due to the energy crisis. Big business will have few restraints on their choice of energy alternatives. Such inaction from higher up will require a strong State backing to ensure existing standards.

(Beth Rossi - Occasional Student).

#### Bibliography

- Benaris, Michael, M. *Urban Air Pollution Modelling*: Mac Millan, 1980.  
Detwyler, Thomas R. *Man's Impact On The Environment*. New York, McGraw Hill, 1971.  
Frankel, Maurice. *The Social Audit Pollution: How to Assess Environmental and Work Place Pollution*. Dublin, Mac Millan, 1978.

## FUSCIARDI'S

Main Street  
Maynooth

### TAKE AWAY FOODS

Sweets, burgers, chips.....

Fast service  
Reasonable Prices.

OPEN TUESDAY TO SUNDAY

FROM 6.00 p.m.



## THE PROBLEM OF THE LAST INTERGLACIAL IN IRELAND.

Analysis of the Pleistocene history in Ireland has long been an enigma for geomorphologists and physical geographers. It is evident that more than one Pleistocene glaciation has modified the Irish landscape in recent geologic history. According to Charlesworth, Farrington, Mitchell, Synge, and Stephens, there have been 2 glacial episodes in Ireland. These two Glaciations have been given the names Munsterian and Midlandian. However, the main problem in interpreting the recent geologic history is that there is no strong evidence of an Interglacial between the Munsterian and Midlandian Glaciations.

Both of these Glaciations were formed due to ice caps forming on the island. These ice caps formed relatively easy since moisture bearing air had no difficulty in penetrating the scattered mountain groups that surround the periphery of Ireland. Thus as the global temperature cooled, snow accumulated in the Irish central lowlands, eventually forming an ice cap as accumulation exceeded melting.

The Munsterian Glaciation corresponds with the Wolstonian Glaciation in England and the Saalian Glaciation, northern Europe (Synge, 1960). During this Glaciation, ice originating from Scotland extended across the Irish Sea, and merged with the Munsterian Ice Cap which originated in the central Irish lowlands. Independent ice caps and valley glaciers also existed in peripheral mountain ranges in Cork, Kerry, Wicklow, and Donegal. Evidence for this local ice in these areas can be seen in the local tills that were ice free during the later Midlandian Glaciation. Overall, during the Munsterian Glaciation, ice covered the entire island. The ice from the ice-caps and northeastern ice flows deposited a brown-gray till, rich in marine shell fragments, but rare in large bouldery material. During the glacial maximum the Munsterian Ice Cap had a central axis extending from the Lough Neagh basin southwest towards Connemara. The overall age of the Munsterian Glaciation was about 100,000 years, extending from 175,000 to 75,000 B.P. (Mitchell, 1975).

The Midlandian Glaciation was less extensive in covering Ireland. Only  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the island was covered, the ice cap was thinner, and no Scottish or Irish Sea ice penetrated very far into the island. Ice caps formed in several areas

of central Ireland and the major highlands around the periphery of the island were exposed on nunataks (Synge, 1970). The overall age of the Midlandian was about 60,000 years, extending from 70,000 to 10,000 B.P. (Mitchell, 1975).

Overall, the Midlandian Glaciation involved a much lesser degree of alteration of material. This less extensive reworked and weathered material as well as the more recent and different surficial sculpture of the landscape separate and characterise the two Glaciations. The main source of this stratigraphical and morphological separation is the Ballylanders Moraine (or South Ireland End Moraine). North of this Moraine are surficial features such as drumlins, eskers, kettle holes, and kames, as well as local tills characteristic of several areas in central Ireland, suggesting Midlandian deposits. South of this Moraine, more heavily altered and frost heaved material exists, thus suggesting Munsterian drift; which in this area was of course, ice-free during Midlandian time.

Pre-Munsterian interglacial evidence is also common. This evidence consists of temperate mud, peat, or plant beds overlain by Munsterian till. Several of these interglacial deposits are found south of the Ballylanders Moraine. This interglaciation, called the Gortian Interglaciation can be correlated fairly well with the Hoxnian Interglaciation in England, which also predates Munsterian-Wolstonian age. In both cases, inorganic temperate beds are located below Munsterian-Wolstonian glacial tills, outwash gravels, head deposits, or a combination of all three.

However, reinterpretation shows pessimistic results. Even though pollen finds in the Shortalstown material sections of Midlandian drift available for examination, but only two finds of possible interglacial material are presently known. These two finds are at Shortalstown, Co. Wexford and Baggotstown, Co. Limerick. Basically, what is found is interglacial estuarine sand associated with beach gravels, and interbedded between an upper and lower till. This interglacial material differs in composition from any of the Gortian locations. Instead, its closest correlation is with the Ipswichian Interglacial material found in England.

compares relatively close with that of the Ipswichian material in England regarding deciduous woodland species such as *Quercus* and an abundance of pollen of the species *Ulmus* which is not found in Gortian age material; doubt is still cast on a possible Shortalstown-Ipswichian correlation (Mitchell, 1976). This doubt is due to the lack of other finds of similar material in other parts of Ireland. Thus, instead of being interglacial deposits of supposed Ipswichian age, the Shortalstown and Baggotstown finds may be instead, just a couple of erratic sand pockets.

Hence, instead of being evidence of an interglacial between the Munsterian and Midlandian glaciations, the finds at Shortalstown and Baggotstown may instead be deposits formed during a very short retreat, then readvance of Irish Sea Ice (in the case of the Shortalstown deposit). Also, when taking into consideration the ages of the Munsterian and Midlandian Glaciations, only 5000 years of possible Interglacial time existed. This is a relatively short time to develop an interglacial horizon, especially if a rather cool environment existed during this time.

In conclusion, nowhere in Ireland is there any real stratigraphical or morphological evidence of interglacial material except in the Gortian. However to interpret the Gortian as the last Interglacial would change the interpretation of the age of the Munsterian Glaciation and its correlation with other European Glaciations. Also the Ballylanders Moraine would not be the limit of a more recent Glaciation, but instead a sign of a readvance before world climate warmed up again in present (Holocene) time. Thus, more work is needed in pollen correlations of interglacial material and in relating Irish glacial drift to British and European drift before this problem of the last Irish Interglacial can be solved.

Michael Gallagher (Occasional Student).

#### Bibliography

Herries-Davies, G.L., and Stephens, N., *Ireland*.

Mitchell, F., *The Irish Landscape*.

Sparks, B.W., and West, R.G., *The Ice Age in Britain*.

Synge, F.M., and Stephens, N., "The Quarternary Period in Ireland - An Assessment, 1960, *Irish Geography*, Vol. 4(2), p. 121-130.

### THE MOST BORING LECTURE

One of the most boring lecturers in the civilised world is certainly Dr David Coward of Leeds University. He won the 'Boring Lecturer of the Year' contest, held annually at Leeds, two years running. Lecturers nominate themselves and may speak on any subject. Dr Coward, a lecturer in the French Department, set the record in 1977 with a delightfully dull talk on 'The problem of the manned urinal'. In winning, he fended off such slight opposition as a man who fell asleep during his third sentence amidst boos and catcalls, and a member of the medical faculty whose lecture 'How to tell right from left' was repeatedly illustrated by slides of a billiard ball viewed from different angles.

The previous year Dr Coward had won with a Marxist explanation of a joke about coconuts. 'It wasn't a terribly good joke,' he said, 'but after I had explained it for twenty minutes people began to see its latent merits.' He retired from the competition undefeated.

### THE WORST CANAL CLEARANCE

In 1978 workers were sent to dredge a murky stretch of the Chesterfield-Stockwith canal. Their task was to remove all the rubbish and leave the canal clear. They were soon disturbed during their teabreak by a policeman who said he was investigating a giant whirlpool in the canal. When they got back, however, the whirlpool had gone and so had a one and a half mile stretch of the canal. In its place was a seamless stretch of mud thickly punctuated with old prams, bedsteads and rusting bicycle accessories. In addition to this the workmen found a flotilla of irate holidaymakers stranded on their boats in a brown sludge.

Among the first pieces of junk they hauled out had been the 200 year-old plug that alone ensured the canal's continuing existence. 'We didn't know there was a plug,' said one workman explaining that all the records had been lost in a fire during the war. 'Anything can happen on a canal', a spokesman for the British Waterways Board said afterwards.

### THE WORST CANAL

In 1840 a construction company was asked to build a waterway between two lakes in Western Ireland, Corrib and Mask. With inspiration not given to everyone, they built it entirely on porous limestone. The result was that no sooner had water been poured in than it drained away. In an effort to correct this fault, a clay bed was laid. However, it was soon found that one of the lakes was several feet lower than the other. As the work neared completion the workmen realised that they were asking water to run uphill. At this point the project was abandoned, leaving a quay that has never seen a boat and a bridge under which nothing has ever flowed. [Lest you should think this another Irish joke ascribing all incompetence to the Emerald Isle, it should be said that the canal's designer was an Englishman.]

From Stephan Pile,  
The Book of Heroic Failures,  
Routledge & Kegan Paul 1979.

#### Contributors

E. Vol-Ution & Alan, D. Scape.

## MAYNOOTH University Bookshop

Maynooth Count Kildare, Ireland

Telephone: (01) 286261  
ext 224

a branch of

## KENNYS BOOKSHOPS & ART GALLERIES LTD.



High Street  
Tel. (091) 62739 - 61014 - 61021

7 Upper Abbeygate Street  
Tel. (091) 65873

Cross Street  
Tel. (091) 62739

GALWAY IRELAND  
Kingshill Salthill  
Tel. (091) 62793

### PRE CAPITALIST, CAPITALIST AND SOCIALIST CITIES

The view that there are different types of cities in different parts of the world or in different periods of time has given rise to the idea of "ecological transition" which sees urbanisation passing through a series of phases from "the pre-industrial city" to the modern city. This paper proposes to look at how cities have changed in morphological layout over time and how they vary over space, generally reflecting the different modes of production and values of the society in which they are found.

The pre-capitalist city was small with a haphazard layout, streets were narrow and confined to strips of ground between houses, dwellings were compact giving a high density and usually less than two storeys high. But the pre-industrial towns of today are quite large and shanty towns have developed in the suburbs of Latin American and Asian cities. The city was controlled by a religious elite which had no connection with the merchant class though both were located in the city centre. The ground floor of residential houses was occupied by shops, the first floor by the master's family and above this the journeymen, apprentices and servants lived. All householders owned land for cultivation but it did not have an economic value. Guilds were common in the medieval city for gaining full standing as a freeman. However most writers agree that there was little social mobility in the pre-Capitalist city of crafts guildsmen.

As long distance trade became important changes spread throughout the medieval world and transformed it into a new type of economic society. A new class of capitalists arose who were not under the control of the religious elite. With capitalism competition, which had been shunned in the medieval city, was introduced and accepted. Competition arose for land plots and their value was now in terms of their yield of capital rather than the functional value they held in the medieval city. City centre land generated more wealth as a retail or business district rather than as a residential area, which function now moved to the outskirts. The rich were now located in the periphery and the poor in the centre usually living in tenements. Social segregation was present in the Capitalist city but not in the pre-industrial city where a number of social ranks lived within the same house

as well as within the same residential area. Houses were now extended in the inner city for economic reasons. They were built in courts and alleyways and even blocking thoroughfares. The early industrial town was characterised by factories around which the workers lived, often in poor conditions. The medieval town was characterised by small units working together with the extended family living in one house.

As Vance pointed out "since filtering down was thought to be a sufficient system to provide lower-class housing" this often put the poor at the mercy of the rich. This created the conditions in which thinkers such as Karl Marx developed theories of Socialism. While this meant a complete change in society, not just a reform of urban condition for the poor, the over-all goals of socialist planning were and are (1) to correct the ills inherited from the era of capitalists (2) to develop a new pattern for the city which will indicate clearly the inherent unity of the people, the classlessness of society. Community is very important in the socialist ideal, everyone should work for the good of the community and not just for themselves of their family.

"According to socialist theory the city is the core of the ideal communist community, a centralised highly standardised and uniform type of social organisation" (Fisher, J.C. "Planning the City of Socialist Man"). Socialism attempts to integrate urban dwellers with rural dwellers. Features of socialist planning which help to produce this uniformity in cities and between cities and rural areas can be seen in most Socialist countries. They include (1) Standardisation of house size (2) Popular size of towns (3) City centre (4) Neighbourhood units. Most Socialist countries have efficiency as their main goal thus most money is spent on industry which is productive, while housing which is not must rely on excess capital. Therefore in order to achieve urban uniformity and to maximise the effectiveness of limited investments, "it is necessary to regulate in a socially correct way the standard of satisfaction of housing needs". House size is uniform and usually dependent on family size.

Attempts to limit the growth of large cities and encourage the growth of smaller cities thus eliminating the contradiction between town and countryside "are common in most

socialist countries. However the Soviets seem to be abandoning this plan as they find large cities to be much more efficient for location of factories. The Chinese have made the dispersion of industry the centrepiece of their economic planning and have actually encouraged people to move out from the larger cities to the countryside. The city centre in socialist cities functions as the political-cultural-administrative centre, however in Russia" instead of evoking a sense of socialist solidarity, the monumental centre with its broad avenues radiating outward would become a visual symbol of hierarchical social structure and an expression not of socialist liberation but of repression". (Sawers L. "Urban Planning in the Soviet Union and China") In China there is not a strong focus on the centre of the city and planning has concentrated on the design of neighbourhood units.

The neighbourhood units are self-managing independent units which theoretically act as an association to look after local affairs. They take many different forms in different Socialist countries. In Belgrade there is a four tier system a) this provides the essential services of schools, stores etc. b) the housing quarter, c) a city region and d) the city centre. Each provides higher level services than the preceding unit. In Moscow they are called microdistricts with a population of five thousand to fifteen thousand people, these together form residential districts which provide higher level services. However as many microdistricts cannot provide employment for all the people who live in them the Soviet neighbourhood unit has not been very successful. In China neighbourhoods are planned around places of employment. Political and social organisations are centred in them and this helps to foster a sense of community.

Since most cities of Eastern Europe have a heritage of capitalist planning (even Warsaw was rebuilt with its capitalist heritage after World War II) it is difficult to assess what the full impact of this Socialist system of land assignment would be because the morphological overlap from the capitalist era is very large. Even with the planning of new "Socialist" Urban Complexes such as *Nowa Huta* (a city built on open fields to house the workers of a major steel mill in Poland) population levels have not been controlled and services were initially neglected, as was the case in *Nowe Tychy* which was designed

solely as a residential area for the overcrowded upper Silesian industrial complex.

However *Velenje* in Yugoslavia does contain most of the features of a socialist city.

The three types of city, the pre-capitalist, capitalist and socialist city, can be seen to exist over time and space, each associated with different modes of production and each reflecting the different social and economic values of the society and the time which they were built in. While almost all cities are subject to outside influences or past heritage very few cities of any one period are exactly the same, thus only generalised statements could be made about the cities of any one period. But it is clear that all cities indicate in their morphology the values and ideologies of the society which gave rise to them. Thus the statement that "towns and cities bear the imprint of the planned or unintended consequences of human action to a far greater degree than the much more extensive rural or uninhabited parts of the world", seems to be very true.

Michael Healy

#### Bibliography

- Fisher, J.C. (1962) "Planning the City of Socialist Man".  
Langton, J. (1975) "Residential Patterns in Pre-Industrial Cities: Some case studies for 17th Century Britain"  
Sawers, L. (1977) "Urban Planning in the Soviet Union and China"  
Sjoberg, G. (1960) "The Pre-Industrial City"  
Vance, J.E. (1971) "Land Assignment in the Pre-Capitalist, Capitalist and Post Capitalist City"  
Jones, E. (1976) "Towns and Cities"



---

BARRY'S

CONFECTIONER'S

NEWSAGENT'S

TOBACCONIST'S

Main Street,  
Maynooth

---

## NEW APPROACHES TO GEOGRAPHY IN MAYNOOTH' 1972-78

"The further you want to go from Dublin, the longer it takes to get there" (Anon.)<sup>(1)</sup>

Geographical thought progressed in leaps and bounds in Maynooth throughout the seventies. All the major earth-shaking, awe-striking and mind-boggling ideas that have rent and riveted the Irish geographical community in the past decade<sup>2</sup> were reflected in Maynooth. It behoves us now to record this collection of observations on the states of geography throughout the seventies, so that posterity can judge Maynooth's indubitable contribution. The following almost totally unabridged remarks on a number of themes are taken out of context. But it doesn't really matter...

#### On Geography and Geographers

Open Geography involves links with Empiricism, which asks why things are put into two different categories and also says that things aren't made any easier or better in these categories. . . Maps became of extreme importance to sailors and merchants. They also contributed a lot of knowledge to people who were unable to read or write . . . The next stage was the introduction of man as a phenomena on the landscape, this was mainly Ritter (for further information on this topic, cf my essay "Geography" Christmas 1972). . . The whole of nature followed a plan but to find the plan would take infinite work and he himself never got round to this . . . The fight on our hands is no longer one of man against mother earth but man against fellow man. Economic geography must strive to become part of the solution -- not part of the problem as it is at the moment.

Von Thunen was a German who owned a farm. . He was the last of the cartographers . . . He created a state and had all the farmers around selling their products to this state alone . . . De la Blache established a regional monarch and gained a seat in geography at the Sorbonne . . . While in Berlin he (Ritter) befriended Hartshorne whom he had met 20 years earlier and during their professional intercourse conceived of many useful theories . . . Every geographer that has attempted to describe a place uses his own discretion and either does or does not . . . In the famous Hettner vs Davis feud, Davis thought that Hettner was suffering from regionalism.

#### On the World and its wonders

There are three types of world. First World is the world of the rich. The 2nd World is the world of the middle class and the 3rd World is the world of the poor. The Third World is that region which Christians throughout the world and more recently the Irish bishops have adopted as their conscience . . . The whole community is being extinguished because of man's need for oil for margarine . . . Deserts speak for themselves. (So does "sedimentary agriculture"). . . After the New World was discovered the pop. was sparse. There were only a few tribes there, and these were mainly a drop in the ocean . . . They first began to sail round Africa but usually came back again as they thought the waters would boil them alive. . . It was said that within a few isotherms of the equator things were basically the same . . . Then there was the case of the eskimo and his camel. . Having established for the first time that the earth was round and not flat, this opened their eyes to new horizons. . . Von Humboldt discovered isotherms, lines getting narrower at the North Pole and longer at the equator. . . New ideas were transported across the Atlantic as far as China . . . Tynagh is rich in lead and zinc and the ore content is also very high . . . The fact is that population is increasing at a faster rate than the world can possibly accommodate. This is because the territory in which people live has not expanded in proportion to the expansion in population. . . By the end of the century population will have doubled: this incredible situation is unbelievable . . . Due also to the eradication of the killing diseases such as tuberculosis and phenomena. . .

#### On Cows, Rats and sundry animals

A cow is only good for one of two things . . . They have through years of experiment in Norway and Sweden come up with a breed of cow that produces up to ten times as much as the Irish cow . . . A cow's grass is also called a townland or vica versa . . . Europe doesn't want any animals with any fat. This is to their own detriment if they like tasteless insipid stakes . . . The solution lies in more twin calving sulking cow herds. . . Beef producing means just what it says -- producing beef . . . The 40 hour week is not part

of the rural way of life and until such time as the cow gives milk five days a week which is hardly likely to happen. .

The bison population of North America fed on the Caribou population, but when they went south during the spring, the bison had to get something else to feed on and so they claimed the rabbit population . . . Four hundred years ago Ireland was vastly underdeveloped, the wolf had been extinct in England 100 years before he had in Ireland in 1875 (approx.) . . . In India, however, the eating of pigmeat is forbidden and so there are millions of sacred cows roaming about . . . 50% of the grain in India is eaten by rats that could go a long way to feeding the millions but due to a tradition in India that rats are somewhat sacred the people will not kill them . . . The growth of the Aztec population, who were cannibals, was closely tied-up with the mouse population of the boggy valleys.

#### On the shortest distance between two points<sup>(4)</sup>

In many thinly populated areas, paths follow animal tracks and most animals haven't heard that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line . . . The main reason why people in practice rarely follow the shortest distance is because they don't want to -- say a person is on a journey from A to B, they have all the time in the world and felt it would be worthwhile to take in a few sights. . . In order to get from one side of the city to the other one must either use the bridge or swim across to form a straight line. To swim across is ridiculous as it would mean getting your clothes all wet or else running home for swim suits every time you wanted to follow a straight line . . .

#### On Clachans

As I said before<sup>(5)</sup>, clachans were in linear fashion. Today in the modern world all streets of towns are constructed in such a way that the houses running parallel to each other on opposite sides of the streets are in linear fashion. So it is quite possible that town planners got their ideas from clachans. . .<sup>(6)</sup>

### On Urban sort of Geography etc.

These areas (suburbia) are select with wealthy professionals, doctors, lawyers, lecturers, academics and intellectuals. The food supply for the Greek cities was so good that the people were able to afford many philosophers, educators, artists and layabouts.

Many towns of course were built near bridges that crossed rivers because many early people travelled by boat. . The main point to note about the modern city is that all activity is centred in the centre during business hours and at night it is left to the cats. . . The people who live in the hinterland are the people who want to be a part of it: e.g., Maynooth is in the hinterland of Dublin if the people want it that way.

Being an ex-city dweller I found this a very interesting topic. Cork, Waterford and Limerick are fairly familiar, the first very much so — I have spent some years in Dublin too, but one would need an aeroplane to get the sort of over-all view one can get of Cork from Gurranebraher or Wyse Hill or even from my own bedroom window. But to be objective. . . The Normans were the first to use the grid-iron system in city planning. The central shopping area was surrounded by streets and these were inhabited by people living in the central area . . . The ancient Greeks being philosophers and mathematicians liked to have ideal cities in triangular or other mathematical shapes.

There is an aspiration to the metaphysical comforts of the city as a result of these preceptual factors. . . Burgess came under a lot of criticism for his theory. But he intended it not to be ridget but to be loose. . . Because of the great demand for land at the edge the price has increased greatly. It is outrageous now the price that some land gets, however, I suppose it is more profitable in the end . . .

### On Popes, pills, and population

Pope Paul's perspective is valid from the Christian point of view, but from the human point of view . . . The statement made by Pope Paul I agree with to a certain extent but disagree with also. I know that I am in no position to question the sayings of the Church . . . What the Pope meant by this statement was that such things as birth-control, infanticide and existentialism should be wiped out . . . Malthus claims population was increasing geometrically 2,4,16 etc. and food only arithmetically 2,4,6 etc. No one

knows how he arrived at these figures but they were accepted because he was a mathematician . . . Preventive checks, not to have sex so often (was a Christian so didn't believe in pills) . . . population increases geometrically, food alphabetically . . . They have advocated family planning and the use of pills but this is against God's commandment "multiply and fill the earth" . . . I don't believe a restriction should be put on the number of children as many believe, which I think is logical enough, that God has given them a job and that is to have as many children as they can possibly raise . . . There are three different types of birth control: (1) Pontiception (2) Contraception etc . . . Malthusian checks: Malthusia has proven to be correct that the passion between the sexes enables the population to double itself every generation. . The man provides food and shelter for his wife and family and his wife provides sex and brews his beer. . . The best way of checking the birth rate would really be through contraception, but then not everybody believes in it especially the clergy . . .

### On Hedging your bets

There *is* a degree of order underlying land-use in cities. This shows the quotation is a generalisation and is therefore, I think, probably true.

### On Your-guess-is-as-good-as-mine

Africa and Asia though infiltrated mostly more recently by other distinct cultures have not themselves been the result of cultural diffusion as such, in the sense of today from outside . . . I would only make one country as guilty of a complete cultural diffusion and it being the case of the U.S.A. Coca Cola etc. otherwise I disagree with the contention in question 8.

Should the government step in or are we incapable of producing ourselves? . . . Population trends must stabilise in order to gain the maximum output from industrial activity. There has been quite a long run of incompatibility and the complete patterns of demography seem to be contained by constraints inside which it acts in repeating circles. New forces tend to appear constantly and these have added impact. These forces can be social and economic but they certainly wield people's opinions and policies . . . They are constrained by the operational milieu, ignorance and knowledge . . . They (not the same as

the previous) consume what they produce and sell the surplus.

### On Connacht and the West of Ireland

To Hell or to Connacht was Cromwell's command and many chose Connacht . . . Forced migration is a thing our forefathers did a lot of due to persecution of their religion and their race by the English, the famous 'to hell or to Connacht' bearing it out . . . Oliver Cromwell said 'to hell or Connacht'. Obviously he didn't think much of Connacht.

In old Irish tradition religion was very important. To have little was looked upon as a sign of reward "in the next life". Perhaps this was why Irish people started to settle on the poor land of the west . . . One often hears of the 'Wild West'. This suits the west of Ireland very well. The land is wild, vegetation is wild, mountains are wild, weather is wild but it is not necessarily true that the people are wild . . . The major factors that have given Western Ireland its character are first, the East's nearness to England and Europe . . .

Bubble & Squeeke McGorragh.

### Notes and References

1. From archival records of examination scripts 1972-78. If you think a word is misspelt, it is. The sics have been left out for the sake of propriety.
2. See *Atlas of Ireland*, Geographical Society of Ireland, relevant, radical and respectable geography etc., as a result of which geography was excluded as a scientific qualification from the 1981 census.
3. Source subsequently deceased. 'Foul play not suspected' Ha!
4. A straight line . . . (See Euclid, book 1).
5. Source unfortunately destroyed by fire. (cf. bombing of the Four Courts 1922 ect.).
6. Alternative readings on clachans are strongly advised.