

# CULTURE ECONOMIES

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**Culture Economies:**  
**a perspective on local rural**  
**development in Europe**

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How can people in rural areas revive, or protect, their economic and social well-being ? Is it possible to create a vibrant economy, engaging with globalisation, and yet nurture a sense of local identity and a humanistic view of 'development' ? The answer is yes, but only if development is based on the joint principles of: (a) the strategic use of local culture; and (b) the pursuit of local participative democracy - encapsulated in the term "Culture Economy".

Culture Economies operate on three conceptual levels: the organisation of development within and by a local area; the dynamic interrelationship between a local area and regional, national and international institutions; and the emerging connectivity between rural development initiatives in different local areas.

This book explores the new approach to rural development by interweaving elements of social theory with observations of contemporary rural development/cultural revival activity throughout Europe. The book will be useful to local development practitioners and the organisations whose actions have an impact on the rural areas of Europe.

The illustration on the cover of this book is the Parish Map produced from the Halton-Lea-Gate History Project, Easter 1995 - August 1997, under the guidance of Gwyneth Wilde. This was a textile project celebrating the unique buildings and natural environment of Halton-Lea-Gate, Northumberland. The map, measuring 10ft by 6ft, was made by pupils from Herdley Bank First School and young people and adults from Halton-Lea-Gate.

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1 Towards a concept of *neo-endogenous* rural development

This is a book about the pursuit of social and economic development in the rural areas of the present-day EU. Although the ideas set out in the following pages could be taken up by any rural area, the primary target of the ideas are those areas whose relatively low prosperity, high vulnerability (socially, economically, culturally) or special environmental value has singled them out as in need of new ideas for the animation of their development.

The hope in writing the book is that it will be read by three types of people: those who are *doing* rural development, whose actions directly or indirectly affect such areas; those living and working in areas to which rural development is *being done* (and who might gain some insights into how to take local action); and those who engaged in the sociological study of European rural development and who may be in a position of influencing policy makers. It is aimed, therefore, at local animateurs, interest group representatives, officials and politicians in the politico-administrative system (local, regional, national and European) and academics. It will also be of interest, hopefully, to officials and practitioners in those countries which are expected to join the EU in the near future. The style of analysis underpinning the book conceptualises the EU as a dynamic and evolving system. At the level of EU programmes of intervention, potential members need to understand that there is a 'game' to be played: a game not of rules to be learnt and followed literally but one in which local success and the health of the EU system as a whole require imaginative interpretation by participants of the

purposes and uses of any given intervention. By participating in EU programmes, players from the local to the national level influence directly or indirectly the trajectory of the EU game.

Much of the book could be translated without too many mental gymnastics into the context of urban regeneration and indeed, when it comes to theories of cultural identity, and of contemporary meanings of the term 'rural'; urban and rural contexts are inextricably interrelated. Nonetheless, the term 'rural development' will be retained in the text because it provides a convenient shorthand with which to identify the policy domain of the book and because an important empirical seedbed for the ideas has been the European Commission's rural development initiative: LEADER (see below). For present purposes, the term will refer to the pursuit of improved well-being of the people of areas generally thought of in the popular and official mind as being 'rural'. However, given that these entities exist within a broader framework, what we might refer to as the European rural development *system* (chapter 6), 'development' must also refer to the changing states (actual and potential) of the system itself<sup>i</sup>. The two foci are interrelated; system dynamics impinge on the options for action by its constituent local economies whose actions collectively influence the trajectory of the system.

The ideas presented in the following pages concern a hypothesis which is variously called 'endogenous', 'bottom-up', 'participative' or 'community' development. Potentially applicable to any sub-national, geographical scale, the main components of the hypothesis are threefold. First, it suggests that development is best animated by focussing on *territories* of need rather than on certain sectors of the rural economy. Moreover, the scale of territory must be smaller than the national or regional level.

Second, economic and other development activity are reoriented to valorise and exploit local resources – physical and human – and thereby to retain as many of the resultant benefits within the local area. Third, development is contextualised by focusing on the needs, capacities and perspectives of local people; the development model assumes an ethical dimension by emphasising the principle and process of local participation in the design and implementation of action and through the adoption of cultural, environmental and 'community' values within development interventions. The rhetoric offers the prospect of local areas assuming greater influence over development by reorienting it around locally specific resources and by creating structures to sustain the local development momentum after the initial intervention.

As has already been mentioned, the ideas in this book have arisen partly from observing the European Commission's LEADER Initiative. Introduced in 1991, this created a pan-EU laboratory for the testing of the hypothesis in real-world situations. More importantly for this introduction, in LEADER, rural development has been driven by sponsorship on the part of the EU. This book is not therefore about local rural areas pursuing socio-economic development autonomously of outside influences of globalisation, free market capitalism and so on. The notion of 'pure' endogenous development in which change is animated solely by local actors apparently without assistance, financial or otherwise, from 'external agents' is best thought of in terms of what Max Weber<sup>ii</sup> called an "ideal type", i.e. a model which could, but does not necessarily, exist and which can be used to tease out the features of real world observations. The book responds, thus, to calls by writers such as Lowe et al<sup>iii</sup> who have argued for an approach to rural development which goes "beyond endogenous and exogenous models" by focussing on

the dynamic interactions between local areas and their wider political and other institutional, trading and natural environments. The local level does and must interact with the 'extralocal' level: at the very least, at the intangible level of the dynamic flow of ideas. A purpose of this book is to present ideas which could enhance the capacity of local areas to steer processes, ideas and actions in directions more conducive to their well-being, however that comes to be defined. A tutor at the former Manchester Polytechnic, when I was an undergraduate there, warned me against the academic vice of coining new terms in order to give a pretence of scientific progress and thereby accumulating (albeit fragile) academic kudos. It was angst-creating advice. Nonetheless, a new term is needed here, shorthand to describe endogenous-based development in which extra-local factors are recognised and regarded as essential but which retains a belief in the potential of local areas to shape their future. Nervously, therefore, I propose the term *neo-endogenous development*.

At the heart of neo-endogenous development is the assumption that presently disadvantaged rural areas can take action in order to ameliorate their condition. Neither historical circumstances nor the revolution of globalisation need to be regarded as tyrannically consigning such areas to perpetual peripheralisation or decline. Indeed, the assumption is that both can, and must, be used ideologically and turned to local advantage. On the subject of globalisation, the sociologist Anthony Giddens characterises this uncertain yet optimistic stance:

"Globalisation, thus, is a complex set of processes – not a single one – and these operate in contradictory or oppositional fashion. Most people think of globalisation as simply pulling power and influence away from local communities and nations into the global arena and, indeed, this is one of its



consequences; nations do lose some of the economic power they once had. Yet it also has an opposite effect: globalisation not only pulls upwards, it pushes downwards, creating new pressures for local autonomy " <sup>iv</sup>.

Globalisation certainly creates 'pressures' for local responses but it also creates the means for local *opportunism*, or in terms more useful for present purposes, *resources* and *rights*. This book sets out a tentative theory of neo-endogenous (rural) development. It does so from a (rural) sociological perspective. Using concepts from sociological theory, analysis of actual development activity as well as liberal inputs of speculation, the book offers a theory to enhance the understanding and actions of officials and development practitioners. Sociology has generated many useful concepts – such as those relating to cultural identity, 'community' and power – and these can be used in building a theory of neo-endogenous development. As with all generalised 'expertise', the theory is offered in the hope that the "do-ers" of the rural development world will find some or all of it useful but in the realisation that the ideas may in reality be refracted through their practical and political actions, and in turn by the responses of rural people. The qualitative style of academic study upon which this book is based can be used not only to generate insightful academic reports but, *during* the act of fieldwork, create opportunities for actors to step outside of the day-to-day tyranny of pragmatic problem solving to reflect on underlying issues and ideas which are influencing, or which could be adopted to improve, their practical actions. This book is offered in the same spirit.

It is also a tentative and partial theory. It has to be. As experiences accumulate, the theory will be improved. It will also have to accommodate the ever-changing context of the EU as it evolves into an

increasingly important source of policy and development funds while slowly changing the nature of its intervention in the rural economy. The imminent expansion to welcome in Central and East European countries will have profound implications for rural areas and therefore for the EU's approach to rural development. Globalisation, such as in the form of the World Trade Organisation but also in the growth of regionalism and identity politics, and telecommunications, will also have a tangible and increasing influence on the nature of neo-endogenous development.

## **2 Globalisation, the EU and approaches to rural development**

Crucial to an understanding of neo-endogenous development is therefore to appreciate that the very act of creating such territorial initiatives launches them onto a wider (European and global) stage formed by political, policy and trading forces. A theory of neo-endogenous development must therefore take account of the broader political economy of this new, at present incipient, space of rural development territories. It must incorporate the relationships between the various actors in such development initiatives, and the relationships between the separate territorial development entities themselves.

Giddens argues that the term globalisation describes, however imprecisely at present, an economic, political, technological and cultural phenomenon of revolutionary proportions:

"When the image of Nelson Mandela may be more familiar to us than the face of our next-door neighbour, something has changed in the nature of our everyday experience" <sup>v</sup>

It must surely be a precarious undertaking to attempt a comprehensive analysis of a revolution – predicting its direction and impacts – while it is in progress. Such a project would be even more hazardous given that the revolution involves the whole world and, furthermore, that we cannot know at what stage in the revolution we presently are. Even more frustrating is the contention that the complexity and uncertainty of outcomes may, particularly in the era of 'reflexive modernity' (see chapter 7), be an inherent feature of the phenomenon under scrutiny. However, at the heart of the preliminary analysis by Giddens is a view of globalisation as a driving force with its own logic, energy and causality while simultaneously being acted upon by localising interests. There is, according to this view, the potential within the unstoppable momentum of globalisation for intervention by states and for agency by local interests. The debate, he argues, should therefore be about the possibility for new forms of intervention (regulation) and of new understandings of the concept of agency.

How, then, does globalisation translate to the issues on-the-ground in nations, regions, localities and even village communities? What are the options for regulation and agency that might be available to the territorial components of the EU? The term 'territorial components' is used here to focus the discussion onto the variety of geographical scales that are smaller than the nation-state and in which socio-economic, cultural and even politico-administrative action is increasingly taking place: at the very least, globalisation has made the role and status of the state ambiguous and in need of reformulation.

But if globalisation forms the primary background driving the ideas set out below, then the European Union provides the theatre for rehearsing

those ideas: the 'pulling-upwards' by the forces of globalisation is reflected in the increasing influence of the European Union over economic, social and cultural life in the form of common policies and regulatory legislation, and interventions funded by the Structural and Cohesion Funds. Organisations in the public, voluntary and private sector are all, to a greater or lesser extent, being 'Europeanised' as they direct their attention towards the EU in policy lobbying and in opportunistic claims on funds allocated to EU programmes <sup>vi</sup>.

The use of the term 'territorial' is also meant to concentrate attention onto the issues facing the vast majority of people as they are acted upon, and seek to engage with, globalisation/ Europeanisation in that the term encapsulates the innate tension between the local and the extralocal. Increasingly, the spaces within which action (whether emanating from the 'bottom up' or from the 'top down') is being organised are being formed and re-formed as a function of creative tensions between local context and extralocal forces. It is through the medium of these dynamic tensions that the forces of modernity are materialising; just as it has been argued that '(rural) development' takes place at, and is defined by, the interface between the agents of planned intervention and the actors in localities <sup>vii</sup> so territories themselves are being moulded and created by the local–extralocal tensions of globalisation and reflexive modernity. Thus, the use of the term territory (or 'place') signals the intention to formulate some of the options for action available to people in territories to which they feel a sense of belonging and in which the forces described above are manifesting themselves.

The term neo-endogenous development requires us to recognise that development based on local resources and local participation can, in fact,

be animated from three possible directions, separately or together. First, it can be animated by actors *within* the local area. Second, it can be animated *from above*, as national governments and/or the EU respond to the logic of contemporary political-administrative ideology. Third, it can be animated *from the intermediate level*, particularly by non-governmental organisations which see in endogenous development the means by which to pursue their particular agendas. The manifestation of neo-endogenous development in any territory will be the result of various combinations of the *from above* and *intermediate level* sources interacting with the local level.

Across Europe, and indeed, 'advanced industrial' countries in general, the welfare state model is being incrementally transformed. The privatisation of state utilities, the commissioning of agencies to deliver services under contract to the state, the new emphasis on sub-state entities (that is, local administrations, communities and individuals) to take responsibility for their own well-being, and the consequent requirements to devise new modes of management by the 'centre' are the characteristics of the emerging ethos<sup>viii</sup>. The new political ethos is variously portrayed either as a necessary response to the ubiquity of liberal-democratic political institutions and market-oriented economics of the new world order<sup>ix</sup> or as a mass delusion by the "myth of globalisation" leading states to bow to the primacy of the market and to relinquish collective gains<sup>x</sup>. Partly in opposition, and partly interrelated, to this state-centric view of the new ethos are the dynamics of political pluralism and local economic opportunistic actions which register demands for enhanced local participation and new forms of solidarity.

The emergent ethos of governance also involves supra-state actors such as the EU as increasingly important players in the affairs of member-states. Indeed, this ethos is mirrored in the mode of intervention employed by the EU itself. In 1988, the debate over the most appropriate style of Structural Policy intervention for the EU resulted in the adoption of a territorial, neo-endogenous model of rural development. Responding to budgetary pressures, environmental and equity arguments to reform the Common Agricultural Policy, and the apparent failure of Structural Policy to bring about economic convergence between the regions of Europe, the EU announced a shift in the use of the Structural Funds away from the sectoral approach and towards interventions that targeted territories of particular socio-economic disadvantage. The document published by the Commission in 1988 – the Future of Rural Society – established the principles underlying the new approach. Rural areas could apply to be designated either as Objective 1 ('lagging' regions with a per capita GDP of 75% or less of the EU average) or Objective 5b (fragile rural economies dominated by agriculture and in need of rural development assistance). Subsequently, a further type of rural area, Objective 6 (northern parts of Finland and Sweden, based on the criterion of very low population density), was added. The commitment by the European Commission to the closer targeting of rural development onto territories of particular need was reaffirmed at the Cork Conference:

"Rural development policy must be multi-disciplinary in concept and multi-sectoral in application, *with a clear territorial dimension*"<sup>xi</sup>,

and that:

"Given the diversity of the Union's rural areas, rural development policy must follow the principle of subsidiarity. It must be as decentralised as possible and based on a partnership and co-operation between all levels concerned (local, regional, national and European). The emphasis must be on participation and a 'bottom-up' approach which harnesses the creativity and solidarity of rural communities. Rural development must be local and community-driven within a coherent European framework".

### **3 Introduction to LEADER**

At the same time as the 1988 reform, the European Commission acquired the power to introduce its own pilot interventions, "Community Initiatives", of which the rural development version was LEADER. LEADER was introduced in 1991 for a three year period and was extended in 1995 by an expanded, five-year version: LEADER II. LEADER was announced as a pilot to stimulate innovative approaches to rural development at the local level (territories of less than 100,000 population) through essentially small-scale actions. Existing or *ad hoc* local organisations ("Local Action Groups" – LAGs) could apply for LEADER funds by producing a "business plan" of proposed development actions based on the valorisation and exploitation of indigenous resources (tangible and intangible) and on the active participation by the public, voluntary and business sectors within the territory designated. The approval process involved negotiations between DGVI of the European Commission, the local organisation and the designated intermediary representative of the national government. The number of organisations-territories throughout the EU approved under LEADER II eventually totalled some 1000.

Two reasons could be advanced for *not* crediting LEADER with the importance suggested by the official rhetoric. First, if one looks at the amount of Structural Funds money committed to LEADER II, then it would be tempting to dismiss it as of no great significance for rural development, even though LEADER II was a major expansion on the scale of LEADER I. LEADER accounted for only 1.7% of the total EU money allocated to rural development for the period 1995-2000. LEADER has therefore been, as was noted during an event staged by DGVI, "a very modern programme .... a programme virtually without money" <sup>xii</sup>. The position is even more striking at the national level <sup>xiii</sup>.

Another reason for not studying LEADER might be that, as an adoption of the endogenous (participative) approach to socio-economic development, it is not everywhere entirely novel. A number of countries can point to historical and contemporary examples of its introduction, emerging logically from recent history of political restructuring, such as the *intercommunalité* dynamic and re-invention of the *pays* in France or the interventions in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

Yet the "LEADER phenomenon" has many features which make it a very significant intervention. First, as has already been noted, it is a *modern form of intervention*. Solutions to intractable problems of lagging rural areas were, apparently, to be devised with relatively little commitment of public money and looking to the private and voluntary sectors for matching contributions. To quote Von Meyer again, LEADER was to deal with rural problems using funds "at almost homeopathic doses".

Second, LEADER is in many ways a *postmodern form of intervention*. A child of the European Commission (DGVI), it had an apparent anarchic



element pervading the design and implementation of development activity in localities. The hardening of State/regional bureaucratic control that emerged in the second phase of LEADER only partially tamed the essential anarchy of the intervention.

This leads to the third significant feature: the metaphor of LEADER as a *pan-EU laboratory of rural development*. The new style of intervention adopted by the European Commission through LEADER involved the design of general guidelines for the use of funds by LAGs but within an ethos of much latitude for local discretion in implementation. These 1000 experiments were potentially available to more than 40 million people, or 32% of 'disadvantaged rural Europe' – Objectives 1, 5b and 6. They have also provided a wealth of case studies for the academic observer which have fed back into the 'system' by promoting the wider dissemination of rural development ideas.

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<sup>i</sup> Kovách (2000).

<sup>ii</sup> Weber (1962).

<sup>iii</sup> Lowe at al (1995).

<sup>iv</sup> Giddens (1999).

<sup>v</sup> Giddens (1999).

<sup>vi</sup> Rose (1995), Palfrey and Thomas (1996), May and Buck (1998), Marsden and Murdoch (1998).

<sup>vii</sup> see Long and van der Ploeg (1989), Long and Villareal (1993).

<sup>viii</sup> Rose (1995), Palfrey and Thomas (1996), May and Buck (1998), Marsden and Murdoch (1998).

<sup>ix</sup> for example, Fukuyama (1995).

<sup>x</sup> for example, Bourdieu (1998).

<sup>xi</sup> Commission (1996) p.2, emphasis added.

<sup>xii</sup> Von Meyer (1997).

<sup>xiii</sup> see Ray (1998a).



***PART I LOOKING MAINLY INWARDS***

In the following chapters, the theory of neo-endogenous development will be set out. The chapters in Part I focus mainly on the construction of territorial entities and the internal processes which may sustain them. Chapter 2 introduces the idea of the Culture Economy, a schema of modes that can rationalise co-operative action in the form of territorial rural development. This is followed by a case study in Chapter 3 of the creation of two territorial identities through LEADER. Chapter 4 presents a theory of the forms of local capital and how these can work to characterise and sustain a neo-endogenous initiative. Finally, Chapter 5 is devoted to the special influence of individual animateurs on the nature of development activity in local areas.

## CHAPTER 2 THE CULTURE ECONOMY: TERRITORIAL STRATEGIES

Rural (and urban areas) in western Europe are increasingly adopting cultural markers as key resources in the pursuit of territorial development objectives. The range of markers includes food, languages and dialects, crafts, folklore, visual arts, drama, literary references, historical and prehistorical sites, landscapes and associated flora and fauna. This attempt by rural areas to localise economic control – to revalorise place through its cultural identity – has been called the *cultural economy* approach to development<sup>i</sup>. The word 'economy' signals that one is dealing with the relationships between resources, production and consumption, while 'culture' tries to capture the reorganisation of economies, at least partially, onto the geographical scale of local culture-territories. 'Culture' is, in a sense, a synonym for 'territorial identity'; it is the way in which humans create, and then perceive, the differentiation of space (albeit on overlapping layers) and which can differ from the mosaic of politico-administrative boundaries that exist at any moment. However, in another way, 'culture' signals a reorientation in thinking towards *what* is produced and consumed (rather than *where*); that is, it is partly a shift towards a post-industrial, consumerist economy. The culture economy in rural areas replaces the primary production-based economy.

In theorising rural development activity, the idea of a culture economy is primarily concerned with the production side, that is, the territory, its cultural system and the network of actors that construct a set of resources to be employed in the pursuit of the interests of the territory. The aim of the culture economy idea is to investigate the possibilities for locally-designed strategies in the pursuit of the territorial wellbeing. The logic

starts, therefore, from the dynamics of a territory as an unit in which resources can be marshalled. The counterpart of production is consumption. Yet, although consumption is a major force in the culture economy, the theory is an attempt to provide local economies with the conceptual tools by which they can partially manipulate the forces of consumption. When seen from the perspective of the local territory, all manifestations of the extralocal can be conceptualised as 'consumers' to which the territory seeks to sell itself, whether through markets or policy environments. Both the local/producer and the extralocal/consumer can be thought of as having a power of agency, with each having a power to influence the other.

The idea of a culture economy comes from three sources: the changing nature of post-industrial consumer capitalism, the trajectory of rural development policy in the EU, and the growth of regionalism as a European and global phenomenon. For the first of these sources, the analysis of Lash and Urry<sup>ii</sup> is particularly useful. They argue that, in one sense, consumer capitalism has resulted in the same, or similar, products and services being offered 'everywhere' – that is, the “McDonaldization” idea<sup>iii</sup> which argues that the expansion of consumer choice has simply resulted in offering everyone the *same* set of choices. However, the competitive pressures of consumerism have also created a need, and opportunities, for ever-increasing diversification of product design. This latter dynamic is also fuelled by an array of social forces. The emerging capitalist spirit, Lash & Urry argue, is imbued with:

"green, communitarian, environmental and localist new social movements; ... the rejection of abstract, bureaucratic centralisation for the immediacy of locality; ... in the rejection of highly-mediated forms of material culture for an empathy

with nature; in the rejection of cold, abstract logic for feeling and empathy; ...".

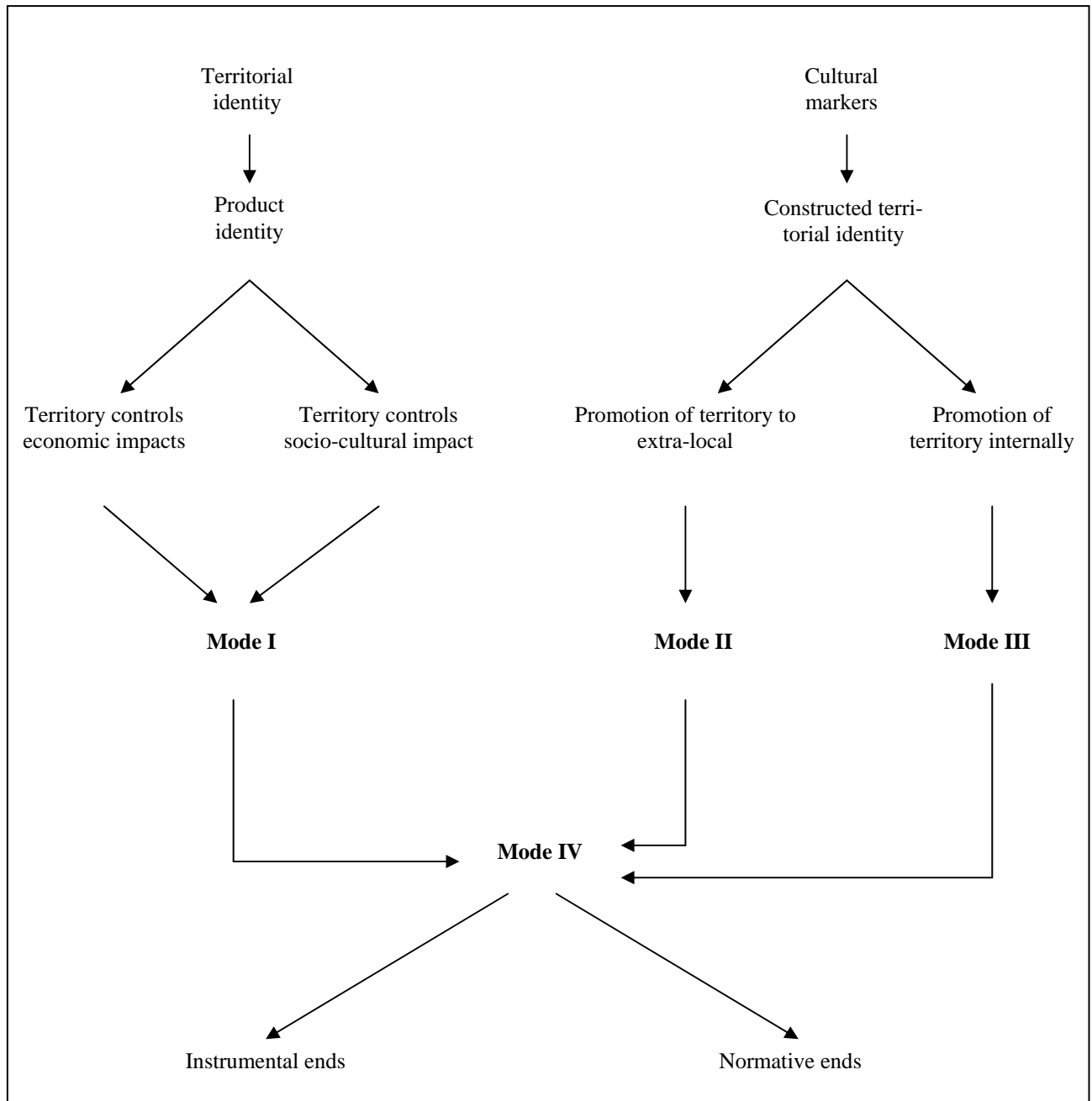
The second source of the culture economy idea is EU rural development policy. Following the reform of the Structural Funds, the EU began to redirect funds away from a sectoral towards a territorial approach, encouraging territories to design and implement strategies that identify and valorise local resources. Thus, liberalisation and homogenisation of European space (i.e. the economic agenda of the Single Market and the political agenda of a European identity/integration) appear to be courting localist agendas.

The third source of the culture economy is regionalism. Throughout Europe, cultural regions have been engaged in self-promotion in order to preserve their cultural identity and develop their socio-economic vibrancy. The local cultural system is variously conceptualised as an end in itself, a set of rights or as a set of resources to fuel territorial economic development. The regionalist agenda is particularly interesting in that each case can be situated along a continuum of development models. At one end, a region seeks to reverse its socio-economic peripheralisation through strategies to reintegrate the area into the wider European and global economy whilst, at the other end, the strategic rhetoric looks inwards into the cultural system in order to redefine the meaning of development according to values within the regional culture.

From these three sources, a preliminary schematisation of the culture economy through four operational *modes* can be proposed. These are by no means mutually exclusive but, rather, represent the range of strategic

emphases that may be employed by territorial initiatives in the pursuit of rural development.

**Figure 1 Typology of the culture economy**



Mode I can be called the commoditisation of local/regional culture. In essence, this refers to the creation and valorisation of resources which have a place identity and which can be marketed directly or used in the

marketing of the territory. The advent of ethno/cultural/green tourism in which culture and history are 'sold' is an example of this. Other examples include regional agri-food products, regional cuisines and crafts. Two rationales underpin this mode: one being that the fixing of product/service to territory enables the locality to retain more of the economic benefit; while the other emphasises the ability of local fragile cultures to mediate the type of economic activity that occurs, moulding it to support, rather than dilute, the local culture.

Whereas mode I emphasises the encapsulation of territory/culture *within* products, mode II occurs as the construction and projection of a (new) territorial identity to the *outside*, i.e., the emphasis here is on the incorporation of cultural resources into a corporate identity for promotional purposes. This is available to new territorial development initiatives in which either an existing organisation (Local Authority, development agency, etc.) or a new co-operative structure seeks to establish and raise its visibility in wider trade and policy environments. LEADER, for example, generated many initiatives whose rationale was based on a new policy area to which local bodies (public, private and voluntary) could subscribe in the animation of local development action. In order to pursue its external strategic objectives (such as securing public funding, establishing a strong presence within national and regional policy-making or participating in networks of local initiatives), a local development group may portray itself as being founded on a territory that is coherent and distinctive, and which would be more effective in the pursuit of local needs than existing politico-administrative areas.

In Mode III, the emphasis is still on territorial strategies but here the new territorial initiative is engaged in selling itself *internally*: to the



communities, businesses, associations and official bodies of the local area. This is an important component of the theory underpinning local development initiatives such as LEADER which seek to animate development in marginalised, vulnerable or declining areas. The rhetoric of such initiatives talks of raising the self-confidence of local people, building confidence in their own capacities to bring about development and valorising local resources. These resources include the local culture which, historically, may have been the object of suppression by a more dominant culture associated with the construction and maintenance of a nation state or imperialist trade. The culture economy approach talks of the reinvigoration of a local culture as the foundation for local/regional socio-economic well-being. From this raising of consciousness, according to the rhetoric, arise new economic opportunities, innovation and a socio-cultural vibrancy that counter economic vulnerability and traditional forces for emigration. The territorial identity invites local capital and entrepreneurship to commit themselves to the culture-territory by presenting common territorial strategic images which businesses and other bodies can exploit. This territorial 'selling itself to itself' can face substantial inertia in those areas where the rhetoric talks of local subjugation to centuries of indoctrination that has devalued the local culture, casting it as a barrier to development. In such cases, for a new territorial initiative to act as an agent for local development, the construction of an identity may choose to employ historical revisionism to alter popular perceptions of the culture. Once the territory has been reconstructed as a coherent entity, the argument is that it can function as a catalyst for local co-operative action and to generate a sense of culture-territorial solidarity in people and enterprises.

Mode IV suggests that a local economy, by turning to its cultural resources, can open a vista of development strategies: that development can mean many different things, and that the territory may choose to select one or several of these options. The logic of the neo-endogenous approach – whether the initial impulse comes from below or above – is that the territory concerned can begin to think in terms of cultivating its own *development repertoire*. The term repertoire is used here to mean a stock of resources or regularly-used techniques from which the repertoire possessor can select according to the requirements of a situation. The term neatly encapsulates the principles of endogeneity: the idea of local *ownership* of resources and the sense of *choice* (local, collective agency) in how to employ those resources (physical and intangible) in the pursuit of local objectives.

It is possible to conceive of a territorial repertoire in two ways. The term can be a synonym for a cultural system where, in the context of endogenous development, the culture is different from, and represents a smaller geographical scale than, that of the nation-state. The components of a repertoire will thus be represented by the markers of the culture (see above). As the 18<sup>th</sup> century philosopher Herder noted, these components, separately or in combination, are the means by which people receive meanings from the past but which they reinterpret according to contemporary circumstances; they provide part of the raw material for a people's creativity. However, because a culture manifests itself geographically, it is potentially available to animate, and even to define, neo-endogenous development. Facile debates about 'authenticity' are of no concern here; in a reflexive world, any notion of a pure and unique cultural system is probably redundant. This does not mean, however, that, consciously or subconsciously, a local culture cannot represent an

innate, seemingly organic, particular worldview. Neo-endogenous development becomes an exercise in raising awareness of the potential of local resources (whatever the basis of the localness) for territorial strategic action. It is also possible, therefore, to think of a repertoire as the sum of tangible and intangible features and resources associated *with a territory*. Thus, in addition to the 'social' and 'physical' cultural forms listed above, a territory might have at its disposal, in particular, a *political* culture. Alternatively, one could think of a situation in which a territory was characterised by cultural *diversity*, each community being able to imagine its separate neo-endogenous development as well as subscribing to a common, *territorial* repertoire, two or more of whose components are the separate cultural systems (thus, avoiding the potential for local exclusion where a territorial identity is associated with only one culture).

Taken together, modes I, II and III can be thought of as *repertoires of strategic action* available to the territory in question. Mode IV of the culture economy typology, however, focuses attention onto the possibility of a *range of paths of development*. In addition to marshalling resources so as to compete in the global marketplace or policy arena, the alternatives might, for example, stress local self-reliance in the use of physical resources, a land stewardship ethic, or the cherishing of 'close community'. This can, in fact, be conceptualised as a further level of strategic choices of which three are noted here. The territory can choose *participation*, whereby it acts competitively to secure a position in the market economy or in the policy arena. Second, it can opt for a *coping* strategy, employing one set of cultural resources for external consumption and another for internal use. Third, there is the more radical option of *resistance* – in other words, a deliberate attempt to disengage, albeit partially, from external forces by framing development within a

radical, political or metaphysical ideology (including such diverse ideas as self-reliance, land collectivisation and local currencies).

Local cultural identity, far from being a fixed concept can form the basis of a dynamic, 'progressive' and flexible approach to endogenous development in the era of globalisation. The term repertoire highlights not only the existence of components in a territorial-cultural identity but also that each component can be employed separately or in conjunction with others in a number of territorial strategies. Just as the repertoire of a musician can be inherited as a whole entity, created from new and/or added-to over time so too can this be the case for neo-endogenous development. It provides a framework for territorial agency. It emphasises the options for local collective action while allowing for a diversity of degrees of co-operation within a single territory. It is reasonable to claim that local collectivity/solidarity is a necessary basis for neo-endogenous development to succeed within the wider context of globalisation.

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<sup>i</sup> Ray (1998b).

<sup>ii</sup> Lash and Urry (1994).

<sup>iii</sup> Ritzer (1993).

## **CHAPTER 3 CREATING NEO-ENDOGENOUS TERRITORIES: TWO LEADER CASE STUDIES**

### **1 The creation of new territories**

LEADER brought into existence many new territories for the organisation of rural development policies and action. It was the European Commission's announcement of LEADER that in most cases directly initiated local activity leading to the formation of a territorial initiative for the first time. The emergence of these rural development territories was thus, in the first instance, an outcome of European Commission intervention. However, there were also local factors that enabled a locality to respond to the Commission's invitation and which further worked to influence the nature of the local LEADER action.

The LEADER process begins with local actors deciding to respond with a bid to become a LEADER group which requires them to write a business (development) plan. This document has to present a case for the particular area to be a beneficiary of the programme and to set out the types of development action to be pursued. However, given that in most cases rural development was not already being organised at the local level, the writing of a business plan was in essence an exercise in constructing a rationale for the area as a development entity. The Commission had indicated the general principles of the programme and local actors had then to devise a strategy that responded to, or interpreted, these principles.

In creating a LEADER territorial identity, local groups could select from a range of rationales. One approach was to rediscover a cultural/historical territory. When this sort of rhetoric was adopted, the

embryonic development initiative could utilise the resources of cultural groups such as minority language revival organisations which may already have been cultivating arguments for such territorial identities. It should be noted, however, that this cultural territory approach was also encouraged by the Commission which, when designing the rules for LEADER, stipulated that local plans should include the identification of local cultural identity in order to generate place-specific resources for social and economic development. LEADER was a signal for territorial-cultural issues to come to the fore and was therefore an invitation for cultural areas to emerge as frameworks for rural development.

Another rationale used by embryonic LEADER groups was to co-opt an area which had previously been given an environmental designation. The announcement of LEADER included a strong environmental component arguing that a protected natural environment could be not only an end of, but also a resource for socio-economic development. This elicited proposed territories based upon official conservation designations. This approach differs markedly from the cultural model in that, whereas the latter implied a relationship between the territory and an innate sense of belonging in the local population, such claims of 'authenticity' or popular identification could not always be made in relation to landscape conservation areas. Landscape *is* a manifestation of culture but examples could be cited where the act of designation failed to recruit local popular support (and, therefore, sense of ownership). However, in a utilitarian sense, these designations – based on environmental quality criteria – lent themselves to be co-opted by local actors – Local Authorities for example – for the purposes of presenting to the Commission a LEADER candidate as apparently coherent territories.

A third rationale occurred where the opportunity presented by LEADER coincided with regional or national restructuring trajectories. In Scotland, for example, the agency responsible for social and economic development in the Highlands and Islands had reorganised itself immediately prior to the announcement of LEADER. The division of the region into rural development territories each with its own newly established development body provided a template that largely co-opted LEADER and dictated its geographical expression. Another example occurred in France where the process of *décentralisation* and *intercommunalité* allowed groups of neighbouring communes to undertake collaborative strategic development and lobbying action. Again, this provided a ready-made rationale for LEADER action.

At the local level, territories were 'designed' either by an individual (such as a Local Authority officer) or synthesised from various agendas within and outwith the area. But in writing the plan and constructing the area rationale, the authors were looking not only to the locality but also to the European Commission; the plans were partly formulaic, to correspond to the published 'rules'.

## **2 Two Case Studies**

In order to illustrate the way in which embryonic, territorial development entities were created in practice, two case studies from the LEADER I phase (1991-4) will be presented. The first is that of LEADER in Central-West Brittany (“GALCOB”<sup>i</sup>, France) in whose early history the political restructuring rationale was foremost. The second is that of the Western Isles, Skye and Lochalsh (United Kingdom) in which two rationales were equally involved: restructuring and historico-cultural.

*Central West Brittany*

The area that was to become the Central-West Brittany LEADER did not in 1991 formally exist. Most policy formation and implementation occurred at the level of the *département* and Central West Brittany straddled the boundaries of three such units. Over time, the interior of Brittany had become a socio-economic backwater as development concentrated in the littoral zone and in the East of the peninsular. It was out of this 'negative identity' within a fragmented politico-administrative space that the initiative was to emerge.

The French politico-administrative system, of which there were two key trajectories, provides the key to an analysis of this initiative. *Décentralisation* was important because the devolution of power for policy design and implementation down from the French state had begun to open the door for new territorial policy structures. *Intercommunalité*, on the other hand, was allowing small rural communes to form co-operative structures for local socio-economic development – but these *syndicats intercommunaux* were still, first and foremost, bottom-up federations with power remaining in the hands of the local elected representatives. These two trajectories – devolving-down and federating-up – took on a new territorial significance as a result of an exogenous factor: the opportunity to designate Objective 5b areas. In Brittany, the rationale that emerged was to focus on the interior and the West. Objective 5b created the precedent of policy design and implementation across the boundaries of the main state policy institutions, the *départements*. There was a requirement to base Objective 5b designations on socio-economic criteria which meant that they often cut across administrative boundaries, that is, the initial supranational state



logic was essentially a technocratic one to do with the rational allocation of limited resources.

When LEADER was announced, the presidents of four *syndicats intercommunnaux* within the Objective 5b area decided to launch a joint LEADER group. Thus, the group ("GALCOB") started in the Local Authority sector and throughout the initiative this was to remain the primary location of power. Local Authority actors, in French political culture, are themselves deeply entrenched within the local-state politico-administrative system and it was clear that the founding *syndicats* saw LEADER, primarily, as a means of creating a new corporate territorial identity within the system. This identity was to provide the framework, first, for existing organisations to re-focus their actions onto the new territory and, second, as a corporate voice to project into state and regional policy formation. These elements of the GALCOB ethos meant that the embryonic group emphasised the construction of a new territorial identity and a strategic territorial organisation.

In terms of the structure of the organisation, this had to conform to French law on associations. Thus, all decision-taking power had to be vested in a *Conseil d'Administration*. It was the *Conseil* that approved proposals for LEADER funding, negotiated matching funding from public sources and took decisions of the adoption of strategic plans by the initiative. Membership was dominated by local councillors with the presidency confined to the leaders of the *syndicats*. This meant that GALCOB based a significant part of its claim to legitimacy as a local development initiative on the model of representative democracy. There were also representatives of the state and the region as members but this, far from compromising local control, was seen as strengthening the

legitimacy of the initiative in the eyes of the state and the region, and so supporting the initiative's strategic goals.

The other component of GALCOB was a set of committees, called *commissions*, whose role was to implement projects identified in the development plan and comment upon new project proposals. They also had a reflexive role in undertaking studies of development strategies and exploring opportunities for institutional co-operation within the territory. The membership of each *commission* was theoretically open to all, but was mainly self-appointed and tended to be a function of sectoral interests. This meant that, although as whole, the *commissions* were representative of the public, private and voluntary sectors, the membership of individual *commissions* tended to emphasise some sectors more than others. However, for GALCOB, the *commissions* represented the 'grass roots' of the initiative and the mechanism for cultivating institutional partnerships.

One *commission* was concerned explicitly with territorial strategic issues. Three major projects were aimed at projecting the area as a territorial entity. Through a poster campaign, the *commission* sought to construct an identity for the area based on a quality of life discourse (environment, pace of life, conviviality) and aimed both at local and extra-local audiences. A territorial database project sought to transform the presentation of data so as, for example, to re-focus development ideas onto the new area. The same *commission* also produced what amounted to a strategic, physical planning document for the area.

In reflecting on the experience of GALCOB, the construction of a territorial identity and a strategic organisation for that territory lay at the

heart of the initiative. In the first instance, GALCOB was attempting to 'enable the territory'. In fact, regional government established a direct liaison between itself and GALCOB and by the end of LEADER I, GALCOB could claim to have established itself as a voice of the locality (*interlocuteur*) in regional and state policy formation.

Opinions differed as to whether this territory could lay claim to any historico-cultural 'authenticity'. Certainly, the rhetoric employed when the initiative was first being established talked of the area as important in terms of culture, ethnicity and people's sense of belonging, but what *was* agreed was that, for local rural development to be enabled, it was necessary to assemble a critical mass of organisations, people, and cultural resources, and this critical mass found expression in the territory of Central West Brittany.

#### *The Western Isles, Skye and Lochalsh*

An analysis of LEADER I in the Western Isles, Skye and Lochalsh (WISL) needs to start from the area's fragmented physical geography: the island chain of the Western Isles; Skye and the 'mainland island' of Lochalsh. This remote, sparsely populated area was, in many ways, not a single territory. Historically, it was divided into smaller territories of belonging, being divided between two local authorities and with many of the transport links between the island components being confined to sea ferries. The first part of the WISL history, as with GALCOB, related to the attempt to construct a territorial identity as a nucleus, or catalyst, for a local development initiative.

If there was not an administrative integrity to what was to become WISL, what *did* exist were two ethnic categories whose heartland provided a rationale for the prospective LEADER area: the category of the Gael – the 'Highlander', embodiment of the Gaelic culture and language – which had taken on a new momentum with the post-1960s regionalist movement throughout Europe; and the category of the crofter which, again, took on a greater vibrancy following the creation of the Scottish Crofters Union in the 1970s. These two ethnic categories provided the material from which local and regional interests were able to construct a rationale for a territorial development initiative in 1991. These interests crystallised around the notion of a 'North West Scotland Heritage Area'.

The rhetoric exploited these categories based, as they were, on historical revisionism, portraying the Gael / crofter as representing a set of values different from, and 'better' than, those of Modernity as manifested in the dominant / repressive English culture. The rhetoric enabled WISL to co-opt the wider environmental, part-time farming, cultural/linguistic 'Unity in Diversity' agendas into the rationale for a local development initiative. The rhetoric, thus, presented the initiative as innately in tune with the policy signals emanating from the European Commission. Furthermore, the rhetoric strengthened the embryonic WISL by acting as a catalyst around which local organisations would agree to co-operate in a common initiative.

The group created in order to implement the LEADER initiative had three components to its structure. The management group represented, for the UK state (Scottish Office) and the European Commission, the 'legitimate' body for designing and implementing the LEADER initiative and consisted of two local authorities, two non-governmental organisations

representing Gaelic and crofting interests, and the two recently-formed local enterprise companies (LECs) for the area.

This historico-cultural rationale in the emergence of WISL as an embryonic development unit was supplemented by one relating to contemporary restructuring of the state's regional development agency system. Immediately prior to the launch of LEADER, quasi-autonomous development agencies had been created to administer development programmes on a local territorial basis. The newly-formed agencies, being the official means of intervention and a major channel for the flow of funds into areas of need, were taken as the obvious territorial template for the implementation of LEADER in the region. The negotiations over the proposal for a LEADER initiative resulted in a co-operative arrangement between two neighbouring LECs. Thus, LEADER was, from the outset, incorporated into, and drew much of its official legitimacy from, this administrative restructuring rationale.

The LEADER management group oversaw the production of the LEADER development plan based on a local consultation exercise but chose to delegate executive power regarding the operation of the LEADER programme to the chief executives of the two LECs. This meant that the LEADER initiative was being situated within the private sector. The LECs were definitely *local* bodies but their boards were dominated by business interests, were self-appointed and formally accountable only to the regional development agency (Highlands and Islands Enterprise, to whom the two LECs had a contractual relationship) and not to the local people (Scottish Affairs Committee, 1995).

### 3 Territorial identity

The two case studies show how the process of creating a local development initiative began with the construction of a territorial identity. An identity was needed that convinced the European Commission (and the state) of the validity of the embryonic initiative and that provided a nucleus around which the institutions (and, subsequently, communities and individuals) of the area would be able to co-operate in a LEADER initiative. Although each case study has its own features, they both based their territorial rationale on historico-cultural sources. The Central-West Brittany case emphasised the way in which the *découpage* of France into *départements* had institutionally disadvantaged the interior of Brittany. Development would require a new territorial focus which emphasised the necessity of: stressing its difference from the developed, littoral zone; and accumulating and exploiting local, cultural resources.

The rhetoric argued that, by re-centring policy and organisational domains onto the historical territory, the repressed vitality and resources still innate in the area and its people could be released. It starts from:

"a political commitment to a particular spatial and social location and where a belief in the importance of residence ... living together and being rooted in a particular terrain and soil become the criteria for citizenship." <sup>ii</sup>

The two initiatives emerged in areas in which regional political and cultural consciousness had acquired a momentum and, although the initiatives were not (at least not explicitly) political movements, the arguments used to construct the territorial rationale can be seen to have employed many of the techniques of ethnic nationalism. By establishing

an identity using, to different degrees, cultural identity, the initiatives were able to use the reconstructed 'authentic' territory as a basis for the competitive bidding for LEADER and other funds. The rhetoric spoke of the need for the territory to 'find its own identity' so that it could generate its own development. Such manifestations of cultural revivalism also fit conveniently into the rhetoric of participatory development through its appeal to populism. Thus, the revaluation of a local culture makes claims that this will provide a more inclusive environment than that available from the values, scale and cultural dynamics of modernity and 'top down' development.

In the LEADER case studies, there was a convergence of local and extra-local factors. Local regionalist/cultural revivalist movements had been raising awareness of cultural resources and how these could be employed in the reconstruction of territorial identity. Trajectories in the politico-administrative systems brought new local bodies into existence, together with newly-enabled local actors ready to exploit opportunities for local development. The announcement of LEADER provided a rationale for the construction of new local policy spaces in that the European Commission sent out signals as to the type of initiative that would be appropriate for funding and the local area was able to adapt its pre-existing agendas, opportunistically, to take advantage of LEADER funds. In other words, not only did the LEADER programme provide the catalyst for the formation of initiatives, it also influenced the nature of the initiatives in terms of the definition of their boundaries, types of organisation and styles of projects.

Furthermore, once the LAG had established itself as a territorial partnership, the new policy space began to assume a self-reinforcing

rationale. As it became clear that the territorial organisational co-operation was making significant new funding available to the area (both from the EU and from match funding from the partners), local bodies became more committed to the *newly-constructed* area. In the WISL case, this was enhanced by the feeling that, through LEADER, the locality had acquired direct access to the policy-making and policy-implementation power of the European Commission. In a different context, the Breton initiative found that it had created a catalyst by which the LAG members, collectively, had acquired a greatly enhanced status and role in state/regional policy-making. Thus, the power, status and funding that came with LEADER fed back to further legitimise the 'new' territory that had been constructed according to primarily parochial agendas. Furthermore, that LEADER enabled these partnerships of local organisations to come together in a co-operative arrangement that might persist after the programme had ended was cited by many local actors as perhaps the most significant outcome of the programme.

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<sup>i</sup> Groupe d' Action Local, Centre-Ouest Bretagne.

<sup>ii</sup> Smith (1991) p.117.



## CHAPTER 4 INTERNAL PROCESSES OF CREATING COMMON RESOURCES

### 1 Modes of Production theory

Neo-endogenous development at the *intra*-territorial level is primarily about the identification and use of *collective resources*. Part of the rationale for this is the need to re-orientate the local, rural economy away from relatively homogenous primary production towards the pursuit of comparative advantage, although local actors quite often subscribe to this as much from a necessity of last resort as from any other rationale. It is accompanied by an argument that a local economy will be more robust if: (a) it consists of a large number of small businesses (contrasted with the vulnerability of relying on one or a small number of, in local terms, large employers); and (b) it has diversified away from reliance on a single sector (such as orthodox, modern agriculture). In order to explore further the nature of local, collective resources and the dynamic relationships between these resources and territorial actors (socio-cultural, public, economic and political), this chapter will begin by resurrecting the idea of "Modes of Production" and meld it to the concept of "cultural capital" <sup>i</sup>.

Conventionally, Modes of Production theory holds that, in any given contemporary society, more than one mode may be operating: a capitalist mode and 'non-capitalist' modes <sup>ii</sup>. The dominant mode would be that of capitalism, linking a region/nation into wider capitalist relations while the other mode – that which appears not to display the general dynamic characteristics of capitalism – would be that of steady-state, subsistence/peasant agriculture. The point of Modes of Production analysis was to show, first, how the capitalist mode, although manifestly dominant and expanding, does not everywhere result in the annihilation

of other pre-existing modes. Second, an interrelationship is said to exist between capitalism and its alternatives in any location: capitalism being able to exploit the local supply of cheap labour and thereby extracting sometimes excess profits. The workers, on the other hand, need to offer a part of their labour to capitalist enterprises in order to supplement the capacity of their own land to produce enough on which to live. The theory seems capable of being extended to the analysis of less extreme situations so as to incorporate within the category on 'non-capitalist' modes (especially in the context of globalisation) small family farms (and, indeed, any farming system still strongly embedded in the local economy) and artisanal (petty-commodity) production.

The usefulness of this for a theory of neo-endogenous development would be in the identification of, if not a 'peasant/subsistence' mode then, rather, a mode which is presently subservient (or potentially so) to the dominant mode and which has characteristics which derive from the logic of neo-endogenous development rather than 'orthodox/ globalising' capitalism. The dominant mode might be characterised by: the ideology of neo-liberal politics and free-market economics; the orthodoxy of business advice and marketing theory; individualistic and expansionist ('growing to survive') enterprise culture; productivist, homogenous commodity agriculture; and so on. The task of neo-endogenous development theory would be to identify alternative modes of production, actual and potential. Such modes would, in the language of economics, be based on the exploitation of factors of production. This is another way of conceptualising the collective (territorial) resources that are at the core of neo-endogenous development. Neo-endogenous development thus can be thought of as the discovery, or creation, and then valorisation (that is, putting to strategic use) of territorial means of production. These factors

are labour and capital – or rather *forms* of capital – which in the neo-endogenous mode are intimately implicated in each other. If neo-endogenous development is about anything, it is about reorienting a local economy/society around labour and capital that is *fixed* to the territory. This is the starting point from which to identify a different mode of production, different from the spatial mobility of global capitalism or the EU Single Market.

## **2 Labour and forms of capitals**

It is at this point that we can turn to Pierre Bourdieu and modify some of his ideas for the present purpose. Capital, he noted, refers to a "capacity to produce profits and to reproduce itself in identical and expanded form"<sup>iii</sup>. In addition to the conventional use of the term – that is, "economic" (financial) – capital can manifest itself in "social", "educational" and "cultural" forms.

The primary interest here is in the conceptualisation of the collective resources of endogenous development as "cultural capital". Culture exists in three states: "objectified", "embodied" and "institutionalised" (Bourdieu, 1986). The objectified state refers to the material objects and media of a cultural system while elements of a culture can be institutionalised when they are co-opted as registers of social differentiation in education and the art industry. The embodied state refers to the inherent values or worldview. This recalls the ideas of Herder<sup>iv</sup> regarding the title over a product of the human mind being claimed by an individual, company, community or territory:

"What right has the bee to the flower from which she sucks?  
The bee might answer, 'Because nature made me for sucking

honey, my instinct guiding me to this flower, and no other, is my dictator who gave me a title to this flower and the garden. If we ask the first man, 'Who gave you the right to those herbs?' he will answer, 'Nature, because she gave me conscious awareness. I have laboured to recognise these herbs, laboured also to teach their characteristics to my wife and my son. .... Every thought I spent on them is the seal of my title, and whoever drives me out of my own, not only takes my life in taking the sustenance of it, but also the value of my past years, my strength, my pains, my thoughts and my language: I have laboured hard for them!"

Cultural capital as capital must be open to accumulation. Leaving Bourdieu for a moment – as he was more concerned with the educational sphere and cultural consumption, see below – what are some of the ways in which cultural capital accumulates in neo-endogenous development? The sources and techniques used in the recovery or creation of cultural resources include:

- the private/family sphere which can be mined for memories of traditional knowledge and anecdotal history as well as for artefacts (for example, local traditional recipes and family photographs);
- the voluntary/community sector which can also operate as a tool for recovering local knowledge or for the creation of new local cultural 'objects' (as in community drama expressing contemporary social issues, or the creation of a new village festival);
- regional revivalist movements (informal as well as formalised in NGOs) by the fact of their existence and activities are assisting in cultural capital formation (to which we could add others such as environmental organisations);

- information exchange networks between localities can work to supplement local repertoires of cultural identity, assisting in the valorisation of local resources through comparative example and solidarity;
- the general working of the "reflexive modernity", especially through Lash and Urry's concept of economies of signs and space, whereby the design of products and services is increasingly responsive to the demands for, and thereby helps to create, lifestyle choices.

Capital formation occurs, therefore, from both an indigenous and a cosmopolitan dynamic. In order to explore the capital accumulation process further, we need to return to Bourdieu who has described a relationship between cultural capital formation and educational capital. He argues that educational capital is created and transmitted primarily through post-primary institutional education. The educational sphere, supported by certain family environments, creates in individuals (students) the capacity to participate in cultural capital; a *competence* is cultivated in individuals so that they acquire "the means of appropriating cultural capital". Bourdieu drew the material for his analysis from national level culture and state educational institutions; he was solely interested in how 'high culture' becomes valorised above other forms and, especially, how the participation in and benefiting (materially and prestigiously) from this was confined to certain social classes. Indeed, Bourdieu was able to conclude that the way in which institutions created educational capital worked to maintain a particular social structure. The process of cultural capital accumulation, he therefore stressed, occurs through categories of people.

Whilst not wishing to disagree with Bourdieu's analysis as a coherent piece of work in its own right, his focus on 'high' (national/cosmopolitan) culture and class relations is not particularly useful to the present purpose. In neo-endogenous development, the geographical unit of culture is not the nation-state but a region or a more local territory, while the social unit is not a social class but rather a territory. However, Bourdieu's work does provide a catalyst over which aspects of a theory of neo-endogenous development could be worked out. First, the embodied nature of cultural capital means that, unlike money or property rights, it cannot be transmitted between actors simultaneously; the process takes time. Cultural capital is "transmissible in its materiality" although the means of consuming it "are not subject to the same laws of transmission" <sup>v</sup>. This provides us with a theorisation of the resistance to outwards capital mobility that is central to neo-endogenous development. The means to the participation in, and appropriation of, a culture are, in the first instance, in the hands of those socialised and educated into the cultural system. These individuals are then in the position, collectively to mediate access to the culture by others. Second, Bourdieu's identification of the relationship between cultural and educational capital – an insight long recognised by regional activists in such places as Wales, Gaelic Scotland and Brittany – is also pertinent to neo-endogenous development theory. Cultural revivalism constantly seeks ways to activate this relationship. At a pre-school level, cultural capital is embodied into children in Wales through *Mudiad Ysgol Meithrin*, a voluntary sector-led movement to provide community-level nurseries run entirely through the medium of the Welsh language. In the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, certain Local Enterprise Companies have included secondary schools in their remit to promote awareness of those with academic ability (traditionally more likely to leave the area in search of better career prospects) of the

benefits of remaining in the locality and being a part of a rejuvenated endogenous enterprise culture. In the tertiary sector in Wales, the agency *Menter a Busnes* works with universities to offer Welsh language degree-level qualifications in entrepreneurship. Bourdieu argued that the academic market worked by conferring on the students of the chosen social class an internalisation of the values inherent in the prestigious culture. The examples cited here follow the same social engineering route, but then target the transmission of capital to the residents of a territory, rather than to an exclusive social class.

### **3 Capital conversion**

Bourdieu notes that cultural capital, in certain conditions, is convertible to economic capital. This happens primarily, he argues, through the medium of educational capital, institutionalised as academic qualifications and embodied in individuals. How could this idea be adopted into a theory of neo-endogenous development?

The convertibility of cultural capital concerns the ease with which conversion might take place, as well as to the range of other forms of capital into which it could be converted. We can also think in terms of 'rates of exchange' to refer to the amount of one form of capital that can be acquired from one unit of the original form of capital. What this latter point means in the case of neo-endogenous development is that the development dynamic has to start not only with the discovery/creation of a culture in its material state but also through an on-going valorisation of the (embodied) culture. This can happen in a number of ways: agents of development may, by promoting culture-based production, raise local awareness of the neo-endogenous model; and the private business and

public sectors may raise the status and utility of the local culture by reorienting their ethos around the indigenous culture. Examples of this in action are to be found in those regions where "lesser-used languages" have survived; the adoption by local businesses and public sector organisations of an official policy on bilingualism has proven to be vital for cultural capital accumulation. Similarly, the offering of culture-centred academic and vocational qualifications raises the status of a culture. These activities, separately or in combination, serve as demonstrations of the utility of a culture leading to the recruitment of more actors into the dynamic.

As has already been noted, cultural capital is convertible into economic capital through the individual. Those born into a culture (or with long-standing membership of it) – that is, people already in possession of a stock of cultural capital such as the ability to speak the local language, play music in the vernacular style, or who possess craft knowledge or local social history – will be able to take advantage of the culture economy as opportunities arise. Economic capital will take the form of privileged access to local employment or enterprise creation. Individuals not innately in possession of cultural capital yet who wish to participate may acquire it through the medium of institutionalised education described above. This is an optimistic, democratic alternative to the structural rigidity of Bourdieu's social class analysis.

Beyond the level of the individual, cultural capital is convertible into economic capital through interactions within the business sphere and between that and the regulatory function of the state and supra-state. Thus, the actors of a culture economy feed on the cultural capital as a collective resource and thereby assist in its accumulation. This is a crucial point: 'conversion' is possibly something of a misnomer, rather,



cultural capital enables other capital to come into being while the stock of capital in its pre-transaction form is not diminished; in fact, the act of conversion works to *add* to the stock of the original form of capital, just as financial capital, for example, can be used to buy the means of production and thereby earn interest.

Cultural capital may also be converted into social capital. The activity of cultural capital accumulation generally proceeds not solely on the basis of economic utilitarianism or self-serving individualism. It includes an element of reciprocal behaviour: future-orientated actions for the local, common good, whether or not actors are conscious of these social purposes. Thus, one can find examples of cultural capital being used to animate voluntary, self-help action in local communities (as in the example of language-based nursery provision mentioned above). Cultural capital can be the driving force and cement of social capital.

From this, it is a short step to link social capital to a political dynamic. The valorisation of embedded/ state culture raises the political consciousness of individuals. The variety of "paths of development" thus revealed as being available to a territory represents invitations to local people to reflect on the nature of socio-economic development and its possible impacts on their cultural capital. This might include, for example, issues such as whether tourism should be 'controlled' in some way so as to be in sympathy with local socio-cultural needs and the sensitisation of local opinion to development and local housing needs.

#### **4 Social capital**

Thus, the accumulation of cultural capital may generate, in turn, the same process in social capital. Academic attention has tended to explore the

hypothesis of social capital as the primary pre-condition for rural development whereas the theory of neo-endogenous development portrays cultural and social capital as two equally vital components in dynamic interrelationship with each other. However, the remainder of the chapter will focus on social capital because neo-endogenous development theory must be able to account for the underlying nature of *inter-personal* relationships which drive capital accumulation and territorial strategic behaviour.

The term social capital focuses onto the nature of interpersonal and inter-group relationships and how these drive or hinder collective activity. Putnam <sup>vi</sup> defines social capital as:

"features of social organisation such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit",

whereas Hall <sup>vii</sup> offers a definition that stresses the non-economic domain favoured by many commentators, social capital being:

"the propensity of individuals to associate together on a regular basis, to trust one another, and to engage in community affairs".

In a very general sense, the term refers to the resources and socio-economic dynamic (including resistance to change) that result from, and recreate, social ties <sup>viii</sup>. It is 'social' in that it concerns trust which leads to associativeness and describes therefore both a certain type of behaviour and a set of ethical principles. It is 'capital' because, as Bourdieu <sup>ix</sup> explains, it is accumulated over time:

"It is the product of an endless effort, of which institutional rites ... mark essential moments .... [it is] accumulated labour".

It is capital which is collectively created and owned, which can be put to use to achieve ends which otherwise would not be possible, by individuals ("social energy is available for appropriation on an individual basis"). As with cultural capital, it can also be converted into an economic form or institutionalised into the solidarity rules of the group concerned.

The notion of trustful relationships has been applied to development studies in two basic ways. It has been presented as the foundation of territorial economies, enabling them to be more effective entities of wealth creation and international trade. The other way has been to emphasise trustful relationships on the local scale as promoting a vibrant form of society that is nurturing and humanistic and politically active <sup>x</sup>. Flora <sup>xi</sup> suggests that this reflects an underlying difference in assumptions: social capital can either describe an innate capacity within human nature (the "embeddedness" perspective), and it refers to means that can be adopted in pursuit of an end (the "rational choice" perspective).

Fukuyama's <sup>xii</sup> investigation of the relationship of social capital to economic development reflects some of this duality. He starts from the current belief that liberal-democratic political institutions and market-oriented economics, as the emerging world order (contrast this with Bourdieu's view above), depend on "a healthy and dynamic civil society", the fundamental underpinning of which is social capital/trust. In his view, the distribution and nature of social capital is a function of national

or regional cultures; it is accumulated through cultural mechanisms such as religion, tradition and historical habit. Social capital is, thus:

"inherited ethical habit ... it is not rational choice in the sense of objective consideration of alternative ways of achieving an end" <sup>xiii</sup>.

All of this ignores the point that all economic activity (as distinct from theft and piracy) relies on contract and therefore on trust (P. Lowe, pers. comm.) Yet what Fukuyama seems to be aiming at is a type of trustful activity that is more direct and explicit than that which underpins conventions such as trading on credit. Rather, he is identifying a type of trust that enables the blurring of orthodox enterprise autonomy.

Fukuyama's thesis is that human action, and economic prosperity in particular, can be explained by the individualist, utility-optimising, rational decision-maker paradigm in only 80% of the time; the remaining, yet crucial, 20% is explained by the role of social capital because a fundamental characteristic of human nature is that people have a need of "norms and rules binding them to others". In contrast to societies based on individualism or kinship-bound relations (dominance of kinship-controlled enterprises in China is cited as a prime example), countries with large accumulations of social capital (in addition to financial capital and physical resources) are proving to be, in the Fukuyama thesis, more economically successful. His explanation for this is that social capital-as-trust works by reducing transactions costs. Minimised transaction costs promote the acquisition of scale leading, he claims, to optimised economic performance. His reading of the history of capitalism leads him to the conclusion that scale as manifested in large organisations or, in the newer model, network organisations is fundamental to successful

economic performance. This reflects the literature on the new business management ethos, concerning the effective operation of organisations.

Contrast this with the views of Gramsci and of Putnam on civil society and trust presented in Osti<sup>xiv</sup>. Here the emphasis is on social capital/trust in the form of voluntary associations. Osti characterises the Gramscian approach as placing an emphasis on voluntary associations as a tool to mediate the effect on localities of internationally powerful forces (transnational corporations). In the context of the declining role of the nation state, Gramsci argues that the vacuum must be filled by voluntary associations that can participate in the delivery of social services and assume the mantle of protest and advocacy for social and political groups. The cultivation of spaces of social capital will result in local, popular "cognitive mobilisation" leading, in turn, to political and civic engagement by individuals.

The Putnam approach, on the other hand, emphasises the capacity of voluntary associations to nurture a 'good society'. Tonkiss and Passey<sup>xv</sup> also comment that associations represent the "values of democracy, equity and inclusiveness" and this reflects Putnam's interest in the *internal form* of associations. Participation in voluntary associations, he argues, encourages people to acquire and reproduce the ethical values of trust and generalised reciprocity (generalised exchange of rights and obligations). This occurs as an outcome of the non-hierarchical structure of associations, the repeated displays of trust and communal altruism, and the frequent and face-to-face interactions that associations allow and require.

Fukuyama emphasises that a high stock of social capital works by reducing transactions costs and thereby 'frees' capitalist enterprises from the constraints of kinship or individualism, promoting economic growth, competitiveness and, nowadays, "flexible production". His thesis says nothing directly about how the accumulation of social capital might be deliberately engineered other than by the whole-hearted adoption of neoliberal market economics. This contrasts with Osti's analysis of Gramsci and Putnam which suggests that social capital in the voluntary sector may furnish localities with a tool of resistance to that self-same neoliberalism, either in terms of the relations between local society and extralocal forces or in terms of establishing local structures from which would result locally efficacious social behaviour. Although Putnam recorded geographical variation of social capital in Italy, both he and Gramsci suggest that social capital, as an ideology with its particular forms of social and economic organisation, can be *cultivated* in localities. Osti's own study of associations in present day Tuscany suggests, however, that it is very difficult to test the suggested causality between the presence of associations, social capital and socio-economic vibrancy. If the animation of territorial development requires the territorial co-ordination of associations and other entities, Osti suggests that this may be problematic for associations almost instinctively would wish to resist political co-ordination.

Hall's study of associations in Britain from the 1950s to the present <sup>xvi</sup>, although disagreeing with the popular contention that the stock of social capital (as measured by membership of voluntary associations, charitable endeavour and/or informal sociability) has been declining over this period suggests that the *nature* of participation by individuals has been changing. Associativeness in the form of strong, class- and/or party-based

solidarity activity is being substituted by a looser form of participation, more associated with "middle class values", in which the voluntary nature of joining associations and the freedom to resign are stressed. Hall's analysis notes the effect of social and physical mobility on the values placed on associativeness in the British case. His analysis would suggest that the Putnam, and especially Gramsci, views would not automatically be applicable generally or, rather, that the theorisation of social capital is lacking some vital dimension.

## **5 Emotional intelligence**

Social capital as a term seems to describe both a *condition* vis-à-vis intra-group relations and an *ideology* pertaining to a 'good way' of organising human activity. In itself, however, the concept does not indicate *how* it works to enable human agency nor how its stock might be increased. The emphasis in the literature on territorial development has tended to concentrate on the *form* in which social capital manifests itself, proposing that social capital, and thereby socio-economic development, will result from the cultivation of local voluntary associations or the encouragement of networks of co-operative behaviour between local enterprises.

But is it enough simply to deal with the form? Neo-endogenous development is an attempt to influence the nature of socio-economic change in a locality. Simply creating the forms within which social capital has traditionally emerged might not be enough; as has been mentioned above, 'naturally occurring' associativeness in Western society appears to be changing in kind. For social capital to be a useful concept, the conditions and process that would bring about a particular type of development need to be defined. Is it the form, or is it some

characteristic of individuals towards which we should be directing our attention? A full theory of social capital in socio-economic development must make the links with individual human agency more explicit. Social capital qua trust is after all, about interpersonal relationships; there must therefore be a psychological component to the theory of social capital.

Social capital is about trust, and trust starts, and is sustained, within the individual mind. Here, the work of Goleman <sup>xvii</sup> and the concept of "emotional intelligence" may provide the key to unlock the agentic capacity of social capital. Goleman's objective was to investigate how, in order to be fully functioning human beings, individuals need access to something more than the sort of intelligence registered by IQ (which measures verbal reasoning and mathematical-logical alacrity). A wider definition of intelligence might include spatial capacity, kinaesthetic ability, musical ability, interpersonal skills, and intrapsychic skills. However, for Goleman, this would be to over-stress *cognitive* functions and thereby under-emphasises "the realm of emotions that is beyond the reach of language and cognition". Goleman's thesis is that individuals become more effective in life by recognising, valorising and developing their innate emotional intelligence.

Goleman identifies the component conditions/ processes of emotional intelligence, namely: self-awareness, emotional management, self-motivation, empathy and relationship management. Self-awareness – "knowing one's emotions" – is the basis of all emotional intelligence. It has the potential to enable an individual to avoid being a "slave" to their passions; the act of reflection represents a "neutral mode .... almost of being accompanied by a second self". This awareness *identifies* the emotions involved and thereby creates a sense of ownership of them (by



applying a consciousness – a conceptualisation – to that which was previously subconsciously driven, or even alien). Awareness of emotions leads to personal agency:

"While strong emotions can create havoc in reasoning, the lack of awareness of feeling can also be ruinous, especially in weighing the decisions on which our destiny largely depends"

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According to Goleman, "some of us are more naturally attuned to the emotional mind's special symbolic modes ... the language of the heart". Although Goleman does not use the term, the implication here is that for self-awareness to be a force available to an individual, it has to include of an element of personal esteem – that is self-love – so that self-confidence (social poise) enables an individual to avoid feeling unnecessarily threatened by others.

Self-awareness, by itself, does not lead to successful relationships; they must also be managed so as to produce behaviour appropriate to a context. Emotion management is thus another skill-component that makes up emotional intelligence. Emotions have to be managed in the pursuit of personal goals and goal-orientation requires the application of a degree of self-control in the form of delayed gratification (that is, stifling impulsiveness). This itself must be focused through empathy, defined as the recognition of emotions in others by being "attuned to the subtle social signals that indicate what others need or want". Empathy is crucial here for it makes the link between an internally well-functioning individual mentality and the creation and maintenance of successful relations with others. Empathising with others is the psychological mechanism whereby altruistic (even if restricted) attitudes and behaviour

are enabled; a genuine concern for others moves people to want to help them.

To summarise thus far, the concept of emotional intelligence – based on a synthesis of psychological empirical studies – provides an understanding of how an individual is able (or not able) to be trusting of others, and thus to be able to allow trustful relationships between themselves and others to emerge and be sustained. This capacity is operationalised through the phenomenon of "emotional contagion" whereby a successfully functioning individual will tend to excite a similar reciprocating response from others with whom they come into contact:

"We transmit and catch moods from each other in what amounts to a subterranean economy of the psyche in which some encounters are toxic, some nourishing" <sup>xix</sup>.

Goleman's ideas can be applied to this investigation of social capital and territorial socio-economic development. Trust emerges through the contagion of nourishing and reassuring interpersonal contact. Trust becomes social capital – that is, a community resource – when emotional intelligence flows through a network of individuals, maintaining itself and even increasing its stock. Social capital could thus be thought of as "emotional accumulation". In addition to the benefits to personal well-being, Goleman notes that the types of associativeness that flow from emotional intelligence are inherently "cost-effective" in that behaviour and relationships are maintained by a continuous state of self-monitoring, making externally applied sanctions largely redundant. It is important to note also that this refers not only to the membership of associations but also to loose networks in which ad hoc or temporary clusters can be formed by various members of a network in order to achieve a particular

task; that is, "ad hoc groups, each with a membership tailored to offer the optimal array of talents, expertise and placement" <sup>xx</sup> in other words, "group emotional intelligence".

## **6 From emotional intelligence to human agency**

If the concept of emotional intelligence helps to operationalise social capital, how is emotional intelligence itself operationalised? What enables an individual to convert a propensity for emotional intelligence into human agency? Goleman acknowledges that genetic inheritance may play a part. He also argues that primary socialisation and the pedagogic influences to which a child is exposed are also crucial. A pedagogic system can promote emotional intelligence by "identifying a child's profile of natural competencies and playing to the strengths as well as trying to shore up the weaknesses".

It is also possible that emotional intelligence can be formed in the life stages that follow those of primary socialisation and school education. The concept of reflexive modernity suggests that ideologies and perspectives from any number of cultural, religious or political traditions may be in circulation at any given time and available for adoption by individuals. People can, and do, change as they are exposed to the world of ideas and other peoples' experiences; witness, for example, life-changing religious conversions, the altruistic campaigning activity that is instigated by personal tragedy or the occasional intense identification with an ethnic revivalist cause experienced by an incomer. Such extra-personal influences can result in a fundamental "cognitive re-framing" in the individual concerned.

This suggests that the emphasis placed by a number of development sociologists and practitioners on the manifest *form* of trust and associative life – voluntary associations, local networks – may be misplaced. Rather than emphasising the creation of *structures* in the anticipation of their leading to trustful behaviour, it would be more appropriate to think in terms of the capacity of individuals to be trusting and thereby enabling structures of co-operation to emerge. The form is merely an artefact of human nature; it is intra- and inter-individual psychological states and dynamics that lead to, or hinder, associativeness. True, Fukuyama and others could be used to argue for the ad hoc use of associative *forms* in the pursuit of territorial socio-economic objectives in that an economic utility argument may be adequate to lead individuals to behave in a certain way until the socio-economic problem appears to have been solved and then the structure allowed to disintegrate. This, however, would be to ignore the values of a 'better society' that are associated with trustful structures and behaviour and which are an important reason for contemporary interest in this subject. Such values may be offended or alienated by the creation of a cynical partnership.

Trust and emotional intelligence refer to capacities to act. How is this linked into the taking of action? Campbell <sup>xxi</sup> notes that action by an individual (or any object for that matter) occurs in response to a stimulus (or stimuli). These stimuli can be both endogenous and exogenous. Campbell's ideas mirror much of Goleman's thesis but he adds an useful further element: will-power. Stimuli can work on the subconscious and conscious mind. Insofar as human agency means anything, it refers to the capacity by individuals to manage stimuli:

"Will-power is ... the power to decide which stimuli – from all those of which the agent is aware – shall have the predominant influence over his behaviour" <sup>xxii</sup>.

The notion of will-power refers back to the voluntary delay of gratification mentioned above as a component of emotional intelligence. However, the ability of an individual to select stimuli will inevitably be limited and so, therefore, must be will-power. This constraint is an important characteristic of human agency.

The discussion can now juxtapose the ideas of individual and group psychology and analyses such as Fukuyama's on historico-cultural factors with the work of Emirbeyer <sup>xxiii</sup>. Emirbeyer has tried to integrate psychological with socio-cultural factors in an investigation of the role of human agency in explaining social change. At the level of the individual, the thesis portrays human agency as a function of three processes, interacting in series: iteration, projectivity and practical-evaluation.

On the iterational dimension, the mind acknowledges the individual's memory of past experiences and thoughts from which it takes selectively as it continuously updates the individual's ordering of the social world. Against the personal worldview thus created, the individual has a capacity to imagine "possible future trajectories of action"; that is, at any moment, there is a (limited) set of choices about how to act which the individual can invent from information stored in their mind (including recently received information). This is the projective dimension. The individual, in normal circumstances, is then ready to make a normative judgement as to which of the possible futures imagined would be the most appropriate or feasible; this is the practical-evaluative dimension.

Emirbeyer and Goodwin<sup>xxiv</sup> comment that the "iterational" is not necessarily about linear change/ 'progress'; it can just as easily manifest itself as a conscious "radicalisation of tradition", that is, a decision to try to resist forces of change. Which options emerge in the human agency process, and the way in which decision-preparing processes interact between individuals, will be influenced by "relational contexts": namely, culture, social structure and social psychology. Here is a mechanism by which individual agency is tied-in to the social: collective ideas such as, for example, social movements or, in this case trustful associativeness, can take hold through an individual's "projective dimension". Socio-cultural factors can, therefore, be either liberating or constraining.

## **7 Agency as territorial solidarity**

Finally, human agency at the intra- and inter-individual level must be integrated into the theory of neo-endogenous development for which there are a number of possibilities. One would be to consider the function of that category of individual employed to implement policy or animate socio-economic development within a territorial initiative and this will be considered more fully in chapter 5. Another would be to consider is the territorial scale at which human agency in the field of socio-economic development might be operationalisable. The empathy component of emotional intelligence indicates that territorial co-operation is possible and desirable but it is difficult to read off any idea of scale. Thinking along the lines of Emirbeyer and linking this with the concept of reflexive modernity, one could speculate that scale may partly be defined by extralocal factors. Solidarity between quite disparate entities can emerge if there is a perception of an external threat. A consciousness of being on the wrong side of an inequitable balance of power and material advantage

or a consciousness of imminent damage to something held in common regard (local cultural integrity, natural environment, etc.) can create a territorial solidarity but only while the threat, or the perception of the threat, remains strong. The creation and maintenance of solidarity, as strong associativeness, requires the use of ideological means<sup>xxv</sup>. Although Western Europe witnesses ad hoc demonstrations of solidarity (for example, protests by farmers against hygiene regulations or trade conditions), it seems difficult to sustain them, especially at a local territorial level (see above for comments on the changing nature of associativeness in a British context).

Another possibility is solidarity on an inter-local level (see chapter 6). This occurs if territories act to form collaborative relationships in pursuit of a common project. In the field of territorial socio-economic development, examples abound of such arrangements between initiatives within a country and between initiatives in different countries. Joint marketing projects, for example, allow localities to benefit from economies of scale, forming a sort of loose horizontal enterprise network. Alternatively, or additionally, inter-locality may be encouraged through the creation of information exchange networks (using technical seminars, internet communication, etc.). Again, examples already exist of localities participating in any number of overlapping multilateral arrangements involving local initiatives in two or more countries. This can even be supplemented by meta-networks such as that comprising territories representing "minority languages" or the embryonic pan-EU network of local rural development initiatives organised through LEADER. However, it should again be noted that a network is simply a structure, just as an association or partnership is. A network is operationalised by the individual development practitioners who opt to participate; it is no

more than the sum of emotional intelligence of the individuals involved,  
or potentially involved.

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<sup>i</sup> Bourdieu (1973; 1986).

<sup>ii</sup> Schuurman (1993).

<sup>iii</sup> Bourdieu (1986) p.241.

<sup>iv</sup> Herder (1770/1969) p.164.

<sup>v</sup> Bourdieu (1986) p.246-7.

<sup>vi</sup> Putnam, quoted in Smith (1999) p. 553.

<sup>vii</sup> Hall (1999) p.417.

<sup>viii</sup> Astone et al. (1999)

<sup>ix</sup> Bourdieu (1986) p.249.

<sup>x</sup> We should also note attempts to marry the two approaches, as in Boswell (1990)

<sup>xi</sup> Flora (1998)

<sup>xii</sup> Fukuyama (1995)

<sup>xiii</sup> Fukuyama (1995), p.34-5.

<sup>xiv</sup> Osti (1999).

<sup>xv</sup> Tonkiss and Passey (1999), p.258.

<sup>xvi</sup> Hall (1999)

<sup>xvii</sup> Goleman (1995)

<sup>xviii</sup> Goleman (1995), p. 53.

<sup>xix</sup> (p. 112).

<sup>xx</sup> (p.161).

<sup>xxi</sup> Campbell (1999)

<sup>xxii</sup> Campbell (1999) p.53.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Emirbeyer and Goodwin (1996), Emirbeyer and Mische (1998)

<sup>xxiv</sup> Emirbeyer and Goodwin (1996)

<sup>xxv</sup> The ideology need not be sinister; Freire — "pedagogy of the oppressed" — and Scott — "weapons of the weak" — <sup>xxv</sup> are still cited in the context of participative forms of development in the "Third World".



## CHAPTER 5 THE DEVELOPMENT WORKER

### 1 Introduction

In general, the design of policy and interventions continues to conform to an 'engineering' metaphor. Put simply, this imagines a linear, causal relationship between the apparent intentions of the designers of a policy or programme and the consequent impact on the ground. The mechanical process starts with the clear and rationale identification of objectives, which are then translated into measures by experts in bureaucracies. These measures are implemented by agencies, leading to observable impacts on the ground. Any inconsistency between the impacts observed and the original objectives can be rectified by a redesign of the measures by the appropriate bureaucrats. In practice, however, this linearity can be interrupted by the various actors involved in the implementation and assessment of an intervention. This translation, or even resistance, effect can be particularly marked once implementation reaches the local level<sup>i</sup>, where the objectives of the intervention can sometimes be regarded as alien or disruptive, resulting in their being translated through a prism of local agendas of a political, cultural or personal nature.

The importance of locality-based professionals in influencing policy implementation on the ground has been noted elsewhere. In a study of the implementation of agricultural pollution policy in the United Kingdom, Lowe et al.<sup>ii</sup> demonstrated the way in which Pollution Inspectors from the National Rivers Authority in England effectively mediated between farmers and policy designers (and, indirectly, society). As such, the decisions and actions taken by these local professional workers were formed through the personal stance that they each adopted

between two opposing discourses: an environmentalist morality and an agricultural moral economy. Lowe et al. categorised these individuals as “field-level bureaucrats” after the work of Lipsky on “street-level bureaucrats”, the latter being the first to theorise about the discretion exercised by local professionals in their work and thereby interpreting policy. They develop ‘coping strategies’ in the face of ideological and practical pressures and in the Lowe et al. study, this manifested in the individuals concerned:

“choosing easy rather than difficult cases [to inspect/prosecute], routinization of procedure and working methods, standardised classification of the regulated world and of client groups; and of adopting a cynical attitude to ambitious goals and their replacement with more personal goals”<sup>iii</sup>.

The analysis presented in this chapter differs slightly from the conclusions of Lowe et al. in that it will emphasise the belief-led modus operandi of this type of actor, whose significance lies as much in its potential as in its immediate concrete impact.

LEADER seemed to represent a new approach to EU rural development policy; an approach that created the potential for local areas to take control of development by reorienting development around local resources and by setting up structures and processes that would enable the local area to perpetuate a local development momentum. It had been devised by DGVI of the European Commission specifically as a tool in the reformed Structural Fund approach; it was to be a "rural laboratory", using territorial stations throughout the EU to explore innovative ways to animate socio-economic development. In a sense, therefore, the European Commission was devolving some responsibility for the design

and implementation of rural development in the designated territories. General rules had been written by the Commission, and although national and regional governments adopted various stances towards the mediation that they imposed on the Commission-local territory linkage, in the eyes of the Commission, local LEADER groups represented the local level. When viewed at the level of a local territory, however, the groups could equally be seen more as proxies for the various community groups, settlements, businesses and individuals in the area. They were usually very new creations and during the life of LEADER were travelling along a rather steep learning curve as they grappled with the concepts of participative development, partnerships and the playing of the 'European game'. Each group also employed a development worker to be responsible for implementing the programme in the local area and, because of its style – deliberately non-prescriptive so as to allow localities to explore innovative approaches to development based on the principles of endogeneity and local participation -- these individuals came to be crucial players.

## **2 Development workers as Reflexive Practitioners**

These individual development workers (called 'co-ordinators' or 'managers') often had a significant impact on the nature of the development programme on the ground. They found themselves operating as mediators between three domains. First, and they would argue the primary domain, was that of the people of the local territory: the village communities, social groups and small businesses which the endogenous approach takes as the participants in, and resources for, socio-economic development. The second involved the building of relationships with the various manifestations of 'extra-local' officialdom:

in a practical sense by, for example, engaging with the appropriate Directorate of the European Commission; and in an ideological sense by acting as a medium for a dynamic of Europeanisation. Third, they had to deal with the various local and regional players that, directly or indirectly, actually or potentially, had an impact on the implementation of LEADER.

Although their impact was not necessarily always unproblematic – just as the bottom-up approach in general can be problematic – their approach could be crucial to the implementation of the programme. Of interest here is not the extent to which these actors were 'successful' but, rather, the way they interpreted LEADER through certain principles. Their impact was often very subtle, frequently of a potential rather than concrete nature, and more to do with the cultivation of perceptions and embryonic forms of local citizen participation than with blatant challenges to the explicit aims of the intervention. They were not therefore simply 'technicians', mechanically implementing a development intervention through a literal reading of its measures. Rather, they were active agents, reacting to, and learning from, the dynamics of the institutional context. Even more crucially, they were cognisant, *reflexive* individuals who sought, however subtly, to influence the nature of the intervention in their locality.

Their importance becomes yet more apparent when the focus of evaluation is shifted away from the 'products' of development activity and onto intangibles. The significance of this type of intervention – the philosophy underpinning it, the 'process' being animated, and the pragmatic reality of its operation on the ground – hinges on this individual as the intermediary between the local and the institutional level. It is through the category of the development worker that one gains

insights into the on-going attempts to square the idealism of local participation with institutional orthodoxy. This is not an altogether novel point to be making: others<sup>iv</sup> have each explored this dichotomy with reference to rural community development workers in England.

Research has thrown light on the extent to which the ideas of local, participatory action has figured prominently in the (auto)biographies of each individual. Generally, they have a predisposition towards participative democracy. This meant that, on being recruited, they were selected as already being familiar with, and committed to, the participative principle and this dictated their reading of what the significance of LEADER should be. They are more interested in the intangibles of participatory process and structures than in "getting the programme money spent" (although they managed to do this as well). Generally, they applied for the position of development worker because they were attracted by the prospect of having funding to pursue these principles.

Once in post, a development worker armed with this principle has to engage with the local people and with the funding environment (made up of their LEADER group committees, public sector bodies, the European Commission, etc.). Concerning the former, a development workers is continuously self-reflexive. Their reading of the programme dictated that the principle of participation was paramount in any action supported by the intervention but LEADER included a requirement that all projects be "innovative". Neither 'participation' nor "innovation" was defined by LEADER, precisely because the ethos of the bottom-up approach is to allow the characteristics of each area to emerge through exploratory projects. On an almost daily basis in LEADER I and II, therefore,

development workers reconsidered the question of what, in local terms, was meant by these concepts. In the early days, when they were advertising the existence of the programme throughout their territories, they could do little more than talk in abstract terms. With time, working definitions were formed and reformed by the way in which the territory responded to the invitation to instigate this style of development. Although the principles remained firm, the ambiguity when translating the principles to real situations was an unremitting factor in the lives of development workers. Moreover, it was often the case that the invitation to participatory development was a novel proposition to local people: in some cases, they could not grasp the radical potential whilst in others they were wary of the idea. Development workers would find themselves having to promote and cultivate such ideas among local people. This took time and, as a result, the translation of principles into activity on the ground resulted in participation being socially selective at times, or being modified by pragmatism (running with whatever response emerged from a locality).

The extent to which these individuals share similar views on the process and significance of endogenous development can be quite remarkable. In part, the explanation is circular: the experimental nature of LEADER, its 'newness', and its use of a particular vocabulary all worked to invite applications to be development workers from people motivated by such signals but it was also its experimental nature – representing a devolution to localities of power to influence rural development activity – which created the space for the newly-appointed development workers to pursue its radical potential. Members of local groups and development workers were involved in a continuous game of defining (and sometimes contesting) the nature of development activity that was allowable within

LEADER. Being the only people working full-time on the programme, and less constrained by institutional factors, development workers quickly grasped the potential of the 'European policy game'. It is also important to note that they were not operating in isolation; they were continuously exposed to information exchanges which allowed individual development workers to learn about the experiences and ideas of their counterparts in the region and on a pan-European level. This flow of information was sponsored by the European Commission, having been built into the design of the programme, showing how the design simultaneously promoted EU agendas and made it available for interpretation by local actors. There is also perhaps a more mundane set of explanations to do with the fact that, in many of these areas, existing structures of participatory or representative democracy had become hollow or ossified.

The refrain of many practitioners – that the programme should be "more than just another grant scheme" – is the key to understanding this interpretation. It had been introduced by the European Commission as a "laboratory" in which novel experiments for rural development in designated localities could be undertaken. Although the design adopted the language of endogeneity and popular participation, the implicit yet overriding objective was to contribute to the pursuit of the primary politico-economic agendas of the European Union: reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (through diversification of the rural economy into other activities); development of the Single Market (through the convergence of regional social conditions and economic performance); and the cultivation of political support for the idea of a European Union (through enhanced visibility of EU actions in the regions and local areas, encouragement of pan-European contacts between

people, etc.). It also contributed to the construction of a transnational constituency for the actions of the European Commission. LEADER could be seen as one element in a more effective *modus operandi* to pursue these broader agendas. Working in their local territories, development workers could have (and some did) read the design literally and set about animating projects which conformed to the types of measures set out in the guidelines of the European Commission and in their local development plans. Yet, as has been noted above, it is not new for rural community development workers to have to deal with the tension between, on the one hand, the radical potential of a programme as manifested in intangible activity and, on the other, pressures to reduce activity to tangible 'products' (i.e. handing out grants to projects whose effect could be readily seen and measured). The "reflexive practitioner", however, chooses to focus on the radical potential of the terms endogenous and participation. They do this partly because their background makes them sensitive to the desirability and excitement of such ideas: this was what local rural development should really be about. Their beliefs led them to want the programme to be "more than just another grant scheme".

The relationship between the development worker and the institutional environment in which they work should also be considered. In a sense, the relationship could be characterised as a dichotomy, with the development worker on one side and the institutions on the other but it is important not to over-emphasise this dichotomy, nor to characterise it as necessarily conflictual. It is dichotomous in that development workers often portray themselves as seeking to animate local participation and, implicitly, this represents a challenge to the status and role of the existing array of public sector bodies. The public sector is concerned with the



legitimate use of public money: Local Authorities, for example, have a remit to spend public money within their geographical boundaries, not for the benefit of people in other areas. The 'new' territories created by the programme often, therefore, raised issues of legitimacy and accountability for public sector bodies. It is interesting to note that during its first phase, there was generally less concern for these issues; LEADER was new and largely unknown and, importantly, very small scale (some 200 groups throughout the EU). With the expansion in the second phase (to some 1000 groups), the political issues became more visible and problematic. Wright <sup>v</sup> has examined how, in a Third World context, the expression of local needs, and therefore of action strategies, tends to be defined by a standard repertoire reflecting the perspective of the sponsoring institution. In LEADER, it is fair to say that, although there were eligibility rules (often rather literally interpreted by state agencies and others), development workers usually demonstrated a preparedness to transcend a superficial reading of what could constitute LEADER development; they created their conceptual space in which to operate.

Is the fact that the intervention was a child of the EU pertinent to this analysis of the development worker factor? It emerged from the European Commission, passed lightly through the hands of the state (e.g. through the production of national guideline plans) and then through the lead institutions in each locality in the writing of the business plan. With the appointment of development workers, the fully radical nature of the programme entered the picture; it could mean 'real' bottom-up participative development, and this translated, subconsciously at least, into the casting of the EU as a force for the radical democratisation of rural development. To varying degrees, this also manifested itself as a

gradual Europeanisation effect in that the experience of the intervention by development workers, other supportive practitioners, and community groups raised their awareness of the EU as a positive force, providing the means for socio-economic change (and in some areas for cultural revival). Individuals admit that the experience of being involved in such initiatives leads them to be more Europhile. LEADER included a particular element which enhanced this Europhilia: the deliberate promotion of a loose 'community'/network through the use of seminars, a magazine and internet site, all designed to encourage contact between local territorial initiatives.

Of course, Europhilia is also an outcome of an EU agenda to raise its visibility in local areas in pursuit of greater European goals. It seems likely that the Europeanisation of development workers occurs not simply because the EU is seen as a friend of localities and regions – and a friend with money to give out – but also because the advocacy of bottom-up development became part of the professional identity of the development workers. Individuals found themselves spending not inconsiderable amounts of their time promoting the bottom-up cause, sometimes against some local distrust or incomprehension. Their ability to succeed depended on convincing the representatives of organisations with which they engaged of the value of these ideas and this meant that, to a greater or lesser degree, there was some transference of LEADER rhetoric to their professional identity.

Development workers often argue that the value of whatever they achieved lies more in the 'processes' instigated than in tangible 'products'. This 'process/product' dichotomy allows us to sketch some of the components of a vague rationale that, implicitly, underpins the

interpretation effect. The first component is that of sustainability. This refers to the idea of 'the active society'; that if people become actively involved in the design and implementation of development activity as it affects them and their locality, then the raised socio-economic condition will be more robust. There will, according to the rhetoric, be a greater sense of local ownership of, and therefore commitment to, maintaining a local development dynamic (which, at the same time, will also be more environmentally sustainable).

The second component of the rationale is the portrayal of the role of a development worker as a catalyst or a mediator. For the former, neo-endogenous development means nurturing the innate capacities (and self-confidence) of people, introducing additional skills into the 'community', and bringing elements together to create a new local dynamic (for which another component of the vocabulary - "synergy" - is sometimes used). The catalyst can be the development workers themselves or it can be represented more abstractly by the introduction of an ethos of neo-endogenous development. The other metaphor - that of a mediator - can also assume a personal or abstract form. In this case, the mediator helps the locality and its people to engage more equally with extralocal factors (anything from sources of development funds that the local area might need to pursue a development project up to the broader environment of ideas and socio-economic factors). The rhetoric of development workers is that LEADER could be used to supply these catalytic and mediation roles until such time as a locality acquires the experience and confidence necessary to assume the roles itself.

The third component was that the interpretations of the development workers represented a more humanistic view of development. By

adopting the principles of endogeneity and participation, rural development could be translated into 'personal growth'. Development, therefore, would become less to do with sectors of the economy, or even geographical entities, and more concerned with the flowering of individual potential (primarily through local co-operative action).

This section has demonstrated the way in which a particular development programme of the EU was interpreted by development workers in certain localities. However, the analysis should not itself be interpreted as a criticism, either of the individuals concerned or of the act of interpretation. There was nothing subversive about these interpretations. Rather they can be seen as one aspect of the policy game in which the other players are the European Commission, and public, private and voluntary bodies at national, regional and local levels. The ideas informing the interpretations simply reflect those abroad in contemporary society. This analysis certainly should not be read as a call for future endogenous development policy and programmes to be more prescriptive and tightly controlled. The strength of this "anarchic" style of programme lay in the very fact that it allowed such local interpretation.

### **3 The category of the Reflexive Practitioner**

#### *Pedagogy*

The above analysis concerns a category of actor that not only interprets planned intervention but also thinks about the nature and basis of his or her actions and about the possible impacts of these actions on those whom they are employed to help. They are, in that sense, *reflexive* practitioners, and this places them into a broader category that is

emerging in a number of domains. By noting three of these domains, some of the wider, societal dynamics underpinning the emergence of the category can be added to the analysis.

The phenomenon has been observed in the pedagogic domain <sup>vi</sup>. Reflexivity can occur when an individual teacher is sensitive to the epistemological basis of the knowledge that they impart and the teaching methods that they use. The latter is also a function of the cognitive status that they afford to their students. The approach adopted by an individual teacher is strongly influenced by the subject taught and by the biography of the individual. Regarding the former, an art teacher who takes a constructivist approach to teaching, seeing it as, in essence, a dialogue between herself and her pupils:

"Teachers negotiate their classroom curricula with students in the midst of social, political and bureaucratic factors" <sup>vii</sup>.

The science teacher, on the other hand, adopted an objectivist viewpoint, being:

"more sensitive to the structure of the content to be taught rather than to students' needs, classroom curricula tend to be pre-figured" <sup>viii</sup>.

As for biographical factors, the art teacher's previous career had involved being "continuously creative, searching for ways to improve her work". This humanistic influence had trained her to be inherently reflexive in her work. It had been supplemented by voluntary work as a counsellor in a youth detention centre in which the solutions to problems only came from engaging in a meaningful dialogue with individual youths. As for the

science teacher, his previous career had emphasised the central importance of the 'scientific method', as a way of thinking. For him, there was an amount of fixed-meaning content to be transferred to his students.

Their biographies were crucial in forming their beliefs about teaching, and in dictating the subject that they opted to teach. In a sense, there were two cultures here. The artist was inherently more reflexive about her methods and the impact that she was having on her students. She was also (and consequently) both more constructivist in the meanings which could be attached to the subject, and therefore more participative in the relationship between her and her students.

### *Medicine*

Turning to the second parallel domain - that of medicine - demonstrates the influence of societal value change on the emergence of the reflexive practitioner.. In geriatric medicine, the increasing presence of the "old old" has provided a space for reflexivity<sup>ix</sup>. When medical problems were of a fundamental and acute nature, society deferred to a medical authority which was based on 'technical knowledge' (i.e. 'facts' about interventions to treat a disease). However, in the area of geriatric medicine in particular – where the problems are increasingly of a chronic nature – there is an argument that technical knowledge has to give way to "fundamental beliefs and values" and a new language of care. The societal change behind this is not simply demographic; it is driven by the emergence of a biomedical ethics movement. This movement stresses the crucial importance of patients' rights, in particular, the ideas of self determination and autonomy. This is, primarily, a reaction to the ethos that has been dominating Western medicine, that of physician paternalism

and science/technology based interventions. The reflexive practitioner explores the ground of a new professional-patient relationship. This relationship starts with a concern for what would be in the best interests of the individual patient and invites questions to be asked about who should take the decisions that affect the patient's life. Fundamentally, it is about a substitution of authority:

"the technical aspects of medical authority must give way to a value authority held by the patient" <sup>x</sup>.

Staying in the medical domain, but this time concerning general practice, we can touch on the work of Reason <sup>xi</sup>. There are, among GPs, those who have an interest in the possibilities of holistic medicine. This interest is an expression of an:

"underlying desire to provide a better service to patients and to increase personal satisfaction in their work" <sup>xii</sup>.

Here, then, is another dimension to the reflexive practitioner. Not only are they seeking 'better' modes of behaviour, but they are also doing this for their own benefit. Using the technique of co-operative enquiry, a group of GPs developed a tentative model of the practitioner-patient relationship, reformulated according to what they saw as the key aspects of holistic general practice:

- the patient would be treated as a full being, made up of body, mind and spirit, understood in his or her particular historical, social and political contexts;
- the patient would be seen as a potential self-healing agent, i.e.:

"that each person, as a mental and spiritual being, has the potential capacity, consciously and intentionally, to facilitate healing in their body, and by a variety of internal and external actions";

- power should be shared between doctor and patient, i.e. that there should be a "shared responsibility for diagnosis and treatment"; and
- the doctor should adopt the concept of "self-gardening", being mindful of their own needs and health (physical, mental and spiritual) because this will have an impact on the healing relationship with the patient. They need, in their work as a practitioner, to be "consciously involved in the process of holistic self-development and social awareness".

### *Psycho-analysis*

Psycho-analysis provides the final example of the domains of the reflexive practitioner. The American Carl Rogers in the 1940s is generally credited with introducing the idea of "client-centred counselling" <sup>xiii</sup> whose central principle is that:

"it is the client who knows what is hurting and in the final analysis it is the client who knows how to move forward" <sup>xiv</sup>.

This radically changes the dynamics of the practitioner-patient relationship, so that the former "learns to recognise how patients offer cues to the therapeutic experience". The practitioner has to monitor the implications of their own contributions to a psycho-analytical session from the viewpoint of the patient. It has been argued that this requires the practitioner to submit themselves to a continuous discipline of internal supervision, learning by reflecting on their day-to-day work experiences -



"we should always be in a state of becoming". In the sessions, the analyst communicates all manner of signals to the patient, many of which occur subconsciously. Furthermore, patients will "unintentionally manoeuvre" the analyst requiring the latter, if progress is to be made in the healing process, to be continuously reflexive of their behaviour, motivations and impact. Not only this, but they must also develop a state of mind in which they enter each relationship open to the possibility of new understanding, particular to the individual patient. The relationship must proceed through listening, dialogue and empathy with the patient.

This section has extended the category of the socio-economic development worker into a more general category: that of the reflexive practitioner. In general terms, there are two parallel cultures at work: the reflexive practitioner (presently, a minority) and the technician-expert. The former is defined primarily as a critique of the latter. The characteristics of reflexivity are manifold. Such practitioners question, continuously, their authority to intervene. Although sometimes the source of personal angst, this internal dialogue is taken to be a continuous and vital part of their identity and *modus operandi*. They also maintain that, whatever field they are operating in, improvement is most effectively achieved through the involvement of the 'targets' of the particular intervention. This involvement includes a dialogue about the aims and methods of the intervention. Practitioners animate a process by which the 'targets' are enabled to consider their needs, allowing for the possibility that these may differ from the aims incorporated in the original design of the intervention. They subscribe to a pluralistic and humanistic worldview: celebrating cultural diversity (group rights) and allowing spaces for the personal level (individual rights). Finally, although

engaging with 'authority', they are driven, often subconsciously, by an ambivalence of officialdom and hierarchy.

#### **4 The reflexive practitioner, bureaucracy and the state**

The reflexive practitioner as a general category is a mildly anarchic figure in society. Although each individual practitioner has their own way of working, and of rationalising their behaviour, he or she represents an intermediary between officialdom and the local/personal level that is their target group. They are an intermediary in the sense of mediating the impact of officialdom by refracting it through their own principles (as generated through social movements). This was the conclusion of the case study of endogenous, socio-economic development workers. In other domains, they can be seen as creating an alternative space, tolerated by officialdom yet not accepted into the mainstream, in which to conduct their experiments.

Either way, their belief-led activity inevitably creates tensions with the bureaucracies that are responsible to society for the design of interventions and the commitment of public funds. The 'two cultures' of practitioners noted above are a mirror image of a dynamic ideological contest at work in society, manifested in complementary dichotomies such as: official versus local/personal knowledge, hierarchy/patriarchy versus egalitarianism/participative democracies; objectivism versus relativism, and so on.

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<sup>i</sup> See Long and van der Ploeg (1989), Long and Villareal (1993) Boissevain (1996), Ray (1997).

<sup>ii</sup> Lowe et al. (1997)

<sup>iii</sup> Lowe et al (1997), p. 203.

<sup>iv</sup> Lumb (1990), Wright (1992), M<sup>c</sup>Nicholas (2000)

<sup>v</sup> Wright (1990)

<sup>vi</sup> Powell (1996)

- vii Source as note vi.
- viii Source as note vi.
- ix Clark (1996)
- x Source as note ix.
- xi Reason (1988).
- xii Reason (1988)
- xiii Casement (1985), Mearns and Thorne (1988)
- xiv Mearns and Thorn (1988) p.1.



## ***PART II LOOKING MAINLY OUTWARDS***

Whereas Part I concentrated on factors and processes occurring within a neo-endogenous development territory, Part II switches focus to territories as entities operating in, and acted on by, their wider political economy environment. Chapter 6 sketches a number of scenarios of the emerging EU rural development system. Chapter 7 describes the supportive functions of the extralocal level, through the concept of reflexive modernity and as the provider of rights. Chapter 8 deals with the issue of the evaluation of such initiatives in which local action is brought face-to-face with the institutional requirements of states and the bureaucracy of the EU.

## CHAPTER 6 NEO-ENDOGENOUS DEVELOPMENT TERRITORIES AND A POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE EU

### 1 LEADER as a quasi-marketisation of rural development

The EU can be imagined as a *system* comprising overlapping mosaics of territories. One of these mosaics – the most important for the present purpose – is the territorial manifestation of neo-endogenous development interventions such as LEADER. These territories are the cells into which interventions by all levels of government and NGOs is increasingly being channelled. A Europe of neo-endogenous territories represents a new regime of co-ordination or system management. It is also a system which continues to evolve: as new territories emerge (either as opportunistic responses to official policy or as genuinely, bottom-up initiatives); as the boundaries of territories flex; and as territories explore possibilities for transnational co-operation between themselves.

This emerging regimes has been described as a rural development *quasi-market*<sup>1</sup>. By courting the territorial/ participative approach, the European Commission, national governments and other rural policy players would seem to be moving towards a less hierarchical system. Neo-endogenous territories are not only presented with the *choice* of pursuing their socio-economic future by means of their local resource-driven strategies but are also increasingly *required* to adopt this approach as governments move inevitably towards a neo-liberal, free-market ethos. Vulnerable areas (as well as vulnerable social categories) are to assume greater responsibility for their well-being. Local actors, faced with the "standard problems of rural areas", have to form themselves into neo-endogenous initiatives or

else risk excluding themselves from the potential benefits. And yet, in interventions such as LEADER, territorial initiatives experience, simultaneously, and increase in autonomy and a potential increase in control by local and regional politico-economic interests. This has been conceptualised<sup>ii</sup> as a move away from direct intervention by the policy 'centre' towards a new regime of indirect intervention. In the rural development quasi-market, redistribution is pursued through indirect co-ordination. The LEADER regime cuts free the new territorial entities of neo-endogenous development while regulating them through the rules of participation in the intervention and through periodic evaluations (and the associated censures – see chapter 8).

## **2 LEADER as the politicisation/democratisation of rural development**

LEADER must also be understood as a political project – or rather, a space in which the component actors are understood to be working, explicitly or implicitly, towards political ends and has a number of dimensions. Neo-endogenous development interventions can be seen as, however tentative, experiments in participative democracy. This occurs implicitly, through the nature of the project process, and explicitly, through the creation of participative decision-taking structures in localities. This is to cast LEADER as an incipient radical new social movement.

However, there is a danger of subscribing too readily to the rhetoric of participative development in that its communitarian assumptions privilege a 'territory' as being potentially homogenous and thereby gloss over the reality of internal socio-economic and cultural inequality<sup>iii</sup>. This

would be to argue that LEADER-type interventions need to include proactive action targeted at raising the social and cultural capital of *individuals* and of *disadvantaged groups* (either of which happen to be *in* the area, but not intrinsically *defined by* the area).

Another dimension concerns that of "interlocality". From the outset, LEADER included an imperative to create linkages between local initiatives in different countries. This was animated through cultivating the exchange of information between local groups across the EU and through the requirement for each group to commit a part of its budget to the creation of collaborative projects with other groups on a "transnational" basis. Although this was rationalised as a technical means to broadcast ideas of 'best practice' local rural development, it is also significant in another way. The cultivation of linkages between localities across Europe may be sowing the seeds of a heterogeneous 'rural development Europe'. Although it is difficult to project this very speculative line into the future, there were tentative signs within LEADER of such an embryonic constituency in the making, a rural constituency not dominated by agricultural interests but by rural development territories engaged in a range of co-operative actions and lobbying functions. This may not be pure speculation: rhetoric of this type was abroad in a symposium event in 1998 sponsored by DGVI in which representatives from some 800 LEADER groups plus civil servants from the countries involved were invited. Observing the event left little room for doubt that the symposium, and LEADER as an intervention, had an underlying political dimension. It also conforms entirely to the way in which bureaucracies establish constituencies for their work and purpose.



What is more, a territorialised rural development intervention provided the EU with a (modest) means by which to promote a positive impression of the EU in the localities and regions. The provision of material assistance to improve the wellbeing of people in localities, the availability of assistance to marginalised socio-cultural groups and the ethical value attached to an intervention that appeared to promote popular participation could all work to cultivate a Europeanisation dynamic in localities and regions. This effect was potentially available despite any attempts by national governments and bureaucracies to mediate the nature of LEADER.

LEADER-type interventions clearly bring rural development into the political domain. Not surprisingly, the potential to activate participative democracy noted above is viewed by some actors as a threat to the legitimate institutions of representative democracy. Local groups do not enjoy a directly-elected mandate for their activities and this has sometimes forced Local Authorities and elected representatives to treat LEADER with suspicion (Ray 1998).

### **3 LEADER and endogenous development as discourse**

Finally, LEADER can be used as a 'lens' through which to view aspects of the workings of the wider social, economic and political systems. Individual evaluations of the performance of LAG actions are important but in themselves insufficient, especially as the usual imperative is to focus on measurable local outcomes, starting from a literal reading of policy objectives. Neo-endogenous development, as the basis of LEADER, needs to be seen as not only a hypothesis but also as a discourse, one which involves a range of actors and contexts. First, there

is the interpretation of endogenous development as *effective intervention*. In this, extralocal actors redesign their modus operandi so as more effectively to achieve their objectives; more effective, that is, than an explicitly exogenous (top-down, 'imposed') intervention. The 'effectiveness' rationale may be driven by an imperative of financial stringency, as in the EU's attempt to reduce the costs of the Common Agricultural Policy by switching some of its budget to territorially-focused, rural development interventions. Alternatively, or additionally, it may be ideologically-driven as in the political restructuring of states, as they move away from the welfare state model, or it may be part of a technical solution to wider politico-economic goals, as in its use by the EU to reduce socio-economic divergence between regions and thereby promote the European Single Market and political integration. Second, neo-endogenous development may be advocated as a *legitimacy-seeking* device. Organisations, whether regional, national or international, may seek to enhance the legitimacy of their agendas for change by arguing that endogenous development and the pursuit of their particular interests are mutually compatible. Thus, for example, a national environmental organisation might seek to insert its extralocal objectives into neo-endogenous development initiatives and thereby benefit from the legitimacy acquired from being ideologically and practically associated with local, popular participative activity.

If the two scenarios just introduced portray the territorial unit of neo-endogenous development as, in essence, a *target* of extra-local actors, there are other scenarios where the balance of intention comes from *within* the territory. Neo-endogenous development can be adopted as an *opportunistic strategy*. This occurs when, for example, the rhetoric is employed by local actors in order to win extralocal funds for the locality,

perhaps leading to the creation of a new territory and organisation for the purpose.

#### **4 Territorialisation of Rural Development**

The re-territorialisation of rural development across the EU is well under way. Complemented and, indeed, assisted by the process of decentralisation of national politico-administrative systems and the associated ethos of the "managerial/ evaluative state" <sup>iv</sup> the post-WWII rural economy, mainly differentiated by Less-Favoured Area and nature/ landscape conservation designations and Local Authority boundaries, is being further divided into a mosaic reflecting a new rural development rationale. The geometry of this mosaic is inherently dynamic as new territorial components emerge and form relationships with each other and yet it seems that, in a general sense, the mosaic may be establishing itself as a long-term feature of Europe. The adoption of the territorial, neo-endogenous approach in rural development interventions by the European Commission – exemplified by the LEADER Initiative – is a response to, and a creative force behind, this territorialisation. Regional and local agri-food product and tourism initiatives also proliferate and play an important part in the definition of the territorial divisions of the mosaic.

Re-territorialisation represents, simultaneously, a process of atomisation and of increasingly complex connectivity between places. For the former, enterprises, Local Authorities, development agencies and the voluntary sector are variously involved in the creation of territorial, neo-endogenous initiatives which are both opportunistic of circumstances and responsive to the imperative of the emerging governance of Western society. Local and extralocal forces interact in order to create rural

development entities each with their own identities and a sense that they can, or must, find some way to manage their own resources in the pursuit of the local collective wellbeing. However, local development initiatives are also, and inevitably, tied-in to all manner of policy and public funding frameworks; capitalist relationships on regional, national, European and even global scales; and to global social movements such as environmentalism.

Thus, it would be profitable to consider the significance of the phenomenon in question in terms of the emergence of a rural development *system*. A system (according to General Systems Theory) will comprise a boundary (closed or open), components (themselves dynamic entities) and connections between the entities along which flows occur. A system – as an entity – will also, at any moment, be in one of a number of dynamic states involving change to the whole system. This pan-European system (albeit with connections beyond the boundary of the EU) has two functions. First, it represents a mode, or perhaps a number of modes, of capitalist production in which the new territories take their place alongside local enterprises and other collective bodies (such as components of politico-administrative systems) as the units of a European economy. Second, it functions as a system of distribution and co-ordination<sup>v</sup>: the territorial entities being a new set of 'nodes' to which public and other funds may flow, and the places in which ideas and agendas are grounded and tested.

The key to understanding a system lies in analyses of the connections (flows) between its components. Central to LEADER has been the objective by its designers not only to animate bottom-up territorial experiments in localities but also to encourage them to create connections

between each other. In the first phase ("LEADER", 1991-4), this principle was somewhat low key and took the form of voluntary participation in technical, international seminars and other information-sharing devices; the latter taking the form of a quarterly LEADER magazine and a newsletter (organised by a Brussels-based under contract to the Commission). In the second phase ("LEADER II": 1994-9), the importance of this pan-EU interconnectivity was stressed by requiring each participating territorial organisation (LAG) to commit a part of its local plan to creating Transnational Co-operation Projects (TCPs) with other LEADER areas. In "LEADER +" (due to be in operation by 2001/2002), yet greater prominence will be given to the transnational dimension.

## **5 Transnational co-operation: outline of a political economic model**

The LEADER II Initiative, by May 2000, had resulted in more than 400 proposals for transnational co-operation projects (TCPs) from local action groups. Of these, more than half had been approved for funding by the Observatory/DGVI (AEIDL pers. com.). Alongside this – and interrelated to it – had been an increase in the number of technical seminars and the creation of a LEADER web site ("Rural-Europe"). The rule for a TCP was that local groups from at least two countries had to be involved as partners; co-operation could thus involve two or several LEADER local groups. Two styles of project were to be allowed: one involving exchange visits between the participating areas in order to facilitate the transfer of experience and knowledge; and the other (perhaps evolving from the former) taking the form of a practical

common development project. Types of projects envisaged as being appropriate for the latter were <sup>vi</sup>:

- the improvement or modernisation of production techniques;
- the development of common or comparable heritage;
- the creation of new markets for local products;
- the horizontal or vertical extension of producer networks.

However, for the purposes of the present paper, these categories are less important than the nature and patterns of interlocal linkages manifested by such projects. Three rationales might motivate a LEADER area to participate in a TCP<sup>vii</sup>. One rationale is "to take advantage of similarity". These similarities could include: being situated within the boundary of a particular ecosystem (shared natural/cultural resources); belonging to a common cultural heritage (in the form of a cultural system such as 'the Celts' or physical artefacts such as a Roman Road); or the production of similar goods and services. It is the commonality which underpins the project. Another rationale is "to take advantage of complementarity". This is where the resources or contexts of the co-operating areas are different yet receive a synergistic boost from being combined with each other in a TCP (for example, a single type of commercial activity being offered in areas with different physical geography, or the elaboration of a development technique by comparing its application in different historical contexts). Similarity or complementarity may also be used to create new markets as when a shared feature such as a Roman Road is used as a catalyst around which to create new business opportunities. Similarly, each participant finds the potential value of their resource (or their share of a common resource) enhanced by the co-operation, in that its wider (yet still very limited) geographical domain is emphasised. Similarly,

they may benefit from the inclusion of international partners in a local project (bringing with them a sense of the 'exotic'). The third rationale cited by the LEADER Observatory is "to reach critical mass". Critical mass may take a number of forms. Local small producers might increase the size of their markets by co-operating with complementary enterprises in other areas or in the creation of a joint marketing arrangement. TCPs may also result in economies of scale in the production or marketing costs of participating enterprises. Similarly, co-operation might represent the only way to investigate and/ or purchase new capital items or to research into common historico-cultural resources. Finally, the critical mass created by co-operation may increase the visibility of a particular development issue so that lobbying pressure can be brought to bear on officials.

These are the rationales which informed the projects approved by AEIDL/DGVI for LEADER funding. However, and whilst it is certainly the case that many project proposals were written formulaically by applicants so as to conform to the signals from the Commission regarding proposal criteria (as was the case with the Business Plan approval process), the project descriptions were examined by the author to discover their inherent (if only seldom explicit) system significance. This was done, firstly, by looking at what could be expected to *flow along* the links of various TCPs. (Although it should be noted that the categories suggested here are not mutually exclusive).

One category of flow detected could loosely be called "culture". In one sense, this category would include all TCPs but it is used here to identify those cases involving culture in an intangible yet very significant form. It includes projects promoting *linguistic contact* between participating

areas. This involves the injection of multilingualism into a project by imparting to tourism operators a basic competence in the languages of the other areas participating in the joint project and the production of multilingual marketing leaflets and information signs. Other projects entail a flow of *cultural memory* by reinvigorating historical trade links (for example those which crossed the Spanish-Portuguese border but were interrupted by 20<sup>th</sup> century political regimes) and other historical politico-administrative areas (such as those transcending the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, U.K.).

Another category concerns the flow of "people and things". Many projects anticipated the exchange of *products* between participating areas. Usually under a common marketing logo, each territory agrees to promote and sell the products of its partners alongside its own. Thus each local product gains access to wider markets the cost of which would otherwise be prohibitive while each 'host' area benefits from having the local range of produce supplemented by other complementary products. Other projects involve the exchange of *customers* in the form of tourists. For example, areas create a joint marketing initiative in which a similar type of holiday (for example, outdoor pursuits) is offered in a number of contrasting locations. The aim is to attract customers to one area and then to be able to 'pass them around' other participating areas during a single season or over successive years. Thirdly, and most importantly in terms of numbers, all TCPs generate flows of a range of other actors, including rural development practitioners such as LEADER co-ordinators, officials, entrepreneurs and members of other socio-economic categories (such as 'youth' and 'farmers'). These individuals are either directly involved in the design and implementation of a TCP, involved in delegations to explore mutual problems, or participants in training events.



A third category emphasises flows of "awareness-raising". TCPs, in addition to their explicit objective, can generate a *feed-back* response. Both the material results and the glamour of international contacts can raise awareness among actors in a participating locality of the benefits of their participation in, or financial and political support for a TCP, future projects and the LEADER Initiative in general. A TCP can thus be used tactically by co-ordinators faced with an unsupportive local institutional environment or by sceptical local businesses and voluntary organisations. It may also raise the visibility of an area and thereby attract the interest of regional and national NGOs in a territorial development initiative. Awareness-raising may also involve the sharing of market intelligence between territories and between entrepreneurs; where the TCP has been instigated around resources common to the participating areas, then collaboration over market development may prevent the danger of direct competition between territories seeking to exploit the same niche product or service. This sharing of development space can sometimes also take the form of the creation of a common internet site as a means of collecting and imparting information or common marketing ('teleboutiques').

The fourth category is that of "regulation and methods". Many LEADER TCPs involved co-operation in order to explore practical solutions to production, marketing or environmental conservation problems common to the participants. The objective was jointly to devise a set of common methods which each participant could use or subsequently adapt to the local context. Although generally of an exploratory and preliminary nature, such projects might also represent a template for a future collaborative culture, in which ways of structuring and controlling the rural development system are devised by the territorial components. This

has already begun to take concrete form in those projects to create marketing labels to indicate standards of production and service. Such projects are potentially manifestations of group *quasi-regulation* in which territories are voluntary participants.

If the four categories suggested above explain some of the significance of TCPs in terms of what flows along the links made, the theorisation of TCPs must now indicate the *potential results of these flows*. The first thing that can be said is that the flows help to assist the process of cultural capital accumulation. A local initiative may find the economic value of its cultural resources enhanced through membership of a wider project; for example, a TCP based on a shared ecosystem identity will generate capital to supplement the local territorial resources of the participants. Similarly, quality assurance schemes and marques, by creating territorial professional standards, increase the earning potential of each component cultural capital. Each territory must assess the trade-off between trying on the one hand to establish unique intellectual property and, on the other, being able to participate in creating and exploiting a wider, common resource.

The capitalist economic model which these ideas support has much in common with the 'network organisation' <sup>viii</sup>. Whether within a territorial initiative (mode 3 of the culture economy model) or, in the case of TCPs, between economic actors in different territories (modes 1 and 2), the principles are the same. Economic entities form various co-operative trading arrangements, which will bring benefits to each partner, while retaining their economic and legal autonomy. The arrangements may be ad hoc or of a longer term nature. Co-operations can take the form of horizontal or vertical development of a producer network. Co-operation

is justified on a utilitarian basis; co-operation will occur if the partners believe that it will serve their separate needs. In the economic domain, the rationale may be seen in reduced operating/transaction costs and/or a stronger presence in the marketplace. In regions where a strong cultural identity exists (for example, those based on a 'minority language'), a parallel rationale for territorial and transnational co-operation may exist: that of local altruistic – or local patriotic – behaviour in order to safeguard a local culture as a fundamental component of the quality of life. A local economy may acquire economic power – in the marketplace and in political lobbying – by being a member of a number of overlapping trading networks, each with its own purpose and sets of common resources. This would be to imagine a rural Europe consisting of autonomous territorial entities and of a multitude of overlapping co-operative arrangements at intra-regional, intra-national and transnational levels.

Apart from the economic domain, another result of TCP flows is an intensification of the interaction that is at the heart of the neo-endogenous theory of rural development, that is between the local and the extralocal levels. The flows of people, experiences, products and languages noted above result in parades of cultural signs in each participating territory. Sometimes, if the common identity constructed proves to be particularly effective, this may lead towards a cultural mixing: the co-operative project and not the component territories being the primary entity. In other cases, co-operation may serve not only to create a shared development dynamic but also to intensify the specificity of each local culture through the repeated acts of juxtaposition of different territorial examples.

TCP flows also promote the Europeanisation (and even a LEADER-isation) of the individuals involved. Individuals from LAGs or from the wider local socio-economic domain can find that their participation in TCPs – through exchange visits, seminars or concrete economic action – begins to change their attitudes. They can become more Europhile, certainly less parochial and more ready to explore LEADER-type innovative rural development. The impact of this psychological effect – in which collective action transmits itself to the sensibilities of individuals – may be felt at three levels. First, at the local level, it helps to recruit local actors (public, private business and voluntary sector) into the territorial initiative. Second, it cultivates implicit, and even explicit, support for EU rural development policy, i.e. the shift towards the territorial, integrated approach. Third, it works insidiously to enhance the visibility of the EU at the sub-national administrative level and thereby promote the overall objectives of the Union itself. Moreover, from an integrationist logic, this promotes the societal integration of the EU, particularly by binding in peripheral areas which, in the past, have been a threat to the integrity of the nation state.

Finally, TCPs have the potential to create new territorialised sectoral grouping of political power across the EU. In a small way, TCPs have claimed that collaboration on the basis of a particular agricultural product created sufficient critical mass to lobby collectively for a change in EU policy. Other clusters of lobbying power might emerge on the basis of 'minority' cultures and reformations of socio-economic groups such as farmers.

## **6 Transnational co-operation and the potential for a hierarchical structure**

However, the history of capitalism is one of shifting geographical inequality and knowing this requires us to speculate on the potential fate of local rural economies as they become drawn into the new politico-economic space of Europe. Could transnational co-operation as a central concept in the new rural development model also contain within its logic the potential to cultivate a new form of politico-economic divergence across Europe?

Parallels can be drawn here with research on global cities in the modern world system <sup>ix</sup>. Over time, the relationship between cities and their nation states has changed from "antagonism" (when power was being centralised to the state), through "mutuality" (cities becoming integral components of national economies), to the present "fall of mutuality" in which cities, as collective commercial entities, increasingly look beyond the boundaries of their nation states for opportunities to pursue their interests. World/ global cities emerge not so much as a function of the accumulation of more inhabitants than their rivals but through an accumulation of superior commercial capacity, especially in the service sector. Cities are connected to each other and to their respective global regions through commercial networks and it is the relative net flows of business volume, public/private investment and aid funds and information ("intelligence") through these networks to the city-nodes which dictate a city's position in the hierarchy of commercial power and influence.

The political economy of world cities in the era of contemporary globalisation provides us with three important notions. First, commercial

vibrancy is a function not solely, or even primarily, of local enterprise creation but of the collective ability of the city to create connectivity with other nodes in networks so as to be able to profit from the net inflows. Second, this results in an hierarchy of world cities <sup>x</sup>. Third, the logic of this international connectivity is that the opportunities for a city's development are not restricted to within its regional or national boundaries. World cities do not (or no longer) emerge as a function of 'central place theory'; they can be centres for global regions that are not their own (for example, London's relationship to the African and Middle East regions).

These ideas are useful for this study of rural development. The territorial entities emerging from interventions such as LEADER may themselves find opportunities in the cultivation of transnational linkages. This is not to undermine the crucial importance of focusing on internal factors and processes in order to create and then sustain a territory as a development entity, rather, after a certain stage, further development will require strategic participation in international (pan-European) networks. The scenarios facing territories being launched into the 'rural development market' are: "competitive territoriality" (in which territorial entities compete with each other to create and maintain niche markets and to secure development finance from public, private and NGO sources); "co-operative territoriality" (groups of territories forming collaborative actions through TCPs, etc.); and "solidarity" (creating clusters of collective 'rural development power' to lobby for extralocal protection through, for example, legislation in favour of territorial intellectual property rights). Adopting World City analysis would suggest that, inevitably, a hierarchy would emerge as some territories and collaborations position themselves more successfully than others. As

territories cultivate linkages with other areas, some may situate themselves as 'centres' of a number of overlapping networks so that they emerge, through their connectivity, as the rural equivalent of World Cities, albeit on an European scale.

We can turn now to the experience of transnational co-operation as animated through the LEADER II Initiative between 1997 and early 2000. The analysis needs to focus on the interlocal connections made, that is the *connectivity* of the system which can be indicated by counting the number of connections made. Box 1 explains that each TCP represents a number of bilateral, transnational connections. At this stage, it is difficult to comment on the robustness of the connections formed in LEADER II; some projects may only be of a short-term nature; in others, participating territories might remove themselves from the project and/ or others join at a later date. Figure 1 shows a geometrical growth in system size and complexity. The expansion to 289 projects brought into being nearly 1000 transnational connections. This rate of growth refers to the initial period of the system and impossibly heroic assumptions would have to be made were this rate to be projected into a trend for subsequent periods. The precise figures are not important. Rather, the general point is that a relatively modest number of projects creates a major potential in terms of transnational connectivity within the system. Moreover, the *potential* for the system to generate connectivity is much greater than recorded so far in practice, being a mathematical function of the number of LAGs and countries involved in each TCP. The hypothesis is that, once started, and if sustained by some extralocal co-ordination and funding, then the system displays a capacity for development whose scale and significance goes far beyond the sum of TCPs created.

**Box 1: Connectivity formula**

country (i)	country (ii)	country (iii)	country (iv)
a	b	c d	e

In this project scenario, five territorial groups (a, b, c, d, e) from four countries are participating in a TCP. The connectivity score reflects that of the TCP as a network. Each pairing of transnational connections, such as [a—d] or [b—e] contributes a value of 1 to the TCP connectivity score. The formula in this example, therefore, would be:

$$\text{connectivity} = ab + ac + ad + ae + bc + bd + be + ce + de = 9$$

**Figure 1. Growth in LEADER TCP: 1997 to Jan 2000**

	Cumulative number of projects	Cumulative connectivity score
end 1996	5	9
end 1997	25	65
end 1998	128	482
end 1999	279	983
2000-Jan	289	992

Next, we need to look at *which territories* are participating in the system. Are there any tendencies within the system for a hierarchy to emerge, that is differential benefit? In other words, at the present stage of system development, might certain territories or regions position themselves as nodes of connectivity more successfully than others (the rural equivalent of 'world cities')? Were such features to be identified, then the analysis



might be extended to indicate reasons for the differential ability to participate successfully, as well as reasons for any non-participation.

Each TCP application is managed by a "lead LAG" which takes the initiative in recruiting partners into the project, applying for LEADER funding, and then putting the project into operation. One could hypothesise that these lead LAGs have an advantage over other participating LAGs because of their administrative and instigating functions. For the present, this can only be a working assumption. By January 2000, 214 LAGs were leading one or more projects and by early 2000 the system was showing signs of an hierarchy of participation in terms of numerical potential, with just 29 LAGs dominating the 'league table'.

But what factors influence the level of participation by a lead LAG in the TCP system? Achieving a high connectivity score is a function either of the number of separate projects co-ordinated, or more importantly, the mathematics of those projects. For example, the highest scoring LAG achieved its place mainly on the basis of one particularly large project whose parameters produced a particularly high score.

The level of participation, including non-participation, will also be influenced by factors *within* a LAG and its local development environment. In particular, a LAG may feel that the cultivation of transnational links cannot yet be afforded a high priority. Much work may be necessary to cultivate an endogenous/ participative development dynamic *within* the territory before attention can be turned to beyond the locality; TCPs may appear to be a luxury or advanced type of action to be indulged in only once the basics are in place. If the LEADER approach is

locally somewhat novel, then co-ordinators may have their work cut out merely to animate local, appropriate activity and to demonstrate the efficacy of the techniques to officials and sources of funding. In cases where LEADER II participation has been preceded by a LEADER phase or other 'bottom-up' initiative, however, LAGs and co-ordinators may be more ready for TCP participation.

Resistance to the allocation of a high priority to TCPs may be particularly compelling in those cases where a LAG has only limited co-ordinator resources. A co-ordinator, working on her/ his own (even with part-time secretarial assistance) and with a LAG management board which adopts a somewhat passive role, may find the opportunity cost of pursuing TCP proposals too high.

There is also some evidence of different rationales influencing the decision of whether to be involved in TCPs at all and, if so, in which ones. This is explored more fully below but, for now, we can note that some TCPs emerge from a coincidence of opportunistic reactions in which an apparent mutuality of problems or interests coalesce in a proposal. However, some LAGs – perhaps those which have accumulated endogenous development experience prior to participation in the LEADER II – adopt a "barter" approach to TCP selection: they select only those partners who have something unique and of specific value to bring to the collaboration (whether in the form of experience or resources).

Thus, the ability of a territory to participate and thereby position itself in the system hierarchy is partly a function of time. Whether those LAGs

which enter the system at an earlier stage maintain an advantage over later entrants depends on their subsequent strategic actions.

Going beyond the level of individual LAGs, one might speculate that regions and countries differ in their politico-administrative culture and that this might affect TCP participation, in its extent and/or in the geography of the linkages created. This factor might be especially influential in those geo-political domains where LEADER has been treated with some suspicion by the public sector at municipal and regional levels. The figures suggest that regions and countries across the EU have differed in terms of taking the initiative in leading project. Fourteen regions (spread across five countries) accounted for nearly half the total number of lead LAGs. Expressing the number of lead LAGs as a ratio of the total number of LAGs in a country reveals that 3 countries have been particularly successful in generating lead LAGs and of these the Republic of Ireland is particularly significant, followed by two 'mid-range' groups (Austria, France, Italy, Spain and United Kingdom; then a slightly less active set containing Finland, Germany, Greece and Portugal) and a 'low' group (Belgium). This suggests that there may be factors particular to each region and country which influence their ability to generate lead LAGs. One could hypothesise that these factors include: the present ethos in each politico-administrative system towards European development policy and the institutional reactions to specific schemes such as LEADER.

The above analyses are based on the assumption that there is something significant in the status of a lead LAG: that they are more likely to secure a position of advantage in the networked system than those LAGs who 'merely' follow. However, an alternative assumption would be that such

strategic advantage is potentially available to all LAGs in a given project. Were all participating LAGs to be treated as equal potential beneficiaries and the "connectivity score" of each TCP equally available to each participant, then the analyses can be re-presented. Just under half of participating LAGs were involved in more than one TCP but that only 5% were active in more than two projects.

In terms of the regional distribution of TCP activity, Spain achieved a prominent position (4 regions in the top 14), followed by the United Kingdom and Germany (3 regions each), then France and Italy (2 each). Aggregating the figures to the country level (figure 10), 50% of TCP-active LAGs come from Spain, Italy and France. If Germany and the United Kingdom are included, this accounts for over 70% of active LAGs. Although the more LAGs in existence in a region/country, the greater is the potential for TCP participation, the point to stress here is that the system as constituted in LEADER II is generating an hierarchy.

## **7 The system in redistribution mode**

The other general function of the emerging rural development system is that of redistribution and co-ordination<sup>xi</sup>. In this mode, the system is structured not only by inter-local (horizontal) flows but also by centre-to-locality (vertical) flows in which the EU/European Commission and national governments are important actors. Kovách, in particular, has reflected upon the nature of the links between the EU – i.e. European Commission – (and implicitly also the member states) and the territorial development entities of LEADER. These entities represent a new category of recipient for the redistribution function of the EU and states. Yet how does the system function in order to facilitate redistribution, and

what is being redistributed? The work being undertaken in the field of political science into "policy transfer" <sup>xii</sup> across national boundaries provides a useful analytical framework in which to identify the system characteristics. This enables us to identify simultaneously the horizontal and vertical flows within the system.

### *Transfer material*

What is being transferred through the system? Clearly, *public funds* (albeit of moderate scale) flow along the channels of the system to these localities: from the centre (the Commission) and from national, regional and municipal government. In LEADER, the flow from Brussels is conditional on flows of equivalent volumes from within each nation. It is also, somewhat more precariously conditional on flows from private business and NGO sources (as well as requiring some contribution from any final community beneficiaries). Thus, for redistribution à la LEADER to operate, at least one type of fund-holder in addition to the prime instigator of the system (the Commission) must volunteer to participate in each territorial example.

Observers have also identified a devolution of *power* to localities (sometimes within regional administrations), i.e. power to design and implement development activity at and by the local level <sup>xiii</sup>. The hope of the centre is that the new approach will be more effective than orthodox rural development interventions in bringing about socio-economic vibrancy while also illuminating a way to reduce the cost of CAP intervention and take rural policy further towards neo-liberal, free (in reality, 'quasi-free) market ideology. (However, the centre retains an element of control, see below).

The other type of content being transferred is that of ideas relating to the techniques and understanding of neo-endogenous development. According to the official rhetoric of LEADER, the objective of the initiative was to appoint local territories as components of a "rural development laboratory" which would seek out "innovative" ideas. Information about local experiences in devising and testing projects would be made available to the rest of the system and, indeed, to all of rural Europe. The system, therefore, was designed to animate experimentation but then, most importantly, to enable a dynamic of *diffusion and learning*. In the first instance, this relates to the experiences of project types, techniques and experiences of the practicalities of operating LEADER at the local level. On another level, contact between practitioners could have the effect of raising awareness of the potential of LEADER; ignorance or suspicion on the part of local officials of the types of development action which could be assisted by LEADER could be countered by the flow of information from around the network into a given locality. The system, in other words, has a capacity to reform 'reactionary' (dysfunctional) components by demonstrating the way that the rest of the system was working. On yet another level, the radical, political potential of initiatives such as LEADER can enter the transfer process, so that participants begin to conceptualise their local actions as contributing to a form of participative democracy, or that the collaborations such as TCPs might lead to some form of 'rural solidarity', lobbying power.

Having identified the main types of content being transferred, we ought briefly to examine the transfer dynamics of the system. However, at this early stage of system development, empirical research on the transfer

process is unavailable and we must confine ourselves to identifying features for subsequent investigation.

*Degree of transfer*

This concerns the stability of whatever is moving along the channels. If total stability exists, then ideas and experiences will be *copied* from one local politico-economic context to another in unadulterated form – a straight transfer process. Alternatively, the process might work by *inspiration*: the source of the process causing creative reactions in the receiving nodes/territories. Evidence from anthropology and sociology suggests that, in keeping with the logic of neo-endogenous development, local actors will mediate incoming ideas and interventions according to their personal beliefs, local politics and cultural coping <sup>xiv</sup> and/or the pragmatics of translating policy into real-world action in localities <sup>xv</sup>.

*Constraints on transfer.*

In a sense, this is merely an element of the previous category which considered the nature of the process at the point of reception. The *constraints* category, however, focuses on the innate nature of the thing being transferred. Of particular interest are the degree of complexity and the maturity (tested in action) of the idea. In LEADER TCPs, this would direct investigations to, for example, the number of linguistic interchanges involved in a given collaboration.

*Recording the transfer effect.*

The concept of "policy failure" (uninformed transfer, incomplete transfer, inappropriate transfer) seems inconsistent with what is known, in general, about policy transfers as well 'top-down' interventions. However, recording the transfer effect is still a useful category in that it brings into

the framework the role of policy evaluation and how this may feed back to the further operation of transfers within the system. This, in turn, signals the need to describe the general process as "transfer-learning-mediation".

*Actor involvement and Transfer initiation.*

A political economy of the European rural development system would also need to consider the issue of system co-ordination; that is, by whom and how is the system being co-ordinated? Within a territorial initiative, there may be individuals able to influence the territory's trajectory by belonging to a political or professional 'elite' or loose policy network formed around common values, or ad hoc alliances. Yet the centre retains control – albeit moderated by the logic of neo-endogenous development theory – of the local beneficiaries of the intervention through its power to decide on the candidature of territories and by setting broad rules regarding the uses (types of projects) to which funds may be put. In terms of "transfer initiation", it has been suggested that the analytical categories here range from "voluntary" participation (i.e. the receiving entity uses 'objective rationality' to appraise the experience of the source entity and to decide whether to adopt the measure for themselves), through "bounded rationality" to "coercive" participation (as in, for example, the transfer of free market ideas from the World Bank to countries requesting financial aid). In the case of LEADER and TCPs, there has been a gradual movement from complete voluntarism (LEADER) through 'gentle incitement' (LEADER II, in which local initiatives had to allocate a part of their budget for anticipated TCP participation) to, finally, a stronger 'coercion' regime for LEADER+.



National and regional governments also retain a form of power, not only by being necessary sources of co-funding of the system, but also by imposing financial monitoring on participating territories. European and national authorities retain power over the system, although, in the history of LEADER to date, this has been of a somewhat mute and variable nature. Redistribution occurs through the selection by the centre of which territories will be allowed to participate in LEADER. Redistribution is also differentiated according to the initial capacity of local actors to organise themselves into acceptable candidates for LEADER territories. Selection thus represents, on the one hand, the criterion of *need* but, on the other, the demonstration of the ability for *self-driven improvement* (that is echoing the post-1970s political ideology of countries such as the U.K.). However, this partial geographical shift in redistribution criteria also includes a sectoral component in that, by its very nature, the territorial approach of LEADER recognises that rural development intervention may profitably be extended beyond the farming sector. In effect, LEADER is a manifestation of the view either that most rural areas have already moved away from being totally reliant on primary agricultural production or that they will soon have to. The redistribution argument recognises that, in many cases, rural development can no longer be equated with 'agricultural policy' and that it must include within its remit a greater array of rural actors and beneficiaries.

## **8 Tentative final thoughts**

This chapter has attempted to sketch a political economy of 'rural development Europe' by examining the record of transnational co-operation projects in the LEADER Initiative. Attempts are being made by various actors to construct a new model for the 'disadvantaged' or

'vulnerable' rural areas of Europe. This model incorporates two dynamics. On the one hand, territorialisation means an atomisation of the rural domain into local units which must construct themselves as new entities to compete for markets and lobby for policy presence and public funds. On the other hand, the model – in both its economic and redistribution modes – encourages linkages between these territorial entities so as to create new, and perhaps geographically overlapping, clusters, as well as new linkages between the centre and the beneficiaries of rural policy intervention. These clusters represent dynamic sets of politico-economic entities juxtaposed with their component local territorial entities.

The theory of neo-endogenous rural development – confirmed by rural development action in localities – continues to be worked out in ever greater sophistication. Yet this paper has suggested that the system, emerging from the logic of neo-endogenous development, may contain a tendency to produce an hierarchical structure and thereby possibly denying the benefits of the neo-endogenous approach to many rural areas. What is presently not known is whether the emerging hierarchy – however it is measured (and the connectivity score used above may not necessarily be the only, or even the best, way of measuring the system) – will establish itself as a fixed feature of the system. In other words, would the initial hierarchy reinforce itself or could later arrivals learn to play the game successfully? In one sense, this is a re-statement of the perpetual question of whether social systems impose structural constraints on participants or whether, armed with the principles of neo-endogenous development, participants can act strategically so as to influence the nature of the system and therefore exert some control over their future socio-economic wellbeing.

The system will shortly experience two shocks. The first will be when the European Commission launches its "LEADER+" Initiative. The new regime will open participation in LEADER to all rural areas, that is going beyond the geographical boundaries of 'disadvantaged rural Europe' as designated by Objective 1 and 2. National administrations will be given the authority to select LEADER areas following what is meant to be a process of 'open competition'. The new system dynamic will thus be influenced by the criteria used to select territorial participants. The LEADER+ regime is meant to favour 'quality' proposals. Success will be more likely for those rural territories that have the capacity to organise themselves so as to design 'good' LEADER proposals. How will this affect the system dynamic?

The second shock that the system will experience is the arrival of a new set of countries in the forthcoming eastwards expansion of the EU. Observers from CEEC countries <sup>xvi</sup> have argued for inclusion of LEADER in the post-accession array of rural policies available for these new members. Yet this paper has shown that the mere availability of a LEADER-type intervention is not in itself enough. The new territorial players will need to understand the principles of neo-endogenous development in its EU form. But the conclusions for the future EU rural participants are the same as for those already in the EU; local rural entities need not only to focus on the intralocal level of neo-endogenous development but they must also act strategically on the extralocal – pan-European – level.

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<sup>i</sup> Osti (2000), Kovách (2000)

<sup>ii</sup> Kovách (2000)

<sup>iii</sup> Shucksmith (2000)

<sup>iv</sup> Ray, C. (2000),

<sup>v</sup> Kovách, I. (2000)

- <sup>vi</sup> LEADER Observatory (undated)
- <sup>vii</sup> LEADER Observatory (1999).
- <sup>viii</sup> Fukuyama, F. (1995)
- <sup>ix</sup> Taylor, P. (1995; 2000)
- <sup>x</sup> In Taylor's descending order: "alpha" cities, of which there are 11, including London; "Beta" cities — 10; "Gamma" cities" — 35; and a category of world cities presently in formation.
- <sup>xi</sup> Kovách (2000) and Osti, G.
- <sup>xii</sup> Dolowitz, D. and D. Marsh (2000)
- <sup>xiii</sup> Kovách 2000.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Boissevain, J. (1996
- <sup>xv</sup> Lowe, P., J. Clark, S. Seymour and N. Ward (1997).
- <sup>xvi</sup> Kovách (2000) , Nemes, G. (1999)

## CHAPTER 7 THE ROLE OF THE EXTRALOCAL IN NEO- ENDOGENOUS DEVELOPMENT

### 1 Identity and reflexive modern times

Identity, it seems, is the "touchstone of our times"<sup>i</sup>. Awareness of our identity as individuals, members of social categories and of cultural 'tribes' is being supercharged by the flows of images enabled by telecommunications technology, mass travel for work and leisure, and global trade in consumer goods. The concept of an 'organic', locally 'authentic' identity seems difficult to sustain in such times. Identity inherited from the past and structured by contemporary socio-economic and political conditions is increasingly becoming something that is *created* in a conscious and indeed strategic way.

Thus, for Giddens, responsibility is transferred to the individual. Individuals are able to, and indeed have to, choose their identity/identities (although the choices are not limitless). They are 'able to' do so thanks to the liberating effect of living in reflexive modern times in which individual choice is driven by the everyday exposure to other cultures, liberal ideology and marketing images. Conversely, the act of choosing also becomes imperative, as a strategy to cope with the threat of existential isolation. A *need* to create new communities of meaning would, therefore, appear to be an abiding component of the human condition. Giddens likens this to an ongoing project of lifestyle choices; self identity becoming increasingly understood in terms of one's personal biography.

In psychology, the mental health status of an individual will revolve around the notion of that individual's 'identity'. A negative, self-destructive identity is diagnosed as ill-health leading to mental and physical effects for the individual, in that the condition undermines the individual's capacity for self-fulfilment through creative activity and for identity re-confirmation through successful interpersonal relationships<sup>ii</sup>. Conversely, a positive, confident identity enables the individual to develop as a creative, active person with an inner sense of well-being. If something occurs to undermine confidence in that identity, an 'illness' occurs, an "identity crisis".

Conceptualising the *sources* of self-identity will depend on the psychological model chosen, but we can for present purposes simplify this to two main approaches. Self-identity may be located within the physical body and mind of the person. Thus, one might imagine a Self that is unique and true but which is susceptible to being suppressed or damaged. If Self-identity is threatened, an identity crisis results, and the cure is pursued, essentially, through resources *internal to the individual*, i.e. the clinical technique looks to analyse and define the crisis through personal biographical accounts. The other approach looks to how society dictates the identities of categories of people. For example, what it means to be a 'man' or a member of a 'minority culture' would be a function of broad, structural factors. If the resulting identities come to appear problematic, solutions are sought through socio-political reform.

Both of these models can be used to conceptualise territorial development initiatives which, like individuals with mental health problems, are established in areas where there is an 'identity crisis' which is preventing the area from functioning fully (policy lobbying function, socially, and

economically), where a lack of collective confidence in itself has resulted in a decline in vibrancy. The development strategy thus can be likened to attempts to reconstruct an identity to enable the territory to become a vibrant, creative, successful entity.

In terms of the first psychological model, a territorial-culture strategy looks within itself to rediscover the sources of its identity which it then works to valorise and exploit. The valorisation of local history and culture would equate with the analysis of personal biographies in psychotherapy. The reconstructed territorial-self emerges from a consciousness of these internal resources: its social and political history, land management and other cultural heritage, etc. The "Identity-Health" model of psychology has been used to explain the emergence of regionalism (ethnic nationalism) from the 1960s onwards<sup>iii</sup>. The "social identity crisis" brought about by the march of Modernity (centralisation, social alienation, uniformity, etc.) led to calls for territories to be treated in the same psychotherapeutic manner as individuals. Territorial-culture identity needed to be based on 'meaningful' units which had clear and continuous roots. To be a vibrant, cohesive unit, the new territory needed to understand its own biography; only thus could a new territory begin to engage in affairs as a fully-functioning entity. Indeed, it has been suggested that a feeling of belonging to a place is an innate human attribute that not even Modernity has destroyed. Simone Weil<sup>iv</sup> anticipated this interpretation: "To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognised need of the human soul".

The other approach is to imagine a territory as trying to recover its identity-health using largely extralocal resources. Environmentalism, gender equality and cultural regionalism/ political devolution are

examples of such resources which become available for use by territorial development initiatives. In contrast to the first approach, this may be seen more as a continuing process of Self-definition or re-definition<sup>v</sup>: as much a process of exploring a changing world of possibilities rather than a search for an authentic, foundational Self/territorial identity. Within this, each individual interprets the symbols of the social realm in the construction of their identities<sup>vi</sup> and this can include the way in which the individual relates to the (symbolic) elements of social and territorial identity of local development initiatives. For the territory, this opens up the possibility of constructing several, overlapping identities that correspond to local needs and extra-local opportunities.

To recall the ideas in chapter 1, neo-endogenous development is about devising strategies which utilise both models: localist/organic/past-orientated and extralocal/universalist/constructed. People in a locality may be acting to re-assert the manifest signs of place and belonging but the emergence of identity politics adds a further tension by counteracting repressive tendencies in communitarianism<sup>vii</sup>. Consciousness/love of place may also hold true for the extra-local 'consumers of place identity'; reflexivity can be a mechanism to de-fetishise material goods and commoditised services, re-injecting into them the 'personality' of the producers (their knowledge/skills, their territorial provenance). Studies of 'regional foods' and craft production, for example, suggest that an element in the symbolism attached to these goods is that they are 'artisan-produced' (small-scale, local, skill-based, traditional production)<sup>viii</sup>. Place identity can be important not just in terms of one's home territory, but also in the knowledge of – and sometimes consumption of – other people's territories of belonging. By celebrating the uniqueness of others, one confirms one's own uniqueness. 'Natural' yet suppressed identities



within the individual or the social group once recognised and accepted, act as the agents or resources for neo-endogenous development. A specific ethnic identity may be more of an historical *re-interpretation* than the recovery of a suppressed, 'authentic' identity yet, once the new identity has been put in place, it may function as a catalyst to enable the expression of other identities: occupational, political, generational etc.

Can a theory of territorial development, then, be likened to psychotherapy, making localities and individuals 'better' (better able to function successfully and to take control of their futures)? Community development activity often includes projects related to interpretation activity (heritage, history, natural environment). Superficially, this sort of project might seem to have more to do with Antiquarianism or Romanticism than local rural development but it can also be seen to have a community development function. In a local development project in South Wales<sup>ix</sup>, the encouragement of village communities to set up local history societies had been formalised within the initiative's blueprint for community development, employing a member of staff specifically to guide and support these nascent groups. We can understand the significance of this in terms of a belief that the past of one's own culture, and of others, has something to say to the present.

This is supported by anecdotal evidence. Studies have found that, in relation to local history society activity, the individual members directly involved tended to find, as they discover more and more data about the distant and recent past, that their sense of belonging, and commitment, to their community or local area deepens. This can then lead into a more general raising of awareness by people of the processes that have affected and are affecting their locality. From the material discovered by the

activists in such groups, a process of consciousness-raising can spread to other local people and from there to a desire to protect the socio-economic-cultural vibrancy of the locality. The need to belong can be found among people coming into a 'community', either as returners or as 'newcomers' <sup>x</sup> as well as among indigenous people. Making the social history of an area manifest can generate the means to help individuals identify with, and 'feel good' about, their area. On this level, then, a recreational activity (local history group) becomes elevated to a tool for individual and collective psychological development. Where it helps to raise a 'community spirit' among indigenous members and/or between locals and incomers, then it can also provide a social solidarity: "consciousness of the past is a living experience at the local level in a way that it rarely is in any other sphere" <sup>xi</sup>.

In the same vein, one can look to one of the basic principles of regionalist movements: the transformation of identities previously perceived as negative into positive ones: for example, the local who stayed at home is re-cast from the 'failure', the person 'not clever enough to escape', but someone who has chosen to stay and to affirm this part of his/her identity. In this, locality becomes operationalised via its social history, its *biography* that has produced its unique identity. This biography – which is both personal and socio-cultural – is valorised by the 'need' for local people to manifest place-community and by the enabling opportunity of neo-endogenous-type intervention policies.

Neo-endogenous development strategies should thus be seen as Janus-faced acts of consciousness-raising: looking inwards and outwards, to the past and the future, inherited and creative, for the sources of, and energy to sustain, identity and territorial resources. However, local/traditional

the resource base is, it will inevitably be informed by extralocal factors; both are necessary.

## 2 Development and rights

These extralocal factors, as noted in the discussion in chapter 1 on globalisation, have effects on localities. A theory of neo-endogenous development, however, needs to say more about the relationship between the extralocal and vulnerable localities than simply that vague interactions exist. How can these extralocal factors be recruited more directly into the strategic armoury of neo-endogenous development?

The concept of 'development' (and its sub-category neo-endogenous development) directs our attention to basic questions relating to human nature and to social structures. Being able to ask 'what does development mean' is to acknowledge the possibility of a choice of development paths while asking 'how best to achieve it' concerns the various actions that might be taken to facilitate such development. Human nature can be conceptualised in two ways<sup>xii</sup>: an *individualistic* interpretation which emphasises our natural capacities *as individuals*, with 'development' translating as the deliberate cultivation of those capacities; and/or a *communitarian* interpretation which emphasises *collective* identities, switching the focus of development onto membership of supportive groups. Traditionally, such issues were discussed primarily in terms of theology or ideology. Nowadays, however, they are increasingly couched in terms of discourses of *rights*.

What is a right? Is it the same thing as a freedom? Freedom, a core idea of liberalism, evokes an image of the individual struggling for freedom

against slavery and other forms of tyranny or of cultural groups fighting against a 'foreign' power for self-determination. It seems synonymous with the term 'liberty' whose essence has been defined as "the absence of impediments" <sup>xiii</sup>. The terms freedom and liberty may therefore be used with regard to the acquisition of a condition of mutual forbearance. A right, on the other hand, suggests the metaphor of "a protective capsule" around an entity which would otherwise be threatened by other, conflicting interests or values. A right "denotes a condition, namely that of being able to use one's power" and so goes beyond "a freedom from and a freedom to" to entail the notion of a duty by someone to someone else <sup>xiv</sup>. In other words, a right involves "a duty to conduct for the right-upholder" and "an attitude of regard to the significant entities who are rights-bearers" (p. 8-9). Perhaps, therefore, the terms freedom and liberty should denote the desired state to which a group aspires whereas the term 'right' should focus attention onto establishing the ability to enforce those freedoms.

Culture and territory are markers of the heterogeneity of the human world. Juxtaposing territory-culture and rights leads the discussion to the concept of *collective rights*. This is a communitarian perspective based on two arguments: that individual development is helped by association with others; and, a stronger version, that the essence of what it means to be human lies in one's membership of groups. Contemporary rights discourse targets the recognition and protection of group attributes. Collective rights refer to those of categories of people – for example language communities– i.e. the rights *of* a community. This draws on a pluralist view of society with its associated right of free association. The argument is that a community can claim a right but "the notion of a community must come to be adopted consciously by the individuals who

constitute it", so that collective rights have legitimacy at the level of the individual <sup>xv</sup>. Collective rights concern the interests of individuals insofar as these depend on co-operative action. Thus, for example, there can be no such thing as a right to speak a local language as a marker of one's cultural identity if measures have not been taken to protect the viability of the speech community as an entity (see chapter 4).

This is to argue from an ethical viewpoint; that cultural diversity is a nature characteristic of humanity; it defines our humanity as self-reflexive beings. The logic of this for Herder was that people's organic cultural affiliations should form the basis of their political arrangements – i.e. the *Volk* state as a "territorial unit in which men conscious of sharing a common cultural heritage are free to order their lives within a legal framework of their own making" <sup>xvi</sup>.

Thus, when linking rights to neo-endogenous development, we are talking about, on the one hand, the right of local cultures to exist and thrive and, on the other, the accumulation of universal, human rights to protect and nurture individuals. In the creation of both sorts of rights, the intervention of extralocal regulatory institutions is necessary.

For collective, cultural rights, the example of French wine is instructive <sup>xvii</sup>. Here, localities and individual vineyards make claims that each wine is a product of the physical characteristics of the locality and accumulated local know-how, the combination of which, it is claimed, "cannot be replicated elsewhere". More importantly, however, is that that much French wine became dependant upon interregional and international trade which led to a collaboration between the local and state levels to protect the economic interests of producers and localities. The creation of state

regulations to designate the precise geographical source of a product – *appellation d'origine contrôlée* – in effect transforms local knowledge into *intellectual property*. It becomes something which can be owned, either by an individual producer or the producers in an area who will agree to conform to the dictates (place and methods of production and labelling) of the regulated local knowledge. The relationship of intellectual property to cultural capital is that whilst the people of a territory can conceive of themselves as the inheritors and creators of cultural capital, the acquisition of a legal protective framework assigns to it the status of ‘property’. Intellectual property institutionalises the reliance of cultural capital on extralocal protection. Transforming local, organic knowledge into property through an extralocal regulatory framework means that localities and producers have been granted property rights; the benefits accruing from exploiting this local knowledge are thus protected by the state legal system, allowing the owners of this intellectual property to prevent other parties from stealing or sharing this knowledge-property without permission or providing financial recompense. The product is given a sort of trademark or copyright, exploitable only by the territory and its component producers who claim ownership of the intellectual property rights invested in the product. The acquisition of intellectual property rights feeds back into the capital accumulation process discussed in chapter 4 (cultural capital -> social capital -> economic capital -> cultural capital). Thus, the dynamic largely internal to a cultural system is made more visible and sustainable by the extralocal power of intellectual property right protection.

The example demonstrates how knowledge local to the territory may be crystallised in the construction of the local product's identity, in this case, wine, and that once officially sanctioned this intellectual property is

available to all producers in the area who agree to abide by the regulations. Once this occurs, the intellectual property created can go through a further transformation. Product identity feeds back into the territorial identity and this enhanced territorial identity thereby becomes intellectual capital which is subsequently available for the producers of other products in the area. Thus, for example, a wine identity is constructed from its territory of origin and then the identity of the territory itself is enhanced by being known as the source of the wine product. When this occurs, the intellectual property becomes available to producers of other products and services in the territory who are able to promote their own local product by association with that of the original product. In a sense, therefore, the original local knowledge may have the capacity to transcend the original set of guardians in the form of capital for other social and economic actors whose identity is tied to the territory.

The concept and enforcement of intellectual property are, however, not without problems. Periodically, attempts are made to launch a new product whose identity trades on that of another product traditionally produced elsewhere. In such cases, protection of the original property rights must depend on an appeal to the regulatory institution (EU law etc.) over product definition or to recourse to consumer attitudes (claims of authenticity).

These insights <sup>xviii</sup> can be taken a stage further by considering how local knowledge is capable of being rediscovered or even invented. The rural development interventions of the EU increasingly emphasise the role of local communities in animating development; the local community is seen as an important source of knowledge and ability which can be used

in development activity. It can recover lost social history which can then be used to promote a sense of attachment and commitment to place among local people and to create opportunities for local input into the design and implementation of community tourism initiatives. Likewise, community art – locally created and produced drama, visual art, etc. – which either draws on local history and sense of place or which makes visible current local issues of social exclusion can recover, and in some cases create, local knowledge.

Local cultures exposed to a global predatory capitalist order are seeking protection through legalistic language and regulatory frameworks such as the Convention on Biological Diversity <sup>xix</sup>. The anxiety for some commentators is that this defensive mechanism transforms a culture *simply* into something that is tradable, that nothing is inalienable from the doctrine of economic utilitarianism and its associated concepts of individualism/possessiveness; culture becomes a commodity and nothing more. For some, this would be disastrous in that it would undermine the fundamental characteristic of humans introduced above in that organic cultural identity is the medium through which human/personal development and innovation occurs. The issue of biological diversity and economic exploitation demonstrates the difficulties involved here with, for example, large companies arguing that ownership should move from the locality to whatever company succeeds in identifying a commercial use and in developing markets for the knowledge.

An alternative, more positive view which draws on field evidence from anthropologists is that although commoditisation does undoubtedly have an effect on people, drawing them into the values of the capitalist order, the transformation is only ever partial. The commoditisation of local,



indigenous art through international trade has not necessarily resulted in the loss of local, religious and aesthetic symbolism and function. Whilst extralocal interest may work to raise awareness of, and to valorise, local cultural identity, there appears also to be an abiding notion of *market inalienability*; that some aspects of a culture are, or should be, protected from perversion. Inalienability has been defined as:

"rights or things ... that can be given away but not alienated by sale in the market. This domain includes personal attributes and the integrity of the body, sacred objects and kinship relations ...." <sup>xx</sup>.

It can be argued that commoditisation transforms common resources into private ones; property equals ownership and can thus be traded. The trend in property rights, whether the 'right' to the image of a famous person such as Elvis Presley, the right to the exploitation of a plant species or even to the knowledge of how to exploit human genes, is presently towards taking ownership out of the public domain and into the private sector. It is for this reason that the relationship between a territory-culture and the capitalist order in the era of globalisation must develop a moralistic, protective framework of collective rights. Such rights would categorise local knowledge as property but this property would be owned by the territory, for the local collective good. Neo-endogenous development provides, potentially, a way to resolve the commoditisation-inalienability tension by creating local democratic structures of a participative or deliberate nature.

Human rights are increasingly setting the agenda for relations between nation states and between states and their citizens. They are acquiring a universality, transcending space and thereby becoming accultural. Their

basis is the *individualistic* interpretation of human nature and development mentioned above. This argues that progress in life is about the working-out of one's natural capacities as an individual; that it is about the unfolding of a range of personal attributes<sup>xxi</sup>, and about equality of opportunity over and above ethnic and gender categories. According to this view, society should be organised so as to prevent any hindrance to, or diversion of, this 'becoming' of each individual. At a very general level, individual/human rights have come to refer to principles such as the right to autonomy, creativity, the means to earn a living, physical well-being, and non-violation of the body. They are also often framed within general social categories – in particular, gender and age.

In a globalising world, this category of rights cannot be ignored. The tension between liberalist/universalist and communitarian/relativistic conceptions of ethics and rights which should frame development is perhaps more acute in a non-western context. Its inclusion here is justified, in a general sense, because of the need to include in the new view of European endogenous development, both cultural specificity and universality; the global communication of ideas and experiences will ensure that this must be so. Cultural vibrancy alone is not sufficient. The dangers of parochialism and local reactionary forces dictate the inclusion of universal, human rights. Neo-endogenous development has to be linked into systems to cultivate and enforce human rights.

Neo-endogenous development – whether rural or urban – is a project (i) to imagine the possibility for freedoms, and (ii) to find ways to legitimise them as rights. This might be by institutionalising them, protecting rights by legally enforceable means. Or it might be by their

encapsulation in an ideology (and the rhetoric of religious and cultural revivalist groups is full of such claims). They will appeal to 'moral rights' – i.e. that they have a moral right to live how they want to live (cultural relativism) – and the force of this way of thinking is not diminished by its not being enshrined in a regulatory framework: "People *do* assume that moral rights exists, and they behave accordingly" <sup>xxii</sup>.

The introduction of rights as a generic category into the model of neo-endogenous development has a further implication. In the era of reflexivity, individual and collective identities and values are affected by the dynamics of the extralocal. A defining characteristic of globalisation is the increasing connectivity of the world as ideas and experiences are exchanged and interpreted by individuals and localities. The rights discourse in a locality, therefore, can be enabled by globalisation, feeding on information flows from outwith the territory. The rights discourse also ties the locality into the extralocal as the territory-culture seeks out entities that can legitimise and protect such rights. These entities may be orthodox institutions such as the state, the EU or other international bodies or they might be networks of solidarity between territories with a shared interest.

Finding ways to understand and deal with this globalising-localising dichotomy is the major challenge for nation-states, supra-state organisations such as the EU and for sub-state localities. Cultural regions sometimes have an ambivalent (sometimes hostile) relationship with the state. Neo-endogenous development initiatives and cultural regions feel that they have discovered a friend in the form of the EU, or more precisely its executive wing, the Commission. The EU appears to listen to their needs and offers them money to pursue their local agendas.

Although committed to the development of a single European trading and financial (and even political) space, the EU simultaneously promotes internal heterogeneity through the idea of an Europe of cultural diversity, local development and regulation (such as to protect "produits typiques"). Looking solely at matters from this top-sponsored direction, one might conclude that the offers of cultural diversity and endogeneity are being made at the price of greater integration of localities and their economies into the EU capitalist, free market order.

Cultural specificity is vital because it maintains and extends the possibility of local mediation of any negative effects of globalisation and of modern development in general. This mediation if operationalised by providing for the locality a range of ways in which to engage with the extralocal. In an era of doubts about the trajectory of modern development, the cultivation of a diversity of living experiments would seem to be a wise and grand option for "risk society" <sup>xxiii</sup>. An emphasis on culture-territory is also an invitation to consider new forms of varying formality of collective action. This collective action is simultaneously local/parochial and, thanks to globalisation, inter-local/international.

The outcome of the project of modernity has been the "internalisation of democracy" into the individual <sup>xxiv</sup>. People, especially the younger generation, are "freedom's children" in that they reconcile individualism with the need to belong to groups (but which are joined on a voluntary basis); the spectre of the 'me' society is, in fact, a "self-organised concern for others". If this is correct, the new human condition is a continuous act of playing-off personal autonomy with membership of groups/categories, and the local with the extralocal levels. The project for endogenous development, therefore, becomes one of raising consciousness of this

dichotomy and of the creative possibilities that could flow from it. These creative possibilities emerge if a local cultural-territorial identity is operationalised so as to allow repertoires and paths of development to emerge and then to be cultivated. If repertoires provide one of the fulcrums articulating the relations between a locality and the extralocal, the other is provided by a discourse of rights whereby a locality looks both inwards for a moral basis to cultural rights and outwards for frameworks of protective regulation for universal human rights.

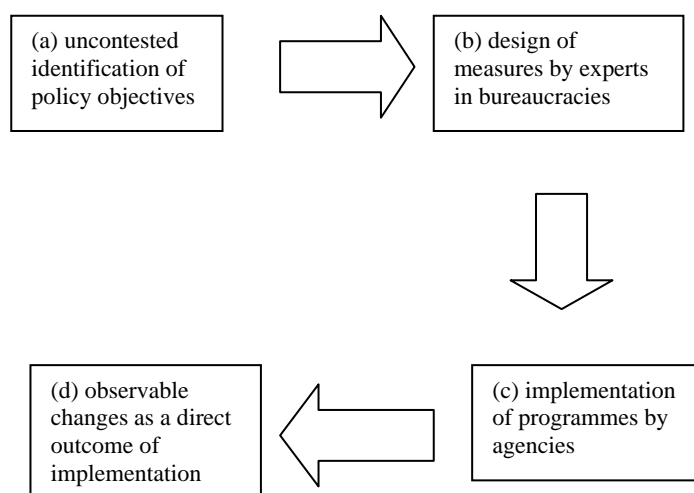
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- <sup>i</sup> Jenkins (1996) p.8.
  - <sup>ii</sup> Mearns & Thorne (1988).
  - <sup>iii</sup> MacDonald (1993).
  - <sup>iv</sup> Weil (1949/1978) p.41.
  - <sup>v</sup> Breakwell (1986), Phillips (1995).
  - <sup>vi</sup> Shotter (1993).
  - <sup>vii</sup> Frazer & Lacey (1993)
  - <sup>viii</sup> Tregear (1998)
  - <sup>ix</sup> Midmore et al. )1994),
  - <sup>x</sup> Bowie and Davies (1992)
  - <sup>xi</sup> White, cited in Philo and Kearns, (1993) p.4.
  - <sup>xii</sup> Freeden (1991)
  - <sup>xiii</sup> Freeden
  - <sup>xiv</sup> Freeden, p.13.
  - <sup>xv</sup> Freeden
  - <sup>xvi</sup> Barnard (1969).
  - <sup>xvii</sup> Moran (1993)
  - <sup>xviii</sup> Moran
  - <sup>xix</sup> Strathern (1999)
  - <sup>xx</sup> Frow
  - <sup>xxi</sup> Freeden
  - <sup>xxii</sup> Freeden (1991):
  - <sup>xxiii</sup> Beck (1996)
  - <sup>xxiv</sup> Beck

## CHAPTER 8 THE LOGIC OF PARTICIPATIVE DEVELOPMENT: PARTICIPATIVE EVALUATION

### 1 Meanings of the term 'evaluation'

What do we understand by the term 'evaluation'? What does an evaluation do? Generally, it is an attempt to measure for a given intervention the extent to which the stated objectives have been achieved and to discover the reasons for any shortfall between the objectives and the observed impact. Underpinning what we might call the 'orthodox' evaluation is a particularly modern view of government and administration (Diagram 1) in which evaluation occurs as the comparison of 'd' (apparent outcomes) and 'a' (apparently robust objectives). But are 'a' and 'd' always necessarily the most appropriate parameters to use?

Diagram 1 Mechanical policy process



source: Ray (2000a)

The formality and constraints of this model are exacerbated by the style of intervention emerging in the West, i.e. the "managerial" or "evaluative" state. The general approach together with the

complementary principles of "value for money" ('efficiency') and the pressure on public officials and organisations to avoid accusations of the misuse of public funds lead to the utmost importance being put on observable and quantifiable indicators of performance. Although evaluations will occasionally be required to test an intervention against wider social goals (such as gender and ethnic equal opportunities), the mechanical model predominates.

However, when considering the form of evaluation most appropriate to neo-endogenous development, the model described above seems at best inadequate and at worst potentially disruptive. The logic of interventions such as LEADER is that evaluation must be capable of supporting and extending their exploratory and imaginative remits. Moreover, given that the new style of rural development initiative has, at its heart, the promotion of active and popular participation in the design and implementation of local development action, evaluation must somehow focus on participation as the core dynamic principle. As LEADER practitioners often comment, evaluation must focus on the process and overall principles of the approach. Evaluation must not be myopic, confusing short-term measurable outputs with the real ways and means of innovative rural development. Participative, local development requires participative, local evaluation. We can, at this point, change the definition of evaluation to be "discovering the value of whatever is being evaluated". This 'value' would be in terms of the broader goals of 'development' rather than against the parameters built into the original design of the intervention concerned.

This is not, however, to argue for autonomous self-evaluation by local development organisations. Each level of player in an initiative such as

LEADER has a legitimate, crucial and potentially complementary need of, and responsibility for, evaluation<sup>i</sup>. At the European level, it has been suggested that evaluation should seek to identify the factors which have influenced the way in which specific features of LEADER were implemented in each geo-political context. National and regional levels of each politico-administrative system, however, would wish to aggregate and compare data from each LEADER experiment in order to generate models of best practice and to indicate the transferability of local experiences. At the local level, the emphasis should be on self-evaluation by the local group assisted by external evaluators.

There is no doubting the wisdom and utility of this model. However, attitudes to a local initiative – and thereby preparedness to participate in and to fund it – will be affected by whichever type of evaluation is seen to have the highest status (owing to its perceived rigour). This chapter is mainly concerned with the local level, believing this to be crucial to the ultimate success of innovative rural development.

This chapter will explore two possibilities for the evaluation of endogenous rural development. Both deal almost exclusively with qualitative material (although it is not the intention here to rehearse the arguments about the qualitative or quantitative approaches and/or syntheses of the two). The qualitative approach is not simply a matter of the methods of data gathering and analysis, rather, it reflects the conceptualisation of ‘development’ that are brought to an evaluation. The qualitative approach is not merely a preliminary stage preceding quantitative study but it represents a more appropriate and entirely rigorous way of understanding the social world. The first of the two approaches introduced here may be called *Critical Empathic Dialogue*



and is an examination of the possibilities of ethnography as applied to rural development evaluation. The second approach is *Human Enquiry*, a term coined by Reason (1988) to incorporate the various applications of "action research".

## 2 A "Critical Empathy" approach

There are several advantages in the use of ethnography for endogenous development evaluation: it can capture people's experiences of a development initiative and it can record their aspirations where these might differ from values embedded in the design of an intervention. Most usefully, it can look for the *potential* within a local initiative, i.e. by taking an interpretative approach, it is possible to escape the limitations of intervention timeframes and pre-given values and look at the options for change which local people may be exploring. It can also act as an input into the development dynamic by revealing and valorising local viewpoints, including those local voices which may not be sufficiently eloquent to be recorded in more formal approaches to data collection.

At the heart of ethnography is the principle of seeking an empathy with how people in localities see the world within their socio-cultural, political and economic context. The observer tries to understand how the observed see the world, rather than automatically refracting it through another worldview (either his/hers, or that of the agency commissioning the study). This is a major challenge for the individual evaluator concerned as it is for the commissioning agency, both of whom will have been trained to uphold certain professional and scientific standards<sup>ii</sup>.

Whilst empathy furnishes us with an important principle in evaluation methods for innovative, LEADER-style development, *passive* empathy will not generate the conditions for social change <sup>iii</sup>. If empathy is only passive, it allows the reader of evaluation reports to remain detached from, and unmoved by, the account. The basis of the ethnographer's approach is to attempt, as far as possible, to minimise their impact on whatever they are studying <sup>iv</sup> and this is a principle to which evaluation could choose to subscribe; if it is to bring to light locally-specific meanings of development, then evaluation should reduce its impact, confining itself to an exploration of what is there already (or potentially there). Its active function thus becomes to raise awareness within the locality and in the minds of extra-local officials of what is unique or valuable in the local context.

There is an alternative view: the *clinical* approach <sup>v</sup>. This is the application of ethnographic methods to situations where the objective is to generate practical solutions to perceived problems. The 'client' – an organisation, a community or whatever – initiates the study, inviting the evaluator in and negotiating the terms of reference for the study and the degree of co-operation the evaluator can expect from those to be studied. The approach here is to study the organisation only insofar as this will lead to the generation of solutions to the problem. A 'transference relationship' can emerge when the evaluator arrives at an understanding of how an organisation works, and the nature of the problem, by examining the way in which the organisation/ community or its components react to provocations (provocative questions, interpretations or recommendations).

However, we could imagine a way of making ethnography less passive without adopting this external expert consultant model and we might call this approach Critical Empathic Dialogue. This would still take as its basis the project to understand the local perspective(s), but it would also juxtapose this relativistic viewpoint with a critical input. Empathy with the local context would be paramount and form a distinct component of an evaluation study; it would capture the endogeneity/ participatory essence of a development initiative. This would be supplemented by subjecting the interpretation to critical theory. For example, the evaluation could review the ethnography from the perspectives of feminist theory or environmentalism (sustainable development). These ideas are included in the evaluation as an invitation to local participants and officials to consider further dimensions to the situation that might not have emerged from a pure ethnographic study. These critical insights are offered not as judgements in the orthodox meaning of evaluation but as offerings for the local initiative to reflect upon.

In this approach, the outside evaluator and the players in the local initiative become *joint-evaluators*. The evaluation becomes a dialogue in which the development players reflect on their actions. The evaluator operates firstly empathetically, encouraging the individuals to relate their experiences and their own evaluative judgements. But the evaluator, through various means, can then animate a learning environment, either through positive criticism or through the introduction of his/her conceptualisation of the initiative (using both parochial and general material). This is the sort of 'learning' evaluation called for by other commentators on rural development<sup>vi</sup>. In this, the act of evaluation becomes an input into an on-going development dynamic, and ideally

during the life of a development programme, rather than a judgement at the end.

### **3 The Human Enquiry Approach**

The essence of the territorial/ participative approach to rural development is that local players, separately and collectively, reflect on their circumstances and devise and take action to protect and extend what they see as good and to remove what seems bad. It is advocated either because of a perceived failure of top-down interventions and/or because it responds more closely to radical meanings given to the term 'development'. At best, it creates the conditions in which local people can reflect on 'progress' and cultivate ideas to try out. For the ailing or vulnerable areas into which it is introduced, the approach helps to promote a greater sense of collective agency. The individuals of the area – or at least a good many of them – are credited with a capacity to create neo-endogenous resources and to devise development activity for local, collective benefit.

This has profound implications for the style of evaluation that should be used. Evaluation has to start by recognising this overarching dynamic of participative development and then work to assist the accumulation of local capacity/ agency. This is as valid for the organs of the politico-administrative system (from the local through to the European level) as it is for the actors (potential and actual) in the territory concerned. Evaluation, following the logic of participative development, is a vital component in the development dynamic. Indeed, it could be said that participative evaluation to a large extent *constitutes* participative development. This is because participative evaluation/ development

comprises reflection, plans *and action* as interrelated elements in a process in which local actors are crucial players. External facilitators (evaluators) have a part to play but it is a delicate one; if control moves too far towards the 'expert'/ outside observer/ evaluator, the agency-building dynamic of participative development risks being undermined.

Reason <sup>vii</sup> provides case studies of the use of the collaborative enquiry technique. One concerns the growing interest among orthodox general practitioners in *whole person medical practice*. Reason and a colleague set up an initiative to enable a group of general practitioners to engage with the issues in a framework of participative knowledge. The initiative was preceded by a conference in which some of the issues of complementary medicine and whole person medical practice were aired. All those who attended the conference were then invited to form a co-operative enquiry group; although all the participants were by definition active in orthodox general medicine, they had to have had some experience of, and sympathy with, complementary medicine or personal growth processes. As a result, a self-selected group of General Practitioners (and three academic facilitators) was formed. The members were either discontent with aspects of orthodox medicine or simply interested in considering new ideas. Subsequently, the group convened to establish rules for the research exercise and then to develop a conceptual model of whole person medical practice that would be used to guide subsequent cycles. In each meeting a number of techniques was used: "re-joining" (to bond the group, create mutual trust, etc.); discussions in pairs and as a group; and "encounter" sessions (in which intra-group psychological difficulties were explored and resolved).

The group then chose to split into two thematic sub-groups. Each group discussed the issues in their meetings and then agreed on a set of activities which they would each try out in their practices during the subsequent six week period. At the next meeting, each member reported back on their experiences of the action phase and this led the group into a reflection on how these experiences could be incorporated into a modified set of activities that would be implemented in the next six-week action phase. Several cycles were completed until the group decided that it had gone as far as it could, that it had achieved some development. The function of the outsider-academic was to facilitate the process.

Another form more common in rural development practice in the Third World is called Participatory Action-Research. This involves meetings between research workers (rural/community development officers) and, for example, a village community. Over several meetings, the research worker animates a dialogue with the local people, encouraging them to express their views, to consider their options for solving the socio-economic problem and what resources they already have available to help achieve this end. The worker is, in effect, acting as a catalyst or animateur for bottom-up action. Formal evaluation – as a separate action – is inappropriate because at the core of the approach is the cultivation of a dialogue about development and the encouragement of local action. The aims and means of development are defined by local people, as advised by the development worker. Evaluation (as the comparison of objectives with outputs) is replaced by a continuous process of reflection and learning.

The choice of methods is not confined to discussion groups. Community development has many other techniques. Plays written and performed by

a community portraying their history, cultural identity or a contemporary threat to the community are excellent examples of the participative approach<sup>viii</sup>. A similar form is that of local story telling. There is also psychodrama in which the group members use movement and music in a workshop environment to act out their feelings about an issue and to image solutions to it.

#### **4 Conclusion**

In this brief consideration of evaluation, the participative approach has been presented in a positive light. It is not, however, without its problems. An invitation to reflect on local development scenarios has been known to bring to the surface social, cultural and political divisions which had hitherto been tacitly submerged for reasons of communal peace. The participative approach can, in such cases, be highly divisive. Nonetheless, if change is regarded as desirable, then the opening of wounds may sometimes be necessary. In other cases, the local status quo has been observed either to thwart any attempt to activate innovative development or to capture the process for the benefit of local élites.

Even where such obstacles do not present themselves, the actors of a territory may be starting along the participative/innovation path from a very low position. Not every development area when offered the participatory approach will be able immediately to generate innovative ideas. However, for some, even the *attempt* to instigate participative development/ evaluation will be innovative. The time scale, therefore, which the approach needs will vary according to the context.

There is also the issue of geographical scale. The unit of participatory evaluation is of necessity rather small; one could not operate an entire LEADER area (typically 20,000 to 100,000 inhabitants) as a single unit of participatory reflection and action. More appropriate would be the operation of many parallel units within the territory, each reflecting natural *basins de vie*, with the territorial development group acting as co-ordinator.

Finally, it should be underlined that participative evaluation is not mere utopian, humanistic philosophy; it is a logical extension of the core principles of the territorial/ participative approach to rural development. It is a very uncertain tool and it sits very uneasily with what appears to be the dominant spirit of Western government and administration and yet it could produce remarkable gains: for localities and for European (rural) society. This is why initiatives such as LEADER are so important: they employ the ideas of neo-endogenous development while avoiding the pitfalls of parochialism by linking local activity into myriad funding, trading and political regional, national and pan-EU networks.

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<sup>i</sup> Ideas drawn from LEADER (1999)

<sup>ii</sup> Palfrey and Thomas (1996)

<sup>iii</sup> according to Boler (1997)

<sup>iv</sup> Schein

<sup>v</sup> Schein

<sup>vi</sup> Bryden et al (1995)

<sup>vii</sup> Reason (1988)

<sup>viii</sup> Butcher et al, 1993



## **CHAPTER 9 CONCLUSION: THE DEMOCRATISATION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT?**

The culture economy idea, in essence, is about the strategic use of cultural resources in the pursuit of local socio-economic vibrancy. 'Culture' is defined very broadly, referring to the characteristics that differentiate one area from another (and including generic features that differentiate types of area, such as 'rural' and 'urban') and, thereby, also to the ways in which people express their sense of belonging and of what is significant in their lives. It will do no harm, therefore, to state again that the term 'culture' means heritage *and* innovation, the backstage *and* frontstage. In these reflexive times, innovation and modernity need not be the sole preserve of the city. 'Rural' culture operates, or needs to operate, at the interplay of the indigenous and the cosmopolitan. It is utility and the awareness of utility that brings resources into being.

By definition, cultural resources must have a territorial dimension to them. Yet it has also been argued that historical authenticity/ heritage is not the only basis for a culture economy. A number of other rationales have been identified: opportunism – for example, as generated by EU policies or by a creative engagement with globalisation – can create territorial rationales. Local solidarity and a willingness to support development activity, again, come from an awareness of potential utility.

With this broad definitional framework, the culture economy opens up the possibility of choices of which development paths to follow; it creates a dialogue about the meaning of development. The culture economy stresses process over end-product, and structures that evolve into whatever is consistent with the principles of the approach rather than with

whatever already exists. Add to this the turn to territories – away from privileging traditional rural sectors such as primary agriculture – and one is led to the conclusion that the culture economy represents an invitation to reflect on the nature of democratic society.

Theoretically, neo-endogenous development is concerned with the transfer of power to, or its reinforcement at, the geographical level at which the approach ought to be most effective. Given the historical context of state-building and intervention, this invariably means a transfer of power *downwards* from central government but to do this can precipitate crises of legitimacy at all levels of the politico-administrative structure of a nation state. Such crises are not necessarily driven by the reactionary instincts of power holders within the *status quo*; they often seem more to reflect the concerns of officials and elected representatives to maintain the operating principles of democratic society. Issues of legitimacy and accountability are problematised yet further in the case of EU-sponsored neo-endogenous development such as LEADER. Here, there is simultaneously a shift of some power *upwards* (to the appropriate Directorate in the European Commission) as well as *downwards* to the local level. But the experience of LEADER is instructive in two ways: there is not an uniform geopolitical 'local' level as the destination of the downwards shift of power, not even within a single national context; and the various parties (from a community group up to the European Commission) may adopt quite different interpretations of the democratic politics of neo-endogenous development based on 'local participation'. The LEADER experience abounds with examples of 'new' bodies taking on the role of animating endogenous development, often deliberately based on geographical boundaries that transcend those of the public authorities (see chapter 2). Furthermore, and to varying degrees, the

responsibility for designing and implementing LEADER in localities has often been mediated through the participation of players outwith the model of representative democracy: private sector bodies, 'community' groups and various non-governmental organisations (particularly those representing cultural and environmental interests).

The 'problem' for initiatives such as LEADER is that their rhetoric invites populist participation but their implementation requires the political and financial support of the organs of the orthodox politico-administrative system. Indeed, LEADER has, in certain situations, found itself the subject of accusations of being "undemocratic" (particularly where it has been implemented through the private sector or where the geographical boundaries have not conformed to those of the Local Authorities). Dealing with the 'problem' requires us to review the options available within the generic term democracy. The legitimacy claimed by the *representative democracy* model rests with the power of citizens as electors. This power is expressed through 'the anticipation of retrospective control' – the ability to vote representatives out of power or appoint them for a further period – and through 'prospective control' – the view that representatives only have a mandate to act insofar as their intentions were set out in the election manifesto<sup>i</sup>. Neo-endogenous development can often be a challenge to the modus operandi of orthodox democracy, especially if a cultural or ethnic rationale is brought to the fore. This is not only because of the appearance of 'non-elected' interests into the decision-making structure but also because neo-endogenous development contains within itself an invitation to imagine alternative, even radical, notions of development.

This can be compared with the view that neo-endogenous development is a project in *participative democracy*. In this, peoples' demands for action are registered not only through elected representatives but also through the lobbying activity of myriad interest groups and through consultation with individuals. In a rural development context, one can already find examples of populist approach in operation, either formally in the democratisation of the decision-making body of a LEADER initiative or informally through the principled *modus operandi* of community development workers (chapter 5). It is possible that the participative approach may emerge if the body created to manage a territorial initiative resists the temptation to direct development through prescriptive plans and, instead, encourages the creation of local, quasi-autonomous bodies to animate development dialogue and action while the territorial organisation concentrates on the strategic level (modes II and III of the culture economy model). Local bodies may – and some have – evolved into representative forms by encouraging individuals from their component settlements to serve on the decision-making committee. This, in its most radical form, recasts the territorial organisation in the role of a ‘human development’ agency, cultivating the capacities of local people to be more involved in the animation and management of socio-economic development <sup>ii</sup>. Another form involves the organisation adopting a participative ethical code (as in WISL’s intention – see chapter 3 – to open its decisions on project funding to local inspection).

The two forms noted so far do not exhaust the possibilities of democracy. A third option is *deliberative democracy* <sup>iii</sup>. The term dates back to writers such as John Stuart Mill <sup>iv</sup> who argued that elected representatives should be freed from the ‘tyranny’ of their electoral mandate so as to be able to engage in free and rationale debate in their assemblies. It is used

here, however, in a different way, recalling aspects of Classical Greek polity. This presents us with the idea of neo-endogenous development being defined and animated through local debate. Immediately, one can see in this the possibility for 'alternative paths of development' to emerge – discussing the meanings of development and options for local action (chapter 2). Idealistic, perhaps, but, again, one can glimpse occasional, tentative examples of this approach on the ground. It has happened – admittedly in a rather implicit and ad hoc way – in some of examples of community appraisal. Where this has happened, the role of the development worker becomes one of gentle encouragement to the people of a locality to be prepared to think radically.

Finally, the point to emphasise is that neo-endogenous development is, by definition, political and that, in order for it to be operationalised, issues of democratic politics must be addressed directly and continuously. If 'top' organisations (states, the EU) court the idea of neo-endogeneity in order better to address the problems of society, then it is only by addressing simultaneously the politics that the approach will have a chance to succeed.

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<sup>i</sup> Elster (1998).

<sup>ii</sup> Asby & Midmore (1993)

<sup>iii</sup> Elster (1998)

<sup>iv</sup> Mill (1861/1975)

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