

Milieu

2007



Journal of the NUI Maynooth Geography Society
30th Edition

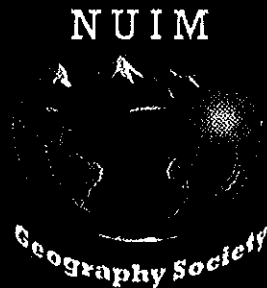


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It gives me great pleasure to welcome the return of *Milieu* after an absence of two years. For most students, even those in their third year, this edition will be their first. Many will therefore be totally unaware that *Milieu* now has a tradition stretching back more than 30 years. Paddy Duffy has documented this tradition in much more depth elsewhere in this volume but, with the exception of the recent two year break and (to the best of my recollection) only one other single year break much further back, *Milieu* has been published every year since 1975. We are not the only university Geography Society in Ireland to publish a magazine, but (and there may be a certain degree of bias) we have always regarded *Milieu* to be the best, providing a mix of serious geographical articles and lighter material, reflecting the strong sense of community developed around the Geography Society. I am therefore delighted to see its return.

Pride of place in our thanks for making this happen must obviously go the various contributors and to the editor, Adrienne Hobbs, who has taken time off from the early stages of her Ph.D research to bring it all together. Magazines such as *Milieu* do not just happen by themselves; they require a lot of work by the editor and other individuals. In this case, Adrienne had the support of *Milieu* Committee members John Cosgrove, Pamela Dore, Sandra Walsh and Eoin Flaherty. She was also assisted by an active and innovative Geography Society Committee under the leadership of Jackie McGloughlin. Despite, or possibly because of, the rapid increase in student numbers in recent years, it is now much more difficult to sustain a vibrant subject-related student society today than in the past. In the past, when most Maynooth students lived in Maynooth (or at least during the week and, going further back, most weekends as well), student societies played a major role in the social life of the College. Now, with so many students commuting to College and with so many other competing options for socialisation (including virtual communities via the internet) and mobile phones to keep in touch with distant friends, the social role of student societies has declined. It is against this background that the Geography Society has re-emerged, phoenix-like, under the guidance of Jackie and her team, and in no small measure to the innovations promoted by Greg White to raise sponsorship for the magazine and to promote the Society by creating a website at <http://nuimgcosoc.org>.

The Geography Society has tended to wax and wane over the years. In some years it was particularly vibrant; in other years less so, despite the best efforts of its officers. It may be a trick of the memory, but it seems to me that the good years tended to run in cycles - i.e. one good year tended to be followed by several others. However, continued success obviously depends upon the willingness of a new cohort of volunteers to take up the reins and maintain the momentum when the existing officers move on to bigger and better things (i.e. graduate). We live in a very pragmatic age, and consequently some very able people in first or second year may be unwilling to step forward out of a fear that it might interfere with their studies. This is understandable, but probably unfounded. The thing that struck me most when reading Paddy Duffy's article was how many of the former auditors of the Society and editors of *Milieu* were very high achievers. I would stop short of claiming that being an officer in the Geography Society guarantees success in exams, but the evidence would suggest that it has never been an impediment. I therefore hope that the return of *Milieu* will encourage a new generation of geographers to build upon the good work already done by Jackie McGloughlin and her committee.

This short piece was unimaginatively entitled 'Foreword'. It would be nice to think that it might more accurately have been entitled 'Forward'.

Dennis Pringle, Acting Head of Department

Editor's Note

Welcome to the 30th edition of *Milieu*. After being off the shelves for two years *Milieu* is back, packed with interesting articles to amuse, provoke conversation (argument?) or maybe even inspire.

My promotion to editor of this publication happened almost accidentally - no nail biting contest, no examination of part-perforated 'chads', no recount was required. Back in October 2006 I tentatively enquired if an editor had been appointed yet. "Oh my goodness, are you offering, thanks so much!" Okkaaaay - so now I was editor. Who was going to contribute and how on earth was I going to entice people to write for the magazine? I opened the floodgates but nothing trickled in. Just as I was facing down the prospect of having to write 30 articles myself (under a variety of pseudonyms), the first two arrived. Congratulations (and a huge sigh of relief) therefore to Dr. Shelagh Waddington and Siobhán Lyons, staff and student respectively, for being the first brave souls to submit to this year's edition.

From one solitary First Year (well done Ciarán!), to Second Years, Third Years, postgraduates and staff, there is a broad range of contributors and items inside the covers, with many people seeing their name in print for the first time. There are also quite a few alumni who have written for this year's magazine. These link in well with Paddy Duffy's two pieces about the history of *Milieu* and of the Geography Department and Society.

So its time to stop looking at rocks, time to stop testing water quality, time to stop trying to write learning outcomes without using the words 'understand' or 'know', and definitely time to stop thinking about Place. Instead, take the time *out* to sit back and enjoy this year's publication. A huge 'Thank you' to the *Milieu* committee for their trojan work: Sandra Walsh; John Cosgrove who organised the printing of the magazine (no easy task!); Pamela Dore for her cover shot of Rhetoric House and Eoin Flaherty for designing the cover. Thank You of course to the various members of the NUI Maynooth Geography Society, in particular the President of the society Jackie McGloughlin, Vice-President Daniel Coyle, PRO Greg White and Treasurer Cathy Burke. Thanks also to all *Milieu*'s contributors - apologies for the threats if you didn't deliver on your promises to submit, but hey, they worked!

Happy Reading

Adrienne Hobbs, Editor

(Incidentally, make sure to keep an eye on the Geography noticeboards and also the Geography Society website, www.nuimgeosoc.org for details on how to vote for your favourite article)

NUIM Geography Society: 2006-07

The NUIM Geography Society, a long standing institution at NUI Maynooth, experienced a lull period during the past few years. The Society has been transformed into an active, vibrant student society with more than 75 members. Events for the 2006-07 academic year ranged from treasure hunts to a Christmas Party featuring the "Geog-or-no-Geog" gameshow complete with guest celebrity Noel-Noel Edmunds.

One might ask, though, what does the Geography Society do? This question came up repeatedly at the Autumn Fairs Day. Back in October 2006, we set about answering that question post haste with the first ever Geography Society GPS Treasure Hunt. Participants, as true geographers, located all the clues using hand held receivers and gathered up for a quick pint at the local SU. It should be noted; however, that finishing times ranged from less than 13 minutes to more than 34 minutes. Fortunately, all trekkers returned to hunt another day.

The next event for intrepid members was the Careers Talk, hosted by the Geographical Society of Ireland, at UCD. Great information was provided at the event; and, of course, there was great craic on the chartered bus as we wound our way through the streets of Dublin. Speakers at the Careers Talk extolled the virtues of geography as a broad based discipline, while simultaneously cautioning students against thinking they would have the world by the tail once they received their BA.

We had good fun in 2006 but the highlight of 2006 was certainly the Christmas Party. Theatre 1 was converted from lecture hall to a mock TV studio, complete with the obligatory cheesy game show music. Noel-Noel Edmunds led our contestant through destinations ranging from "the puddle outside Rhetoric House" to the "Amazonian Rainforest". In the end, our contestant emerged unscathed from his experience and even ended up with a copy of *Geography and Geographers*. To round up the evening, a Mystery Raffle was held and €100 was raised for the Concern charity.

As we go to press in March 2007, there are still several months left in before those glorious summer months. In the meantime, Proinsias Breathnath took members on a virtual trip to Cuba and everyone considered the question: "Does Fidel Drink Heineken?" As we head into warmer weather, society members will have an opportunity to "Chillout" with other undergraduates and postgraduates at NUIM. Other events in the offing include a possible field trip, additional GPS Treasure Hunts and maybe even a Careers Talk: "Looking for a Job? - Don't Make These Mistakes!"

The NUIM Geography Society is much more than just a quick list of events. To encapsulate the NUIM Geography Society is challenging because, like geography, our members are extremely diverse. As geographers, we include some who champion physical geography and others who focus on human geography. Fortunately, geography is a discipline which includes many foci and can always answer where and sometimes even why.

Jackie S. McGloughlin, President NUIM Geography Society

The Geography Society & *Milieu*, A History

PJD

Milieu, the magazine of what was originally titled with a grandiloquent flourish The Maynooth University Geographical Society, started in 1975, before most of today's readers were born. The following short historical survey is mostly based on past issues of *Milieu*.

The Society had been launched in the first year of the Geography Department's existence in the 1971-2 session. There was only one lecturer in the department at that stage and the Society was used as a vehicle to get in some (fairly inexpensive) guest lecturers. In 1973, Tom Collins, currently the Professor of Education in NUIM, was the first Auditor (as the Society's President was called until recent years) to significantly expand the activities of the Society with the launch of an Inaugural Lecture and Dinner Dance. The first inaugural lecture (by Prof. T Jones Hughes of UCD in February 1974) was preceded by a 'sherry reception ... for invited guests and afterwards a large number attended a dinner dance in the Hitchin Post' (*Milieu* 1975). The Geography Society was a classy affair back then! Following several years, the dinner dance phenomenon seems to have lapsed.

Inaugural lecturers in those early years included Estyn Evans of Queen's University (1976), J H Johnson, Lancaster (1977), T W Freeman, Manchester (1978), Joseph Doherty, St Andrews (1979), Ted Relf, Toronto (1980), Brian Roberts, Manchester (1981), William Loy, Oregon (1980), Phil O'Keefe, (Clark), Fred Boal (Queens) and many others from near and far, including the Ambassador of Greece in conjunction with Greece's entry to EEC in 1983. On Jan 26, 1982, the Geography Society hosted the 'great debate between Jim Kemmy and Michael Farrell which was reported next day in all the major publications' because Kemmy that evening had brought down the coalition government over VAT on children's shoes!

The following is the honour roll of Auditors of the Society over the years: Pat Goff (1971-2), Jim Murphy (72-3), Tom Collins (73-4), Seamus Ryan (74-5), Marguerite Crosbie (75-6), Fintan Diggin (76-7), Mary Rose Bogan (77-8), Mary Smith (78-9), Anthony Leavy (79-80), Brendan Fleming (80-1), Gerard Toal (81-2), John Ahearne (1982-3), Rita Kearney (President, 83-4), Paul Daly (1985-6), Joe Leyden (86-87), Neil A Gordon (87-88), Catherine Sproule (President, 88-89), Leonard Molloy (89-90), Margaret O'Reilly (90-1), Adrian Kavanagh (91-2), John-Joe Callaghan (92-3), Grace Hamilton (93-4), Tom Corbett (94-5), Gerard Fitzsimons (President, 95-6), Dermot O'Mahoney (President, 96-97), Andrea Killoran (President, 97-98), Andrew Power (President, 98-99), Tim Cummins (99-2000), Maura Murphy (00-01), Julian Bloomer (01-2), *no record* (02-3), Robert Grace (03-4), *no record* (04-05).

The establishment of *Milieu* was an innovation by the Geography Society (under the auditorship of Seamus Ryan, today Principal of Dunshaughlin Community College) which was unique among student societies in Maynooth and its virtually uninterrupted publication since 1975 is a tribute to the collegial spirit and enthusiasm of geography students down the years. The first editor of the magazine was Jim Murphy, who was also the first postgraduate student in the Department and who currently teaches Geography in Enniscorthy.

Milieu offered an opportunity for geography students to write about things they were interested in, and was a platform for creativity and humour, for testing out writing skills, as well as teamwork and committee skills, business acumen, layout and design. Many of the covers were outlets for budding graphics skills: some were clever and innovative; others reflected changing technologies as photograph reproduction became easier. Field trip groups cowering in some god-forsaken winter landscape began to feature in later issues, for example. The 1975-77 numbers were stencilled outputs of gestetner machines, with advertisements laid out in wobbly stencilling: in the first issue is a hand-stencilled ad for 'Lough Egish Co-operative Society Ltd, Castleblayney, Co Monaghan. Manufacturers of guaranteed quality milk products. Our Butter, and Butter Portions, lead the field. All your farm needs supplied. Tel. Tullnahunera 2' - clearly Geog Soc had a long reach - though it more likely connected to secretary Michael Ward, being from that neck of the woods - he is now lecturing in Food and Business Development in UCC.

Former editors

Although in a few cases, some editors modestly omitted to mention who they were, the following is a list of former editors who no doubt have gone on to greater things based on their editorial experience:

Jim Murphy (1975), Seamus Ryan (1976 and 1977), Margaret Wagner-Harrington (1978), Joe Boland and Mick Halpenny (1979), Anthony Leavy (1980), Bob Kenny (1981), Jim Walsh (1982), Dympna McLoughlin (1983), Kathleen Elliott and Rosarii Whelan (1984), Gerry Quinn and Joe Leyden (1986), Shane Maguire (1987), Joe Leyden (1988), Jacqueline O'Donnell (1989), *no record* (1990), Brian Daly (1991 and 1992), Ivan Devilly and Colm McNeill (1993), Devika Ghosh, Shane O'Neill and John Weadick (1994), Garry Gill and Karl McGovern (1995), Susan Doherty and Martin Whelan (1996), Ruth Bennett (1997), Karen O'Reilly, Marcus Gilhewley and Karena Cahill (1998), Gus Worth (1999), Adrian Kavanagh (2000) - an issue which contains an article by Jim Murphy the first editor of *Milieu*, Adrian Kavanagh (2001), Sonja Moore (2002), John O'Byrne (2003), Karen Keaveney and Conor Murphy (2004).

There have been some outstanding essays published in *Milieu* over the years, many synopses of thesis research, or high-achieving essays, or simply topics which interested the writer and reflected contemporary courses. There is also a thread of humour and entertainment running down the years: earlier generations of undergrads seem to have been (either intentionally, or more likely unintentionally) amusing - as evidenced by the following extracts from 1970s 'examination archives.' Many of the writers could be your teachers or your parents, dear reader: '... 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 whole of nature followed a plan but to find the plan would take infinite work and he himself never got round to this (for further information on this topic see my essay 'Geography', Christmas 1972) ... After the New World was discovered the pop was sparse. There were only a few tribes there and these were a drop in the ocean ... Having established for the first time that the world was round and not flat this opened their eyes to new horizons ... Europe doesn't want any animals with any fat. That is to their own detriment if they like tasteless insipid stakes... The solution lies in more twin calving sulking cow herds... Many towns of course were built near bridges that crossed rivers because many early people travelled by boat... To Hell or to Connacht was Cromwell's command and many chose Connacht.' (*Milieu*, 81, pp19-20)

All the issues of *Milieu* from 1975 include lists of members of the Society committee, many of whom went on to teach geography in schools, or to undertake graduate studies in Geography here or elsewhere or to do something completely different: John O'Mahony, managed Galway county football. Michael Halpenny of the 1979 committee is defending the barricades for Aer Lingus workers at Dublin airport. His colleague on the committee was Brendan Bartley who later joined the staff of the Geography Department. Among the members of the 1980 committee was Gerard Toal, now Professor of government and international affairs in Virginia Tech and editor of *Geopolitics*. Other committee members were Vincent Carey, now Professor of History in SUNY Plattsburgh; Joe Leyden who teaches in Canada, Dympna McLoughlin lectures in history in NUIM and of course Drs Adrian Kavanagh and Conor Murphy.

The Forewords to each (usually written by the Head of Department), the Editorials and the Society reports provide interesting insights into the achievements of the Department and Society and the enduring optimism of student life over the years. Field trips were often satirised/ commemorated in neanderthal doggerel by a Bard of Batterstown. The 1985 Westport week was celebrated in song: (star of co down)

'We counted shops and supermarkets, semis and saloons,
To see if Pringle's theories were just hot-air balloons,
We talked to people blissfully in bungalows sublime
To find out who they were and what they did in their spare time...
I think a lot of work was done in tavern and in pub
— we phoned a few and found a crew of geographers in trub
They said they interviewed barmaids and others who dropped in
But the questionnaires are soaked in beer and the clipboards smell of gin.
(*Milieu* '86)

Working with students and with the community

Dr. Shelagh Waddington

In 1986 I was first employed as the demonstrator for the 2nd Year practical classes. Things were different in those days – about 90 students and the teaching was divided between four or five of the staff (all of whom were not very keen on the experience – I wonder why?). I spent my time adjusting from teaching in a secondary school (how did I relate to students who were old enough to be my parents, but who regarded me as an expert?) and marking lots and lots of work. Who was it who forgot to record the marks for one class taught by Dennis, and tried to sneak around the group later, asking them to return the work, without Dennis realising what I was doing??

After the first year, Professor Smyth went off on sabbatical and either I got lucky (or I was desperate for a job) and was offered the chance to teach the year long course myself. I jumped at the chance and have been doing the work ever since and enjoying it too! After a short time, however, I realised that there was no real structure to the course (no modules in those distant days). Students just were told about a set of skills, did exercises based on them, and then forgot all about them. Since I was keen that the outcomes of education should be more positive than this, and, anyway, teaching the same stuff all the time is boring, I decided to experiment. While I would strongly argue that the student body did not become my experimental animals, they were certainly heavily involved in the research.

When I reflected on what had been happening (note the word 'reflected' here!, those who were Second Years in 2005-6 or 2006-7) I realised that unless people used skills in a way that made them real, probably as part of a 'joined-up' piece of work, they were unlikely to remember them ever again. This meant that when/if they needed to use them again, they had to re-learn them. Therefore, I decided that we needed to have a project which would allow a number of skills to be learned and used. This was great – but what project would the students do? How would it be done – there was only me, a bunch of students (maybe 150 at this point) and two demonstrators.

Just in time, Proinnsias Breathnach was approached by a local Community Council. They needed somebody to carry out a survey of transport usage in their town because CIE insisted there was no need for a train service, while the community council insisted that the demand existed. Proinnsias agreed to undertake the survey, the MA group was recruited to process the data, and bodies were needed to carry out the survey – the first 2nd Year questionnaire survey was born!

The experience was a great learning one for me – I am still not sure what it was for the students involved. We had no street map of the town available (or at least not one which had been up-dated in the last 40 years) so Proinnsias and myself spent quite a long time driving very slowly around residential streets making sketch maps of the street layouts. Surprisingly this wasn't the time when I was accused of 'casing' an area prior to a robbery – that was a few years later on the southside of Dublin.

We subsequently hired buses and took all of the students out one evening – we counted them out and (fortunately) they all came back. This may have been due to the offer of sandwiches and a drink in a local pub after the questionnaires had been completed. All went well and, while it wasn't the only factor, the station was re-opened and a train service started. Clearly we were on to something and the students seemed to find the experience enjoyable. One later reported that this survey had been one of the highlights of his studies in Maynooth. This was gratifying for me, but I was curious about what the rest of his experiences were like, when walking the streets of a North Kildare town on a dark, cold night in November was a highlight! The students hadn't been very involved in planning the survey or in the detailed analysis of the results, so, having gained some confidence, I decided to expand the idea further. It was, therefore, decided to bring in the 'partners' at an early stage and give a briefing to the students. To make sure we *had* partners, we invited them in for the first session and provided a video or an audio recording for the others. Nobody volunteered to repeat the same briefing three or four times! The first time we had a very good briefing from the 'partners' but 'tea and buns' for the students was not to be provided. Fortunately Professor Walsh didn't feel the same – so the reward was there at the end of the survey! Other involvement has come with time – students now have input into planning the survey, piloting the questions, analysing the data and writing the final report.

Our furthest trip outside of Maynooth was when the students were recruited by Brendan Bartley to take part in an EU study of transport. This was a real challenge for all concerned – we hired buses from Dublin Bus and headed off, one night to the northside and one night to the southside, dropping groups of students in areas ranging from leafy suburbs to the inner city. This was the only survey when we actually did not bring all of them home. No, they weren't attacked by marauding bands of Dubs, but two of them who had discovered mutual attraction decided to come home early to pursue that attraction. I was in my car to provide back-up for those on the buses. When we discovered two people had disappeared, our first effort was to try to find them by driving round the area – faint hope – leaving a demonstrator at the pick up point in case they turned up late. We then phoned Maynooth to find out where they lived (and get phone numbers). A postgrad revealed an unexpected talent for burglary by breaking into an office to access the record card, but they weren't answering the phone. When we got back to Maynooth, two demonstrators went off for a drink and found somebody who knew where they were! By 9.30 the following morning two *very* apologetic students were in my office – I never knew exactly how this was brought about, but clearly it was effective.

Have students ever had problems with the public? Well, nobody has been kidnapped, and so far as I know we have only had one complaint. Someone phoned the President of the time to report that two students had laughed at him – we never did trace the students so we never knew why he was so funny. There have been some who were nervous beforehand, but most people actually enjoyed the experience. Have any ever 'fiddled' the results? Yes, a few, and the most unfortunate ones were those who put down my address as one of the houses they had surveyed. I advised them not to take to crime – clearly they were unlikely to be successful!

There have been a number of other 'away days' apart from those highlighted here, where students have been 'bussed' outside Maynooth and carried out surveys in conjunction with local community councils and other groups. Relations can be tricky at times – one group wanted to investigate the number of unmarried parents in their area and another, the number of foreign nationals. Explaining that these questions were likely to have two bad outcomes was a bit difficult but eventually they understood that firstly the council would get very bad publicity (as would NUIM) but worse (from the student viewpoint) was that those asking the questions would be likely to receive abuse (at best verbal abuse!). Another group wanted to ask questions which would ensure that they got the answers they wanted about the location of a development. However, in general, things have worked well and the groups have been grateful for the efforts of the students who have produced such excellent data and contributed to reports which have been used to guide community developments.

Unfortunately, today it isn't possible to get out of Maynooth – organising and transporting 260 or more students to do a survey has proved too much for the staff, but it was fun?? while it lasted. We do still 'terrorise' the local people, of course. The most recent survey was for Maynooth Tidy Towns group and the report was launched at their annual award ceremony in November 2006. A number of the students were present on the evening and they were kind enough to applaud when I was presented with a glass bowl for my part in events – although one suggested that I should smash it and present a piece of glass to each student who had been involved!

I was astonished to learn that some of the students had assumed that the Tidy Towns involvement was a fiction designed to give realism to the exercise. I admit I lied when I implied that they were going to pay us vast sums of money for our assistance, but I actually assumed the students would believe me when I said we were really working for the group. I thought that good evidence for this was provided by the report of the planned work in the local press and the recorded briefing provided by a member of the group. Next time, I will make video and get sworn statements!!

So – what of the future? The university still has a remit which involves working with and for the benefit of the local community, I am still teaching 2nd Year methods classes which still need projects to undertake, so.... watch this space!

(Dr. Shelagh Waddington, Department of Geography, NUI Maynooth)

Editor: Prior to the commencement of their studies, the MA class 2007 travelled to the Sunny South-East for a bonding weekend. Undergraduates should read the following piece carefully, taking notes as required, for this too could happen to you if you do not take evasive action NOW! Staff who have had these students 'through their hands' should take heart and know that they did the best that they could with the resources available to them ...

The MA Bonding Weekend!

In the History of Great Geographic expeditions the omens that morning was auspicious, we had a few people under the weather and one person in a disaster zone! The sick one Mini P (aka Shane) sat at the back of the bus and first made himself known by making weird noises and complaining of death...no one took notice until regurgitating sounds of the unwell Mini P interrupted Proinnsias's narration! So we pulled into the Dolmen hotel for some light refreshments...the more educated among us chose Guinness while the naïve students, not wanting to create a bad impression chose soup!



Maybe the MA Fieldtrip wasn't such a handy one afterall ...?!?

Hello to the famous Dungarvan the MA's declared as they arrived! Dungarvan was the birthplace to the giant amongst international academia, Proinnsias Breathnach, and hometown to Dennis Pringle for the weekend. We arrived at the hostel located across from the Garda station (someone has trust issues), we were greeted by a person of indistinct gender, which acted as a conversation starter among the group. We then explored the town looking out important historical landmarks and prospective watering holes for deeper investigation later that evening. We returned to our humble abode and partook in the get to know you activities. We each found out something different and interesting about each other such as, Colette who had won her place in the MA a week before in Las Vegas, and that jockey Ciara and

dog lover Zoe shared a unique interest in animals. Preparation for the night began; terror reigned through the rooms of the 11 girls..shock and horror as only one hairdryer and one GHD could be found...as predicted by the menly folk the ladies were fashionably late!

We proceeded to the famous Mooring tavern. The night was young and the party pieces begun. Colette, who played with fire and didn't get burnt and Kat, who levitated and read Dennis's mind leaving him speechless, provided entertainment for the night. Cunning Eilish, ever the opportunist tried on the hapless geographers leather jacket and morphed into THE FONZ! The two Cosgroves, Cel and John showed their appreciation for the national pastime, one by defying all medical advice and the other by risking his life by matching Proinnsias pint for pint! However, the night didn't end there. As we arrived home the cravings for the cupán tae began! Alas, there was no milk in the place so Ciaran improvised! The result was smoothie tea an alternative choice, which was tried and tested by the daring Niamh; she has been close to death since!

Saturday morning we set about our tasks some conducting surveys in the town centre and the new shopping centre while others conducted interviews with local businesses. It was in the new shopping centre where we were amazed by Catherine's completion of her surveys in record time and Diana who charmed her shoppers and fought the elements to complete her share of the work. While across town Niamh and Drew conducted their own interview with a local entrepreneur who bore an uncanny resemblance to Proinnsias making our intrepid duo think they were being PUNKED!

After the torture endured whilst coding the questionnaires, one group was force-marched by Aoife (aka Fiona) through the monsoon weather to the Cineplex! The rest began to queue again for the hairdryer and the GHD! We later joined forces and set up rank in the Moorings, now our local. We felt we should get to know the nightlife scene in Dungarvan a little better and made our way to the infamous Preachers night-club. Again Mini P was in a disaster zone and experienced a slide and tumble with two pints in tow. Slide marks were left on the dance floor! After much drink, dance and assaults, (in that order) we headed back to some late night cuisine served up by chef Paula Ramsey accompanied by Scrubs.

Sunday morning, too bright and far too early, Fran and Dinny led us to the barracks where after much education we were coerced to leave. After this the Maynooth scholars split once again, some enjoyed cluiche iománocht and the rest sampled the local cuisine, Dungarvan Chinese.



Bonding Exercise:
The MA Technique

After our weekend, we were "experts" in the field of retail development and C.B.D planning issues. Essentially, we realised it was not a simple black and white debate of new vs. old but rather one of multiple spatial complexities which must take into account both social and economic factors. At the end of the day, we left Dungarvan a more socially cohesive academic body ready for the year ahead!

Supervisor: Mini P,
Creative Consultant: The Gambler,
Executive Director: The Fonz,
Motivational Officer: The Smoothie Tea Broadbander.

(MA Class 2007: Colette Byrne, Fiona Coleman, Ciara Comerford, Celestine Cosgrove, John Cosgrove, Niamh Donnellan, Zoe Donnelly, Diana Doyle, Shane Doyle, Paula Fitzsimons, Andrew Horan, Ciaran McLoone, Eilish Meaney, Catherine Mulhall & Kathryn Walsh).

AR4, The Little Optimum and the Vikings: A Warming and a Warning of the Last Millennium

Dr. John Sweeney

The recently published Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has created a stir across the world as awareness of the implications of climate change have entered the consciousness of the general public in a manner not apparent hitherto. This report, reflecting a consensus of 2,500 climate scientists, and endorsed by 130 governments, was the latest in a line of highly influential statements which reflect climatologists growing confidence that people are playing an increasingly dominant role in changing global climate. The First Assessment Report (1995) was tentative: "...the observed increase could be largely due to this natural variability; alternatively this variability and other human factors could have offset a still larger human-induced greenhouse warming." The Second Assessment Report (1995) was less cautious: "The balance of evidence suggests a discernible human influence on global climate." The Third Assessment Report boldly stated that: "There is new and stronger evidence that most of the warming observed over the last 50 years is attributable to human activities." This conclusion is now strongly reinforced in AR4: "It is very likely that anthropogenic greenhouse gas increases caused most of the observed increase in globally averaged temperatures since the mid-20th century". In the carefully crafted conservative language of the IPCC 'very likely' means '90% sure'.

It is clear that in the absence of serious efforts, the world of the 21st century will become a less hospitable place, particularly for the developing countries. It is now also clear that we humans will determine the short term course of global climate, and are not just prisoners of it as our ancestors were. So what are the highlights of this latest report? These are many, but essentially centre on the following: Concentrations of the main greenhouse gases are higher than at any time in the past 650,000 years. CO₂ concentrations are now over 379ppm compared with pre-industrial levels of 280ppm, while methane concentrations have already doubled from their pre-industrial values. Global warming is now an unequivocal fact with 11 of the 12 warmest years since 1850 occurring since 1995. The warming now extends higher into the atmosphere and as far as 3km into the world's oceans. Cold days, cold nights and frost have become rarer in most parts, while hot days, hot nights and heat waves have become more frequent occurrences.

Global sea-levels are rising by 1.8mm/year, and this rate has accelerated to 3.1mm/year over the past decade. Many changes in wind patterns, rainfall, sea ice, ice sheets, and extreme weather have occurred at a regional scale. High latitude regions have warmed twice as fast as the rest of the globe over the past century with sea-ice shrinking by 2.7% per decade. The flow of some outlet glaciers in the Arctic and Antarctic have increased and the extent of seasonally frozen ground has fallen 7% over the past century.

Rainfall trends are less clear-cut than temperature, though droughts in the tropics and subtropics have become more intense and prolonged. A downward trend in rainfall in the Sahel, Mediterranean, southern Africa and parts of south Asia is evident. Increased precipitation is occurring in northern Europe and northern Asia and eastern parts of North and South America. The frequency of heavy rainfall events is increasing wherever warming is occurring. While no clear trend exists in the number of hurricanes, some research suggests very intense storms are becoming more common as the oceans warm. The jury is still out on trends in the oceanic overturning circulation at a global scale and, on a smaller scale, on phenomena such as tornadoes, hail, lightning and dust-storms.

Of course the main attraction of the IPCC Report for most is probably its projections for the future, and this report marks a period of major progress in modelling future climates. Increased computer power and better understanding of how climate works underpin this increased confidence. While most projections depend on assumptions concerning the future rate of fossil fuel emissions, the main projections are:

Warming of 1.8-4°C by the end of the century as compared to the average of the last 20 years of the last century. This will be most pronounced over the northern land areas of Eurasia and North America. Sea ice coverage will shrink considerably with summer sea ice disappearing completely in some projections by the second half of this century.

Storm tracks will move polewards, with resultant changes in rainfall, wind and temperature patterns. Intense hurricanes will become more frequent and more damaging. Precipitation decreases are likely in most subtropical regions while increases are highly likely in high latitudes. While the Atlantic overturning circula-

tion is likely to decrease by about 25% during the century, it is unlikely to fail and will not offset the present warming trend. Sea level rise estimates for end century range from 0.28-0.43m as compared with the 1980-99 averages. These may however be underestimating factors such as carbon cycle feedbacks and ice-flow processes and may turn out to be significantly higher.

Warming is expected to be most pronounced at the high latitudes in both hemispheres as melting ice transforms the reflectivity of the surface into a darker more absorbing surface. This is known as the ice-albedo feedback effect and is one of a number of feedback effects which because they are difficult to incorporate into computerised models have restricted the utility of global climate models somewhat in recent years. It is thus interesting to look backwards to a time when the high latitudes were as warm as, or even slightly warmer than, the mid 20th century. Of course a true analogue of the future climate is not possible by this technique; but a glimpse of who might be the winners and losers as global warming proceeds is obtained. Such a warm period occurred in the interval 900-1200 A.D., sometimes known as the Little Optimum.

Towards the end of the first millennium, temperatures in parts of northern Europe appear to have been about 1degC warmer than in the mid 20th century, and probably this period represents the warmest few centuries there since the Post Glacial Climatic Optimum around 6,000 years ago. Sea surface temperature analysis from the clearly shows this warm spell at the turn of the first Millennium (Figure 1). The Little Optimum came at a time when documentary sources were becoming available to help piece together the pattern and variation in global climate in the absence of observational data. These sources indicate that the Little Optimum was probably not a period of global warming, as had formerly been thought, but was anomalously warm in the high latitudes of the Northern Hemisphere. It was marked by latitudinal and altitudinal expansion of settlement and cultivation. In Europe, for example, vines were grown much further north than today. The Doomsday Book of William the Conqueror documents 38 vineyards in Britain in 1066, some as far north as York. Fossil forests in Canada 100km north of the present tree line, reports of swarms of locusts in Austria, and tillage at heights over 350m on Dartmoor convey a picture of general warmth. But it was in the marginal lands of northern Europe that the impacts of these benign climates appear to have manifested themselves most.

Harvests were undoubtedly easier. This is important since harvests in those days were a matter of life or death. Only if food security could be obtained could attention turn to other things. Certainly it was much easier to subsist in these northern lands, where the harvests are mainly limited by the short cool summers, than at present. Wheat could be grown in the north of Norway and oats in Iceland. Barley, oats and rye were recorded in Greenland. A growing population could only be supported though if the area under cultivation could be extended. In much of Norway, population growth was considerable, and the number of farms increased substantially, especially in the northern regions and in the more sheltered south around Oslo. However on the coastal fringes of the west the limitations of the physical environment could not be overcome easily, even by a more benign climate and the options were more restricted. It was from these parts that most of the Viking expeditions to the Atlantic islands south and west originated (Helle, 1998). By the first half of the 9th Century Viking kingdoms had been set up on the Hebrides, the Northern Isles and northern Scotland and it is likely that it was from these bases that most of the raids on Ireland were mounted (Ó Corráin (1998)).

For the inhabitants of these northern lands the weather was crucially important. When did the ice melt on their fiords in spring? When did they need to be back before the winter freeze-up? Such records were often meticulously kept in the sagas. From Iceland we have the Landnam Saga to guide us, while from Greenland the Greenland saga is an invaluable source of information. Since climatic inferences can be drawn from such sources a comparison with present day instrumental records enables reconstruction of the rudiments of climate for this period.

The era of Scandinavian expansion commences at the end of the 8th Century, probably coinciding with advances in sailing techniques which seem to have occurred around that time. No compasses were available to these early mariners and yet the exploration of the northern oceans commenced, undoubtedly helped by calmer quieter conditions than both before and after the period. By the middle of the 9th Century, fleets of Vikings were sailing up the Seine, sailing into the Mediterranean, exploring the rivers of northern Russia (the word Rus means oarsmen) and sacking cities such as Pisa, Lisbon and Paris. To the west, the first recorded Viking exploration to Iceland was in 860 by a farmer, Floki Vilgerdason, who found that Irish monks had

got there before him. These peoples were termed the *papas* – clearly a corruption of the Irish for ‘father’. This was a common discovery in Atlantic Europe at the time as Irish monks sought to find contemplative solitude. Interestingly the tradition of documentation which characterises both Iceland and Ireland is not present to the same extent in Norway. Were the sagas of Iceland (and later Greenland) a part product of its early Irish contacts?

However in 860 the warming of the Little Optimum was not yet underway and Vilgerdason’s settlement attempt failed. Floki returned to tell of an island where the fiords were “choked with ice. By the end of the next century however the warming was well underway and Iceland was an altogether more hospitable place. By 1095 over 77,000 settlers were established. It was from the Iceland that in 982 Erik the Red was banished for killing two men and set sail further to the west where vague stories of another land had been told. By 982 the warming was well advanced and Erik settled on the southern tip of the large island which he called Greenland. It is one of the quirks of climatic history that the island which today is so inhospitable is called Greenland, while the island on which a long established viable community exists is given the harsher name of Iceland. Was this the result of the stages during the Little Optimum in which they were settled? Iceland was at the beginning, before the warming had become pronounced, Greenland when it was close to its peak. Of course there may be other reasons. Perhaps Erik was trying to lure other settlers to his new fiefdom, or perhaps the sunlight glinting off the icefields appeared green; but in any event two thriving settlements were established numbering over 6,000 people by 1200. The spectacle of first contact between the Norse settlers and the Inuit hunters must have provided an interesting contrast in cultures – one a sedentary agriculturalist – a prisoner of their climate – and the other a nomadic hunter – adapted to the vagaries of their climate in search of mobile food sources. By 1125 the Greenland Norse were so well established that they sent back home for a bishop, traded a live polar bear for him and built a small cathedral. It was but a short distance for ships blown off course to end up in northern Newfoundland or the North American coast (Vinland). Indeed if we are to believe Erik the Red’s Saga the first European couple to have a child in North America: Thorfinn Karsefni was descended from a Viking Queen in Dublin (Aud) and his wife Gudrid Thorbjarnsdottir was descended from a Gaelic slave brought to Iceland by the same Queen Aud (Anon, 1997)

In Ireland, the Vikings in the early days of their expansion were coming into contact with a culture which provided rich pickings from their monasteries and these raiders became a force for terror which was deeply embedded in the psyche of medieval Ireland. Only a stormy night provided security and safety from their raids, which commenced around 795. One monk wrote:

“There’s a wicked wind tonight,
Wild upheaval in the sea;
No fear now that the Viking hordes
Will terrify me.”

All coastal communities lived in fear, especially during the worst decades of the early 9th Century (Figure 2). Later on, the single-ship raids were replaced by larger fleets as the Vikings began to use the rivers, especially the Shannon to penetrate further inland (Figure 3). In 827, for example, 60 ships were reported on the Boyne and even larger fleets were reported towards mid century. The plunder of monasteries and churches, even quite far removed from navigable waterways, was achieved by portage and some fleets even began to over winter in the larger lakes, such as Lough Neagh.

But as the Little Optimum wore on, a downturn in climate was becoming apparent. In the northern latitudes the sea ice was beginning to return to the areas around Iceland, making trade contacts increasingly difficult. It was becoming too cool to save the hay in many years and the all important harvest was becoming problematical. By 1342 the main sailing route from Scandinavia to Iceland, close to the Arctic Circle, had to be abandoned in favour of a more southerly route. The Danish parliament even debated whether to evacuate Iceland at one point. In Greenland, the encroaching permafrost can be inferred from the increasingly shallow burial depths in the graveyards. By the 13th Century the colony was increasingly isolated, reachable only in very good summers, and facing extinction. On the same year that Columbus made landfall in North America, Pope Alexander VI expressed his concern for this northern outpost of Christendom:

“The church of Garda is situated at the ends of the earth in

Greenland, and the people dwelling there are accustomed to living on dried fish and milk for lack of bread, wine and oil...shipping to that county is very infrequent because of the extensive freezing of the waters – no ship having put into shore, it is believed, for eighty years.”

By 1540 the last inhabitants had died off. Their bodies were found in more recent excavations of the graveyard buried in permafrost dressed in out-of-date European clothing. The average height of adult males in the graveyard had declined by 13cms since the pioneers arrived.

Was the demise inevitable? Perhaps not. Had the Greenland Norse abandoned their cattle and switched to the sea they might have survived. Had they adopted the flexible lifestyle of the Inuit they would almost certainly still be there. Even persevering with cattle and dressing in wool rather than furs showed their stubborn unwillingness to adapt to changed climatic conditions. Conservatism doomed these peoples. The lesson as we enter the next millennium is obvious. We must be prepared to adopt radical ideas to fit with the changing threats and opportunities of a greenhouse-warmed world. The IPCC report discussed above shows the likely way ahead if do not start taking radical steps to reduce our impact on climate. But over the next few decades the die is cast and significant climate changes are inevitable. It is for the longer haul that we must start planning now. Adapt or fail - this is the ultimate lesson of the Little Optimum.

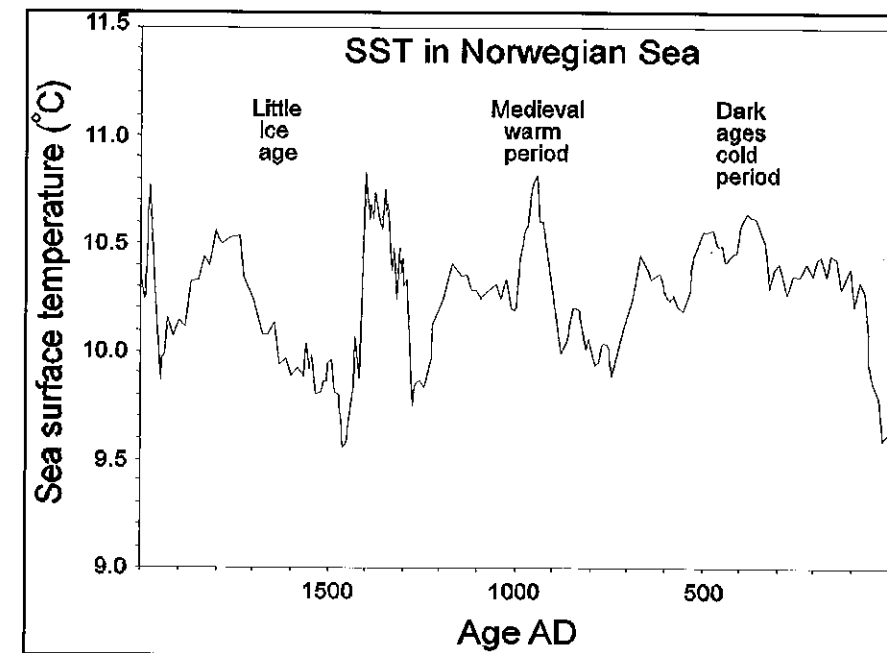


Figure 1: Sea surface temperatures in the Norwegian Sea

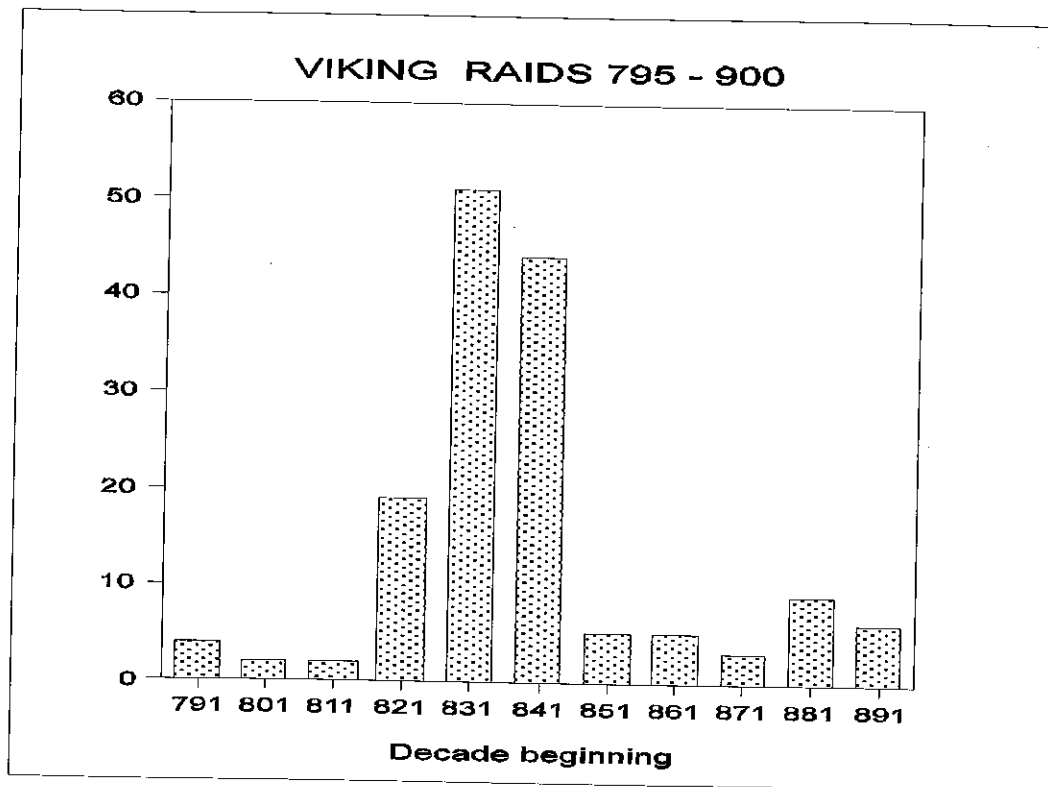


Figure 2: Viking Raids on Irish Churches 795-900

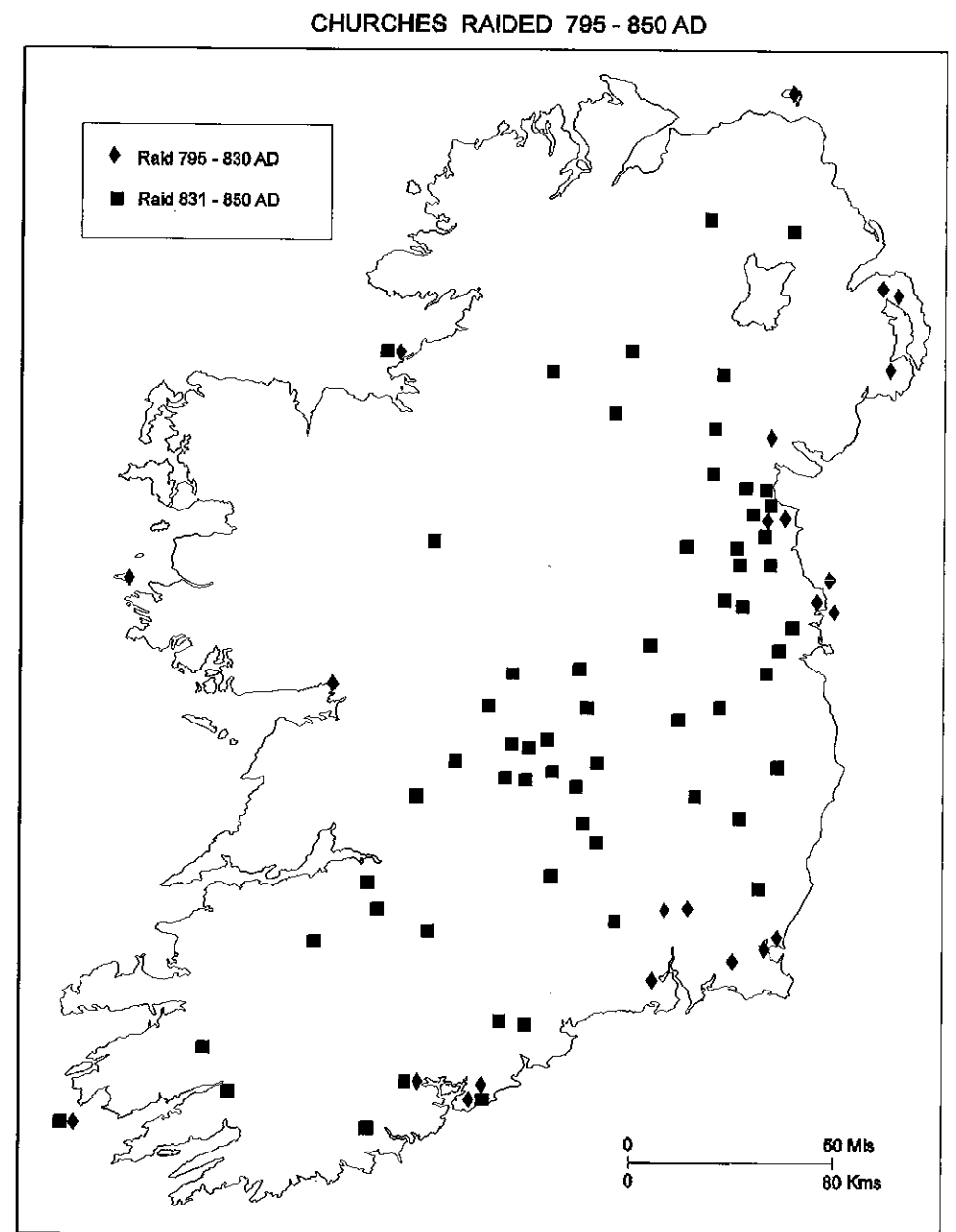
(after Etchingam, 1996)

(Dr. John Sweeney, Department of Geography, NUI Maynooth)

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Figure 3: Churches raided 831-850 in Ireland



(after Etchingam, 1996)

Global Warming- Ireland needs to take responsibility or face a bleak future

Fiona M. Coleman

In contemporary society, we are constantly subjected to the worrying effects of global warming, with various Hollywood films demonstrating that due to our relaxed principles, cities destroyed by torrential floods and the beginnings of a new Ice Age are only a short time away. However, numerous scientists and geographers claim that these works of fiction could, within the next hundred years, become a reality. This article will examine how such a transition could affect Ireland and Western Europe and how we, as a nation must be educated in the means of limiting this inevitable catastrophe by addressing the high levels of greenhouse gas emissions we emit.

Numerous factors can be seen as causing this unprecedented warming, with many scientists (2007) placing the blame on human pollution as being the most significant contributor, through the burning of fossil fuels, industrial processes which release emissions of carbon dioxide, along with changes in land use such as deforestation.¹ This thickening layer of carbon dioxide emitted from some of the above practices allows heat to be trapped in the atmosphere, allowing a gradual rise in global temperatures. Models conducted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) project that a global increase of between 2.5⁰ Fahrenheit and 10.4⁰ Fahrenheit will occur by 2100¹, the effects of which will be detrimental to human life and disruptive to the eco-system. A rise in sea level would undoubtedly be one of the more negative consequences, with knock-on effects for more frequent and more intensive weather events. Some of these effects have already been witnessed in Western Europe within the last five years where the United Kingdom and Ireland have been subjected to numerous devastating floods costing millions in damages.

The consequence of melting ice-caps is another major cause of concern, with predictions conducted by the Climate Research Unit at the University of East Anglia estimating a global sea level rise of between 12 and 67 centimetres by the year 2050.² Low-lying areas such as the South East of England will be under direct threat whereas here in Ireland, 2.5% of this country is under threat from rising sea levels, including many estuaries such as Malahide, Shannon and Wexford Harbour, along with bays such as Dublin, Sligo and Tralee.³ The Western coast of Ireland has already been subjected to frequent high intensity storms and this pattern will continue in the near future. As well as the increase in precipitation levels, temperatures are likely to increase in Ireland and the United Kingdom, with many scientists indicating that these regions will see a climate comparable with the Mediterranean within the next century. The year 2006 recorded a mean temperature of 9.7⁰ Celsius, making it the warmest year since 1914 according to meteorological statistics, the top temperature (30.3⁰ Celsius), being recorded in Northern Ireland in County Tyrone on the 19th of July.⁴ However, 2007 is expected to outstrip this record with projections conducted by the Met Office, in conjunction with the University of Anglia, outlining that "2007 temperatures will be 0.54 degrees Celsius above the long term average of 14 degrees with a 60% probability that 2007 will be as warm or warmer than the current warmest year-1998".⁴ With such an increase in temperature the British Isles could be subjected to a multitude of insect pests that currently only populate Mediterranean regions, along with an increase in the risk of skin cancer due to heightened sun exposure. Droughts, already seen to be a problem in recent years, could be exacerbated as a result of greater levels of evaporation due to higher temperatures, with heat-waves already having a negative impact on many European countries. In 2003 this was the contributory factor in over 20,000 deaths.⁵

However, Ireland's role in the attempts to alleviate climate change has not been as favourable as some of our European counterparts. Ireland has ratified the Kyoto protocol which attempts to reduce the production of greenhouse gases, and runs from 2008 until 2012. However, what changes will occur after this period? Under the rules of the Kyoto agreement Ireland's emissions level are not allowed exceed 13% above its 1990 levels. As of October 2006, our level stands at a shameful 23%, with our failure to adhere to the set target resulting in the Government purchasing credits for every tonne of carbon dioxide above the limit. Ireland is unlikely to adhere to such targets and by 2010, it is expected that only "three other member states will perform worse- Spain, Portugal and Greece."⁶

The Green Party highlight that Ireland's inability to reach the target is as a result of the Government choosing to invest in road building projects instead of rail, which will allow emissions to increase rapidly. Government plans outline that €6.3 billion is to be spent on roads with very little to be invested into developing rail lines.³ More cars on the road signal an increase in carbon dioxide emissions and with the Celtic Tiger likely to continue in the near future, car ownership is likely to only increase. In an attempt to reduce such harmful emissions and improve the quality of life for generations to come, simple adjustments must be undertaken. For domestic practices, changing from oil to gas central heating can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, coupled with the implementation of fibreglass insulation and lagging jackets. Agriculture plays a major role in Ireland's emissions and if changes in feed practices are introduced, methane levels would decrease dramatically. Ireland is regarded as one of the wealthiest economies in the world but we are doing very little to control our emissions. Ireland lies at number 33 out of 56 in taking measures to cut down its carbon dioxide emissions in contrast to the United Kingdom which lies at number 2.⁷ Cutting such greenhouse gas emissions by incorporating some of the suggested practices above will cost less now than having to cope with the devastating effects in the future.

(Fiona Coleman is a MA student)

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Emissions Trading in Ireland

Jackie S. McGloughlin

Anticipated climate change in the 21st century is prompting major changes in government policies and business practices. The contributing greenhouse gas emissions were addressed with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992 and the Kyoto Protocol, entering into force in 2005 with its legally binding targets. Ireland's target is 63 million tonnes CO₂ per annum for the 2008-2012 period. Ireland's projected emissions for this period exceed this mark by 7.174 million tonnes per annum¹ – at a cost of between €28.7 million and €215.22 million to purchase credits². These costs are solely for the distance to target amounts. Overall costs for total Irish emissions at 63 million tonnes per annum range between €255.15 million and €1.89 billion².

Economic instruments available to encourage emission reductions include quotas and tradable permits. The theory behind these methods began as a concept in 1960 when Ronald Coase proposed that the "if the factors of production are thought of as rights . . . [and] a harmful effect (such as the creation of smoke, noise, smells, etc.) is also a factor of production" (Coase, 1960, 22). A few years later JH Dales expanded this by proposing that these rights could be defined and quantified. Then these pollution rights could be traded between different emitters. For the case of greenhouse gas emissions, so long as the total quantity of pollution is limited, pollution reduction can be achieved regardless of which emitter decreases their effluent. Therefore, if one company can do it at lower cost, they should reduce more than another company with higher marginal abatement costs. The more efficient installation receives the benefit of added revenues from permit sales. The less efficient installation is able to meet their quotas at a lower cost than compared to adopting more expensive new technologies and processes.

The United States has a long-standing history of using economic instruments to address pollution. Tietenberg outlines the many programs implemented in the last thirty years in the areas of air pollution, water pollution and fisheries. Tietenberg addresses the key area of initial allocation methodology with its strong impact on the effectiveness of a trading scheme. When the regulator distributes permits without charge, the initial impacts are very different than if they are auctioned. Another main issue which applies to the EU ETS is the challenges in setting the overall limit of cap for the program. If set too low, the costs associated will be prohibitive. If set too high, the program will not achieve its goal of reducing CO₂ emissions to desired targets.

While the US is well versed in tradable permits, historically the European Commission (EC) has favoured command and control measures. The new European Union Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS) represents a new climate policy era for Europe. However, the emissions trading scheme is not without controversy; there are concerns in Europe and the US about how the allowances are initially allocated and how effective actual reductions will be.

Clinch and Convery (1999) provide an insightful overview of policy changes for Ireland relating to efficiency, effectiveness and equity. The EU ETS is a partial answer to these challenges. Clinch and Convery analyse impacts on sectors specifically relating to costs and associated emission reductions; commercial viability is the key to management adopting new technologies.

From the business perspective, surveys were conducted over a 3½ year span (2001-2004) with firms from varied countries and industry sectors (Brewer, 2005). Respondents expressed widespread uncertainty about the EU ETS and consequently had made limited preparations for EU ETS participation. During this same time, a different concern was expressed by ESB; that of the need to purchase additional credits since their projected emissions will exceed granted allowances (Point Carbon, 2003, 4).

Issues for Irish climate policy extend beyond EU ETS since this only applies to certain large scale emitters in designated sectors. The impacts extend to other businesses and comparative differences between included and exempted firms have been raised by Betz, Eichhammer & Schleich (2004); Klepper (2004); and Fitz Gerald (2004). Further issues have been considered relating to the interaction between policies and technological innovation (Jänicke & Jacob, 2004).

Another facet of emissions trading is how businesses are adapting to the new regulations. The pollution is emitted at an installation level and that is where the reductions for industry will occur. Berkhout, Hertin & Gann (2006) addressed challenges limiting the business sector's capacities to adapt.

More specifically, Purvis, Hunt & Drake (2001) considered how uncertainty limits decision-making capacity in the UK refrigeration sector. Another applicable study by Rehan & Nehdi (2005) concerns the cement industry and the role of consumer demand in whether companies will adopt new technologies and processes.

The corpus of knowledge extensively covers the economics of emissions trading. The policy implications are being explored; but since the ETS has just started, issues will be evolving. No scheme has been attempted at this scale before. The EU ETS will cover between 10,000 and 12,000 businesses. The decisions by each of these businesses will determine whether or not emissions are collectively reduced below the business as usual level.

As part of my study, a questionnaire was sent to all NAP permit holders in Ireland with 75 of the 117 permit holders participating. Emissions trading is highly likely since 59% of permit holders report that their projected emissions exceed level of granted allowances. Conversely, 21% anticipate their installations will have excess permits and will be able to sell them on the open market.

Survey respondents also indicated areas of concern regarding the ETS. The most commonly cited concern was competitiveness, followed by equity issues about the distribution of burden both between covered sectors and those exempted from the trading scheme. The specific responses rates for each issue are shown in Figure 1.

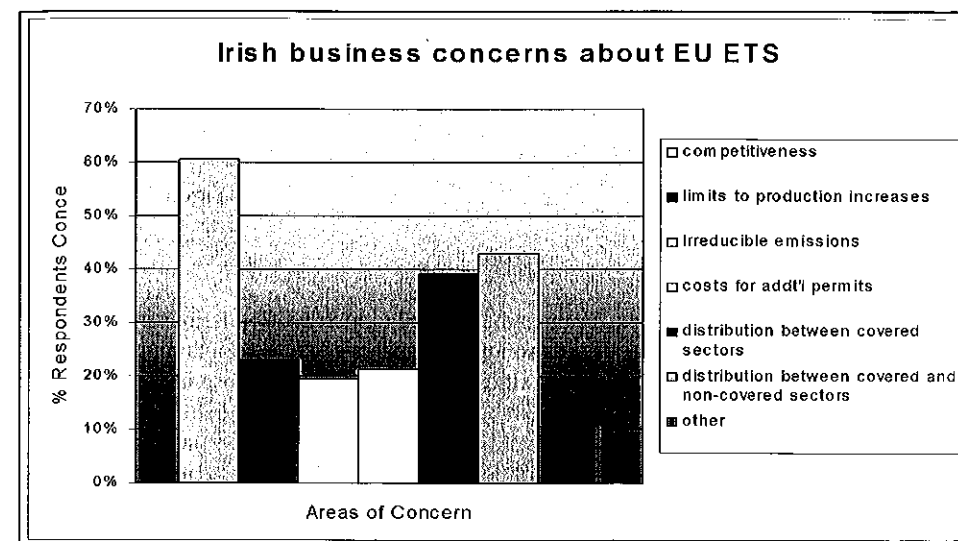
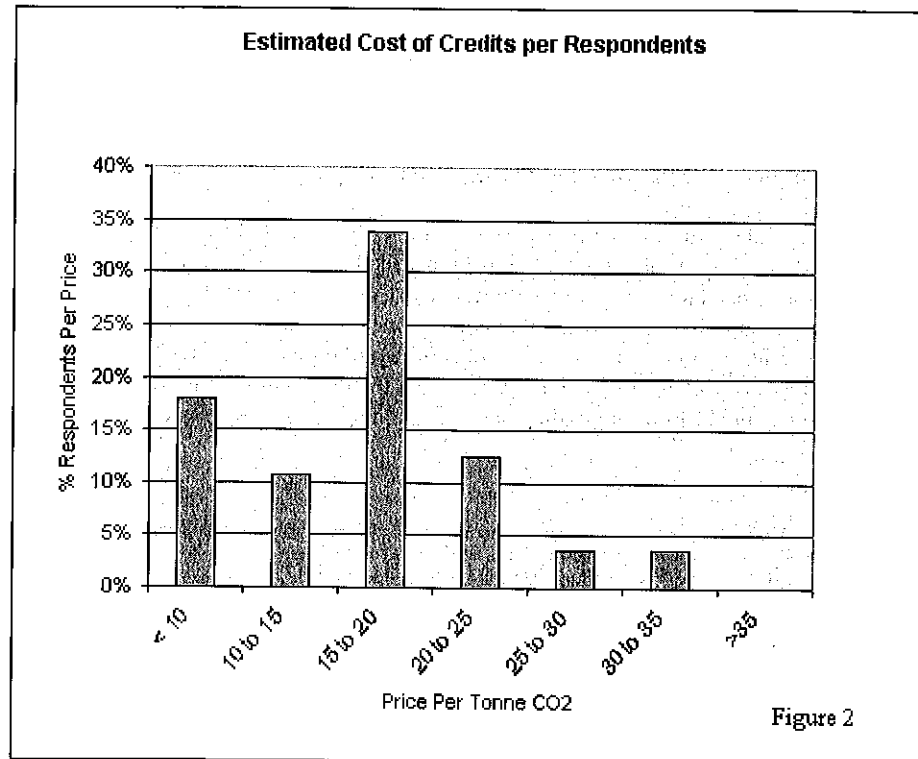


Figure 1

Interestingly, less than 20% cited cost of additional permits as a concern. This may relate to the anticipated costs of the permits. Most respondents anticipate a cost of €15 to €20 per tonne CO₂ emitted as shown in Figure 2. The details regarding the marginal abatement costs were not included in the survey; however, further studies regarding this issue would provide additional guidance for policy makers.



In conclusion, emissions trading is a policy instrument being used to limit CO² emissions in the EU. This is the latest version of government trying to meet environmental goals while still maintaining a robust economy. This is a tall order with many different complexities facing the regulator, those in the business sector, and society in general. In 2007 we are approaching the end of the trial period and entering the time period where these issues carry more weight since the Kyoto Protocol's legally binding targets begin in 2008. Whether emissions trading will result in reduced emissions overall remains an element of epistemic uncertainty. It is clear, however, that businesses will bear costs associated with CO² production and the related climate change impacts.

(Jackie McGloughlin is a 3rd Year Single Honours student)

Notes:

- 1 DOEHLG. (2006) Ireland's Pathway to Kyoto Compliance.
- 2 The figures are calculated using the low current market price of €4.05/tonne for 16 January 2007, <http://www.point-carbon.com/>. The high end average of €30/tonne was reported in the ICF Consulting report submitted to the DEOI in 2006: Determining the Share of National Greenhouse Gas Emissions for Emissions Trading in Ireland 2008-2012: Summary for Policymakers (p. 6), [http://www.environ.ie/DOEI/DOEIPol.nsf/0/48bc4a2b3cb6210380256f0f003bc858/\\$FILE/ICF-BOC%20Summary%20for%20Policymakers.pdf](http://www.environ.ie/DOEI/DOEIPol.nsf/0/48bc4a2b3cb6210380256f0f003bc858/$FILE/ICF-BOC%20Summary%20for%20Policymakers.pdf), accessed 2 November 2006.

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Mount Everest
(Source: www.acrossthedivide.com)

The Irish Everest Expedition – On top of the world

John Bourke

The resounding success story and the powerful images of endurance and courage that come alive for virtually all Irish people when Everest is mentioned today is the finest tribute that could be given to the splendid endeavour that was the Irish Mount Everest Expedition 1993.

What was it all about? At one level it was merely a bunch of Irish climbers tackling Everest from its more difficult north side, satisfied in themselves that they could between them reach the world's highest summit. At another level, it represented a culminating point in the climbing careers – long personal odysseys of ice and snow techniques being honed, of experience being gained, of successes being achieved on the world's mountains – of some of Ireland's finest climbers. The priceless reward which had been obtained from climbing was the self knowledge which they had in abundance. Self knowledge learned from living with the mountains, from handling the extremes of mountain climates, from adapting to the thin air of the great peaks, and Everest was now a necessary constituent for that ever expanding knowledge base.

At a third level, an Irish expedition to Mount Everest in the early 1990s could be regarded as an idea whose time had come. Irish mountaineers, although few in number, and Irish mountaineering although with the lightest of formal structures and the minimum of financial support, had in the eighties been putting together an increasingly impressive record of achievement. Among Irish climbers and those committed to Irish climbing the view was emerging that Irish climbing was ready to move upward to a new plateau, that Everest should be "knocked off" the list and that a credible expedition could be mounted. The Everest Expedition was all of these things.

In 1987 Joss Lynam led the first significant Irish expedition to the Himalayas to Changtse the 7,583m peak to the immediate north of Everest. Among the members of this expedition were Frank Nugent (who was stopped by dangerous snow at the expedition's high point some 250m from the summit), Mike Barry, Dermot Somers and Leslie Lawrence. In November 1988 Frank Nugent booked the North Ridge route on Everest – the original Everest route identified in 1921 by Irishman Charles Howard-Bury and an altogether more challenging climb than the Hillary route on the south side of the mountain – with the Tibetan Mountaineering Association. The earliest date available was Spring 1993. A precursor expedition was organised with Dawson Stelfox to Manaslu (8,163m) in 1991 and the "Changtse four" were joined on this climb by Dawson Stelfox, Robbie Fenlon, Nick Stevenson and John Murray, of RTE, along with six other climbers. Exceptionally heavy snowfalls pinned the Manaslu expedition to a height of 6,100m.

On March 19 1993 after 18 months of sustained organisational effort the Expedition departed for Kathmandu. The Expedition was made up of the Changtse four, the Manaslu four, climbers Tony Burke, Richard O'Neill-Dean and Mick Murphy, doctors Kathryn Fleming and Stephen Potts, film crew Rory McKee and Brian Hayes of RTE and myself, John Bourke.

Heavy snowfalls were encountered in Nepal on an initial altitude acclimatization trek, lasting one week and reaching a height of more than 4,500m. The Expedition's Base Camp site on the Rongbuk Glacier at 5,200m was accessible by truck over some icebound terrain and was reached on April 1st after quite an adventurous journey along tibetan roads and tracks blocked at various points with snow and mud slides.

The Expedition's game plan was to establish a series of four camps at increasing heights up the mountain and to stock these camps with the fuel, food, oxygen and other equipment necessary to enable climbers, after a recuperation period at Base Camp to climb the mountain quickly. These camps were Camp Colgate (our advanced base camp) at 6,450m, Camp 1 on the North Col at 7,000m, Camp 2 on the North Ridge at 7,700m above a long snowfield and Camp 3 at 8,300m, about 200m below the juncture of the North and Northeast Ridges. Putting these camps in place was demanding in the extreme and frequently left the climbers in a state of exhaustion. Load carrying at altitude, where the oxygen content of the air is much reduced (at 6,000m the oxygen content of air is 50% of its sea level value) coupled with very low temperatures (20/40C) and very high winds (50/70mph) can only be managed by constant ongoing recuperation periods for the climbers. Only limited recovery is possible above 5,500m and accordingly it was necessary for the climbers to get back down to Base Camp at regular intervals.

The time slot April 5-May 5 was allocated to establishing the higher camps and that timetable was adhered to in the main. We were able to use yaks to transport the two tons of supplies needed higher on the mountain to Camp Colgate. The 1,000foot snow and ice climb leading to the North Col was a major technical obstacle to be overcome in the early stages. We were greatly helped in this phase of the climb by the fact that a Chinese expedition was ahead of us on the mountain. They had already pitched their camp on the North Col and in so doing had found a good route up the wall to the Col and had their fixed ropes in place. It was clear to us that they had chosen nearly the best route possible and we agreed with the Chinese that in exchange for carrying some loads for them to the North Col and to Camp 1 we could use their ropes. With the elimination of the often time consuming process of route finding, the Expedition made very good progress in these first few weeks.

Working in two teams of four: (a) Dawson, Dermot, Richard and Robbie and (b) Frank, Mike, Mike and Tony, the camps were established and stocked. The climbers were sleeping at higher altitudes and were creating new Irish height records, if not by the day then by the week. This was the period when the foundations were laid for the ultimately successful assault on the summit. It finished on May 8 when Richard and Tony, together with Sherpa Khunke – the Expedition's one high altitude Sherpa, failed to establish Camp 3. Tony turned back at 7,900m with incipient frostbite. Richard became the first Irishman to break the 8,000m

mark when he dumped his loaded rucksack at 8,050m while Khunke actually left his rucksack at the Camp 3 site. Camp 3 had been established but we had got some gear and a tent to the 8,300m campsite.

The weather patterns for Everest show that the most likely period for stable conditions in the pre-spring monsoon season is from about the first week in May to the end of the month. The planning of our summit attempts was based around this weather window. Get everything in place by the first week in May, have the climbers well rested and move quickly when the settled breaks of weather occur. While progress had not been exactly to plan, which necessitated some rethinking in regard to the make-up and structure of the summit teams, nevertheless we were substantially in the position we had hoped to be in by this point in May.

However, the next two weeks brought a different story. Arrangements had been made with the British Meteorological Survey whereby they would supply us with 24 hour and 48 hour wind speed forecasts and, later in May, we got forecasts for up to three days ahead. The forecasts kept coming in for high winds and we got high winds. Once or twice short abatements were predicted but they didn't materialise. The climbers moved back up the mountain as far as the North Col in one such short interval but were driven down again. The month was well on when our chance materialised. Weaker winds were forecast and on May 23 the first summit team of Dawson, Frank and Mike together with Khunke Sherpa moved up from Camp Colgate to Camp 1. The next day they climbed up to Camp 2 while the second summit team of Mick, Robbie and Tony moved from Colgate to Camp 1. On May 25 the winds had increased such that no movement up the ridge was possible and the climbers spent a frustrating day tent bound. In order to conserve oxygen supplies at Camp 2 Mike went down to Camp 1. The wind had dropped again on May 26 and the teams climbed on up the mountain. That evening saw Dawson and Frank installed in Camp 3, Khunke having been carried to Camp 3 was back down at Camp 1 and the second team was sleeping at Camp 2.

May 27 – "Everest Calling Rongbuk" was Dawson's radio call from the summit to Base Camp at 4.30pm and we knew that our self belief was intact. Starting with Frank from Camp 3 at 5.15am deep snow caused progress in the morning to be slow and it was 8.30am before the Northeast Ridge was reached. Frank had problems with his oxygen equipment and had turned back from 8,680m about two hours later at 10.30am. Dawson got back to Camp 3 in the dark about 11.00pm. Frank, together with Robbic and Tony, who had climbed up from Camp 2 were there to welcome him back with all our shared pride. Mick having given his oxygen supplies to Robbie and Tony at 7,900m earlier in the day had subsequently climbed on for some hours before descending to Camp 1.

The next morning climbing up quickly Robbie and Tony got to the Northeast Ridge by 7.00am but the weather looked very threatening and they decided to call it a day at that point. They descended to Camp 3, joined up with Frank and Dawson and together headed down the ridge towards the North Col and Camp Colgate. This proved to be a very wise decision as the weather deteriorated rapidly with a lot of snow coming down, making the climbing treacherous in avalanche prone conditions. Stripping the camps as they descended everyone, with the exception of Tony who spent the night at Camp 1 reached Colgate on the 28. By the following night, May 29, the whole Expedition with all its gear was back in Base Camp.

The first Irish ascent of Everest had been achieved by climbing the original 1921 or Mallory Irvine route and this climb by Dawson Stelfox, also a British citizen, was in fact the first British ascent from the North side of Everest.

As the weeks passed the Expedition members became very conscious, through feedback from Ireland via our satellite communications system, that there was an enormous public at home willing the Expedition success. This interaction through the Pat Kenny Show with Dermot Somers and Leslie Lawrence acting as the voice of the Expedition and through Lorna Siggins' fine reporting in *The Irish Times* was a totally unexpected phenomenon. The knowledge of that support was of immense value to us throughout the duration of the Expedition and we are privileged to share our success with all.

A record of this Expedition was made by RTE – this constituted an epic in itself with John and Jangbu Sherpa of the film crew working as high as Camp 2 on the North Ridge.

(John Bourke was a member of the first conquest of Mount Everest by an Irish expedition, This article originally published in *Shell People*, Autumn 1993, Issue 3)



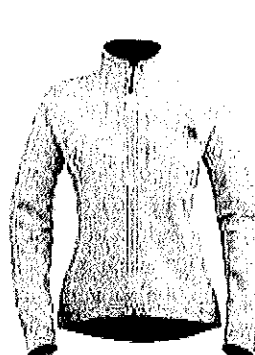
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Tabhacht ár n-Óidhreachta

Paula Fitzsimons

'Thugas iarracht ar mheon na ndaoine a bhí i mo thimpeall a chur síos chun go mbeadh a dtuairisc inár ndiaidh mar ná beidh ár leithéidí arís ann.'

Tomás Ó Criomtháin
An t-Oileánach
1855-1937

Is í an Ghaeilge an teanga scríofa is ársa cé is smúite den Laidin agus den Ghréigis le feiceáil ann, féach ar na lámhscríbhinní ornáideacha ealaíonta cáiliúla a scríobh na manaigh sna meánaoiseanna mar shampla. Tá litríocht den scoth againn ón Rúraíocht go dtí an lá atá inniu ann. Chomh maith leis seo tá gluaiseacht na ngaelscoileanna ag dul ó neart go neart agus tuismitheoirí ag éileamh oideachas trí Ghaeilge - ag cruthú go bhfuil céatadán mór den pobal ag iarraidh an teanga a chaomhnú agus a chur chun cinn. Ní féidir a shéanadh go bhfuil tábhacht mhór ag baint leis na nGaeltachtaí mar fhoinse do shuibhreas na teanga.

'Is glas iad na cnoic i bhfad uainn'. Bhí an t-ádh liom anuraidh agus fuair mé agus cúpla cara deis cúpla seachtaine a chaith sa Ghaeltacht Dún Chaoin i gCiarraí - "an paróiste is giorra do Mheiriceá". Is í an Ghaeilge gnáth-theanga na ndaoine anseo go fóill ach faraor gear is é an Béarla an teanga is fearr leis an ndream óg a labhairt. É sin ráite áfach is léir go bhfuil muintir na pharóiste an-bhródúil as a gcultúr agus a ndúchas féin.

Ba í 'Brú Óige' an t-ainm a dtugadh ar mo lóistín. Bhí sé an-chompordach, agus cúig nóiméad ón Ionad (nó timpeall is tríocha soicind ar an rothair!). 'Séard atá i gceist agam anseo ná 'Ionad an Bhlascaoid Mhóir'. Tógadh an tIonad 'mar chomhairle ómóis don oidhreacht shuaithinseach a bhí ar an mBlascaodaí agus mar ómós dár dteanga dhúchais'. Osclaíodh an tIonad go hoifigiúil ar an 6ú Aibreán 1994 agus costas £3.8 milliún ar an bhfoirgneamh. Tá fhios againn gur tháinig 75% den chostas ó Chiste Struchtúr an Aontais Eorpaigh. Is é an aidhm ná Páirc Náisiúnta Stairiúla a dhéanamh den Bhlascaoid Mór.

Rud a chuaigh go mór i bhfeidhm ormsa ná scéal Bab Feiritéar. Rugadh Bab i mBaile na hAbha i nDún Chaoin. Fuair a máthair bás dem dhroim. Mhair a hathair críonna in aontíos leis Bab agus a hathair. Chaith sé an lá suite cois tine ag dúnaireacht agus ag insint scéalta. Bhíodh Bab faoi dhraíocht na scéalta agus thosaigh siad ag dul i bhfeidhm uirthi. Nuair a tháinig sí ar scoil ba chuimhin léi a múinteoir Brid Ní Lúing ó Bhaile an Fheirtéaraigh ag insint scéalta beaga dóibh. Scéalta cosúil leis 'An Caitín agus An Luch' agus 'Cearc an Phrompa'. Nuair a bhí sí níos sine bhí múinteoir eile aici, an máistir, Muiris Ó Dálaigh. D'inis sé dóibh ceisteanna a chur ar a muintir faoi na sean scéalta a bhí acu. Mhuscail sé suim inti.

Thug Bab ansin go raibh tábhacht le seanchas agus scéalaíocht. Thosaigh sí ag insint scéalta agus ag deireadh a saol bhí na céadta scéil ina ceann aici nuair a fuair sí bás anuraidh. Ceann de na seanchaí is fearr in Éirinn a bhí ann. Bhailigh an roinn béaloideas i UCD cuid de na scéalta a bhí ag Bab chun iad a chaomhnú. Ag ceann den ár laethanta deireanacha bhí turas againn timpeall Dún Chaoin le Gráinne, duine de na mná a oibríodh san Ionad. Thaispeáin Gráinne teach Bab dúinn. D'inis sí dúinn go raibh an pobal áitiúil fós ag caoineadh a bás agus cinnte nuair a sheasamar ag féachaint ar a teach, mhothaigh muid páirt bheag den bhrón sin.

'An té nach bhfuil láidir ní foláir dó bheith glic' ná an seanfhocail agus is féidir an méid sin a rá faoi muintir na nOileán. Gan aon dabht bhíodar an-seiftiúil. Fuairéamar an deis cuairt a thabhairt ar an t-oileán. Chuaigh muid isteach chuig an t-oileán ar bád bheag agus bhí an chraic againn ar an mbealach. Bhí an t-ádh linn agus chonaicamar deifl nó dhó agus ar ndóigh tháinig na ceamaraí amach! Bhuaileamar le Mícheál Ó Dubhshláine, príomhoide Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Gobnait i nDún Chaoin agus ba fear breá cairdiúil ab ea é, suimiúil agus gealgháireach a bhí ann. Thug Mícheál turas dúinn timpeall na hoileáin. Thug sé go leor eolais dúinn agus spreag sé an suim atá fós agam anois in san Bhlascaoid Mhóir.

Is cúis bhróid dúinn é an saibhreas litríochta ón mBlascaod. Scéalta ó daoine cosúil le Thomáis Criomhtháin, Mhuiris Uí Shúilleabháin agus Pheig Sayers. Fuair mé tuiscint níos doimhne faoi tábhacht ár n-oidhreacht tar éis an dhá seachtain a chaitheamh i nDún Chaoin. Cuireann áilleacht na háite daoine faoi dhraíocht agus bíonn fonn orthu fillcadh ar ais.

'Tír gan teanga, tír gan anam' a dúirt Pádraig Mac Piarais agus aontaím go hiomlán leis an ráiteas seo. Is mór an trua é nach labhraimid mar tír ár dteanga dhúchais. Teanga álainn beómhair is í an Ghaeilge. Teanga beomhar go háirithe i gcontae Chiarraí nuair a chloiseann tú na seanleids agus iad ag caint go tapaigh istigh sna tí tábhairne! Mar is eol do chách is é an Ghaeltacht an tseoid chultúrtha is luachmhaire atá againn sa tír seo. Mealltar an-chuid cuairteoirí idir Éireannaigh agus eachtrannaigh chuig an Ghaeltacht. Is iomaí dalta a chaitheadh tréimhse sa Ghaeltacht i rith an tsamhraidh agus eagraítear cúrsaí i ngach Gaeltacht timpeall na tíre, ó thuaidh, ó dheas, thiar agus thoir. Cabhraíonn siad go mór le daoine feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge agus is minic gurb í an tréimhse sa Ghaeltacht is mó a spreagadh spéis sa teanga. Is ceart dúinn gach tacaíocht a thabhairt do mhuintir na Gaeltachta chun na Gaeltachtaí a chaomhnú ó bhrú an Bhéarla.

Baineann teanga náisiúnta le féiniúlacht an náisiúin. Má fhaigheann an teanga bás gheobhaidh gnó luachmhar dár bhféiniúlacht bás freisin. 'Beatha teanga í a labhairt' - Ba cheart dúinn an méid Gaeilge atá againn a úsáid le mórtas!

(Is mac léinn céim mháistreachta í Paula Fitzsimons faoi láthair)

The Geography of the Fashion Phenomenon

Sandra Walsh

Fashion is mystifying, fascinating, irritating and most of all obsessive. And it seems the importance of haute couture has the globe in its greedy grip. Within recent years, concepts of appropriate attire, taking into account ethnicity, native origin, and individualism has given way to standardised, somewhat uniform, branded attire. This uniformed globe has globalisation to thank. Standardised products became the trend during the post-Fordist era, this was encouraged by the media, and endorsed by celebrities appearing on cinema screens world wide, idyllic styles were created and became objects of desire. Increasing incomes, improved life styles and more leisure time, lead to such desires becoming "must-haves", thus enforcing the replacement of mass production with batch production to provide the new millennium's populace with the short shelf life garments and accessories that adorn the glossy magazines, clothe the socialites and creates a global catwalk.

It is no longer a case of owning a pair of shoes, it is a case of how many you own. The branding of clothing and footwear which became more obvious from the 1970s has become a global phenomenon reaching the urban, the rural and the remote. A trend that stretches from Times Square New York, all the way to Sub-Saharan Africa as Sir Bob Geldof found on his travels through Africa. When asking scarcely clad children in a small African village what they would most like Sir Bob was astonished to hear the answer, they dreamed of one day owning a pair of Nike runners. A classic example of the globalisation of brand names.

The price is not a problem for your average glamour-puss, after all who can put a price on quality, style and fashion, those who sew the fabric together that's who. The price? Their health, their lives!

Now, here's a task for you, not a difficult one I assure, find five items they can be any thing that you would assume to be made in a factory and possibly distributed worldwide. How many of them are made in developing countries, countries trying to rekindle their economy and grasping at any straws that will get them on the first or second rung of the development ladder? Two items, maybe three, or perhaps all of them. If they could speak, unrealistic yes, but let's use our imaginations, and allow the facts to back them up, what would they reveal?

They would describe the harsh conditions the factory employees endure to ensure they can provide for their families the necessities they require to stay alive, and remain in bearable health. Where such a hard working and eager workforce is available there is bound to be someone willing to take advantage. These are the garment factory owners whose aim is to produce as much high quality pieces of apparel as possible for as little as possible, with the intention of finishing each piece with an internationally recognised label, such as Nike, Adidas, Polo etc.

The conditions the factory employees endure range from poor working environment, incredibly long hours, poor wages, and sexual harassment most often directed at the female employees, (Sachs, 2005)

An example of such factory is the Tung Tat Factory in China which is the main manufacturer of

Adidas garments, producing the tops, tracksuits and bags found on our very own shop racks. They may look nice, colourful and expensive but behind each stitch there's a horror story. A story that involves working 75-87.5 hours a week and receiving only 22 cents an hour in payment. Employees are fined if they are caught talking or resting. They often take anti-dozing tablets to keep themselves awake. When they retire for the evening it's to a dorm room with poor facilities and no privacy. These are the people who make the clothes we flaunt to our friends, the clothes we buy liberally with our credit cards and end up donating them to charity, perhaps ending up in the very country from which they originated. It is us the consumer who has caused this manipulation by our superficial attitudes to style. (Kleine, 2005)

Protests, such as those in favour of boycotting "Made in China" produce, use the basis that economic growth can be aligned with military expansion, thus increasing the likelihood of China acquiring enough power to seek control within the global economy through possible warfare.

The other argument however is in favour of concentrating and supporting factories set up in developing countries, as it will put them on the developing ladder, even if it is the very bottom rung, (Sachs, 2005)

So, can it be that our superficial nature is helping those less fortunate to reach our standards of living? As we have seen the clothing industry is divided into two groups, one group is used and abused for their labour, the other group dress to impress. Should it continue, the developed world can remain proudly outfitted in the latest attire. However if we return to our traditional seamstresses and tailors, are we further promoting this inequality, and hindering global development completely?

(Sandra Walsh is a 2nd Year Single Honours student)

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Mapping the Pope's Children or Sic transit gloria mundi¹

Dr. Ronan Foley

Introduction

As a University lecturer it's not often that one gets a phone call with questions based on comments ascribed to one's self in one of the nation's best-selling books. David McWilliams' immensely popular *The Pope's Children*, quoted research by a team of NUI Maynooth staff which identified the fact that almost six in ever ten residents of Athlone were commuters (McWilliams, 2005; 42-43). Apart from being a fairly wilful misinterpretation of the data quoted by the researchers (the figure actually includes commuting to the suburbs of Athlone itself!), it was encouraging that some attention was being given, however fleetingly, to research by social and economic geographers (Walsh et. al., 2007). In recent years, an increased awareness of the importance of strategic spatial planning has emerged and of the extent to which concepts such as place and space really matter. An enhanced understanding of the geography of living and of the economy requires not only a knowledge of where people and objects are but also of how those places relate to one another. This requires fundamentally sound data on movement patterns, of which the most important is probably the daily journey to work (Horner, 1999). Another feature of the social and economic adjustments in Ireland between 1995 and 2007 that has had a bearing on journey to work patterns has been the increase in car ownership-ship levels. Between 1991 and 2002 the proportion of households with at least one car increased from 59.5% to 78.3%. In absolute terms the number of households with at least two cars increased by more than five-times from 87,174 to 478,660 and the total number of cars owned by private households increased from

445,226 to 1,601,619 or by 360%! With the imminent release of 2006 data it will be interesting to see if these patterns have intensified or diminished.

Essentially, the aim of this short piece is to draw attention to a key data set called the Place of Work Sample of Anonymised Records (POWSAR), prepared by the CSO for the first time in 2002. It was drawn from an anonymised national sample of approximately 13.5% of all working individuals aged over 15 (CSO, 2004). This was a relatively large sample size when compared to other countries². Additionally, and unlike other anonymised samples, it focused on a particular topic, travel to and the location of work. Two other elements were also unusual about the data set. Firstly it recorded geography to the same spatial resolution as the overall census results, namely the electoral division (ED). Secondly it recorded data for both the home and the place of work of the individuals in the samples, thereby providing the first ever set of origin-destination data collected for the entire State. This differed significantly from previous ED level aggregations, which only contained origin related data and no destination information of any sort.

The POWSAR data is an extremely rich dataset and makes possible a large amount of analysis of labour force patterns, links between employment and social class, homeworking, household type and work patterns as well as allowing for cross-tabulations between work mobility, age, gender and migration.

POWSAR Structure

The POWSAR data was generously provided by the CSO, for use by the Department of Geography and the National Centre for GeoComputation (NCG) at the NUI Maynooth. The full sample contained a total of 220,470 individual records sampled across the whole country. The codes and descriptions of the POWSAR variables are listed in Table 1 below. Most of the variables are self evident from the description listed in the table.

Table 1: Codes and Descriptions of POWSAR variables

CODE	DESCRIPTION
Planning Reg	Panning region
County	Home county
ED	Home Enumeration district
Town	Home town (if over 1,500 people)
Resident Persons	Number of residents in household
Household Composition	Household composition - 5 classes
Year Built	Year accommodation built
Nature of Occupancy	Type of household tenure
Cars or Vans	Number of available cars and vans
Sex	Gender
Age Grp	Five year groups
Martial Status	Marital status
Res One Year Flag	Whether resident has moved in last yr
Travel	Mode of tvl to work, schl or college
Dep time	Time of departure
In_miles	Journey distance in miles
In_mins	Journey time in minutes
POW_ed	ED location code for workplace
POWTownCty	Town or county code for workplace
Seg	Socio-Economic group code
IndustrialGroup	Industrial Group (8 codes)
ILOHours	Hours worked in previous week
Wgtpersons	Grossing Factor (no. of persons assigned to record in samples)

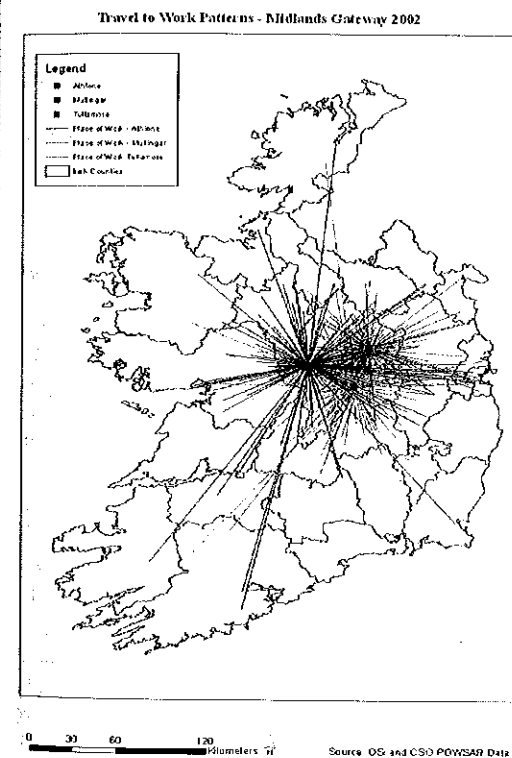
POWSAR Geography

The size of the sample varied from county to county and from town to town. Four main levels of geography were contained within the sample. The Planning Region (n=8) was recorded, as was the County (n=34). The ED was also recorded (n=3,440). A final level of geography was the Census Town (n=183) where the sampled individual lived. As well as recording the ED codes for the place of residence and work, this dataset also contained codes of the letters B (Place of work address blank or uncodeable), M (Mobile Worker) and W (Works mainly at or from home). When missing and mobile workers are excluded, the sample size was 185,803. As a county sample, this averaged out at 13.45% with a range from 12.7% in Dublin and Galway to 14.1% in Louth. Numerically, the samples ranged from 1,019 in Leitrim to 24,237 in Dublin City. The average county sample size was 5,465.

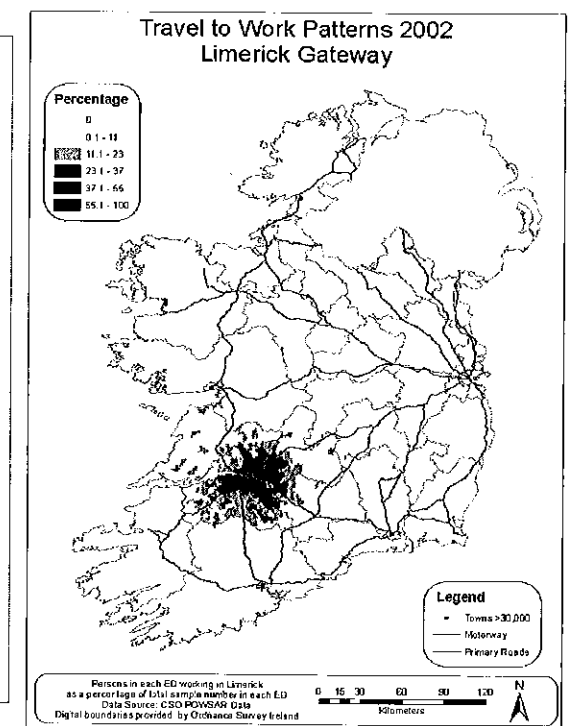
While much work went into its' preparation, attached below are some visual examples of how the data was used. Within a GIS for example it was possible to use two visual methods to show the extents and intensities respectively, of individual town's work catchments. The first (Figure 1a) used a spider-mapping algorithm to show the visual spread of mobility between home and workplace for the three 'Midland Gateway' towns of Mullingar, Athlone and Tullamore. The second approach (Figure 1b) used point-in-polygon modelling within a GIS to produce a count of the total numbers associated with each ED.

Figure 1. Sample Visualisations of Travel to Work Catchments, 2002

a) Midlands Gateway



b) Limerick City



Ways Forward

Apart from its ability to help visually map travel to work catchments, the POWSAR data can also be interpreted within statistical packages such as SPSS to analyse data for broad work locations. For example it was possible using the data set to quickly identify the number of sampled commuters who left County Louth daily to work in Dublin Airport. This was possible because we knew the county code for County Louth (10) and we knew the ED code for the Airport (04001). In fact from the sample, we knew there were actually 53 such people. Even more interestingly by analysing this sub-group within SPSS, we knew that of those 53 people, 35 were men, a staggering 46 (86.7%) travelled by car, 24 were married and 9 were in Social Classes 1 or 2. This ability to start to demographically model both specific groups of commuters and to an extent individual employment hubs is one of the reasons why the data was of interest to authors such as McWilliams with his interests in combining social, spatial and economic modelling. This of course is not news to geographers who have working in the area of geodemographics for decades, but certainly the POWSAR dataset enabled the quality of that modelling to be much improved.

As yet this dataset is relatively under-explored, but may get a new lease of life with the release towards the end of 2007 or in early 2008 of the POWSAR data for the 2006 Census. This new version will potentially have two quite staggering innovations. Firstly, it is the intention of the CSO to make this a full 100% dataset and secondly, they intend to add a sub-ED level geography based on a 100 metre grid co-ordinate into the coding. The intention is that this dataset will be also be made more widely available for both academic and public use. While some effort is needed for its conversion into a GIS-friendly product, the ability to quickly and effectively analyse the data within programmes like SPSS should make this indispensable to both student's and best selling authors' alike in the future. As with all data sets, however the devil is in the interpretation. Caveat lector, as it were.

(Dr. Ronan Foley, Department of Geography, NUI Maynooth)

Endnotes

1 Sic transit gloria mundi is a Latin phrase that means "Thus passes the glory of the world", but is more commonly interpreted as "Fame is fleeting". It is also a phrase used in Papal coronations.

2 The UK has only recently upgraded its Sample of Anonymised Records (SAR) from an individual survey of 2% in 1991 to 3% in 2001.

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Hands up if you're in!

Adrienne Hobbs

The credibility of the Republic of Ireland's electoral register has attracted much media attention lately, with seemingly thousands of names being on the register when they shouldn't, and equally thousands of names not being on it when they should. The government is aware of the problem and has set about tackling it (albeit somewhat belatedly). Setting up an intensive *three* month multi-media campaign, Minister for Environment Dick Roche (2006) declared that he would "improve the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the electoral register". Print media, radio, television and even Dublin Bus were all going to carry the message that in order to vote, you must be registered to vote. Simple, what could be easier?

The reality however has turned out not to be so simple. *The Sunday Tribune* (2006a) has been to the forefront in highlighting electoral register problems, predicting "an election fiasco as thousands lose the right to vote" and pointing to the register being incorrect by up to 860,000 names. Acting on strict instructions from the Minister, county councils countrywide conducted door-to-door investigations in order to update their individual registers. Unless people were in when the council called to their door, or alternatively unless they responded to a council letter confirming their registration status, it appeared that many names were going to be removed from the register. Many of these would have been people who would have always been registered but who did not understand the necessity and urgency of replying to such council letters.

Take for example Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council. It issued 19,000 warning letters to people in December 2006 advising that they were about to be removed from the electoral register if they did not confirm their status. However after receiving legal advice the council was forced to rescind this warning, claiming that only those who the council was sure should not be on the register would have their names removed from it. The minister took issue with the council (2007) stating that it had never been his intention to remove people from the electoral register. So what therefore, was the point of the register cleanup exercise?

Recently *The Irish Independent* (2007) reported that there were 11,000 more people on the register for Laois, Offaly and Westmeath than their official respective population figures. Highland Radio (2007) claimed that there are still serious concerns over the quality of the register in Donegal, advising that thousands of people were wrongfully removed from it and that 7000 claims for correction to the draft register for Donegal were received. Galway City's and Waterford City's electoral registers also appear to be in complete disarray according to Fionnan Sheahan (2007), reporting that almost a quarter of the adult population are missing from these registers.

The completed draft register was released at the beginning of February 2007 but according to *The Sunday Tribune* (2006b) it is still 'out' by more than 575,000 voters. So what are the implications of this? Well, the possibility for electoral fraud is made more likely with so many extra polling cards about to be issued to people who either are dead, or do not live at the address the cards are being issued against. The Minister has promised strict vigilance at polling stations to counteract electoral fraud. The possibility is that come election day we may even be asked for photo identification (sic).

There is also the possibility that some of the results for the forthcoming 2007 General Election could be challenged. We have all become used to recounts in Irish general elections with Dáil seats sometimes being determined by a handful of votes. If this happens in a constituency where there is genuine concern over the quality of the electoral register, a lengthy legal battle could ensue. Kavanagh et al (2006) contend that problems with the electoral register dampen rather than cause voter turnout differences across the country. However arguments over tightly contested results in the 2007 General Election are bound to centre on electoral register quality.

A snapshot of other electoral registers worldwide, show that Ireland is not alone is experiencing difficulties. *The Irish Times* (2006) reported that there was huge concern in Northern Ireland over its electoral register having 82,000 fewer voters than the same time last year. However 'the North' has always pushed for people to be aware of their registration status. As a result of rolling registration chief electoral officer Douglas Bain stated in January 2007 that 40,489 more voters have registered to vote. He claims that Northern Ireland's register is "by far the most accurate and comprehensive anywhere in these islands."

In Nigeria (2007) a determined governmental push for electronic voter registration has not been that successful, with machines and personnel proving not to be up to the task. States and civil society groups have stepped into the affray. Some states have taken the draconian step of threatening to have social welfare benefits denied those who refuse to register. Civil servants may have their salaries withheld if they do not register, market women may lose their stalls if they do not register, churchgoers have been urged from the pulpit to all go and register. The irony of these heavy handed, democratically dubious tactics is that it is expected that the number of registered voters in Nigeria will have tripled by the end of the January 2007.

The electoral register in the recent Venezuelan presidential election held in late 2006 swelled by some 34%, claimed opposition leader Pablo Medina (2007). He maintains that foreign nationals were allowed vote, identify cards were granted arbitrarily and that even voting machines were programmed for "bi-directional communication". So it is clear therefore that electoral register problems are not exclusively an Irish problem.

Inadequacies with electoral registers are not just recent phenomena. In July 1945 after guiding his country to victory in World War II, Winston Churchill was inadvertently left off Britain's electoral register and temporarily disenfranchised (1945). As recently as last year, during the USA mid-term elections Chelsea Clinton found she too was unable to vote through an administrative slip-up (2006). In an interview given to this writer in 2006 one high profile politician admitted to being registered in two constituencies, but of course only voted in the one she was standing in during the 2002 General Election!

In Ireland there have been various suggestions about how to improve the electoral register. Fine Gael's suggestion (2006) that once a person is granted a Personal Public Service Number (PPS) that they be automatically added to the electoral register was not acted upon by the current government. Initiatives such as the establishment of Comhairle na nÓg (Young Peoples' City Council), under the auspices of the Dublin City Development Board helps generate interest in political issues and civic obligation. Comhairle na nÓg is designed to attract 13-17 year-olds to be able to have a say in "decision making and local democracy [... and] "also facilitates representatives to attend Dáil na nÓg" (Dublin City Council, 2006). Once interest in political participation has been stimulated, one would imagine that children and teenagers who were involved in Comhairle na nÓg would be more likely to *want* to register once they turn 18 years old.

The Students Union of Ireland's (USI) plan (2006) to register students in both their home constituency and the constituency of their college failed to materialise. This plan, being both ill-conceived and illegal meant that the union failed to reach its target of registering 15,000 extra student voters. However it did highlight the fact that according to the Union's figures, 30% of students do not vote in elections.

The Southside Traveller Action Group (STAG) has been encouraging Travellers to call to its centre where they will be helped with their registration. This is particularly pertinent among Travellers as literacy problems are common among this group. STAG is also carrying out voter education classes to encourage their members to play an active part in the forthcoming 2007 General Election. Efforts by STAG and USI do show that in order to increase voter registration levels the government must not only make the process easier, but also reach out to people in different ways than heretofore.

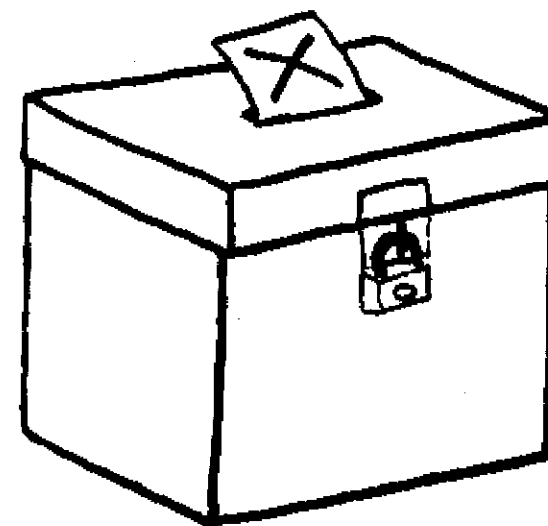
By the time of *Milieu's* publication the new Draft Register of Electors should have been published. However it is possible to get yourself onto the Supplementary Register, up to 15 working days before polling day. Go to www.citizensinformation.ie and follow the links to 'voting' for more information. Studies in the United States (1993) have shown that inequality in participation is increased when fewer people are actively involved in political activity. Voter apathy appears to be increasing but surely it is only by registering, and then going out and actually voting that you have the right to challenge politicians on their policies and decisions.

So the challenge for those in power is to establish an electoral register we can have confidence in, and then to convince political sceptics that it is worthwhile turning out to vote. Voter turnout for the 2002 General Election was the lowest since the foundation of the state. It will be interesting to see what the figures are for May 2007. And if you really have missed the latest deadline to get on the electoral register? No need to panic as there is always the 2009-Local Elections to come!

(Adrienne Hobbs is a MLitt student)

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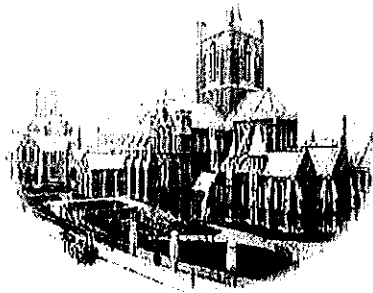
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Christchurch Cathedral

Emma O'Beirne

"The church was standing empty,
The pub was standing packed,
There came a yell, "Noel, Noel!"
And glasses they got cracked.
From up above the fireplace,
Christmas cards began to fall,
And trodden on the floor, said:
"Merry Christmas, to you all."

"Goodwill To Men
- Give Us Your Money"
(Pam Ayres)



During December our thoughts naturally turn to the festive feelings of the season, and whether you are atheist, agnostic or wearing your cross on your sleeve, no other place can truly embody the real meaning of the season as Christchurch Cathedral in the heart of our old city.

The humorous words of Pam Ayres reflect the typical Christmas where all bodies cram into the pub instead of the chapel. Not so in Christchurch. From early December the church will be filled with worshippers attending the Advent Procession. This dramatic prayer service sees the congregation enter a darkened cathedral lit only with thousands of candles and are taken through the Old Testament in a symphony of music, song, light and colour.

This candle lit service celebrated by the people of Dublin in Christchurch on December 3rd harks back to the Cathedrals origins in medieval Dublin. Doubtlessly the first 800 years of the cathedrals history were candle lit!

This proud Church has seen every stage of the development of our city from Viking to the modern day and is truly a testament to the lasting heritage and importance of the cathedral in the cities consciousness. The beginnings of the church dates back to the 11th century where a wooden Viking Church was established on the site of the foundations of Viking Dublin near Wood Quay. From these humble beginnings the church rose to the seat of The Church of Ireland in 1871 in direct competition with St. Patrick's just a short mile away.

Established in 1030AD by a sprightly sounding sort, King Sitric Silkbeard, at the heart of the old medieval town and within the medieval walls, Christchurch was known as the Church of the Holy Trinity. This hardy Viking King of Dublin sent his army at the Battle of Clontarf, but wisely did not take part, instead preferring to take time to establish the oldest crypt and church in Dublin's history with Bishop Dunan.

The crypt that now sits under the current structure dates back to the twelfth century stretches the whole length of the building and is the only one of its kind in Britain and Ireland. This crypt, along with the more modern building, dates from 1172 when it was appointed by Strongbow, the infamous Norman leader of Dublin and Archbishop O' Toole.

Several restoration periods took place over the centuries including 1358, 1562, 1829 and 1871. It seems at the time alcoholic sponsorship was as popular as it is today when both St. Patrick's Cathedral and Christ Church were renovated with the help of the Guinness and Roe family respectively.

The existing building dates from Victorian times when around 1871 renovations by George Edward Street were funded by whiskey distiller Henry Roe to the tune of almost £230,000. In Euro almost 140 years

later this modest figure reaches a staggering €2.3 million!! In direct competition with St. Patrick's Cathedral which was built humbly in a plain Romanesque style, Christ Church was built in the totally opposite manner, where grandeur, ceremony and opulence were the order of the day.

Perhaps the most lasting memory of the Christmas season is the bells of Christ Church ringing in the New Year. At midnight the bells peal in a pattern of 16 or 19 bells to warm the cockles of thousands of Dubliners who crowd around the church to hear the spirit-lifting bells of our oldest medieval church.

So in the festive season, as you dash around the frosty streets on Christmas Eve or fill the watering holes like Pam Ayres, listen carefully for Santa and his Reindeer and the bells of Christ Church Cathedral. Nollaig Shona Duit!!

(Emma O'Beirne graduated from UCD with a BA & MA, and from NUIM with H.Dip. in Education)

(Editor: Recently two of the Department's staff members, one a physical geography lecturer, the other a human geography lecturer, travelled to Cuba - the following two articles are their individual, contrasting reflections).

'Good Cubans do not need ...' Reflections on a changing Cuba

Dr. Stephen McCarron



Hurricane Dennis
storm surge limit on
South East coast

Figure 1

The physical environment

Cuba is a surprisingly mountainous ~800km long semi-tropical island, the largest in the Caribbean Sea. The country has one large urban centre, Havana, and several large provincial towns (Cuenfuegos, Santiago de Cuba, Sancti Spiritus, Trinidad). Picturesque mountain ranges dominate its northwestern and southeastern ends with the Escambray upland plateau bisecting the island in roughly two equal parts. Between these very sparsely populated uplands the island is comprised of flat, low lying plains of thick tropical lateritic soils on deeply weathered Limestone karst.

In 2005 my wife and I spent the month of July there, staying firstly at a coastal resort, and then travelling throughout the western half of the island. The island's relative scarcity of (mapped) metalled roads and complete lack of road signs make travelling by car a fairly tricky procedure. Inter-town public transport is primarily in the form of open-topped flat-bed trucks. The shared occupancy of cars on the country's few inter-town roads is forced through an official taxi-rank system at major road intersections. Tourist hire cars are exempt from the system, but in the absence of any reliable road maps, it is logistically and morally impossible to travel without a full back seat, everyone enjoying the luxury of an air-conditioned modern car interior, often for the first time.

Our experience of Cuba, and intended journey around the island, was defined by the passage of the largest storm to have crossed Cuba in many years (the Category 1 Hurricane Dennis) during the second week of the month. At that stage we were still staying at a coastal resort and were evacuated to a 1970s or 80s built large concrete hotel nearby. The abandoned hotel was quickly refitted for us, and we were able to watch the passage of the storm from relative safety. The eye of the storm's surrounding destructive wind belt passed close enough to where we were (~50km), but not close enough to cause any major structural damage, or the feared storm surge which would have drowned our low-lying coastal hotel. Watching the passage of the storm, and soon after observing the track it made across the island, I was amazed at just how small an area

the high winds covered. The centralised energy and focus of the eye was more analogous to the wandering tip of a cone-shaped spinning top than I'd appreciated.

Most of Cuba's central lowland plain, which the storm crossed, is sparsely populated and the eye was also sufficiently far away from Havana to prevent large scale loss of life. Many small towns were without electricity afterward, as heard from hotel staff and discovered on our journey around the island a week after the storm. Landfall of the eye was just far enough away from the historical town of Trinidad, founded in 1515, to spare it from destruction. Cuban rural building styles may inherently reflect these environmental dangers. Houses are generally low and squat, with terracotta roof tiles that may be easily removed, but can be easily replaced. The storm surge washing limit along the south coast can be seen in Figure 1, and some tile removal from rooftops in Matanzas (an old sugar cane plantation area just inland from Trinidad) in Figure 2 (photo taken from the Manaca-Iznaga Tower, 45m high, built in 1816 as a slave watchtower).

The human environment

It is difficult to visit Cuba and not feel the highly politicised nature of the country. The politics of the US embargo and the state's Communism pervade much of everyday life, and was the subject of many conversations with those we met. The vast majority of Cubans are unquestionably financially poor. However Cuba's literacy rates and life expectancy both exceed the USA's. The higher life expectancy is possibly a combination of widespread community based health care and a very healthy, low processed sugar, low fat diet of mango, rice, black bean soup (delicious by the way!) and of course rum. The Cuban education system exports doctors to Africa and South America, and its health system imports patients for free eye surgery (an offer extended to USA citizens also). I did have the feeling of a hamstrung population however: with good hospitals, but no means of getting there as public transport and roads are woefully inadequate; with good education, but no employment.

A sense of pride and change

A sense of pride in independence and the control of Cuba by Cubans is strong. Application of the industry and ingenuity to succeed, despite the crippling financial and political problems, is deeply rooted in this pride and a vivid remembrance of the state's history. The famous guerrilla 'Revolution' of 1958 is celebrated by every news bulletin, and annually on the 26th July, the day marking Castro's landing with Che Guevara and his small group of Revolutionaries in the southeast of the island. When we were there, the day was marked by small televised events and a long meeting of the Government and supporters in Havana, presided over by a (then) healthy Fidel Castro. We trekked in high temperatures to La Plaza de la Revolution in Havana, hoping to catch some celebratory parade in keeping with the iconic images of the large parades of former years. The familiar image of Che, a present of the French government, overlooks the plaza. The huge Plaza was empty, bar us and another tourist couple, and an armed guard standing in 40°C heat. Government organised public rallies are apparently dwindling in popularity, and the popularity shown for Pope John Paul II's visit in 1998 was apparently a major revelation to the regime after official censure of organised religion for over 50 years. However images depicting Che Guevara are numerous throughout the island and he certainly has iconic status in the minds of many Cubanos. There was also much apprehension about the future, particularly in light of the anticipated end of Fidel Castro's reign as President and the role of the 'evictees of the Revolution' now living in Florida and warning of their intention to reclaim what is 'theirs'.

The tourism industry and the future

The need to generate inward investment has resulted in a slow economic reorganisation and partial opening to capitalist co-ventures through the policies of 'Neuvo Socialismo' (New Socialism) to the point that some countries' companies (e.g. Spain's Navarra Hotels) may operate and also take profit from the business. Such investment is particularly needed in the vital tourism industry. Shopping centres selling manufactured, imported goods, are also appearing in more affluent neighbourhoods of Havana e.g. Miramar.

Most mainstream, 'sun-seeking' tourist activity is aimed at European and Canadian tourists. Much of it occurs on the peninsula of Varadero, ~100km northwest of Havana and similar coastal sandy stretches on the south coast of the island near Trinidad and on the Cabos or small islands off the north coast. In straying from our hotel by hire-car, we discovered that Varadero is practically an 'enclave' of 'compound' hotel type accommodation. The effective partition of the hotels from the rest of the island is affected simply through the use of a toll-bridge on the roadway onto the peninsula. The prohibitively high 2 tourist dollars toll (as opposed to Pesos that the Cubans use as local currency) makes it very difficult for anyone but tourists and bussed-in hotel staff to reach the hotels. The beaches are patrolled, and we were also told by staff that Cubans could not stay in the hotels.

Nearby, extensive limestone show caves (La Cueva de Bellamar) have been open for over a century. Today they are a remote backwater part of the modern tourism industry with very dilapidated associated infrastructure. Havana is by far the most common 'packaged' excursion, usually run as an overnight trip from Varadero. Havana remains the hub of life on the western portion of the island, and still maintains world-famous jazz clubs scattered throughout its Downtown. It is a museum of Spanish colonial architecture with propped-up, crumbling 18th and 19th Century balustraded mansions rub shoulders with the worst (best?) of austere Soviet 1970s architecture in Havana. We were surprised by the totally cash economy operating there, a major change from our guide book's findings only a year or two earlier. Many enticing sounding places had also closed in the intervening years.

Economic privations and the 'Special times'

Emergency economic policies and rationing (Special Times) have been in place in Cuba since the collapse of the Soviet Union, when reliance on imports e.g. rice from North Korea and oil from the USSR largely ended overnight. The Cuban economy had concentrated largely on the production of a single product, sugar, for export. The lack of indigenous food production was surely an economic millstone that has contributed, along with the continuing blockade by the USA, to the privations of the 'Special Times'.

In 2005, roving power cuts regularly plunged whole regions of the country into darkness (e.g. at 5pm every day in Vinales, Pinar del Rio, 100km west of Havana). In reference to this necessity, and the spirit required to tolerate it, I saw a billboard on the Airport to Havana road which gave rise to the title of this piece. It showed a cartoon city skyline at night, presumably Havana, dotted by occasional lights shining from windows. A banner message spans across the top of the cartoon translated roughly to: 'Good Cubans do not need electricity all of the time'.

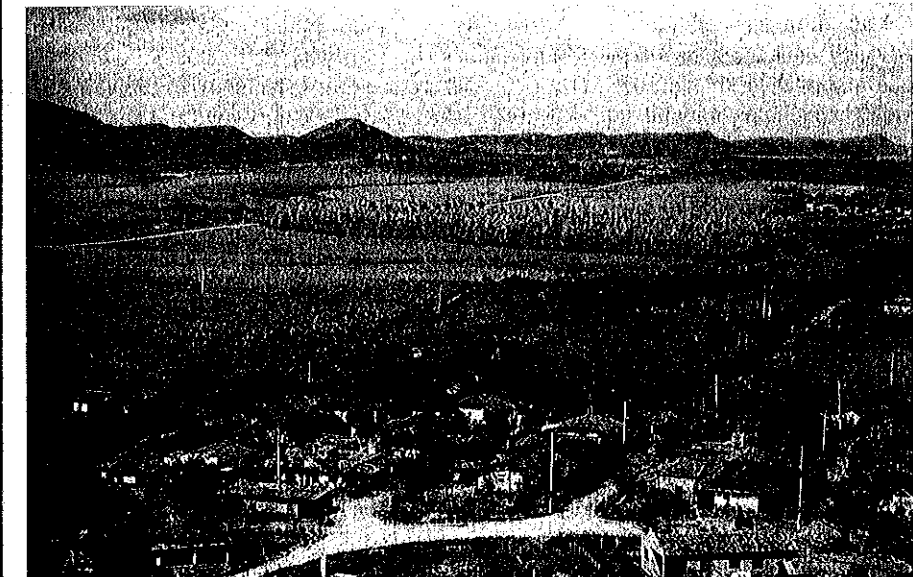


Figure 2

Matanzas and former plantations after the storm



Figure 3

'We are doing well'

Memories of better times seem to make their current impoverishment the more difficult to bear. For a long time, the common way of dealing with the economic harshness was to leave. The lure of the American dream, merely a 90mile journey by boat, is very strong in a country so imbued with a popular love of American symbols and culture. Those however who are intercepted and deported, or returned for other reasons, face a mandatory two year jail term and a lifetime on a blacklist to prevent the holding of any government or tourism-related job. Tourism-related jobs are one of the only ways to earn above the standard wage limit (~20-40 Euro a month) and therefore much sought after. We were told by the hotel staff that the 12 hour shift jobs in Varadero were supporting large extended families in the town of Cadenzas, over an hours bus ride away. Many of our accommodation proprietors were qualified doctors, dentists and teachers, who had given up their state jobs for the much more profitable tourism sector.

Many Cubans we met were tired waiting for change, no matter what the initial cause of the problems was. Much of Havana and the surrounding infrastructure is old and/or in an advanced state of disrepair. Along formerly grand thoroughfares in the city, cracked sewers run into the streets. Quite dishearteningly, we also saw evidence of much wealth in Cuba, particularly in a suburb called Sibony, on the western edge of Havana. This area contains a lot of the former homes of those who fled Cuba following the Revolution. We visited one of them, having been chauffeured there at the insistence of a relative of the owner, from whom we had sought accommodation. Relative to the rest of the country we had seen to that point, this home in Sibony was palatial. The house spread out behind high hedges, was staffed by Mexican servants, floored in marble throughout and guarded by several dogs. The owner offered us a room for 300 Cuban (Tourist) dollars a night (which we politely refused in favour of our 20 dollar room in town), 15 times the regular monthly Cuban wage. The streets were patrolled by the army as Fidel Castro, we were told, lives in this suburb also.

In many ways, Cubans are a long way towards the modern western ideal of a healthy, environmentally sustainable lifestyle. Everything is reused, life expectancy is long and obesity does not occur. But, as a taxi driver on the airport road told me in reply to my 'C'est la vie', as he changed his remoulded rear tyre yet again, it's not a life *he* would choose. However there obviously are those not leading this life. With the current transition towards a more capitalist economy in rapid progress and the tolerated outward shows of affluence, the true number of how many may never become known.

(Dr. Stephen McCarron, Department of Geography, NUI Maynooth)



Trinidad Backstreet

Reflections on a visit to Cuba Proinnsias Breathnach

There are many parallels between the histories of Ireland and Cuba. Both are small island nations with primarily Catholic populations located adjacent to major industrial superpowers whose religious affiliations are predominantly Protestant. And both spent several hundred years as colonies during which their respective economies were mainly oriented to the production of agricultural commodities for export.

Cuba became a Spanish colony at the beginning of the 16th century and was transformed into a major sugar producer based on large-scale plantations worked by slaves brought over from Africa in their hundreds of thousands. The crystallisation of a sense of national identity in the early 19th century led to the emergence of a national independence movement which was on the point of victory in 1898 when the USA intervened to take control of the country. While a Republic of Cuba was proclaimed in 1902, it remained essentially an American satellite, and over the ensuing sixty years was frequently under the rule of outright dictators or presidents of dubious electoral legitimacy. In this period, Cuba became an important offshore base of operations for the American mafia, with the capital city, Havana, emerging as a major gambling, drugs and prostitution centre.

In 1959, revolutionaries under Fidel Castro gained control of Cuba, and pursued a socialistic path of economic and social development. This included nationalisation of private enterprise, land reform, a major literacy programme, and the development of a comprehensive healthcare system. In the face of US hostility, Castro turned to the Soviet Union which became a major source of military and economic assistance and a sales outlet for Cuba's sugar crop. The dangers inherent in this high level of dependency on a single ally became apparent when, following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990, Russia and its former satellites ceased the supply of aid to, and the purchase of sugar from, Cuba.

This led to the so-called "special period" of severe austerity as Cuba struggled with shortages of oil, food and industrial products to add to the ongoing US economic blockade which had been imposed in the 1960s. However, more recently, the Cuban economy has been greatly stabilised by new trade links with the EU and China, the diversification of the economy (including the opening up of the island to foreign tourism), the discovery of indigenous oil supplies and cheap oil supplies from Venezuela.

Today, Cuba is almost a surreal experience for visitors from affluent western countries (or at least those who venture outside tourist enclaves such as Varadero and Havana's downtown tourist hotels – I met one Irish couple who had spent two days in one such hotel and had scarcely ventured more than 100 metres from the front door). Apart from the wide divided highway which runs down the centre of the island's spine,

main roads are straight out of 1950s Ireland, complete with numerous horse-drawn vehicles and mounted horses that share the road with a bizarre range of 1950s Cadillacs and other old American gas-guzzlers, Soviet-made Ladas from the 1970s and 1980s, trucks packed with passengers and modern cars and buses.

Apart from cars, trucks and horse-drawn vehicles, Cuba boasts an extraordinary array of methods of passenger conveyance, including rickshaws, coco taxis (essentially motorbikes with two passenger seats stuck onto the rear), regular buses and the so-called "camel" buses, which can accommodate several hundred passengers and are drawn by truck tractor units (these were introduced as a means of urban transport to cope with the oil shortages of the early 1990s). Another feature of the Cuban public transport scene is hitchhikers who populate the roadsides in large numbers.

The old part of Havana (Habana Vieja) is architecturally magnificent, and a reflection of the huge economic surplus generated by the old slave economy. The buildings are now generally in a poor state of repair, but observed from a distance continue to constitute a superb colonial urban landscape. However, in contrast to capitalist cities, the downtown area teems with local low-income residents, either living "above the shops" in commercial streets or in tenements in the side streets. While the crowded and dilapidated nature of these neighbourhoods may be perceived as threatening by some visitors, in this writer's experience Cuba is an extremely safe place to move around in. Here we came across O'Reilly Street with a nameplate in Spanish, English and Irish, and a plaque in honour of one of the great founding fathers of modern Geography, Alexander von Humboldt, who spent a couple of years in Cuba at the beginning of the 19th century.

The key features of the main drag in central Havana (Avenida Salvadore Allende, west of the Old City) are the bustle of pedestrian hordes, hawkers peddling an extraordinary range of goods, queues outside certain shops, and air filled with motor fumes. While footpaths and roads are in poor repair (with unguarded holes in the ground a constant hazard), one also noted the universally-pristine school uniforms worn by the children – quite a contrast from the slums and shanties which are a normal feature of less-developed parts of the world.

I spent most of my short stay in Cuba in a seaside resort on the south coast. For a standard cost of about 750 per day, we got not only our hotel room but all the food and drink we wished to consume, available on a 24/7 basis. Rum (a by-product of sugar production) is the national beverage and was doled out in the bars ad lib in various forms of cocktail, but there was no shortage of alternatives, including quite acceptable beer. Despite the free booze, we met no other Irish people bar ourselves: most of the guests were from northern Europe or Canada. There were very few Americans about: the "land of the free" imposes a stiff fine and/or a prison sentence for those of its citizens who are found to have visited Cuba without official permission.

A few kilometres from our resort was the beautiful city of Trinidad, whose extensive 18th century centre is now a World Heritage Site and in an excellent state of repair and maintenance. The planned, cobblestoned, streets consist mainly of gaily-coloured single-story terraces with large windows protected by iron or wooden grills and large doors in which are embedded smaller inset doors. There are also numerous museums, churches and art galleries and several casas de la trove, originally set up by the government to facilitate the intergenerational transfer of the ubiquitous salsa music (a mixture of jazz and rumba featuring trumpets, saxophones and various methods of percussion), but now important tourist attractions.

While now an important source of employment and foreign earnings for Cuba, tourism also tends to have a distorting and disruptive effect. One of the waiting staff in our hotel told me he was a nuclear engineer who chose to work in tourism because of the higher earnings which it provided. Cuba operates a dual currency system, with separate prices for everything depending on whether one is using the tourist peso or the local peso. Tourist peso prices are quite variable from place to place but are generally relatively cheap compared to Irish prices. However, they are much higher than the prices charged in local pesos. Despite this, there appears to be no local black market in the local currency, compared with the constant harassment one experienced from illegal money-changers in eastern Europe in the Soviet days.

While we were in Cuba, Fidel Castro was stricken with an intestinal disorder, and his brother Raoul had taken charge of the government. There has therefore been much discussion of what path Cuba might take in the post-Fidel era. Cuba is not, of course, Castro's personal possession (as some like to think): rather, Fidel is at the head of a vast political and administrative system which has worked hard to create an alternative form of social system in very difficult circumstances. Many people have argued that less developed

countries cannot afford the luxury of Western-style parliamentary democracy. Others point to the USA's tendency to subvert democracy in such countries where it throws up governments not to the USA's liking (Chile and Nicaragua being recent examples).

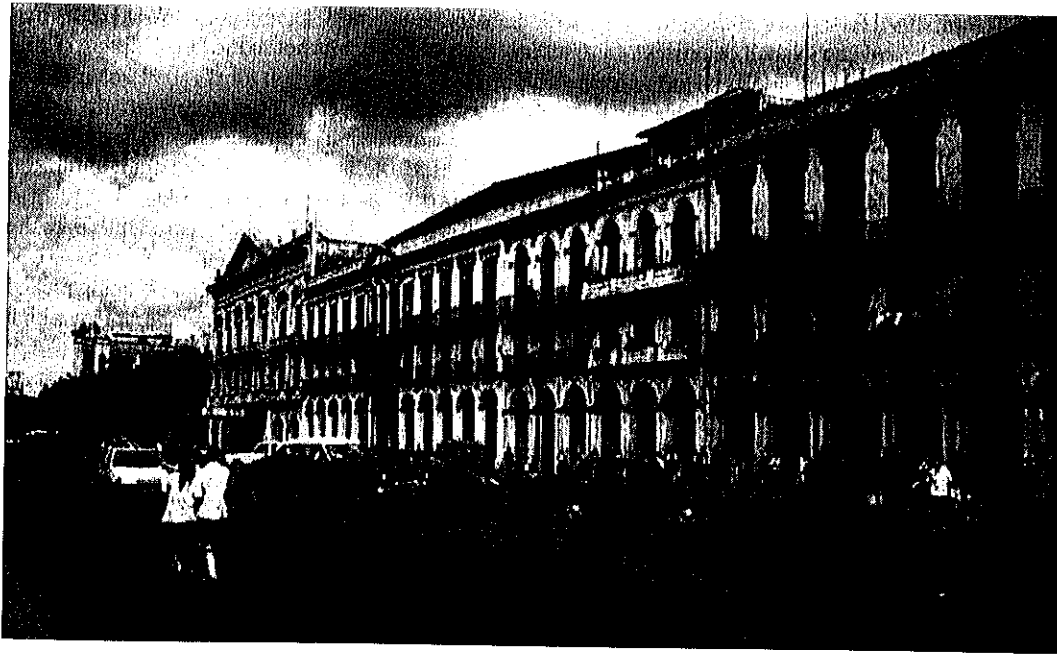
In such circumstances, when evaluating the Cuban social system, perhaps the more instructive comparators are not advanced western democracies but neighbouring Caribbean countries. Thus, in terms of life expectancy, infant mortality and adult literacy, Cuba is well ahead of Jamaica, Haiti and the Dominican Republic (indeed, Cuban life expectancy and literacy levels are superior to those of the USA). When it comes to crime and personal security, the contrast is particularly stark. The US State Department's website giving advice on travel abroad paints a dark picture of the prevalence of violent crime in the other three countries, but acknowledges that tourist experience of crime in Cuba is generally confined to pockets being picked and purses snatched. Given that the extreme inequality and high levels of poverty and unemployment which underpin high crime levels in these other Caribbean countries were also characteristic of pre-Castro Cuba, it can be argued that, in the absence of Castro's revolution, Cuba today would also be characterised by the social dysfunctionality which permeates its Caribbean neighbours.

(Proinnsias Breathnach, Department of Geography, NUI Maynooth)

Open-air music Trinidad:

A salsa band entertains visitors at the Casa de la Musica, Trinidad





Opposite Capitolio:
Street scene in Central Havana. Note various modes of conveyance and two school girls on left.

Experiencing China Zoe Donnelly

It was difficult to define our initial feelings as we arrived into Shanghai's international airport, Pudong, an airport like any other, as my husband and I searched for our names amongst the numerous plaques as their holders jostled for position at the arrivals hall.

The strangest feeling of all was suddenly becoming virtually illiterate and unable to communicate with anyone, as all we had in the way of communication skills was the helpful phrases at the back of our Lonely Planet guide. Our initial trepidation quickly retreated as school staff and locals alike welcomed us and we soon settled into the bosom of school life in Huashi (Wha-Sheugh), although as part of the foreign contingency of the town, containing but four others we always stood out. So many funny little experiences and observations come to memory now, I will comment on just a few we encountered whilst on our travels...

Before embarking on any trip, even if it is just to the local town, we soon learned that it was vital to have any necessary correspondence written in characters, or earmarked in our phrase book for what we needed or where we wanted to go. Taxi drivers, though generally trustworthy, can also be (like anywhere else) dishonest and spy a potential tourist to be scammed with glee, so if there is no meter, or even if there is, it is a good idea to agree on a price before the taxi ride. For long distance train journeys, soft sleeper is the best as there is a door with a lock and only four beds to a cabin. Hard sleepers have six beds to a cabin and no door (we never braved it but I hear it is an experience not to be repeated if you can afford it!).

In Chinese clothes markets, one can pretty much bargain for everything, the first mandarin we learned was "Tai-Gui-le" which means "too expensive"... and we often amused the locals with our feeble

attempts to bargain, we soon improved though. In addition, they usually enjoyed the banter. We always tried the "walk away" trick- works every time!!! Another little nugget was to speak in Irish, if market traders were haranguing us, good old gaeilge confused them and we could make a quick exit.

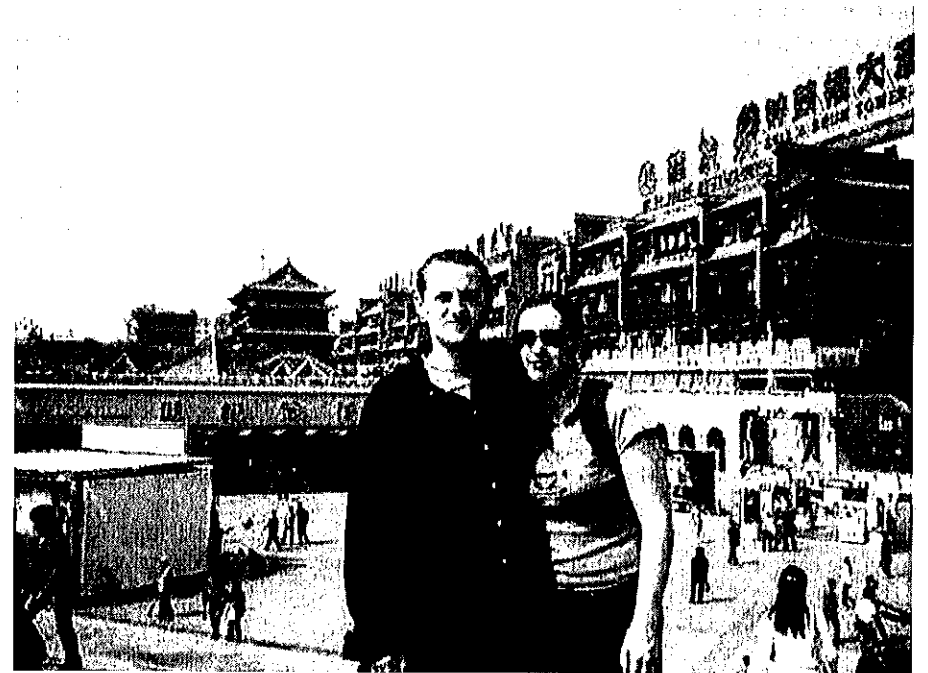
One of the most memorable highlights of our Chinese experience was our instant celebrity- everywhere we visited, except for Beijing and Shanghai, people would stare, and point in interest, and we often were asked to be in photos (not take them!!) with complete strangers, which was a bit intimidating at first, but soon became second nature and even fun! China is relatively foreigner free and often heard people say "Lau wai" (foreigner)! They are friendly inquisitive stares though. There were three key questions deemed to ask any new acquaintance in the following order; Where are you from? What is your occupation? How much do you earn?

Although we studied hard, and picked up mandarin slowly, we were not always able to make ourselves understood- there are so many dialects in Mandarin; we were not always understood even if our pronunciation was correct, we always kept lists with characters in order to communicate effectively. These lists were particularly useful when ordering food. We discovered a few things about Chinese cuisine:

They eat anything and everything (they say there are no seagulls in Shanghai harbour...), so be prepared! (The weirdest thing I ate has to be ants with pine nuts- they were nice), my husband even tried dog; he was being polite as we were dinner guests. When you are out for a meal, there are not many rules regarding manners you need to adhere to; everyone just gets stuck in, and spit what they don't want back on to the table/ or onto a side plate. Everyone shares their food, which is served in the middle of the rotating table, and you pick from there. In addition, as a dinner guest they toast you with their drinks every 5 minutes. As a mark of respect we always tried to clink our glass lower than our host, this is a common custom.

McDonalds and KFC are usually a safe bet abroad, and we often sought refuge in their delights whenever we left "home", though we sometimes wondered at the uncanny "sameness" of the taste, texture, and quality of the food...?

Damien and Zoe Donnelly in Xi'An, October 2004



The experience overall was fantastic. Life there is always interesting. One thing that we came home absolutely sure of was with their strong sense of family and importance of looking after one another, generations alike.

The overriding feel as we travelled throughout China was that of history and experience, in almost every city we visited, there was a plethora of temples and monuments that spanned literally hundreds and in some cases thousands of years. Of these the most impressive in our memory was the Longman grottos in Luoyang, the old capital of China, the Forbidden City in Beijing and the Terracotta warriors in Xi'An. These sights are incomparable in majestic perfect beauty. One other highlight of our trip was climbing the great wall in Beijing, with snow-capped peaks all around us, while trying to ascend dangerously icy steps. Every memory brings back ten more, coupled with a wish to return to that vibrant diverse, magical place that is China.

(Zoe Donnelly is a MA student)

**Fieldtrip to the Wicklow Mountains and the Avoca mines,
(11-12 November 2006)
Daniel Hall**

On the first morning there was an enthusiastic start with everyone arriving on time. We were introduced to our second "tour guide" Conor Murphy. There was no need for an introduction to Ro Charlton as we had previously met her in First Year geography. After a brief head count we were on our way.

As the surroundings were new to all of us, and the fact it was 9 o'clock in the morning, there was a silence across the bus. With that Ro Charlton took full advantage of it by giving us a brief introduction to the day's plan. It was not long until we arrived at our first destination, Upper Lough Bray. We were given an interesting and detailed account of the surrounding area, which included facts like that the central plains of upper Lough Bray are the largest continual uplands in Ireland. After this detailed geographical account we were on the road again. We then travelled through the Blanket bogs in the surrounding area taking in the views of the heather, this became too much for some people and they fell into a deep sleep! On our travels we discussed the geography of the area and related them to our lectures to help us understand them better with the aid of the actual elements themselves.

Passing through the valleys we saw the birthplace of the River Liffey. We discussed how the river is still affected by the glacier, which once covered the upper valley. I would say the one effect we all could relate to the most would be the hangover!! Well the historical one that affects the general flow of the river! On our travels we also saw evidence of the coronation plantations of Queen Elizabeth during the 16th Century. It was not long until we proceeded down the valley to our next destination at the Water Reservoir. Here we discussed the main rivers supplying Dublin with water and how the supply is enhanced and controlled. It was here we discussed the water shortage problem in the greater Dublin area and to see if we could come up with any solutions to the situation. We found out that 500,000,000 litres a day is used in the greater Dublin region. That's enough to fill Croke Park and more!!

After a brief stop at the dam we were off to Hollywood, Hollywood Glen that is! This is where the flood of Lake Blessington occurred. This huge area amazingly was carved out in a matter of days. After a quick toilet break the spirits were raised as we were on our way to Glendalough. On the way we stopped to have a quick look at the only water-storage pumping scheme in Ireland. Here we were shown how the electricity is generated and sent out to help supply the surrounding areas. These stations are enforced to help maintain the balance of electricity flow during times of surges, like the break in 'Corrie' where most people put on the kettle to make hot drinks.

We then moved down the valley in anticipation as the word spread that it was dinnertime! Somewhere in the background Dr. Charlton was giving a detailed account of the changes in the shist and why the valley changed shape as we approached the restaurant. The Restaurant and meal were both of excellent quality and everyone enjoyed the meal.

After an hour break and a quick trip to the bar for soft drinks we were on track to the waterfall and a trek around the beautiful surroundings of Glendalough. A wooden footpath raised from the ground led the way as we were given a guided tour of the grounds. At this point the wind was at a strong gale and we were being blown around while at the base of the mountain looking out onto the lake. After a brief discussion and a few laughs at the tourists getting blown over while posing for photos, we proceeded up the mountain. A few tired and red faces later we reached our destination. That brought around the end of the first day as we all slowly walked back to the bus to proceed home to Maynooth. The bus trip home did not take to long as most fell asleep and were woken upon our arrival home.

The second morning did not start as smoothly or as enthusiastically as some members slept in and we had to wait for them to arrive. A somewhat scared introduction from Conor Murphy started the day as he described the day's events. After the bus trip we arrived at the Avoca Mines. Here we discussed the effects the mines had on the surrounding areas. How agriculture, the local landscape and the surrounding vegetation were and are still affected by the leechate. We then travelled further up the hill to look at what was one of the largest pits of its time. We then went down the hillside again and began to measure the chemical levels in the river. It was from this that we discovered that the high levels of the chemicals in the river were the cause of the extinction of salmon in the river.

Again it was that time where we went for something to eat. The food again was great which left smiles all round. Afterwards we travelled along the coast until we reached our final destination the Beach. Here we discussed sea levels rising and falling and the implications it is having on the surrounding coast. We also measured sand dunes to see how they are becoming eroded through the sea, wind, and anthropogenic influences. That took the guts of an hour. After returning to the bus frozen we thought that the day was over and we could relax the rest of the way home! Well we were wrong. It was then we got a scare as it was announced that as a part of our project we had to do a series of maths equations and combine them all to come up with solutions to the null hypothesis to discover if the two samples were significantly different.

All in all the whole weekend was a very eventful yet interesting experience. The only downfall to the whole thing, according to my fellow classmates, is the fact that at the time I am writing this (January 2007) we have yet to receive any results from the two assignments we had to hand in! Apart from that the weekend was enjoyed very much.

(Daniel Hall is a 2nd Year Joint Honours Student)

**Cultural Memes in Kinship Care
Mary O'Flannagáin**

In most countries of the developed world the issue of alternative care for children who for a variety of reasons cannot live with their biological families, is addressed by formal legislated practices which arrange foster care, relative foster care or residential care for these children. Sometimes also informal care by relatives (kinship care) occurs but for reasons of child protection the system prefers to regulate this care. The Better Care Network is an international organization whose mission statement includes the desire to reunify families if appropriate, and regulate kinship care in order to avoid exploitation, abuse or denied access to education (Better Care Network, 2006). The rights of the biological family are enshrined in the constitutions of many developed countries, and this translates into legislation which places high importance on the biological family as caregivers in these countries. In countries of the developing world where informal kinship care has been used for generations, are concerns regarding child protection still valid?

Kinship Care in Less Developed Countries

Many of the less developed countries of the African and Asian continents care for children within the wider family in circumstances where there is a need for alternative care. This may be where children have lost their parents because of the high rate of deaths from diseases such as HIV/AIDS in these countries (Better Care Network, 2006). This type of informal kinship care is in fact the most prevalent method of providing alternative care for children worldwide. The practice is in use even where necessity is not the driving force. Is there a reason, apart from practical necessity, why kinship care is common in developing countries and not in developed countries? It has been argued that in all cultures practices including child care practices have evolved much like biological traits evolve, rather than being the result of circumstantial necessity (Dawkins, 1976). Coining the phrase 'cultural memes' Dawkins likens biological genes by which traits are replicated to memes which he argues replicate cultural practices, thereby ensuring their survival within the culture. Perhaps cultural memes replicate traits which are essential to the survival of those cultures. In this essay I look at the example of the Aka and the Ngandu and hypothesize that informal kinship care along with other caregiving practices have evolved for the specific reason of ensuring the survival of the cultures as they currently exist.

Cultural Memes

So what are cultural memes? The term describes the practices or ideas which are replicated and repeated in a culture in a way analogous to the way biological traits are replicated by genes. In this way culture can be described as an evolutionary process. Practices are passed down by one generation to the next until they become normalized within that culture. Benzon (1996, 321) in his article 'Culture as an Evolutionary Arena' includes the quote by Norbert Wiener that a chicken is just an egg's way of making another egg. In the same way, Benzon argues, a specific cultural meme can be thought of as having the sole function of replicating itself. In Darwinian evolution there must be an advantage to the survival of an organism in order for it to survive, so under this theory there must also be an advantage to the survival of the meme. In the case of the survival of kinship care as a practice in the developing world, there must, under this theory, be advantages of this over other systems of alternative care.

Aka Caregiving Practices

A study carried out by anthropologist Barry S. Hewlett compares caregiving practices in two Central African tribes (the hunter gatherer Aka and the slash and burn farmers the Ngandu) with American caregiving practices. He puts forward a number of theories as to why infant caregiving memes have developed in the three cultures looked at (Hewlett in Bower 2000). One of these is the theory of Evolutionary Ecology (EE) which assumes that individuals will adapt to their environment in a way which maximizes their reproductive fitness. In terms of caregiving, this means that hunter/gatherer societies like the Aka, pass on cultural memes such as responding to infant cries quickly, holding infants close, hunting and collecting with families in a group and other cooperative practices in order to protect the infants in an environment where infant mortality rates are high (ibid). It can be seen that these practices serve to ensure the survival of individual infants but this is not what Dawkins means by survival. He argues that the cultural memes which protect the infant also protect the memes themselves. So what is the cultural advantage conferred by the survival of the meme?

Studies of hunter/gatherer tribes show a high rate of sharing, generosity and trust. It may be that it is the passing on of these traits that ensure the survival of the race rather than the simply protective function which nurtures individual infants. In a society such as Akaian society, which is dependent on hunting and gathering, it is essential that cooperation and trust is fostered in order for it to function effectively. It is the replication of cultural memes of sharing, trust and generosity which ensure the economic success of the tribe and thereby survival. The advantage for the Aka of the type of infant caregiving they adopt is that a strong sense of trust and sharing is fostered within the society, and this is replicated within the culture, ensuring that the tribe as a whole survives. This sharing extends to the use of family members other than the biological mother for breastfeeding and child care. Thus trust, sharing and generosity at family level leads to traits of cooperation which are essential during the hunt and benefit the tribe as a whole.

So it would seem that within Aka culture the practice of both attentiveness to the cries of infants by all adults and the use of kin as caregivers has evolved in order to foster the traits of sharing and generosity

which are essential to the survival of this race. And the reason that these traits are essential has to do with the nature of the tribal mode of production. Hunting in groups is simply more successful than hunting alone so individual group members must know how to cooperate with others and must be willing to share the spoils of the hunt.

Ngandu Caregiving Practices

The agrarian Ngandu tribe adopts somewhat different practices. In Ngandu society, although infants are kept physically near the caregivers, they are held less and left to cry more. The nature of Ngandu society is one which depends on clearing land and planting crops. Individual effort is encouraged and it is possible for a family to survive on the proceeds of its own work. In contrast to the Aka, Ngandu society does not depend on sharing, generosity and trust but on independence, innovation and self sufficiency. It may be that non-indulgence of infants serves to foster independence in the individual which is necessary for success in the society and survival of the race by the survival of individuals rather than the survival of the group.

American Caregiving Practices

American and European parents adopt a parenting style in which a higher proportion (in comparison with Aka and Ngandu) leave infants to cry, have the infants sleep in another room and, generally keep their infants more distant. It is much less common for Western parents to carry their infants with them and many must return to work away from their infants within a few months. In Western society Akaian-like traits may not be essential to survival because in a capitalist society modes of production are more diversified. Where there is a need for parents to survive by working for an employer and it is not normal (or allowed) for children to accompany parents to work, one could hypothesize that cultural memes which value an Aka-like approach to caregiving have no use in this society and have been bred out of the culture. Ngandian-like traits on the other hand may be necessary because in western societies individual effort is valued. So in both Ngandian and American culture the traits of independence, innovation and self-sufficiency are replicated in part by the cultural memes of non-indulgent infant caregiving practices including a distrust of any caregivers other than the biological parent.

Would this explain the western preference for the biological parent as caregiver in every instance even where there is a suspicion of neglect or abuse? And does it explain the fact that until recently the use of relatives as alternative carers was not seen in developed countries to be a good option? Where sharing and trust are not essential for survival and in fact may be risky within a society, immediate family only may be the only acceptable kinship type caregiving option, the other option being state control in the form of legislation and regulation of stranger foster care or residential care. Western society demands heavy regulation of all these arrangements. Is this because we cannot trust each other? And can we not trust each other because the cultural memes which foster trust building practices are no longer replicated in western society because they are no longer essential for survival?

If this is the case, then the desire of the Better Care Network and other international organisations which have the mission to protect children in developing countries may need to look at the desirability of imposing western standards on races of people who have evolved different memes relating to childcare. The cultural memes which have evolved may be essential for the survival of these races and the concern is that intervention will make it more difficult for these races to preserve their culture.

(Mary O'Flannagáin graduated with a BSoc from NUIM in September 2006 and is completing a Masters in Social Work in UCD)

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**A Mystical Geography of Place:
Lady Augusta Gregory's *Coole* (1931)
Dr. Charles Travis**

I meditate upon a swallow's flight
Upon an aged woman and her house [W.B. Yeats, *Coole Park* (1927)]

In the poetic intersection located between literature, history and landscape, Lady Augusta Gregory's 1931 memoir *Coole*, brings to mind an observation of Friedrich Nietzsche's, concerning the relationship between architecture and the mystical experience of place: 'everything in a Greek or Christian building originally signified something, and indeed something of a higher order of things: this feeling of inexhaustible significance lay about the building like a magical veil.'ⁱ W.B. Yeats' prefacing poem situates Gregory at the centre of a *genius loci* of place, around which the centripetal forces of a culture revolved:

*They came like swallows and like swallows went,
And yet a woman's powerful character
Could keep a swallow to its first intent;*ⁱⁱ

Yeats' tribute praised Gregory's contribution to the Irish Literary Revival. It also recognized the power of place that inspired the imaginations of a literary movement. As Nietzsche reminds us:

'Architecture is a kind of eloquence of power in forms—now persuading, even flattering, now only commanding. The highest feeling of power and sureness finds expression in a *grand style*.'ⁱⁱⁱ

Indeed, the grand style of the Revival can be seen reflected in Gregory's literary reconstruction of the architecture and grounds of Coole Park, as she leads the reader through the spaces of its woods and garden.

The Visionary Demesne.

In the second section of her memoir, entitled *Woods, Visions, And The Lake*, Gregory moves beyond the confines of Coole's granite walls and surveys the landscape within the demesne, and provides a brief social history of the estate. She begins by noting despite the proximity of its location to her own origins, there is a Gothic remoteness to the place:

Although this house of Coole that has been my home for half a hundred years lies but seven miles from the home of my childhood, Roxborough, the estate being separated indeed at one point but by a field or two from the high demesne walls within which my childhood was passed, there has ever seemed to be a strangeness and romance about Coole..^{iv}

Adding to this remoteness was the faulty construction of demesne itself, which often precluded the estate from hosting an event central to the landed Ascendancy's social cohesion—the Fox Hunt:

The demesne even was but seldom visited by the County Hunt because it did not possess as do most of the Galway estates, small coverts from which a fox hearing sounds of danger would make for the open country, but the long stretch of wooded acres, counted by hundreds, where he could twist and turn and never break to give opportunity for that scamper through open fields and over loose stone walls that is the joy of huntsmen and hounds.^v

Instead, Coole Park was used to host shooting parties, whose guests appear with a dull regularity in the

estates' records: '... a Greville from Warwick; once even a Duke of Marlborough from the Phoenix Park.'^{vi} The forest within the demesne supplied Gregory with a sense of communion with the natural landscape, and proved to be a repository from which she collected mystic tales for her literary canon. Sadly, the presence of modernity, with its conflicts and technology does annoyingly disrupt the ambience of her forested demesne:

too many noises were coming near us in this twentieth Century, some better or forgotten, the blowing up of bridges, the rattling of armoured cars. And later yet, that aeroplane lost in its flight over the Atlantic, passed so low over our lawns and woods, the last those hapless voyagers were ever to see, that the cattle ran terrified here and there, and it is likely that the twitter of birds was silenced and all the wild creatures trembled, their race memory recalling no such regular throbbing in any thunderous storm. And now even in time of peace, we, remembering war, have been sometimes startled by the booming noises that have come near and nearer from the works that are bringing light and power from the invisible Shannon's force.'^{vii}

Gregory juxtaposes the 'invisible' force of the Shannon, harnessed by the modicum of modern technology, which brings electricity to the rural hinterlands of the Free State, with the supernatural force of the folklore surrounding the river that winds through Coole Park's demesne, which finds a catchment basin within the estate, and forms a lake that regularly drains into the sea: 'Its transit is has been said of human life "from a mystery through a mystery to a mystery."^{viii}

Gregory's collaboration with Yeats, led her to seek out tenants living in Coole Park and its environs. Their stories influenced her perception of a mythical Irish landscape, though in some quarters, it was felt that her approach was naïve and gullible: 'The writer Brinsley MacNamara wrote that she gathered "material for her books and plays in the cabins and cottages of Clare-Galway, where she had been industriously plied with folklore specially invented for her visits, and all of which she innocently accepted."^{ix}

Despite these critiques Gregory claimed that 'folklore has continued to gather round this place,'^x and tells the story of two men who went to hunt rabbits, but were lured by the sound of 'a tambourine below, music going on and the beating of a drum, so they moved a little farther and then they heard the sound of a fiddle from below. So they came home and caught no rabbits that night'^{xi} There is also the story of the girl who began to gather kippeens and was taken up and 'found herself was in Galway sitting in the Square'^{xii} She recalls sighting a spectral figure on the banks of the river 'sitting there by the bank where the trees fell. Dark clothes he had, and he was headless.'^{xiii} She tells tales of spectres lurking in and around the waters of the lake at Coole: 'we heard a great splashing and we saw some creature put up its head with a head and a mane like a horse.'^{xiv} And two ladies appearing along the banks 'sitting there by the lake, and their wings came and they vanished into the air.'^{xv} But despite the reports of such phenomena she concludes that 'whatever terrible creatures may hide or be dreamed of in the water's depths its still surface is a mirror for much tranquil beauty.'^{xvi} She invokes a few lines of Yeats' poetry to describe the swans that touched down on the lake's surface during their annual migrations,

All silently mount
And scatter wheeling in great broken rings
Upon their clamorous wings...^{xvii}

This impression of beauty was mirrored in the text of Yeats' *The Wild Swans at Coole*, which he drafted at the estate in 1917. Just as the volumes of books in her library provided her with a sense of accompaniment, she recalled that that within the natural atmosphere of Coole Park, 'the generation of trees have been my care, my comforters. Their companionship has often brought me peace.'^{xviii} And it is watching wild ducks, 'flying towards the source of the river'^{xix} from the woods provided by these trees, that a memory of lost poetic inspiration, that 'might have been given a stanza in Yeats poems, had he been with me one evening'^{xx}

is imagined: 'So still in the air, I remembered as I watched them I could hear the ringing of the Angelus bell two miles away in Gort.'^{xxi}

The Garden

In the final section of her literary construction of Coole Park, *The Bust of Macaenas*, she describes the landscape of a garden, which contains as its central feature

... the colossal marble bust of Macaenas at the end of the flower bordered gravel walk. Kiltartan tradition says this image was carried across Europe on wagons drawn by oxen.^{xxii}

The bust depicting a classical Greco-Roman figure from ancient mythology, though originally placed within the walls of the house, was relocated to the Garden, which provided an aesthetic function, in addition to serving as a loci of creative endeavour, 'Yeats planned many a play or poem pacing up and down this gravelled walk before facing the blank paper on the writing table in his room.'^{xxiii} Within the confines of the garden is another feature that contains a record of the figures involved within the coterie of the literary revival:

And on the great stem, smooth as parchment, of a copper beech whose branches sweep the ground as we come near the gate into the woods, many a friend who stayed here has carved the letter of his name. W. B. Y. of course, and Jack B. Y. with a graving of the little donkey he loves; and J. M. Syngé and AE and An Craoibhin (Douglas Hyde) and John Masefield and Sean O'Casey and as it should be, a very large G. B. S. . . And this A. J. was cut by Augustus John after his descent from the very topmost boughs where he had left those letters also to astonish the birds of the air.^{xxiv}

Autumn of my Days

Lady Gregory's memoir *Coole* survives the actual house. A year after its publication, she died and the structure was sold to a builder who demolished it. This event was foreshadowed by the conflagration of her family's own estate Roxborough, during the Civil War. At the time she recorded in her journal:

'The house, the ruin is very sad,' she wrote . . . 'just the walls standing, blackened, and all the long yards silent, all the many buildings, dairy, laundry, cow-houses, coach houses, stables, kennels, smithy, sawmill and carpenter's workshop empty, some of the roofs falling in.'^{xxv}

This scene of destruction may have motivated Lady Gregory to preserve in letters, the memory of place. Gregory intended *Coole* as an elegy for her beloved landed estate, but in another sense, her memoir can be viewed as a piece of literary geography charting a means to recover the lost architecture of place and culture from the palimpsest that composed the historical landscape in which she resided. *Coole* illustrates that: 'for many humanistic geographers, literature represents this mystical or even magical realm where the most concrete aspects of the outside world and the human imagination and subjectivity are blended in perfect harmony.'^{xxvi} Although the house no longer exists in the landscape outside of Gort, traces of its demesne linger in the woods and fields. Within its broken necklace, the copper beach bearing the initials of the Revival's literary coterie carved into its trunk still thrives, testifying to the impact of the estate upon the cultural architecture of modern Irish consciousness.

Indeed the persona of Lady Gregory and the vanished estate have become inextricable in the literary imagination: 'what matters most is the experience of *being* in that place and, more particularly, *becoming part of the place*.'^{xxvii} And secure in the knowledge of her contributions to the success of the Revival, she concluded *Coole* accordingly:

And as I sit here in the winter time or rough autumn weather I sometimes hear the call

of wild geese and see them flying in the air, towards the sea. I have gone far out in the world, east and west in my time, and so the peace within these enclosing walls is fitting for the autumn of my days.^{xxviii}

(Dr. Charles Travis, Department of Geography, Trinity College, Dublin
Dr. Travis also lectures part-time in the Department of Geography, NUI Maynooth)

Endnotes

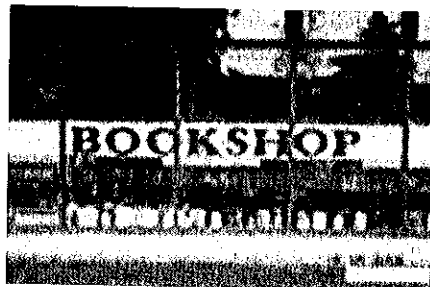
- (i) Friedrich Nietzsche, *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches*, (1878) Trans. R. J. Hollingdale as *Human, All too Human* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) p. 218.
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- (x) *Coole*, 29.
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- (xxii) Ibid., 39.
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- (xxvi) Marc Brousseau, 'Geography's literature', *Progress in Human Geography* 18. 3 (1994) p. 339.
- (xxvii) Edward Casey, *Getting Back Into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993) p.33.
- (xxviii) *Coole*, 50.

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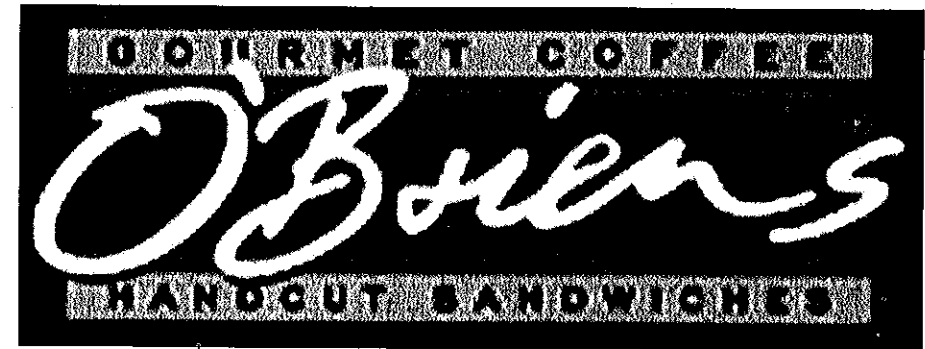
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Time-space, ontology, hermeneutics
A Grumpy Old Man

aka "Mr. Angry's guide to negotiating space in, and around, NUI Maynooth": he just decided to give it a fancy title purely out of academic snobbery, even though he doesn't understand what any of those words mean"

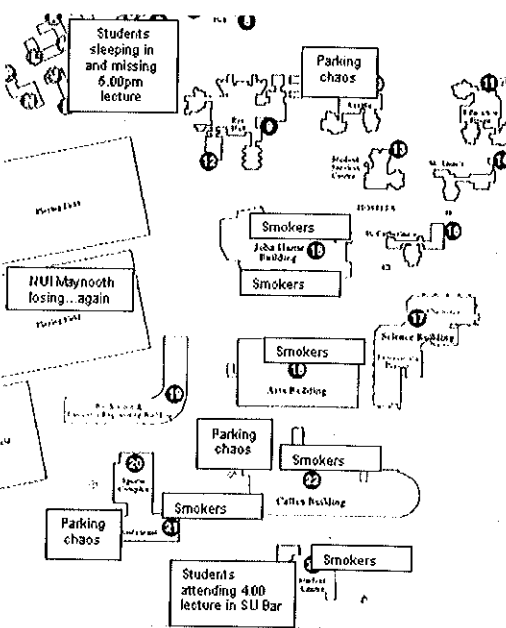


"Remove it all!!!"

Those of you who were lucky (ha ha ha) enough to take the module currently known as GY305 (and soon to be GY205...confused? Who cares...) in the first semester will have presumably (and in some cases, that's quite a big presumption) encountered the spatial scientists and the assumptions that underpinned their models, that of the isotropic plain (flat, featureless, homogeneous, no barriers to movement) and economic man (purely rational being, will always aim to maximise his/her economic benefit). This work was subsequently challenged by physical (no reference to rivers, lakes, mountains etc.), behavioural/humanistic (ignores the human, element) and radical/Marxist (ignores social context) geographers, but you know what, Mr. Angry doesn't

give a fig for what these hippy greenie, goody-goody, commie geography types think. Give me a good old fashioned isotropic plain any day! Rivers? Fill 'em up with concrete. Mountains? Er, hello? Anyone heard of bulldozers? Areas of outstanding natural beauty? Need I mention the bulldozers again? At least with an isotropic plain, you could get from A to B within the NUI Maynooth campus, without experiencing C, maddening, cardiac arrest inducing, frustration, and wanting to do D, namely 'do' for someone, in turn resulting in E, a long 30-year stint enjoying free accommodation in a state run B&B. Yes, indeed, negotiating space in NUI Maynooth is brimful of hazards, horrors and hellish encounters, and as a geographer, Mr. Angry feels it his duty to help the Milieu readership in this onerous task. Here he offers his own personal bugbears and also some helpful solutions to address these! Unfortunately, with a government peopled by loving and kind Justice, Transport and Environment ministers, Mr. Angry isn't holding his breath as to whether these ideas get implemented or not

The Foot Bridge: Picture the scene. It's miserable, it's raining...and you have to go from Rhetoric House to the North Campus, even though your umbrella has just been blown over Logic House. You kind of hoped that Sweeney, Fealy and Murphy, our resident "climate change experts" (front page of Irish Times, 2nd February 2007) could have warned you about this, but they were too busy out burning fossil fuels to spew more CO2 into the air and keep themselves in jobs! But now you see the Library ahead and know that you should be in the warm shelter of the ever-attractive Arts Block in a minute or two. WR-RONG matey. For you're about to come up to the footbridge, and your route is blocked by a gaggle of students, walking at a speed of 0.001 km/hr and discussing the sort of interesting crap that students discuss. Your subtle hints, such as yelling "MOVE IT YOU SHOWER OF TOTAL WASTERS!!!" fall on deaf ears. To make matters worse, their path is likewise impeded by another shower of students who have decided that the footbridge is not a footbridge; but is actually Speaker's

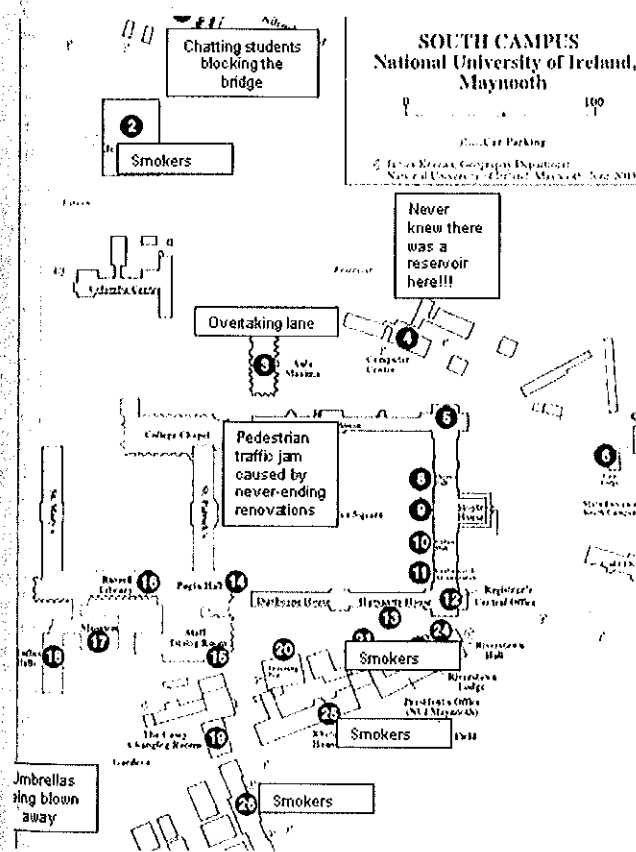


Corner in Hyde Park, and have parked themselves on it to earnestly discuss the sort of crap that students earnestly discuss (probably to do with BEEBELL or whatever that internet yoke is) oblivious to the fact that 1,234 people are trying to get past. The result? The sodden, and murderous, pedestrians eventually make it to the Arts Block some 11 hours later...

What to do: Random executions, or chuckings-off-the-bridge, would prove a highly efficient way of clearing the way, as indeed would walking purposefully across the bridge with a sword held straight in front of you. Alas, this sort of thing doesn't go down well with the PC crowd and there is a thing called the rule of law – so much for bloody democracy! More humane solutions would include the introduction of traffic wardens with the power to fine loiterers, traffic lights, or the construction of an overtaking lane alongside the bridge. Or better still, helicopter pads to allow for transportation from one campus to another...A cheaper method would be for the CAO to restrict entry to NUI Maynooth to socially-challenged students who can count their number of friends on one hand...after that hand is chopped off!

Bit between the Church and Aula Maxima: The same problems with the footbridge now also apply to the section between the church and the Aula Maxima. I mean, the renovation work was supposed to be for only a few months surely, but instead the barrier is being moved out more and more to the point that a group of amoebas can hardly pass by at this stage. There's also the pants-wetting feeling you get every time you pass by that a tonne of bricks are about to descend on you at any second.

What to do: Obviously the problems are down to shoddy workmanship on the part of the original builders Sue them! (Or rather their great, great, great...grandchildren)



Stairs in Rhetoric House: Some poor darlings can be so knackered after walking for three seconds in from the Rhetoric car park that they have to plonk their rears down on the stairs in Rhetoric House, thus rendering themselves a hazard over which an impossibly charming, handsome and heroic Geography lecturer could very easily trip over and end up in hospital with two broken legs and a dose of MRSA. Amazingly the lecturers in the Geography Department (even with an average age of 73) can manage going up and down those stairs fifty times a day without collapsing in a heap on said stairs, and causing others to do likewise...

What to do: The most effective measure would be a swift foot up the rear, along with an injunction to the parties concerned to move said rears elsewhere. Again humanists and grasping ambulance-chasing lawyers seem to take issue with this, so other means are obviously required. Probably hiring some sherpas to carry 'tired' students from the carpark to their desks in the Rocque Lab...

Smoker chokers:

When the smoking ban came in, we thought we could at last go about our daily business without some feckin' chain smoker imposing a lethal dose of nicotine down our lungs. Instead the smoking ban has resulted in a noxious spatial clustering effect (surely a PhD thesis in this?) where every smoker in the university insists on parking themselves and their cigarettes at the entrance to every building worth going into, thus forcing non-smokers to wrestle their way past them, in the process imbibing lethal doses of a selection of horrific toxins for their troubles.

What to do: The summary execution of smokers again would do the job, but apparently this is not nice. Instead, Mr. Angry (being a sweetheart really) suggests creating a special reservation for these smoking types at the far end of one of the Arts Block pitches (the ones not being built on!) of about 1 metre in diameter, where they can puff away come shine or (even better) rain. A sure-fire way of reducing the number of smokers! And also making better use of the sports pitches, as our crap university teams don't really have to use them once they're knocked out of every thing by October!

Farkin' Parking: Again, it's wet and you're a pedestrian and walking into the university for a 9.00 Climatology lecture. Can things get worse? Well actually, yeah, they can. For speeding towards you, as you come to the pedestrian crossing, is a frantically driven car, whose driver is desperately trying to get the last parking spot and cares not for what life forms get squashed as a result of this. Thanks to previously untapped gymnastic abilities you escape, but alas your only reward is a shower of murky water, deposited from a marriage of burning tyre rubber with big puddle (as I'm sure is covered in Fluvial lectures!) Time to sneeze...

What to do: Rather than having all our pedestrians out of college on permanent sick leave, why not only allow environmentally friendly vehicles pass within the campus environs? The old humble ass and cart has been used to get around by many for generations (including the former Tánaiste and Minister for Decentralisation as recently as 2002), and should be the only form of transportation allowed here in lieu of that. Plus think of all the tourist dollars on tap from Americans coming over to see quaint lecturers and students going about their business in the traditional manner, hell, I'd even offer to collect the cash for a 'small' share of the profits!

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[With apologies to (as in Mr. Angry doesn't really want to apologise, but apparently the Geog Soc's lawyer was insistent on it!): Sociable and activity-challenged students, the smoking fraternity, Tom Parlon's ass and cart, Jim Keenan, climate change 'experts', the USA, psychotic NUIM car drivers, builders (both the 19th and 21st century versions), Mick McDowell and the Indo (source of the Mick snap).

(Editor notes: The unfortunately framed photo, printed in The Irish Independent last January, of our esteemed Tánaiste does not involve him advocating the removal of all surface features in a neo-Malthusian quasi-positivist manner, as Mr. Angry seems to suggest, but he's basically just pointing out something or other...the editorial team finds nothing amusing in this at all (ahem!)), Cathy Burke...

The Editor would like it noted that the campus maps have been doctored by this Grumpy Old Man for the purposes of hammering home his rants for this article).

Postscript: The Milieu 2007 editorial team regret to note that subsequent to this rant, Mr. Angry was taken to a secure location where he is currently surrounded by nice individuals in white coats...Nurse Ratched says he is doing just fine and she's watching him closely. The editorial team would also like to apologise to NUI Maynooth's Sherpa community.

Experiences of an Erasmus Student

Siobhán Lyons

Every year, as part of the Erasmus (Socrates) programme, many students travel to various universities around Europe to add another academic year to their degrees. I spent last year studying in a university just outside Madrid in a very charming and historically interesting town called Alcala de Henares. This year abroad was part of my degree in European Studies. As Spanish is the language I am taking, it was necessary for me to find a suitable university in Spain which would also cater for my other subject, Geography. I choose Alcala de Henares partly due to its very good name (some lecturers in NUIM have done their Erasmus year in this particular university, so it has to be good!) and also because of its geographiction in the heart of Spain.

I found the year very beneficial when I look back now, at the time of leaving and for many months at the start, I did feel quite overwhelmed, feeling that my language skills were lacking somewhat and also being a little bit older and having done 'the year away' thing before, I wondered how I would fit in and whether I would actually have fun. However language skills I improved upon and fun I had in abundance!

The year away is of course about gaining experience in the chosen language and taking another year to study the second subject, but it is about a lot more than this. The nine or ten months spent living in a foreign country is an exciting experience, scary at times but a good scary. One hurdle to overcome at the beginning is inevitably feeling like an idiot: a bumbling (very white in my case!) *gringo* who can barely string a sentence together. But thankfully this feeling does go away; you find you become immune to the weary looks of confusion coming from the (sometimes) patient bus driver, shop attendant... There is more at stake then trying to make their lives easier, there is Spanish to be learnt God damn it! But having said that, people are extremely accommodating and understanding, being well used to international students.

A good thing about the Spanish universities is that a student may choose modules from any year; this provides a lot of choice and variety. There are some subjects in particular which I would defiantly recommend such as the Geography of Spain which was a very broad look at every geographical aspect of the country, good to learn about the place in which you are living and then put the knowledge into practice on the trips around the country (hours of fun naming mountain ranges and rivers on the long bus journeys to God knows where). There are also courses offered in Urban Geography and the Geography of Latin America which I would recommend. Many courses are aimed at Erasmus students, although they are not solely for Erasmus students, and the lecturers are familiar with the various problems that face international students and they will in many cases offer essays or in-class presentations as an alternative to taking an exam.

The geography department in Alcala de Henares is separated somewhat so this is something that should be taken into account when thinking of where to live, as the campuses are far apart. I tended to take courses, which were offered in the centre campus in Alcala, and I found there was good choice available there.

Studying geography through Spanish is not as difficult as you might think as you are allowed to use dictionaries in exams which removes a huge burden. I found I gained a lot of very useful vocabulary, as well as a greater understanding of the urban, physical and economic geography of the country. The Erasmus programme is defiantly something I would recommend. Being a European Studies student I had no choice about doing it, and am glad about this fact, as had it not been compulsory for me I may not have even considered it, or felt I was capable of doing it. The programme is something that I think will always stand to you in the future, employment-wise, but also it was an invaluable personal experience, meeting and studying with students from all over the world and a break from the routine of college life in Ireland.

(Siobhán Lyons, BA International student, currently in her 4th Year)

Time spent studying in Kentucky

Jennifer Murphy

I can honestly say that spending my second year of college in Kentucky was by far the best and most enjoyable experience I've had so far. I'd never thought of studying abroad but when I got the opportunity I jumped at it. Most people laughed when I said I was jetting off to Kentucky for five months and the usually KFC joke followed... But Kentucky had more to offer than fried chicken!!

Lexington, where the University of Kentucky is situated, is the second largest city in Kentucky. It is known worldwide for its Bluegrass horse farms and Keeneland Race Track, and proudly boasts of itself as "The Horse Capital of the World." It is the horse industry connection between Lexington and Kildare that has allowed the two Universities to establish a link, allowing students to study abroad for a semester or a year.

College life was certainly different to Maynooth and it was strange and enjoyable settling into a completely new college culture. Lexington itself isn't much different to a Dublin town but in comparison to Maynooth it was huge, the college campus is probably half the size of Maynooth town! As regards to actual college work, I found the classes in the US easier. I am studying Geography and Sociology and was used to 10 page essays and long exams, but in America most of my classes were assessed with short answer questions and in some cases multiple choice exams! Some classes however were a bit more challenging but there is definitely not the same level of dedication required.

Because of the obvious horse connection, the outskirts of the town were green and flat with white picket fences dividing the fields. I embraced the horse connection and visited the Keeneland races in November which are only a twenty minute drive from the college campus. At the end of my extend stay (I was due home in December and finally arrived in May!) I was lucky enough to get to the Kentucky derby which wasn't as classy an event as I expected! We were in what the called the out-field where everyone just lets loose and enjoys themselves, paying little attention to the races at all!

The majority of my friends were other international students as I was living in a dorm with them and as they were new to the American way of life, like me they wanted to make the most of it and were great for getting out and doing things. In the first semester 21 of us booked a cabin in the Smoky mountains for a weekend which really was beautiful. The five hour drive was long but we saw the amount of variety American has to offer.

Over Christmas I travelled from Kentucky to Las Vegas to meet my family as we had planned to do before I decided to go to Kentucky. We spent the holidays in Las Vegas, LA and San Diego. It's not surprising that half of all Americans have never left the country with the amount of variety they have within their own country. We spent most of the holiday in theme parks or shopping malls but we did get to see the Hoover Dam which was built on the Colorado River, an hour's drive from Las Vegas, and supplies hydroelectric power for use in Nevada, Arizona, and California.

In the second semester I really embraced the college life and jetted off to Cancun, Mexico for spring break! The beaches in Mexico were some of the most beautiful I've ever seen and the weather was fantastic. The area had been struck by Hurricane Wilma only a few months before we arrived but it had recovered well in order to accommodate their busiest holiday season but there was still some evidence of damage. Some of the pavements were still cracked, a lot of trees were damaged and there was a lot of building work around hotels.

Spending St. Patrick's day in Cancun isn't something many people can say they've done and I was absolutely shocked by the amount of green, one bar even died their beer! Americans are very proud of their Irish "roots" and every second person is able to tell you what their connection is. Kentucky has a particularly strong Irish connection due to the horse industry as many people have moved over to run or work in horse farms.

It is undisputed that one of Ireland's biggest exports is the Irish Pub, of which there was five in Lexington, two even made their way to Cancun! But our reputation for drinking has also travelled well. On learning I was Irish a lot of Americans would first tell me how they too were Irish and then told me I must be a good drinker! After our break in Mexico, two Australians and I decided we were going to make the most of our last few weeks in Kentucky and rented a car and took a trip down to the country music capital of the

world, Nashville. Nashville really lived up to our expectations with great sites, tours and people. We got to see the Music Hall of Fame, a professional football game and the Parthenon, a full-sized replica of the famous Parthenon in Athens, Greece. We also ate real Tennessee food, Barbecue chicken, corn and coleslaw and got to see where some of the most famous music in the world was recorded. We also got to see a the recording of one of the most famous country music shows in the Grand Ole Opry, some of you might recognise it from Johnny Cash.

I am so thankful that I was given the opportunity to study in Kentucky for the year. I don't think the Geography Department, especially Proinsias Breathnach, could be thanked enough for giving NUIM and Kentucky students this amazing opportunity. In fact, I don't think they even realise what a service they have done NUI Maynooth by forging the connection with the University of Kentucky. I would urge anybody to, if given half the chance, take the opportunity to study anywhere abroad as it is one of the best experiences you'll ever have. In Kentucky I know I made friends for life and it's given me even more drive to go out and see the world as I know that there are people all over the globe that will be only to delighted to show me around!

(Jennifer Murphy is a 3rd Year Joint Honours student)

How does it work exactly?

Greg White

"Well, you need to receive the information from three satellites to be able to triangulate your location". *How do you read the figures on the console?* "Well, one is a longitude and one is latitude, you know"!!!

These were a couple of questions asked when the NUI Maynooth Geography Society was setting up GPS treasure hunting. Six people stood within the paved area on the top of the John Hume building inserting batteries into GPS handheld units, trying to bring to life the technology to help us start planning the inaugural Geography Society Treasure hunt.

With the handheld consoles switched on, we all started to walk around erratically in all directions, staring at the screen and praying and wishing that something would appear that we could intelligibly decipher within our powerful geographical brains. With baited breath suddenly, nothing happened! We had to locate a sub menu to change the data input to cover Ireland, as it was on India by default. We rooted through sub menus until we saw the Irish national grid selection. As we selected the grid our consoles came to life. A screen appeared with bar indicators picking up satellite information. We were ready to plan our treasure hunt!

The following day a plan was made for one of us to walk around the North Campus and take down several building locations for our treasure Hunt. I decided I would take up this challenge, and so set out to find four or five locations for the treasure hunt that would take place later in the week. I walked around the North Campus for 50 minutes and thought that the treasure hunt would last for about 40 to 45 minutes until the winners struck gold! So with all the clues set and the promotional fliers stuck around the campus, I relaxed thinking and hoping that the participants would complete the hunt within three quarters of an hour.

The day arrived and the contestants gathered outside the Hume building. The consoles were given out to teams of two, three's and four's. The clues were given to the teams and a helpful extra clue to the direction of the first location was verbalized to the teams. So off they went! As I saw the last team disappear from my view I walked over to the final location at the SU Bar and ordered my Lunch, safe (so I thought!) in the knowledge that would be able to enjoy my lunch peacefully sat on a comfortable couch. How wrong I was! The first bite of my roll was just starting to be digested as the first team came into my view over my left shoulder. 33 minutes earlier than I had expected! They had completed the hunt in 13 minutes. Thirteen minutes after starting and these two treasure hunt athletes had managed to run, jump, and leap their way to a first prize of 50 Euros. They commented on how it was "the easiest 50 Euros they had ever managed to earn."

They were quickly followed by teams completing the treasure hunt in 14, 15 and 18 minutes, picking up 25, 15 and 10 Euros respectively. The last two teams appeared around the time I had thought the first

team was going to appear! Everybody gathered around, chatting and laughing about his or her teams own strategies and tactics. It was agreed that the first treasure hunt by NUIM Geography Society had been a great success.

GPS, it seems, has successfully located itself within the Societies future events plans. But a revision of planning the Treasure Hunt needs to happen if I ever want to avoid eating a cold sausage and egg roll again!

(Greg White is a 3rd Year Single Honours student)

The Lost City of the Incas Ciarán Gray

On the 24 July 1911 Hiram Bingham an American archaeologist set off on the final leg of an exploration that was to echo his name through the pages of history books for centuries. He crept across the plunging rapids of the Urubamba River on a makeshift rope bridge. Full of hope and enthusiasm he began his ascent of the towering Andes Mountains, humbled by the immense beauty of the region. That same day he came upon his first sight of what was to confirm his suspicions and quench the thirst of curiosity that had lingered inside him for years. A magnificent flight of Inca crafted stone terraces. With great haste he began to climb, chopping away the lush undergrowth. He advanced higher and further into the Andean jungle until finally he walked straight into the heart of the Lost City. Machu Picchu, the most significant pre-Columbian Inca ruin in South America.

Machu Picchu (or Old Peak in Quechua, the indigenous language of the region) is located 2,430 meters above sea level in the southeast of Peru. It is situated 70 km northwest of Cusco, the old Inca capital, and overlooks the Urubamba river valley. It is thought that the city was built in the 1400's and was inhabited until the Spanish conquest of Peru in 1532. Archaeologists suggest that Machu Picchu was not a conventional city but was a retreat for Inca nobility. It boasts (140 buildings) a large palace and temples with smaller buildings at lower levels to house the less distinguished workers. It is estimated that around 750 peoples would have resided in Machu Picchu at any one time. The site was probably chosen for its unique geographical location to help prevent attack. But many archaeologists have also suggested that the site was an important Inca centre for worship and astronomic observation. The Incas were masters in a stone cutting technique called ashlar, which allowed them to tightly fit together huge blocks of stone, some weighing several tonnes. It is believed that these enormous boulders were transported up the mountain by manpower on inclined planes. They also were highly skilled in irrigation. This is still evident today at the site with hundreds of metres of interconnected channels, transporting and draining water around the city. The Inca road network was quite vast, spreading across the Andes, with one particular roadway stretching over 70 km from Cusco to Machu Picchu. Today thousands of tourists use these roads taking two to four day treks on foot from the Urubamba valley up through the Andes Mountains to Machu Picchu. I was one of these lucky people who had the opportunity to trek the Inca trail and experience one of the most spectacular wonders of the world.

I started my journey of exploration on Tuesday, 19 April 2005. After a bus ride into the heart of the Urubamba valley we set off in earnest, our guide leading the way. My group of twelve, with nationalities spanning from Argentina to Australia, gelled quite well. Sharing the experience with these new found friends made it all the more enjoyable. We started our journey by first gaining entry into the historic sanctuary of Machu Picchu where I got my complimentary Machu Picchu passport stamp. The sanctuary was established in 1981 to protect the landscape of the Machu Picchu archaeological site. The first thing I notice is the incredible beauty of the region. I remember being in complete awe of the surroundings snow capped Andes Mountains in the foreground of an almost transparent blue sky. Sporadic fluffy cumulous clouds casting ghost like shadows across the undulating mountain face.

Hiking at this altitude was challenging for most, thankfully I had had enough time to acclimatise in the Cusco before starting the journey. On the first day one of the most prevalent things I witnessed apart from the sticking beauty of the region was the incredible endurance of the porters. These hardened local men carry

anything up to 40 Kilos on their backs whilst ascending the steep mountainous slopes at high altitudes. It is no wonder they have developed such a muscular physic carrying camping gear, cooking equipment, food supplies as well as much of our clothing. On one particular occasion I remember being overtaken by a middle-aged porter who was playing a Peruvian style wooden flute while climbing. Needless to say this didn't do much for my self-confidence. The porters were amazing men, in the morning they were up first preparing breakfast. Then my group and I would set off with our guide while the porters cleaned up after us. Within about an hour of our trek, the porters would have already overtaken us, heavily laden and on the way to our midday resting point to prepare our lunch or to our campsite to prepare our dinner and pitch our tents. Being a porter is a very respected job among the indigenous people of this region, probably due to the fact that in relative terms it is a well-paid profession. Tipping the guides and porters is common practice on the Inca trail and there is certainly no need to justify a healthy tip after witnessing the efforts that these men make.

The second day was the most physically enduring day with much of the trail rising steeply high into the Andes. The goal was to cross through a mountain pass. Up to this point much of the Inca trail had been a two-meter wide dirt track. On day two we climbed a network of stone terrace paths laid down by the Incas over 600 years previous. These granite stairways were the first real slice of hard evidence I had seen of Inca existence and their skilled craftsmanship. I remember pausing in recognition, trying to visualise the scene all those years ago. The deeper we travelled high into the Andes jungle the more stimulated the senses become. Sounds like the constant running of stream water, exotic colourful birds singing and the humming sound of passing insects, all added to the experience. The breathtaking visual stimulation of the local flora and fauna, from orchids to the large Andean condor, not to mention the innumerable vantage points along the trail, also formed a large part of this fantastic journey.

At the end of the second day and after a tough uphill struggle we finally reached the mountain pass. There was a great feeling of achievement among the group. At this point I gladly took part in the ritual offering of a shot of local whiskey to both peaks that we were about to pass through. With the instruction of my guide I quickly knocked back a capful of the local brew only after raising a toast to both mountains on either side as a sign of respect. That night we set up camp at about 3,000 metres above sea level. The thin cold air made it difficult to sleep, even though I was completely jaded from all the days climbing. On the third morning I remember waking up and gazing from my tent door at the most amazing sight. Over the course of my travels in South America I had seen many incredible sunsets but to see the sunrise over the Andes Mountains, bringing warmth and life to all its inhabitants was something I will never forget.

Halfway through the third day high in the mountains, quite unexpectedly we came across a local farmhouse. How anyone could survive in such a remote area was hard to comprehend. But, it soon became evident that the family had what seemed like a very lucrative business, selling snickers bars, Coca Cola and plastic ponchos to the passing tourists. The small farm was complemented with a pony, some chickens and a skinned goat, which was hanging outside to dry, swarmed by the local variety of fly. To my surprise the farmer invited me inside his house, a one room thatched structure. I soon realised why when he began to explain with great pride how he made the best beer in the mountains. The fermentation process of boiled barley, wheat and sugar was practiced widely in this region, producing a corn beer called chicha. When ready the corn is filtered from the fermented liquid using a grass woven filter and served with half a giant bowl shaped seed that grows in the jungle. The remaining mashed corn is not wasted but used to fatten, the twenty or so guinea pigs for eating, which were running around in the corner.

On average we were hiking about 7 hours per day at varying altitudes. The differing altitudes lead us to encounter many different types of weather. From low lying fog, clouds and rain to warm humid weather, clear skies and tropical conditions.

By the end of the third day we were in striking distance of Machu Picchu. The excitement that had been building through out the previous three days was coming to a climax. At this point we had reached the last campsite, that had some basic facilities like toilets and cold showers. These were a welcome relief to all, after having three tough days of hiking without any real means to wash ourselves.

We got up on the fourth morning at 5.00 am. This was the day I had been waiting for. Within a couple of hours we had reached our first destination the Sun Gate (Intipunku). The sun shines through this gate as it rises on the morning of the winter solstice each year. The gate is made of two large upright pillars of stone that direct the suns rays towards Machu Picchu, illuminating the whole site. Unfortunately for us cloud cover prevented us from gaining our first glimpse of the lost city, which made us all the more eager to reach

Machu Picchu. Thankfully it didn't take too long and by 8.00 am we had arrived at the site having a couple of hours there before the onslaught of day-trippers. For several years previous to that day I'd had many different preconceptions of what Machu Picchu would be like. I'd had this elaborate visual conception of Machu Picchu in all its glory, influenced by television, books, film, stories etc. With this glorified preconceived idea in mind I have to admit the Machu Picchu did not fall short of my high expectations, in fact quite the contrary was my reality. I cannot even imagine what it would have been like to see it in all its bustling splendour at the height of the Inca civilization. The city is overflowing in magical beauty with many buildings still standing majestically in the finest interlocking Inca masonry. Its remarkable unity over a five square kilometre site and its fine state of preservation made it so satisfying for all to see.

With houses, temples and buildings standing intact to their roofline, bound together by a web of paths and stairways throughout the entire site. Its mystery heightened by ghostly wisps of low cloud that clung to the humid mountains.

Our guide brought us through the different sections of the city, agricultural, urban and religious, where it was plain to see the sophistication of the Inca society. I saw how the Incas built terraces with retention walls to avoid erosion and irrigation channels to aid cultivation. I also saw temples, adorning splendid architecture and stonework.

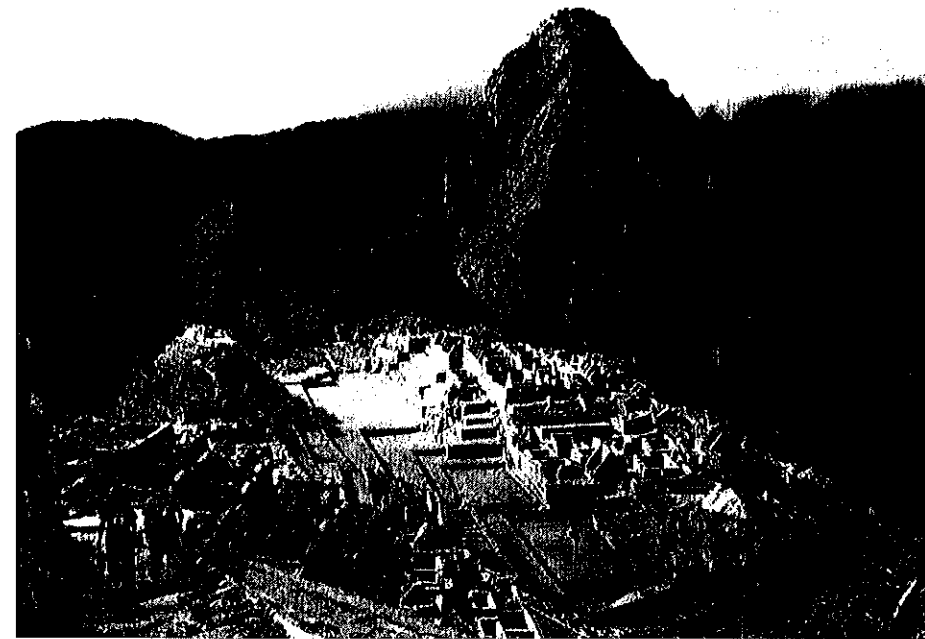
After spending some time touring the site our guide invited us to climb Huayna Picchu (young peak) the towering peak that overlooks Machu Picchu to the north. Without hesitation I scaled the peak following the original spiral Inca path. From this vantage point I gained an astounding view of the Machu Picchu in all its magnificence. The city clinging to the upper slope and crest of a narrow ridge with steep forest hills rising up all around it.

Machu Picchu is a place of extraordinary beauty and was probably the most amazing urban creation of the Inca Empire at its height. The Inca trail itself, trekking through the tropical mountain forests of the Andes, made the experience all the more worth while. That same day I remember reluctantly leaving the ruins, completely exhausted after all the exertion and excitement, with questions swarming in my mind. To what expense did I make my journey to Machu Picchu? Had I done more damage than good with every step I had taken on the Inca Trail? These thoughts were intensified when I came across the adjacent Machu Picchu Sanctuary Lodge Hotel, which boasts panoramic views for only \$1005 per night, and nearby retail shops. Had I added to the exploitation of the lucrative tourist trade? I wasn't sure, but one thing I was sure of was how much of an honour it had been to experience a place, best described by the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda in his poem "The Heights of Machu Picchu" (translated from Spanish). (<http://agutie.homestead.com/files/MachuPicchu.htm>)

"Machu Picchu is a trip to the serenity of the soul, to the eternal fusion with the cosmos; there we feel our own fragility. It is one of the greatest marvels of South America. A resting place of butterflies at the epicentre of the great circle of life. One more miracle."

(Ciarán Gray is a 1st year Student)

(See Image of Machu Picchu on next page)



Peru: A personal experience

Ali Robinson

Lima has little to recommend it except for the marvellously colonial Spanish Plaza De Armas in its centre. The taxi men at the airport are most reassuring in their warnings of Cuidado (take care) and Peligro (danger) when we insist on being taken to the centre at 2.30 am! After a harrowing delayed and most uncomfortable KLM flight surrounded by a total of 26 rowdy and inconsiderate babies, determined to keep every passenger awake for the entire flight, we arrived not a little despondent and absolutely exhausted. We stayed in a rather marvellously run down colonial house with huge high ceilings and winding staircases just off the Plaza. Typical of the remnants of Spanish occupation in both its grandeur and style. Next day we make a collective decision to 'get out of dodge' and pick up a bus for our first port of call-Nazca. Once again amidst the warnings on how dangerous the bus stations were we warily set off. Not even when I travelled in Africa had I received such heartfelt warnings of caution!

Ica is five hours south of Lima and the first main town before Nazca. The Pacific highway runs parallel to the ocean on our right and the Andean sand blasted foothills to our left. We change in Ica and jump aboard a 'local' bus to Nazca... Salsa music blasting, topless girls dancing to its rhythm on the bus 'TV' as we set off into the desert. The setting sun behind the huge parabolic sand dunes, the hub bub of blaring car horns, shouted Spanish exclamations and the ever present salsa, brought to life a vibrancy that could not help but get us in the mood.

Nazca is famous for both the Parracas mummies discovered in the past decades by gravediggers, completely desiccated but skin and hair appearing lifelike due to decomposition halted by the dry desert air. The same desert that a few hundred miles south becomes geographically known as the Atacama desert-driest desert on earth where in parts, its said, no rain has ever fallen!

The second reason and better known claim Nazca has over the passing traveller is the intriguing and mysterious Nazca lines and animal drawings cut into rock and the brushed miles of symmetrically perfect strokes across the arid plains. Animal patterns range from aquatic Orcas to the jungle monkey with magnificent spiralling tail to the Arana or Spider and the most famous of all, the Astronaut and the Hummingbird designs. Local lore tells us that whatever group of people drew these designs; they admired the powers of

survival and adaptation inherent in the animals they drew.

We spent the next day in the desert amongst the mummies as they lay desiccated and uneasily life like on the windy blown sands, the same sands that have been scarred by multitudes of trapezoid lines, animal calendars and lay lines. The trapezoids point to the water underneath 'Cerro Blanca' – largest mountain sand dune in the world. It is most impressive standing on top of an existing mountain. We are amazed at the fact that no one knows what the Nazca lines are for, the many theories unverified. It is amazing to look above the desert and see a landscape so completely filled by lines perfectly straight.

Our next port of call was Arequipa, the 'White City'. Arequipa is 3000 metres above sea level and it marked our ascent into the Andes. An 8 hr bus ride on 'Royal Class' we travelled along the Pacific highway and ever-increasing desert. As we turned toward the Anti Plano or foothills of the Andes the air became not only colder but noticeably thinner. Old Arequipa is undoubtedly beautiful, however it is the second biggest city in Peru and once out of the old city one is in danger and surrounded by poverty and the ever familiar smells and sounds of second world over populated cities. Arequipa was our base for both hiking and mountain climbing and the start of acclimatisation before Cusco.

The Colca Canyon is 1000 metres deep with sheer cliffs on either side. This was the start of our two-day hike in the only canyon in the world where one can see Condors and the pace of life was truly primitive. We stared down to the hazy depths below and set off on our dusty precarious descent. It was 6am and we descended for 3 hrs before reaching the cool gushing waters below... It was like Voltaire's 'El Dorado'... A misty lush forgotten valley in the midst of a dry unforgiving desert. As we trekked on for another 5 hours towards the hot springs and our camp for the night, it was apparent that this is indeed a forgotten place, its Inca people resigned to the loneliness, cut off by geography for centuries. The barter system supersedes money here, one of the few places left in the world where this is the case. We were amazed that such a life can exist where electricity is alien and money is barely a concept.

Dinner that night was disappointing, Lama fat soup, the local brew and despite my horror of fat in any kind of dish, I tried my best to consume the thick slimy fat congealed 'soup' placed in front of me. Despite my arduous trek and need for nourishment I could not suppress the retches and burps as the thick liquid refused to be swallowed! Nutritious I'm sure but my heart went out to those poor Inca's who had suffered for centuries on such coarse and unsavoury dishes. This was indeed hardship!

After grabbing a few hours sleep in a reed hut we started off the dreaded ascent out of this sheer sided canyon at 3am! We all knew and feared the pain we would experience as our guide bounded ahead of us. In complete blackness we trudged 'til the first wisps of dawn throw light ahead. We were making good progress although the agony in our legs and lungs made us feel other wise. Altitude was also making my sister and her friend ill. I got my second wind, despite the exhaustion and begin to move up a gear. The guide and I become locked in a battle to the top, which I reach first!! What should have been a 4-hr ascent, we made it in 3hrs 20!

The 'local bus' plodded along over the corrugates back toward Arequipa at a resigned 25 kms/hr. The stench of donkey urine, Lama fat and unwashed bodies was overpowering however the option of opening a window brought with it a cloud of thick dust that clogged the lungs! Despite having at least 100 passengers on a single deck bus, the driver insisted in continuing to 'pack em in at all costs'. "Avance avance" he roared as the crowd surged toward the back to allow a cowboy covered in cow dung and his long-suffering wife, with child clamped to her nipple hanging on for dear life, to get on. Both child and wife wrapped in the most amazing luminous yarns draped around them for warmth and modesty and yet another bright pink and yellow rug slung as a mobile carry cot across the mothers back. We watched in amused European quietness, the local Peruvian scene unfold before us!

Back in Arequipa after a refreshing Cusquena beer we planned our moves. My sister was to head to Puno and Lake Tititaca to meet some friends of ours and Clodagh and I had made the brave decision to stay and climb Mt Chichani. I was determined, on arriving in Peru to climb one of the Andes and now was my chance. Chichani's peak is 6075 metres, higher than Everest camp 2! Could we do it, what about the altitude? Would we cope with the illness? Were we strong enough physically for the climb and severe conditions? As we went to bed that night, we were agreed; there was only one way to find out!

We reached base camp –5250 metres. A flat area with stonewalls for shelter- tent up, very cold but the sun is scorching – no energy and hard to breath. The landscape is desert and rock-so dry one can feel the moisture being sapped from the body. We were 825 metres from the top and it took us 6 hrs to hike there.

We set off in icy winds and hiked for one hour, then across a precipice for two hrs dodging rock slides. It took us two hours to climb 5900 metres. Our guide cut steps into the mountain for us as this was the only reason we were able to make it to the top.

We left the breathtaking summit amongst the Andean mists and iced waterfalls and headed down-a cruel 3 hrs of steep descent. We could see Base camp at this stage – 200 metres away but it might as well have been 2 miles away! The guide packed up and forced us on our feet. At this stage we had another 2 days hike to the jeep.

Two days later we all met up in Cusco, my sister Auriel having met her two friends who had travelled from Chile. Cusco's reputation had preceded it and as a result, we were all a little disappointed on arrival. Churches and remnants of the conquistadors' quarters built on top of the austere straight and geometrically superior Inca walls from centuries before beautifully surround its plaza. However, the place was over run with desperate touts, cheeky pickpockets and filthy beggars camped in the doorway of every museum and church in sight. To add to this, the number of clichéd 'surfing is the source man' travellers in search of the even more clichéd 'enlightenment' was tragic.

The whole place, despite its archaeological significance had an air of the ludicrous about it. May 'Manu' the Inca warrior forgive us, but we decided then and there in the falling hail that we had had enough of the mountains and Incas. The trail could wait; we were going to the jungle! Away to the glorious humidity and heat of Porto Maldonado on the Bolivian border for a few days exploration of the Amazon basin!

Our local captain/cook/river guide was nervous at our restlessness and after the first 3 days we had him broken down! We were heading up a tiny tributary draped in vegetation in search of rum having drunk the last of the reserves in an effort to bring life back into our buttocks. He pulled the boat over to the side and started to hack at the undergrowth with his machete complaining and me under orders to follow. After about an hour of fly infested hacking we emerged into a green area only to be met by some local Indians who just happened to have, in a tiny falling down wooden shack 3 bottles of the most delicious fruit rum I have ever tasted! I arrived back to the boat to the incredulous stares of the girls who thought they'd never see me again. It is so typical of South America that no matter how remote, off the beaten track or poor a place is, you can always get what you want in some shape or form. The local resilience and invention to adversity is unique. When we finally arrived back to Porto Maldonado, bitten, stinking and covered in layers of sweat and filth but completely buzzed from our experience we went straight to the market, spent a fortune of about 2 euros on a new clothes and headed to the nearest bar to recap on the Jacare, (Cayman) that nearly ended up in the boat, the sweet tasting Piranha we'd caught and cooked and the slime covered lake that we'd paddles across under a full moon in a canoe dangerously overloaded due to the 3 inch lye stagnant water below.



Drinking Rum in the Jungle

My last night was spent dancing salsa and meringues with the locals; falling into my mosquito net to sleep and feeling 'something' softly land on my back in the early morning. I shifted in the bed just in time to see the remainder of three enormous hairy legs and huge hairy body skittle into the corner of my hut, Tarantula! He had been sitting on top of the mosquito net just waiting for his chance to escape; I don't know who was closer to a coronary, him or me! Peru is not a country to be taken lightly and can be difficult to adjust to the climate and altitude variations, but if its adventure and a little danger you're after then go.

(Ali Robinson is a 3rd Year Single Honours student)



Summit Chichani

Tourism in the North West of Ireland: Underperformance in a dynamic Industry

Ciaran McLoone

Over the last quarter of a century there has been unprecedented growth in world tour travel rising to over 800 million trips in 2005. The performance of Ireland has been impressive with the country outperforming the rest of Europe as a tourist destination during the 1990s. For the last available figures, for the 2005 year, overseas visitor numbers increased by 5% over 2004 figures to reach a high of 8 million overseas visitors. This has seen a corresponding growth in tourism revenue for the island of Ireland to €3,975 million for 2005 which was an increase of 8.4% over 2004. While Ireland has seen remarkable growth in overseas visitor numbers and revenue it has been concentrated mainly urban areas.

The North West region, comprising of Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan and Sligo, is an example of a region which has consistently underperformed relative to other regions on the Island. Overseas visitor numbers in the North West, for example, have not witnessed the same growth over the past few years with visitor numbers in 2001 being 468,000. Since then numbers have fluctuated with numbers for 2005 at 489,000, a relatively small improvement. However if we look back further to 2000, we see this is a marked decline with overseas visitor numbers of 660,000 for the North West in 1999 and 604,000 for 2000 (Fáilte Ireland, 2006). There is an urgent need to focus on reversing the decline in demand for holidays to regional Ireland. The underperformance of the North West was traditionally linked to the troubles in Northern Ireland but following the Good Friday Agreement overall visitor numbers has at best remained static into this region.

The increased attraction of short city breaks because of increased air travel and cheap flights has led to increased growth in urban areas but a decline in car touring holidays which has been a key factor in the imbalance in regional distribution. A number of other key challenges need to be addressed to reverse this imbalance in the North West among these of the utmost importance are better access to the region, development of activity holidays, the establishment and promoting of partnerships with local authorities, the industry and the creation of cross border partnerships and initiatives.

Overseas visitor expenditure is predominantly on food and drink, bed and board and shopping with Dublin being the biggest pull for visitors. The North West is at the other end of the scale attracting the least amount of overseas visitors and also underperforms in relation to holidaymaker numbers only being underperformed by Northern Ireland in relation to the Island as a whole.

Domestic Tourism is also very important in achieving geographical spread. Domestic Tourism spending increased by 64.8% over the period 2000-2005 (Fáilte Ireland, 2006) Domestic trips have increased to the North West over the period 2001-2005 increasing from 556,000 in 2001 to 650,000 in 2005, which generated revenue of 95.4 million. This Domestic tourism is defined as visitors from the Republic of Ireland.

In addition and of particular importance to the North West are visitors from Northern Ireland. Visitor numbers from Northern Ireland have rose from 165,000 in 2001 to 211,000 in 2005 which generated revenue of €54.2 million. Tourism product suppliers in the North West are reliant on both this domestic tourism and tourism from Northern Ireland. This revenue figure of €95.4 million for domestic tourism and €54.2 million for visitors from the North doesn't account for day trips. When this is factored in the real extent of dependence by these product suppliers is even greater. This overdependence on domestic tourism means that product suppliers in the North West are very exposed to any fall or fluctuation in this market alone (Fáilte Ireland, 2006).

With the exception of Donegal and Sligo, both of which have an extensive coastline, tourism product density in the North West is poor. The most important products in the North West are activity based – Golf, water-sports and equestrian holidays. Other products which are of great tourism potential and require further investment are hill walking and cycling. In relation to golf internet booking of tee times is not widely available and on a national scale only about one third of the 320 golf courses in the Republic are easily accessible to visitors. In relation to equestrian activities there is opportunity to develop this with increased race meetings and other attractions. Also high cost of insurance has led to fewer operators in this sector. However these activity based holidays are declining nationwide as a result of the draw of urban areas and 'city breaks'. An element which is contributing to the decline of all these activities is price competitiveness, with other European destinations offering both cheaper prices and better weather.

One of the strongest products on a national scale is Ireland's cultural and historical heritage. However this product has not been developed. A lack of reinvestment has led to it being overshadowed by other tourist attractions and activities. Similarly the marine sector requires further investment in order that Donegal and Sligo's extensive coastline realizes its potential.

Accommodation product is strong on a national scale however there is need for some improvement in the North West region. While accommodation product in Sligo and Donegal is good with 20,000 beds between the two, there are only 3,000 beds between Cavan, Leitrim and Monaghan. Occupancy levels average at 53%, reinvestment to improve quality and maximize bed usage is needed (Fáilte Ireland, 2006).

In order to attract more visitors to the area however improved infrastructure is needed, with better access to the region by road, rail, sea and air. Airports at Knock, Donegal, Sligo and Derry provide direct access to the region. But in recent years this has only been a limited service from a number of airports in the UK. To increase visitor numbers to the North West this service will have to be increased and new routes developed from mainland Europe and further afield. However the recent announcement of air links to New York and Boston from Knock will be a major boost for the region bringing in an expected 50,000 visitors annually and will hopefully act attract more low-cost airlines to the region.

The region is poorly served by rail and road. There is no motorway serving the region and the entire North West region is only served by rail at Carrick-on-Shannon and Sligo. Improvement of road and rail would improve domestic tourism and also improve access for international tourists to regions like the North West. There has also been a drop of 60% over the last five years in overseas visitors bringing their own cars (Fáilte Ireland, 2006). This has taken from the spread of tourists as people bringing their own cars are likely to have done so to 'explore' the country. Development of this sector through low cost offers especially to those in the UK for example would increase visitor numbers.

It is clear from the latest available figures that the North West region and other mainly rural areas are underperforming. The phenomenon of 'city breaks' has led to more rural areas losing out; however regions such as the North West do have the potential to be successful. There is a clear need for product development, especially with regards to areas such as cultural and heritage sites, activity holidays, water-sports and other marine activities. There is a need for reinvestment in these sectors as well as a need for investment in creating new key visitor attractions for the region. These product developments need to be fast-tracked and developed in partnership with local authorities and the industry. When doing this it is important for rural areas such as the North West Region to protect the environment through preservation and management schemes which can also open up more eco-friendly product development opportunities. Increased research and development is required to insure that evolving consumer needs are being met. Cross border initiatives and partnerships are important in developing the region and additional investment in marketing is also required.

The Government needs a strategic and well funded regional version of the NDP for the North West in order for the region to gain its fair share of the tourism revenue generated (Irish Tourist Industry confederation, 2005). Many of the developments need to be addressed on a cross border basis in order to 'raise the tide' for the wider Northern Region. Innovation is needed from the Public and Private Sector to provide a 'unique' North West attraction and experience.

(Ciaran McCloone is a MA student)

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General Election 2007: It's all about Geography really...

Dr. Adrian Kavanagh

Those of you with a passing interest in national political affairs will be well aware by now that a general election is due to be held in the Republic of Ireland by no later than June 2007. Writing this at the start of February 2007, a series of opinion polls, in the wake of the fall out of the "Bertiegate", suggesting a return to power for the present government have now been contested by an Irish Times/TNS mrbi poll which shows a gap of just 1% between the Fianna Fáil/Progressive Democrat and Fine Gael/Labour coalition options and also suggests that a rainbow coalition involving Fine Gael, Labour and the Greens is a distinct possibility. The relevance of such national level polls is undermined however in that these do not reflect the particular contexts in which these elections will be contested, relating to the division of the state into forty-three multi-member constituencies, each with their own specific local particularities, and Ireland's proportional representation-single transferable vote (PR-STV) electoral system, which, in turn, is very much associated with a high degree of localism in Ireland's highly clientelist political system. Speaking of the power of "geographical images over men's minds", O'Carroll (1987: 79) talks of the "importance of locality, territory or of geography for Irish politics, both local and national" and proceeds to note how "electoral boundaries, bailiwicks, vote transfers, nomination of candidates as well as appointment of ministers are still rigidly determined by social-geographical factors". Local places are important to the Irish politicians contesting the constituencies that these are located in, and, as such, a study of Irish elections is deficient if there is not a significant place-based component to it. John Agnew's (1987) place-based approach to studying political behaviour offers a useful vehicle for approaching such a study – in *Place and Politics* Agnew argues that political behaviour is intrinsically geographical and thus a place-based perspective is essential in order to fully understand such behaviour. Explanations of electoral behaviour and changing patterns of electoral support need to be couched in terms of place-specific economic growth and social change. Place for Agnew is a setting for interaction, but this setting must be located and thus his concept of place is multidimensional, containing three interrelated elements:

- Locale – place as setting for everyday social interactions and where social relations are constituted
- Location – place located in geographical space, how it relates to other places;
- Sense of place – degree of attachment between people and a place.

As well as pointing to a growing tendency towards localisation or increased differentiation of political expression, Agnew's electoral geography shows that voters will be subject to a wide range of different influences, relating to a wide range of different groups and spatial scales, and these influences tend to vary across

places. It also shows that political parties vary considerably in how well they are organised from place-to-place and, as a result, their effectiveness in communicating their message to, and mobilising, potential supporters. These ideas, and the multidimensional place-based framework underpinning them, will form the basis for this study of how geography will be a vital element in shaping, and understanding, the context that the upcoming general election will take place in.

Place as locale: Political behaviour and electoral choice in Ireland is often shaped by concerns and circumstances specific to local places, as well as the political figures associated with such places and also those places' political histories, both recent and long-term. For a variety of reasons, support patterns in places are often at variance not just with national trends, but also with average party support levels within their specific constituencies. Such local particularities have been very much part of Irish political culture, as indeed is evident from a study of past papers on the topic of Irish electoral behaviour, including those of Marsh (1981), Parker (1982), Komito (1984) and O'Carroll (1987). O'Carroll (1987: 79), in his paper, portrayed Irish voting decisions in the 1980s as "the assertion of inherited loyalties and partisanship – rather than as an exercise of individual choice", also viewing local places as key elements of community identity and important bases on which political careers are made or broken:

"The concrete and indestructible aspect of place makes it a reassuring focus for identity, particularly for a community fearful of change. Finally, because locality is so much associated with community, political leaders lack credibility of they are not local. By definition, a leader should be an intrinsic part of the community and therefore of the locality. These cultural traits have ensured that historically and currently, Irish politics at all levels is heavily influenced by interaction of place and identity."

This strong localistic dimension to Irish politics is tied up with the system of clientelism, which means that effective local representatives will be viewed as beneficial to areas. This involves a "tacit exchange" of political support, on behalf of constituents, for politicians' assistance in gaining access to government benefits and services (Komito, 1997: 296). Komito (1997: 299) argues that politicians build their support bases on their knowledge of different government services and schemes, and suggests that "politics in Ireland has been conditioned by restricted access to information" Clientelist approaches to politics do not view elected representatives as legislators, but as people who carry out errands on behalf of their constituents, and negotiate on their area's behalf so as to draw perks and benefits to that area and its local communities. Should the politician prove to be successful in this role, they will be rewarded by significant support levels from their local area in the next election.

A significant process that may shape significant variations in candidate support levels at very localised scales is the 'friends and neighbours effect', which argues that election candidates will tend to receive their highest level of votes in areas close to their home base (bailiwick) and their support levels will fall the further away they go from their home base, tantamount to a distance decay effect. There are a number of reasons for this. First of all, local candidates can benefit from greater access to local information flows and could use this greater knowledge to their benefit. Secondly, people in the area will personally know the candidate, another factor that may encourage them to select that candidate in preference to others based in different parts of a constituency, which in turn is closely related to another reason for the existence of a 'friends and neighbours effect'; a 'local made good' syndrome, in which people from an area may wish to bask in the reflected glory of having 'one of their own' elected (Parker, 1982). Finally, 'friends and neighbours' style voting is also closely linked to clientelism, for voters may feel that local candidates will have better understanding of area's problems and be the more likely to gain benefits for people of the area. The friends and neighbours effect is more pronounced in the Irish PR-STV electoral system, as one can vote for a local candidate, safe in the knowledge that the vote will not be wasted should that candidate be eliminated during the election count but can be transferred to other, stronger, members of a voter's favoured party. "Friends and neighbours" effect impacts on party strategy in Irish elections – carefully select candidates from different parts of constituency to maintain support for party in different areas even if local candidate in certain areas unlikely to be elected – expectation that unsuccessful candidate's support will transfer to stronger party colleagues in the following count. Linked to this effect and other points noted in this section, it is hardly surprising that the vast majority of parliamentary representatives and election candidates in Ireland will be based in the constituencies that they are contesting. Over 25 years ago Michael Marsh (1981: 267) was to claim that "it is a particularly striking feature of the electoral process in Ireland that it produces members

of parliament (TDs) who are local people. They are local in so far as they live and have usually spent their lives in the constituencies which they serve", and if anything, this trend is probably stronger today, even in the context of an increasingly globalised and mobile Irish society.

There has also been considerable interest amongst political geographers in the influence of the social environment on voting intention, who argue that the manner in which people vote will depend on how people around them, including family, friends and work colleagues, will vote. This phenomenon is encapsulated in the concept of the "neighbourhood effect". Huckfeldt and Sprague (1990) describe this effect as a situation in which political information is conveyed to an individual through social interaction, who in turn makes political decisions based on this. The neighbourhood effect involves a learning process of "behavioural contagion" or "conversion through conversation", with Huckfeldt and Sprague arguing that working class voters are the more likely to be influenced by environmental and contextual influences.

Place as location: Studying places as location – that is how those places are located in geographical space and relate to other places – offers another perspective on how geographies of party and candidate support may be shaped. This allows a consideration of how voting patterns in areas may be a reflection of national trends and overall changes in party support patterns specific to certain election. Just as local factors and concerns may shape voting behaviour, it must be noted that changing trends in party support level at the national level will also impact on the election results in constituencies, while party leader considerations and the policies put forward by parties at the national levels will also have some degree of influence also. In general, should a political party experience a significant increase or decline in their national levels of support then this trend will be largely replicated also at the constituency level, albeit to varying degrees. There can, of course, be instances where support patterns in specific areas or constituencies diverge significantly from the national trend in an election, and this may happen for a variety of reasons, including the influence of local factors and political culture as discussed in the above section. Changes in electoral boundary configurations between elections, as well as the nature of the competition facing a party's candidates within that constituency, can act as a means of shielding a party from adverse national electoral trends, or else act to dampen the boost that the party might have received arising from significant upturns in its fortunes at the national level. Incumbency and a reputation for being a hard worker in terms of constituency affairs can similarly safeguard individual candidates from the effects of a national downturn in their party's fortunes (although in some circumstances these effects may not prove enough for the retention of their seat). The Westmeath constituency (which was subsequently abolished by the 2004 Constituency Commission) offers an example of where the electoral fortunes of a party (or rather specific election candidates) in a constituency remained impervious to significant declines in support for that party at the national level. In 1992, Willie Penrose became the first Labour TD to be elected for the county for many decades on the back of the "Spring tide" but only did so by narrowly taking the final seat by 137 votes. When the Spring tide ebbed away in the 1997 election, Penrose's seat should have been especially vulnerable but it transpired that he actually topped the poll in Westmeath in this contest with an increase of almost 2,000 first preference votes, a result that was very much against the national trend in that election. Paul McGrath of Fine Gael was the final candidate elected for Westmeath in that election and, with the addition of high-profile Seantor Donic Cassidy to the Fianna Fáil ticket, his seat was viewed to be "in jeopardy", particularly in light of a disappointing performance in the 1999 local elections and his geographic proximity to Penrose (Whelan, 2002: 169). As one of Fine Gael's most vulnerable incumbents, the significant decline in Fine Gael support nationally in the 2002 contest should have seen the loss of his seat, but McGrath and Athlone-based running mate, Nicky McFadden, defied the national trend, with party support increasing in Westmeath by 1.3% and McGrath taking the final seat with 450 votes to spare over Mary O'Rourke.

Another manner in which the location understanding of place-based voting behaviour may be considered involves a study of the impact of national, European or global politicking, policy directives, economic processes, or cultural transformations on local places. Decisions taken at national and supranational levels can impact on the socio-economic well being of local areas, which in turn can instigate a political response on behalf of these local communities. Favourable government policies may be rewarded by increasing levels of support from areas, as is evident in the high incidence of ministerial decisions favouring their own constituencies in the expectation that these will be rewarded by increased electoral support for that minister in the subsequent general election (and this also explains why ministerial appointments are often largely dictated by geographical considerations). On the other hand, anti-government votes may intensify within areas

where local communities perceive themselves to be ignored, or overlooked, at the expense of other, neighbouring, areas, when government largesse is distributed. Similarly, government policies, or indeed European Union (EU) directives, may prove to be unpopular if local people believe that the negative effects of these are particularly impacting on their specific area and community. As in the case of disputes over bin charges and proposed waste incinerator construction, such government and EU policy initiatives may provoke a political response on behalf of local communities, crystallising in the creation of protest groups and electoral support for candidates who are seen to support the community's position and reflect their concerns. This is very much a reflection of Ireland's localised and clientelistic political culture that candidates representing the government parties (even ministers!) will usually support protest groups in their own constituencies as they see this to be key to their ultimate electoral survival (Coleman, 2004). Finally, local areas are vulnerable to global economic forces and may benefit, or suffer, from global economic restructuring processes and the decisions taken at the headquarters of multinational corporations that can result in an increase in, or loss of, employment in their area. This, in turn, will prompt a political response from the local populace, which will be advantageous to the government if the effects are positive for the area, but which may result in a loss of government support if the area is seen to lose out.

Sense of place: A sense of place relates to the degree of attachment that people have with their home places and the manner by which they identify with such places. As many Irish people have a range of different territorial identifications (identifying with their townland (or street/estate), then their parish, then their local town or village, then their county, then their province, then their state/nation, then with Europe...), there will tend to be more than one place that they specifically identify with, especially in the case of people who have moved from their home place but still retain strong links with that place. In terms of this geographical analysis of Irish voting behaviour, the aspects of most interest here relates to how ordinary voters identify with their immediate place, or locale, and their county, as well as how politicians may gain in electoral terms from being linked with a range of different places within a constituency. In the latter case, a politician who grew up in one part of a constituency but subsequently moved to another area within the same constituency may benefit from effectively having two separate 'friends and neighbours effects' acting to their advantage, winning significant votes in their current place of residence but also in their original home base, particularly if family members are still resident in the that area.

Significantly different voting trends may be observed between areas, depending on whether a strong sense of place is evident in such areas, or not. Certain parts of Ireland, including traditional rural areas also long-standing urban communities, have a strong sense of place; the local people's sense of attachment to, identification with, and interest with their home place is very strong and these places tend to be viewed as unique and rich in meaning. Most local people's every day social and commercial interactions may take place in, and around, these places. In other parts of Ireland however, particularly in newly developing commuter belt areas, the sense of place is weak, almost to the extent that these areas form 'placeless' or 'inauthentic' environments; the residents of such areas have not developed a strong sense of identification with such places and the degree to which the social, cultural and commercial lives are focussed on these places is limited, with many carrying out their business, recreational and social activities in other areas, either the nearest city or their original home place. Traditional, 'placeful', areas will generally tend to be associated with the types of voting patterns as were detailed above in the "locale" section, with strong support levels for local candidates, particularly in local elections, and such places will also tend to offer proportionally highest levels of support to the main political parties, Fine Gael and especially Fianna Fáil. This was especially evident in the last general election, where both parties did better in the more traditional rural constituencies – allowing for cases where support was lost to independent candidates, who were former members of those parties – while some of Fianna Fáil's stronger electoral performances were also associated with some of the more settled urban constituencies – for instance, winning 50.1% of the first preference votes in the Dublin North Central constituency. Areas characterised by a strong sense of place also tend to have higher than average voter turnout levels and in local and general elections traditional rural areas tend to have the highest turnout rates nationally – Cork North West having the highest turnout level (73.4%) in the 2002 General Election (Kavanagh, Sinnott and Mills, 2004; Took and Donnelly, 2007). Within Dublin and the other cities, the highest turnouts tended to be found in the more settled, older communities, further underpinning the linking between a strong sense of place and higher turnout levels. Areas that are characterised by a weak sense of place tend to have lower than average turnout levels and the lowest turnout levels in recent areas have tended to be associated

with commuter-based and highly mobile areas, that have recently experienced significant increases in population. Where people in these areas do vote, their voting choices are less dictated by traditional support patterns or place loyalties and more likely to support smaller or newer, and often left-wing, political parties and less likely to vote for the main parties. A study of recent elections supports this. In 1992, three left-wing candidates were elected in the then rapidly growing five-seat Dublin South West constituency. The constituency with the fastest growing population in 2002 was Dublin Mid West, and this was the only three-seat constituency to elect a Green Party candidate, Paul Gogarty. The four-seat Lucan electoral area, which forms the northern part of Dublin Mid West and contains some of the fastest growing areas within the Dublin region, did not elect any candidates from the main parties in the 2004 local elections, electing two Independent, one Green and one Labour councillor instead – a result that was replicated in the fast growing Balbriggan electoral area. Thus, there has been a tendency in the recent past for ‘surprise’ results and support patterns that diverge significantly from the norm to be associated with these ‘placeless’ commuter belt constituencies, where traditional localistic voting patterns have broken down. Moreover, if voting trends can be understood as responding to a combination of local and national impulses, it could be argued that there is also a tendency for national changes in party support levels to be particularly exacerbated in these commuter-based areas and constituencies. Again, the examples of Dublin South West in 1992 and Dublin Mid West in 2002 may be used to illustrate this point, given that these reflected a major increase in Labour support in 1992 (with the election of two Labour candidates in Dublin South West) and significant gains for smaller parties at the expense of Fine Gael in 2002 (two of the seats in the three-seat constituency were won by Gogarty and then Progressive Democrat leader, Mary Harney, while Fine Gael lost their seat).

Finally the impact of county identity on voting choice acts as another significant aspect of how a sense of place may shape support patterns in specific areas. Where two counties are located within the same constituency, or one county and part of a neighbouring county, the tendency is for voters to support a candidate from their own specific county and these voters will also be more likely to transfer their votes to other candidates from the same county. There is a sense that candidates from the other county will not look after their issues, as these politicians realise the bulk of their vote is based in their own county. In the 2002 General Election, for instance, Longford-based Peter Kelly of Fianna Fáil won 96.7% of all the votes cast for his party in Co. Longford and just 1.1% of all the Fianna Fáil votes cast in Co. Roscommon. Similarly, Longford-based Louis Belton of Fine Gael won 97.6% of the Longford Fine Gael votes and 0.8% of the Roscommon Fine Gael votes. Furthermore, when Belton was eliminated on the penultimate count, 91.5% of his vote transfers went to the two remaining Longford candidates, Kelly and Mae Sexton (Progressive Democrats), with the remainder going to the two remaining Roscommon candidates, Michael Finneran and Greg Kelly (both of Fianna Fáil). When non-transferable votes were included, the two Roscommon candidates were seen to take less than 6% of the Belton transfers, ultimately ensuring the electoral success of Sexton, who took 60.9% of the Belton transfers, and the failure of Greg Kelly to take a seat despite winning 1,760 more first preference votes than Sexton. The importance of the county factor is even more apparent when the ability of a county to elect a TD is perceived to be threatened. Prior to the 2002 General Election, a controversial constituency opinion poll in the Carlow Nationalist warned that Carlow was at risk of not having a TD in the following Dáil and this may subsequently have fuelled an upsurge in support levels for local Fianna Fáil candidate, MJ Nolan, who was identified in the piece as the Carlow politician most likely to win a seat.

The strength of the link between county identity, politics and electoral behaviour was readily apparent after the publication of the Constituency Commission report in January 2004, which drew up new constituency boundaries for the next (Summer 2007, as it has transpired) general election. Significant opposition to the report emerged in cases where it advocated the breaking up of county units between two different constituencies. People in the Coole electoral area, in north-eastern Westmeath, were unhappy that their area was removed from the rest of the county (now forming a new Longford-Westmeath constituency) and perceived that their areas was being used as an “add-on” to make up the population numbers for the adjacent constituency of Meath West (Newman, 2004). More virulent opposition emerged after the county of Leitrim was divided between the new Sligo-North Leitrim and Roscommon-South Leitrim constituencies, leading to fears that there would be no Leitrim-based TD after the next general election and the development of a “Save Leitrim” campaign (Halligan, 2004), reflecting the intense opposition to the report findings within the county and involving all sections of Leitrim society:

“Leitrim GAA County Board has voiced its support of the campaign to prevent Leitrim being split into two separate constituencies. County Chairman Michael McGowan said that while the GAA are a strictly non-political organisation, “we don’t see this as a political issue. We see football as a binding force in the county and it is very important that we have the identity of a single county”. Should the proposed changes happen, north Leitrim would join Sligo and south Leitrim would join Roscommon to form two new constituencies. McGowan added that he had spent his life “trying to unite north Leitrim and south Leitrim and we will not allow this”.” (Leitrim GAA website, 2004)

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Final Words: This short account offers a brief study of how electoral support and turnout levels are not just a reflection of overall national trends, but emerge when these national patterns are mediated through a range of geographically based structures and concerns. As Richard Sinnott (1995) has argued, Irish general elections, in effect, amount to forty, or more, separate electoral contests, rather than one single contest, and each constituency has its own peculiar circumstances. Results will be influenced by national factors, but also by local constituency concerns, and the relative influence of local and national factors will vary from constituency to constituency, with local factors perhaps having more weight in traditional areas characterised by a strong sense of place as opposed to placeless commuter-based locales. Of course, as noted above, significant variations exist within constituencies also, with significant differences in turnout and candidate support between areas being, in part, shaped by local candidate (“friends and neighbour”) effects, the particular political history of those areas, local political issues and party competition and mobilisation approaches. Thus, while opinion polls are interesting in that they give some sense of how party support levels stands at a very specific point in time, one needs to avoid placing too much credence in these as they fail, or are unable, to take cognisance of how the final election results will be shaped by constituency boundary configurations (and changes in the same) and other geographical factors. Especially in Ireland, elections are won in places, not in opinion polls.

(Dr. Adrian Kavanagh, Department of Geography, NUI Maynooth)

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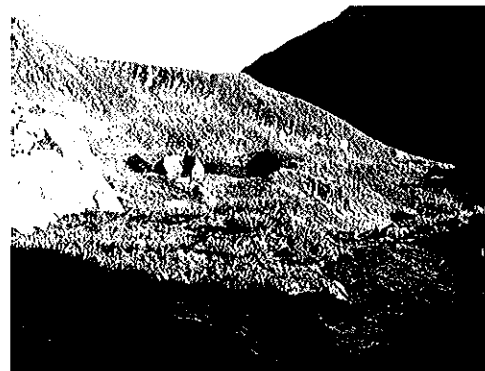
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**Romania - A country of cultural contrasts
 and breathtaking landscapes**
 Diana Catargiu Doyle

"Why should you go to Romania? The straight answer is because it is one of the most beautiful countries of Southeast Europe" (The Blue Guide). Romania lies on the Black Sea coast with the Danube at its southern border. In the centre are the Carpathian Mountains which form an arch across the country dividing the upland basin of Transylvania from the Danube Plain.

Long dominated by Roman, Ottoman, Russia and Habsburg empires Romania became an independent monarchy in 1878. After World War II, the monarchy was substituted by the Communist People's Republic, headed by Nicolae Ceausescu from 1965 until 1989, when his dictatorial regime was eliminated and then followed by eighteen years of transition from a socialist economy to a free market economy. After 1989 Romania welcomed tourists who can now enjoy a wonderfully and diverse heritage of traditional culture, varied landscape and opportunities for leisure at affordable prices.

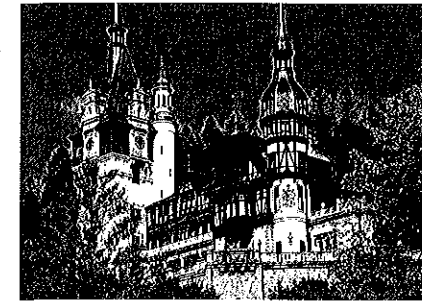


Retezat-Godeanu National Park

In the southern part of Carpathian, named 'Transylvanian Alps', skiing is the main attraction in Winter. Poiana Brasov is the best known and Predeal, Busteni (well known for rock climbing). Sinaia was a royal resort from 1870. Popular facilities in Winter include skiing on the ski slopes, bobsleigh runs, and in Summer, hiking, riding and not forgetting the 'free' health benefits. Don't miss Castle Peles, built for King Carol in 1883 in Sinaia.

In the Summer you can hike through untouched landscapes where rivers flow clear, pass through the oak, beech woods on lower slopes and pastures, climb in the Alpine zone where you can find splendid wildflowers. There are numerous protected areas, for example Retezat-Godeanu National Park has been designated to protect wildlife, rare bearded vultures, red deer, chamois, marmot, wild boar, lynx and bears.

In the Apuseni Mountains exploring the karstic caves can be very exciting. More than 11,000 caves are on Romanian territory with many of them situated in the Apuseni Mountains. In the same region, on the Cerna Valley, you can find the renowned health resort Baile Herculane, established by the Romans in first century. It's recognized for mineral and thermal springs for treating rheumatic and nervous systems and also nutritional problems. There are also outdoor and indoor thermal swimming pools. Other attractions for tourists looking for spectacular views are 'The Muddy Volcanoes' one of the best known geological reserves in Romania.



Peles Castle

Transylvania is one of the most attractive Romanian's provinces. Here we can find legendary castles, Bran Castles was supposed to be the home of Vlad Impeller who inspired the myth of Count Dracula. Corvin Castle was built in the 15th century by the Prince Iancu Corvin in a gothic style. Fascinating medieval towns Brasov, Sibiu are famous for their Old Saxon architecture, Sighisoara is one of the greatest medieval cities left in the world.

Bucovina and Moldavia province is situated in the north east of Romania and is well known for the beautiful exterior mural paintings of its monasteries. It reflects the Byzantium influence in art and cultural development of the 15th century 16th century in Moldavian Civilization. The exterior mural painting of Moldovita,

Sucevita, Humor, Arbore Voronet monasteries is an expression of religish beliefs of an orthodox spirit. Voronet has been considered 'Sistine Chapel of the East'. These monasteries are part of UNESCO World Heritage recognised for their unique beauty and rarity.

Maramures is situated in the depression with the same name, surrounded by impressive mountains and has a distinctive rural culture, which we can find in few parts of Europe today. Main characteristics of the vilages are the Wooden Churches, a great combination of Gothic style and traditional timber, using the same techniques for centuries. But the most famous attraction is The Merry Cemetery in Sapinta vilages. In 1935 Stan Patras started carving and painting crosses, each of them representing, in caricature, the good and bad habits of the deceased

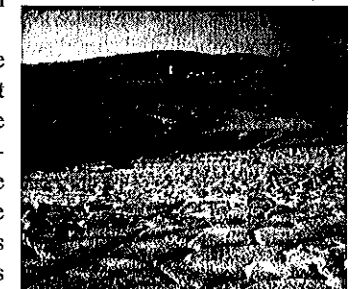
Romania could be an interesting destination for those who want adventure in a fascinating and unique place like Danube Delta. It's the second largest and the best preserved of Europe's deltas. The UNESCO Natural Heritage website designated the Danube Delta a biosphere Reservation. It is a network of channels, lakes, reed isles tropical woods and sand dunes. The wetland shelters over 300 species of birds (pelicans, cormorants, white eagles, egrets, black and white swans, herons), countless species of fishes including royal sturgeon which produces caviar), 1,500 species of plants

ranging from sinuous lianas (Letea forest) and silver oak forests to water lilies and lotus. More than eight-ten protected reserves and "buffer "areas are found throughout the Danube delta and it is considered to be the largest marshland in Europ. A warm climate, sandy beaches, non-existence of tides, Greek and Roman ancient monuments, modern hotels and sports facilities (wind surf, water ski, scuba diving) make Romania's Black Sea the ideal destination for a summer holiday. Romania has all the ingredients for an enjoyable, pleasant holiday and presents great opportunities and facilities for those with a spirit of adventure.. "Considered by many the most beautiful country in Eastern-Europe, Romania still claims regions that seem bastions of a medieval past long since lost elsewhere."(Fodor's Eastern and Central Europe).

(Diana Catargiu Doyle graduated from the University of Bucharest in 1997 and is a current MA student in NUI Maynooth)



Muddy Volcanoes



Visual Research and Place Theory

Eoin Flaherty

It can be argued that visual research has enjoyed the same hostile reception within the social sciences as that of photography into the realm of art. For Bourdieu, photography represented a 'middle brow' cultural form for the consumption and practice of the newly emergent post-fordist service class. As noted by Allan Sekula (1992), its threat to established bourgeois cultural order in the mid 19th century co-existed with Fox Talbot's predictions of the adoption of photography, both as art form, and objective witness in relation to judicial proceedings. The 'Pencil of Nature' (i.e. the camera - Talbot, 1844¹) promised an objective representation of reality and superiority over the verbal and textual testimony: the photograph as fact. The place of the photograph within social research throughout the 20th century has been no less problematic than its transition of status from 'middle brow' to high art form, as documented by the development of publications such as *Camera Work* and *Aperture*. More problematic still, has been the nature and position of theory within visual studies concerning both the camera as a tool of data collection, and photographic discourse. Within existing research (a limited amount upon which this article is based), a number of distinct research approaches become apparent; Visual Ethnography, from Bateson and Mead's *Balinese Character* (1962), to contemporary accounts such as Goldfine's *Hunters and Healers* (2003), have treated the status of the photograph as comparable to that of the field note. Studies such as Susan Sontag's *On Photography* (1977), and Allan Sekula's *On the Invention of Photographic Meaning* (2002), discuss the nature of 'the visual' within its many contexts of interpretation & dissemination, and emphasize its dual status as both material artifact, and discursive element. Within the context of tourism promotion, studies such as Des Bell's *Images of Ireland* (1995), and Sinead O Leary's *People, Pace, Place* (2003), (although not exclusively focusing upon the photograph), discuss the role of the visual in generating a distinct 'sense of place', arguably contrary to that experienced within the host environment, which is successfully mobilized as a promotional tool depicting Ireland as a pre-modern 'world apart', outside the realm of conventional space and time (O'Connor, 1992).

Definitions of space and place & their position within research methodology differ according to both author and paradigm². Carter & Donald (1993) suggest a definition of place as "space to which meaning is ascribed...articulated within networks of social relations and understanding". Massey presents a multidimensional view of place, so defined in terms of definition and representation, cultural identity, and its position within a predefined set of global relations (Hubbard et al 2004). Massey's theory, along with others such as John Agnew's sense of place, allows for a consideration beyond the traditional Euclidian view of places as geographically situated and bounded, toward an analysis of the cultural practices that constitute a particular sense of place.

I devote the remainder of this article to a brief discussion of place and identity theory in the processes of image creation and dissemination, and the role of geographical theories of place and space in the study of visual imagery and 'imagined' place formation.

Photography and Landscape

Des Bell's *Sociology of the Landscape* (1993) offers a summary of developments in landscape art throughout the 17th and 18th centuries; of particular interest throughout this period are the works of Nicolas Poussin³ and Claude Lorrain⁴. In aesthetic terms, their works embodied the distinct notions of both 'the beautiful' and 'the sublime', resulting, as Gibbons (1996) argues, in the emergence of 'picturesque taste and tourism' toward the end of the 18th century. The distribution and adoption of painterly conventions of 'the sublime' informed later techniques of landscape gardening, to the extent that the aesthetic of Claude and Poussin came to be physically inscribed on the landscape (Nash, 2002). Enacted through the English 'grand tour', and recorded in travelogues such as those of the Hall's (Slater 1993), the 'search for the sublime' continued as a mediated engagement with particular localities; mediated through the previously established definitions of what could be considered exotic.

Developments in visual technologies throughout the early 20th century, further problematize the discussion, by introducing a new media form: The motion picture. Gibbons (1996) discusses the impact of John Ford's *The Quiet Man* in terms of its influence on the composition and production of John Hinde's widely

circulated series of postcard-photographs of Ireland. Such productions, he argues, are a key component in the construction and maintenance of visitors' views of Ireland as an Arcadian 'world apart'. The key point of note here, in relation also to the work of Des Bell, is that our perceptions of particular environs, and the pre-configured notions we bring to our gaze upon it, are the product of a historical process, whereby through developments of early-modern art, photography, and the motion picture, a particular 'sense of place' becomes established, at both the personal cognitive level, and materially through the photograph, motion picture and postcard.

Contemporary Visual Studies

As a case in point, in relation to uses of the camera in data collection, Goldfine's (2003) study of contested interpretations of rural landscape in Maine, examines the concept of place, and its subjective meaning within areas of contention. The study addresses conflict both physical and ideological, concerning appropriate uses of rural space, mobilising the photograph as a key data source. Framed as a conflict of 'established tradition' and 'modern rationality', the authors present, in narrative form, the contesting of boundary demarcation between local residents, and new arrivals⁵. The conflict highlights the contested nature of landscape meaning, and is presented through both text and image. The images, although relating to specific places in this context, also carry connotations of the particular discourses of tradition and modern rationality, inherent in the opposing arguments of both parties respectively.

Jon Prosser attempts to account for the marginal position of visual research (in relation to alternative approaches) by suggesting that social science, as 'a discipline of words and text' (Prosser, 2001), tends to underemphasize the existing contribution, and future potential of the visual in qualitative research. An overview of some current texts on visual methodologies reveals some interesting issues. Sarah Pink (2001) cites Prosser's 'objective realist' approach to visual research as a significant barrier to the development of theory within research. Forwarding an inductive approach to research design, Pink suggests that the methods of visual research are essentially flexible, and adaptable to particular field requirements as research develops. Rose's *Visual Methodologies* focuses on the analysis and interpretation of existing visual data within the frameworks of semiotics, content analysis, and psychoanalysis, emphasizing a critical approach to visual methodologies. An interesting contrast is the former's focus on the practical collection of visual data, and the latter upon the examination of existing materials. Irrespective of focus (in our case, less upon the individual considerations of researcher reflexivity), the question remains of the position of theory within such studies.

Photography and Theories of Place

John Agnew presents a multi-dimensional perspective on concepts of place including locale as the setting of social relations, location as geographical area, and sense of place as the subjective feeling associated with particular places (Hubbard, 2004). The epistemological aspects of visual data have often been identified as a significant barrier toward its acceptance as a mainstream research tool, and, as discussed by Wagner (2002), the realist approach to visual data has encountered significant criticism, in the form of the 'postmodern critique of the documentary gaze'. In realist terms, the locational aspects of Agnew's and Massey's theories of place (as discussed earlier) require little further theorizing, location is reflected in the captured image⁶. It is the issue of sense of place that becomes significant. As noted previously by Gibbons, the photograph itself may be subject to significant modification, conditioned by pre-established aesthetic conventions (idealized painterly conventions in the case of Hinde). Its new 'form' subsequently enters collective conscience through dissemination, to form a significant part of the construction of a particular sense of place'. This conclusion, however, is not without its problems.

In directing attention toward the phenomenological aspects of photographic interpretation and questioning the status of the image as objective text, identifying a specific level of analysis becomes difficult. The focus upon cognitive, individual interpretations of place, such as those advanced by the humanistic and behavioral school in the early 70s, calls for attention to be placed upon the actor (Johnston, 2004). However, the processes of dissemination, and the embedding of the image within collective conscience, require attention to both material networks and individual consumption. In light of Wagner's call for interdisciplinary collaboration within the field of visual research, the discipline of Geography is conspicuous in its absence.

In relation to the initial example of tourism and photography, it is clear that a thorough discussion requires consideration of aspects geographical, cultural, material, social and historical. Massey has noted, within her progressive theory of place, that 'places' are "produced by the complex intersection of processes that operate across spatial scales from the local to the global" (Massey, 2002). In a move from the literal to the figurative, theories of place stand to overcome certain conceptual weaknesses within image based research, by theoretically reconciling the material, social, and phenomenological, and taking steps toward a truly interdisciplinary analysis.

(Eoin Flaherty is a 3rd Year Joint Honours student)

Endnotes

1 The 'Pencil of Nature' refers to an analogy used by Talbot within his 1844 publication of the same name, containing a range of illustrations, and Talbot's reflections on potential uses of the photograph. Of particular interest, is his idea of utilizing the photograph as evidence within court proceedings, as it is here we encounter the first of many interpretations of the photograph of an objective recording instrument, of singular interpretation, and an absolute representation of reality. It is this view that enters into early accounts of the photograph as it was used in visual ethnography; the contention that it renders a document as indisputable as that of the researchers field note.

2 Space and place as foundational concepts in geographical analysis vary according to both paradigm and approach (Johnston & Sidaway, 2004). Within the spatial science schools, the focus on space as a 'container of flows and exchanges to be mapped' complemented the quantitative methods employed in human geography at the time. The shift toward a focus on place occurs within the emergent paradigms of humanism and postmodernism in the late 60s / 70s. The marginal position of visual methodologies within the social sciences, considered in this respect, places visual data within the positivist approach, reducing its status in light of the adoption of other qualitative methods such as participant observation; visual data collection, in this context, contradicts the approaches of qualitative researchers seeking to establish a distinct research approach within the social sciences.

3 Turner, Jane. 1996. *The Dictionary of Art* Vol 25: Pittoni - Raphael. New York: Macmillan

4 Turner, Jane. 1996. *The Dictionary of Art* Vol 7: China, VIII: Jade Carving - Cossa. New York: Macmillan

5 See Goldfine, R. 2003. Hunters and Healers: Social Change and Cultural Conflict in Rural Maine, *Visual Studies* (18) 2 pp96-111

6 In relation to the technology of the camera, the 'ambiguity' of certain images becomes an issue in relation to authenticity (in terms of the 'contrivances' suggested by Gibbons in relation to the work of John Hinde). Although space does not permit further discussion, Bourdieu raises the interesting question of the status of various art forms within a unilateral hierarchy. As technologies of manipulation become more accessible, and the image itself infinitely more manipulable, the objective nature of the photograph in relation to its

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Global Map Projections: The SuperValu Globe

Dr. Frank Houghton

Map projections of our planet Earth are a difficult, mathematically tedious and highly contentious issue among the (thankfully small) minority of people who know or care about such matters. In 1568 the Flemish geographer/ mathematician/ cartographer Gerhardus Mercator first produced what for many has been a 'standard map' of the world, based on an acceptance that the world is in fact round.

His namesake, the Mercator projection, is just the first in a long list of map projections, most of which claim to be 'better' or more 'accurate' than their predecessors. The list of competing projections is long and their titles equally tedious (the Van der Grinten projection, the Robinson projection, the Winkel Tripel projection, the Aitoff projection, the Equirectangular projection, Mollweide's Projection, the Sanson-Lamsteed projection ... to list just a few)

Perhaps the projection that has received most publicity, both positive and negative has been the Peters Projection, or as some commentators note, the Gall-Peters Projection (based on the work of both Arno Peters and English clergyman James Gall in an 1855 edition of the *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, in which he called for an equal area projection) (Rosenberg, 2006).

Proponents of the Peters projection are often concerned about the way the Mercator projection, and many similar projections, distort the size of both countries and continents in the Northern Hemisphere. The Mercator projection, for example, appears to show Africa and Greenland as having roughly the same land mass, while in fact Africa is 14 times larger. Defenders of the Peters projection argue that this reinforces racism by over-inflating the relative size and importance of the Northern, and predominately white, hemisphere over the Southern.

Although popular and in particular media interest in the Peters/Gall-Peters projection has been intense, this has only served to incense the finer sensibilities of numerous cartographers. While proponents of the Peters projection claim that it is the only 'fair' and 'non-racist' map available, others have described it in less flattering terms. In rather less than the standard code of academic discourse Robinson for example describes the Peters projection as "somewhat reminiscent of wet, ragged long winter underwear hung out to dry on the Arctic Circle." (Rosenberg, 2006). Feldman has clearly articulated opposition to the Peters Projection describing it in no uncertain way as a 'scam capitalizing on the cartographic ignorance of most people and, sad to say, many teachers at all levels, and which survives quite nicely in a climate of political correctness'. In this context, I have the rather dubious honour of bringing what can only be described as the SuperValu globe to the attention of any colleagues that have not yet seen it to date (see Figure 1). SuperValu's colourful environmentally friendly 'Bag for Life' features four images: a dolphin; a tree; the sun; and a rather dubious 'globe'. As can be seen from Figure 1 the SuperValu globe may well have Arno Peters spinning in his grave (he died in 2002).

Suffice it to say that if there is any truth in the claims made by the proponents of the Peters projection concerning the subliminal message that 'standard' projections, such as the Mercator projection give out, then these have been taken to what some may see as their logical conclusion in this image. Distilled Eurocentrism at its very best, or perhaps more correctly at its very worst...

(Dr. Frank Houghton, ICRASS, Limerick Institute of Technology & NIRSA)

Figure 1



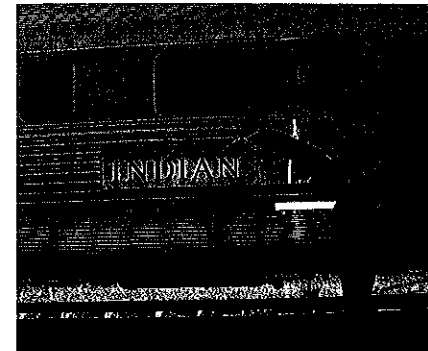
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Coast to Coast on the Indian Pacific

Pamela Dore

Let me take you on a journey, one I took myself across the southern continent of Australia, home of the barbie, kangaroos and the didgeridoo. In Summer 2006 I found myself boarding the Indian Pacific, leaving Australia's First City, the bustling metropolis of Sydney in New South Wales and traveling 4352 kilometers on one of the last few Trans - Continental journeys done by train. The Indian Pacific crosses many diverse terrains, from climbing into the spectacular Blue Mountains, then passing through outposts and mining towns onto the Red Outback and the stark desolate Nullarbor Plain, before returning to humanity in Kalgoorlie and then back to city life in Perth on the west coast. The Indian Pacific is one of the world's longest train journeys, taking 66 hours to finish its journey and traveling at an average speed of 115 km an hour. The railway line has undergone many changes since first constructed; no longer does the journey run on five different gauges requiring many different trains and changeovers for passengers. Since 1970 the line has been converted into a standard gauge line that passes through all three states and time zones.



We board the bright aluminium carriages of the Indian Pacific, each of which carries the image of the Australian wedge tail eagle, which symbolizes the epic journey, an adventure that spans the continent. I find my seat in Red Class, where the ordinary Ozzies and backpackers like me sit unlike Gold Class where we heard word of beds, waiters and free food! This will be my home for the next 66 hours except for stop offs in Broken Hill, Adelaide, Cook and Kalgoorlie.

So off we set westbound from Sydney on Wednesday afternoon at 2.55pm, the home of the Harbour Bridge, Bondi Beach and the world famous Opera House, where the countries first European settlement began in the 1770s.

Pamela with the Indian Pacific

Leaving this behind we started to climb into the great mountain barrier west of Sydney, the spectacular Blue Mountains which get their name from the blue haze that surrounds them, caused by vapours emitted from Eucalyptus trees. Our first stop is in Broken Hill, early Thursday morning, an average looking mining town miles from anywhere as signposts show. Some of the world's richest ore deposits exist here in lead, zinc and silver. The town also houses a base for The Royal Flying Doctors and School of the Air, the lifelines for those living in the outback. The Royal Flying Doctors was established in 1928, a mobile health service that provides 24 hour emergency health care with the use of radios, phone consultations and planes for those who are located in hard to access areas. While the School of the Air serves the many children living in remote conditions on stations with the use of radio and more recently the internet. After a quick breakfast, we head west again setting our watches to South Australia time. We arrive in Adelaide that afternoon, one of the main southern cities, which is well planned with a broad street layout and stone buildings. The Barossa Valley 55 km from Adelaide is home to many wineries, while the majestic peaks of the Flinders Ranges are 250 km north and one of the world's most ancient landforms. Kangaroo Island is 113 km south west of Adelaide, cut off from the mainland when sea levels rose. Being totally isolated it has nurtured a kangaroo species found no where else on earth. Penguins, koalas, echidnas and sea lions are just some of the wildlife that roams here also.



Broken Hill Mine



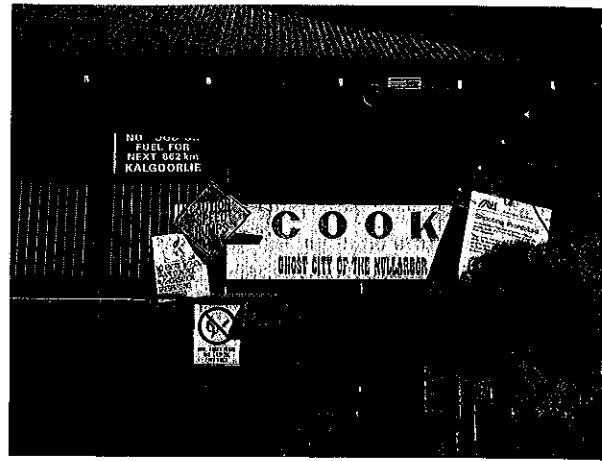
On the Nullarbor Plain

Then it is back on to the train as we enter the world's longest straight stretch of track 478 km across the Nullarbor Plain. Nullarbor means no trees and this is certainly true as trees are few and far between, only scattered patches of salt scrub grow on this limestone plateau which was created 25 millions years ago, when the bed of a prehistoric sea was uplifted by the earth's movements and now measures 270,000 square kilometers. It is a harsh environment where few would survive. There is only one scheduled stop, in this semi-arid region on Friday morning, the famous outpost of Cook. The town was built in 1917 to serve the railway but today the population has dwindled to four with the privatisation of the railway. Cook is a refueling station for locomotives and overnight accommodation for drivers. Full of unusual features like a grassless golf course, abandoned shops, post office, bush hospital, school and houses. The only supplies come when this train pulls into the town. When the population was bigger water was pumped from an underground artesian aquifer but now is delivered by the train. We have a brief stop to wander around one of the most isolated places on earth. The sun is blistering high in the blue sky. Sunscreen and hats are donned all around. I walk to the town's edge and stand on the Nullarbor Plain facing towards the empty school there is nothing behind me, absolutely nothing, but salt scrub and red soil. Except for the station master, his wife and two station hands, Cook is essentially a ghost town.

On the train we set our watches back again, as soon we'll be entering a new time zone in Western Australia. By nightfall we reach Kalgoorlie, which seems like a metropolis after the Nullarbor. This is a gold mining town since its discovery in 1893 by Paddy Hannana, a fellow Irish man. Word soon spread and prospectors came in search of gold and so Kalgoorlie was born and has been mining since. Today there is a population of 27,000 people with virtually no unemployment thanks to the Super Pit, Australia's largest open cut gold mine.

On Saturday morning I wake up to a totally new landscape, which has transformed overnight from red desert, into green pastures and fields. So my journey comes to an end on Saturday morning at 9.10am, having covered 4352 km of this beautiful country, in one of the world's most isolated cities. Perth is young and affluent and developed rapidly due to Western Australia's huge mineral resources. This train is truly a transcontinental experience, which lives up to its name, bringing people from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean or vice versa – The Indian Pacific.

(Pamela Dore is a 2nd Year Single Honours Student)



The Famous outpost of Cook

Rialto Bridge, Venice

Marion McGinn

Geographical landscapes are more than a valuable resource for exploring the history of cultures and societies as because of their inseparable connection to specific localities, they may be used to evoke an enormous range of mental and emotional associations – associations of time and space, of history and events, of persons and social activities to which individuals can maintain deep and abiding attachments, regardless of where they travel.

The Rialto Bridge, which is today one of the great symbols of Venice, was for a long time, a simple wooden bridge over the Grand Canal. Before the twelfth century, people who wanted to cross the canal had to hire a small boat and the help of its owner. However, not only was it costly, it was quite risky to embark and disembark, especially when a huge wave attacked the Grand Canal. In 1264, a wooden drawbridge was launched between the two banks. This bridge was twice destroyed, the first time deliberately, by Bajomonte Tiepolo after his unsuccessful rising in 1310, the second time, inadvertently, by the weight of people crowding on to it to watch the passage of the Marquis of Ferrara in 1444. There is a painting of this bridge by Carpaccio in the series of the 'Miracles of the relic of the true cross' in the Museo dell' academia. While building continued on other areas like the Piazza and the Bacino San Marco, the Rialto was relatively neglected. It was not until 1524, that the first designs were made for a stone bridge, although the planning dragged on almost the entire sixteenth century. According to Frederick Lane (Lane, 1973: 447), the contrast between the half-hearted urban renewal around the Rialto and the multiplication of splendid buildings around San Marco reflected the dominance of affairs of state over commercial business in the early sixteenth century. However, since the old bridge was in decay, a new bridge was called for with all the famous architects of the period drafting designs, including Sansovino, Scamozzi, Palladio and Michelangelo.

The contract for a high arched bridge with shops finally went to Antonio da Ponte in 1588. Da Ponte was not a particularly prominent architect of his time, but was a master builder for the Magistrato al Sal, who was responsible for Venice's numerous public buildings. He also worked there in his capacity as hydraulic engineer, and it was perhaps his experience in this sphere that was decisive in him being commissioned. It was finally finished in 1591. It is 27m long and seven and a half metres in height, with one arch surmounted by a stone portico, sheltering two rows of boutiques. It was designed to allow passage of galleys and the massive structure was built on some 12,000 wooden pilings that still support the bridge today. The faces of the bridge depict in relief, the city's patron saints, Theodore and Mark, with a memorial inscription to Doge Pasquale Cigogna.

The area adjoining the Rialto has always been the commercial centre of Venice. It was a large market place mostly for speciality goods. There were areas for gold, jewellery, silks, fine cloth and money changing. Merchants would come to the Rialto not only to trade but to learn news of their investments and arrange to make deals on joint ventures. When voyages became more regular and colonies were established in distant centres, traders no longer had to travel with their products. However, even if a merchant had plenty of coins in his treasure chest, it was a bothersome and dangerous business to get them out and count them every time he made a purchase. The use of resident agents instead of travelling merchants was facilitated by a number of improvements in commercial techniques in banking and insurance. In Venice, banking developed a distinctive style, which is associated with the name giro bank. This is a system based on promissory notes that does not require the transfer of literal money but only that of theoretical money. Credits were not transferred by writing checks, as is done today, but depended on the person who was making the payment appearing in person before the banker, who sat behind a bench under the portico of a church at Rialto, with his big journal spread out in front of him. There were normally four or five such banks with booths on the campo next to the Rialto Bridge. The credit given a merchant on the banker's books could be transferred to some other merchant to pay for purchases. With thousands of depositors transferring credits, a banker would have to trust that his depositors would not ask for cash but would merely transfer credits to other depositors. The danger of such a situation was exemplified in 1499 when the failure of the oldest of the four existing banks caused a run on all the others. Once confidence was shaken, merchants were not content to accept payments with transfers on the banker's books, they wanted coins. This led to a famous banker of the period, Alvise Pisani's success in getting almost all the banking business into his own hands. His significance for the histo-

ry of banking is in the extent to which he enabled Venice to finance wars by inflation of bank credit. Finally however, the failure of a new Pisani bank led the government to create the *Banco della Piazza* in 1587 and give it a monopoly. In 1619, a second public bank was created, the *Banco del Giro*, which had the additional function of financing government debt. The type of giro bank developed in Venice was widely imitated in the seventeenth century as in Amsterdam, Hamburg and Nuremberg. Compared to other cities at the time, Venice had relatively good banking facilities, and this combined with its long established commercial connections, made Venice one of Europe's most important financial centres, especially for the transfer of funds internationally through bills of exchange.

In 1854 a second bridge was constructed across the Grand Canal taking some of the pressure off the Rialto, but the Istrian stone span still stands as a landmark today. It is in this way that geographical landscapes are never culturally vacant but rather acquire value and significance by virtue of how a community can assign a meaning to a geographical feature and put their landscapes to work to communicate something about themselves.

(Marion McGinn graduated from NUIM with a BA in September 2006)

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A River Runs Through It

Kevin Nolan & Joyce Farren

Anyone who has seen the films 'A River runs through it' or 'The Horse Whisperer' will have seen the beauty that is Montana. My wife and I decided to take the bull by the horns and realise her dream of seeing 'Big Sky Country'. For me the planning and organisation of any holiday is as enjoyable as the trip itself (well almost!), but in this case, because of the vast distances involved, it was paramount that I did my homework.

After much deliberation we decided to use Salt Lake City as our gateway and hire a car there. Of course it wasn't just any car; it was a bright red Mustang convertible! On September 4, 2006 we set off from Salt Lake City, heading north on Interstate 15, our aim to cover as much distance as possible that day. We made it all the way to Missoula, a staggering 550 miles and spent the night there. Missoula is a small university town located on the Clark Fork River, so in fact a river really does run through it! At first light we set off on our journey to Kalispell which was to be our base while exploring Montana – only 120 miles to go! From a crisp pink and orange morning to the most beautiful blue sky by lunchtime, it was a breathtaking sight from our four wheeled stallion. No doubt about it, we were in Montana. Kalispell is situated 22 miles from Montana's jewel in the crown, Glacier National Park. We booked into our hotel, a very solid redbrick building built in 1909. The neon sign reads 'The Grand Hotel' and could be seen for miles back in those days when there was very little else on Main Street. Today there are many great restaurants and bars, including a real live saloon, complete with resident cowboys!

Day Four started with breakfast in an All-American diner, a great way to begin the day. We made our way to the west gate entrance to Glacier National Park. Entry to park costs US\$25 for a one week pass. Once inside the gate the magic began, from the tallest pines you've ever seen to the sheer beauty of Lake McDonald, surrounded by snow-tipped mountains. The road which goes from one side of the park to the other (52 miles in all), is called 'Going to the Sun Road'. I had read so much about it and my expectations were high, not to mention the altitude and we were driving to the sun all right! The scenery was out of this world, sheer drops, dramatic peaks and waterfalls gushing from the still melting snow on the uppermost peaks. The temperature was in the mid eighties but at an altitude of 6,000 feet it felt so fresh and crisp that you would never have thought it was that warm.

We stopped at Logan's Pass which is located on the Continental Divide and is the highest point at 6,650 feet of the 'Going to the Sun Road'. We got out of the car and trekked a mile and a half to what my wife described as a little piece of heaven, Hidden Lake. The blue is the stuff of Disney, unbelievable and to



Hidden Lake Glacier National Park

see it from a height at the foot of Mount Wilbur is an unforgettable sight. The vastness strikes you immediately, taking your breath away; totally unspoilt, uninterrupted beauty. Glacier National Park was declared a World Heritage Sight in 1995. The 'Going to the Sun Road' was built in 1932 and due to its perilous position, coupled with the severe climate in winter, is under constant repair and maintenance. Just recently in November 2006 an avalanche severely damaged the road on the eastern side and work will be in progress until June 2007 at least. The next day we drove the 52 miles through the park to the eastern side, which is renowned for its wildlife and spectacular trails. All the trails begin and end at the Swift Current Inn, so we parked the car and started up the Iceberg trail. The hike all the way to Iceberg Lake takes about five to six hours so we knew we wouldn't complete it. Nevertheless we wanted to see some of the beautiful scenery and flora. Now is the time to visit Iceberg Lake as if global warming continues at its present rate all of the parks (50 or so moving ice masses), may be completely melted by 2030. We headed back down the trail and on to Fishcap Lake nearby, where we had heard from other hikers that there was bull mousse. We sat at the edge of the lake enjoying the peace and tranquillity, hoping to catch a glimpse of the mousse, only to see a grizzly bear and her cub, not 50 yards away!

What an exhilarating moment. The park rangers later informed us that this was quite common as towards the end of the summer the bears are keen to eat as much as possible before hibernation and where there are humans, there is food! We left Swiftcurrent feeling satisfied that we had seen real grizzlies; little did we know that the excitement was only beginning. We heard from some other people that there were bears high up on the hillside foraging for food and berries. We joined the rest of the 'bearers' (the name given to bear watchers), on the roadside and waited patiently as the black bears in the distance made their way slowly down the hillside. Our patience paid off about 45 minutes later when the mother poked her head through roadside bushes to check if the coast was clear. Most people had left by then so it was pretty quiet. Her two cubs followed her across the road and into the stream – what a picture and I managed to get it all on camera as they were only about 20 yards away.

Instead of driving back the way we came we decided to return via the eastern perimeter of the park. On our way we passed an area called Saint Mary's which three months earlier had been devastated by forest fires. It was a very sad sight as you could only imagine the lush forest there once was, and the wildlife that went with it. However we subsequently learned that these forest fires are not all bad news as rejuvenation starts almost immediately, replenishing the forest with new vegetation, and so it all begins again. That evening before dinner we decided to experience some real cowboy culture and went to the local saloon, complete with swinging doors, in Kalispell. Once inside you are transported back to a scene from the Wild West. You can expect to see the local cowboys in all their finery (such as it is), comparing stories loudly at the bar. The next day we drove 15 miles north to the Big Mountain ski resort at Whitefish. There are plenty of walking trails at Big Mountain, some more challenging than others. You can take the gondola up to the top and hike down or vice versa. We took the gondola up and hiked the Danny Trail four miles to the bottom. Although we didn't encounter the bears on our journey, we did manage to meet some rather curious deer who posed nervously for the camera, again only feet away. This, along with some woodpecker sightings made our day.

The next couple of days were spent exploring the surrounding towns of Libby, Eureka and our favourite, Big Fork at the north end of the Flathead Lake. It is a quaint, rustic little town with lots of craft shops where you can find unique pieces, handmade by local artists. Sadly our Montana adventure was near an end but we took a slight detour while driving back to Salt Lake City, which brought us to Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming. We overnighted in a small town called Gardiner and the next morning headed for Yellowstone. We were not long inside the park when we saw all sorts of wildlife, including bison, coyotes,

wolves and elk. The wildlife is easy to spot in Yellowstone due to the flat nature of the landscape, wide open golden plains punctuated with rivers and lakes. Yellowstone was the world's first national park and is home to half of the world's geysers, the most notable being 'Old Faithful', so named because every ninety minutes or so it erupts spectacularly. We had the privilege of witnessing this phenomenon – Mother Nature astounds once again and not for the first time during our trip. All good things must come to an end and our dream holiday was now over. We are currently in the process of planning a return trip in the spring. Suffice to say we're hooked.



Old Faithful, Glacier National Park

(Joyce Farren and Kevin Nolan, International Travellers!)

Ireland's Waste Mountain

Nichola Salmon

You've just finished your lunch... discarded the plastic wrapping, paper cup and leftover food in the nearest bin (if it's close by) and walked away never to think about what happens to your rubbish next. Most of us do not give the issue of waste a second thought once we've removed it from our sight and why should we? It's dirty, impure, grimy and only fit for the dustbin. Wrong! In theory, virtually all our waste can be disposed of in a clean manner so that it can be effectively reused in some form or another. Plastic, paper, glass and tins can all be recycled while organic waste can be composted. Still this requires the effort of segregating different waste materials and bringing them to designated disposal sites, so why bother? The Ireland of 2007, after its economic booms is now characterised by massive levels of consumption and this is resulting in equally massive levels of waste. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (2004), Ireland produces in excess of 75 million tonnes of waste each year. Agriculture is a key contributor, accounting for 76%, which includes animal manures and other aqueous biodegradable waste. Much of this waste is spread over agricultural land but may subsequently reduce water quality in the area if it is allowed seep into local water bodies. Other sectors contribute greatly to Ireland's rising waste levels, particularly the construction and manufacturing industries.

However, the most important issue with our waste mountain is the remaining volume produced by individual households and businesses. Municipal waste (household, commercial and street waste) increased 11% between 2002 and 2005 to 3,050,052 tonnes (EPA, 2007). Astonishingly, a household with just three people are producing, on average, one tonne of waste each year. This waste ends up in wheelie bins, black bags, skips and ultimately, landfills. This is simply unsustainable because many landfills have reached or are nearing their full capacity. New, modern sites occupy more land space due to the sheer demand for landfill facilities and there is a required safeguard zone around each site. Licensed landfills are strictly regulated to prevent environmental damage or pollution, unlike older sites, which have contributed to soil pollution and

groundwater contamination (EPA, 2004). These issues of concern create local opposition to new "super-dumps" and the development process is regularly hindered despite the desperate need for more landfill space.

A primary aim of the Waste Management Act, 1996-2003 is to reduce the volume of waste going to landfill, which is exceptionally high at 77% (EPA, 2007). Along with reducing waste volumes, it is necessary to encourage alternative disposal and recovery methods, such as recycling. Recent figures from the EPA show that the recycling rate of household waste stands at just 23% while the remainder is sent directly to landfills. While this rate is rising steadily over the past number of years, much more effort is required to achieve of the national household recycling target of 50% by 2013. In accordance with the afore-mentioned Act, there are two key areas, which must be focused upon in order to reach set targets over the next 6 years



– waste prevention and waste reduction. The National Waste Prevention Programme commenced in 2004 and encourages responsible behaviour in relation to the quantities of waste being produced in Ireland. Manufacturers and producers must become more conscious of the waste potential of products, while consumers need to be aware of the quantity of packaging associated with each product they purchase.

There has been a tendency to increase the amount of waste generated per person through the growth of packaging and disposable products, creating a 'throwaway society'. Many people are unaware that excess and waste packaging can be returned to the supplier. As part of Producer Responsibility Initiatives, suppliers must dispose of packaging in an environmentally friendly way. This results in a reduction of recyclable materials going to landfill and increases rates of recycling. REPAK is one such waste recovery scheme in Ireland. The EU's Packaging Directive has been successful in this country, partly due to the popularity within industry of the REPAK scheme (Race Against Waste, 2007a). The rate of recycling for packaging has more than doubled since 2001 to 60% in 2005, reaching EU targets (EPA, 2007). These targets can now be increased to help further minimise packaging waste. Over the last few years, the number of Bring-Banks/Civic Amenity sites has increased across the country and cater for most recyclable materials: paper, cardboard, glass, aluminium, textiles, plastic, batteries, electronics etc. In addition, over 35% of homes have a kerbside collection service available from their local authorities or private collection firms (EPA, 2004). Almost every person has a recycling facility available to them in one form or another. Therefore, there is no reason why the national target of 50% recycling cannot be reached by 2013. In general, the ultimate purpose of recycling is to purchase products made from our recycled materials, thus completing the process.

Government sponsored organisations, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, Forfás and widespread media campaigns encourage us to think about and take responsibility for the waste we generate. 'The Race Against Waste' campaign (www.raceagainstwaste.com) was launched to bring the public's attention to issues of waste and appropriate management practices such as reduction and prevention. In all areas of society, it is important that the actual generation of waste is reduced and correct recycling of waste is encouraged so that knock-on environmental impacts such as the pollution of soil, water and air are limited. As the EPA state, "the only rational approach to sustainable waste management is to improve the efficiency of the production/consumption cycle so that resources are used more efficiently, less waste is produced and what is produced is either recovered or disposed of in an environmentally sensitive manner" (2000:70) So, now as you throw away your food containers, bottles and cans spare a thought for where it will go next and ensure it goes to the appropriate place. After all, unlike the real things, waste mountains don't develop all by themselves!

(Nichola Salmon is a 2nd Year Joint Honours student)

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Picture: http://tiki.oneworld.net/pollution/rubbish_mountain.gif

Sacred and secular space: geography in Maynooth 1971-2006

PJD

For all of you readers of *Milieu* today, Geography in Maynooth is a 'timeless' existential-type experience – it probably has no past for most students who spend 3-4 years here: it is here and now, in your presents – you leave and it ceases to exist! But Geography in Maynooth has a past, and perhaps it might be nice to think of yourselves as part of a larger community, a sort of procession through the space and place of Maynooth. So here I set down some highlights of its past, as the department grew and expanded and embraced a long procession of eager, enthusiastic or reluctant souls. I see a procession of faces passing by us, over the years: long haired males, or changing hues of female eyeshadow, or soutaned clerical students for the first couple of years, flared jeans, mini-skirts (not unconnected with the early disappearance of soutanes), leggings and noticeably more (female) cleavage in recent years. Some of these earlier faces went on to become (your) teachers, or mothers/fathers.

Looking back retrospectively is fraught with pitfalls. The past can be modified in memory: either it was all sunshine and smiles (a la Taylor's *To school through the fields*) or rain and misery (McCourt's *Angela's ashes*?). But in this instance, we have past issues of *Milieu* to correct our vision and bring into focus (warts and all!) the passing parade of faces, names, characters, humour, accents, pain and joy, tears on the carpet, laughter in the corridor and squares, songs, adventures and fieldtrip experiences.

From 1971 when the Department of Geography started, Maynooth's historical experience has been in many ways a microcosm of change in Ireland. From then to the present is a transition from a medieval to a moodle world – from an age of blackboard and chalk (with some early expensive overhead transparencies), handwritten essays and notices, through a 1976/7 appearance of computers with BBC micros introduced by Dennis Pringle to today's cybered electronic campus.

In the early seventies Maynooth college consisted of what is today designated as the 'south campus' only. The north campus was unconnected by bridge and was the domain of hostels of nuns and other clerical personnel. The south campus was a deeply masculine, theological world, its space and timetable inscribed with all the marks of an ecclesiastical/celibate culture of priest prof.s and clerical students – predominantly in black, with periodic holyday outbursts in white and black frocks.

As pointed out in *Milieu* 1977, sacred and traditional space was a sensitive issue – under growing pressure throughout the seventies as the numbers of 'gentile' (= lay, and worse, female lay) students escalated, as the special position of the Catholic church waned (= laicisation of many of the priest profs) and in the eighties as bishops etc got into trouble. Sacred space such as 'the cloisters is an obvious example [of the problem] – daily violated by the lower caste with bags and baggage, denims and garish posters'. Where were

they going? To the Russell Library which was the college's only library in those days, creaking and groaning under the weight where the priestly librarian suspected the nuns of smuggling books out under their voluminous habits.

The exclusivist nature of sacred space at the time was manifested in the geography of loos on the campus: male facilities were of elephantine dimensions like the Siberian lavatories in Loftus – now radically refurbished – and heated even; women's loos in the early days ended up in peripheral nooks and crannies left over when the builders departed in 1838 or 1856. Early regulations tried to protect traditional and celibate space by listing places which were out-of-bounds to lay students (especially women), regulations which were 'policed' by theological heavyweights like Rev Prof Sean Quinlan ('Killarney John') or Monsignor Cremin. But such regulations were spatially unworkable in the face of the relentless gentile intrusions of the late seventies and eighties – manifested in new developments like mixed choirs, camogie clubs and crèches. The Pope's visit to Maynooth in 1979 might be seen as a turning point – a last-ditch attempt to shore up the bulwarks of sacred space on a visit very much aimed at clergy.

Thereafter the eighties was distinguished by an inexorable expansion in the NUI college and an erosion of sacred spaces and decline in the seminary population. Today most of the property on the south campus is owned by St Patrick's College and rented to the biggest landuser, NUI. 'Sacred space' has withdrawn to the citadel of St Patricks ('Pat's') and New House, but even here secular inroads have been made by conference accommodation. On the north campus, the nuns abandoned the hostels to takeover by sociologists and the like.

One of the early casualties of the invasion of non-resident students which in many ways was symbolic of the level of *dis-order* which was taking place was the fate of the grass triangles (and rectangles and other quadrilateral fancies which were a legacy of the leisurely seminary of the 19th and early 20th century).

As the gentile hordes increased, timetable pressures resulted in shortcuts being taken through these Euclidean obstructions.² In spite of chest-high admonitions to **keep off the grass**, and the looming presence of Killarney John, the grass triangles suffered, and continue to. The ultimate revolutionary gesture against such seminarian authoritarianism happened in the scorching early summer of 1982 when Mons Cremin happened upon a small horde of women students sunning themselves in bras and jeans in Joe's Square: with camera he obtained some photographic evidence for the bishops meeting, but no signs to cover up or excommunications followed.

Where was the Geography Department amid all this change and upheaval? It was located first in New House (in 71-2) where c12 Arts and Science non-resident lay staff shared one telephone in the corridor.³ Later in the seventies when the staff complement had grown to five, it moved to middle Humanity, overlooking the splendid scenery on Joe's Square. In the mid eighties it moved to middle Rhetoric, and in the mid nineties it moved to Top Rhetoric where the staff of c20 is accommodated.

Lecture space for NUI in the early seventies was in Logic, Loftus and Joe's Square (Callan, Music and Physics Halls, for example). Geography acquired a teaching 'cartography lab' in Rhetoric in 1972 and from this it has grown to occupy most of the ground floor. Until 1977, canteen 'facilities' for non-resident students were located in the steamy, odoriferous pre-fab, currently home to the Computer Centre. A new canteen was subsequently set up in part of the new Arts Block (where the computer labs are now located). At the same time in the late seventies an SU building was erected to cater for the growing numbers of university students and in keeping with the canute-like culture of St Patrick's College, it was located as far as possible from the sacred space of the south campus in a hayshed-like structure on the site of the present SU bar and building.

Student numbers in Geography were c100 in the first year (1971-2) and the annual intake thereafter was c100-150. Until the mid nineties, the BA class was divided into honours and general students. Graduating numbers rose from 52 in 1974 to 95 in 1981. There was a dip to around fifty in the depressed early 1980s, followed by a rise and a sharp increase to over one hundred by the early 1990s. The growing numbers being admitted to the honours BA from 1991 indicate the pressure this dual programme was coming under, and by 1996 it was abandoned. From 1996 the numbers graduating in Geography experienced significant growth, reflecting a surge in first year intake at the same time.

At the same time there was significant growth in the postgraduate student population. The MA in Geographical Analysis ranged from 12-18 since 1996-7; the H.Dip in Cultural Tourism took in 12-15 stu-

dents annually from 1996 until it was discontinued in 2001. The H.Dip in Remote sensing has enrolled similar numbers since 1996??/ with some of them continuing to the MSc. The numbers enrolling for Phds has also increased significantly from the mid 1990s: in 2006 there were c30 Phds registered, five of whom have graduated in the past year. All of the Phd and Master's theses are available for consultation in the Department.

Although there has been an increase in academic staff in the department, it has lagged behind the growth in the student population. An initial cohort of four academics (Breathnach, Duffy, Pringle, Willie Smyth) soldiered until 1977, followed by Sweeney and Seamus Smyth (replacing the other one) in 1978, then Shelagh Waddington in 1986, Jim Walsh 1990, Paul Gibson in 1991, Brendan Bartley in 1994, Ro Charlton 1996, Rob Kitchin 1998, Ronan Foley 2003, and Steve McCarron in 2005. Dr Adrian Kavanagh has been on teaching staff since 2003. Sunnhild Bertz, Conor Murphy and Sinéad Kelly have also been lecturing for the past couple of years as replacements for Rob Kitchin and Brendan Bartley. Jim Keenan joined the department as cartographer in 1985 and Mary Weld who has been a secretary in the college since the early seventies, joined Geography in 1994 and Gay Murphy in 1999. Mick Bolger has been employed as IT technician since 2004.

¹ misprints, misspellings, sloppy lay out, etc... all very *organic* and *authentic* though!

² *Milieu*, 2000

³ See earlier medieval reference

Reflections of a Maynooth Undergraduate in the 1970s

Seamus Ryan

I thought I left my student days behind me in 1976 and moved to Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath. But when I took out an old copy of *Milieu* which I had managed to keep safe over the years, I see that I was Editor of *Milieu* '77. This period of my life obviously requires some further personal research. The conclusion I have come to is that I spent almost five years in Maynooth, and that my involvement with Geography did not end with my degree. This is a tribute to the Geography Department that inspired my college days.

Maynooth in the early 70s was a wonderful place. We were in the second year of lay students to start in the College. I lived on the Main Street beside Caulfield's Pub with three Monaghan lads and a Westmeath man. We went to all our Lectures on the 'old Campus' and came back at night to study in the "Gun" library (and sometimes more than study in the dark recesses of that space) and many of our lecturers were not much older than ourselves.

Geography in First Arts I had presumed would be a global subject, with some local content, but I rapidly realised that geography was really about Co. Monaghan (and West Waterford). Professor Paddy Duffy, then a recent PhD graduate and the first Geography Lecturer appointed in Maynooth gave us the most wonderful insights into the geography of Co. Monaghan (and an appreciation for the poetry and writings of Patrick Kavanagh which I realised were steeped in the geography of glaciation). My Co. Monaghan education did not end with my geography lectures as my three Monaghan housemates discussed every article in the "Argus" over every meal and this left me and my Westmeath friend knowledgeable on all matters pertaining to Clones, Ballybay and especially Castleblaney. I am still amazed that I did not migrate to that great county on graduation. Such was my knowledge of Co. Monaghan by the end of my degree that I could have taken it as my Specialist Topic for Mastermind. Needless to say my three Monaghan housemates did return to Monaghan after graduation and have seldom left there since, (usually to attend G.A.A. matches when Monaghan are playing away from home. I have not seen them very often as Croke Park has not featured too often on these excursions.)

Second Year was all about Co. Tipperary. William Smith joined the Staff as Senior Lecturer and Co. Monaghan took a backseat. I could still write essays on the cultural geography of Tipperary and the words "continuity" "cultural innovation" and "dynamic" would feature in most sentences. This focus on Tipperary continued into third year (there were no exams in second year) and we spent a week in Mitchelstown studying the social patterns of the natives of Clogheen, Burncourt (before Ronald Regan made it famous). The stories from that trip would require a whole night in a pub.

But don't get me wrong, it was all inspiring stuff, delivered at every lecture with a passion that left me hooked on all things geographical ever since. My specialities are Tipperary, Monaghan, Economic, Historical, Urban and Rural. In those days we managed to avoid physical geography, despite Stewart Daltry's best efforts.

(Seamus Ryan 1972-1975

Auditor Geography Society 1974-75

Now Principal Dunshaughlin Community College)

Passing the Torch

Margaret Deegan

My greatest revelation as a teacher is that the joys of teaching begin with the pleasures of learning, for I truly have discovered he or she who teaches learns. Undoubtedly if I knew as much about Geography while studying in college as I do now while teaching others I would have achieved a far better grade than I did. So now I learn and I teach and the participation is a joyful give and take which I relish and wonder at on a daily basis.

I learn from the subjects that I teach, and from my ever magnanimous and supportive colleagues, I learn from parents and most of all from my own struggling students who can astound me with their grasp, frustrate me with their difficulties, motivate me with their achievements and on many occasions delight me with the unintentional humour of their errors.

I try to learn as I teach; it is in this that I truly witness lifelong learning. If I could I would repeat endlessly, and patent the formula of what it is that happens to the incredulous student who finally sees for him or herself the solution to the problem which has been so elusive for so long. I would gladly replicate the class that, engaged by the lesson, is surprised by the bell because they have forgotten about time. Hard as I struggle to learn from such moments I now know that they defy prescription and imitation.

And, perhaps most of all, I learn from that very small group of students who return to tell me proudly where they now study and what I did to help prepare them for the demands of college. They tell me what they are reading and what I should read. They tell me of their achievements and what it is that they are now studying and look for tips on referencing and the dreaded bibliography. One or two have sent me an essay or piece of work to be published. They write me letters and e-mails, others I meet in while shopping or out and about in the locality. All begin tentatively: "Are you still there? Do you remember me?" Then they remind me of the day in class when I said such and such, and I am perpetually surprised and touched that a brief moment or comment that was said in passing was at all memorable, and I am content that in some way I have done my job well.

Plato once said, "Those having torches ... pass them on to others." While this sounds rather patronizing - if not indeed, even pompous to the contemporary ear, I thank goodness every day that the classroom is somehow still a haven where idealism may abound and indeed may be espoused. It is a venue where sophistication rarely intrudes and is never appreciated. It is that freshness and eagerness that makes me glad that I have chosen this career. What I have learned most of all is to respect teaching, not only as joyous, but as a most powerful endeavour as well. It both brightens my day with its many joys and burdens my soul with its never ending responsibilities, but whichever it does, I am eternally glad that I have been given the opportunity to participate.

Having had a 20 year career as a Cartographer with Ordnance Survey Ireland, I accidentally tripped into becoming a mature student in NUI Maynooth. It began with a hunger for new experiences and knowledge, and a yearning for a chance to participate in college life which had never been possible for me as a school leaver in the 1980s. My ever-suffering and supportive husband encouraged and even enrolled me at NUIM in 1998. Upon graduation in 2001, with a degree in Geography and Anthropology I spent a short while on a NIRSA scholarship with Dr. John Sweaney, before nervously embarking on the H.Dip.Ed. During this time I completed my teaching practice in Dunshaughlin Community College and have taught there since.

(Margaret Deegan graduated from NUI Maynooth in 2001 and currently teaches Geography and History at Dunshaughlin Community College).

Acknowledgements

The Editor and Milieu Committee would like to thank the following for their support and assistance during the production of this magazine:

- The Students' Union for its financial assistance to *Milieu*
- ~~The Geographical Society of Ireland for its financial assistance to *Milieu*~~
- Dave Moloney for his 'QuarkXpress' tutorial
- Mick Bolger, IT Technican, The Geography Department, NUI Maynooth for his technical expertise
- The Geography Department, NUI Maynooth for its assistance to, and support of, the magazine
- Our Printers: Betaprint Ltd, Unit D1A, Bluebell Industrial Estate, Dublin 12.

Layout: John Cosgrove & Adrienne Hobbs
Cover Design: Eoin Flaherty
Cover Photo: Pamela Dore

Worldwide Football Trivia

Sam Hobbs

(Editor: No point being Editor if you can't exercise a bit of nepotism!)

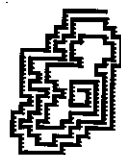
- I'd like to play for an Italian club like Barcelona.** (Mark Draper)
- Where are we in relation to Europe? Not far from Dover.** (Harry Redknapp)
- It was like playing in a foreign country.** (Ian Rush on his time with Juventus in Italy)
- Playing with wingers is more effective against European sides like Brazil than English sides like Wales.** (Ron Greenwood)
- Barcelona – a club with a stadium that seats 120,000 people. And they're all here in Newcastle tonight.** (John Motson)
- The Brazilians were South American, the Ukrainians will be more European.** (Phil Neville)

(Foster, Stephen (2006), *The Book of Lists, Football*, Edinburgh, Canongate Books Ltd).

So you think you know your football? – Try these teasers. Email the Editor if you need the answers!
(Milieueditor@nuimgeosoc.org)

1. Name the only country which never won the World Cup at home?
2. Name the club to have provided the most players for an England first XI?
3. Name the only non-English team to have won the FA Cup?
4. Name the country to have held the World Cup for the longest period of time?
5. What was the fastest hat trick ever in professional football?
6. Name the countries to have hosted the World Cup twice?
7. What is the only European capital city not to have a professional football team in the top division of that country's league?
8. What is the furthest the USA has ever got in a World Cup?
9. Name the four European teams which entered the first World Cup?
10. What was the first match ever in a World Cup? What was the score?
11. When Italy won the World Cup in 1934, who presented them with the trophy?
12. Name the first African side ever in a World Cup?
13. Name the first Asian side ever in a World Cup?
14. Why did India boycott the 1950 World Cup?
15. Name the oldest player ever to have won the World Cup?
16. Name the youngest player ever to have won the World Cup?
17. What is the country with the smallest population to have played in the World Cup?
18. Why are some corner flags in English football club grounds square and some triangular?
19. Which French newspaper set up the European Cup?
20. Name the only English side to have ever beaten Bayern Munich at the Olympic Stadium.
21. Name three British players to have won the European Cup whilst playing with a non-British side? Name the clubs also!
22. Name the only football club to have won the European Cup more times than they won their own domestic league.

The Geographical Society of Ireland
Cumann Tíreolaíocta na hÉireann



The Geographical Society of Ireland was founded in 1934 to promote an interest in geography, seeking to provide information and to promote discussion about a wide range of topics of geographical interest both within Ireland and abroad. The Society holds a series of lectures and seminars during the year, principally in Dublin, but also in other centres such as Limerick, Galway, Belfast, Cork, and Coleraine. The Society also organises conferences on issues of concern to geographers and the general public, with the Proceedings of these Conferences published as Special Publications.

The Society's principal publication is the internationally known journal *Irish Geography*, which is published twice annually, which comprises papers dealing with various aspects of Irish geographical research. The Society also publishes a newsletter *GeoNews*, which provides news and information about geography in Ireland and about the activities of the Society, and acts as a forum for the discussion of matters of general geographical interest. Day fieldtrips also comprise a distinctive feature of the Society's programme. These provide first hand experience of areas of geographical interest in Ireland. The current subscription rate is €30.00 per annum (or €15.00 for Students) and a year's membership covers a calendar year, running from January to December.

Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to the "Geographical Society of Ireland" and please post these to:

G.S.I. Treasurer, Dr. Ronan Foley, Department of Geography, NUI Maynooth, Co, Kildare, Republic of Ireland (ronan.foley@nuim.ie).

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I wish to join the Geography Society and include membership fee for 2007 I
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Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail address: _____

"...the establishment of Milieu was an innovation by the Geography Society, which was unique among student societies in Maynooth, and its virutally uninterrupted publication since 1975 is a tribute to the collegial spirit and enthusiasm of Geography students down the years. Milieu offers an opportunity for Geography students to write about things they are interested in, and is a platform for creativity and humour, for testing out writing skills, as well as teamwork and committee skills, business acumen, layout and design..."

PJD, Department of Geography, NUI Maynooth