

HAS UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENT COME OF AGE?




IDS Bulletin

Transforming Development Knowledge

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Note

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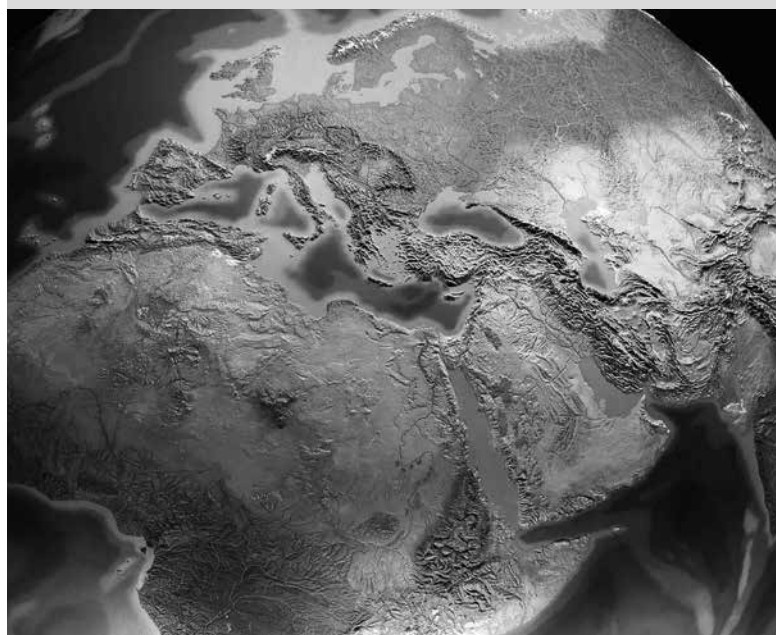
IDS Bulletin

Transforming Development Knowledge

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HAS UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENT COME OF AGE?

Editor **Richard Longhurst**



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Introduction: Universal Development – Research and Practice

Richard Longhurst

Abstract Development policy, practice and research have largely adhered to a North–South, geographic and aid-driven view of the world. Over the last ten years the approaches of South–South cooperation have also come to prominence. However, more attention is being paid to universal development based on the assumption that development challenges are as relevant for the North as for the South, with many common problems. More needs to be known about the nature of learning from South to North in order to complete the paradigm of universal development. The articles chosen for this Archive Collection are addressed to how South and North approaches to development can be interlinked: they show that this topic has been debated for many years. With the advent of the Sustainable Development Goals, there is now a framework in place with which to address a universal approach to development.

Keywords: universal development, universality, Sustainable Development Goals, South–North cooperation, development policy, development practice, development research.

1 Introduction¹

Models of development theory and practice are regularly redefined and then pursued. The most well-known is the development aid-driven model of North to South exchange of ideas, resources and skills. But there has been growing support for such exchanges to enhance learning between countries in the South – that is, South–South development – as well as South–North transfers of patterns of development. The completed paradigm of interconnected or universal development is one where research, practice and learning are fully shared in all directions between South and North, as well as within the South and within the North. Universal development addresses shared problems and challenges. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an embodiment of this approach.

However, as this *IDS Bulletin* Archive Collection of ten articles shows, the idea that development should be seen as universal and not just the transferring of ideas and practice from North to South is not new,



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despite contradicting the view of development aid prevailing in the 1970s and thereafter, and before, in the 1950s and 1960s. This Archive Collection reviews the research published in previous issues of the *IDS Bulletin* and other selected research on universal development, with examples of practice, and looks ahead to suggest how these ideas could be applied generally to make development studies and practice more universal. This is an important part of the next phase of global development, to evolve into universally shared challenges, ideas and practice. The selected articles cover the last 40 years and while the importance of the lessons they provide are generally relevant in the present day, obviously context has changed. Where possible, a 'then' and 'now' perspective is addressed. Many of the former 'North–South' geographic assumptions are now less valid, given the rapid advance of countries such as China and India; income, health and education have converged for many countries; there are rising problems of poverty and malnutrition in developed countries; and there are growing South–North flows of capital and technology.

The universal development approach is particularly relevant against the backdrop of shared and interconnected challenges such as climate change, resource degradation, migration and trafficking, shared technology, and growing inequality, and when the rise of populism and nationalism is undermining attempts to address many of these challenges in both North and South. Approaching these problems requires a more universal approach, which is the aim of the SDGs, now agreed and for which workable implementation is being sought. Some problems may only be solved by the universal approach, while others will benefit from new perspectives. But there are some drawbacks such as institutional constraints and transaction costs. For many people, the term 'universal' would be most commonly applied to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. Universalism has been defined as 'the human development approach of emphasizing the enhancement of freedoms for every human being and the 2030 Agenda by concentrating on leaving no one behind' (UNDP 2016: 45). Universal development can be described as 'where development is a matter for everyone everywhere, and comparative experiences and mutual learning in all directions are valued' (Leach 2016: 6), and more simply as 'development for all'.

The primary objectives of this article are to provide an overview of this *IDS Bulletin* and to: (1) commentate on the selected articles that have addressed universality, (2) link their significance to the present day, and (3) add some new material. In laying out the circular nature of universality – from North to South, South to South, and South to North – it is the third element that is weakest in terms of understanding. North to South has a long history and South to South is gathering momentum. The *IDS Bulletin* articles have focused primarily on seeing every problem as relating potentially to all countries in North and South (and East and West), whatever that issue may be: constraints and solutions will differ across countries, but not necessarily according to geographic divisions.

Key conclusions along the lines of ‘what works or does not work, where and why’ cannot be addressed in any detail within the limits of this overview. Ideally, this overview will be of interest to those outside the development community, as universal development in concept and practice will only make significant progress if advocated by this constituency.

After this introductory section, this article is organised in three further sections. Section 2 reviews ‘reassessments’ of development and of how universality has been addressed. Section 3 addresses five broad thematic areas where universal development was addressed directly, namely: (i) policy approaches to current national and global economic shocks, (ii) inequality and exclusion, (iii) approaching development through greater participation, (iv) democratic governance, and (v) global health. Although the sources for these themes are drawn mostly from *IDS Bulletin* articles, the last theme is treated differently. The lead is taken from practice – the well-known United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Lessons without Borders programme based on child health programmes applied in the United States (US). Some selective research findings are included in the case study. Section 4 provides some conclusions, and discussion of the SDGs.

For the purpose of choosing articles for this Archive Collection, most issues of the *IDS Bulletin* since the first was published in January 1968 were reviewed to assess approaches to, and examples of practice of, universal development. The archive articles are an eclectic selection: authors were writing about various thematic topics and believing that there could be lessons shared universally. For additional research literature, some material relating to the thematic areas was included. This was not generated systematically as it would have been a broad task. What has not been done (for now, at least) is a further step: to review *IDS Bulletin* articles from the perspective of how existing development research, generally conducted in and for developing countries, could be more widely applied.

There are several thematic areas not explored here that have used the universal development approach. These include, *inter alia*, rural development (Baviskar *et al.* 1980; Baviskar 1981; Korf and Oughton 2006), microfinance (Rogaly and Roche 1998), smallholder farming (Stringer, Twyman and Gibbs 2008), floodplain management and irrigation (Monbiot 2014; Lean 2014), malnutrition (IFPRI 2016), food policy (Constantine and Santarelli 2017), and education systems (Little 1988). It is expected that there are many other areas that would be pertinent such as urban development, gender empowerment and social welfare programmes. These and others would merit a thematic sub-section had space permitted.

In further thematic areas, there are several initiatives currently in progress at IDS to frame development as universal, straddling locations across North and South: the *World Social Science Report 2016* on inequality and social justice included contributions from 107 authors across 40 countries;

the Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability (STEPS) programme bridge-year projects involve hub linkages across countries, carrying out several comparative research projects; a proposal on the political economy of green transformations has been developed, including the UK and Germany; participatory action research initiatives, with engagement with farmer organisations in the UK, Senegal and Nicaragua; and the developmental impact of interactions between formal and informal institutions in Eastern Europe. Further, the International Centre for Tax and Development's research on international corporate taxation is relevant across countries. In addition, the Rockefeller project Market-based Solutions for the Extreme Poor included examples from the developed world context, and there have also been submissions of evidence to parliamentary enquiries on the implications for the UK of the SDGs, and contributions to debates on universality in the area of youth (Wignall 2016). Finally, the current work of the Centre for Rising Powers and Global Development focuses on exchanges of ideas and health and food policies between Brazil and the UK, including activities on food policy in conjunction with the Food Foundation (Constantine and Santarelli 2017).

2 Debates about universal development

At various times, issues of the *IDS Bulletin* have 're-assessed', 're-imagined', 're-framed', or 're-defined' development, starting with debates in the 1970s, with some specific topics in between, and then onto the IDS 40th and 50th anniversary conferences, in 2006 and 2016 respectively. The starting point for reassessments was: (i) the discussions over the Duncan Report (Seers 1969), the Pearson Commission (de Kadt 1969), and later, the Brandt Commission (Jolly and Joeekes 1981); (ii) the Seers proposals (Seers 1977 and Singer 1989, both this *IDS Bulletin*; Seers 1979, 1983) and work on underdeveloped Europe (Seers, Schaffer and Kiljunen 1979; Seers and Vaitos 1980, 1982); (iii) the 'states or markets' debate in the 1980s and 1990s (Colclough and Manor 1991), acting as an important stepping stone; and then onto (iv) the IDS 40th anniversary conference 'Reinventing Development Research' (Haddad 2007, this *IDS Bulletin*) and to 'Reimagining Development' (Haddad *et al.* 2011), a global co-construction where 20–30 groups of people offered their reflections on a common set of questions, the results of which were published as the *IDS Bulletin* 'Time to Reimagine Development?'; and most recently, (v) the 50th anniversary (Leach 2016).

The preoccupation with development as aid, especially of donor-funded research, has largely pre-empted any notions of universal development. As Leach has observed:

Related to this context of complex, globally interconnected challenges is a fundamental shift away from old aid-related paradigms and their framing in North–South terms, towards an assumption that development challenges are as relevant for Europe and North America as they are in Africa, Asia or Latin America, with scope for comparative insights and learning in multiple directions. This taken-for-granted sense of what one can term a 'universal

agenda'... was a striking feature of the IDS 50th anniversary conference. It signals a different set of discourses from even a decade earlier, when the IDS 40th anniversary conference marked out such a universal take as an aspiration (Edwards 2007) (Leach 2016: 5).

Connecting, learning and sharing are key pivots in the universal agenda. The global knowledge economy is changing as innovations in all parts of the world are changing old notions, moving towards South–South and South–North, leading to a Universalist view (*ibid.*).

The first major focus on universal development was promoted by Dudley Seers, where he convened debates and discussions at IDS in the 1970s and early 1980s. As Singer pointed out:

... the insights that Dudley gained about the problems of developing countries could be transferred back to the industrialised countries, and would be very helpful in dealing with our own development problems (Singer 1989: 5, this *IDS Bulletin*).

Seers proposed, in a manner that mirrors debates 40 years later (see also Singer 1989, this *IDS Bulletin*; Seers 1979; Seers with IDS M.Phil. Faculty and Students 1977; Longhurst 2016):²

The convention is that development studies cover only the 'developing' countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, a sort of academic counterpart of OXFAM. But this convention is ceasing to be viable for European social scientists, and indeed that is starting to be harmful. The assumption that 'their' problems are intrinsically different from 'ours' is not merely patronising; it has become a hindrance to the transfer of experience. It is also associated with political commitment of a sort that hinders progress (Seers 1977: 6, this *IDS Bulletin*).

These insights were extended to Europe (where the artificiality of the distinction between 'developed' and 'developing' was most obvious), applying methodologies developed in relation to developing countries, especially concepts of 'backwash' (where development in one location causes adverse effects in the peripheral areas), and core-periphery relations (Seers *et al.* 1979), a concept originating in development studies. Western Europe had its own core and periphery; there was a definite geographical pattern, with the European periphery forming a ring around the core. Presciently, Seers proposed that insights acquired in the development field threw light on several European policy issues, including those raised by the enlargement of the European Economic Community. In the spirit of universal development and mutual learning, the geographical extension of development studies would both contribute to a deeper understanding of European problems and also throw light on the problems of the countries conventionally covered by development studies (Seers 1977: 7, this *IDS Bulletin*).

Singer's later analysis of Seers' work using a Keynesian lens (Singer 1989, this *IDS Bulletin*) noted that John Maynard Keynes himself

did not take any interest in development problems or developing countries, and made no attempt himself to apply his framework to developing countries. Seers' work on the 'special case' of local models in developed countries (Seers 1963) showed differences from that of developing countries. Seers later tried to develop a model better suited to the conditions of developing countries by treating them as part of an international periphery – the centre/periphery view – and emphasised again that insights gained could help in dealing with UK problems (including appropriate technology, the informal sector, the role of transnational corporations, dealing with depressed areas and economic inequalities). This critique by Singer of Seers (and by Toyé 1989) provides a good discussion of the importance of context in the application of economics from North to South and vice versa. Seers' approach was developed as a result of field experience, particularly in the International Labour Organization (ILO) Employment Missions in the 1970s and earlier work in the West Indies. Moving from policy and reality to theory was shared with Keynes: this involved moving from concentration on growth to employment to basic needs, poverty, and income distribution, all influenced by field experience. Keynes then turned to revise the models with which he worked.³

Further discussion was generated by the Brandt Commission recommendations (Jolly and Joekes 1981) that proposed strong and enlarged support to North–South negotiations, and recommended a transfer of resources from developed to developing countries, giving new life to earlier North–South proposals but emphasising a dual relationship, called mutual self-interest.

Reassessment at the IDS 40th anniversary conference raised the question of 'development for whom?' (Haddad 2007, this *IDS Bulletin*). This conference summary reported on the anniversary roundtables that took place in many countries across the globe, so reflecting the views of a wide range of professionals, both researchers and practitioners. Development had become more global, inequality was rising in many countries, and the capacity to use and generate knowledge was increasing outside the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. China's emergence challenged Western assumptions about how development happens. There were new sources of financial capital for development initiatives and sources of information; civil society was forming new transnational alliances; and sustainable development was being questioned in terms of carbon consumption levels. The spheres of influence of the aid donors were shrinking; and the boundaries between domestic and international policies were blurred as national identities reconfigured and the interdependence of nations intensified (*ibid.*).

A rebirth of development research was approached in the context of three aspects of global change: convergence, divergence and accountability.⁴ Convergence was seen in the ebb and flow of identities around religion, sexuality, ethnicity and nationhood; climate change and energy use; the conflation of development and security; and the

emergence of China as a global player. Issues such as international migration and increasing inequality were of global concern. Divergence implied many pathways to development and it was argued that the space to discuss these pathways was opening up, yet there was little integration between these pathways (Edwards 2007). The West or North were no longer acceptable as the yardstick for success, let alone as the target to be aimed for. On accountability, the development industry had much to say about the responsibility of others, but little to say about its own performance. Development research also avoided saying much about ethics, and routinely avoided the private sector.

Ten years later, in summing up the IDS 50th anniversary conference, Melissa Leach (2016) proposed that long-standing but marginalised perspectives and debates from the global South offered new values and ideas, not being confined to a North–South axis let alone as a view of development just as aid. She expressed that emerging alliances and alternatives were not led by the concerns of Northern intellectuals and policymakers, and the North–South paradigm did not measure up to ever-more complex problems.

3 Thematic areas

3.1 Policy approaches to current national and global economic shocks

The relationship between policy, reality and theory is evident in the *IDS Bulletin* on ‘Britain: A Case for Development?’ (Jolly and Luckham 1977, this *IDS Bulletin*) at a time of economic crisis caused by the 1973–74 oil price shock (Jolly 1977, this *IDS Bulletin*). Its editors set off with a sense of hesitation, doubting the *direct* analogy between Britain and the developing countries:

... there are many similarities: structural unemployment, inflation and balance of payments difficulties; the emigration of professional manpower; the visiting expert from the IMF [International Monetary Fund]; regional imbalance and the difficulty of inducing investment and expansion... they indicate shared features of underdevelopment, rather than comparable patterns of development (Jolly and Luckham 1977: 1, this *IDS Bulletin*).

There were also shared social and political problems which recession had sharpened: addressing Scottish, Welsh and Irish nationalism; racial conflict; political violence; persistent poverty; the erosion of the welfare state; and corruption and decay in police and local government bureaucracies. It was argued, however, that there were critical differences between North and South with many problems of overdevelopment, or the wrong kind of development, such as a small or overspecialised agricultural sector, disease patterns and overconsumption in Britain. Those who argued that rapid growth and industrialisation did not necessarily bring benefits to developing countries could identify parallels in the over-industrialisation in Britain. ‘Britain: A Case for Development?’ advocated a less growth-oriented, more self-reliant strategy of change for Britain.

In terms of connections, Jolly (1977, this *IDS Bulletin*), echoing a common theme at the time of 'Redistribution with Sloth [growth]', proposed that some of the UK's economic ills could benefit from the concepts of basic needs and national self-reliance – approaches and priorities suggested in analyses of developing country problems. Poverty, employment problems, inequality, foreign exchange difficulties and heavy international 'dependence' arose as much from the structure and pattern of a country's development as from its growth rate. At that time most economic analyses of Britain's economic difficulties proposed that slow growth was at the heart of the problem, with an acceleration of growth the obvious cure. Had the lessons of recent employment studies in the developing countries been applied to Britain, the emphasis would have been on structural factors as the main causes of unemployment and structural change rather than growth as the critical need. A structural approach covered analysis of the underlying trends and problems of the economy and a disaggregated analysis of unemployment itself, pointing to the different factors bearing on the unemployment of different groups. A structural approach to policy was absent from the then mainstream debate on employment policy in Britain.

The editors noted (Jolly and Luckham 1977: 3, this *IDS Bulletin*) that it was one thing to advocate a less growth-oriented, more self-reliant strategy of change in Britain, but quite another to put it into effect, moving from analysis to implementation. That *IDS Bulletin* in 1977 addressed some of the 'so what?' questions, but it is hard to believe that economic advisers in better-off countries would say they were taking advice from the experience of less well-off countries. Then, that would have been reputational suicide. This work is an early reminder that the key issue of poverty and inequality has been running through the work of IDS and its partners for over 40 years.

Predominant in the debates of the 1980s was the questioning of the neoliberal agenda of 'getting prices right', decreasing the role of the public sector to reduce expenditure (Colclough and Manor 1991), and privatising services. Evidence later emerged that austerity programmes in the South in the 1980s that cut back the role of the state – structural adjustment – did not work in terms of stimulating growth and reducing poverty. But this has not stopped austerity programmes being implemented in the North. Evidence from Latin America (George 2013) provides five lessons from the Latin American debt crises of 1982–89 and 2001–02 that are applicable to present-day Europe. The most important are that fiscal reform alone cannot solve a debt crisis; austerity must be an element of a larger strategy and not the strategy itself; and economic growth is important.

The evaluations of International Monetary Fund (IMF) advice and synthesis evidence from *Be Outraged*, written by Richard Jolly and colleagues (2012), argue that countries undergoing austerity in Europe, such as Greece and the UK, could also learn much from the African

experiences in the 1980s and 1990s. IMF-led structural adjustment forced governments to cut spending by eliminating subsidies and implementing strict financial retrenchment, which was expected to reduce government deficits and make countries economically stable. This was disastrous for many African nations. Lay-offs, privatisations, salary cuts and reduced spending made it harder for African countries to pursue a long-term development agenda and resulted in more indebtedness, which caused more suffering and increased poverty in almost every African country where IMF prescriptions were followed. This all shows that this universal approach is still valid: austerity and rising poverty within many 'North' countries (combined with rapid advances in many of the previously poorer countries) make old North–South assumptions inappropriate.

3.2 Inequality and exclusion

With the growing emphasis on inequality in the 1990s (and continuing to the present day), exchanges of ideas across different contexts were deemed valuable in the *IDS Bulletin* on 'Poverty and Social Exclusion in South and North' (de Haan and Maxwell 1998 and Maxwell 1998, both this *IDS Bulletin*) but writing papers about *developed* countries was still regarded as an unusual exercise from an institute specialising in *developing* countries. The justification lay in the rapid growth of research on the new concept of 'social exclusion',⁵ a concept initially developed in and for the North.

That issue of the *IDS Bulletin* in 1998 addressed two sets of questions. First, how does the new thinking on social exclusion relate to the large body of work on poverty and poverty reduction? Is 'social exclusion' merely a re-labelling or an explanation of poverty? Second, does the new debate in the North offer opportunities for dialogue between North and South? Does the debate on social exclusion in the North offer new lessons for the South? Conversely, are there insights from the South that will enrich debate in the North? The interim conclusion was that social exclusion and new poverty thinking overlap almost completely when it comes to describing poverty, and also overlap in terms of explanation.

Attempts to learn between North and South were fruitful, with opportunities to compare and contrast. The same issue of the *IDS Bulletin* highlighted a number of areas where connections could be made, which included the nature of active labour policies designed for people to find work, the nature of participation in development programmes (Gaventa 1998, this *IDS Bulletin*, see Section 3.3 below), alternative routes to reform of social welfare, and the value of food security analysis. It also extended the debate on poverty through the lens of social exclusion.

Maxwell (1998, this *IDS Bulletin*) referred to the work of Seers in the context of social exclusion, also suggesting appropriate structural change as one means to reduce inequalities. Elements of this (in 1998) that were relevant to both North and South include structuring

the state, poverty reduction and livelihoods, political development and governance, gender inequality, social capital, and agency and participation, plus social exclusion. Maxwell proposed that it was better to avoid direct solutions and to approach learning between different contexts in terms of comparisons, connections and convergences. Increasing attention to poverty and social exclusion (PSE) in the North opens the possibility of fertile dialogue between North and South on three questions: (1) are there new comparisons or lessons to be drawn across geographical boundaries about the characteristics, causes and remedies of PSE? (2) does a rapid increase in PSE in the North signal a new convergence between North and South? and (3) are there theories which will expose connections between PSE in North and South? Did globalisation mean we are now all developing countries?

This work programme was furthered by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), under the meeting series title, *Lessons Without Borders: Conversations across the Boundary between Developed and Developing Countries*. Public events and briefings were organised by ODI and the New Policy Institute in 1999–2000 (Kenway and Maxwell 1999; Maxwell and Kenway 2000) to seek common ground across the North–South boundary with a particular focus on poverty, building on UK initiatives on the subject (e.g. the UK annual report on poverty and social exclusion (UK Department of Social Security 2000)) as well as international initiatives, including Copenhagen Plus Five⁶ and publication of the World Bank 2001 *World Development Report* on poverty (Kanbur *et al.* 2000).

Maxwell's introduction to the first event pointed out that the human development discourse in the South was very similar to the social exclusion discourse in the North, with both stressing a multidimensional perspective on poverty. The social exclusion paradigm goes far in offering a causal model, focusing on PSE in the area of rights, resources and relationships, while the development debate of the time appeared to give greater importance to notions of participation and empowerment than in the UK.⁷

3.3 Approaching development through greater participation

In the late 1990s to early 2000s, the work of Gaventa and colleagues on 'champions of participation' (Gaventa 1999, 2004) brought together researchers and practitioners to explore the problems and potential for strengthening citizen participation in local government. This engagement brought forward participatory approaches to budgeting; processes of participatory planning; new forms of partnerships between citizens, the government and other stakeholders; new methods of consultation and inclusion; and opportunities for citizen participation in service delivery. There was strong learning between higher- and lower-income countries, especially in participatory approaches to budgeting, in particular through shared experiences between Brazil and the UK.

Earlier work by Gaventa with the Highlander Center on South and North exchanges was important in developing participatory approaches in poor parts of the US. The Champions of Participation event was set up to show what could be done using participatory methods in local government, using funds from the UK international and domestic ministries. The role and impact of participatory approaches developed in poor marginalised communities in the South when applied to situations in the North has been well documented.⁸ Approaches to increase the participation of people in poor countries have relevance in empowering people in richer countries (Gaventa 1999). This research described the links between the concepts of participation and social exclusion and the challenges offered by globalisation, linking and learning from common problems in the North and South.

Gaventa (1999) integrates social exclusion and participation. Lack of participation in itself is a form of social exclusion – inclusion is a goal to be achieved in itself. Participation is a means of overcoming other problems to enable the excluded to act more effectively. The unemployed may be organised to participate in strategies for overcoming unemployment or for job creation; youth organisations may be encouraged to participate in issues affecting youth, immigrants or minorities. There can, of course, be ‘Souths within the North’ just as there may be ‘Norths within the South’ (Gaventa 1998, this *IDS Bulletin*).

The literature generated at IDS and elsewhere on participation in South and North provides much useful information on context; *inter alia*, who should participate locally so that capacity, energy and momentum generated at grass roots is continued, often in the face of resistance from traditional powerholders. More than mandating or legislating participation is needed, requiring ongoing intervention from the top to ensure its implementation, and to help intermediary elites to understand or accept new participation. In all contexts, prior social capital and organisational capacity matters, with a history of trust and working together being valuable. There must also be institutional capacity with flexible mindsets; some form of participatory monitoring and evaluation is needed to measure whether quality participation is occurring. Finally, participation may not be enough as promoting participatory approaches is also affected by broader forces and must be linked to other policies for change (Gaventa 2004).

Gaventa (1998: 54, this *IDS Bulletin*) draws some important lessons for participation from the US for participation policy in the South: *inter alia*, participation policy, who participates, and the definition of participation all matter; also important are participation and power, prior social capital, and organisational, governmental or institutional capacity.

Participatory budgeting is a well-known example of a programming element introduced in the South, adopted in the North, and used in both contexts (see Porto de Oliveira 2017; Sintomer, Herzberg and Allegretti 2010; Department for Communities and Local Government 2011;

Gaventa and Benequista 2009). Originating in Brazil in 1989, it involved a series of local assemblies where residents and elected budget officials identified spending priorities and voted on the priorities to implement. Participatory budgeting then spread to cities in Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa. This was introduced to the UK by the Labour government in 2008, and by 2011 £28m was allocated via participatory budgets to 1,500 projects in England and trialled in Newcastle and Bradford. The UK government set a target in 2008 of 1 per cent of all local government funds to be allocated in this manner, but the use of participatory budgeting then struggled under the coalition government of 2010 which severely cut local government budgets.

3.4 Democratic governance

Research on democratic governance has developed the concept of democratic spaces that could be applied across all geographic contexts (Cornwall 2004 and Barnes *et al.* 2004, both this *IDS Bulletin*; Cornwall 2008). The Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability generated a series of case studies from a variety of political and cultural contexts: Brazil, India, Bangladesh, Mexico, South Africa, UK and the US. Contributors to the *IDS Bulletin* 'New Democratic Spaces' (Cornwall 2004) explored the interfaces between different forms of public engagement, showing arenas that were neither new nor democratic but paradoxically appeared to hold promise for deepening democracy in North and South. Their studies addressed questions about the political efficacy of citizen engagement and the viability of these new arenas of public institutions, involving new networks and alliances of actors, which may be government-provided or more transient spaces.

The research questions in that 2004 issue of the *IDS Bulletin* were based on how new democratic experiments meet and transform older forms of governance, as political space for public engagement in governance appeared to be widening. Greater attention was focused on the institutions at the interface between the public, providers and policymakers. This work drew on examples of participatory budgeting from Brazil, health watch committees in Bangladesh, and *panchayats* in India to demonstrate how things could be done better in the UK in terms of engaging a more democratic approach. The one-size-fits-all development rhetoric about governance and institutions played out in very different ways across different cultural, social and political settings. 'Invited spaces' offered the *potential* for reconfiguring relations of rule, extending the practice of democracy beyond the sporadic use of the ballot box. They were embedded in the particular cultural and political configurations making up governance in that context. Such 'spaces' had to be situated in institutional landscapes as one among other domains of association in and out of which actors moved, carrying relationships, resources, identities and identifications.

In the UK, Barnes *et al.* (2004, this *IDS Bulletin*) described a context in which there had been considerable innovation in the form of regular

bodies or passing ways of seeking opinion. There was a tension between different ‘opportunity structures for participation’, identifying two forms in the UK: one that is open to the general public and another that seeks ‘representation’ by enlisting representatives from existing groups. In practice these two forms often overlapped, leading to further tensions and questions about the nature of representation, with important implications for legitimacy. Where authorities set rules for inclusion, groups could choose either to comply, create their own structures, or *create* identities when they participated. This analysis resonates with many of the articles in Cornwall (2004) in suggesting that citizens need their own spaces in which they can develop alternative approaches, at some distance from arenas which bring the public and their representatives together with officials.

The observations of Taylor *et al.* (2004) focused on some of the difficulties with which the voluntary and community sector in England has come to view government-created ‘invited spaces’ – seen as ‘popular spaces’ – from which people are able to mobilise, build alliances and gain the confidence to. There was a proliferation of new spaces for ‘third sector’ involvement in policy processes under the UK Labour administration of 1997–2010.

The research by Barnes *et al.* and Taylor *et al.* highlighted some of the complexities of deliberative governance in two English cities, and of the relations involved. There was a complicated relational picture between councillors, members of the public and officers. The articles in ‘New Democratic Spaces’ (Cornwall 2004) show how a cross-sectional group of countries from North and South can provide helpful perspectives to address common problems, here addressing direct forms of citizen engagement to meet the ‘democratic deficit’ – by strengthening democratic institutions, and urging politicians and bureaucrats to listen more to become more responsive to those they serve. The concept of *space* allowed dialogue about participation, highlighting the relations of power and nature of citizenship that permeated public engagement. Authors of articles in ‘New Democratic Spaces’ used the term ‘spaces’, and three ingredients appear to be critical: (1) ruling party disposition to supporting popular participation, (2) popular mobilisation, and (3) a sufficiently resourced, well-coordinated state bureaucracy. Again the nature of context matters.

At the tail end of the 1990s, ‘civil society participation’ was on everybody’s lips. Today, in 2017, harder questions are being asked (Buddery, Parsfield and Shafique 2016). National government austerity measures and the increasing demand by UK citizens on the welfare staff has introduced a crisis for the public sector. New approaches to engaging local participation are needed. Here, the argument for learning from both developing and developed countries is that the UK needs more creative thinking and that drawing on examples from the South might help, going beyond the comfort of the consultation culture.

3.5 Global health

As noted in Section 1, this sub-section addresses universality on a different basis from other themes of this *IDS Bulletin* overview. Global health issues are an important area where lessons can be shared between North and South (Crisp 2010). The topic is addressed partially here but primarily recounts well-known experiences of the USAID–Carnegie Council Lessons without Borders programme in various cities of the US in the late 1990s (Government Publishing Office 1994; Van Dusen 1998). Some additional research is also highlighted here.

In 1994, USAID supported a programme called Lessons without Borders, beginning with a conversation about the cost of health care in the US, when officials from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention believed there could be cost savings from using oral rehydration salts (ORS) in the US.⁹ Continued discussions showed that other international strategies and practices could be used in the US. Immunisation rates in the US were low, but infant mortality rates were high. As a result there was follow-up in Seattle, Washington, Baltimore and Boston.

In Baltimore, the mayor sent a team to Kenya to observe implementation of the programme; then, between 1994 and 1998, immunisation coverage in Baltimore rose from 60 per cent to above 90 per cent. A team went to Bangladesh to learn how community health workers could disseminate practical information throughout communities. Other teams looked at how gang violence was addressed in the Caribbean and how environmental health information was being provided to literate populations. All of this was done with municipal funds. The programme was successful, for various reasons.

At the time, foreign aid was not popular: there was a recession in the early 1990s. USAID, not being able to spend its funds in the US, wanted to show that foreign aid could benefit the domestic population. There was strong support for the idea of using lessons learned in Kenya for immunisation campaigns in Baltimore at the local level from the mayor. The approach was to be more cost-effective when measures showed that the US was lagging behind some poorer nations in terms of child mortality.

At the national level, there was strong support by the USAID administrator Brian Atwood, also supported by Al Gore, then Vice President of the US, which provided champions at national and local levels. Most importantly, the programme was technically and economically sound: progress could be measured to show it was working; results were clear and it was low-cost and cost-effective.

There were other programmes tried in Washington to use sports as a way of helping young women to gain confidence, not to drop out of school, and to resist gang issues; and there were other attempts in the area of microenterprises and agricultural technologies, for example, but they had no political champion. These programmes were not continued

because when a new administration came in (Bush–Cheney in 2000), new ideas were pursued.

There are other approaches proposed to combine the learning from rich and poor countries to give new insights to improve health (Crisp 2010). For example, staff could be trained and deployed in different ways, and to bring public health, community social care and clinical medicine closer together. New policy, practices and products from poorer countries that might have application in richer countries are the use of conditional cash transfers to incentivise healthy behaviour, changing drug-giving protocols where patients rarely attend outpatient clinics, new forms of treating cataracts, and better long-term outcomes for schizophrenia through inclusion and community involvement (Crisp 2010: 116). Other possibilities include learning from treating mental health (Patel and Cohen 2003).

However, although common lessons involve the use of medical technology (in this case, vaccines) and appear as a universal and neutral good, they are deeply bound up with politics (Poltorak *et al.* 2005; Leach and Fairhead 2007). An agenda of mutual North–South self-interest has played a role in pushing immunisation up international public agendas. This research showed understanding of what causes parents to have their children vaccinated (or not) in different settings. Parental anxieties played a role, and this research compared and contrasted local understandings of health issues with anxieties of parents bringing up young children in southern England at the time of the controversy over the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine with routine immunisation in four countries in West Africa. It was also an exploration of what institutions involved with vaccination and public health policy assume is going on. Medical technologies are introduced into a context with immediate and wider political dimensions. Context matters and juxtapositions are needed to broaden the debate to more global and universal contexts. There are hidden commonalities as well as differences in the ways that parents in European and African settings are dealing with their children’s wellbeing, each other, and state and global institutions in today’s world.

4 Conclusions: Learning and practice

Has universal development come of age? This review shows that the foundations were built a long time ago and have been periodically strengthened. Some building of walls was started as development professionals tried to put the ideas and approaches into practice, but to continue the buildings analogy, planning permission from the powerful to continue was never given in terms of research funding and professional accreditation of those promoting universal development ideas. Reputational risk was at stake. Bureaucracies, the media and the general public were all sceptical about the architecture and whether these buildings would be viable and stand up. Learning has often faltered. But now greater acceptance of, and support for, these approaches is evident. The time has come for all who believe in universal development to build, to provide concrete justifications and experience of what things would

look like. This is not only because of the existence of the SDGs and the related opportunities, but because the greater global interconnectivity that will be brought to bear has never been more needed. However, new ideas and approaches are never value-free nor introduced into neutral situations: there are contestations, with difficulties in learning and in 'unlearning' of current ideas, and the baggage of the politics of change. There are also transaction costs. Conventional joint efforts to address shared problems such as programming partnerships and negotiating joint agreements and conventions – the normal apparatus of global governance – cannot easily address these challenges because there are still dominant partners.¹⁰ The articles reviewed here say much about this, and provide some good signposts for the way forward.

Universal development cannot be applied to every issue: it should not become a new development fad, just to wither after a while. What works (and does not work) now needs to be addressed, and some points relating to its enabling environment are mentioned below. It is better to say that certain overall preconditions should be met, rather than say it works in one sector or another. Also, this should not be seen as a geographical binary divide. Different groupings of countries may be relevant, not the developed/developing divide. The objective of this introduction is to 'set out the table' with key issues; the next stage is to start to cook and eat the meals. There are some exciting opportunities ahead for research and practice, but the topic needs to be addressed by those both inside and outside the development community.

4.1 Poverty, inequality and powerlessness as a key theme

Poverty, whether in North or South, was identified throughout from the 1970s onwards and in the key themes. Reassessments of development have held poverty in its various facets as pivotal, *inter alia* including unemployment, lack of voice, exclusion from governance processes, marginalisation and lack of reach of state services. Many people in developed and developing countries suffer from the same problems, and sharing ways of dealing with these problems is likely to improve policies. Discrimination, exclusion and intolerance occur everywhere and run counter to universalism (UNDP 2016).

4.2 Professional and funding barriers

There is a practical barrier of funding boundaries and professional expertise in agencies that provide research and programme funds. Funds and people are either 'for' the North or 'for' the South and the choice is mostly a binary one.¹¹ Budgets are set up for 'overseas' or for 'domestic', not for both, and the same applies to professional skills. There is a lack of willingness to take reputational risks using something that has worked in a different context, together with organisational set-ups along departmental lines, and time taken to learn across boundaries. There are a variety of institutional contexts that show some promise today – small non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that focus on a specific topic, larger NGOs and governments that have domestic and international departments working in the same building

learning from each other, parliamentary visits, insightful journalists, volunteer programmes, and others. All have potential and could have a vision that such essentially experimental work can be started.

4.3 Perceptions, the media, and public opinion

Although some biases are deeply held, the reaction of the media and public opinion can change rapidly, more so in these febrile times. The media may try to convince people that their communities could not benefit from ideas from unrelated parts of the world. There are the perceptions of the UK public that development means ‘aid’ (and then only ‘disaster relief’) and the strong criticisms that come with it. The ‘labelling’ of this topic needs to be addressed. But there can also be a positive media aspect, especially since social media is universal across locations and can be effective. Many of the innovations and research studies have focused on participation and the creation of ‘space’. This has involved bringing people into decision-making, using participatory action methods, finding out what communities want and need, and then ensuring they are brought into decision-making and building voice. This can trigger public acceptance. Areas (in the North) such as social care, treating mental health, addressing youth violence and violence on women, are crying out for solutions.

4.4 Learning and unlearning

There are the ever-present issues of learning and the context in which it is applied. Organisations find it hard to learn: as well as separate budgets for different programmes, there are different shades of professional skills, with the pressure to deliver, and the structure of bureaucracies.¹² In terms of what works in these circumstances, the IDS Centre for Rising Powers and Global Development proposed a three-part framework: (1) technical aspect, in terms of exchange of know-how; (2) process, in terms of how knowledge is exchanged – the cultural element; and (3) politics, the advocacy that both legitimises some mutual learning and the disabling of previous mindsets (IDS 2016).

More attention could be devoted to see how the private sector addresses issues of innovation and cross-cultural exchanges. If an idea works and the innovation is effective then the origin does not matter that much to the private sector. There also need to be well-resourced institutions in the South with sufficient capacity to harvest ideas and programmes, assess their potential and promote their scaling up. There is potential for cities to link up across this false binary divide: cities can do things that national governments and countries cannot do.

4.5 Context is everything

Researchers say ‘context is everything’ and ‘situations are always complex’. What is needed is to pick out those elements of a situation which overlap between different locations, suggest that preconditions exist for take-up, and convince practitioners. Researchers need to take risks. Some structuring is needed, and there has to be careful analysis of what lessons can be transferred. Analysis and policy for one country cannot be

read off directly from another, even within the broad groupings of North and South; opportunities should not be missed to compare and contrast. A common framework may not work as multiple realities would need multiple theories, and new efforts need to be made to explore common problems brought on by convergence and develop new theory together (de Haan and Maxwell 1998, this *IDS Bulletin*). Researchers' objectives should be to identify differences, if any, and not assume them.

4.6 The coming of the SDGs

The coming of the SDGs is significant. This is a universal agenda because for the first time all countries from North and South (and East and West) have agreed a common agenda and shared accountability. The most recent United Nations *Human Development Report (HDR)* (UNDP 2016) states the need for new development paradigms to ensure nobody is left behind. From the foreword of the report:

Barriers to universalism include, among others, deprivations and inequalities, discrimination and exclusion, social norms and values, and prejudice and intolerance... also... mutually reinforcing gender barriers that deny many women the opportunities and empowerment necessary to realise the full potential of their lives (UNDP 2016: iii).

The HDR argues, among other things, that those left behind can benefit from universal policies. What might happen now? First, the media and global interest concerning the SDGs will help in developing and promoting a universal agenda, and the SDGs will definitely be a hook for this, supported by the United Nations. Second, a universal agenda will address genuine problems of context, complexity, scale and acceptability, and common problems and phenomena such as trafficking, climate change, migration and terrorism. But richer countries still have to buy into the SDGs: there is still much to do in terms of implementation, and progress assessed across all countries, and the lessons and evidence as part of the universal agenda can contribute significantly to this. The HDR emphasises the need to translate universalism into practice by identifying and breaking down barriers that exclude certain groups, narrowing gaps in life chances among people, proposing policy options that fit contexts and levels of development, and identifying institutional shortcomings. All people in all circumstances are not equally disadvantaged.

4.7 Where do we go now on 'what works'?

There are several suggestions from the articles in this *IDS Bulletin*, including the use of public works, conditional cash transfers and promotion of social protection more broadly, building up social institutions for family welfare, microfinance and small-scale credit, and others. It should now be possible to craft better policies and solutions to problems by drawing on a wider range of perspectives other than what works in our own backyard, addressing questions such as: How can the UK social security system learn from the experiences of social protection programmes in South America and Africa, as well as vice versa? How can the system of social and mental care learn from systems

of care in the communities worldwide... and so on? Researchers now have the capacity to address this.

4.8 Back to the future?

Finally, how would Dudley Seers as the originator of many of these ideas have reacted if he looked back? In terms of his work, much has been aimed at the vulnerable and disadvantaged in society, and the focuses on exclusion and income distribution have been underlying themes for some of this work. He would have welcomed the focus on participation which allowed people to fashion their own views and ‘definitions’ of development. He would have been pleased that employment levels are being taken much more seriously as an indicator of the level of development of nations. He would have been positive about the role of exchange of technology, such as mobile phones, where a poor farmer in Haiti and a financial trader in the city of London put the same item to good use. But overall, he might have been disappointed that we still work mainly in silos, some on developed countries and others on developing, and that applying findings on development to problems in the UK and Europe has not received more support nor been translated into real action to help reduce poverty, while no institution has been set up to connect these insights and actions. Are our own teaching and research institutions designed to promote these ideas and actions?

Notes

- 1 I would like to acknowledge the help I have received from Alison Norwood and Gary Edwards in managing the publication of this *IDS Bulletin*. I also appreciate the support from IDS Director Melissa Leach and Research Director John Gaventa. Thanks also to Richard Jolly and Frances Stewart for very helpful reviews, and to Peter Bailey, Lawrence Haddad, Kerrie Howard, Bonnie Koenig, Simon Maxwell, Sarah Mistry and Ann Van Dusen for earlier conversations. However, I am solely responsible for the views expressed. All of the archive articles are reprinted as published at the time without change. Authors’ views may have changed since the time of publication.
- 2 See Toye (1987) for a similar review of the internationalisation of development studies.
- 3 Debate also revolved around Dudley Seers as the director of the two-year MPhil course. In 1975–77, the students challenged the preoccupation in the syllabus on issues in ‘developing countries’, asking why there was hardly any consideration of development policy and experience in Britain itself. In response, Seers adapted the syllabus to include a major case study of a new concern for British policy: the discovery of North Sea oil and its implications for development policy in Scotland and the rest of the UK in general. The paper can be found as Chapter 3 in Jolly (2012). The definition was not clear-cut. Many ‘developing countries’ have higher per capita incomes than some of the ‘developed’ countries. Also, typical problems of ‘developing countries’ – foreign exchange shortage, persistent unemployment and unremitting inflation – can be found in

- Southern Europe too (Seers with IDS M.Phil. Faculty and Students 1977; IDS M.Phil. Faculty and Students 1977). The role of the state was a key element then and has ever since been a source of debate.
- 4 Compare these with Maxwell's three aspects of comparisons, convergence and connections as features of development studies in North and South (Maxwell 1998, this *IDS Bulletin*), and Lipton's three suggestions of analogues, interactions and conceptual transfers (Lipton 1987, in Drabek 1987) and 'juxtapositions' (Leach and Fairhead 2007).
 - 5 Defined as 'the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society in which they live' (de Haan and Maxwell 1998: 2, this *IDS Bulletin*).
 - 6 In 2000, the UN General Assembly called a special session five years on from the adoption of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action at the World Summit on Social Development held in March 1995.
 - 7 After these meetings in 1999–2000, held jointly between ODI and the New Policy Institute, ODI convened a meeting in 2007 with the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Overseas Development (APGOOD) to address the question of whether policymakers and practitioners can learn lessons about poverty reduction strategies across the boundary between developed and developing countries. The speaker was the Rt Hon. Hilary Benn MP, then Secretary of State for International Development at the Department for International Development. Mr Benn cited a number of areas where learning could be shared between South and North; he also stated that successful development was going to depend on sharing expertise and knowledge and that this should not be one-way traffic (Benn 2007). The possibilities for shared learning included education and training, microfinance and participatory budgeting, and democratic processes.
 - 8 For example, the IDS Participation Resource Centre has over 25 studies of participation methods carried out in the UK.
 - 9 It should be noted that this was 12 years after the United Nations Children's Fund had started promoting ORS in developing countries in 1982, often with USAID support.
 - 10 Seers had challenged the United Nations in 1977 (Seers 1977: 7, this *IDS Bulletin*): 'If certain countries of Europe, including Britain, and the Third World share problems with common causes, then is there not a basis for much greater cooperation in international fora, such as UNCTAD [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development], on many issues for example monitoring the TNCs [transnational corporations]? And might not European governments benefit from technical assistance from agencies with international experience in problems like structural unemployment (e.g. the ILO)?'
 - 11 The situation can be summed up (from Colin McFarlane of the Open University): 'These categories are active imaginative barriers that militate against the possibility of different countries to learn from one another' (McFarlane 2006).
 - 12 Richard Rose of the University of Strathclyde: 'Elected officials searching for lessons prefer to turn to those whose overall political values are consistent with their own...' (Rose 1991: 17).

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Glossary

- APGOOD** All-Party Parliamentary Group on Overseas Development
- EADI** European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes
- EEC** European Economic Community
- HDR** Human Development Report
- IDS** Institute of Development Studies
- IFPRI** International Food Policy Research Institute
- ILO** International Labour Organization
- IMF** International Monetary Fund
- MMR** measles, mumps and rubella
- NGO** non-governmental organisation
- ODI** Overseas Development Institute
- OECD** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- ORS** oral rehydration salts
- PSE** poverty and social exclusion
- SDG** Sustainable Development Goal
- STEPS** Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability
- TNC** transnational corporation
- UK** United Kingdom
- UNCTAD** United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
- UNDP** United Nations Development Programme
- US** United States
- USAID** United States Agency for International Development

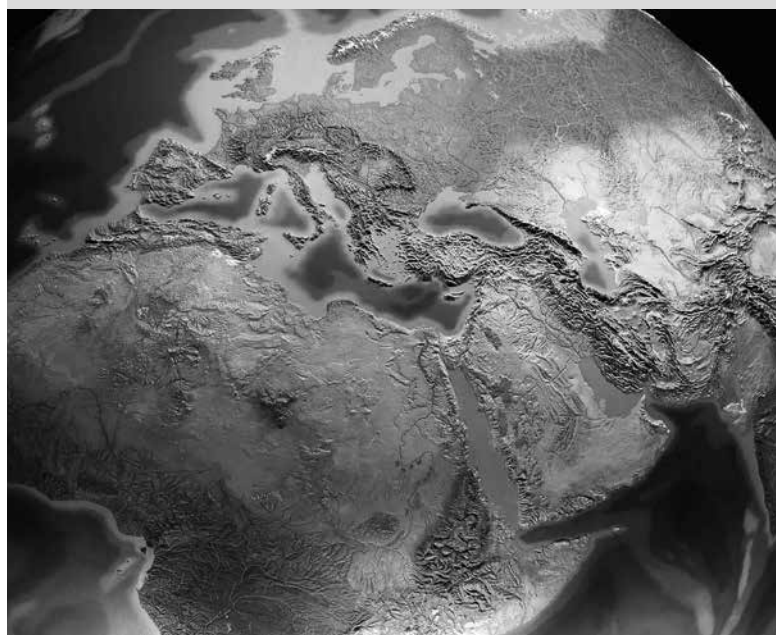
IDS Bulletin

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HAS UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENT COME OF AGE?

Editor **Richard Longhurst**



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Editorial

Britain's predicament

For the past four years the major industrial OECD countries have been in the throes of a crisis brought to a head by the oil price rises of 1973-74, but arising from longer-run difficulties which had already begun to appear by the late 1960s. The crisis is by no means over. The situation of the economically stronger countries such as the USA, Japan and West Germany seems to be on the upturn but the recovery of others including Britain is still very much in doubt. With increasing oil output, Britain's balance of payments is rapidly improving—but this is far from a sufficient condition for dealing with unemployment, stagnation in key sectors, regional imbalance, low productivity and decline or collapse in the social services. And in any case the issues for Britain are not simply economic, but involve also social and political problems which recession has sharpened: the difficulties of coming to terms with Scottish, Welsh and Irish nationalism; racial conflict; political violence; persistent poverty; the erosion of the welfare state; and corruption and decay in our police and local government bureaucracies.

A time of crisis presents both dangers and opportunities, bringing into sharp relief difficulties which previously escaped notice, but possibly also creating conditions in which to seek for more fundamental solutions. The dangers are, of course, increased if British economic policy ignores the deeper problems (as several of our contributors argue) and concentrates on short-run symptoms rather than long-run causes; seeks solutions primarily by aiming at rates of GNP growth (the 5 per cent endorsed both by the NEDC and the OECD) which are unrealistic in present circumstances, beyond anything Britain has achieved in the past and which fail to deal with the structural causes underlying our current difficulties (Richard Jolly); is unable to look beyond the problems and instruments of short-run demand management (B. S. Minhas); believes that if only we could control the money supply or (alternatively) if only we could make incomes policy stick our difficulties would be over; or places too much faith in the ability of legislation to settle difficult problems such as race relations or regional devolution; or succumbs to the almost millenarian faith that our troubles will be calmed by North Sea oil.

The danger is equally one of responding too narrowly to our international predicament. The conventional debate between policies of free trade with deflation or import control with expansion poses the issues far too starkly for either analysis or prescription. This debate largely ignores the real costs of measures aimed at solving our difficulties in the short-run but in ways which in the long-run would tend to maintain inappropriate patterns of international specialisation or damage the fragile economies of our Third World neighbours: such as allowing technological advance to proceed without any sense of long-run world industrial balance, let alone the employment or other human costs; or restricting imports of cheap manufactures from the poorer countries without adequate consideration of the opportunities for mutual adjustment; or promoting our arms exports to developing countries (Mary Kaldor); or imposing and administering immigration restrictions in such a way as to harm race relations in our own country and damage relations with (and exports to) several important countries in the Third World.

The relevance of development studies

It is with some trepidation that we undertake in this issue of the *Bulletin* to analyse some of these dangers and to call attention to some of the opportunities which lie beyond them. Most of us¹ lack direct experience, except in our capacity as citizens and residents, in dealing with British problems. Further, the *direct* analogy between Britain and the developing countries is, as most of our contributors point out, rather suspect. To be sure, there are many similarities: structural unemployment, inflation and balance of payments difficulties; the emigration of professional manpower; the visiting experts from the IMF; regional imbalance and the difficulty of inducing investment and expansion. But even if we hold these in common they indicate shared features of underdevelopment, rather than comparable patterns of development.

And the differences are critical. We are, after all, an industrial country and many of our problems are those of over-development or the wrong kind of development, for instance: an agricultural sector that is too small and overspecialised

¹ From this caveat we should except some of our distinguished contributors from outside the IDS: Stuart Holland, Barbara Ward, Mary Kaldor, Brian Johnson and Michael Allaby.

(Brian Johnson); wasteful methods of energy production and use (Barbara Ward); disease patterns created by stress, lack of exercise and overconsumption (Michael Lipton); and over-specialisation in highly complex defence and aerospace technology (Mary Kaldor). We are still (though decreasingly so) an exporter of technology and culture, including, as Richard Batley and Alan Rew point out, our new town housing policy. We still have large investments abroad (Stuart Holland) and remain the home base of several of the larger multi-national corporations, including some operating in the Third World.²

Nevertheless we believe that the analytical approaches of 'development studies' can suggest new ways of studying Britain's admittedly different problems. For a variety of reasons—cogently explained by Osvaldo Sunkel in a previous issue of the *IDS Bulletin* (vol. 8, no. 3, March, 1977)—planners and social scientists working in developing countries became aware of the inadequacy of policies based on the conventional methods of analysis well *before* the present crisis raised doubts about them in the major industrial countries. As both B. S. Minhas and Stuart Holland point out below, monetary policy and Keynesian demand management are simply not workable in most developing countries; and the prime emphasis of economic policy has *always* been on the structure of production or supply. The inadequacy of growth in GNP as the prime objective of development policy with little regard for distribution, employment, welfare and structural change became ever clearer during the period of relatively high growth rates in the developing countries in the 1960s. (Paradoxically, at about the same time Britain was beginning to give more emphasis to growth in her economic policy and somewhat less than before to welfare and full employment.) Moreover those in development studies have long become used to the idea that significant improvements may come only through major structural change, often accompanied by acute social conflict. And finally, the vulnerability of Third World countries to external economic and political pressures has made us increasingly aware of the consequences of international dependence and of the need for self-reliant strategies of development.

In none of these respects is a 'development approach' completely new, nor is it narrowly confined to 'developing countries'. Indeed, as

Dudley Seers argues so persuasively, the intellectual division of labour between development studies and other social sciences becomes increasingly difficult to define. But we believe that the issues have been posed earlier and somewhat more sharply in countries at the periphery than in the industrialised centres of Europe and North America.

Further, those of us who argue that rapid growth and industrialisation do not necessarily bring development in the Third World can readily identify parallels in the over-industrialisation of Britain, a convergence which is brought out most clearly in the sectoral papers by Michael Lipton, Alan Rew and Richard Batley, Brian Johnson and Michael Allaby, and Barbara Ward. Redistribution, alternative cultures and lifestyles, small units of production and consumption rather than large, decentralisation and self-reliance; these are all themes which emerge both in the development literature and in blueprints for change in Britain.

One of the most troublesome aspects of developing a conservationist, self-reliant strategy of change in Britain is dealing with its possible implications for trade and other transactions with the Third World. This is considered carefully in the paper by Brian Johnson and Michael Allaby who contend that the altered (and increased) agricultural production they advocate in the UK would not require as much adjustment in our trade with the developing countries as with our European Common Market partners. It is less certain whether the same can be said of the case for energy conservation persuasively explored by Barbara Ward, which would surely have major consequences for oil production and prices, at least if put into effect by other industrial consumers as well as Britain. Even developing countries which would otherwise stand to gain by lower oil prices might view with concern, for example, any consequent loss in OPEC's bargaining power *vis-a-vis* the industrial countries. This is not to say, however, that adjustment would be impossible or that the long-run interests of both energy consuming and energy producing countries may not be fairly close as Posner argues in his review of an IDS communications paper on North Sea Oil. Oil producers the world over (including Britain) are increasingly worried about the depletion of their reserves and what happens to them 'after oil'; for both producers and consumers have long-run interests in conservation, however important the differences between them on timing and short-run adjustment.

Neither Britain's own development, nor that of the developing countries can be discussed, there-

² The implications of Britain as a base for multinational operations were explained in a paper by Paul Kesterton and Paul Spray prepared for a Workshop on Britain and Development at which several of the papers in this *Bulletin* were discussed.

fore, without taking account of Britain's changing place in the world economy. This is partly a matter of history. Britain's emergence as the major industrial and imperial power and her subsequent decline have had momentous consequences for the patterns of development and underdevelopment established both in the Third World and in Britain herself. Such historic links continue to shape events even when, as Michael Lipton argues in his book *The Erosion of a Relationship: India and Britain since 1960* (Lipton & Firm, OUP, 1975)—they are explicitly rejected by both former colony and former metropolis.³ Ray Crotty forcefully argues that Ireland's present problems descend directly from her relationships with Britain in the past; and that they can only be dealt with by major changes in the structure of Irish society, changes which would also require the restructuring of Ireland's relationships with Britain. Mary Kaldor suggests that Britain has specialised excessively in defence and aerospace technology both in order to maintain her status as a major military power and to solve, by arms production and exports, short-run difficulties in employment and the balance of payments. This has serious costs in terms of the diversion of resources and technological innovation from alternative uses, in terms of our relations with other arms producing countries and our participation in the arms race, and in terms of the flow of arms to the developing countries.

To a large extent historic connections between Britain and the Third World are being transformed by new international influences including the expansion and transformation of the world economic system, the growing power and resources of the multinational corporations, the emergence of the socialist bloc and the cold war and the increasing integration of certain leading Third World exporters into the manufacturing structure of world production. The problems posed in Britain are not dissimilar to those affecting the developing countries; the decline in our international economic bargaining power due to our lack of competitiveness and recurrent balance of payments difficulties, and the problem of making the activities of multinational corporations compatible with national economic strategies (Stuart Holland). In some ways, however, we are less vulnerable than the developing countries. Foreign multinational corporations invest heavily in the UK, Britain

herself is the home base of several multinational corporations with extensive investments abroad (though this may not be as much of an advantage as it looks, given that even 'British' multinational corporations would not find it difficult to relocate if things became difficult for them in the UK). We export more arms than we import. We rely on doctors from Sri Lanka, India and other developing countries as well as exporting them to the USA, Canada or Australia. In other respects, however, (especially militarily as Mary Kaldor observes) we may depend more heavily upon our NATO and EEC partners than developing countries like Iran or India do upon, say, the USA or the USSR. Although the precise nature of our international predicament and the way we cope with it differs from that of countries in the Third World, we have as much to learn from them as they do from us.

From theory to practice

It is one thing to advocate—like most of the papers in this *Bulletin*—a less growth-oriented, more self-reliant strategy of change in Britain. It is quite another to put it into effect. Several of our contributors begin by looking at the changes necessary in one sector, but end up with a far broader set of prescriptions cutting across a number of different areas. Alan Rew and Richard Batley, for example, criticise "welfare monism" and argue that housing and welfare policy cannot be considered separately from its interrelation with urban growth, industrial production and employment. Barbara Ward's proposals for the conservation of energy would involve changes in transport policy, methods of agricultural production, housing, employment and probably defence. Michael Lipton suggests that a comprehensive strategy of health care would include alterations in education, patterns of work and leisure, sport, transport and habits of consumption such as smoking and the fiscal policies affecting them. All in all our contributors make a persuasive case for comprehensive rather than piecemeal approaches to our problems. Nevertheless they differ in that some of them (in particular Michael Lipton) seem to envisage changes in one sector setting off a wave of 'spread effects' elsewhere; while others (like Stuart Holland) offer more broadly based strategies for national recovery.

Anyone who has worked in development studies—or for that matter any other policy science—is aware of the difficulty of moving between the analysis of problems, prescriptions for dealing with them and back again to assessment of the conditions under which they can (or cannot) be implemented. The difficulties posed can be seen

³ Lipton's argument is that India overreacted by cutting links with Britain even more than self-interest alone would dictate; parallels in Britain's reactions to its former Empire are not hard to find.

most sharply in relation to the imaginary speech by a Minister of Health which Michael Lipton uses as the vehicle for his arguments. Under what circumstances might a British Minister of Health *actually* deliver such a speech and what response (derision or delight?) would it get from his colleagues? How easy would it be to buy off the vested interests he talks about? How would one deal with the vested interests of the medical profession? Would the combination of incentives and alterations in legislation really bring major changes in the structure of health care? How might British politicians hoping to bring about such radical changes win support for their views from those whom Lipton regards as being at the unimaginative centre of the British political spectrum? Would a "non-partisan" approach to health—or any other major issue of social concern—necessarily be the best way of bringing this about? Under what circumstances could politicians develop the vision, leadership and *support* to introduce such fundamental changes in the approach to health or to any other sector, which an alternative development strategy involves? And what are the conditions for such changes to be followed through in other sectors as well? Does the present crisis create the conditions under which the necessary political support could be mobilised for change? How much dissatisfaction with existing conditions—unemployment, declining real incomes, deterioration in social services—is needed? How could this dissatisfaction be mobilised and what are the main political obstacles that would be encountered?

Such questions are all the more necessary because even our practising politicians tend to discuss their policies mainly in terms of economic desirability without assessing (or perhaps deliberately preferring to ignore) their possible political repercussions. As a former economic adviser to the government recently put it in *The Times*:

All economic analysis in this field has to assume that the Government is in a position to enforce the policy recommended—e.g. that a monetarist Government will remain in power however much unemployment turns out to be needed to prevent wage and price escalation, or that an incomes-policy Government will be willing to face and win a confrontation with a powerful union determined to break the rules. Only a visionary optimist would claim today, as you seem to be doing about monetary policy, or as advocates of income policy such as myself have done in the past, that there is any likelihood of either of the main parties being willing to face enough unemployment, or enough confron-

tation, to make it credible to the trade unions that they can and will carry out their policy.⁴ Nor is it always easy to circumvent the administrative obstacles to change. In their article on urban housing, Alan Rew and Richard Batley suggest that planning and bureaucratic decisions have tended to 'redistribute' social problems—to other people, to other agencies or to other sectors—instead of solving them. This is typical of a situation in which changes are mainly seen as being introduced from the top by politicians, planners and civil servants.⁵ Although most of us advocate more participatory styles of development, there is not enough discussion in this *Bulletin* of the way participation itself can generate the momentum for balanced change; except by Stuart Holland who also comes closest to spelling out the particular British groups he thinks are most likely to press for reform. Yet even he gives too little attention to the conflicts from which changes are most likely to arise, to the necessary process of mobilising political support and to the methods by which genuine control over the national economy might in practice be secured.

Any strategy for major change in British society would also have to consider how the necessary international adjustments could be ensured: for example the modifications in our links with NATO implied in Mary Kaldor's proposals for cutting back our arms production and military spending; or the revisions of the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Common Market which would permit the kind of decentralisation and diversification of agricultural production proposed by Brian Johnson; or the international trade adjustments both with the industrial countries of the OECD and with the developing countries that would be made necessary by structural changes in our own economy. The adverse international pressures might be considerable—the more so given the recent reinforcement of international economic dependence. Yet we need not assume that the room for international manoeuvre is completely blocked.⁶ Enough dissatisfaction with the workings of the world economy has been expressed in recent years—to show that other countries, too, not merely in the Third World, have recognised the need for reform in its operations. A new assessment is badly needed in order to distinguish the real inter-

4 Letter from Lord Roberthall to *The Times*, September 16, 1977.

5 It may sometimes, however, also be typical of a decentralised approach, in which local groups take initiatives in solving local problems as they see them.

6 See, for example, the discussion in *IDS Bulletin*, Vol 7, No. 4, on UNCTAD IV.

national constraints from those which are merely manipulated to protect vested interests in our *own* society from necessary change.

Such an assessment would also enable us to identify possible international sources of support for our new position, some of these, perhaps, from outside the 'inner circle' of the industrial OECD countries, in the countries of the Third World whose interests on some issues we share.

All this is to say that both social scientists and practical planners need to give much more thought

to how fundamental changes in strategy can be made politically and administratively feasible, in the rich countries as much as in the Third World. Making realistic proposals for structural change is a difficult task in any society—not least our own. But in many areas it is the starting point for the international changes in which much of the advance in the poorer countries of the Third World will depend.

ARJ and RL.

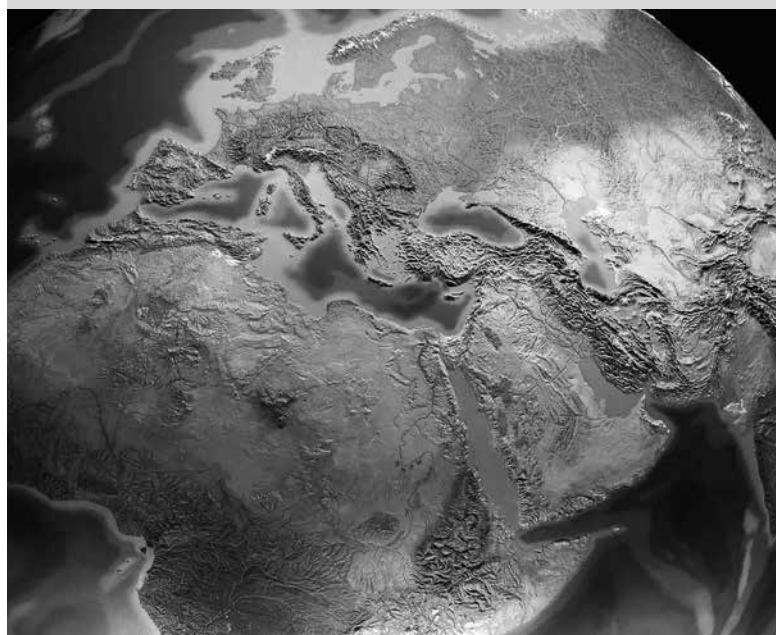
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Back to the Ivory Tower? The Professionalisation of Development Studies and their Extension to Europe

Dudley Seers

The convention is that development studies cover only the 'developing' countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, a sort of academic counterpart of OXFAM. But this convention is ceasing to be viable for European social scientists, and indeed it is starting to be harmful. The assumption that 'their' problems are intrinsically different from 'ours' is not merely patronising; it has become a hindrance to the transfer of experience. It is also associated with political commitment of a sort that hinders professional progress.

The extension of development studies to Europe

The artificiality of the distinction between 'developed' and 'developing' is perhaps most obvious in Europe. Portugal, for example, has been a member of OECD's Development Assistance Committee, as well as the group of 'developed market economies' at UNCTAD. Yet anyone familiar with 'developing' countries, especially in Latin America, finds the Portuguese scene instantly recognisable (Bienefeld and Seers, 1976). A similar structural dualism, with much lower incomes, worse social conditions and higher fertility in the (relatively large) population of the rural areas. A similar concentration in the ownership of property, especially land. A similar pattern of trade, with tourist services, primary products and textiles exchanged for arms, equipment, intermediate products and sophisticated consumer goods. A similar prevalence of transnational corporations (TNCs) in secondary industry and the services (especially big hotels). Similar inappropriate technologies and associated chronic unemployment, relieved (as in many 'developing' countries especially in Central America and the Caribbean) by large-scale migration abroad. A not very different cultural dependence on foreign styles of consumption and on imported ideologies, fed by foreign firms, television programmes, etc. The same sort of bureaucracy with a striking combination of complacency and inefficiency. Similar organised terrorism of both Right and Left and similar political manipulation by dominant powers.

Two basic politico-economic patterns characterise 'developing' countries. In one, a military dictatorship maintains a strong and stable currency by

creating a favourable climate for foreign capital, which implies suppressing trade union activity and political opposition; in the other, a 'soft' government is unable to resolve internal class conflicts, the symptoms of its failure being chronic inflation and foreign exchange difficulties, relieved only by periodic devaluation.¹ Portugal has demonstrated both patterns recently—the former before the 1974 coup, the latter after it. Such a sudden and complete political somersault is also itself characteristic.

Roughly similar socio-economic features and patterns, including heavy dependence on labour migration and tourism, can be seen in many countries of Southern Europe—Spain, Malta, Yugoslavia, Greece, Cyprus and Turkey—and also in the Irish Republic and Finland. So 'Third World' experience—for example in dealing with the TNCs—is likely to be relevant to their problems too. Their social sciences would also gain from an injection of the work of Latin American theorists—as has indeed started to occur (Guzman, 1976); this is likely to be more appropriate to such countries than neo-classical economics, or other theories imported from culturally dominant countries.²

But if 'development studies' are to cover these countries, why not Italy too? It shows many of the same characteristics, notably a big economic and social gap between the cities of the North and the rural areas of the South (including Sicily and Sardinia). It displays economic, cultural and political dependence (including reliance on foreign tourism and labour migration), though less than in Portugal. Successive Italian governments have also faced typical 'Latin American' problems of chronic foreign exchange deficits and inflation, especially since the 1973 rise in the price of oil. And if Italy, why not Britain, the other economically 'weak' member of the EEC? It is true that Britain is—in contrast to most 'developing'

1 There are of course hybrids, especially where (as in Argentina and Chile) the structural causes of inflation are too deep-seated to be eradicated by even ruthless military regimes.

2 IDS, in collaboration with CLACSO, is about to issue a select bibliography of key Latin American writings on development (with references to English and French translations where available).

countries—highly industrialised and urbanised. Although Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are in some senses less developed than South-East and Central England, regional economic inequalities are mitigated by a powerful fiscal machine. Poverty, even in the Highlands of Scotland, is not comparable with what can be found in Latin America or Portugal. Moreover, much of industry is still British-owned. The country continues to be a generator as well as an importer of capital, technology, arms, equipment and cultural artefacts (such as television programmes). It continues to absorb immigrant manpower of various types (especially from the Irish Republic), even if the net inflow is now negligible; and many British tourists continue to visit the Continent, although there is now a strong flow in the opposite direction. Britain is, moreover, a country which has been falling behind rather than failing to catch up.

But the question is not the trivial quasi-joke about whether Britain is a 'developing' country. It is whether the insights gained in development studies would be helpful to those working on British problems, in view of its dependence on foreign-based TNCs, and the difficulty its government finds in reducing the pace of inflation, the foreign exchange deficit and the level of unemployment (despite exceptional trade union cooperation and mounting revenues from North Sea gas and oil) (M Phil faculty and students, 1977).

Typical symptoms of dependence are the tendency to await an acceleration of economic growth in the United States as the solution to national economic problems, a reliance on TNCs for new investment bringing modern technology—as in the North Sea oilfields—and the publicity given to arrivals of IMF missions. (It is rather curious, even dispiriting, to hear in Britain now the same old arguments for and against 'monetarist' policies which have dominated Latin American economic controversy for the last quarter-century. British politicians are apparently, like British economists, too parochial even to be aware of them.)

Development studies have made us familiar with the core-periphery concept: Western Europe seems to have its own core and periphery. What is more, there is a definite geographical pattern to it, with the European periphery³ forming a ring around the core, whether defined in terms of countries or of regions cutting across national boundaries

(including in the core, for example, Northern Italy and most of England).

This raises a number of intriguing questions. How is this European pattern related to the dependence of the whole of Western Europe on the United States? To what extent can we see a similar pattern in Eastern Europe? If so, is the core East Germany? In that case, can we speak of a continental dependence system (a 'new order'?) in Europe based on Germany, West and East? Does this suggest an eventual integration of Eastern and Western Europe? Or is the whole of Eastern Europe too heavily dependent on the Soviet Union?

Insights acquired from work in the development field would throw light on several European policy issues, including those raised by the enlargement of the EEC. For example, anyone who has worked on industrial or agricultural policy overseas will know that a simplistic cost-benefit analysis based on internal rates of return for individual projects such as EEC financial agencies use (Bienefeld and Seers, 1976), will be far from suitable for evaluating sectoral or local programmes with objectives that include reducing unemployment and inequality. (Aid agencies such as ODM might well turn their attention and at least a small part of their resources to such problems: they should certainly be involved in negotiations on enlargement.)

This extension of development studies also has interesting implications for 'North-South' negotiations. If certain countries of Europe, including Britain, and the Third World share problems with common causes, then is there not a basis for much greater cooperation in international fora, such as UNCTAD, on many issues for example monitoring the TNCs? And might not European governments benefit from technical assistance from agencies with international experience in problems like structural unemployment (e.g. the ILO)?

This geographical extension of development studies would not merely contribute to a deeper understanding of European problems, but also conversely throw light on the problems of the countries conventionally covered by development studies. The ring-like periphery of Europe prompts us to reflect on the wider significance of spatial analysis, and to look for similar patterns in other areas: the Northern half of the Western Hemisphere, Southern Africa and the South Pacific spring to mind. This would be a refinement on the somewhat global core-periphery analysis current in development studies.

³ This concept will be explored more fully in later work.

Political expedience and development studies

What stops the inclusion of the European periphery in development studies? It is the convention under which the field deals with aided countries. The origins of its current definitions lie in political expediency allied to commercialism, humanitarianism and academic territorialism—a powerful and somewhat unholy alliance.

As the Cold War intensified in the 1950s and former colonies became independent, political attention in the metropolitan countries focused on problems of 'underdevelopment', which were seen as potential breeding grounds for communism. When three groupings emerged in the politics of international organisations—the 'developed' countries with high *per capita* incomes, the 'centrally planned', and the large residual category of the 'developing'—the last was treated as qualitatively different and alone in need of support from aid agencies and development economists.

This tripartite division of the world was of course both novel and highly artificial. But, as I have pointed out earlier (Seers, 1976), it did have some basis in reality. It recognised the common problems and interests of the governments of 'developing' countries *vis à vis* the companies and governments of richer countries) and their common historic resentments. The governments in the 'developed' countries were prepared to institute aid programmes designed, *inter alia*, to keep those outside the communist bloc still 'developing'. Yet it allowed the bureaucratic class in the communist countries to consider governments of various political complexions as anti-imperialist, and to lend them diplomatic support while leaving to the imperial powers themselves the responsibility for financial and technical aid.

Soon the three world classification acquired a life of its own. Typically, the governing councils of international agencies have balanced representation between 'centrally-planned', 'developed' and 'developing' countries, and so have their committees, expert groups, missions, etc. Many governments of 'developing' countries have come to consider 'Third World unity' a major source of strength. All sorts of institutions have grown up to facilitate 'South-South' and 'North-South' discussions and negotiations.

Academic work in 'developed' countries on the problems of the 'developing' countries was also influenced; though it had started much earlier, especially in the fields of anthropology and colonial economies. When aid departments and the United Nations agencies and regional commissions were

established, in response to the various political interests mentioned above, much greater opportunities were provided for both field and desk research on 'developing' countries. Special development institutions such as IDS were also set up.

Those engaged in research in this field have accepted the geographical definition used by its sponsors.⁴ Moreover, one is bound to say that some of it has not been as objective as is perhaps customary in the social sciences. There has been an implicit assumption that the ultimate goals would be European-style political institutions and levels of living within a capitalist system—basically the same goals as those of colonial governments. Many researchers in colonial times and subsequently have also assumed (usually tacitly) that those with political power were sufficiently motivated and efficient to achieve these ends, and that they could and would make good use of technical and financial assistance. This has amounted to a new (though very different) 'trahaison des clercs'. Elaborate models were worked out to help policy-makers accelerate economic growth and (when political concerns changed) to deal with problems such as high-level manpower shortages, unemployment, inequality and poverty. Development research in all these areas has been marked by conceptual imprecision and a very casual use of statistics—as was inevitable if 'results' were to be provided for policy-makers, but primary data were meagre or non-existent.

Several development courses were established in Europe. These were more or less explicitly designed to 'train' people how to run their own countries (often being successors to colonial service courses), though they sometimes also had places for those from 'developed' countries who were primarily interested in the problems of the 'Third World'.

Many European academics have also been heavily involved in advisory work on 'development'. These have often done little or no similar work on the problems of their own countries. The very understandable desire to do something about the

⁴ The idea of treating European countries as cases for development is not, however, really at all novel. Development studies were born in Europe. I am not referring to the work of Adam Smith or Karl Marx or even the industrialisation debate in the Soviet Union in the 1920s: the first two development studies in the modern sense were written by Rosenstein-Rodan (1943) and Martin, né Mandelbaum (1947). They dealt with the post-war development needs of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. These were followed by work on the Italian South by Rosenstein-Rodan, Chenery and others. This work on Europe was, however, submerged in the swelling torrent of research on Africa, Asia and Latin America.

poverty of the rural masses in the tropics has been reinforced by rather flattering invitations to propose solutions to *their* problems.

Inevitably, much of this work has been superficial. We economists in particular have often offered advice without much knowledge of the history or the political context of the country concerned and therefore with little basis for framing the questions to be studied, let alone predicting the results of our advice. In fact, we have rarely known or even enquired what political interests our visits have served (and often the real motive of an invitation has been to obtain our signatures rather than our opinions). The actual outcome of such well-meaning intervention has sometimes been inadvertently to strengthen regimes obstructing the very changes we have advocated—which may of course sometimes have been the intention all along of the donor agencies sponsoring our travels. Indeed, there is now a fairly widespread disillusion about the effectiveness of high-level technical assistance in the face of powerful hostility to social change or indifference.

Events in recent years, especially the 'oil crisis' and the subsequent recession, have made the three-world classification much less realistic. As explained above, some European countries have developed 'Latin American' symptoms: indeed, few of them are acceptable any longer as models to the rest of the world nor do their governments have the resources—given their domestic problems—to sustain big aid programmes or paternalistic roles. Communist countries have also developed unevenly and no longer form such a homogeneous group with respect to either institutions or policy. The growing detente between their governments and those of capitalist countries raises basic questions about the rationale of a world classification that originated in the Cold War. Enormous differences in politico-economic power have also appeared within the Third World. The *per capita* incomes of most oil exporters and of some other countries—to take the common yardstick on the conventional approach—now exceed those of some European countries (indeed Kuwait has the highest *per capita* income in the world), and what is more to the point, their governments have essential products to sell and capital to invest.

One can perhaps see parallels with the blurring of class divisions inside European countries, where sections of the working class have achieved a bargaining strength and income levels higher than many of those conventionally considered 'middle class' (and labour studies have been extended

beyond their traditional field, the manual workers).

The oil crisis not merely undermined the old three-world classification, and demonstrated that there were other ways of obtaining capital than waiting for aid, it threw doubt on the basically optimistic assumptions that underlay much of the research and advice in this field. Limits to oil and other non-renewable resources have raised serious doubts whether all the countries of the world will become 'developed' even in the remote future, and their populations as a whole able to afford cars and other elements in the level of living of the European working class. While we are not entering a 'zero sum' game, the sum no longer seems infinite.

International relations are characterised by a new ruthlessness, and the position of many 'developed' countries, especially those dependent on imported oil, has become precarious. As happened inside the industrial countries themselves, the representatives of the poor are not waiting any more for charitable concessions, but starting to organise to extract what they can.

The quandary of the European academic

What is the European social scientist to do? Certainly some will continue to carry out research, training and consultancy exclusively on behalf of 'developing' countries and much of this has no doubt a certain value. Often the underlying assumption is that it is desirable to redistribute income towards these countries, however, the idea of a European devoting his energies to shifting resources to foreign governments now seems rather anomalous, especially if they go to support and strengthen the bureaucracy. Yet advocacy of redistribution inside other countries raises uncomfortable questions about paternalism and the propriety of urging sacrifices on other bourgeois, quite apart from the very doubtful effectiveness of such advice. Analogous questions are raised even more sharply for those whose work implies the need for others to carry out revolutions.

This complex of intellectual and moral uncertainties recalls the doubts that troubled the European intelligentsia in the Reformation. The reality is that there is very little we can do as either officials or academics to improve social conditions in other continents—although we can perhaps make them worse! It is not surprising that some European social scientists who had specialised in development have been leaving the field. For those who remain, the first step in changing our

role is to acknowledge the obvious social and political problems in our own country; the second is to accept the validity and utility of nationalism as a shield against dependence; and the third to realise that transfers of resources to countries which are poorer may well, given the extent of our own problems and the difficulties of reaching those in real need, not increase net welfare.

For some, the next step after this is to search for interface policies that will reconcile the needs of those in developed and developing countries. Others see their task as exploring—in alliance with the ecologists—what changes in lifestyles in developed countries would relieve the pressure on oil and other scarce resources, thus creating greater economic space for satisfying basic needs in poorer countries. I will not go into detail here on the pros and cons of these new approaches. They are certainly much healthier than the old concern with the policies of foreign governments. But they raise big questions of political feasibility and do not entirely avoid the invidious task of defining *other* people's needs.

Perhaps some European social scientists need to draw more far-reaching conclusions. The kernel of development studies will surely become the concentration of economic and political power, and the consequent creation of poverty, both absolute and relative, wherever this occurs, not just in the so-called Third World, but also in Europe. This process of marginalisation is not purely economic: it includes threats to national, regional or ethnic identity. Its study involves analysis of the institutions, especially international which in various ways transmit the techniques, tastes, theories and ideologies that generate inequality—including inequalities between and within European countries.

Explaining its causal dynamics leads into deeper historical, as well as broader geographical, analysis than has been customary in our field so far. It means investigating the origins of the present world structure, especially the creation and dissolution of the colonial system, which was of course based in Europe, and drawing on all parts of the world for case studies in teaching as well as research.

The professionalisation of development studies will be helped by their extension to European countries and *vice versa*. Besides providing fresh insights into national and regional problems in Europe, the application of development analysis there will make obsolete, at least in academic work, the professionally dubious distinction between 'developed' and 'developing' countries,

the models and the emulators.⁵ Conversely, it is difficult to extend development studies to Europe until we have discarded a classification of countries which originated primarily in political expediency.

That there are strongly entrenched vested interests against this change of emphasis is implicit in the foregoing analysis. To abandon the 'Third World' as a category, and give up using the phrase itself, would dilute the political cement holding together a coalition which has become even more useful to the governments of the countries concerned. 'North-South' negotiations would lose their rationale:⁶ indeed both 'North' and 'South' would disappear as concepts (though of course the basic issues of commodity and energy policy and so forth would still need to be discussed).

The new approach threatens the political constituency of the bilateral aid administrator, based on transnational corporations and voluntary agencies, and seems heartless to those whose main concern is humanitarian. Some on the West European Left would find it hard to accept the validity of their own country's interests. Officials in Communist countries would be very suspicious of their own internal problems being put in this framework. Any European government (West or East) would find it hard to cooperate politically with governments of 'developing' countries or to apply for technical assistance, in part because of the residues of paternalism. Fundamental changes would be needed in the structures and procedures of international agencies and national administrations.

A heavy cost would also be borne by academics themselves: research covering exclusively 'developing' (or, for that matter, exclusively 'developed') countries would quickly become obsolete, lecture

⁵ I am sometimes asked how I reconcile my present position with my criticisms in the early 1960s of the naive transfer of economic theories developed in Europe and North America to countries in other continents with quite different institutions—e.g. in my 'The Limitations of the Special Case' (originally published in *Bulletin*, Oxford Institute of Economics and Statistics, 1962). In the first place, that battle has partly been won: social science syllabuses of universities in other continents are no longer modelled so closely on those of Europe and North America. But, in addition, the changes outlined above in the international scene have created conditions in which it is more constructive now to emphasise the common elements of problems. Besides, I was then arguing against transferring theories devised for the 'developed' countries to the 'Third World'. I am now advocating a transfer in the reverse direction: it seems that the theories devised for the 'developed' countries (such as Keynesian and other forms of neo-classical economics) are ceasing to be appropriate even in the countries where they originated.

⁶ The North-South 'dialogue' reflects the seating arrangements in the British House of Commons, where the parties confront each other: one might view the world political structure as more like the continuous arc of the French Chamber.

notes in the field of development studies might have to be torn up, reading lists substantially revised and inventories of textbooks written off. Libraries would need to be reorganised and their purchasing policies broadened. Training courses (if 'training' is the right word in this field) would have to include European material, and to aim at the enrolment of students from Europe who are working on European problems and of teachers from other continents. Offers of consultancies would be treated much more warily. Development studies as redefined above would no doubt remain a separate field characterised by interdisciplinarity, an historical approach, an emphasis on international determinants and a focus on institutional issues. It would still be marked by greater concern for social problems, particularly poverty, than is customary among academic social scientists, and greater need for the first-hand acquaintance with these problems that can only be provided by fieldwork (though of a less paternalistic kind). But the boundaries dividing it from the conventional social sciences would be hazier and easier to violate. Those in development institutes would have to familiarise themselves with work on their own country and also face the 'rigorous' standards of their colleagues in disciplinary departments. The latter on the other hand would hardly feel comfortable in closer contact with the messy and largely unquantifiable problems of the real world.

It will therefore take quite some time for development studies to escape from their traditional boundaries. From the viewpoint of the European academic, however, there would be major benefits to offset against the short-term costs of its redefinition. Awkward moral tensions would be eased. Challenging possibilities would be opened up for more objective and fundamental research, based (to the extent that quantitative analysis is possible) on proper statistics. We would be less at the mercy of changes in political winds. Our own social science syllabuses could be made more relevant to our own continental, national and regional problems. In addition, European social scientists could become genuine colleagues of those in other continents—something hardly possible so long as development studies exclude Europe.

We are brought back therefore to the old-fashioned conclusion that academics had best use

long spoons when supping with politicians. Their immunity from political pressures has been defended on the ground that it was necessary for innovative professional work. In development studies, this defence has been impaired. I am not, however, suggesting that the subject's social relevance should be reduced; rather that those inside government or outside should be left to draw whatever conclusions are relevant to their own occupation, nationality and ideology. The study of the constraints on national policy is potentially significant for people of many types, inside or outside government. Politicians and officials may well take more notice of the contributions of academics who are less partisan, and therefore more readily reconsider the assumptions on which their approaches are based.

But that would be so-to-speak a by-product. A more important result of some degree of detachment of development studies from the aid lobby is that this would facilitate the coverage of European problems. While it can be argued plausibly (if perhaps mistakenly) that development theory and experience, as conventionally defined, can contribute little to the analysis of the problems of countries such as the United States and the Soviet Union, this is obviously untrue of Portugal and other countries in the European periphery. They provide the bridge for the extension and thus professionalisation of development studies.

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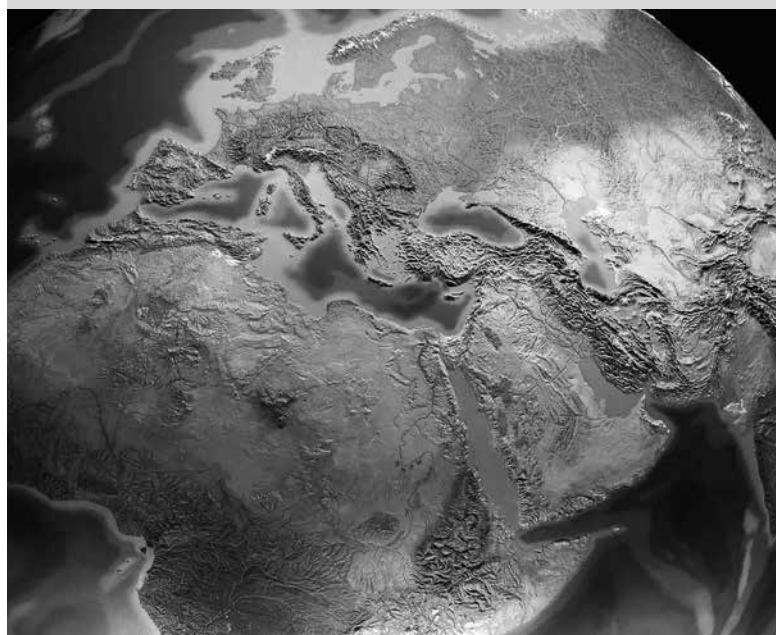
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HAS UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENT COME OF AGE?

Editor Richard Longhurst



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Redistribution with Sloth—Britain's problem?

Richard Jolly

Many if not most economic analyses of Britain's economic difficulties suggest that slow growth is at the heart of the problem—and an acceleration of growth the obvious cure. Past experience in Britain and in the Third World casts doubts on this. Except for the last three or four years, *per capita* growth rates in Britain since the war have been almost as fast or faster than at any time since the start of the industrial revolution. In terms of unemployment, income distribution and export-import balance Britain's post-war performance has also been better than for most of the last century.

Recent work on developing countries has shown that poverty, employment problems, inequality, foreign exchange difficulties and heavy international 'dependence' arise as much from the structure and pattern of a country's development as from its growth rate. Similarly, the eradication of these problems depends as much on structural change as on growth. If this is true for poor countries why not also for a country like Britain, very much richer and much more industrialised? Instead of our somewhat naive faith in growth and our short run monetarist or neo-Keynesian preoccupations—should we not direct economic policy much more explicitly towards what is needed to restructure the British economy in the short and over the longer run? Such restructuring would need to focus on a number of issues, but the concepts of basic needs and national self-reliance, approaches and priorities suggested in analyses of Third World problems, interpreted within the context of a still relatively rich, industrialised country, might provide helpful guidelines. It is not even clear that aggregate growth has more than a minor part to play in the process.

Britain's past economic performance

Since the industrial revolution began about two centuries ago, the long-run pattern of British economic development has been of very slow but relatively steady growth. There was little or no redistribution, except for the major and very important reduction in inequality between the slump of the 1930s and the establishment of the

welfare state by the mid 1950s.¹ The distinctive long run characteristic of the British pattern has been creeping growth rather than creeping socialism.

The long-run trends in British growth can be judged by the rates of increase of real GNP over the 30 years periods, shown in Table 1. The trend growth rate was just under 3 per cent per annum over the first part of the 19th century, dipped to just under 2½ per cent per annum in the middle and ended at just over 3 per cent. The average growth rate over the whole century was virtually identical to the 2.7 per cent per annum achieved over the period of nearly three decades following the second world war (1946-73). (Taking account of the last three or four years stagnation, the 1946-76 rate would be somewhat lower, probably 2.3 per cent per annum).

Table 1
British Economic Growth—long term growth rates
(average annual percentage increase)

Year	Real GNP	Real GNP per capita
1700-1745	0.3	0.3
1745-1785	0.9	0.3
1780-1800	1.8	0.3
1801/11-1831/41	2.9	1.5
1811/21-1841/51	2.9	1.4
1821/31-1851/61	2.3	0.4
1831/41-1861/71	2.2	0.4
1841/51-1871/71	2.5	1.4
1851/61-1881/91	3.2	2.0
1861/71-1891/1901	3.3	2.2
1901-1913	0.9	0.1
1921-1937	2.1	1.7
1938-1946	1.5	1.7
1946-1956	2.4	1.5
1956-1966	2.8	2.1
1966-1973	2.8	2.4
19th century average	2.7	1.4
1946-1973	2.7	2.0

Source:
until 1901—Phyllis Deane and W. A. Cole, *British Economic Growth*
20th century—calculated from *British Economy—Key Statistics 1900-1966* and recent NIESR reports.

In contrast with this slow, long haul of growth, redistribution of personal incomes has been quantitatively significant only in this century. Although there appear to have been minor improvements in the distribution of income in the quarter-century or so before 1914, when the basis

¹ Over the last few years, rapid inflation and various controls in incomes and profits appear to have brought other changes in distribution—though it is too early to assess reliably the extent of these or how permanent they will be.

for further changes was laid, the one major improvement in the last two centuries occurred in the two decades between the mid-1930s and the early 1950s. Over this period both pre-tax and post-tax income distribution improved substantially—the result of a marked reduction in unemployment and the introduction of a range of welfare state measures following the Second World War.²

Britain's comparative standing with other developed countries in respect to post war income distribution can be judged from Table 2.

national income in 1801 but had fallen to 4 per cent by 1948/57. Moreover, the share of profits, interest and mixed incomes halved from about 40 per cent to about 24 per cent over the same period (21 per cent by 1966, even lower in the last few years), though all of the latter decline took place during this century. In contrast employment incomes have increased—from some 44 per cent of national income in 1801 to some 73 per cent in 1966.

In terms of the living standards and styles of

Table 2

Distribution of Post-Tax Income in OECD Countries (percentage share of personal incomes by quintile groups)

	Year	Bottom 20%	Middle 60%	Top 20%	Total	Ratio top to bottom 20%
Australia	66/7	6.6	54.6	38.8	100.0	5.9
Canada	69	5.0	54.0	41.0	100.0	8.2
France	70	4.3	48.8	46.9	100.0	10.9
Germany	73	6.5	47.4	46.1	100.0	7.1
Italy	69	5.1	48.4	46.5	100.0	9.1
Japan	69	7.9	51.1	41.0	100.0	5.2
Netherlands	67	6.5	50.6	42.9	100.0	6.6
Norway	70	6.3	56.4	37.3	100.0	5.9
Spain	73/4	6.0	51.7	42.3	100.0	7.1
Sweden	72	6.6	56.4	37.0	100.0	5.6
United Kingdom	73	6.3	55.0	38.7	100.0	6.1
United States	72	4.5	52.6	42.9	100.0	9.5
Average		5.9	52.3	41.8	100.0	7.1

Source: OECD. Public Expenditure on Income Maintenance Programmes, OECD, Paris, July, 1976, p.109

Because only limited changes in the distribution of personal incomes occurred before the second world war, one must not assume that distribution in other respects has not changed. Income by factor shares has shifted markedly over the last two centuries. From the beginning of the 19th century to post second world war, the share of national income from all forms of rent declined dramatically. Rents were some 20 per cent of

both the rich and the really poor, these have meant significant changes. From the beginning of the 20th century, for example, the share of home-rents had fallen from about 9 per cent of national income to about 3 per cent, largely reflecting rent controls and subsidised council housing. The gradual build up of unemployment relief and state pensions beginning with the Liberal reforms of 1906-14 were tremendously significant.³ On the other side, so to speak, domestic service which formed 5 to 6 per cent of recorded output at the end of the 19th century has virtually disappeared in recent years (though it has been partly replaced by household equipment and non-household services). There is certainly no cause for complacency in the present crisis, with the threats it holds for the social services and the capacity or willingness of government to restore high rates of employment and effective welfare state policies, the two pillars on which the positive post war gains in income distribution rested. Nevertheless, the dramatic improvements over the extremes of poverty and inequality in earlier times should be recognised.

2 Solrow, (1968) summarises the statistical evidence on income inequality in Britain, inevitably based on partial and occasionally fairly reliable data. The estimates show that the Gini coefficient of income distribution remained between 0.56 and 0.50 for the two centuries up to 1913 compared with 0.34 in 1962/3. Solrow's judgement on the changes between the periods for which data are available are as follows:

1688—1801/3 no change in inequality.
 1801/3—1867/80 probably no change, just possibly some reduction.
 1867/80—1911/13 certainly no increase, possibly 10 per cent reduction.
 1911/13—1962/3 substantial decrease in inequality.

Besides these changes in overall inequality, upper tail income tax data show evidence of continuous decline in inequality between 1801, 1911/12 and 1962/3.

The more recent evidence is summarised in the report of the Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth, in R. J. Nicholson (1967), and B. Abel-Smith, and Townsend, (1965). Note that within the limitations of the data, most analysts agree that poverty and inequality were both significantly reduced over the decade or two until the early 1950s—but that it is much more doubtful whether the process has continued thereafter.

3 A good summary is available in Hay, 1975.

International changes

Internationally, too, the recorded changes in net inflows of income and outflows of investment represent a very considerable contrast with the earlier position. Net inflows of income from abroad rose from about 1 per cent of GNP in the early 19th century to 7 or 8 per cent at the end and during the decade or so before the first world war. Thereafter net inflows of income from abroad have declined—to about 6 per cent of GNP in the 1920s, 5 per cent in the 1930s, 3 per cent immediately after the second world war and just over 1 per cent in the last two decades. More or less in parallel with this rise and fall, (but with considerable fluctuations) net foreign investment rose from 3 per cent of GNP in 1861 to nearly 7 per cent in 1911, thereafter declining sharply, at times to the extent of net dis-investment or net capital inflows into Britain in the 1930s and afterwards.⁴ Over the whole period, net outflows of foreign investment have always been somewhat lower than inflows of net income from abroad although in recent years Britain has begun to pay its own way to a degree not seen for 100 years, if then.

The real significance of these changing international relationships is indicated, however, less by the statistical 'shift' in income or investment flows than by the broader changes of political and economic institutions and structures which have influenced the pattern and terms on which international trade and investment takes place. The existence of the Empire and colonies meant that an important part of British trade and commercial involvement abroad was built up in secure and protected markets—protected through language, contacts and political influence, as well as by direct imperial preferences. The end of this structure and the earlier loss of Britain's technological lead removed many, though by no means all, of these important advantages. Part of Britain's post war difficulties have been the result of a forced adjustment to an international context in which Britain has had to compete economically as never before.

The future implications—for unemployment

How important is it to change these patterns for the future? Or put another way, how important

⁴ One can never be entirely sure of the meaningfulness of long term changes in recorded foreign exchange flows, since the prices and components on which they depend reflect structures and institutions which themselves may be changing. Britain's position as both a base for and host to the operations of international firms is especially significant in the area of investment and income flows, some of which may be unrecorded.

are growth and redistribution for tackling Britain's current economic difficulties and achieving her long run objectives?

In order to keep the discussion to a reasonable length, I will consider the question in relation to unemployment, which, together with inflation, is the most critical problem of the British economy today.

In Britain, as in several OECD countries, the rate of unemployment in 1976 was almost double the average of 1962-73⁵ (Table 3).

Table 3—Unemployment rates^a in OECD countries

	Average 1962-73	1974	1975	1976
United States	4.6	5.4	8.3	7.5
Canada	5.1	5.4	7.0	7.1
Japan	1.2	1.4	2.0	2.1
France	2.2	2.7	4.1	4.0
West Germany	0.6	1.5	3.6	4.0
Italy	3.5	3.1	3.6	3.9
United Kingdom	3.1	2.9	4.5	6.0
Total ^b	2.8	3.3	5.1	5.2

^a Standardised to international definitions

^b Representing about 90% of OECD, including Australia, Finland, Norway, Spain and Sweden as well as countries listed above.

Source: National Institute *Economic Review*, 80, May 1977, p.29

At first sight—and still conventionally accepted by most analyses in Britain today—growth is the critical ingredient for expanding employment. For example, the NIESR analysis published in February, 1977, estimated that to reduce unemployment from 1.4 mn. to a full employment level of about 0.5 mn. "would need an increase of some 9 per cent in GDP—this it must be stressed, in addition to the increase of approaching 3 per cent per annum (reflecting the growth of output per head, together with the rather rapid increase in the labour force expected over the next five years) required merely to halt the rise in unemployment. Thus to return to full employment in five years, for example, would require an annual growth rate over the period of nearly 5 per cent". (National Institute Economic Review, 1977: 51).

The fact that even 5 per cent might be very difficult to attain—it is nearly double the rate of growth achieved over any significant period in Britain over the last two centuries—should itself be sufficient to suggest that to rely primarily

⁵ Appalling as the current level of unemployment in Britain may be, it is worth noting that in no less than 25 years of the present century, the rate of unemployment has been higher than the current rate, and in two-thirds of them, double the 1976 rate.

upon growth to solve the unemployment problem is, to say the least, unsatisfactory.

Yet the same conclusion can be read—and in fact has now become the ‘conventional wisdom’—from the experience of many developing countries, where even growth at rates of 5 or 6 per cent per annum has usually proved inadequate to ensure more than marginal increases in wage earning employment, let alone decreases in unemployment.⁶

If we applied to Britain the lesson of recent employment studies in the Third World, we would emphasise structural factors among the main causes of unemployment, and structural change rather than growth as the critical need. A structural approach in this context would need to cover two sets of issues—1. analysis of the underlying trends and problems of the economy, emphasising structural factors in the pattern and components of production, technological change, consumption, external linkages, etc, not simply relationships between the aggregates of total demand; investment, consumption, etc. and 2. a disaggregated analysis of unemployment itself, emphasising the different factors bearing on the unemployment problems of youth, women, older persons, etc. Both elements have been recognised as essential for the effective understanding of employment problems in Third World countries and of policies to tackle them.

A structural approach to policy would take one into a wide range of issues, many absent from the mainstream debate on employment policy in Britain: the pattern of technological advance and the need for a major shift of policy towards the small producers; integrated local development schemes with more central support for local planning; a more selective approach to foreign investment; a radical change of policy towards informal sector services and methods of production; changes in education; incomes policy; a restructuring of government revenue and expenditure with employment objectives in mind. Each of these and some other areas of policy would, of course, need to be expanded and analysed at length as, for instance, was done in the ILO report on *Increasing Productive Employment in Kenya* (from the summary chapter of which the above headings were taken). One would also need to consider the influences on labour force

supply: population growth, changing participation rates particularly of women (which have been rising), retirement policy and the whole set of factors determining the composition of the labour force.

The key point is that an employment policy built up from such a structural analysis would differ fundamentally from one emphasising GNP expansion. Growth would probably still be involved—but it would be growth *implied* by the specifics of strategy to reach and maintain full employment and meet other social and economic objectives, rather than an aggregate goal from which the resources required to meet other economic objectives might hopefully be financed. And the specifics of these other social and economic objectives and of how to attain them would need to be made a central part of the debate on economic and employment policy, not left peripheral to it.

Structural change and the problem of poverty

Such an approach would raise immediately the *problem of poverty*, clearly related to the problem of unemployment but conceptually distinct. (Indeed Third World analyses have emphasised that the two problems ought generally to be considered together, both for analytical and policy making purposes.) Some 7 to 13 per cent of the British population are estimated to fall below ‘the poverty line’ (as variously defined), less than in several other OECD countries but still unreasonably high (Table 4). Yet the amount by which their incomes in total fall short of the poverty line is only small, barely 1 per cent of GNP. The same is true, according to recent OECD reports, for a number of OECD countries (OECD, 1976). Long run growth is hardly a necessary and certainly not a sufficient condition to fill a gap of this size.

More significant, it is not clear that growth alone will even assist with the matter. According to the OECD study, for instance, expenditure on income maintenance programmes over the decade until 1972 rose nearly three times as fast as *per capita* income in Britain, yet poverty remained. In large part, this was because of widespread ‘leakages’ which meant that most of the resources provided for income maintenance went to persons other than the poor or, if they did reach the poor, were offset by other reductions in their incomes. Some 8 per cent of GNP was spent on income maintenance but only a fraction helped the poor. Again, the eradication of poverty in Britain, as in most of the other industrialised countries, is a matter of structural changes which

⁶ See, for example, the ILO employment missions to Colombia (1970) Sri Lanka (1971) and Kenya (1972), in which members of the IDS were heavily involved. Several years ago it was suggested that the ILO might send an employment mission to Britain. Unfortunately little official interest was shown in this interesting idea.

will deal with the causes of this poverty, not just more money: the issue is not really one of GNP.

Table 4—Percentages of population below 'poverty line' in various OECD countries and expenditure on income maintenance programmes, in early 1970s

	Per cent population below 'poverty line'		Per cent of national product spent on income maintenance programmes
	Standardised definitions	National definitions	
Australia	8	8.2	4.0
Belgium	—	(14.4)	14.1
Canada	11	15.1	7.3
France	16	15.20	12.4
Germany	3	—	12.4
Ireland	—	24.0	6.4
Norway	5	—	9.8
Sweden	3½	—	9.3
UK	7½	13.2	7.7
USA	13	11.9	8.0

Source: OECD *op. cit.* Table 27 and 1.

Employment patterns—the wider issues

The increasing need in Britain, as in most of the richer OECD countries, is to provide an environment for a richer and fuller life for all groups and classes within the country, not just in material terms, but in respect of a range of activities, self fulfilment, family life and social interaction, of freedom of choice and active participation whether at work or in leisure.

Each of us probably has our own pet hobby horses in respect of the new elements we would like to see in this remodelled world. With regard to employment, mine include complete flexibility after the age of 15 with respect to education, work and retirement patterns, with the ability to shift periodically between all three (including in and out of temporary periods of 'retirement' for men and women over one's lifetime—and tapering rather than complete retirement for older persons); more flexible housing patterns freeing people to move and change jobs more easily; and a better balanced and more conscious integration

of small scale and informal employment opportunities for providing everyday goods and services with large scale production and provision only where really essential.

This is not the place to expand further on these points, let alone to suggest that these ideas are the most important of the many that would need to be drawn upon and worked out politically, socially and economically into a new pattern of development. The critical point is simply that such changes, if set in motion, would put the emphasis on structural change, rather than growth. Growth, as conventionally measured, might or might not increase. This would almost be beside the point. The ability of people to choose, to participate, to lead fuller lives, to do more of the things which prove really satisfying would have increased. Against achievements of this sort, 5 per cent growth seems totally inadequate as a goal, and almost irrelevant as the means to achieve such change.

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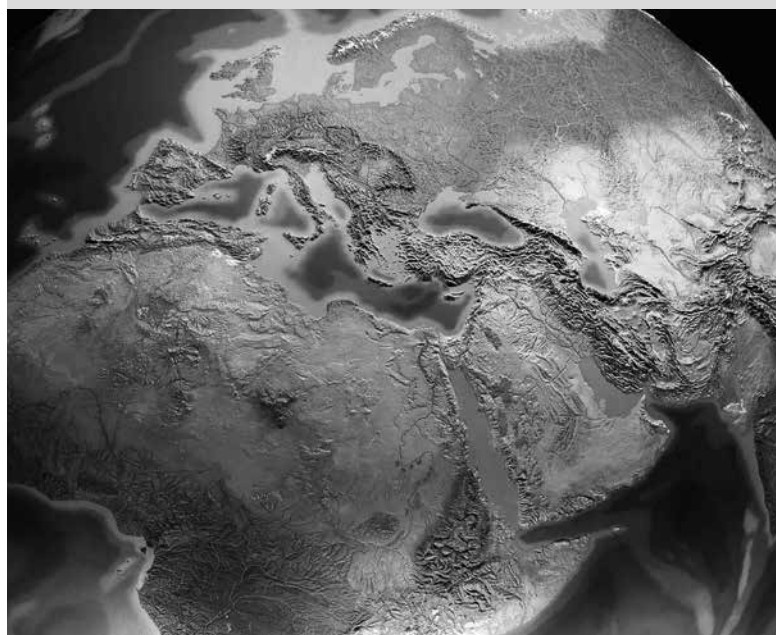
IDS Bulletin

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HAS UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENT COME OF AGE?

Editor **Richard Longhurst**



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Three Dudley Seers Memorial Lectures

Keynes, Seers and Economic Development

H. W. Singer

Seers and Keynes: Some Personal Analogies

There is no need to repeat here what was said at the time of Dudley Seers' death about the great loss of a friend and source of inspiration. Now the time has come to take a little distance and try to appraise his contribution to thinking about development. Perhaps the best way I can think of trying to do this is by relating his work and thinking to that of John Maynard Keynes. To begin with, there are a number of personal analogies and similarities between Dudley Seers and Keynes, starting with the coincidental fact that both of them died at almost exactly the same age, almost to the day, both much too early, at the age of 62. Moreover, both of them died more or less on the job, having had ample warning that their life was in danger and knowing that they could probably have prolonged it by withdrawing from strenuous work. For both of them their sense of commitment and fulfilment in what they had set themselves to do was so great that they made their choice without much hesitation; the consideration of extending their life counted for very little in the scale against the contribution to human progress they felt it in them to make.

Both of them were at their best against the background of the institutions with which they were associated. They were both what you might call great collegial men. Keynes was the heart and soul of his college: when he was away one always knew it; when he was there everything revolved around him. At some periods in the IDS one had the same feeling about Dudley Seers. Dudley was the soul and spirit of the IDS, and much of his best work and best thinking was done in the collegiate framework of teamwork within the IDS. I am thinking here particularly of the ILO Employment Missions, with which his name is associated. I think also both men shared the experience, for both of them a sad experience, of having to challenge established views and to quarrel with their natural allies and teachers. In the case of Keynes, I am thinking here of the Keynes of the 1930s, the author of the *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*. The *General Theory* for Keynes was a break with his venerated teachers, with the classics, with Marshall, with Pigou. He had to challenge orthodoxies. The allies with which he had to

rank himself were often not very congenial to him — the so-called economic underworld of Hobson, Gesell, Major Douglas *et al.*, against his natural world, the academic mainstream economists. In the same way Dudley Seers, towards the end of his life, argued against the Brandt Report, against the principle of aid, against charity in international relations. In one of his last articles he proposed a new aid target of 0.1 per cent of donors' GNP to which aid should be reduced; that, of course, brought him acclaim from some very unaccustomed and uncongenial allies from both right and left about which he felt very unhappy. But he kept saying this is what I believe in and I must say it.

Shared Perceptions of Nationalism

Perhaps a more substantive similarity lies in their leaning towards a nationally-oriented policy of de-linking or partial de-linking from the world economy. Dudley's last book (which appeared posthumously) was called *The Political Economy of Nationalism*; an element of 'nationalism' is also a key characteristic of Keynes' *General Theory*. This was the product of the 1930s, an era of heavy unemployment when international relations had broken down in a wild scramble of each-for-himself and beggar-my-neighbour deflation. The World Economic Conference in London in 1933, the last attempt to try to right the Depression by means of international cooperation, had collapsed. Keynes in his famous article in *The New Statesman* in 1933, immediately following the collapse of the London Conference, said that the time had come when Great Britain as a nation must try to act on her own to restore full employment at home, if necessary by means of national self-sufficiency:

I sympathise, therefore, with those who would minimise, rather than with those who would maximise, economic entanglement between nations. Ideas, knowledge, art, hospitality, travel — these are things which should of their nature be international. But let goods be home-spun whenever it is reasonably and conveniently possible; and, above all, let finance be primarily national. Yet, at the same time, those who seek to disembarrass a country of its entanglements should be very slow and wary. It should not be a matter of tearing up roots, but of slowly training a plant to grow in a different direction.

This is also the key theme of Dudley's last book. Like the *General Theory*, it was 'a struggle of escape from habitual modes of thought and expression'. Both of them were accused of being unduly nationalist. In the case of Keynes, during the Keynes centenary year (1983), (this by the way is another link between the two — that Dudley died in Keynes' centenary year) in the contributions which *The Economist* published on that occasion, Hayek was predictably very critical of Keynes for being a nationalist. The other commentators, Hicks, Samuelson, etc., also commented on this fact, some approvingly and some critically. Keynes of course, had the opportunity of transcending his nationalist phase of the 1930s. At Bretton Woods, the Keynes of the 1940s had the chance to help to build an international system which, if it had been implemented in the way Keynes visualised it, would have been of great benefit to world development. It would probably have given us more than the 25 golden years which we enjoyed under the Keynesian consensus, even under the imperfect Bretton Woods system which was finally created.

But both Dudley Seers and John Maynard Keynes knew, or felt, that nationalism is not enough; both felt the need for what Dudley called in his book 'extended nationalism'. In the case of Keynes, there was not much need to emphasise this: let us remind ourselves that when Keynes said in the 1930s that 'England can go it alone', and restore full employment at home by changing our policies, by changing our view of the way the economy works and by acting according to this new view — the 'England' that he was speaking of was an economic superpower — it had half the world still associated with it, including the whole Indian sub-continent. Keynes took this for granted, and hence did not worry too much about the balance of payments effect which expansionist policies in the UK would have; he took it for granted that he was really speaking of half the world expanding together. Therefore, when we call Keynes a nationalist, or when Keynes thought he was acting and talking as a nationalist, in the current meaning of the term, that is a statement that one must considerably qualify. Similarly, Dudley Seers felt the need, particularly in his last book, to say that the UK *cannot* go it alone. We must de-link from the world economy to some extent; above all, we must not be paternalistic, we must not believe that we have the secret of telling other countries how to develop. We can only look after ourselves but we must not do this alone; we must do this as part of Europe. Hence Dudley's last book presented a picture of the possibility of a European regional bloc looking after its own depressed areas. Just as Keynes wanted us to look after the depressed areas of England in the 1930s, so Dudley Seers had the vision of a Europe that was looking after its own periphery, and would then deal as a regional bloc with countries outside Europe.

I am struck by another analogy between Dudley Seers and Keynes. Keynes says repeatedly in the *General Theory* that he was looking for what he called a middle way between capitalism and socialism. The macro-economic management by the government of an essentially capitalist economy, with full employment as the top priority, was to him the essence of the middle way. Such a 'guiding influence' of the state could combine the advantages, or virtues, of capitalism and socialism. This phrase, the middle way, was then picked up by Keynes' good friend and publisher, and future Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, in his book entitled *The Middle Way*, a popular exposition of the Keynesian view that through enlightened macroeconomic management and expansionist policies you could gain the benefits of socialism even in a capitalist economy. I remember vividly when Keynes in the mid-1930s visited Russia and Sweden and startled all of us on his return by saying that during his visit he had found the country of true socialism — Sweden. Sweden to him represented at that time a good approximation of the middle way that he was advocating. It is interesting to note that Dudley Seers, in his last book, kept using the phrase 'the third way': they both struggled to escape from sterile debates and look for a promising synthesis.

Shared Interest in Quantification

Let me now turn to another shared interest of the two: both were particularly concerned with what we may call the quantification possibilities and data requirements for economic policies — the need for national accounting systems of some kind, a framework that would lend itself to quantification. In the case of Keynes, of course, this led in the first place to his collaboration with Colin Clark, who took the Keynesian concepts and incorporated them in his national accounting framework, a work then carried on by Richard Stone.

Dudley Seers, as we know, was very active in extending Richard Stone's analysis further in directions in which he felt the Keynesian analysis, or the conventional Keynesian analysis was deficient. The Keynesian analysis led Harrod and Domar, as well as Colin Clark, to put great emphasis in their accounting system on physical capital accumulation, which was subsequently transferred as policy models and policy advice to developing countries. Like others, Dudley Seers became very doubtful whether such an identification of development with GNP growth and of GNP growth with physical capital accumulation was the most relevant or the most important thing about economic development. Therefore, towards the end of his life, he extended Richard Stone's framework of national accounting through his publications on the life cycle, relating it more directly to poverty, to standards of living, to what we now call human

capital, to the human condition. It is quite in the spirit of this major contribution that towards the end of his life, he helped to lay the foundations for UNICEF to move to a more humane — and at the same time more productive — approach to the new adjustment problems of the 1980s.

Here we have an unbroken intellectual chain which leads from Keynes to Colin Clark, Richard Stone and Dudley Seers. But at the same time, in his last book Dudley Seers emphasises his differences from, rather than his links with, Keynes. He stresses that the conventional national accounting framework — and by that he means Keynes, Harrod, Domar and Colin Clark (but not Stone) — which now dominates the statistical and planning systems of so many developing countries, as well as industrial countries, is a case of the politicians and statesmen of today being the unknowing victims of some defunct economist. This is a way of turning the tables on Keynes — it refers to Keynes' famous statement made in the concluding sentences of the *General Theory* in trying to explain why the idea of the laissez-faire market automatically providing full employment was still so widely accepted in the minds of statesmen and the general public when he started writing the book. In that famous passage Keynes also spoke of 'madmen in authority', who believe they hear voices in the air but are really only repeating the ideas and writings of a defunct academic scribbler. Without mentioning him by name, Dudley Seers hoists Keynes on his own petard by saying that when thinking about national accounting we are still the victims of a defunct economist, i.e. Keynes.

Keynes' Ideas and Developing Countries

In a number of ways Dudley Seers complemented Keynes' work. Keynes himself was not particularly interested in the application of his *General Theory* to developing countries, about which he was not greatly concerned. As far as I know he never visited a developing country: indeed, even though his early career before the war was in the India Office, he never visited India. He was rather contemptuous about Third World participation at Bretton Woods, and there is no great evidence, apart from the problems of colonial finance, that he took any interest in what we now call development problems or developing countries. Keynes himself is therefore innocent of any attempt to apply his framework, directly or in adjusted form, to developing countries. That was a matter for his followers, particularly Harrod and Domar in their successful attempt to extend Keynesianism beyond short-term statics, and to convert it into a long-term and dynamic view, to show what happens to an economy after it has achieved full employment in the process of its subsequent growth. So it was those who followed Keynes, particularly in the 1950s, who tried to apply Keynesianism as such to conditions of

developing countries.

The moment this was done, immediate doubts arose whether this was a proper approach. Dudley Seers was among those who argued from the very beginning that this was not a proper approach — that the England of 1936 was 'a special case', different from that of the developing countries. He tried to develop a better model, which would suit the conditions of developing countries, by treating them as part of an international periphery — the centre/periphery view. Rather interestingly Dudley Seers then went a step further. In several quotations from his last book it is clear that his mind was moving in the direction of thinking that the insights that he or others had gained, in different ways, about the problems of developing countries, could be transferred back to the industrial countries, and would be very helpful in dealing with our own development problems. Such reverse transfers would include ideas of appropriate technology, the informal sector, the role of transnational corporations, dealing with depressed areas and economic inequalities, etc. Indeed, if Dudley had lived longer, I think he would have expanded this line of thought, applying the insights gained by studying development problems to the problems of industrial countries.

Let me now come back to something I said before about Keynes, i.e. that he was not interested in developing countries. It is true that his ideas as he put them forward in 1936 taken *superficially* were not relevant for developing countries. For instance, V. K. R. V. Rao, his favourite Indian student in Cambridge, on his return to India published a famous article in the *Indian Economic Review* in which he gave us all the reasons why, in spite of being a great admirer and loyal student of Keynes, he thought Keynes' views were not applicable to India. Rao gave four main reasons which are still important today, although they have since been added to, and in some cases questioned and amended. These four reasons were as follows:

First, the type of unemployment that is found in developing countries is so different from that in industrial countries that the problem is not job creation. Of course, it should be remembered that Rao wrote this in 1950, with India in mind, when India was still largely an agricultural country, and most developing countries were strongly identified with agriculture. So naturally he said that the prevailing type of employment is self-employment, either in agriculture or in what we now call the urban informal sector; hence the idea of job creation governing the approach to improved employment or full employment which Keynes put before us in 1936, is not applicable.

Secondly, Rao maintained that the problem in developing countries is not, as Keynes described it, a problem of effective demand, of demand deficiency. It is essentially a problem of supply inelasticity. The

problems are on the supply side. If you just try to inject additional demand you immediately come up against what we would call vertical supply curves, reflecting structural rigidities in supply, particularly in food production, the most important wage good. This makes it impossible to carry out Keynesian policies, which, Rao thought, would in India only lead to wild inflation without resulting in much increase in production.

The third (and clearly related) reason which Rao gave was that Keynes had argued his case in the midst of the world recession for an economy like England which had not only unemployed labour, but also ample underutilised capital and underutilised capacity in all industries. Therefore, the job of bringing unemployed labour and unused capacity together was much easier than the quite different task presented in developing countries. To put it in terms of the criticism subsequently made by Kalecki and Joan Robinson, Keynes thought he could solve the problems by purely financial tricks: 'turning stones into bread'. In developing countries, however, there may also be latent capacity underutilisation. Rao would probably be criticised today for denying the existence of such latent capacity. At the same time as Rao was writing in India, Ragnar Nurkse, in America, was showing perhaps more insight on this point. While he agreed with Rao that there may be no *open* unutilised capacity or unused capital of the type found in an industrial economy in recession (at least under normal conditions and in the absence of balance of payments constraint), there is nevertheless a lot of latent capacity, e.g. agricultural surplus population, which can be mobilised by the right policies, albeit not necessarily simply by a financial trick. Schumpeter thought that the development of entrepreneurship could do it. Other people thought improved technological capacity in developing countries could do it. Nurkse thought (Rosenstein-Rodan having blazed the trail here) that the big push or balanced growth could do it, perhaps by mobilising the latent power of reciprocal demand and external economics.

But at any rate, Rao, Rosenstein-Rodan, Nurkse and all the others who followed them would all agree that the situation is *different* in developing countries; what is needed is a more complex and difficult policy than the largely monetary and financial policies which Keynes suggested. Budget deficits, cheap money — these things would not by themselves do the trick in developing countries, as they might well do in industrial countries with unemployment.

Finally, the fourth point which Rao made very strongly, a point subsequently also modified in the development discussion, was that Keynes assumed that there was an ample supply of working capital to support an increase in production; this again was not the case in developing countries.

So at this *superficial* level (using the word not in a derogatory sense), one might say that Keynes was not very relevant to developing countries and that the critics, including Dudley Seers, of a transfer of simple Keynesianism to developing countries, were absolutely justified. But having said that, one or two important qualifications have to be made.

The Relevance of Keynes

The first qualification is that so far we have been talking only of the Keynes of 1936, the Keynes of the *General Theory*. When I said Keynes was not directly concerned with the problems of developing countries, there was one major exception to this. He was, since the 1930s, an ardent supporter of commodity price stabilisation, through intervention in international commodity markets. He followed up the *General Theory* with a 1938 article in the *Economic Journal*, advocating a policy of government storage of raw materials. In the middle of the war in 1942 when the war situation was very grim, he found the time to write a memorandum for the War Cabinet in which he said that the most important measure for the post-war world was the creation of an international commodity stabilisation agency. Then at Bretton Woods, he proposed the International Trade Organisation (ITO), as the third pillar of the Bretton Woods system, in addition to the World Bank and IMF. He had set his heart on this. Unfortunately the ITO was never ratified.

Keynes went a lot further: he wanted an IMF which would put pressure not on balance of payments deficit countries but on balance of payments surplus countries. This fitted in perfectly with his views developed for the domestic economy in the *General Theory*. He wanted a world currency that would be based on 30 primary commodities rather than on gold alone (gold would have been one of the 30) — not on sterling, not on the dollar, not on SDRs, but on 30 primary commodities, so that commodity stabilisation would be built into the world monetary system. In his vision of the world the balance of payments limitation for economic development, for economic expansion in developing countries, would be either eliminated or very much reduced, opening the way for his preferred inward-looking domestic expansion. So if you define Keynesianism by adding to the 1936 *General Theory* the 1938 article on commodity stabilisation and particularly Bretton Woods, then its relevance and applicability to economic development immediately becomes a lot more plausible.

But let me add that at an even more important methodological level, in spite of apparent or superficial reasons why Keynes was not particularly relevant or directly suitable for developing countries, the way of thinking which Keynes introduced into

economic analysis was also the foundation of development economics. Albert Hirschman, in his article 'The rise and decline of development economics', wisely credits Keynes with taking the decisive methodological step towards development economics by replacing classical mono-economics by duo-economics. Keynes was the creator of duo-economics. His duo-economic model was based on the proposition that when you have unemployment in an industrial economic system, the economic interactions and economic relations are fundamentally different from those of an economy in full employment. Hence the economic policies that are applicable to reduce unemployment and restore full employment are fundamentally different from those of running an economy at full employment level. All subsequent schools of development economics, even though they may not have accepted the precise Keynesian model and found (usually valid) reasons why it should not be directly applicable to developing countries derive from this decisive departure by Keynes that economics is not a doctrine of universal validity, as the classical economists more or less assume, but that there are different economic laws or principles leading to different economic policies for countries in different conditions. The present neo-classical counter-revolution is in essence a counter-revolution not against planning, protectionism etc., but against the principle of duo-economics and of a separate discipline of development economics — although it is, of course, perfectly possible for a genuine development economist to be in favour of liberalisation, against centralised planning etc.

A good example of this principle of duo-economics is Keynes' advocacy, already discussed, of stabilisation of primary commodity prices. For implicit in this view, fervently held by Keynes, is the idea that countries which depend on the production and export of primary commodities are subject to different laws and different trends and therefore require different treatment and different policies from countries which rely on the production and export of manufactured goods. As we know, this idea was readily taken up by Prebisch and others. Dudley Seers was, of course, one of 'the others', and during his work with Prebisch at ECLA the idea of duo-economics, in its sharp form of centre/periphery analysis, became firmly embedded in his thinking. His last writings, in fact, extended the duo-economic centre/periphery model to the industrial world and even to domestic problems within industrial countries, providing a link between development economics and the old concern about 'depressed areas'. Rather ironically, though, his thinking led him back to some new form of synthesis of mono-economics and duo-economics, with the industrial countries constituting a 'special case'.

Thus, although unemployment in developing countries is of a different kind, and requires different

approaches from Keynesian policies as prescribed in the *General Theory*, the idea of latent or disguised unemployment, not only of labour but of other resources, including capital, became a common element in early thinking about development problems and is still widespread today. Rather interestingly, both the adherents of the school of balanced economic growth and those of unbalanced growth can claim descent from Keynes. The policy of balanced growth is based on the idea that you cannot rely on the market because it does not take account of externalities, reciprocal demand and interaction between sectors. What is not possible on an individual enterprise or even sectoral basis becomes possible on an economy-wide or even better, global basis, through macroeconomic synchronisation. This provided the foundation for the tremendous popularity of development planning in the 1950s, derived directly from Keynes' *General Theory*. In this sense, he has been incredibly influential in developing countries.

With the benefit of hindsight, many of us are now more sceptical of the unqualified belief in planning, and more specifically of the centralised planning which the ideas of big push and balanced development imply. But the more general idea that development to an important extent is a matter of good macroeconomic management, and that specifically the government of a developing country has a great deal to contribute by adopting the right policies, by taking account of factors which individuals or individual enterprises cannot take account of, still commands mainstream support.

Similarly, and perhaps surprisingly, the opposite theory of unbalanced growth, which was also very influential in the formative period of development economics, can also claim links with Keynes. Keynes also tried to identify for the Britain of 1936 the key points where public policy could, through multipliers and interactions, have a maximum impact in pulling the whole economic system along with it. This idea of finding a leading element or leading sector, or bottleneck sector, releasing some latent resources which would otherwise lie idle has become a common endeavour of many development practitioners and economists. Some of the biggest success stories in economic development may be due to the correct identification of leading sectors, and effective action based on such identification. On the other hand, obsession with certain lead sectors, e.g. heavy industry, to the neglect of others, e.g. agriculture, is also held responsible for some of the failure. But our point here is that this also is a direct part of the Keynesian inheritance.

Seers' Criticisms of Keynes

There is one sense in which Dudley Seers took the

Keynesian analysis a good deal further. He was not alone in this, but he played a leading part. Let me come back to a criticism, of Keynes' work, which was already made in the 1930s, and even more so after the war when ideas of the Welfare State and income redistribution had become widespread, not only in the industrial countries, but also in the developing countries. That criticism alleges that Keynes was not particularly interested in human welfare, that he wanted economic growth mainly through the revival of physical investment; that he did not care enough what kind of investment ('digging holes and filling them up again'); or who would benefit from the investment; what would be the effect on income distribution; what would be the impact on poverty, on human welfare. There is some substance in such criticism; in the *General Theory* we do not find much explicit discussion of this. Against this, however, it can be argued that the very fact that Keynes picked out unemployment, which after all was the main cause of poverty in the 1930s, as the chief objective to be eliminated or reduced, shows a concern with poverty; and also that full employment in itself will contribute to more equal income distribution. But it is certainly true that other elements of Keynesian policy might increase inequalities of income distribution. He was quite ready to accept, or even advocate, a reduction in real wages of those in work as a necessary precondition for the reduction of unemployment. Certainly under his recipe for restoration of full employment the share of profits in national income would increase (as it does in related development strategies based on the absorption of 'surplus labour'). So, to the extent that Keynes was not directly concerned with welfare and income redistribution, Dudley Seers' emphasis on life cycles and social indicators represents an essential further development and correction of the Keynesian approach. In a way that was typical of him, Dudley developed his views not theoretically, but as a result of field experience in developing countries, particularly in the ILO

Employment Missions. This choice of moving from policy and reality to theory rather than the other way is, I think, also shared with Keynes, who, in spite of appearances to the contrary in the *General Theory*, essentially did not believe in the primacy of theory. His starting point was that the conventional classical view clearly conflicted with reality. He looked at reality, saw that it conflicted with theory, and then set about revising theory. Dudley Seers, in his move from concentration on growth and then employment in the era of the ILO Employment Missions, to basic needs, to poverty, to income distribution, was also influenced not so much by theoretical thinking but by his life experience, by what he observed. He then turned to revise the models with which he worked.

In this article I have certainly not exhausted Keynes' contribution to development thinking, nor Dudley's role, even in relation to Keynes, but I hope that at least some things which it contains will help to bring home to us again the loss we have suffered in his death.

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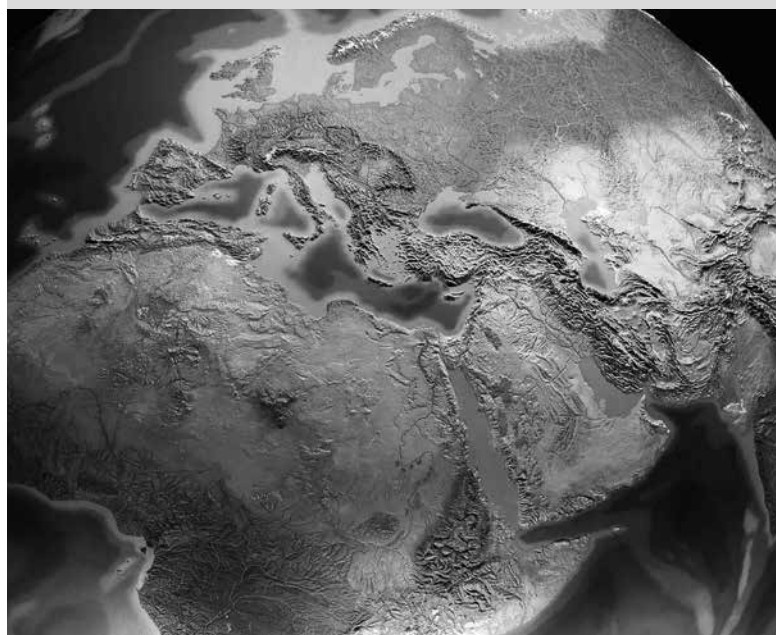
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Lawrence Haddad Article first published March 2007, IDSB38.2

1 Introduction¹

This **IDS Bulletin** is an oddity: a publication by an institute specialising in *developing* countries, which consists almost entirely of papers about *developed* countries. There is a justification, however. It lies in the rapid growth in writing about a new concept, 'social exclusion'. Despite some pioneering work by the International Institute of Labour Studies on social exclusion in the South², most writing on social exclusion has been in and about the North, originally in France, but now more widely³. The new writing represents new thinking on a new problem, namely the rapid growth of poverty in rich countries. Poverty has been driven rapidly up the policy and research agendas of the European welfare states, of the USA, and also of Eastern Europe's transitional countries. Increasingly, it is discussed in the vocabulary of social exclusion.

Our purpose is to draw attention to the new debate; and beyond that to address two sets of questions:

- First, how does the new thinking on social exclusion relate to the large body of work on poverty and poverty reduction? Is 'social exclusion' merely a re-labelling of poverty? Is it an explanation of poverty? Or does it offer something entirely new?
- Second, does the new debate in the North offer opportunities for dialogue between North and

¹ The articles in this **Bulletin** were first presented as papers at a workshop on 'Poverty and Social Exclusion in North and South', jointly sponsored by IDS and the Poverty Research Unit at the University of Sussex, and held at IDS on 28–29 April 1997. The workshop was supported financially by the International Institute for Labour Studies and by the British Overseas Development Administration (now Department for International Development). A report on the workshop has been published as O'Brien et al. (1997).

² This is briefly discussed in de Haan's contribution; for an overview of the work of IILS, see Gore and Figueiredo, (eds) (1997), and IILS (1996).

³ Cannan provided an overview on social exclusion and French social integration policies in the April 1997 **IDS Bulletin** (Cannan 1997); recent work on Britain includes Walker and Walker (eds) (1997), London Research Centre (1996), and Jordan (1996). Research on social exclusion has been summarised in the annotated bibliography prepared for our project (O'Brien and de Haan 1997).

Poverty and Social Exclusion in North and South

Arjan de Haan and Simon Maxwell

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South? Does the debate on social exclusion in the North offer new lessons for the South? Conversely, are there insights from the South that will enrich debate in the North?

In brief, our answers to these questions are that the concept of social exclusion does offer something new to those of us who work on developing countries, particularly in its focus on the institutional processes which lead to deprivation; and also that the new debate in the North will make it both easier and more necessary for colleagues working on either side of the geographical divide to share findings and collaborate. There are qualifications to these conclusions, but in general we are optimistic about the potential.

2 What is 'Social Exclusion'?

We obviously need to start with the term 'social exclusion'. De Haan (in this volume) provides us with a guide to the genealogy of the concept, and to the bewildering diversity of ways in which it is currently used. One definition is that social exclusion is

the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society in which they live (European Foundation 1995: 4).

This definition focuses on the process of social exclusion. Others lay greater emphasis on multiple deprivation as a defining feature of social exclusion: low income, an insecure job, poor housing, family stress, and social alienation (Paugam 1995). In either case, social exclusion may take the form of, or result in, an income markedly lower than that customary in the society, failure or inability to participate in social and political activities, or otherwise a life on the margins. The poor are excluded, but so are the old, the homeless, the disenfranchised, the mentally ill, and the culturally alienated.

The social exclusion debate originated in France and draws specifically on the French tradition of national integration and social solidarity. The opposite of social exclusion is then 'social inclusion', with the idea of the social bond at its heart. Exclusion, in the French discourse, is associated with the rupture of the social bond (Lenoir 1974).

There are competing paradigms of inclusion and exclusion, however, and Silver (1994) has identified three: the *solidarity paradigm*, founded in French ideas about social solidarity; a *specialisation paradigm*, dominant in the US and perhaps the UK, where exclusion is tied to notions of discrimination; and a *monopoly paradigm*, dominant in Western Europe, in which exclusion is associated with group monopoly formation.

Different interpretations reflect different national traditions and debates, but also, as Evans makes clear in this volume, different fiscal systems and institutional frameworks. For example, in France, the term was popularised by Lenoir (1974), to describe groups who fell through the insurance-based social safety-net: as the title of his book, 'Les Exclis: Un Français sur Dix' makes clear, as many as one French person in ten fell through the net. In Britain, social assistance is differently structured, with less dependence on formal insurance, and few are 'excluded' from help in the French sense; nevertheless, social exclusion is frequently identified as a phenomenon linked to multiple deprivation (Walker and Walker 1997).

In principle, it is right that national debates should evolve in ways which reflect local realities. We should note Harwin and Fajth's point (in this volume), however, that different definitions lead to different policies, and that adjudicating between the paradigms may circumscribe policy choices. For example, policy drawn from the solidarity paradigm is likely to emphasise the integrative role of the state; whereas that drawn from a monopoly paradigm will emphasise policies which help individuals to access markets. In the end, it is important to remember that Silver's paradigms are heuristic devices: ways of looking at reality, rather than reality itself.

More seriously perhaps, there are risks in using one term, 'social exclusion', to cover a wide diversity of ideas. The IILS project on social exclusion in developing countries exemplifies the problem. Is social inclusion an end in itself or a means to poverty reduction? And is it a state (of multiple deprivation) or a process (by which deprivation occurs)? In the studies summarised by de Haan, the term is used in all these ways. In the articles here, many authors struggle with the same problem. Is participation an

end or a means (Gaventa)? Is a job an end or a means (Robinson)? Is health an end or a means (Wilkinson)? And does it matter if it is both?

Evans argues forcibly for clarity in the use of definitions:

it is wrong to extrapolate ... to a position where [social exclusion] can mean anything to anyone. 'Social exclusion' must include a definition of at least the group and the reason for or the process of their exclusion. In the wider sense, it must refer to a group of people with different profiles of exclusion, which must be made explicit.

Quite so, but as yet there is no consensus around a single definition. Perhaps the most we can ask is that definitions be made explicit. For us, the definition at the beginning of this section will stand, giving particular emphasis to process issues. Beyond that, we believe that we need to be eclectic and include the various dimensions and processes of exclusion: for practical purposes, Silver's three paradigms are not mutually exclusive.

To be specific, the key arenas for exclusion will be those referred to by Evans (citing Commins 1993): democratic and legal systems; markets, particularly

the labour market; welfare state provision; and family and community. In Table 1, we present these under the headings of rights, resources, and relationships. The main dimensions of social exclusion will be different in each society. For example, one of the central issues in former communist countries, as well as welfare states, is exclusion from state provision. In India, by contrast, exclusion from markets for labour, land or credit is a much more important dimension of social exclusion. In fast-growing economies of East Asia, exclusion from civic and democratic rights – including trade union organisations as in South Korea – may be more salient aspects.

In practice, of course, exclusion in different arenas will overlap. Thus, the poor in India are likely to be denied essential rights, such as access to courts; they will have less access to labour and product markets; and they will also suffer from lack of family support and wider networks. All these aspects of multiple deprivation are bound up with the actions of élites, such as dominant landlords that control voting, or class justice in courts. Exclusion from markets is often related to geographical location, but also to discrimination on grounds of gender, caste and/or ethnicity. Similarly, gendered values may determine the exclusion of poor women from family support.

Table 1: Arenas and elements of social exclusion

Key arenas	Elements
Rights	human legal/civic democratic
Resources	human and social capital labour markets product markets state provision common property resources
Relationships	family networks wider support networks voluntary organisations

Source: de Haan

3 Is There Value-Added?⁴

An important question for students of poverty in developing countries remains whether 'social exclusion' adds anything to the debate? The answer to this question is not straightforward, because 'poverty' itself is a contested term, subject to many different definitions and interpretations. As Baulch noted, in an earlier **IDS Bulletin** on the subject, poverty is 'a portmanteau term which has different meanings to different people' (Baulch 1996: 2).

For some, 'poverty' is simply about levels of income; to others, it is about much wider concepts, like security, autonomy and self-esteem (Baulch 1996, Shaffer 1996). The term 'well-being' is often used by those in the latter camp (Chambers 1997).

The different possible components of 'poverty' have been summarised in the pyramid in Figure 1, which enlarges the definition in successive stages from private consumption (PC) at one extreme, to a multi-component definition at the other, which includes private consumption, but also access to common property resources (CPR), state-provided commodities (SPC), the ownership of assets to protect against destitution, dignity, and autonomy. Some would want to add participation to this list.

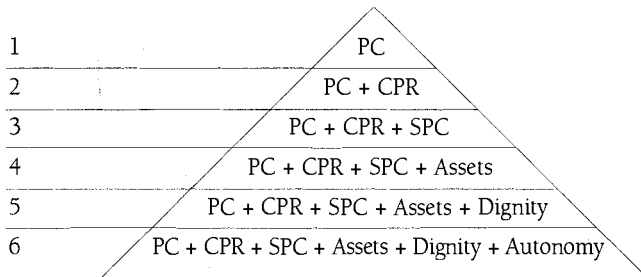
A caricature would be to say that the World Bank has adopted a definition of poverty which is close to the top of the pyramid, and that UNDP, particularly through its work on human development (e.g. UNDP 1997), has adopted a definition close to the bottom. 'Poverty' versus 'human development' is a

nice polemic and provides a good basis for product differentiation (Askwith 1994). However, it is an over-simplification. Certainly, even economists primarily concerned with income and consumption would recognise the importance of consumption derived from common property resources or provided by the state (line 3 in the pyramid). Most would also acknowledge the contribution of the other factors listed.

In any case, the World Bank does not consist only of economists. A recent review of World Bank poverty assessments in Africa (Hanmer et al. 1996: 2.4ff) makes the point that a narrow income definition is provided in the World Bank operational directive on poverty, but goes on to identify the many poverty assessments in which the multi-dimensional nature of poverty is emphasised. In the poverty assessment for Benin, for example, poverty is described as 'a multi-dimensional phenomenon which cannot easily be reduced to a few quantitative indicators' (*ibid*). Similar comments are made in the poverty assessments for Mali, Uganda, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Cameroon. As suggested by de Haan in this volume, the 'poverty profiles' or analysis of 'correlates of poverty' found in World Bank poverty assessments are different only in emphasis from a human development or social exclusion approach.

There is thus close to an intellectual consensus that narrow income and consumption measures of poverty are inadequate, and that a wider vision is needed. For example, the DAC statement on

Figure 1: Dimensions of Poverty



Source: Baulch (1996): 2

⁴ This section draws largely from Maxwell (1997).

'Shaping the 21st Century: the Contribution of Development Cooperation' states that 'we agree with the 1995 G7 Summit at Halifax that a higher quality of life for all people is the goal of sustainable development. A higher quality of life means that people will attain *increased power over their own future*' (DAC 1996: 8, emphasis added).

The new consensus has taken hold thanks to the wide dissemination of documents like UNDP's Human Development Report, and of the work on human capabilities (Sen 1985) on which it is partly based. The new consensus also draws on participatory research with poor people themselves, who forcefully express their own desires for security, social participation and autonomy (Chambers 1997). The fact that the poor themselves think and act in this way provides the strongest justification for adopting the new poverty thinking.

On this evidence, social exclusion and the new poverty thinking overlap almost completely when it comes to describing poverty. A different question is whether they overlap in terms of explanation.

As Maxwell remarks in his article, the theoretical space which deals with this question in development studies is 'already full, and getting fuller', with theories ranging across history, from the classical political economy of Smith and Ricardo, to the recent concern with the development 'impasse' and a post-impasse development theory (Schuurman 1993). In this rich brew, we can find explanations of poverty which include the psychological, environmental, social, economic and political. Many would argue that the central processes of social and institutional exclusion are already present in existing development theory. Maxwell argues as much in making the case for a development studies that crosses North-South boundaries. It would be brave indeed to argue that development studies has not been centrally concerned with market access, social capital, and the other exclusion processes listed in Table 1.

So why, then, do we need the concept of social exclusion? Our existing concepts of poverty are broad enough to encompass the multi-dimensional concerns of the social exclusion school; and our explanations of poverty certainly cover much of the same territory. Where is the value-added? We have three answers to the question.

First, some weight must be given to the argument of ILS (1996), that social exclusion paradigms offer an integrating framework, which puts institutional processes at the heart of the poverty debate. As argued by Rodgers, the initiator of work on social exclusion at ILS (in Gore and Figueiredo 1997), the framework helps to focus on the institutions and actors involved in the processes that cause deprivation. It thus has immediate implications for policy.

Second, the 're-discovery' of poverty in the North offers new opportunities to put traditional concerns onto the international agenda. Thus, at a recent meeting at ILO, it was argued that a social exclusion notion that embodies social justice could be a very useful instrument for rejuvenating the organisation's central concerns (Figueiredo and de Haan (eds) forthcoming).

Third, and most important, we see enormous potential in the opportunity for a new dialogue between North and South. The 'discovery' of social exclusion in the North opens new opportunities for analysis of what Maxwell describes as 'comparisons, convergence and connections' between North and South.

4 Social Exclusion in the North

Many researchers on the South are reluctant to make comparisons with the North, and for good reason. Despite growing heterogeneity among developing countries and some signs of convergence between the North and parts of the South (Maxwell), the particularities of place and history remain important, so that lessons can rarely be transferred directly. Nevertheless, it would be foolish to deny the possibility of learning across geographical boundaries, and the articles here show just how fruitful and stimulating the exercise can be. We have brought together papers from the North on poverty, participation and social assistance, and on food, and health and labour markets; as well as work on poverty, especially child poverty, in the former Soviet Union. There are some remarkable findings, in five main areas.

First, the articles provide convincing evidence that poverty, in its wider sense, is a serious and growing problem in OECD countries. Maxwell provides

summary data, showing that relative poverty increased in eight out of ten countries in the European Union in the 1980s, and that in 1991–92, child poverty in the United Kingdom affected one child in three. Jarvis and Jenkins provide much more detailed data on the UK, showing that 31 per cent of the population experienced at least one spell of poverty between 1990 and 1994. Lest any should think that relative poverty is somehow unimportant, Dowler provides evidence for the UK of nutrient deficiencies among low income households, those with more than three children, or headed by a lone parent. She concludes that those living on income support are seriously at risk: claimants cannot live adequately, healthily, on state benefits for long periods, and neither can their children.

Outside Europe, similar findings are cited. For the former Soviet Union, Harwin and Fajth find that mortality rates had increased in 15 out of 18 countries, and that child poverty rates had increased at one and a half times the aggregate rate. Perhaps this was not surprising during a period of decline. Even for the United States, however, Gaventa talks of the 'South within the North': 'areas within inner cities and vast rural areas where levels of poverty, unemployment, relatively poor education, illiteracy, lack of health care, provide similarities to certain parts of the South'.

A second set of findings is that income poverty in the North is associated strongly with multiple deprivation and, particularly, with lack of participation. Dowler makes the point about social disadvantage especially strongly:

Those who cannot afford to eat in ways acceptable to society; who find food shopping a stressful or potentially humiliating experience because they might have insufficient money; whose children cannot have a packed lunch similar to their friends'; who do not call on others to avoid having to accommodate return calls – these are people excluded from the 'minimum acceptable way of life'. Food is an expression of who a person is and what they are worth, and of their ability to provide their family's basic needs; it is also a focus for social exchange. Food is, of course, a major contributor to health and well-being. But it is not just health that is compromised in food-poor households: social behaviour is also at risk.

Gaventa is on a similar track. He makes the point that participation is an 'essential vehicle to enable the excluded to act more effectively to address the problems which they face – yet finds that, in the USA, the level of participation is strongly and negatively correlated with socio-economic status. Growing inequality in the USA has undermined political participation, and raised doubts about the health of civil society (Putnam 1995).

Third, there is evidence in these papers which closely mirrors the findings of development studies about the importance of transient poverty. The French discussion has discovered *précarité* (Paugam 1995), a concept closely allied to the concept of *vulnerability* much used in development studies (Chambers 1989). In the UK, Jarvis and Jenkins, in particular, have careful statistical analysis to show that large numbers of people move in and out of poverty. Over four waves of a national household panel survey, only 4 per cent of people were persistently poor, but nearly a third of the sample was touched by low income at least once. In fact, the figures underestimate the extent of transient poverty, since interviews were annual and there could be periods of poverty for some households between interviews. In the UK context, unemployment is a key determinant of poverty. Jarvis and Jenkins conclude that policies to increase the tenure and quality of labour market attachment are necessary to secure permanent escape from poverty – where quality presumably means both length of job and wage level.

A fourth point, and among the most surprising, is that, independent of the level of income, inequality is important. It prejudices participation as we have seen. It has a major negative impact on health; and it also appears to militate against growth. Wilkinson summarises the evidence and shows that a sharp mortality gradient between rich and poor

arises less from the direct effects of differences in people's material circumstances than it does from the psychosocial effects of those differences ... having control over one's work and domestic circumstances, job security, ... the absence of long-term difficulties and threatening life events, the quality of parenting and lack of family conflict early in life.

Wilkinson argues that chronic stress is probably the key to understanding the psychosocial causality between inequality and poor health, and finds support for this in animal studies. He goes on to demonstrate that inequality in industrial societies is also bad for growth, citing evidence that egalitarian societies have faster growth, and claiming to identify a 'new economic orthodoxy which says that equity is good for growth'.

Finally, the policy implications of these findings resonate often, though not always, with debates in developing countries. In some areas, we are entitled to be sceptical. For example, Wilkinson himself admits that his findings cannot be transferred directly to developing countries, where infectious diseases are the main cause of death and the epidemiological transition has yet to take place – though this does not mean that chronic stress is not a problem for the poor in the South. Similarly, the preoccupation with formal sector jobs that runs through several of the articles would not fit well in countries with large informal and subsistence sectors. Nevertheless, in other areas, there are important connections to make. Robinson, for example, draws our attention to the potentials and pitfalls of 'active labour market policies', designed to help people find work. Gaventa discusses the value of local economic initiatives, emphasising the role of participation. Evans illustrates alternative routes to reform of social welfare. Dowler shows the value of food security analysis applied to an industrial country.

In all these cases, there are stimulating comparisons to be made with developing countries. This is not to say that the lessons can be transferred directly, because circumstances vary. For example, Maxwell argues for public works as a form of relief in developing countries, whereas Robinson rather scoffs at the idea in the North. It turns out that their difference lies in whether or not relief works are 'useful', in terms of creating assets and jobs for the future: Maxwell, in the South, says they are, Robinson, in the North, says not. Both could be right, but the comparison is fruitful. In the end, there has to be a careful analysis of what lessons can be transferred. Gaventa is one who attempts this, drawing eight important lessons from the US experience for participation policy in the South. Outside this volume, IILS have also explored policy issues, focusing on rights, markets and civil society (IILS 1996).

It should also be noted that lessons can be transferred both ways. Traditionally, exchanges were mainly in the North–South direction: for example, India's social policies were framed along British traditions. But we now also witness attempts to replicate policies and programmes from the South to the North, most notably with attempts to introduce Grameen-type credit programmes for the poor in Europe and the USA. We believe that much more of this should be attempted. What, for example, can we learn in the North from the successes with employment guarantee schemes in India or Botswana? Or what can we learn from the East Asian experience with its 'social question': the way it prepared the whole population, including the poor, for an internationally competitive market?

There is obviously more to learn about the social exclusion debate. In particular, our contributions do little to explore processes of exclusion. Many contributions focus on one aspect of exclusion, without exploring causality, for example: Dowler on food, and Jarvis and Jenkins on income. Evans, however, concentrates on welfare state entitlements, and helps us to begin to understand how different states – in France and in Britain – include and exclude people.

Harwin and Fajth focus on the different welfare outcomes following restructuring of education, health and social security in former communist states, and again illuminate exclusion processes. The Caucasian economies have experienced the worst economic decline, but indicators of 'social cohesion' (including rates of divorce and suicide) have not followed. On the other hand, the Western Commonwealth of Independent States and Baltic regions did not experience a similar crisis, but the incidence of divorce, suicide, sexually transmitted diseases, and child abandonment increased much more rapidly. Poverty, in their view, cannot fully explain the different responses in transition, and the responses have been mediated by social norms such as the greater importance of family networks and distrust of the state in the Caucasian economies. This framework could very well be extended with empirical research on how communities in these different countries respond to, for example, the cutting of welfare entitlements.

There is also more work to do on the connections between North and South, perhaps particularly in the context of globalisation: Maxwell does no more than scratch the surface here.

A final issue is the operationalisation of social exclusion concepts. This responds to Evans's plea for unambiguous profiles as well as Lipton's (1997) call for more concrete measurement. If social exclusion is defined in terms of multiple deprivation, then measurement clearly has to cover health, housing, family status, and all the other components of human development. Indicators have to be specified, and, more difficult, procedures have to be specified for aggregation. UNDP have struggled with the problem in preparing various forms of the human development and human deprivation index, using data available internationally (UNDP 1997); others (e.g. London Research Centre 1996, CESIS 1997) have developed locally-specific indicators, especially of a non-monetary kind.

When social exclusion is defined in terms of process, the factors listed in Table 1 come into play. De Haan (forthcoming) is one who has worked on this, turning a taxonomy of processes into a checklist of indicators. The indicators are likely to be location-specific, but there is no reason in principle why the concept of social exclusion cannot be made operational.

5 What Next?

Concepts travel quickly. A good example is the notion of social capital that was popularised by Putnam (1993) in his work on differences between Northern and Southern Italy. Only a few years later, it was introduced in the study of poverty in Tanzania (Narayan and Pritchett 1997) and subsequently in the 1997 **World Development Report**. Something similar is happening with the concept of social exclusion.

A question follows about unifying frameworks. There is discussion in the articles of the scope for 'mono-economics', about whether a single frame of analysis can be applied to North and South, and about whether 'social exclusion' is a strong enough vehicle to drive across the North–South boundary. For now, we think this is not the issue. There is great scope for collaboration, but these are still early days. Poverty and social exclusion debates each have distinguished pedigrees in North and South, and each deal with tremendously important particularities of history, culture, politics and institutions. Collaboration cannot be imposed, but must be built, inductively, from the bottom up.

But this is an exciting agenda. There need to be joint projects, we think, on specific themes: small-scale credit, participation and participatory methods, social policy, food policy, and public works; and, indeed, on the meaning and measurement of poverty and social exclusion. Perhaps we do not need **IDS Bulletins** with an entirely Northern focus; but nor should we expect to find many in the future which focus entirely on the South.

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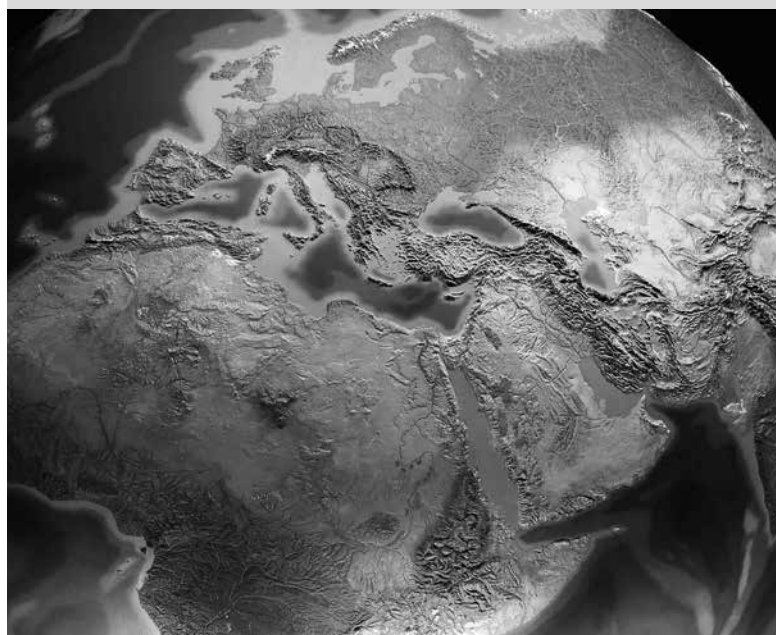
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HAS UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENT COME OF AGE?

Editor Richard Longhurst



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Comparisons, Convergence and Connections

*Development Studies
in North and South*

Simon Maxwell

1. Introduction¹

My mission is to explore the issues of poverty and social exclusion across the boundary between developed and developing countries. Put briskly, the thesis is that increasing attention to poverty and social exclusion (PSE) in the North opens the possibility of fertile dialogue between North and South, on three questions of successively greater depth. First, are there new comparisons, or lessons to be drawn across geographical boundaries, about the characteristics, causes and remedies of PSE? Second, does the rapid increase in PSE in the North signal a new convergence between North and South? And third, are there theories to hand which will expose connections between PSE in North and South? The thesis is that the answer to each of these questions is 'yes': there are then exciting possibilities for a new 'mono-economics'², in which the boundaries of development studies begin to dissolve. Perhaps the Third World really is no more than a 'collective psychological delusion'³. Or does globalisation now mean that we are all developing countries?

The extent of PSE in the South needs no rehearsal here. Widespread poverty persists in developing countries, despite rapid income growth in some, and rapid improvement of social indicators in many (World Bank 1990, UNDP 1990, 1997): according to World Bank data, 1.3 billion people lived on less than \$US 1 per day in 1993, equivalent to 30 per cent of the population of the developing world.⁴ Poverty within developing countries, characterised by low income, but also by powerlessness and vulnerability, is often reported as a form of social exclusion (Chambers 1995; Shaffer 1996; ILO 1996; Gore and Figuereido 1997; UNDP 1997). And the growing disparities between rich and poor countries, associated with greater heterogeneity in the developing world, can themselves be seen as a form of social exclusion on the

¹ I am grateful to colleagues who provided comments on the draft of this paper: Arjan de Haan, Stephen Devereux, Walter Elkan, John Toye, Adrian Wood. Responsibility is mine.

² Hirschman (1981), cited by Lal (1983): 7

³ Toye (1987b): 5, citing the views of 'development counter-revolutionaries'.

⁴ This is at 1985 purchasing power parity.

international scale: Africa, in particular, is frequently represented as a continent excluded from the world economy (Berge et al. 1994).

What appears to be new is increasing poverty and social exclusion in OECD countries, associated with rising inequality, falling political participation, and the rapid growth (allegedly) of a poorly-educated and unemployed underclass. There is a growing literature (Silver 1994; Evans et al. 1995; Rodgers et al. 1995; Walker and Walker (eds) 1997). Figure 1 provides information for the UK on inequality, poverty and mortality, illustrating the growth of poverty and inequality, and the marked association between poverty, low class status, and high mortality. Figure 2 provides comparative data on poverty in the 1980s for the countries of the European Union, showing an increase in poverty in 8 of 10 countries. There is much other evidence, from Europe and North America, for example on differentials in health status (Wilkinson 1996 and in this volume), or food poverty and malnutrition (Riches (ed) 1997; Kohler et al. (eds) 1997; Dowler in this volume).

The figures for rich countries need to be kept in proportion, of course. Whereas poverty lines for poor countries are usually fixed in absolute terms, based on minimum needs, those for rich countries are normally fixed in relative terms, at half average income or similar. Thus, for developing countries, the World Bank 1990 uses a figure of \$US 1 per day per capita as a poverty line, calculated in 1985 purchasing power parity prices. By contrast, in the UK, a poverty line set at 50 per cent of average income can mean around \$US 17 per person per day, not adjusted for purchasing power parity (Oppenheim and Harker 1996: 33), clearly a very different figure. This is not to deny real hardship among the poor in the North, but rather to make the additional point that poverty is often understood in relative, social terms: in Townsend's well-known wording, as the 'lack [of] the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are *customary, or at least widely encouraged and/or approved, in the societies to which they belong*' (Townsend 1979, italics added).

These ideas have become pervasive. As Dowler, among others, makes clear in this volume, the debate in the North is not just concerned with

material well-being; it is equally focused on participation, autonomy and self-respect, classic parameters of social exclusion. Indeed, Wilkinson makes an explicit link between social exclusion/inclusion and material well-being. As he argues in this volume, relative deprivation has material consequences: inequality is associated with higher morbidity and mortality, irrespective of income level. The causal path, he suggests, is psycho-social: the powerlessness associated with inequality has direct health effects.

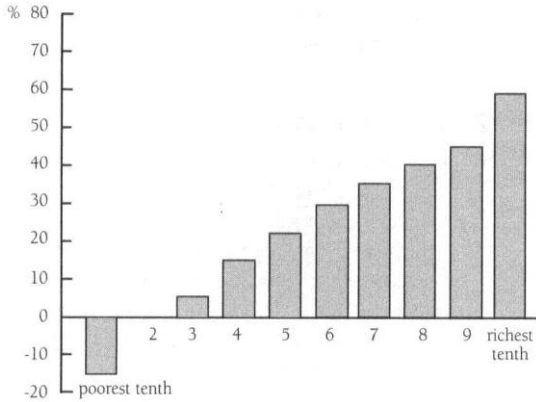
2 Comparisons

We will come below to the question of whether differences between North and South in the money equivalent of incomes accruing to the poor invalidate the search for *convergence* or *connections*. Whether they do or not, there are suggestive *comparisons* to be made, deriving on the one hand from differences in the discourse about PSE, and on the other from differences in the orientation of programmes to reduce PSE.

Take the discourse first. As far as developing countries are concerned, there has been a well-publicised dialectic between income-consumption poverty and a wider human development perspective, incorporating features of social exclusion (Shaffer 1996). The former has been associated with the World Bank (1990), with its familiar three-pronged strategy of labour-intensive growth, human resource development, and publicly-provided safety nets. The latter has been associated with UNDP (1990), which emphasises empowerment and participation, as well as income. In truth, these two visions were never as far apart as sometimes claimed (Askwith 1994). Over time, they have come closer together, with the Bank recognising the multi-dimensional nature of poverty (Hanmer et al. 1996), and UNDP the importance of growth (UNDP 1997). The common discourse has come to incorporate other elements of well-being and human development, particularly peace, good governance and participation, as ends and not just as means to the reduction of PSE. There has also been a shift away from the notion of 'jobs', towards the notion of 'livelihood', with more attention to self-employment, and to the diversity of poor people's livelihood strategies (Davies 1996, Chambers 1997).

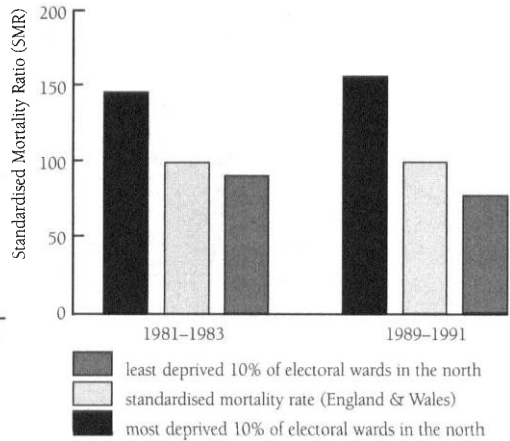
Figure 1: Poverty and inequality in the UK

A: Inequality is rising: changes in income 1979–1991/2, adjusted for household size, after housing costs



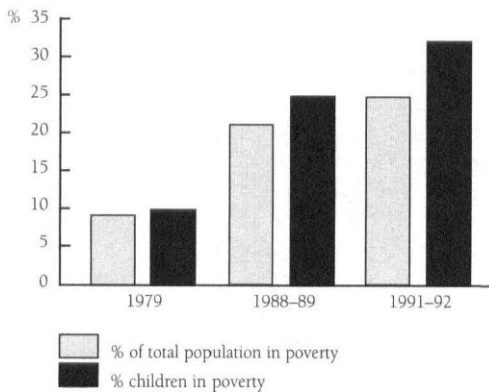
Source: 1994, *Households Below Average Income: A Statistical Analysis 1979–1991/2*, London: HMSO

B: Dying from poverty



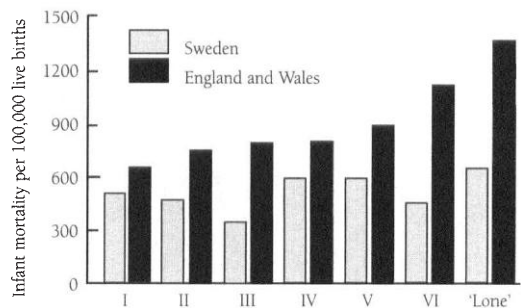
Source: P. Phillimore, A. Beattie and P. Townsend, 1994, 'Widening inequality of health in Northern England', *British Medical Journal* Vol 308

C: Poverty is rising: percentage below half average (mean) income, adjusted for household size, after housing costs



Source: 1994, *Households Below Average Income: A Statistical Analysis 1979–1991/2*, London: HMSO

D: Infant mortality: class still counts in Britain

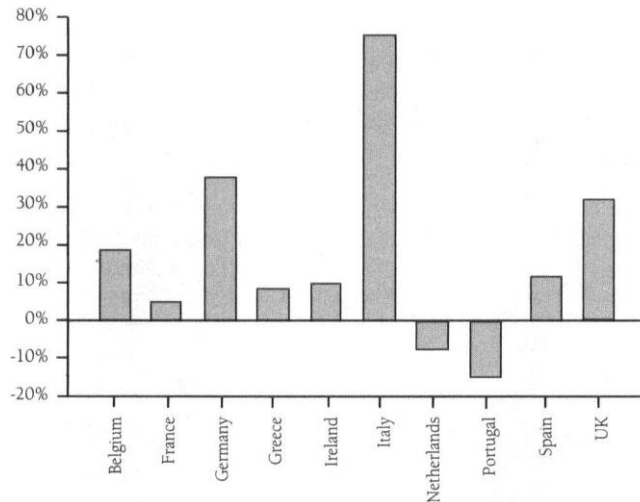


Note: 'Lone' refers to births registered in mother's name only. Social classes from I (professional) to VI (unskilled manual)

Source: D. Leon, D. Vagero and P. Otterblad, 1992, 'Social class differences in infant mortality in Sweden: comparisons with England and Wales', *British Medical Journal* Vol 305

Cited in: Commission on Social Justice, 1994

**Figure 2: Poverty in the European Union:
percentage change of persons in poverty* between 1980 and 1988**



* poverty = 50% of national expenditure adjusted for family size

Source: Eurostat, 1994, **Poverty in Figures: Europe in the Late 1980s**, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the EC

In developed countries, unemployment has been seen as the main correlate of PSE, compounded by factors such as age, race, gender, lone parenthood, or migration status (Walker and Walker (eds) 1997). Education has been seen as the key to reducing unemployment; and reform of social security as a route both to reduction of PSE and to building stronger bridges from welfare to work. Most countries have adopted 'active labour market policies', for example involving training (Robinson 1996). And some have pioneered new forms of social programme explicitly designed to increase the participation in society of the socially excluded: the French programme, *Revenu Minimum d'Insertion* created in 1988, is a frequently-cited example, in which benefits can be provided in return for participation in community projects; more generally in France, a multi-agency urban regeneration programme, the *Développement Social de Quartiers* (DSQ), is specifically intended to assist in the reintegration of disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Cannan 1997).

There are both similarities and differences in these approaches. Education, skill-acquisition and growth are common to both. Many developing

countries also pursue active labour-market policies, for example India, which has a programme of training youth for self-employment (TRYSEM). Similarly, community development programmes emphasising participation are found in both types of country (see Gaventa, in this volume). The differences are instructive, however. Are there not lessons for developed countries in the developing country emphasis on secure and sustainable livelihoods, rather than jobs? And in the emphasis on the labour-intensity of growth, with all that implies for the incentive and regulatory framework and for tax policy? Similarly, can developing countries learn from social security reform in the North, particularly the apparent unsustainability of fiscal cost and the move to private insurance?

When it comes to the detail of programmes, there are many comparisons to be made. Two examples are the attractiveness of workfare and the design of food interventions. Why is it that progressive analysts in the South regard work in return for welfare as morally acceptable and economically productive (Ravallion 1990; Von Braun et al. 1992), whereas those in the North often see it as morally degrading and economically useless (Robinson 1996)? Are

there lessons that can be transferred from South to North? For example, the Southern debate focuses much more than the Northern on the longer term benefits of employment schemes: public works are valuable not just because they provide short-term jobs, and thereby foster social inclusion, but also because they create assets, like roads, forests, or irrigation ponds, that generate livelihoods and incomes into the future. Unemployment or famine relief in the North has certainly followed this route in the past: think of the roads built during the potato famine in Ireland. Has the lesson been forgotten?

By the same token, policy initiatives in the North about how to remedy food poverty seem sterile by comparison with those in the South: overly preoccupied with small-scale, local initiatives, nutrition education and the like, too little concerned with macro-economic issues, national food pricing, and the geographical distribution of shops. The need for a broader perspective is well-known – Dowler makes the point eloquently here, and others have done so too (e.g. Leather 1996). However, a recent British review (Low Income Project Team 1996) was specifically debarred from examining wider issues: Leather (*ibid*) describes it as having been 'gagged'. This is a pity, for certainly, there are policies in the Southern tool box that could be considered in the North: subsidies on inferior commodities, supplementary feeding programmes, food stamps, even food hand-outs (World Bank 1986, Pinstруп-Andersen 1988). It is worth making the point, too, that analysis of food insecurity in the South has attached great importance to the cultural and social roles of food, emphasising autonomy, self-determination, cultural appropriateness, and other terms redolent of the social exclusion debate³.

The point here is not to pretend that analysis and policy for one country can be read off directly from another, even within the broad groupings of North and South. It is simply to demonstrate that opportunities are missed to compare and contrast. A good, recent example was the World Food Summit, held in November 1996 (FAO 1996), which concentrated almost entirely on third world hunger, and missed precisely the opportunities suggested here.

3 Convergence

The North is rich, the South is poor. GNP per capita in the UK is over 40 times that of Ethiopia, even on the basis of purchasing power parity (UNDP 1997). The poverty line in the UK, as we have seen, is 17 times the poverty line established by the World Bank for developing countries. How, then, can it be possible to talk of convergence between North and South?

The argument rests not on levels of living, so much as on the economic, political and social characteristics of different groups of countries; and on the tools of analysis deployed to study them.

The argument about the differences between North and South, both the features and tools of analysis, occupies well-trodden and much-loved territory, which goes to the heart of whether 'development studies', or more often 'development economics' is a legitimate area of professional endeavour. Do we believe, with Seers (1963), Sen (1983), or Meier (1989), that developing countries are qualitatively different, and therefore worthy of an independent discipline? Or do we follow Lal (1983), Krueger (1986) and others, in arguing that differences are merely quantitative, and should not preclude similarities in theory or analytical method?

A starting point for the discussion is Dudley Seers' classic 1963 paper **The Limitations of the Special Case**, which effectively launched the discipline of development economics. Seers helpfully provided a checklist of 20 features, which distinguished a small group of developed countries from others, and marked them out as a 'special case': development economics was concerned with the rest. The list is reproduced in the Appendix. From the perspective of the late 1990s, it has a distinctly dated feel. Partly, this is because of growing heterogeneity among developing countries, and the fact that many have either graduated or are about to do so. It can hardly be said of the Asian tigers, for example, or of the middle-income countries of Latin America, that they lack entrepreneurship, skilled professionals, or a sector exporting manufactures. But more generally, there has been movement in both developed and developing countries, which has brought them

³ For a review of food security concepts, see Maxwell (1996).

closer together: free trade and deindustrialisation in the North; population increase, urbanisation and economic diversification in the South; these and other factors have changed the world significantly since 1963.

Take a few examples⁶. In 1960, manufacturing accounted for around 30 per cent of GDP among the high income economies, but for only 15 per cent among low income economies. By the mid-1990s, the figures had converged, falling to under a quarter in high income economies, and rising to around the same figure in low income economies – and we should note here that the category of low income economies excludes the newly industrialised countries (NICs) where manufacturing has really taken off. Other changes follow from this shift: greater similarity in the composition of exports (75 per cent of India's exports are now manufactures); a greater share of capital goods in the imports of developed countries (now just under 40 per cent, the same figure as for developing countries); similarities in the level and composition of investment (now higher in the North than the South). Again, Seers's statement that rich countries have no tendency to chronic trade deficits no longer applies: high income economies had aggregate trade deficits regularly after 1979, low income economies had regular trade surpluses.

Other examples could be cited: the rise of literacy in developing countries; their gradual shift away from trade taxes to value-added tax and income tax; their cultural homogenisation; and, on the other side, the growing exposure of developed economies to the vagaries of capital markets, their growing income inequality, and their growing envy of others' living standards. Of course, many developing countries, particularly the poorest, remain predominantly agrarian and dependent on exports of primary commodities. Even here, however, it is much harder to argue than in 1963 (even if it could be argued then) that there remain large amounts of unused land, or that farmers are not responsive to price, or that marketing of food is rare. Seers's list is really no longer a good guide to what defines a developing country.

Have others done better? Seers himself had another stab at the question in his writing on the European periphery. Here, he defined the problem as one of structural change, for example the reduction of regional inequalities (cited by Emmerij 1989). Sen (1983) identified development problems in terms of major strategic themes, such as capital accumulation, industrialisation, unemployment, and planning, with the ultimate objective of increasing the capabilities of poor people. In the 1980s, Meier (1989:18), too, focused on structural problems such as population growth, inequality, or lack of political development. He laid particular emphasis on managing the disequilibria associated with the dynamics of structural change. Toye (1987b) is another who has addressed the question. While emphasising the heterogeneity of developing countries, he nevertheless finds commonality in psychological and political factors, particularly the shared experience of decolonisation.

All this is well and good, as far as it goes. But it raises two problems. First, classification is obviously an endless game. Take any pair of societies or countries, identify some differences between them, isolate those which belong to the poorer country, and call this the true territory of development. But we could do this with Britain and Belgium, as easily as with Britain and Belize; and anyway, the characteristics change over time. Does the game bring us any closer to a 'true' definition of a developing country? I fear not, except, to paraphrase Ernest Hemingway, that the difference between the poorer countries and us is that they have less money.

The second problem is that the list of features of development studies will immediately be familiar and seem relevant to many who work on so-called developed countries. Do developed countries not need to 'modernise'? Do they not face growing pains associated with structural change in their economies? Do they not struggle with market failure? If 'development studies', by induction, is what students of development do, then many current themes are relevant to both North and South: restructuring the state; poverty reduction and livelihood; political development and governance; gender inequality; social capital; agency and

⁶ I am indebted to Edward Andersen for research assistance on the data which follow. Data are from the

World Bank's World Development Report, various years.

participation ... the list goes on – and of course includes social exclusion⁷.

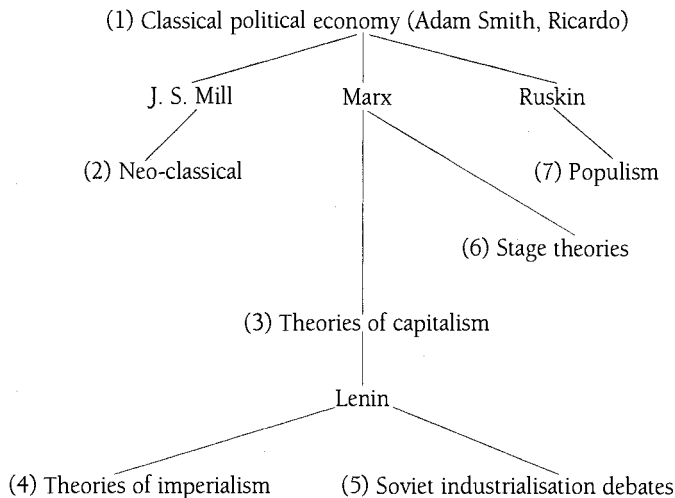
Of course, there are many particularities to the analysis of development in particular places, and it would be foolish to pretend that these do not matter: share-cropping, to take one example, is important in Indian agriculture, but not in British. Nevertheless, it does seem that the sharp boundaries between developed and developing countries as groups are beginning to blur. In his later writing, Seers himself recognised as much. In a Presidential Address to the European Association of Development Institutes in 1975, he talked about development studies 'coming home' to underdeveloped Europe. But he also observed, in a comment that resonates with the case I have been trying to make, that 'attempting to deal with problems of the Third World will end, if the history of economic thought is any guide, by changing the attitude to development in industrial economies, and therefore the whole body of economic theory' (cited in Toye 1987a: 508).

4 Connections

Policy-makers need explanations before they can intervene; and explanations usually involve theory. As the old saw has it, there is nothing so practical as a good theory. If PSE are current in both North and South, and if there is at least some degree of convergence between the two, then an intriguing possibility arises: that common theories can be found which will explain PSE across the North-South divide.

My use of 'theories' in the plural is apposite, I hope. Neo-classical neo-liberalism may be hegemonic, but it is not universal. On the development side, at least, the theoretical space is already full, and getting fuller. Lipton (1977: 92) has produced one map to the territory, in the context of rural development. It is reproduced in Figure 3 and provides a framework which relates neo-classical theory as well as Marxist analysis back to the classical political economy of Smith and Ricardo. We can add to this, however. Hunt (1989) identifies six new paradigms of development post-1940, which she

Figure 3: Ideologies and rural development



Source: Lipton (1977)

⁷ Toye (1989) identifies the following features of structuralism that became relevant to OECD countries in the 1980s: structural bottlenecks, pervasive sources of

inefficiency in production, wage bargaining systems, non-competitive pricing rules, supply side bottlenecks.

identifies as follows, with the key proponents in brackets:

- (i) A paradigm of the expanding capitalist nucleus (Lewis, Rostow, Ranis/Fei);
- (ii) A structuralist paradigm (Furtado, Prebisch, Seers);
- (iii) A neo-Marxist paradigm (Baran, Gunder Frank, Amin);
- (iv) A dependency paradigm (Sunkel, Furtado, Cardoso);
- (v) A Maoist paradigm;
- (vi) A basic needs paradigm (Singer, Streeten, Stewart)

There's more. A further stream of thinking has been concerned with the 'impasse' in development theory, and with possible new avenues. This territory is mapped by Schuurman (1993). To Hunt's list, he adds the Regulation School of Lipietz and Aglietta, the actor-oriented approach of Long, and a school of post-imperialism associated with Becker and Sklar. He identifies diversity and inequality, universalism and specificity, determinism and voluntarism, as marking out 'the narrow path of post-impasse development theory', and concludes that

the point is not to strive for one grand and glorious metatheory *per se*, but rather to stress that a lot of ground has already been covered, but that the plots remain rather isolated . . . The construction of a post-impasse development theory on a non-reductionist and non-teleological basis is the challenge of the 1990s. (*ibid*: 32)

As an avowed post-modernist (Maxwell 1996), I share Schuurman's scepticism of meta-theory. Two or three points are worth making, however.

First, growing PSE in the North ought to change the terms of debate, or what Schuurman, following Buttel and McMichael, calls the 'explanandum', that which needs to be explained. The heterogeneity of the so-called Third World already puts obstacles in the way of theories which try to explain the experience of under-development across the board; and Schuurman and his collaborators find themselves arguing over whether 'diversity' or 'inequality' would be more appropriate as terms to describe the

diversity they observe. Whichever is chosen, diversity should stretch to include the fact of poverty and social exclusion in the North.

Second, it is clear that the existence of PSE in the North helps to discriminate between the multitude of development theories on offer. In particular, it casts serious doubt on linear theories of progress associated with modernisation theory, and particularly with what Lipton in Figure 3 describes as Stage Theories.

Third, globalisation offers new challenges to theory – and to the distinction between developed and developing countries. Seers, again, spotted this, pointing to 'forces at work within the international economy which made a tripartite division of the world increasingly misleading' (cited by Jolly 1989: 39). More recently, UNDP have emphasised that the winners and losers straddle the North–South divide:

With the expansion of trade and foreign investment, developing countries have seen the gaps among themselves widen. Meanwhile, in many industrial countries unemployment has soared to levels not seen since the 1930s, and income inequality to levels not recorded since the last century. A rising tide of wealth is supposed to lift all boats . . . the yachts and ocean liners are indeed rising in response to new opportunities, but the rafts and rowboats are taking on water – and some are sinking fast (UNDP 1997: 82).

Globalisation is not in itself a theory or a paradigm, but it does change the context within which theory must work. In particular, it is associated with rapid technical change, an apparent shift in unskilled jobs from North to South, and a marked growth in the size and reach of transnational corporations. Different theories are propounded as to the motor of globalisation. Some (e.g. Wood 1996a,b) cite orthodox trade theory, and see the shift of jobs as being explained by the comparative advantage of poorer countries in the supply of unskilled labour. Others cite technical change, particularly computerisation and the fall in communication costs, which enable production to be more flexible and to take place further from the market (Economist 1996). Still others cite tendencies to accumulation in the world economy (Murray in O'Brien et al.

1997). Probably, there is some truth in all of these: they are not mutually exclusive.

Indeed, this point can be generalised: eclecticism could be the key to understanding poverty and social exclusion in North and South. Poverty and social exclusion are not themselves homogeneous phenomena. The poverty experienced by a small-scale pastoralist in semi-arid Tanzania is not of the same character, and does not have the same causes, as that experienced by a landless family in a cash-cropping area of the same country, let alone that experienced by people carrying similar labels in other countries, or by those carrying different labels altogether. Multiple realities need multiple theories – across the North–South boundary.

5 Conclusion

I have argued that the increase in poverty and social exclusion in the North offers new possibilities to

learn lessons across the North–South boundary; that it actually blurs the boundary; and that it challenges theory. Where does this leave researchers and policy-makers concerned with poverty and social exclusion?

There is one route I think we should not take, which is that each of us should try to merge all our work into one, covering North and South. The world is too big, and the intellectual complexity too great. Instead, people who specialise on the North or South will continue to do so, but should make new efforts to learn from each other, to explore common problems brought on by convergence, and perhaps to develop new theory together. The best place to start might be with specific topics, like public works, food policy or participation – indeed, with the meaning and measurement of terms like 'poverty' and 'social exclusion'. This will enable collaboration to be built inductively, from the bottom-up.

Appendix: Characteristic features of the special case

I. *Factors of Production*

- a. *Labour*. Literate and mobile, mostly in employment; highly organised; racial, religious and linguistic differences not sufficiently important to break up the labour supply; substantial quantities of skilled and professional workers.
- b. *Land*. Most available land cultivated, and by private owners (or farmers with secure leaseholds) in plots of economic size.
- c. *Capital*. All sectors heavily capitalised, with spare capacity; integrated and comprehensive systems of transport and power.
- d. *Enterprise*. A wide field from which entrepreneurs can be drawn, and a favourable climate for enterprise; firm legal basis for corporations.

II. *Sectors of the Economy*

- a. *Agriculture*. Wholly commercial, and flexible in response to price changes or technical advances; foreign ownership rare; extensive marketing network for foods.
- b. *Mining*. Of limited size and in the hands of local firms.
- c. *Manufacturing*. Diversified, with a large metal-using industry producing (inter alia) machinery and vehicles; some areas of competition.
- d. *Overall*. Manufacturing much larger than either agriculture or mining; natural resources adequately surveyed.

III. *Public Finance*

- a. *Revenue*. Strong reliance on direct taxes relative to import or export duties; tax laws enforceable.
- b. *Expenditure*. Includes big outlays on social security and agricultural subsidies, relatively little on public works.

IV. *Foreign Trade*

- a. *Exports*. Consist of several products for which there is a large internal market; and for which price and income elasticities are fairly high; export prices determined by local costs and stable; exports sold to many countries.
- b. *Imports*. Consist largely of primary products (some of which are also produced domestically) which come from many countries, and for which the income elasticity of demand is not high.
- c. *Capital*. Long-term capital flows and profit remittances of secondary importance.

V. *Households*

- a. *Income*. Distribution moderately equal (post-tax); very few living at subsistence level.
- b. *Expenditure*. Food not overwhelmingly important; standardisation and mass production possible, because of equal distribution of income, national promotion and homogeneity of tastes; prestige of local manufactures high.

VI. *Savings and Investment*

- a. *Savings*. Mobilised by a capital market, comprising a stock exchange, a bond market and an extensive nationally owned banking system, with a central bank and a managed currency; personal savings significant.
- b. *Investment*. High (probably over 20 per cent of G.D.P.); but import content low.

VII. *Dynamic Influences*

- a. *Trade*. No chronic tendency to deficit because of income elasticities (see above).
- b. *Population*. Growth of population slow (less than 2 per cent a year), and urbanisation relatively moderate.
- c. *Aspirations*. Envy of foreign living standards not high or spreading as a cause of discontent.

Source: Seers 1963

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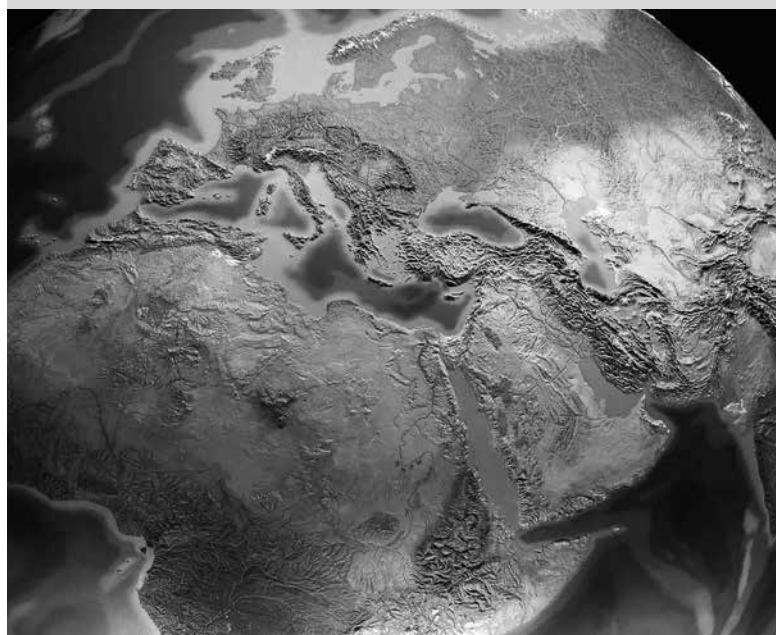
IDS Bulletin

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HAS UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENT COME OF AGE?

Editor Richard Longhurst



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Poverty, Participation and Social Exclusion in North and South

John Gaventa

1 Introduction

The rapid growth and acceptance of the concept of participation has been a key feature in development in the 1990s, and is central to the evolving discussion on social exclusion. While during the 1970s and 1980s, 'participation' was more the discourse of grassroots organisations or NGOs, this decade has seen the concept being embraced at the institutional and governmental level. The World Bank Working Group on Participation is seen as an authoritative source on participation in development. The Bank has launched 18 flagship participation projects internationally. An Interagency Group on Participation has been established to promote participation amongst aid agencies. The UNDP is incorporating participation as a critical path for poverty alleviation. Encouraged by aid organisations, national governments are being urged to decentralise, and to democratise through strengthening community participation and planning at the local and regional levels.

The institutionalisation of participation offers the possibility of taking grassroots participation to a larger scale, of being a powerful vehicle for social inclusion, and for mobilising new energy and resources for overcoming poverty. The adoption of policies on participation at high government levels provides an opportunity to link efforts of participation 'from below' with efforts to legitimate and strengthen participation 'from above'.

Yet the dangers of misuse are also present. The institutionalisation of participation at a policy level can lead to co-optation of grassroots efforts, bureaucratisation and standardisation of the approach through top-down methods, and poor quality experiences that will taint participatory efforts in the future (Blackburn, forthcoming).

While policies in support of participation enjoy a new currency, the approach has been around for a long time. In particular, we can learn a great deal about the use of participation to address poverty and social exclusion by looking at how the concept has been used in the North, where policies to promote participation for community development and poverty alleviation have been tried for several decades.

In this article, I will briefly discuss the links between the concepts of participation and social exclusion. Then, turning to the context of the United States, I will present a short history of three government programmes that have attempted to use participation to address poverty and social exclusion. Finally, I will conclude with themes which emerge from this history and which may be relevant for the South, as participation is increasingly used as an institutionalised strategy for addressing poverty.

2 Participation and Social Exclusion

Within the literature on participation, a distinction is often made between participation as an end itself, or as a means to an end. A similar distinction may be helpful as we link the concept of participation to that of social exclusion.

First, we can understand the lack of participation in itself as a form of social exclusion. In his contribution to this volume, Arjan de Haan (1997) discusses several definitions of social exclusion, including social exclusion as 'the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society within which they live.' In this sense, participation or inclusion is a goal to be achieved in and of itself, as a response to the problem of exclusion. This definition of participation is similar to that used, for instance, by UNRISD in its work, which defined participation as 'the organised efforts to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in given social situations, on the part of groups and movements from those hitherto *excluded from such control*' (Stiefel and Wolfe 1994: 5, italics added).

Second, however, we often find in the literature that participation is also a means of overcoming other problems of exclusion. Participation is seen as a vehicle to enable the excluded to act more effectively to address the problems which they face. Thus, the unemployed may be organised to participate in strategies for overcoming unemployment or for job creation, youth organisations may be encouraged to participate on issues affecting youth, immigrants or minorities may develop participatory strategies for addressing racism or cultural exclusion, etc.

In the first sense, participation may be seen as an antidote to the problem of exclusion and is more an end in itself. In the second sense, participation is seen as a means of engaging the socially excluded in broader solutions to the issues and problems in their lives. In either sense, participation and social exclusion are important concepts to discuss together, in both the North and the South.

3 Poverty and Social Exclusion in the North

While we often think of poverty in the 'South' and wealth in the 'North', these distinctions are increasingly misleading. While the North clearly is a place of relative wealth, it also contains within it large-scale poverty and increasing inequality. In the United States, development is highly uneven. We find areas within inner cities and vast rural areas where levels of poverty, unemployment, relatively poor education, illiteracy, lack of access to health care, etc. provide similarities to certain parts of the 'South'. With growing inequality in industrialised countries, the movement of jobs and industry to newly industrialised regions of the South, increasing issues of access to basic services such as health care for the poor in many countries, and the globalisation of goods, services and information, the traditional distinctions between North and South need to be re-examined. We must recognise that there are 'Souths within the 'North,' just as there may be 'Norths within the 'South' (Gaventa, 1991; see also other articles in this volume).

The parallels, convergences and connections between North and South (Maxwell 1997) are especially strong in the area of inequality, and its consequences for social cohesion and participation (see, for instance, the Wilkinson article in this volume). While globally, the levels of inequality are known to be increasing in the South and North, it is not often realised that the level of income inequality in the USA is higher than in many other countries, including many in the South (Couto 1994; World Bank 1991). Moreover, for whatever reason, socio-economic status (defined more broadly than income) is also more likely to affect social and political participation in the USA than in many other countries. Over 25 years ago, Verba and Nie (1972) found, for instance, that socio-economic status was a better predictor of participation in the USA than in many

countries in the north, such as the UK, Netherlands, and Germany, but also than in countries in the South such as Mexico and Nigeria. More recently, Robert Putnam (1995) has written of the decline of social capital and civic engagement in the US, at the same time that the USA is promoting a vibrant civil society as a condition for newly emerging democracies in other parts of the world.

So we face a paradox of participation in the North. In countries that globally have the most, there is high inequality between the haves and have-nots. And, for the have-nots who might need to participate the most to change their socio-economic situations, there are low levels of participation. (Verba and Nie: 150). It is perhaps for this reason that social policy in the United States over the last 30 years has included a series of programmes that have used participation – with differing meanings and strategies – to address poverty and social exclusion. These include:

- Participation as Community Action – 1960s
- Participation through Regional Planning and Integration – 1970s and 1980s
- Participation as Partnership and Collaboration – 1990s

3.1 Participation as community action: the war on poverty

Today for the first time in our history, we have the power to strike away barriers to full participation in our society.

Maximum feasible participation of the poor.

President Johnson, 4 March 1964, while presenting War on Poverty Legislation to Congress

In the 1960 presidential campaign, John Kennedy brought the plight of the rural poor to the attention of the nation. A book by Michael Harrington on the hidden poor, **The Other America**, had captured his attention, as well as that of others across the country. Visiting the coal fields of Appalachia, Kennedy was shocked at the conditions of rural poverty which he witnessed. Urban areas, as well, were facing growing unrest. Following the election, President Kennedy (and later, President Johnson) became the architects of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, widely known as the War on Poverty legislation.

A cornerstone of the Act was the community action clause, which mandated that there should be 'maximum feasible participation of the poor' in anti-poverty efforts. It directed local communities to designate public or private non-profit agencies as grant receiving agencies, and to use those funds to develop employment opportunities and improve local living conditions. Community Action Programmes (CAPs) were formed, involving poor people and their organisations, often with the help of young, educated organisers who had enlisted in the War on Poverty efforts. Across the country in a few short months, there was an outpouring of community mobilisation and action.

Such a blossoming of poor people's organisations and voices, especially when supported by funds from the federal government, also provoked an outcry from the local elites in city halls and county councils. Conflicting interpretations over how much participation was either 'maximum' or 'feasible' quickly emerged, producing ongoing struggles over board composition and representation. Daniel Moynihan, one of the framers of the legislation, later referred to the CAP clause as 'Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding,' arguing that the intent was simply to encourage citizen participation, not to turn over control of the programme to them, nor to by-pass local political structures (Moynihan 1969; Gaventa, Morrissey and Edwards 1995).

By 1966, two years after passage of the historic legislation, the federal government had beat a hasty retreat. An amendment sponsored by Edith Green of Oregon put funding for community action under the authority of state or local governments, and determined participation by the poor to mean one-third representation of poor people themselves, one-third from government, and one-third from other business and civic sectors.

While brief, the skirmish with maximum feasible participation of the poor in official government anti-poverty programmes was a formative moment for future anti-poverty efforts. The policy intervention helped to galvanise the formation of new local groups and leaders, who would continue to organise self-help and other non-governmental efforts for the next two decades.

By the 1970s, the government had turned its attention in urban areas to a 'Model Cities' programme, concentrating on revitalisation through locally elected government, with little strong citizen involvement. In the rural areas, especially in Appalachia, one of the largest areas of rural poverty in the country, the strategy moved from community action by the poor, to regional development, achieved through integration into the national economy, and led by a more professional planning approach.

3.2 Participation as regional integration

For all practical purposes, most of the 14 million poor in our poverty areas are on the outside of the market economy . . . they are on the outside looking in, and they need our help.

The People Left Behind, President's Commission on Rural Poverty, 1967

In the 1960s, socio-economic maps of the United States revealed enormous pockets of poverty in rural areas, regions viewed as being 'socially excluded' in the sense that they were outside the nation's social and economic mainstream. Of these, three regions stood out most clearly: the Appalachian region, the largest, most densely populated area of rural white poverty; the deep South, which includes Mississippi, Alabama and the Arkansas delta and is the largest area of rural black poverty; and the Native American reservations in the western United States (Gaventa and Lewis 1989).

In the Appalachian region, a special development agency, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), was launched. Over the next 25 years, the ARC, with aggregated expenditures exceeding \$15 billion, became the nation's largest rural economic development agency. The commission invested most of its funds on infrastructure – highways and industrial parks – that it hoped would lure in outside industry, following a model parallel to the 'modernisation' approach in other parts of the world. Through the development of regional infrastructure, the commission believed, Appalachia would 'take off' and become 'integrated' into the national economy, overcoming the regional exclusion and poverty of previous decades.

From the late 1960s to the late 1970s, the ARC strategy seemed to work. Industries, often from the industrialised northern USA, migrated South in search of resources, cheaper labour, and a more favourable business climate. The gains, however, were short lived. The 1980s were marked by decline for many residents, including a widening gap between their income and that of other more affluent parts of America. The crisis was no longer of impoverished rural pockets of poverty 'on the outside looking in,' it appeared much more to be of the mainstream economy itself.

What had happened? One factor lies in an economic restructuring that was national and international in scope. During the 1970s and 1980s, agricultural and industrial America was being transformed into a service and finance economy. Millions of jobs were lost as plants shut down or moved, many to overseas locations. Such economic restructuring had particular impact on the rural poor, who saw themselves underbid by newly industrialising parts of the world, but were not able to compete for new jobs or industries with the more affluent and educated regions in their own country.

By end of the 1980s, it was clear that the regional integration solution to poverty was not working, especially in the context of a changing global economy. At the same time, during the 1970s and 1980s, community-based efforts at development, many of which were spawned in the 1960s, had continued to grow and to demonstrate results, at least on a small scale (Gaventa, Smith and Willingham 1993). As in other parts of the world, attention began to turn to forming new partnerships between government and civil society, rather than to traditional market mechanisms, as a path for change.

3.3 Participation as partnership and collaboration

The road to economic opportunity and community development starts with broad participation by all segments of the community. This may include, among others, the political and governmental leadership, community groups, health and social service groups, environmental groups, religious organisations, the private and non-profit sectors, centres of learning and other

community institutions. The residents themselves, however, are the most important element of revitalisation.

President's Community Empowerment Board,
1994

One of the hallmarks of the Clinton administration has been the Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC) programme, the most comprehensive federal programme of the 1990s to focus on relieving severe distress in rural and urban areas. Launched in 1993, the programme provides \$2.5 billion in tax incentives and \$1 billion in block grants to revitalise 95 distressed urban and rural communities.

The principles of the EZ/EC programme are similar to many which are now being articulated in international approaches to community development. First, the programme builds on each community's own vision for change, through a strategic planning process that allows local residents to set their own path to success. It gives significant new emphasis to the role of citizen participation in the planning and development process by promoting involvement and partnerships among all sectors of a community. Second, it adopts a comprehensive approach to development by linking the principles of economic opportunity and sustainable community development into a broad vision of change and revitalisation.

While much can be learned from the implementation of this programme, two points pertaining to participation stand out. First, as in the War on Poverty, given a chance to participate in development, people did so in enormous numbers. The process began with strategic planning, in which thousands of citizens at a grassroots level took an active role in determining the vision, goals and strategies for revitalisation of their communities. Widely diverse groups were involved in the planning process, including women, minorities and low-income people. In addition to racial, gender and class diversity, the planning process represented community-based organisations, government, private business, labour unions, educators, health care officials, media and other community stakeholders.

Second, however, while participation was high in the beginning visioning process, it has been difficult to maintain in the implementation process. After encouraging local communities to go through a very hurried planning process, with promises for quick action, long delays then occurred as the government agencies attempted to devise new ways to process applications or allocate and disburse funds. Then, once money began to flow, communities often found the traditional power holders stepping in to take charge, and serious conflicts emerging over goals, governance and implementation, as in the War on Poverty. In other places, however, these conflicts have been less pervasive and new initiatives have taken root very quickly, involving new coalitions of civil society organisations, local government and the private sector.

4 Key Themes for Development

What does this brief history of participation policy in poverty programmes in the United States suggest about the current debates on participation and policy in international development? A number of key themes emerge which are relevant and perhaps instructive.

Participation policy matters

While in some quarters there may be scepticism about attempts of government or large-scale agencies to legislate or mandate participation, the experience in the United States is that participation policy matters. Strong legislation in the War on Poverty and in the latest Empowerment Zone programme helped to legitimate and to galvanise large-scale action at the grassroots level. Opportunities for participation, when built into national policy, made a difference in who participated locally. The capacity, energy, and momentum created at the grassroots often continued, even after the formal policies changed or failed.

Who participates matters

Broadening the base of participation is not only important in its own right, but it affects the development agenda. When there was broader-based participation in the 1960s and 1990s, we saw very different definitions of what was important for development than in the more top-down and market oriented versions of the 1970s and 1980s.

Visions of development which emerged in the community-based planning process in the Empowerment Zone Programme reflected much broader concerns with issues of participation, capacity building, cultural awareness, empowerment, etc., not only the more traditional agenda of economic and infrastructure development. The varying emphases on the development of economic, human or social capital by differing groups often led to conflict about which goals were most important.

The definition of participation matters

Attempts to institutionalise participation have also led to conceptual debates about what we actually mean by participation. In 1969, a chief advisor for the War on Poverty published a ladder of participation which ranged from non-participatory forms of manipulation, to degrees of token participation, to degrees of shared power, including partnership, delegation, and control (Arnstein 1969). In the mid 1990s, similar typologies or scales are also being used and developed. Pretty (1996), for instance, examines levels of participation ranging, again, from manipulation to self-mobilisation.

As the War on Poverty debates on what was meant by 'maximum feasible participation' illustrated, it is important to have as much clarity as possible on the levels and types of participation intended. However, we must also recognise that in its implementation, participation is a dynamic process. Participation at one point on the scale may lead to movement along the scale. For instance, consultation processes, if done well, may lead to demands and expectations on the part of those consulted for a greater level of participation. Similarly, consultation that is misused can lead to manipulation and reinforce levels of passivity or cynicism in future attempts at participation.

Participation and power

As participation moves 'up' the scale to include concepts like citizen control over resources or self-mobilisation of groups which have previously been inactive, then we can expect it to encounter resistance from the traditional power holders. There is one school of thought which says that power is not a zero sum game, that increased participation by some groups does not diminish the power and participation of others. However, if participation

involves decision-making and control over scarce resources, then the history of these programmes in the USA suggests the opposite to be true – increased participation by the have-nots will be perceived as threatening to those who have traditionally been the dominant decision-makers.

The history also suggests that simply mandating or legislating participation from the top is not enough to sustain it. Ongoing intervention is needed from the top to help ensure its implementation, and to help intermediary elites to understand or accept the new participation. High-level 'champions' of participation at the top of government institutions are important to reinforce the participatory vision at the local level, to help resolve conflicts, and, if necessary, to intervene to enforce the new policies.

The importance of prior social capital and organisational capacity

In both the War on Poverty and the Empowerment Zone programmes, communities which were historically poor by measures of economic and human capital, revealed strong resources of social capital in the planning and visioning process. Given an opportunity to participate with others, they were able to do so, building upon networks, relationships and levels of trust that may have been structured over decades. This was not uniformly true, however. It is perhaps self-evident that groups that have a history of trust, and of working together, will do better at working together in the future. Where there is a history of conflict or 'vertical' social capital, participation in large-scale formal endeavours is more difficult to accomplish or to sustain.

While 'social capital,' (defined by Putnam as trust, reciprocity, and networks of support) is important for participation, so, too, is the organisational capacity of the grassroots or poor people. In the Empowerment Zone Programme, large numbers of people participated in the strategic visioning process. However, it has been more difficult to sustain participation in the implementation of the programme. In communities where grassroots organisations and leadership have been built in 10–20 years of prior development work, the poor have been more successful not only at 'getting to the table' but also in 'staying at the table.' With the help of this organisational capacity, these communities were more able to take advantage of the institu-

tional opportunities for participation when they came along, to negotiate with government officials over terms and implementation, to survive difficult conflicts, and to mobilise resources when necessary (Morrissey with Gaventa and Creed 1997).

This suggests another important lesson for policy intervention: mandates for participation from 'above' must be linked with pre-existing capacities for participation 'from below.' If there has not been a prior history of local action and organisational development, there will be fewer building blocks for larger-scale participation to occur.

The importance of governmental or institutional capacity

If the development of organisational capacity at the grassroots community level is important for sustained participation with institutions, then equally important is the development of the capacity of institutions and governments to work in a participatory way with communities. A major obstacle in the implementation of the EZ/EC Programme has been the conflict among the various levels of government, and turf conflicts within agencies responsible for implementation of programmes. This has led to delays, confused and often conflicting procedures, and mixed signals and advice to the localities. Also important has been the lack of skills, knowledge and attitudes amongst agency staff about how to work in a more participatory fashion, especially where goals and projects are set by the community, rather than given to them by government. New more flexible institutional procedures, and new skills and attitudes on the part of the government staffs and officials are important for participatory policies to work effectively at the community level.

The importance of participatory monitoring and evaluation of participation

As participation becomes more and more accepted, it will also be important to determine ways to monitor and measure whether 'quality' participation is occurring, and with what results. What are the indicators for success in participatory development?

This issue has at least two important inter-related dimensions. On the one hand, as participation is accepted in principle, we must evolve indicators

and ways to know if it is in fact occurring in practice. However, while researchers have developed earlier methods of monitoring and evaluating more traditional forms of development, such as infrastructure, job creation or education, the tools and indicators do not exist when it comes to measuring (potentially more fuzzy) concepts of participation, empowerment, and capacity.

The second dimension relates to the question of 'who measures?'. Whose indicators of success are used and who uses them? The rapid evolution of PRA has taught us a great deal about the importance of people's knowledge and has provided sets of tools for using that knowledge in appraisal and implementation of projects. The next step is to involve people centrally in evaluating their success and impact. 'Who counts reality?' may prove as significant as 'whose reality counts?' (Chambers 1996).

Participation may not be enough

Clearly, policies to promote participatory approaches for dealing with poverty and social exclusion are also affected by broader forces and must be linked to other policies for change. Much more work is needed to understand the relationships of grassroots participation to other large issues linked to globalisation of the economy, racial, ethnic and religious movements, the overhaul of social welfare policies, governance and decentralisation policies, to name a few.

5 Conclusion

This article has suggested that policies and experiences with participation as a strategy for countering poverty and social exclusion in the North may be relevant to the current debates on how to institutionalise participation in development in the South. It has argued that there are many parallels and themes to be explored, and it will take much further research to do so adequately.

However, from this preliminary inquiry one lesson is perhaps most clear. While many donors and aid organisations in the North (such as AID in the United States) are promoting strategies of participation abroad, they may do well to examine more critically the lessons which can be learned from similar strategies at home. While democracy and participation in the North have strong traditions,

the models and approaches used at home have also taught us a great deal about challenges still to be faced in implementing large-scale participatory

programmes. Perhaps the new experiences with participatory development in the South will provide new lessons for the North as well.

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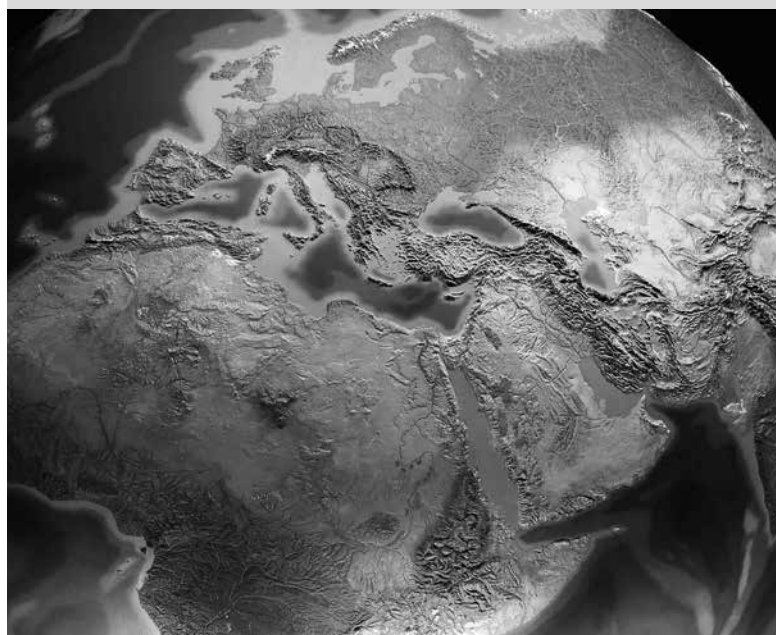
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Editor **Richard Longhurst**



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Introduction: New Democratic Spaces? The Politics and Dynamics of Institutionalised Participation

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Across the world, as new democratic experiments meet with and transform older forms of governance, political space for public engagement in governance appears to be widening. A renewed concern with rights, power and difference in debates about participation in development has focused greater attention on the institutions at the interface between publics, providers and policy makers. Some see in them exciting prospects for the practice of more vibrant and deliberative democracy (Fung and Wright 2003; Gaventa, forthcoming). Others raise concerns about them as forms of co-optation, and as absorbing, neutralising and deflecting social energy from other forms of political participation (Taylor 1998). The title of this *Bulletin* reflects some of their ambiguities as arenas that may be neither new nor democratic, but at the same time appear to hold promise for renewing and deepening democracy.

Through a series of case studies from a range of political and cultural contexts – Brazil, India, Bangladesh, Mexico, South Africa, England and the United States of America, contributors to this *Bulletin* explore the interfaces between different forms of public engagement. Their studies engage with questions about representation, inclusion and voice, about the political efficacy of citizen engagement as well as the viability of these new arenas as political institutions. Read together, they serve to emphasise the historical, cultural and political embeddedness of the institutions and actors that constitute spaces for participation.

1 Spaces for participation

Moves to extend opportunities for citizen participation in governance are inspired and underpinned by the view that to do so makes for

better citizens, better decisions and better government (Mansbridge 1999; Warren 1992; Gaventa, forthcoming). Some would cast the move towards more direct forms of citizen engagement in governance as a means of addressing the “democratic deficit” by strengthening liberal democratic institutions: urging politicians to listen more to those who elect them and bureaucrats to become more responsive to those they are meant to serve. For others, it constitutes a more radical reconfiguration of relationships and responsibilities, one that extends beyond citizen–state interactions to encompass complex alliances of actors and networks across permeable institutional boundaries and an expanded vision of the public domain (Fung and Wright 2003; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003).

New arenas for public participation appear to offer all this, and more. One potentially useful way of characterising these institutions is using the concept of *space* (cf. Lefebvre 1991), a concept rich with metaphor as well as a literal descriptor of arenas where people gather, which are bounded in time as well as dimension. A space can be emptied or filled, permeable or sealed; it can be an opening, an invitation to speak or act. Spaces can also be clamped shut, voided of meaning, or depopulated as people turn their attention elsewhere. Thinking about participation as a spatial practice highlights the relations of power and constructions of citizenship that permeate any site for public engagement (Cornwall 2002).

Contributors to this *Bulletin* use the term “spaces” to evoke these dynamics, but also to refer more concretely to two distinct kinds of arenas. One we have come to call “invited spaces”, a label that serves to convey the origin of many intermediary

institutions as government-provided, whether in response to popular demand, donor pressure or shifts in policy (Brock *et al.* 2001). Some are more transient in character: policy moments where public space is opened up for deliberation or communication, before being closed again as authorities return to business as usual. Other “invited spaces” are more durable, often taking the shape of regularised institutions modelled on enduring templates such as the welter of co-management committees and user groups that have proliferated in the wake of sector reforms (Manor, forthcoming).

A second set of spaces we have come to call “popular spaces”, arenas in which people come together at their own instigation – whether to protest against government policies or the interventions of foreign powers, to produce their own services or for solidarity and mutual aid. “Popular spaces” may be regularised, institutionalised in the form of associations or groups; they may also be transient expressions of public dissent, as passions about the issues that bring people together wax and wane. Boundaries between “invited” and “popular” spaces are mutable, rather than fixed; “popular spaces” can become institutionalised, with statutory backing, and “invited spaces” may become sites for the articulation of dissent, as well as for collaboration and compromise.

Different spaces have different kinds of interfaces with existing political institutions. Transient consultative events have gained popularity with governments, lenders and donors in recent years, whether to take the pulse of public opinion or gather “voices” to secure legitimacy for policies (Holmes and Scoones 2000; Goetz and Gaventa 2001). They can, at times, work to undermine regularised institutions, whether popular or invited; they can also lend alternative avenues for voice, particularly for dissent. Differences in durability matter, as we come to see, when it comes to questions about who participates, and related questions of accountability, representativeness, democratic legitimacy and viability as political institutions.

“Invited spaces” offer the *potential* for reconfiguring relations of rule, extending the practice of democracy beyond the sporadic use of the ballot box. But how this potential is translated into actual changes in governance is contingent on a range of factors. One is the locus of their creation: *conquered* spaces (Marcus Mello, pers. comm.), spaces that exist as a result of successful demands, may be perceived by would-be

participants quite differently to *provided* spaces that are simply put in place at the behest of donors or lenders. Another is the existing governance landscape in any particular context, in which three “ingredients” appear to be critical: ruling party disposition to supporting popular participation; popular mobilisation; and a sufficiently resourced, well coordinated state bureaucracy (Heller 2001; Fung and Wright 2003; Gaventa, forthcoming). Further, related, factors lie in the particularities of context. These include histories of governance and experiences of rule, whether those gained through popular struggle or through decades of being treated as passive recipients of a paternalistic state. They also include prevailing cultures of politics, whether in terms of the ways in which everyday citizens relate to the arena of the political, the meanings and expectations attached to the utterances of politicians or to promise making by the powerful, or the cultural practices of decision making and dissent within any given space for participation. These factors shape expectations, relationships and dynamics at the interface with the state, lending different meanings to apparently similar “invited spaces”. It is with some of these differences that the first section of this *Bulletin* is concerned.

2 The dynamics of participation in “invited spaces”

Much is expected of arenas for participation. Yet, as with other “participatory” institutions, the preconditions for equitable participation and voice are often lacking within them. How to involve those who lack presence or voice in conventional political arenas, the resources to engage, and a feeling of belonging, of mattering, of being able to contribute or of having anything to gain, continues to present an enduring challenge. The arenas with which we’re concerned may appear as innovations, but are often fashioned out of existing forms through a process of institutional bricolage, using whatever is at hand and re-inscribing existing relationships, hierarchies and rules of the game.

In some cases, “invited spaces” have been transplanted onto institutional landscapes in which entrenched relations of dependency, fear and disprivilege undermine the possibility for the kind of deliberative decision making they are to foster. It is in this kind of setting that Simeen Mahmud’s study is located. Focusing on co-management institutions, community groups (CGs), created by donor-driven health sector reform in Bangladesh, it illustrates the

dissonance between ideals and reality. In principle, these institutions are to provide the basis for new partnerships between service providers, users and local government. In practice, Mahmud shows how poor people continue to look to the state as provider and guarantor of rights, whilst experiencing their own agency as limited by the relations of dependency within which they remain locked, as “lesser” citizens and “unequal” rights’.

Mahmud’s analysis points to a combination of factors that conspire to limit the possibilities for “ordinary people” to participate in these new institutions. These are: prevalent interpretations of “participation”, many of which do not provide much scope for the exercise of citizenship or recognition of the knowledge and agency of poor or marginalised people; the limited responsibilities “community participants” are given within these institutions, which remain restricted to changing the behaviour of others like them rather than holding the state to account; lack of information about or understanding of the functioning of these institutions or the health service in general; elite capture; a lack of clarity about the purpose and responsibilities of members of the CG; and deeply held reluctance to question the actions of the state. Lacking formal links to other governmental spaces, remaining without official recognition by the Ministry of Health, CGs appear to lack authority as well as accountability.

Given that CGs are essentially a donor-imposed, rather than an organic, institutional form, there are wider lessons to be learnt about the cultural dynamics that complicate the neat superimposition of development blueprints. What did the people Mahmud spoke with think might make a difference in this setting? For them, education and mobilisation were seen as key to individual and collective empowerment, and to gaining voice rather than being silent or silenced by fear. Yet as long as officials interpret “participation” in as narrow and instrumental a sense as in this context, the scope for engagement may remain limited. Without constitutional guarantees or other mechanisms for accountability, institutions like CGs lack political viability and can undermine representative local government, as Manor (forthcoming) argues.

What happens when these spaces are created as *part* of local government? John Williams’ account of the city of Cape Town’s Area Coordinating Teams (ACTs), set up in the late 1990s as a space for

communication, consensus-building and coordination, explores the dynamics among and between three sets of actors who constitute the ACTs: public officials, local councillors and community organisations. The promise of these institutions is considerable, Williams suggests. Officials and councillors see the ACTs as ‘an ideal place for interaction and synergy’, a forum for civic education and for mobilisation to address shared concerns; the very existence of such a space helps to narrow the gap between officials and local people, and can serve as an arena for transformation.

However, this promise remains largely unrealised. Why? First, Williams identifies a lack of political commitment, which is manifested in irregular attendance from certain officials. Second, he points to a lack of a sense of ownership of the process amongst councillors, and fears about involving “difficult” groups, such as gangs and traditional leaders. Third, he highlights how issues of representation – who speaks for whom, and how claims to represent are made and negotiated – emerge, working to undermine the legitimacy of community organisations. Fourth, he suggests that the non-binding nature of the issues discussed at the ACTs lend the institution little accountability for following through.

This case highlights the significance of links between “invited” spaces and the political machinery of governance, illustrating how the dislocation of ACTs from channels of influence renders them mere consultative bodies with limited clout. Lacking the means by which to enforce attendance by officials and to hold the Council accountable for decisions reached in meetings, procedural weakness undermines their potential for democratising the planning process. Williams’ study underscores the significance of institutional design. It also illustrates how provided-for institutions like these can become other peoples’ spaces that no-one in particular feels a sense of commitment to, and which remain inert, vacated, lacking in potency.

Enabling legislation can be one tool for strengthening the efficacy and scope of citizen involvement, on ‘both sides of the equation’ (Goetz and Gaventa 2001). Ranjita Mohanty’s article takes a closer look at the invited spaces of forest management, in the impoverished State of Uttaranchal, a context in which the participation of marginalised groups – in this case women, and members of scheduled castes and tribes – is

guaranteed by the constitution through the reservation of seats in local bodies. Her conclusions, like those of Williams, are not encouraging.

Joining Agarwal (1997) and others in exposing the myths of participation that undergird donor/lender enthusiasm for joint forest management (JFM) schemes, Mohanty draws attention to the emergent new forms of exclusion. The promise of including women – the primary forest users – was one of the rallying calls of JFM. And through stipulations and procedures, women have gained a place at the table. But today's forest management institutions have been fashioned out of previous institutions put in place by the colonial state, and remain imbued with traces of relations of power and expectations from former times. Cultural barriers, fear, dependency and lack of self-confidence all conspire to make it difficult for women to use their voice, and be heard. Where women have gained the resources to participate, it has been through the creation of separate spaces within which they can build confidence and learn leadership skills. Mohanty's conclusions attest to the more diffuse changes that are happening:

... even if the landscape of marginalisation is not completely altered, new leadership is emerging from marginalised sectors of society, from women, from lower castes. By acquainting people with the language of the state and through engagement with state-led rules, JFM has taught people the art of governance.

There is much in these studies to suggest that participation, like citizenship, is something that is learnt through practice. While many invited spaces remain harsh testing grounds for beginners, they are part of a shifting institutional landscape in which longer term changes in the way people perceive and engage with governance may be taking root. The next section turns to two countries in which there has been a significant expansion of invited spaces in recent years, to explore further some of the issues that arise.

3 Engaging citizens? Issues of Representation

At the tail end of the 1990s, "civil society participation" was on every donor's lips. But something has happened in the last few years that has brought a little more circumspection. Harder

questions are being asked about exactly whom "civil society organisations" represent, on whose behalf they speak and to whom they are accountable. One of the characteristics of many of the spaces that we're concerned with here is that "public involvement" may relate less to engaging the general public-at-large in consultation or policy deliberation, but rather the organisations that claim to speak for and about them. The articles in this section reflect on some of the questions this raises about what "citizen voice" comes to mean, as about the legitimacy derived from claims to have involved "the public".

Nowhere has there been greater expansion of opportunities for citizen participation in institutions created by the state for deliberative governance than in Brazil. Daring experiments in participatory governance appear, in some quarters, to have made a significant difference to redistributive outcomes, as well as to a sense of citizenship and political community (Abers 1998; Avritzer 2003). What happens, when all the enabling conditions for citizen participation and influence appear to be present and yet the resultant institutions lack muscle, asks Vera Coelho? Her study of health councils in São Paulo, Brazil's biggest city, explores the question of how such institutions can make a tangible difference to public decision making. Through a close examination of the dynamics of participation within these "invited spaces", and of the rules of access and engagement, Coelho comes to the conclusion that issues of representation are essential precisely because they serve to define these spaces as political institutions, guaranteeing or undermining their legitimacy.

Coelho identifies two features of institutional design that are of critical importance in lending invited spaces such as councils the means to become more effective political institutions. First, she argues, closer attention needs to be paid to the criteria for organising political representation – a far from simple issue when it is to complement, rather than substitute, existing statutory authorities, and to guarantee the presence of organised civil society and groups traditionally excluded from access to state services. Second, she highlights the organisation of procedures for discussion and decision making. This, too, is complex, she argues, as the rules of deliberation call for different dynamics from those used within statutory institutions, where decisions are taken according to acknowledged hierarchies. Noting the often unhelpful role of the chairperson

or executive secretary, Coelho's study emphasises the importance of enabling leadership, as well as the potential use of participatory techniques in facilitating more inclusive deliberation.

Complementing Coelho's study of health councils, Arnab Acharya, Adrián Gurza Lavalle and Peter Houtzager focus in more depth on the question of who – or, as in this case, what kind of *organisations* – participate in these new democratic spaces in the city of São Paulo and what factors increase their propensity to participate. Comparing three kinds of “invited spaces”, those of the participatory budget, the deliberative policy councils (of which health is one kind) and other institutionalised forms of citizen participation, their findings point to the significance of three factors: affiliations with traditional institutional actors – in this case, the ruling Workers' Party or the State; institutional design, such as their legal mandate and procedures for participation; and the organisation's form, specifically whether it serves a representative, advocacy or service delivery function. Challenging what they term the “civil society perspective” on citizen participation, they argue that the organisations which engage in Brazil's new democratic institutions need to be situated as *institutionally embedded* actors. To do so is to recognise the connections that those who enter “invited spaces” have with other spaces, and other actors.

Acharya *et al.*'s study challenges one of the key presuppositions of the “civil society perspective”: that it consists of autonomous actors who are able to hold traditional political institutions to account. Rather, they show dense linkages between “civil society” participants, the ruling political party and the government, via contracts to deliver services. It is these ties, they argue, that are one of the best predictors of participation in all three of the spaces they studied. It would be easy to draw the conclusion from this that the powers-that-be insure themselves against contestation by packing “invited spaces” with “their” people. But there is another way in which these findings might be read. The new politics of democracy has come to rely on multiple arenas outside the formal “closed” spaces of government for gaining legitimacy or securing consent, whether through liberal or deliberative democratic means. Consultation, even where it only consists of the provision of information, has become part of the very fabric of governance in ways that were barely imaginable even a decade ago. The density of these linkages may in itself

represent an increased propensity for participation, manifesting itself in engagement in multiple arenas.

In this context, questions about the basis on which actors – whether individual or collective – participate become ever more important to answer. Angela Alonso and Valeriano Costa take up some of these questions in their study of public hearings for environmental licensing, Aplas, which adds a further dimension to the studies of participation in São Paulo in this *Bulletin*. Unlike the regularised institutions described by Acharya *et al.*, and Coelho, Aplas is a transient space. Alonso and Costa's study looks in depth at who exactly participated in deliberation in the Aplas: who spoke, for how long, and how often. They found that few of the “civil society” contingent that were present were directly affected social groups. Affected groups actually occupied a fraction of discursive space, requesting information rather than expressing opposition to the scheme. It was left to other actors, environmental organisations and social movements, to articulate a position of dissent: one framed in terms that had barely any resonance amongst the local population.

The public hearings became, in their terms, ‘ceremonial areas in which participation was ritualised’. Intersections with other invited spaces worked, at the same time, to compromise that of the Aplas. Alonso and Costa describe how government actors created other spaces into which local elites were invited, which served to disarm any potential local opposition and effectively empty the “invited space” of the public hearing of its political significance. Observing that the general public lacked the knowledge, skills and expectations of being taken seriously which might have enabled them to participate, Alonso and Costa argue that institutions of deliberative democracy suffer from the very shortcomings that their advocates level against those of traditional representative institutions.

The articles in this section point to some of the paradoxes of participation at the heart of these “new democratic spaces”. And they point to an area in which much more research, and theorisation, remains to be done. These arenas are often intended as a means to change the nature of interactions between those who provide services and resources, and those who are entitled, consume or benefit from them. But quite how those on the receiving end of policies are represented varies enormously, with attendant implications for legitimacy, credibility and accountability. Tensions between representatives of

various kinds make matters more complicated still. Elected officials might resent attempts to bypass them where local government opens up public consultation to the general public; self-selected representatives may come to speak for others without any accountability to, or even communication with, them; those who are put forward to speak about any given group can be taken to be speaking *as*, rather than simply *for*, them – and be subjected to similar forms of discrimination as a consequence, and so on. As Coelho notes, traditional representative democracy just doesn't match what these new institutions are seeking to do; and yet, in these newer spaces, the rules of representation are often unclear and may be improvised to suit the circumstance, leaving a lot to be desired in terms of legitimacy and undermining potential viability as political institutions.

The fourth case in this section is from the UK, again a context in which there has been considerable innovation in recent years, whether in the form of regularised bodies or transient exercises in opinion-seeking or consultation. Marian Barnes, Helen Sullivan, Andrew Knops and Janet Newman highlight some of the complexities of deliberative governance in two English cities. Looking across a range of spaces for participation, their analysis highlights the complexity of relations between those who enter these arenas. Interlocking agendas, tactical alliances and tensions between councillors, members of the public and officers, make for a complicated relational picture, as one example illustrates:

When councillors felt challenged by members of the public, they took this out on officers; when members of the public complained about lack of resources going into their wards, councillors supported this. Officers regarded councillors as their audience, rather than the public, and this frustrated officer accountability to the public.

Barnes *et al.* consider the tension between different 'opportunity structures for participation', identifying two forms: one that is open to the general public and another that seeks "representation" by enlisting representatives from existing groups and organisations. They argue that these two tendencies are overlaid in complex configurations in practice, leading to further tensions and raising a host of further questions about the nature of representation, with important implications for legitimacy. Where

authorities set parameters for inclusion, groups can choose either to comply or to create their own structures. Indeed, Barnes *et al.* argue, spaces for participation may serve to *create* identities (cf. Hajer 2003); that is, rather than people entering these spaces as members of pre-constituted groups, they gain such identities only when they participate. Attention needs to be given to the potential of these new democratic spaces to produce new forms of exclusion, they argue, as a result. Their analysis resonates with many of the articles in this *Bulletin* in suggesting that citizens also need their own spaces in which they can develop alternative discourses and approaches, some of which might best remain at some distance from arenas which bring publics and their representatives together with officials.

4 Intersections: contesting public policy from "below"

What then, of those who seek to engage in influencing public policy from outside these invited spaces? The last section of this *Bulletin* considers "popular spaces" – arenas within and from which people are able to frame alternatives, mobilise, build arguments and alliances and gain the confidence to use their voice, and to act.

The first article in this section, by Marilyn Taylor and colleagues, focuses on some of the ambivalence with which the voluntary and community sector in England has come to view government-created "invited spaces". Citing a recent policy document that proclaims, 'the freedom of citizens can only be truly realised if they are enabled to participate constructively in the decisions that affect their lives' (Blunkett 2003: 3), Taylor describes the proliferation of new spaces for "third sector" involvement in policy processes under the New Labour administration, highlighting inherent tensions that have been exposed in the process. First, she draws attention to the tension between a desire for diversity and the need for cohesion to win policy space, exacerbated by government preference for the sector to take a single position.

Secondly, she highlights the tension between leadership and participation, and the broader issues of representation and accountability that this raises. Calling for realism about the numbers of people who are likely to engage over time in these new spaces, Taylor argues that more thought needs to be given to different levels at which people are likely to participate and to links between them. She points

out, however, the contradictory reactions of government funders who, on the one hand, accuse voluntary organisations ‘of being “obsessed” by process’ and on the other hand, ‘were the first to complain if they thought that an organisation was not representative’. Thirdly, she highlights the tension between occupying invited spaces and remaining on the outside, noting that ‘being invited onto the inside of a policy community can take the sting out of organisations that have been a thorn in the government’s side’. Interestingly, the study found that traditional lines were blurring as organisations sought to balance taking up and turning down invitations to participate.

Taylor’s article helps shed further light on the interface between popular and invited spaces, and on what happens to actors when they traverse the borders between them. Mixed as outcomes have been, her account gives cause for cautious optimism, if only about the potential of newly opened spaces that would be politically difficult to slam shut again. On the one hand, it is these border crossings that makes “representatives” representative; they enter invited spaces on behalf of a given popular space, bringing with them some of the legitimacy that is sought by those doing the inviting, and taking from it information and other resources sought by those they left behind. But on the other hand, the process of crossing the borders between these spaces, no matter how permeable and contingent they are, also works to change those involved and how they are perceived by others. On the positive side, this may serve to build and strengthen alliances across different kinds of organisations, and make more permeable still the borders between invited and popular spaces. However, those who enter invited spaces run the risk of being regarded by those who choose to remain outside them as having been co-opted: ‘they are seen’, Taylor notes, ‘to have sold out’.

Remaining outside the structures of the state offers a position from which not only to critique state policy, but also to imagine and enact alternatives. Carlos Cortez Ruiz’s article describes the case of the Zapatista movement’s creation of spaces of resistance in Chiapas, as popular spaces that remain in defiant separation from those of the Mexican government. Counterposing the “invited spaces” of the Mexican state with the “popular spaces” of the Zapatista movement, Ruiz’s study highlights the extent to which the political implications of any given space depend in part on

the locus of its origins, as well as on its location within a broader configuration of political institutions. In Chiapas, social movements are not uniformly allied with either the Mexican State or the Zapatistas, creating further complexities: they occupy a spectrum of positions from that of resistance, and the refusal of any resources at all from the Mexican government, to collaboration along the lines of their own strategic objectives, to receptiveness to any government assistance going.

Identifying a range of factors that differentiate what participation comes to mean in the “popular” and “invited” spaces of Chiapas, Ruiz explores some of the divergences in experiences in these different sites. He discusses the extent to which participation in “invited spaces” is framed by technocrats, whose interventions produce and limit what is possible. One interesting dimension of his account is in highlighting the difference between the ‘rhythm of participation’ in government-promoted spaces and in the Zapatista-controlled spaces, which adds another dimension to earlier discussion in this introduction about duration and durability. Ruiz suggests that in the autonomous municipalities, there is a longer-term vision for participation as a means of struggling for the guarantee of rights; in contrast, in the arenas controlled by the government, there is a much more short-term and instrumental view of participation. These are differences in kind, rather than simply in degree, and are significant in framing these different spaces and for what they come to represent to indigenes of the Chiapas region.

Just as the Zapatistas have become renowned for their use of the new media, the transnational campaign tactics of the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) owe as much to the new political spaces emerging with the growth of “network society” (Castells 1997), as to the new strategies for political engagement that TAC has developed at a national level. The struggle for access to treatment for people living with HIV and AIDS in South Africa has made headlines the world over. Steve Robins and Bettina von Lieres’ contribution to this *Bulletin* tells a fascinating tale of the conjunction of tactics to contest, and prise open, political space in multiple arenas, and the new “spaces of citizenship” created through the ingenuity of TAC activists. Activists traversed conventional boundaries between the institutions of the state and of public space, waging mutually impinging battles in the courts and in the streets simultaneously. Robins and von Lieres’

analysis points to the significance of the ways in which TAC activists came to animate – and activate – these “new spaces”, from township clinics to the courtrooms of South Africa, and through protests that spilled beyond the streets of Cape Town to reach the offices of pharmaceutical multinationals in Europe and America. It is, Robins and von Lieres suggest, in the articulation of these different forms of mobilisation that TAC’s significance lies; in the joining together across different sites of identifications between otherwise disparate individuals, brought into concert in their pursuit of an issue-in-common.

TAC serves, in many ways, as an example of the new politics described by Hajer and Wagenaar (2003). Issue-based, often composed of transient interventions characterised more by their intensity and spontaneity than their durability, one of the principal characteristics of such political spaces is their heterogeneity, and their ability to reach across and hold together segments of society that might otherwise have little in common, creating at the same time the basis for new and different ways of relating between them. In TAC, black mothers living with HIV who are surviving on the margins of the economy, and white middle class advocates, queer activists and doctors, are drawn together in a common struggle. Articulated in different configurations in different sites, together they provide a force to be reckoned with. By bringing together experiential and expert knowledge, buttressing normative claims framed in the language of human rights with the language of evidence-based medicine, TAC has become a formidable alliance.

The case of TAC provides an interesting example with which to think more about intersections between different kinds of space, and for the synergies between action in one sphere and in another. In this case, the pursuit of policy change through conventional routes is complemented by active use by TAC of both kinds of “popular spaces” identified earlier. Popular regularised spaces serve to build and sustain the movement, providing a base from which to act and in which to strategise; and popular transient spaces, such as well-publicised demonstrations, lend all-important public space levers. In his contribution to the *Bulletin*, Andy Mott explores the intersection of these spaces further. Drawing on experience with community organising and citizen monitoring in the United States of America, Mott’s article describes

the terrain of struggle that is “democracy”, US-style, and highlights the role of mass mobilisation in claiming and winning political space for those who are poor and discriminated against.

Situating grassroots social movements on the American political landscape, Mott explores the interplay between government moves to open political space for citizen engagement in policy processes and the kinds of alliances that formed as a result, between legal services advocates and poor people’s organisations, and between grassroots activist groups and national campaigns. Mott argues that as political space for policy influence began to shrink with conservative forces winning ground within government, poorer people sought to create their own spaces from which to gain strength, and field representatives to fight for greater involvement in decision making. Tactics used to win and expand space range from oppositional to alliance-building, combining attempts to reform the “rules of the game” with creating connections with other actors and processes outside the space, so as to act more effectively to lever open opportunities for influence.

As in the case of TAC, the kind of organising Mott describes has involved work right at the grassroots – going door-to-door to talk to people about the issues concerning them and to encourage them to get involved – and has linked this with national-level campaigns around core issues that affect people’s lives. Citizen monitoring is shown to have been an especially effective way of using, and extending, available political space and holding government to account. An emerging emphasis within Mott’s account is the centrality of popular spaces – “own spaces” that are created anew, sought and strengthened – as sites in which people can work together to get on top of an issue and develop strategies to have an effect in the public domain.

Mobilisation, and confidence and capacity building in “popular spaces” thus provides a basis for entry into “invited spaces”, one that can not only equip those who traverse these spaces with the resources needed to use their voice, but also the legitimacy with which to speak – as representative of constituencies who remain watchful, outside the “invited space”, rather than as individuals. This returns us to the questions of representation raised earlier in this introduction, and to the broader issues that our enquiry into spaces and places of participation has raised about issues of voice, inclusion and difference in these new arenas.

5 Conclusion

Many of the institutions described in this *Bulletin* are in their infancy; they are, in many respects, democratic experiments in the making. As they mature, the kind of changes that they promise in political culture, in consciousness and in the quality and depth of civic engagement, may yet become more apparent. Yet even now it is clear that whilst much of their potential as democratic institutions remains to be realised, something is happening. From differences in the framing of needs as demands for rights, to changes in the way in which citizens regard the process of governance and their own competence as participants in it, small changes offer the prospect of greater effects. People who have never had anything to do with processes of rule are being brought into arenas of governance and are learning more about how they work: lessons that may stand them in good stead in other arenas. In some contexts, the difference this may make – to people, to political processes, to the way in which government and governance come to be thought about – may be incremental, but it is not inconsiderable. Even where institutionalised participation has little or no policy efficacy, there are tactics to be tried, alliances to be built; and what participants bring into and take from these spaces may have all kinds of possibilities for them as actors in other spaces and, more broadly, for the practice of democracy (cf. Warren 1992; Mansbridge 1999).

But there is clearly still a long way to go before these kinds of “invited spaces” can become genuinely inclusive and equitable institutions. Much can be done by improving institutional design (Fung 2003), especially in the area of representativeness and procedures for democratic decision making. And yet in every case contextual factors come into play, whether, for example, the influence of the sanitarian movement on those engaged in shaping health policy in Brazil or a political culture of non-bindingness in South Africa. The sheer diversity of institutions described in this *Bulletin* serves to

underscore the point that the one-size-fits-all development rhetoric about governance and institutions plays out in very different ways across different cultural, social and political settings.

Not only do “invited spaces” need to be understood as embedded in the particular cultural understandings and political configurations that constitute governance in any given context. It is also crucial to situate them in institutional landscapes as one amongst a host of other domains of association into and out of which actors move, carrying with them relationships, knowledge, connections, resources, identities and identifications (Cornwall 2002). Viewed in isolation, they may appear more inviting – and certainly more straightforward – than when they are set on this more populous institutional terrain, where they jostle for policy space with political parties, social movements, religious organisations, kinship and patronage networks, and so on. Development agencies ignore the embedded and situated character of these institutions at their peril.

Situating the spaces with which we have been concerned here on this broader landscape, and exploring the intersections and interfaces with other political institutions, both those of the formal bureaucracy and other kinds of arenas for citizen engagement, transient or regularised, “invited” or “popular”, raises a host of further questions. To what extent has the expansion of participation by invitation worked to undermine the place of traditional political institutions like voting and protest, and is this in the interest of marginalised groups or the more articulate and organised professional classes? If the door is always open, what happens to those who choose not to go in – do they get discredited as trouble makers? And what are the reciprocal effects of the enlargement of the public space and the increasing permeability of boundaries between state and non-state institutions? These are questions that remain for future studies of the politics of participation, to which this *Bulletin* hopes to make a modest contribution.

Notes

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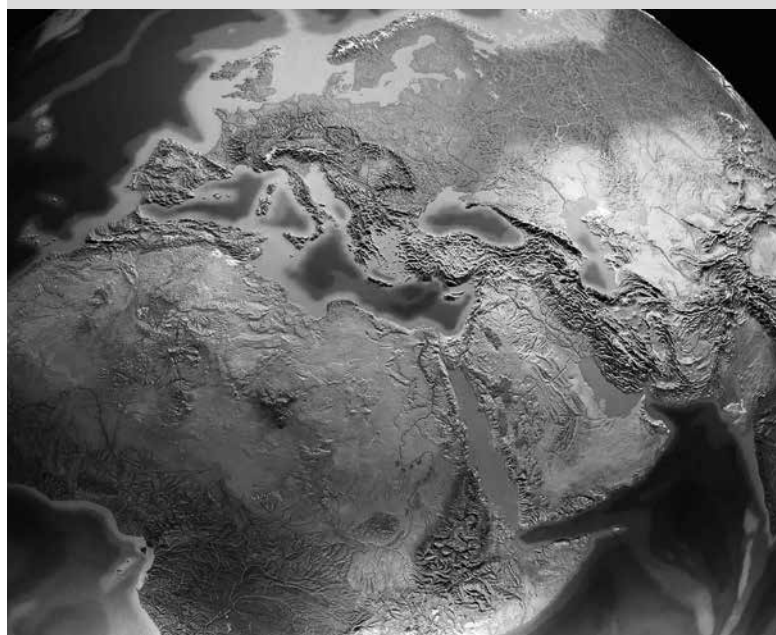
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HAS UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENT COME OF AGE?

Editor **Richard Longhurst**



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Power, Participation and Political Renewal: Issues from a Study of Public Participation in Two English Cities

Marian Barnes, Helen Sullivan, Andrew Knops and Janet Newman

1 Introduction

Contemporary interest in citizen engagement in public policy stems from a concern with the governance and quality of public service delivery, with improving the legitimacy of decision making and with articulating the claims of those previously marginalised (Barnes and Bowl 2001; Newman 2001; Sullivan and Skelcher 2002). This article discusses recent research into the diversity of sites and practices of public participation in two contrasting English cities, Birmingham and Liverpool.¹ It explores the perspectives of citizens and officials on participation and examines the construction of “the public”, the negotiation of legitimacy and how questions of difference and diversity are managed in spaces for participation. Our analysis reflects on issues of interaction and institutional design within forums for public involvement, the interaction between representative and participative democracy in the public policy field and how the tensions between representative and participative democracy are reconciled, or not.

2 Citizenship and participation in service delivery

Shifting notions of citizenship and the merits of participation have informed successive attempts by UK governments to involve the public in policy-making over service delivery. In the 1970s, spatially targeted Community Development Projects (CDP) sought to involve citizens as empowered partners in their dealings with the state, a programme which ultimately failed to shift the prevailing balance of power (Cockburn 1977). The 1980s saw a dramatic shift in emphasis as Conservative governments

promoted the notion of the “citizen as consumer”. This privatisation of the relationship between the citizen and the state was supported by the outsourcing of local services and the expansion of private provision in key areas of public concern. The public were encouraged to play an active role in assessing service quality (through satisfaction surveys and charter initiatives) and contributing to service management (through participation in school governing bodies and forms of tenant management). The empowerment of citizen-consumers was considered important in challenging the dominant self-interest of ruling politicians and professionals at the local level (Prior *et al.* 1995).

The inadequacy of the Conservatives’ individualised conceptualisation of citizens as consumers led to an emphasis in the latter years of the twentieth century on the responsibilities of citizens to contribute to creating their own and others’ welfare (Barnes and Prior 2000). This position was developed under the New Labour administration that took power in 1997 and is reflected in their publicised priorities for reform. These included measures that sought to reconnect the citizen to the state, revitalising the democratic health of the nation and included efforts to involve the public at all levels of government through instruments such as referendums, citizens’ juries and panels, youth councils, neighbourhood forums and interactive websites.

New Labour sought to engage service users as participants in measures to improve the performance of public services, whether through “Best Value” at local government level or the Patient Advocacy and Liaison Services (PALs) in the health

service, which was heralded as a voice for users in service planning. Resources were targeted at disadvantaged or socially excluded communities through particular programmes contained within the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (Social Exclusion Unit 2001; see Taylor this *Bulletin*). The rapid increase in recent years in the volume and range of non-electoral participation initiatives used by local government has seen methods such as public meetings now more likely to be used alongside user-oriented mechanisms like focus groups and more innovative approaches such as interactive websites or citizens' juries (Lowndes *et al.* 1998; ODPM 2002). In 2001, 14 million people were estimated to have participated in these exercises (ODPM 2002).

Public participation in public policy, however, is not simply a response to government prompting and promotion but also emanates from autonomous community action and social movements, from claims for the authentic expression of lived experiences, which have gone unheard or been actively silenced (e.g. Barnes and Bowl 2001). Sometimes couched in terms of creating opportunities for more active citizenship (e.g. Barnes 1997; Lister 1997), the concern here is to create opportunities for people excluded from decision making to become empowered and to influence decisions that affect their lives (Melucci 1996; Touraine 2000; Fraser 1997). Our study sought to assess the capacity of these new spaces for participation in public policy (whether stimulated by government or autonomous citizen action) to contribute to democratic renewal and challenge social exclusion.² In particular, we sought to understand better the kinds of fora that exist at the local level, who participates in them, how issues of difference and dissent are handled and how participants engage with the 'rules of engagement' within these spaces.³

3 The range and types of deliberative forums at the local level

Our mapping of public participation in the two cities provided evidence of a wide range of initiatives. The majority of reported initiatives could be characterised as "invited spaces", serving to bridge the gap between the citizen and state. This is not surprising given that most of our informants were officials from the local government or health

sectors, many of whom were engaged in developing these "invited spaces". However, we also obtained information about a small number of relatively longstanding "popular spaces" through our voluntary and community sector informants. It is possible to characterise these initiatives in the following ways although many of the reported initiatives could be included in more than one of the categories below:

- Initiatives to address cross-cutting issues such as the Sustainability Forum in Birmingham (environmental initiative established in response to Local Agenda 21), Communities Against Poverty in Liverpool and a wider range of regeneration partnerships in both cities.
- Initiatives that focused on issues affecting a specific population group/s including the Senior Citizens' Forums in both cities, the Lesbian and Gay Forum in Liverpool, the Black and Minority Ethnic Group Council and the Search Team (disabled and other service users) in Birmingham. These initiatives may be city-wide or neighbourhood-based such as the initiative to develop services for Asian young people as part of an area-based regeneration programme in Birmingham.
- Generic forums for involvement led by the local authority but involving the public and partners from other sectors namely the Local Involvement, Local Action (LILA) initiative in Birmingham and Area Committees in Liverpool.
- Advocacy initiatives stimulated by community or voluntary action to improve services or secure policy change, such as the Liverpool Mental Health Consortium, Communities Against Poverty and the Birmingham Women's Advice and Information Centre.
- Service-specific initiatives including Patients Forums/Councils in hospitals in both cities, a Women's Information Network for maternity services in Liverpool, Best Value consultations by local government departments, tenant participation initiatives relating to housing and Primary Care Group involvement activities (in both cities).
- Area-specific initiatives including Education Action Zones (improving school attainment levels in targeted areas) and Sure Start (working with children aged 0–4) in both cities, Neighbourhood Services Pilots (a decentralisation scheme) and

the West Everton Community Council (a community-led organisation) in Liverpool and the Family Support Strategy in Birmingham.

- Issue-specific initiatives such as the redevelopment of a park in Birmingham and the community action to prevent the closure of a health centre in Liverpool. From our initial mapping exercise, it was possible to identify three key features of the reported local public participation initiatives: a neighbourhood focus, an intention to extend and enhance participative democracy and the building of social capital.

4 The neighbourhood focus

Motivation for public participation could be found from locality to supra-national level in both cities. Evidence of a shift towards neighbourhood-based activity was provided most obviously by the “New Deal for Communities” regeneration programmes in both cities. This programme targeted activity and resources at place-based communities of no more than 8,000 people. The combination of policies and programmes from national and supra-national bodies also had a neighbourhood focus. Locally generated policies and programmes supported this neighbourhood momentum and the local government organisations in both cities had devised decentralisation programmes that aimed to devolve decision making to sub-local level.

However, other dimensions to involvement cut across this neighbourhood focus. In the National Health Service (NHS), these related to specific service sites, such as hospital or surgery patients’ councils, or types of health problem, such as mental health or diabetes. Participation was also organised around communities of identity, the strongest example of which was a city-wide lesbian and gay community police forum, although other examples are outlined above. Finally, both cities paid attention to super-ordinate issues that affected all communities. For example, in one city, there was a city-wide sustainability forum, while in another, a “Communities Against Poverty” forum reflected a concern with deprivation.

5 Extending and enhancing participatory democracy

Participation initiatives in both cities were designed to involve citizens in all stages of the policy process from design to implementation and evaluation, through three main modes of engagement:

1. Information giving, either as a means to wider participation, or to raise awareness about the nature of a particular service or function.
2. Consultation, an opportunity for the public to express views about a particular issue within a framework set by a service delivery organisation.
3. Dialogue, or deliberation, between organisations and citizens, in which issues for discussion could be introduced by both parties.

In most cases, a number of methods were combined to extend and enhance participation. The most commonly employed was the small group, normally as part of a combination of other techniques. Other methods included visioning events, focus groups and citizen research. Certain circumstances called for very particular methods, so teleconferencing was used for a group of cystic fibrosis sufferers who could not meet face to face because of the risk of cross infection. Social networks in pubs and clubs had been used to access the views of the lesbian and gay community.

6 Building social capital

There was evidence that building collective capacity among specific communities informed the design of some participation initiatives. This developmental capacity had two emphases. The first concentrated on building the capacity of groups and institutions to relate to each other. Activity here was targeted at improving the understanding between communities and institutions of each others’ ways of operating. Here Black and minority ethnic communities were most frequently identified as target groups as they were often perceived to be the most marginalised from existing decision-making processes. However, the issue also arose in relation to the setting up of a new health organisation, a primary care group, where key officials were conscious that the reproduction of ‘the traditional ways of doing things’ would not attract community members to participate.

The second related to building individuals’ capacity within communities. Activities here tended towards providing opportunities for individuals to associate with each other as well as officials, to exchange information and share personal experiences and to build personal relationships through the process of association and exchange, for example, an initiative providing support for carers was as much about developing a strong

network amongst potentially isolated carers as it was about accessing carers' experiences to inform future policy and service delivery decisions.

7 Who takes part and why?

Many of those involved had previous experience of "activism" including within trades unions, political parties, voluntary organisations, self-help groups or community action. Some officials shared similar histories with community members illustrating the way in which the experiences of different stakeholders frequently overlapped or were held in common. Participants could be considered to be motivated on a range of different "commitments", including:

- Commitment to an area, for example, young people involved in a regeneration initiative saw this as an opportunity to improve the area in which they lived.
- A religious commitment that provided a value base leading to social action to improve people's lives.
- A commitment to a cause about which people could become very knowledgeable, for example, amongst both citizens and officials involved in an Agenda 21 initiative.
- An awareness of being a representative of "a people". For example, a Yemeni man who saw his role as ensuring that the voices and experiences of the Yemeni population were heard to improve the lives of older people.
- Lifelong commitment to causes, such as party political, trade union, peace campaigns, women's groups, deriving from political commitments or professional backgrounds.
- Commitments originating in experiences of difference, exclusion or disadvantage, including poverty, disability, or differences related to sexuality, gender or ethnicity.

To dismiss people demonstrating such commitments as "self interested" is too simplistic (see Young 2000). Nevertheless, it is important not to ignore the potential for new forms of participation to reproduce exclusions. This is a point we address below.

Different "opportunity structures" for participation are created by public bodies. Initial survey data suggested two forms. The first emphasised the desire for "openness" within a given

population group, most commonly, residents living in a specific area (such as area committees); users of a particular service (such as community care services); or citizens sharing particular characteristics (such as the lesbian and gay forum). The second emphasised the idea of "representation". Here membership was created by eliciting "representatives" from existing groups and organisations, for example, the Minority Ethnic Group Council (MEGC) established by an NHS Trust, in which membership was formed by invitation to ethnic community organisations.

More detailed analysis of the initiatives in our case studies suggested that these two principles were overlaid in quite complex ways. For example, those forums constituted through the principle of representation could be more or less open in terms of the field from which representation was sought. In the MEGC, for example, only organisations recognised by the local health trust were invited to send representatives. There was, as one member termed it, an 'unofficial hierarchy structure' of representation.

Data suggested that the tension between "openness" and "representation" was resolved through the use of informal networks to extend membership. This led to a number of difficulties. In some forums, an imbalanced membership resulted, with some groups significantly underrepresented because an absence of networks to existing membership created a barrier to participation. Our detailed studies of individual initiatives revealed different ways in which groups dealt with the desire for membership to be "open", while ensuring that particular groups were represented and a diversity of voices heard. Some groups sought to resolve this by creating more formally constituted decision-making groups within an open membership. But this did not necessarily resolve the difficulties because of the problems of securing nominations for election or applications for appointment. Our data suggested that problems of securing both membership and office holding are shaped by the interaction between institutional context and individual motivations.

Questions of legitimacy informed the way in which opportunity structures were created, the forms of power and influence that operated within forums and between forums and decision-making bodies. Whatever the formal membership rules (see below), informal claims to legitimacy tended to be

based on the skills, knowledge and experience of particular members and/or their claims to “represent” a wider constituency. For example, in locality based forums, knowledge of the locality was highly valued. But while notions of “the general public” or “local residents” were used by officials and lay members to denote the absence of sectoral interests, in practice many lay advisory members were not “just residents”, some were professionals viewed as having their own agendas.

“Representation” was a key discourse in claims for legitimacy. Interviews highlighted the ways in which “representation” and “representativeness” informed official expectations about who should be involved and how. But our studies showed that citizens also drew on a range of notions of representation to define their position within the forums and to establish the legitimacy of their claims by reference to external publics. For example, in a service user’s forum individuals were invited to join on the basis of (1) their capacity to represent service users’ views by virtue of their own experience; (2) their capacity to represent particular user groups, for example disabled people; (3) their capacity to represent other service users through contact with them. The tensions between these different claims were resolved in part by creating a distinction between representation of *people* and representation of *issues*.

Conflicting claims may underpin struggles for legitimacy within and between forums. This was evident in the youth conference study, where council youth workers sought to impose an inclusive view of the young people to be involved in planning the conference, in the face of claims put forward by an existing autonomous youth forum that they were the legitimate representatives of local youth. This study illustrates the tensions between officially espoused adherence to recognising diversity and deeply embedded assumptions about what constitutes a legitimate community. Here an attempt by city council workers to widen the range of groups involved in planning the conference served to question the legitimacy of the original forum to speak on behalf of all local young people. The forum’s legitimacy claim came not from a formal process of election, nor from claims to be representative of all young people in the area, but from a shared history of action.

Autonomous groups can face problems as they engage with institutional forums in which officials

claim the right to define membership. Such groups may then be faced with a choice about whether they reconstitute themselves to maintain the opportunity for dialogue, or whether they assert their autonomy by breaking away. For example, members of the women’s advice centre were influential in forming a women’s network to promote dialogue and shape strategy away from the constraints of official forums; a senior citizens forum was under threat as official bodies created alternative structures where they had more control over membership.

Struggles over legitimacy and control are negotiated in the everyday processes through which officials engage with groups. Our study has highlighted the importance of studying the micro-politics of engagement amongst forum members and between forums and official bodies and we have elaborated on this elsewhere (Barnes *et al.* 2003).

8 The process of deliberation: particularity, difference and dissent

It became apparent through our studies of individual initiatives that the different purposes and origins of each participation initiative will affect the nature of exchange. It was also evident that there were tensions between the institutional contexts within which conditions of participation were framed and the struggle for recognition amongst excluded groups. We concluded that such forums can be seen as the site for the development of new discourses that are negotiated along the citizen/official continuum, suggesting that deliberative forums are sites in which identity is constituted rather than expressed.

The social services user group illustrated tensions concerning purpose that were evident in responses to the nature of exchanges within the forum. The purpose was described as enabling a voice for users of social care services. Members contested whether voice should be understood as individual advocacy, personal testimony or collective action with specific change objectives. Some spoke of the importance of the forum as a site in which experiential knowledge, expressed in personal accounts, could be exchanged. Others saw this as inadequate as a basis for achieving change and there was little evidence of testimony informing more general campaigns. Evidence suggested that the social services department concerned was content to

support the group as a forum, which could enable access to useful experiential knowledge relevant to “safe” issues (such as the design of identity cards for Orange Badge holders), rather than encourage more challenging responses on broader issues of policy (including resource allocation).

This initiative study also illuminated the complexity of diversity issues in deliberative forums. It included different *interests* within the constitution of the group (the range of community care “client” groups), as well as different *perspectives* (see Young 2000). The forced resignation of a previous chair on the grounds of racism had created self-consciousness about language. One interviewee suggested there had been a sophisticated debate about how a sub-group of minority ethnic members should be described and how this would affect who would identify with the group. Others were reluctant to speak explicitly about this issue, indicating the difficulty experienced in engaging with conflict along these lines. The actual constitution of the group was also affected by an earlier fracturing. Mental health service users had “fallen out” with others. The institutional location of the group within local government rather than the health service also meant that many of the most important issues for this group could not be addressed in this context. In this instance, the substance of deliberations was framed by the institutional location of the forum. This in turn marginalised issues of central importance to some putative members.

One of the area committees illustrated the tensions associated with bringing together representative and participative democracy. The purpose was to enhance democracy and devolve decision making. As committees of the council they are subject to the rules and conditions that regulate council conduct. Membership comprises councillors from relevant wards, independent advisory members from local communities or voluntary organisations, representatives of key public organisations and co-opted members. Only elected councillors have voting rights. Any member of the public can attend meetings. The substance of dialogue was ‘small issues: rats, rubbish and road safety’: issues of considerable importance in the day-to-day lives of local residents. The council’s failure to resolve these issues was one source of frustration leading to angry exchanges. A sub-text here was that attempts to engage on more strategic issues within the committee had been unsuccessful.

But the nature of exchanges reflected inter-councillor and councillor/officer dynamics in other contexts, exacerbated by tactical “alliance making” with members of the public. Councillors always had the first opportunity to speak and the capacity of the public to contribute was limited by the failure to distribute information in advance. Whilst lay knowledge was valued for providing different insights and a source of challenge, there was evidence of councillors using their power to limit debate. When councillors felt challenged by members of the public they took this out on officers; when members of the public complained about lack of resources going into their wards councillors supported this. Officers regarded councillors as their audience, rather than the public and this frustrated officer accountability to the public.

Deliberation within autonomous groups could be very different. For example, in a senior citizens’ forum exchanges illustrated the significance of Young’s concept of “greeting” as an important element of deliberation: ‘Greeting, ... names communicative political gestures through which those who have conflicts aim to solve problems, *recognize* others as included in the discussion, especially those with whom they differ in opinion, interest, or social location’ (Young 2000: 61). There were frequent references to the friendliness, respect, tolerance and humour evident here. Before the meetings there were jokes and anecdotes and after formal business people stayed to share tea. Participants felt this enabled strong views to be expressed and disagreement to be negotiated without falling out. The group exercised discipline over members, but also offered support, for example when an African member of the group had been subjected to racist abuse at an annual general meeting of the group.

9 The rules of engagement

An important aspect of our study was the dynamics of the prevailing institutional and policy context with reference to New Labour’s agenda for public participation. Our analysis of the range of public participation initiatives within each of the cities led us to conclude that notwithstanding the dominance of central government in the UK, local variation in public participation is important and remains very much in evidence. This local variation is stimulated by the prevailing local context and the emergence of multi-level governance that facilitates access to

additional sites of decision making parallel to the central state (Sullivan *et al.*, forthcoming).

The formulation and application of rules within new deliberative forums and how this is affected by institutional context was an important consideration for us in our examination of whether and how the public could inform the rules of deliberation and what difference this made. There were four key points in the life of a public participation initiative at which rules could be seen to facilitate and/or constrain public participation.

9.1 Access rules

Access rules delimited participation in forums by describing who the forum was intended to engage. Those forums that aimed to be most open were experienced as the most exclusive. This was the case in the youth conference discussed above. This suggested that in very diverse communities inclusive forums based on single identities such as age may not be viable.

Organisations also influenced access through the ways they promoted forums, for example publicising their existence within known networks or targeting service users whose interests “fitted” with the organisations’ priorities. For example, doctors reserved the right to vet new members of the surgery patients’ group and the MEGC required that members demonstrated their accountability and representativeness before they were granted access.

Many forums developed additional rules to classify membership. In one local authority area forum *participation* was open to all residents but *membership* was restricted to elected councillors and appointed “lay members”. Other forums distinguished between ordinary members and those elected or co-opted to officer roles. Access to the positions was determined by election from amongst the wider membership at an annual meeting for example, or by agreement amongst the other officers on the committee/steering group.

9.2 Agenda setting

Agenda setting was contested in forums where citizens felt relatively powerless and mistrusting of the sponsoring organisation. In the youth forum where officials considered agenda setting to be uncontentious, citizens experienced this as offering limited opportunities for deliberation within an officially determined framework. Elsewhere, agenda

setting was a formal process between officers of the forum and respective officials. Issues got onto the agenda by being raised at past meetings, being a standing item or by request from the sponsoring organisation. In autonomous forums agenda setting was undertaken in a more collective way. For example, in the women’s group agenda setting took place annually at a weekend event that combined business with social activities.

9.3 Rules and norms in deliberation

Institutions comprise rules (the formal expression of regulation) and norms (the informal expression of “appropriate” behaviour). Elsewhere (Sullivan *et al.* forthcoming), we have illustrated how dominant logics of appropriate behaviour interact with formal rules to guide the conduct of both citizens and officials in deliberative forums. The evidence of our initiative studies suggested that citizens were increasingly reluctant to play the role expected of them by officials because of a loss of trust in officials’ expertise.

While officials sought to impose rules of deliberation, citizens often challenged this. For example, in an area forum, one individual regularly sought to take advantage of public question time by refusing to stick to his one (allowed) question, while in the youth forum one individual consistently challenged officials’ motivations and credibility to try and shift control into the hands of young people. The consequences for each were different and related to their power and position within the forum. The area forum individual was considered a “committee anorak” and had little sympathy either from the chair or other citizens. The young person had considerable influence as he had a constituency of young people who saw him as their leader. As such he held the balance of power in the forum.

The purpose of rules was also contested. In statutory sponsored forums citizens often argued that rules existed to protect statutory bodies rather than to support participation. This was disputed by officials who believed that people ‘needed to learn how to play by the rules’ if they were to exercise influence. By contrast, in autonomous forums rules were discussed in terms of how they facilitated action rather than how they maintained the position of one group over another. For example, in a senior citizens’ forum the emphasis was upon all members understanding the rules so as to maximise participation.

10 Institutions, dialogue and outcomes

Few significant policy outcomes followed deliberation within our study period. Sometimes tension arising from the interplay of competing rules and norms meant that citizens exited the forum. In most cases citizens and officials continued to work together despite limited progress. Citizens thought small steps forward were to be expected given the institutional constraints. Little victories, like the acceptance of the forums' right to be consulted, were perceived as the first steps to more long-term change. However, for other forums their impact on the statutory sector had lessened over time as they had become "institutionalised" in their relationship. Fundamental to the achievement of different outcomes was the preparedness of statutory bodies to make change and in the area forum officials and citizens were increasingly aware of the limited power to act granted to the forum by the sponsoring agency.

Our research suggested that a key factor in achieving meaningful dialogue was the nature of rule making and the degree of involvement of citizen participants at this point. Where citizens were part of the rule making their allegiance to the rules increased and considerable attention was given to communicating rules and debating rule changes, for example the Older People's Forums. Where citizens were not part of the rule making their allegiance was limited and their engagement with rule changes minimal, for example the local authority area committees. This is significant as without the wider interaction of agents with rules, future institutional change (and hence more meaningful dialogue) is unlikely.

11 Conclusion

By exploring participation from the perspectives of both citizens and officials and by studying the process of deliberation in a number of study sites, we have highlighted the rich diversity and dynamic and interactive nature of participation in England.

We are able to conclude that public participation initiatives can be both facilitated and constrained by their operation in a "developed" state context. Our research has shown that the power, capacity and resources available to the state can be marshalled to support an agenda for change in such a way as to secure the swift development of new

initiatives in a variety of arenas. However, the inability (and reluctance) of many institutional players to change the way in which they operate can result in public participation initiatives that are bound by rules and structures that fit officials' expectations of how things should be done, but are correspondingly alien to public participants. This is compounded by the fact that very few state-sponsored initiatives actually challenge the prevailing power relationship between "the public" and "the officials", resulting in little material change to decision making, a "buying off" or deflection of any citizen opposition and a demoralisation and even alienation of once-committed citizen participants.

Following on from this, our research has confirmed that even within a "developed" state, there remains a corresponding need for citizens to develop free or "popular spaces" in which alternative discourses and approaches can be developed. On some occasions these "popular spaces" may combine with state-sponsored bodies, while in other circumstances "popular spaces" may retain an "arms length" relationship with state institutions. However, the capacity to develop an independent existence is vitally important to the health of a democratic society.

This study has alerted us to particular areas of further investigation into deliberation and public participation that could be usefully exploited in the future. Data from this project has highlighted the process outcomes of deliberative forums, that is, their impact on institutional norms and the shaping of new patterns of relationship between the public sector and citizens/users. However, it has not been possible to identify concrete links between public participation in deliberative forums and specific policy impacts. Assessing policy outcomes through a longitudinal study of a cross section of public participation initiatives such as those covered in our study would fill this important gap in the research evidence. A parallel project exploring deliberation at different tiers of governance would offer interesting insights into the relationship between deliberative processes at different levels of decision making. Together with further comparative work across different political contexts, with differently structured and developed state systems, this could help promote greater understandings of the political dynamics of participation in practice.

Notes

1. Birmingham (pop. 977,091) and Liverpool (pop. 439,476) were chosen for a number of contrasting features, which include: different political profiles (Birmingham with a longstanding Labour administration in contrast to Liverpool's rather more turbulent political history which has recently seen the Liberal Democrats wrest power from Labour); differences in racial composition at 20 per cent and 5 per cent Black and ethnic minority populations, respectively; and different ranks on an index of deprivation in England, at 23rd and 3rd, respectively.
2. The first phase of the research involved surveying the two cities to establish the range and types of deliberative

forums in existence. We received information about 71 examples of participation initiatives in Birmingham and 30 in Liverpool, the smaller of the two cities. We then conducted 17 detailed case studies across the two cities, selected to address our research questions across a range of types of initiative. In each of the 17 initiatives, we undertook observation and conducted semi-structured interviews with both citizen and official participants.

3. The research was funded by the Economic and Social Science Research Council as part of its 'Democracy and Participation Programme'. Our research project 'Power, Participation and Political Renewal' was award No L215252001.

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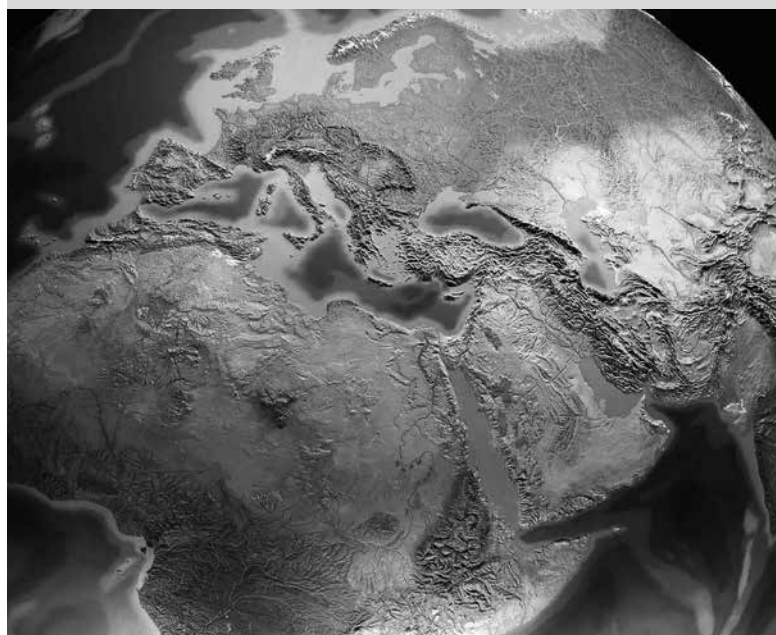
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HAS UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENT COME OF AGE?

Editor Richard Longhurst



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Development Research: Globalised, Connected and Accountable

Lawrence Haddad

Does development research need reinventing? If it does, why now and in what ways does it need to be changed? These are the questions addressed by the articles in this issue of the *IDS Bulletin*, many of which were presented at IDS40, the fortieth anniversary conference, in September 2006. They were also posed by the 46 Roundtables held throughout the world in 2006, organised by IDS partners and alumni, which preceded and helped frame the conference agenda.

Much is changing in 'development' and in the political context in which we work. International development issues are becoming more global; inequality is rising across a whole host of dimensions – both within and between countries; the capacity to use and generate knowledge is increasing outside the OECD countries; China's emergence is shining a new light on Western assumptions about how development happens; there are new sources of financial capital for development initiatives (the new philanthropic foundations, the emerging countries); information is more easily shared – at least for those with fast internet connections – and is sourced from more places; civil society is forming new transnational alliances to challenge norms and power relations (see **Vera Schattan Coelho**, page 98); the very idea of what sustainable development means is being profoundly questioned in terms of current carbon consumption levels (see **Wolfgang Sachs**, page 36); there is a heightened consciousness in the West about living conditions in other countries; the spheres of influence of the aid donors are shrinking – although their influence within those spheres is increasing; and the boundaries between domestic and international policies are becoming increasingly blurred as national identities are reconfigured and the interdependence of nations intensifies.

But do these changes mean that development research needs to be reinvented? As **John Humphrey**

reminds us (page 14), development research has constantly reinvented itself over the years. Certainly, as **Mike Edwards** notes (page 40), 'business as usual' in development research is financially sustainable given rising aid donor budgets. Yet for many of those involved in the IDS40 activities there was a sense that there is a need for development research to make a conscious decision to change direction. In the West, one's fortieth birthday is known as a watershed year – an ending of one phase of life and a beginning of another. But as several of the Roundtable and conference presenters reminded us, in many other countries the fortieth birthday signals a very different kind of transition as one draws closer to the end of life expectancy. It is natural perhaps therefore to reflect on how much has changed in the world since IDS was founded in 1966 and to characterise the above changes as some kind of fork in the road or threshold for development and therefore for development research.

Taking into account the powerful symbolism of fortieth birthdays, my own participation in (and reading of the reports from all) the Roundtables leads me to conclude that we really have reached a significant place in defining what we want development research to be. The Roundtables told me that there is an increasing convergence of concerns around international development but an increasing divergence of opinion and experience about how to address those concerns underpinned by a context in which the accountability of external development initiatives and development research remains extremely weak.

1 Convergence, divergence and accountability

On convergence, issues such as international migration, the ebb and flow of identities around religion, sexuality, ethnicity and nationhood; climate change and energy use; the conflation of

development and security; and the emergence of China as a global player were heard from all over the world. People are increasingly worried about the same transnational phenomena. Of course, the vastly differing impact of these changes across the world reflects the wide range of abilities to influence and respond to them, increasing inequalities across and between countries. As **José Antonio Ocampo** notes (page 26), nine out of ten people live in countries in which income inequality is increasing. Many of the Roundtables felt that this increasing inequality was unsustainable, particularly from a social cohesion perspective. **Wolfgang Sachs** (page 36) makes the more arresting point that unless outcomes begin to converge – at a level of material wellbeing that is much lower than that enjoyed in the West right now – prosperity will continue to be the preserve of a minority at the expense of a sustainable and *sufficient* prosperity for all. **Barbara Harriss-White** (page 46) also agrees that ‘catch up (with the West) is dead’.

On divergence, it is not so much the current trend of increasing differences in outcome that is striking (that has been an ongoing debate for the last ten years at least), but the realisation that there are many pathways to ‘development’ and that the space to discuss these pathways is opening up once again. As **Adebayo Olukoshi** (page 20) suggests, it is becoming harder and harder to sustain the argument that development is a ‘discussion about the other’ where ‘idealised versions of the history of development in the West’ are used as a metric ‘against which the experiences of the developing countries were measured’. If European development really is exceptional, as **Sachs** argues it is (being based on colonies and carbon), then we do even more violence to the idea of development by using the West as the standard of measurement. The rise of China – sometimes characterised as a unique form of capitalism, sometimes as raw mercantilism – certainly does not conform to this idealised history and makes many Western commentators uncomfortable as a result.

In his article **Hubert Schmitz** (page 51) argues that China’s economic performance forces a reassessment of the broad strands of Western thinking on development which he characterises as: (1) ‘the West is best’ (which he concludes is now discredited); (2) ‘find your own way’ (in his opinion, a bolstered view but problematic for international development agencies); and (3) ‘the West is the problem’ and (4) ‘putting the poor first’, both of which need rethinking in light of China’s economic rise. The

widespread disillusionment that was expressed in the Latin America Roundtables at the inability of the neoliberal recipe to deliver growth was striking and led to calls from the Roundtable participants for governments in the region to neither break with nor submit to globalisation but to create an environment in which development strategies become infused with national values, norms and institutions. As **Ocampo** notes, international frameworks must play a role in creating such policy space, although the likes of Brazil, China, India, Russia and South Africa will not wait for an invitation.

On accountability, the Roundtables noted that the development industry has much to say about the responsibility of others, but little to say about its own performance in this domain. **Shalmali Guttal** (page 31) noted the development industry’s incredible ability to shrug off failure. **Roy Trivedy** (page 100) would have liked more discussion on what the aid donors could do to improve accountability. **Andy Sumner’s** review article (page 59) concludes that development research has quite successfully ignored ethics, despite dressing itself up in them when it is at its proselytising worst. Perhaps we do not hear much about the ethics of development and development research because we think we have little impact. Indeed, **John Humphrey’s** article (page 14) does a good job of reminding us how three of the major planks of international development – gender equity, environmental stewardship and structural adjustment – arose from research, social movements and policies in the USA and Europe that were essentially domestic in nature. **Nick Benequista** and **Ian Macaulan** (page 86) note that the development research community (including, alas, the IDS40 process) routinely ignores the private sector, another major player not often considered to be within the charmed circle by many in international development. Development initiatives, including research, may or may not have a lot of impact. Frankly we do not know because we don’t spend enough time finding out. If we did, we would be forced to be more reflective about our own positionality as development specialists, especially those of us based in the North.

2 The implications for development research

So, what do these themes of convergence of concerns, divergence of development pathways and weak accountability of development actors mean for development research?²¹

First, we have to acknowledge that, as **Barbara Harriss-White** puts it, development and development research is in a state of flux. Are development and development research increasingly framed by the international aid agenda? If so, this means doing research mainly in Africa and arguably in South Asia. Or is development increasingly framed by positive social change – wherever it occurs? If the former, development studies will become a niche area, with a built-in end-date. If the latter, it begs the question, what is special about development research? As **Adebayo Olukoshi** describes it, the past 40 years have marked the ‘end of the beginning’ for development research. The question is what will the next 40 years mark the beginning of? A waning of development studies as we know it, or a rebirth?

Mike Edwards (page 40) strongly argues for rebirth. He urges the development research community to avoid being bound by the definitions of geography and economics that the aid industry adheres to and to embrace the reality of common but differently experienced patterns of global change. In my overview of the Roundtables (page 1) I argue for a multi-sited perspective on these patterns – for instance, a rounded view on the interactions between China and Africa must include perspectives from China and Africa and cannot be solely reliant on a partial view from Europe or North America. This multi-sited or ‘360-degree’ view of an issue is especially crucial if one believes, as I do, that where one is spatially embedded has an enormous influence on the way one frames an issue, the knowledge one chooses to draw on and the conclusions one comes to. The challenge is to globalise so-called ‘general’ or ‘global knowledge’ by engaging seriously with Southern and Eastern researchers in a way that respects their unique knowledge and perspectives on global issues and also confronts asymmetries in the resources to generate and mobilise knowledge. Capacity development is one of the greatest of these asymmetries – in terms of the ability of those in the South to access, generate, share and promote knowledge from the South. It is an asymmetry that is much talked about and invested in but, as the Roundtables and **Hilary Standing** and **Peter Taylor’s** article note (page 79), little interrogated by the donors or by the development research community.

The implications of the diverging development pathways perspective and the ‘find your own way’ argument laid out by **Hubert Schmitz** (page 51) is the

need to be able to learn across different development stories. If there is more variation across development pathways, let’s make sure we learn across them. **Adebayo Olukoshi** refers to this as a ‘unified development discourse underpinned by solid comparative methods’ and **Mike Edwards** calls them ‘symphonic poems’, which are ‘sufficiently generalised but ‘sufficiently connected to myths and memories, beliefs and ideologies, emotions and aspirations’ – all symptoms of ‘the local’. He cites our neglect of capacity development as an example of an area that needs to be remedied through the creation of new symphonic poems.

So why don’t we see more comparative research on, say, identity politics in Leeds, Lusaka, St Louis and Lahore? Moreover, why don’t we see this research being done by a team of researchers drawn from the UK, Zambia, the USA and Pakistan? Perhaps it is because, as **Standing and Taylor** put it (page 79), development studies is ‘founded on the very dichotomies that it seeks to overcome’. Extant research funding flows, power structures and patterns of credentialism reinforce this dichotomy (**Benequista and Macauslan**). But as Olukoshi notes, ‘problems are not the monopoly of the South and solutions are not the monopoly of the North’. Examples of North–South comparative learning abound: in New York City a variant of the Mexican conditional cash transfer programme, *Oportunidades*, is being introduced; Ségolène Royal, a leader in the French Socialist Party, is championing participatory democracy epitomised by participatory budgeting from Brazil; the UK government is promoting a cash transfer scheme to pregnant mothers so their babies are not born malnourished, a scheme that is common in Central America; and finally, the UK’s Department of Local Government and Communities is looking for ways in which citizens can engage with government, learning from experiences from Brazil, India and Nigeria. It is also interesting to note that Hilary Benn, currently the UK Secretary of State for International Development, gave a seminar in February 2007 to a parliamentary committee on ‘The Challenge of Reducing Poverty: Comparing Developed and Developing Countries’.

Some of this globalised comparative research is already done at IDS and I hope we will soon be doing more. Our experience to date is that such globalised comparative research has made us much

more sensitive to the issues of accountability, to the power differentials between researchers and the researched, and the ability of those researched to hold researchers to account. The fact that we have done this in our own backyard also gives us more legitimacy when we do this work elsewhere.

As I have already argued, external accountability is weak in the development field, whether in policy, practice or research. **Andy Sumner** (page 59) argues that a test of our ethics as researchers is the 'degree to which the research process reorients, focuses, and energises participants towards knowing reality in order to transform it'. But my location in relation to the place I conduct the research is a crucial modifier of **Sumner's** statement. If I conduct a piece of research in the UK that is poorly designed and draws faulty conclusions and is picked up by the media, I will have to deal with embarrassed family, friends and colleagues. If I make a mess of a piece of research in Ghana, the consequences are more localised, further from home and more easily brushed aside. Accountability came up frequently at the conference. It was central to the presentation from Bill Easterly which was drawn from his latest book, *White Man's Burden* and to **Andy Sumner's** article on ethics. Easterly urges us to be aware of the limits of what external actors can do in furthering development and change.

In research that is geared to be shared only inside the academy, peer review offers some partial accountability. But it is for work that is shared with the wider world, and that seeks more directly and deliberately to influence opinion, where accountability is weakest. Should we even be trying to influence public opinion? Edwards argues that we cannot contribute seriously to change unless we do, but he warns about the importance of maintaining rigour and independence while legitimising a wider source of knowledge.

Humphrey and **Harriss-White** both also stress that theory has to also be strengthened if we are going to challenge short-lived political agendas, wherever they come from (not just from aid donors). **McKeown** would have liked to see more in the conference on the gap between knowing and doing (although there is plenty of discussion of this in the Roundtable reports, see my overview, page 1). **Harriss-White** also lists the dangers of a wide-eyed external focus: donor priorities that shift more rapidly than researchers would like, and researchers allowing the priorities of funders to unduly influence their conclusions.

So, in a world where development is globalised, do we need development research? Moreover, do we need institutes of development research in the North? I would argue that development research can maintain its value-added, only if (a) it embraces comparative work, negotiates multidisciplinary, and acknowledges its normative stance, and (b) it embraces and reconciles multiple perspectives, is not trapped by aid boundaries in terms of geography and theory, allows the location(s) of the research to be determined by the issue being explored, and works on improving its accountability.

The challenge is to globalise our 'general' knowledge on development and to strengthen the capacity to connect general and specific knowledge creation processes. Success in one will reinforce the other.

What about Northern institutes of development research? They will be needed for many reasons, including to co-create '360 degree' research on global issues; to analyse domestic social change thus contributing to comparative analyses; to analyse the international effects of domestic policies and the domestic effects of international policies (see **O'Brien's** note on the Canadian experience, page 95); and to influence powerful actors in the aid community. Do they have to change? As several of the speakers at the IDS40 conference noted, 'business as usual' will not be punitive in a financial sense, at least in the short run.

IDS will certainly not be charting such a static course. The IDS40 process – the Roundtables, the conference and the conversations we had with peers and partners throughout our anniversary year – has influenced us deeply. We will be reflecting on our relationships with the aid industry; about the scope and nature of our comparative work; on how we can facilitate the globalising of 'general' knowledge on development; on how we can help connect general and specific knowledges (see **Nyakoojo's** note, page 93); on the way we work with partners and the partners that we choose to work with; about how we can be held more accountable; about our approach to capacity development and theory development; and about our role as change agents. I don't have the answers for you yet (or for the questions posed by **Roy Trivedy**, page 100) as to what the consequences of these reflections and consultations will be for IDS, but I can assure you that they will not result in business as usual.

Mike Edwards, half jokingly suggested that by 2046 IDS would have to rename itself the Institute for Revolutionary Social Sciences. Whether or not 2046 sees us in that incarnation, our fortieth birthday marked, for us, the end of the beginning

Note

1 We are taken to task somewhat by Nick Benequista and Ian Macauslan and by Mary McKeown for our lack of focus on teaching. In my defence, I can only plead that for me it is hard to separate out the functions of

and the beginning of something new. We hope this issue of the *IDS Bulletin* stimulates you, your networks and your organisation to reflect in the same way.

research and graduate-level teaching. Clearly there are many implications for the content of teaching and the way it is conducted, but it seems to me these stem from the why, what and the how of research.

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Save the Children UK, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the World Food Programme (WFP).

None of these agencies stipulated where the Roundtables should be held or the specifics of what they should focus on, which was essential to maintain the spirit of the exercise.