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A2 Sociology for AQA

Chris Livesey & Tony Lawson

Hodder Arnold

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Finally, to paraphrase the mighty Arcade Fire:

Consider this text a tunnel.

Yeah, a tunnel – From my window to yours.
Meet me in the middle, the empty middle ground.

And since there's no one else around,
We'll let our time grow long,
And remember everything we've come to know.

Chris Livesey

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About This Book

About This Book

In writing this book we have tried to satisfy two main aims:

First, we wanted to retain a sense of continuity between this and our previous (AS) text in terms of both overall structure and scope, mainly for the benefit of those students and teachers who've used the AS text in their first year of the A-level course. In terms of structural continuity, therefore, the general layout will be familiar to anyone who has used **AS Sociology for AQA** (although it's not, of course, necessary to have used this AS text to get the most from the A2 text). More specifically, we've once again chosen to tie the text closely to the **AQA Specification** (highlighting, where appropriate, **synoptic links** within and between the A2 and AS Modules) and we've retained the basic structure of the AS text by dividing the sections into two parts: introductory material ('**Preparing the Ground**') provides a general overview of a section and is broadly aimed at students of all abilities, while more challenging material ('**Digging Deeper**') is included to both develop the initial material and stretch the more able student.

In addition, we've retained a couple of features we believe worked well in the AS text:

The **Key Word** focus, whereby the text is structured around significant concepts – a system designed to both help students to

focus on the most important ideas in a particular area and encourage planned examination answers.

Integrated exercises designed to achieve a variety of aims (mainly relating to the development of the interpretation, analysis and evaluative skills required at A2). These exercises involve three main types:

- **Warm-up** exercises appear at the start of a section and are designed to ease students into a topic by getting them to think about it in a way that builds on their existing knowledge. The basic idea here is to identify the knowledge students already possess about a topic or issue, something that provides a foundation for building a more sociological level of understanding. This type of exercise also serves as a whole-class ice-breaker for each new section of the course.
- **Growing It Yourself** exercises are more focused and, in general, they're designed for small group work. They usually require students to generate and discuss information, although, reflecting the increased demand for evaluative skills at this level, many of these exercises require students to make decisions about the information generated through discussion. This type of exercise is normally closely integrated with the surrounding text and is designed to complement student reading and note-taking by requiring

them to reflect on – and expand – the information presented through the text. Each exercise has been designed to flow naturally from the text and generally requires little or no prior preparation by students or teachers. Having said this, some of the exercises take the form of **simulations** that require students to take on various roles as part of the overall discussion process; these, reflecting the fact they are slightly more complex than the standard exercises, require a relatively simple level of prior organisation and preparation.

- **Discussion Points** provide opportunities for students to discuss or debate different ideas – something we felt would be useful to build into the overall design to help students clarify and express their thinking in a relatively structured way. Some of the discussion points are tightly-constructed around a particular issue, while others are more loosely constructed to allow students greater scope for discussion and debate.

In terms of our **second** aim, although structural continuity was important when designing this text, we also wanted to reflect the fact that A2 study involves both greater theoretical and evaluative depth.

In relation to the former we were conscious of the need to strike a balance between classical (Marx, Durkheim, Weber and the like) and contemporary sociological theory (writers such as Luhmann, Baudrillard and Foucault), on the basis that, while it's important for students and teachers to have access to contemporary material, we shouldn't lose sight of the classical origins of sociology (something we

feel is generally reflected in the structure of AQA A2 examination questions).

In terms of the latter we decided to add a couple of extra features to the A2 text.



The Potting Shed involves questions that reflect the structure of the smaller-mark exam questions (requiring students to 'identify and explain' something, for example). These short, relatively simple, questions have also been designed to help students make **synoptic links** between, for example, A2 and AS modules (once again reflecting the general structure of the smaller-mark AQA exam questions).



Weeding the Path: The most significant change between the A2 and AS text, reflecting the fact that A2 study requires students to use evaluation skills more rigorously than at AS, is the addition of clearly-signposted evaluation material. Although such material runs throughout the text (at its most basic, of course, being by juxtaposition) we felt it would be helpful to draw students' attention more specifically to this type of information.

Finally, although this A2 text, like its AS counterpart, is focused around helping students work their way successfully through the AQA A-level Sociology course, we hope we've managed to produce a text that, while informative and challenging to all abilities and interests, is one you will enjoy reading – not only because (we trust) it will help you achieve the best possible grade in your examination but also, more importantly perhaps, because we firmly believe that Sociology is a fascinating subject to study in its own right.

World sociology

In this chapter we focus on the concept of *development* in terms of two major contexts:

- **A national context** in relation to the various ways our society has changed over time, and
- **An international context** considered in terms of how the development of our society has both influenced and been influenced by developments in other societies.

In general, this involves looking at the *process* of development (in relation to concepts like *industrialisation* and *urbanisation*), *aspects* of development (such as its impact on employment, education, health and gender) and development *strategies* (involving an understanding of the role of aid and trade). Finally, we need to consider the role of economic, political and cultural *globalisation* in a national and international context.

1. Different definitions and explanations of development and underdevelopment

In this opening section, the focus is on the concept of development itself – thinking initially about how it can be *operationalised* (in terms of definition and measurement) and, subsequently, about a range of possible sociological explanations for social development.



Preparing the ground: Definitions of development and underdevelopment

Although the concept of *development* is central to this chapter (with each section looking at different aspects of this idea), the concept itself is by no means simple and straightforward to define, for two main reasons. First, there are general disagreements among social scientists about how we can *operationalise* and explain this concept; and second, there are disagreements about the meaning of the concept itself. We can illustrate this by thinking initially about social development as what **Leinbach** (2005) terms both a *process* and a *condition*:

- **Process** relates to the conventional meaning of development – that a society, for example, ‘grows’ or changes in some way and the developmental process is both:
- **Dynamic** – it involves *movement* or

change (from, for example, *undeveloped* to *developed*) and

- **Progressive** or **cumulative** – that is, ‘development’ also involves the idea that change produces a new form of society that is both *quantitatively* and *qualitatively* different to what has gone before.
- **Condition:** If social development is a *process*, it follows that, at various points, we can identify the extent to which a society is – or is not – ‘developed’, making it possible to compare the extent of a society’s development in two main ways:
- **Historically** – how a particular society has changed over time (comparing, for example, Britain in the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries).
- **Cross-culturally**, in the sense of comparing different societies to measure/understand their respective developmental differences (such as comparing Britain with both broadly *similar* societies, such as France or the USA, and potentially *dissimilar* societies, such as Ethiopia or China).

WARM-UP: DEVELOPING MEANINGS

‘Development’ can have a number of possible meanings. These include:

- improvement
- expansion
- passing through different stages or phases
- progress
- cumulative change
- growth – orderly change from simple to complex or primitive to advanced.

In small groups, consider each of these meanings in turn and apply them to our society (for example, identify things that have improved over the past century).

As a class, identify and briefly discuss the possible strengths and weaknesses of each meaning in terms of understanding how and why our society has developed.



Weeding the path

If we view development in these terms – as a *process of social change* where societies have the potential, both historically and comparatively, to move from one condition (*undeveloped*, for example) to another (such as *developed*), two things follow from this:

- **Measurement:** Some sort of *scale* against which to measure development is needed, making it possible to *categorise* or group different societies on the basis of similar levels of development.
- **Linearity:** This (conventional) way of viewing development effectively characterises it in terms of a:
 - **Continuum** where at one extreme we have ‘non-developed’ societies and at the other we have ‘fully developed’ societies.

These ideas suggest development involves two important concepts:

Hierarchy: If social development is *unequal* it follows that some form of *societal stratification* will exist whereby different societies are grouped in terms of their respective *levels* of development (either crudely, in terms of being rich or poor, developed or underdeveloped, or less crudely, in terms of things like levels of life expectancy or average income.

Social change is central to the idea of development because it encapsulates two ideas: first, that individual societies change over time, and second that such change can be measured against objective indicators (such as average living standards).

In general terms, **Thomas** (2000) suggests we can define development on the basis of three key characteristics:

Large-scale: The focus here is on identifying and understanding change on a *grand scale* – in terms of society-wide improvements in areas such as economic production and consumption, levels of income and wealth, and so forth.

Evolution: Change is both a *continual process* occurring over an extended period and *cumulative* in terms of improvements in the economic, political and cultural life of a society. This, in turn, relates to change at both the *individual level* (improvements in life expectancy, for instance) and the *societal level*, involving, for example, increased economic production.

Direction: Although development is conventionally characterised as positive social change (the idea of individual and collective *improvement*), this is not necessarily the case. Negative changes can occur, both in terms of individual experiences of change and in relation to whole societies. Using the evolutionary analogy it is possible for biological organisms to evolve, stay the same or become extinct, just as human societies may develop and decline (in terms of their power and influence on a world stage, for example). In *comparative terms*, therefore, change is not simply *unidirectional* (one-way) – from non-development to development, for example.

Two further features of development involve seeing it as:

Planned in the sense of the intentional outcome of social policies – governments taking deliberate steps to develop the economic, political and cultural environments, for example.

Unplanned: Development may also arise from ‘spontaneous behaviours’, what **Thomas** calls:

Immanent development – something that springs from behaviour within a particular society. The Industrial Revolution in Britain during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is an example here; a huge range of scientific and technological developments combined to produce rapid and widespread economic, political and cultural changes that were not consciously planned.

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Stratification and differentiation: Ideas about social change can be linked to different theories of social stratification, changes in the class structure and social mobility.



Weeding the path

Tying the idea of *change* to either social *improvements* or social *degradations* creates three significant problems in terms of how we operationalise the concept of development.

Definitions: Social change does not necessarily constitute development. This follows, as **Matthews** (2005) suggests, because change ‘could be part of a process of development, but could also be part of several other processes, such as those of alteration, modification, deformation,

adaptation, regression, degradation and the like'. In other words, social change becomes development only when it produces 'increased likeness to some more advanced or better state of being'.

Categorisation: To identify changes that are meaningful in the context of development we must make *judgements* about what constitutes ideas like 'improvement' or development, and **Barbanti** (2004) notes 'there is little consensus' as to how to operationalise such concepts objectively, for two main reasons:

- **Value judgements** about what does or does not constitute *development*, as opposed to *change*.
- **Ideological debates** relating to whether development can be measured in *objective*, quantifiable ways, *subjective*, qualitative ways or some combination of both.

Development is, therefore, a:

Contested concept that involves debates not only about how it can be measured – if at all – but also about the meaning of the term itself.

Measurement: Although it's possible to measure concepts like development in a variety of ways, such measurements involve two main problems:

- **Indicators:** There are a wide variety of possible economic, political and cultural aspects to development and this involves decisions about what indicators can be used to measure it. Debates, for example, surround not only things like the choice of economic indicators, but also whether development should be measured in purely economic terms.
- **Reliability and validity:** *Quantifiable measures* (such as historical changes in

income levels, poverty or living standards) are relatively easy to identify, access and construct in an objective, standardised way. *Qualitative measures* are more problematic (*questionable*) in the sense of being more difficult to define and standardise, both within and across societies (making comparisons, for example, more difficult).

Economic indicators

Although development involves clear problems of operationalisation in terms of how it is defined and measured, it's possible to suggest some possible *economic* and *social* indicators of this process:

Economic indicators: **Barbanti** (2004) notes the conventional way to understand development since the 1950s has been to see it 'as a synonym for economic growth'. In other words, development has traditionally been measured in terms of economic indicators such as:

- **Gross domestic product (GDP)** – a measure of the total value of economic goods and services created by a society over a specific time period, or:
- **Gross national product (GNP)** – a measure (sometimes called **gross national income**) that includes net income from abroad (such as the value of foreign investments).



Weeding the path

Economic indicators such as GDP and/or GNP are useful in a number of ways.

Economic development provides a broad way of classifying different societies in terms of their general living standards and can be used to estimate the likely level of many

| Gross domestic product: selected world areas, 2004 | | |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Source: Quebec Institute of Statistics (2005) | | |
| | Highest | Lowest |
| Africa | 510,000 (South Africa) | 1,100 (Guinea-Bissau) |
| Europe | 2,300,000 (Germany) | 7,350 (Moldova) |
| North and Central America | 11,600,000 (USA) | 270 (Dominica) |
| South America | 1,480,000 (Brazil) | 24,300 (Bolivia) |
| Asia | 7,100,000 (China) | 5,100 (Mongolia) |

(US\$ millions, adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP) – a measure of the relative purchasing power of different currencies)

other social factors (such as education, health care, literacy and so forth).

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Stratification and differentiation: Economic indicators (such as income and wealth) are frequently used as objective indicators of social class.

Comparisons: They allow us to make broadly reliable historical and cross-cultural comparisons (using objective, quantifiable criteria) of relative economic standing and growth.

Classification: Different societies can be easily ranked (*stratified*) in terms of their different levels of GNP/GDP (with the USA, for example, ranking as the most highly developed, and places like Dominica among the least developed countries).

Classifications

In terms of classification, we can note some of the different ways societies have been conventionally grouped on a global level.

Three worlds system: A traditional form of classification involves dividing the globe into three distinct worlds, based on levels of both *economic wealth* and *political ideology*:

- **First world** – wealthy, industrialised, technologically developed, capitalist economies of Western Europe, North America and Japan.
- **Second world** – relatively poorer industrial and semi-industrial communist societies, such as the USSR (as was) and China.
- **Third world** – relatively impoverished pre- and semi-industrial nations with low levels of technological development in

Africa, South America and South East Asia.



Weeding the path

Although this classification is still occasionally used (in the media, for example), it has largely outgrown any classificatory significance it might once have had in a couple of ways:

- **Politics:** The break-up of the former USSR has made the concept of a 'second world' based around 'communist principles' largely redundant.
- **Homogeneity:** The system is too broad to *reliably* and *validly* reflect developmental differences both within and between these worlds.

Two worlds system: An alternative classification (proposed by the 1980 **Independent Commission on International Development Issues** – the **Brandt Report**) focused on the idea of a 'north–south' global divide. The most developed and wealthiest economies are largely found in the northern hemisphere and the poorest, least developed in the southern hemisphere.



Weeding the path

Although this broad division arguably reflects the relative distribution of economic development across the globe (in 2005, for example, the most economically developed countries consumed around 80% of the world's economic resources, a figure that had increased from 67% 50 years previously), the 'two worlds' distinction has two main problems:

- **Geography:** The divide is not geographically perfect – Australia is an obvious anomaly.
- **Economic change:** In recent years the growth of economies in China and South East Asia (India, for example) has made a simple north–south divide invalid – in terms of GDP (2004), for example, China has the second largest economy after the USA, with India in fourth place.

Many Worlds system: This classification is relatively more sophisticated in terms of how development is characterised, with both a greater number of categories and a recognition that the vast majority of



The North–South divide
(Source: www.bbc.co.uk)

societies around the world have experienced some form of economic development in the post-Second World War period. Thus we can talk about:

- **MEDCs** – more economically developed countries
- **LEDCs** – less economically developed countries
- **LLEDCs** – least economically developed countries.



Weeding the path

This classification – which can be expanded to include a range of further types (such as NICs – newly industrialising countries) – is both more sophisticated in the way it defines different levels of development and less tied to notions of geographic space. However, it still presents a couple of problems.

Labelling: Although the use of a ‘sliding scale’ reflects the dynamic nature of economic development (and avoids the rigidities inherent in both the three- and two-worlds systems), there remains a strong correlation between MEDCs and the first world/north and LLEDCs and the third world/south systems.

Fragmentation: The main problem here is the number of different levels of development it is potentially possible to define, without necessarily being able to agree a definitive economic definition of development. We could, for example, include relative levels of manufacturing and service industries, consumption patterns or even the price of a standardised product in different societies:

The Hamburger Standard (devised by *The Economist* magazine) takes a global commodity (such as a Big Mac),

manufactured to exactly the same standards worldwide, and compares its relative cost in different societies to arrive at a general estimate of economic development – the more developed a society, the greater the purchasing power of its currency. In an economically strong country, something like a Big Mac would cost relatively less than in an economically weak country.

More fundamentally, perhaps, **Thirlwall** (2002) has questioned the usefulness of *economic indicators* as measures of *development* (as opposed to *growth*), mainly because they fail to take into account factors (such as levels of health care, income distribution, literacy and the like) that impact on a society’s overall development, a criticism

| Highest purchasing power (2004) | Least purchasing power (2004) |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Britain | Taiwan |
| Western Europe | South Korea |
| North America | Hungary (!) |
| Australia | Indonesia |



More bite for your buck in Britain?

that brings into play a range of further observations.

Income distribution: Relatively simple economic indicators of development tell us little or nothing about how incomes are distributed throughout a society (and hence the overall level of development in that society).

Reliability: Indicators such as GNP/GDP are not necessarily defined or calculated in the same way in all societies.

Quality of life: Economic growth and prosperity may come at a price – in terms of environmental degradation, large-scale unemployment, and so forth – for large numbers of people. This suggests we shouldn't automatically assume economic indicators measure social development – economic growth, in this respect, should perhaps be seen as one possible means to one possible end.

Social indicators

Although economic development is an important aspect to consider, it arguably doesn't tell the whole story – just as, for example, there's more to social class than income alone, the same is true of development. In this respect we can note a number of possible social indicators of development, starting with what **Badri** (1994) identifies as *political factors* such as:

Democracy: The basic idea here is that greater levels of social development are associated with a broad range of *political*:

- **Freedoms**, such as democratic elections, the right to free assembly and association, peaceful protest, freedom of speech and religion.
- **Rights**, such as legal representation, a fair trial, and so forth.

- **Relationships**, such as '... a country's level of respect of borders, of others' national sovereignty and abidance by international laws and treaties'.

The focus here is on the level of *personal control* people have over the way they live. On a wider scale, **Leinbach** (2005) notes the concept of:

Distributive justice – the idea that development should not be seen just in terms of political freedoms and rights, but also in terms of how 'basic human needs' are satisfied. These might include areas like the provision of and access to:

Public goods and services (such as health care, education and the like) as well as general measures of need relating to:

Demographic variables like:

- **Infant and child mortality rates:** These relate to children surviving, respectively, their first year after birth and after their fifth year.
- **Death rates** relating to the chances of people dying from both natural and non-natural causes (such as murder or suicide). These, in turn, can be related to:
- **Life expectancy:** The average age to which people in a society live can be indicative of a range of developmental factors, and although average life expectancy generally rose across the globe during the twentieth century (**Palacios** (2002) notes an average rise from 50 to 66 years), there are clear differences between societies at different stages of development. **Kinsella** and **Velkoff** (2001) note: 'On average, an individual born in an MEDC can expect to outlive his/her LEDC counterpart by 13 years.'



The potting shed

Identify and briefly explain two factors that might contribute to increased life expectancy.

Moore (1993) suggests that a range of developmental factors are responsible for rising national/global average life expectancy since the 1800s; these include medical and sanitation advances coupled with 'new modes of familial, social, economic, and political organization'.

Badri (1994) identifies a further range of *cultural indicators* that contributes to our understanding of levels of development:

- Levels of adult literacy and educational opportunities.
- Access to basic services (such as shelter, clean water and electricity).

She argues it would be possible to devise a continuum or ladder scale against which to measure a society's developmental progress –

educationally, for example, such a scale 'could begin with the elimination of illiteracy and the enrolment of all children of school age, continuing up to quality of education in terms of the student–teacher ratio, availability of training in various skills, knowledge for all those soon to be on the labour market, and the opening up of various educational facilities to those outside the school and labour market population'.



Weeding the path

Social indicators of development provide a different – and arguably more rounded – way to measure development. They also provide a range of:

Development goals against which to measure a society or region's progress in meeting certain universal life standards.

As with purely economic indicators, however, there are measurement problems:

Reliability and validity questions arise over how particular countries produce statistical data relating to areas like life expectancy and child mortality, which

Average male and female life expectancy: selected world areas

| | Highest | Lowest |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Africa | 74 (Tunisia) | 38 (Malawi) |
| Europe | 80 (Sweden) | 66 (Ukraine) |
| North and Central America | 79 (Canada) | 66 (Guatemala) |
| South America | 76 (Costa Rica) | 63 (Brazil) |
| Asia | 81 (Japan) | 60 (Bangladesh) |

Source: US Census Bureau (2001)



Growing it yourself: Development scales

In small groups, choose one of the following and devise a continuum/ladder scale to express different possible levels of social development.

| | | | |
|---------|--------|----------|-----------|
| Shelter | Health | Politics | Economics |
|---------|--------|----------|-----------|

creates problems of comparability between different societies.

Social indicators are also subject to distortion within and between different societies – in the USA, for example, some groups have higher average life expectancy than others. Young, black, urban, working-class males have lower average life expectancies due to high homicide and suicide rates. In developing countries, average life expectancy can be lowered by high rates of infant and female mortality during childbirth (which distorts life expectancy figures for those who survive).

Given that both economic and social indicators have certain drawbacks when considered in isolation from one another, an obvious thing to do is to combine indicators to arrive at a:

Human Development Index (HDI), such as that constructed by **Mahbub ul Haq** (1990) and used by the **United Nations** development programme. The index assesses and ranks countries in terms of three economic and cultural dimensions:

- **life expectancy** at birth
- **knowledge** – measured by adult literacy and educational provision
- **living standards** measured by GDP per capita.



Weeding the path

The HDI has an obvious advantage in that it doesn't rank countries according to some form of predetermined 'development scale' (in the sense of, for example, universal standards of development/underdevelopment). Rather, it focuses on a comparison between different societies and their relationship to each other. This type of index also redresses one of the main criticisms of development scales based on economic indicators, namely their possible:

Ideological bias towards Western societies with high levels of economic development. Using the HDI, it is possible for countries with high levels of economic capital but low levels of investment in human capital (through education, for example) to be ranked as 'less developed' than less wealthy societies which invest more in social and educational welfare. In this respect the HDI measures the:

Ends of social development (what it means in terms of raised living standards, for example) rather than the *means* to achieve such ends (*economic growth*). This type of index can also potentially measure levels of:

Overdevelopment – the illnesses and diseases, for example, that affect affluent societies (high levels of heart disease,

obesity, and so forth, that may reduce average life expectancy).

The HDI is not, of course, without its drawbacks, some of which relate to the *reliability* and *validity* problems we've previously noted, and others to the idea it needs to be used in *combination* with other indexes (such as those measuring Human Poverty (HPI) or Gender Development (GDI) – the former introducing an element of class measurement and the latter reflecting the idea that gender differences exist in most societies in terms of how economic and cultural development is experienced).



Digging deeper: Explanations of development and underdevelopment

Todero and **Smith** (2005) suggest *four main models* that explain how and why societies develop.

Modernisation

Modernisation theory has its theoretical roots in classical (nineteenth and early twentieth century) sociology that involved a general (*modernist*) perception of development following a broadly:

Linear trend – from economically, politically and culturally *undeveloped* societies to fully *developed* social formations. As **Capitán** and **Lambie** (1994) put it: 'Modernisation is the process by which the gap between tradition and modernity (development) is progressively closed.'

We can note a couple of examples of this particular tradition in terms of:

Classical functionalism that theorised development in terms of different *stages* through which all societies passed. **Comte**

(1853) considered these in ideological terms; theological, metaphysical and scientific ('positive') stages represented a move from a society based on superstition to one based on scientific knowledge. The motor of change, in this respect, was:

Institutional differentiation – development was driven by *evolutionary* changes in social institutions; as institutions such as work developed, they forced changes in other institutions (such as education and the family), thereby creating institutional specialisation and evolutionary social development.

These general ideas were further developed in the twentieth century by **Parsons** (1951), who conceptualised development in terms of how *social systems* adapt to changing political, economic and cultural environments (such as the process of *globalisation* in recent times).

Classical Weberian interpretations, meanwhile, saw modernisation in terms of a change from pre-modern (traditional) society to modern (industrial) society. **Weber** (1905) argued that social development, once started, followed an inevitable process of modernisation, features of which included industrialisation, urbanisation and rationalisation (behaviour and social organisation based on scientific principles). The motor of modernisation, for **Weber**, was the ideological ideas and principles embodied in the Calvinist (Protestant) religion.

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Religion: Weber's ideas on the relationship between modernisation and religion are outlined in more detail in the 'Different theories of religion' section.

Contemporary modernisation theories developed initially in the post-Second World War period, the most well-known of which is associated with **Rostow** (1960) and his:

Stages of Growth, a development theory based around the idea that all societies pass through five separate (*discrete*) developmental stages:

- 1. Traditional society:** The initial stage for all societies has three common characteristics:
 - **Technological:** Such societies are pre-scientific. Religion is generally the dominant ideological form.
 - **Economic** production is largely agricultural with no industrial development.
 - **Political:** This type tends to be ‘rigidly hierarchical’, with little or no social mobility. Social relationships are largely *ascriptive* (fixed at birth) and based around family/kinship structures.

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Stratification and differentiation:

Traditional society is often considered *pre-modern* and its general features are discussed in more detail in this chapter.

- 2. Preconditions for take-off:** The second stage is characterised by a range of developments triggered, in the post-war period at least, by relationships with developed societies in the form of:
 - **trade** – goods and services are exchanged in the marketplace
 - **aid** – in the form of grants and loans from developed countries.

This type of development has three basic characteristics:

- **Technological:** Scientific ideas and practices develop, leading to either technological developments (such as inventions) or the application of technologies introduced by or from more developed societies.
 - **Economic:** Industrial production develops, initially focused around labour-intensive extractive industries such as mining, although this may depend on relationships with other, developed societies (they may, for example, be instrumental in introducing different forms of manufacturing industry, such as shipbuilding or car manufacture). Agricultural production is still significant, but starts to decline gradually in economic importance.
 - **Political:** Societies develop as recognisable nation states, often ruled by an elite group (such as a monarchy or military/civilian dictatorship). A key development is the emergence of a *bourgeois* (capitalist) class, with the knowledge, skills and motivation to exploit economic opportunities; they must be able and willing to invest capital and reinvest profits to lay the foundations for the next stage.
- 3. Take-off** is the stage where economic growth becomes self-sustaining – levels of capital investment (from both within and outside society) and productivity reach a critical level from which economic expansion can be sustained. The general characteristics of this stage include:



Preparing to take off or stalled on the runway?

Economic: Manufacturing develops strongly and in the normal run of events one or two economic sectors develop rapidly to provide a motor for further development. In Britain during the nineteenth century, for example, shipbuilding and clothing manufacture led the developmental thrust. In this stage *indigenous* agricultural production generally declines in economic and social importance (although various forms of *agribusiness* – large-scale agricultural production run along the lines of manufacturing industry – may develop or be introduced by foreign investors).

Political and cultural institutions develop a more mature form; for the former this may involve more democratic systems of government, while for the latter education systems providing skilled, literate and numerate workers and managers start to develop.

4. **The drive to maturity** – a consolidation phase in which science and technological developments are increasingly applied across different economic sectors.

Economic development involves the production of a wider range of goods and services for both internal consumption and export; the economy becomes more diversified, in terms of a wider range of economic activity within both the manufacturing sectors and service industries.

Political reforms tend to be consolidated in this phase, with the emergence or extension of democratic processes. A range of social reforms, some of which are likely to be government sponsored (such as welfare systems), may be introduced.

5. **Maturity:** In the final phase we reach what **Rostow** termed the ‘age of high mass consumption’ (think about contemporary Britain as an example here), a situation characterised:

Economically by advanced levels of activity and development, relating not just to manufacturing and service industries, but also, in the twenty-first century, to knowledge industries (such as advanced communications).

Politically by an increasing range of choices to be made about all aspects of development, such as the type of society in which people want to live and also the type of society they envisage for their children. These choices are exercised at both the:

- **individual level** in terms of consumption patterns, and the
- **institutional level** in terms of, for example, *social infrastructure* (whether, for example, to develop state-sponsored welfare systems, as occurred in countries such as Britain and Germany, how the education system is

structured, developed and financed and the like).



Weeding the path

Modernisation theory is both a *description* and an *explanation* of the development process in that it represents a way of understanding how development occurs as well as a blueprint for that process – ideas that have led to a range of criticisms.

Process: Modernisation is generally characterised as a *linear, evolutionary* process that, once started, proceeds along a set path towards a specific end. This, however, assumes modernisation is an ‘inevitable historical process’ (once started it cannot be stopped). However, although modernisation theory may accurately reflect the experiences of the *first societies* to modernise (in Europe and the USA), they did so under different conditions to those facing, for example, contemporary African societies – the most obvious difference being the fact that developed societies exist and may have an interest in the economic and social exploitation of less developed societies. In other words, the conditions under which development occurs have arguably *changed* and we cannot assume modernisation theory will reliably and validly *explain* the development process in, for example, Iraq or Ethiopia (if only because when Britain, for example, modernised, developed societies did not exist).

Convergence: If modernisation is an inevitable, linear process, it follows that all societies are ‘converging’ in terms of their social, economic and political structures, something ideologically convenient for developed Western societies because it holds there is only one way (the Western way)

towards development. This, in turn, can be used to justify:

- **Intervention:** A range of economic, political and cultural interventions by developed countries in the internal affairs of undeveloped countries can be justified on the basis that these are necessary for modernisation.
- **Hegemony** by developed societies in the sense of prescribing what undeveloped societies must do to modernise.

Cultural values: The argument here is that a Western model of development is *imposed* on the basis of both its *utility* (it worked in the past) and its *inevitability* (it is the only way to modernise). As **Coury** (1997) argues, development ‘is defined in terms of very specific Western societies which are characterized as being individualistic, democratic, capitalist, scientific, secular and stable’.

Economism: **Capitán** and **Lambie** (1994) note how this model is based around economic factors and measures; development equates to economic change and growth, regardless of the social and political consequences for a population. As they note: ‘Social and political factors are held to be less important and are simply assumed under broad concepts such as modernity and freedom.’

Neo-modernisation theorists like **Berger** and **Hsiao** (1988) and **Redding** (1990) have addressed this issue (mainly in relation to Japan and East Asia) by suggesting that development has a ‘cultural trigger’. That is, in much the same way that **Weber** identified *Calvinism* as the crucial variable in the development of capitalism and modern society, **Borrego** (1995) notes how neo-modernisation theorists argue *Confucianism*



Growing it yourself: Developing development

Modernisation theory sees ‘developed societies’ as an ideal to which underdeveloped societies should aspire.

In small groups, identify the possible economic, political and cultural benefits and drawbacks of the type of development suggested by modernisation theory.

| Benefits of development | Drawbacks of development |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Higher living standards | Environmental problems |
| Further examples? | |

played a similar role in East Asia – its central beliefs (a ‘high value placed on education, a commitment to meritocratic personal advancement and a capacity for hard work’) provided the qualities needed to exploit opportunities presented by developments in Western societies; in Japan, for example, development ‘took off’ once Japanese companies started to make cheap copies of US electrical goods.

Structural change

A key criticism of modernisation theory is that it fails to recognise the idea that development is not a ‘one size fits all’ model. Structural change theories, however, recognise that development is a process affected by the fact that developing countries are locked into a set of *global* economic, political and cultural relationships that affect their ability to develop. In other words, we should not look for a *uniform model* of development.

The main difference between

undeveloped and developed societies, from this position, is a structural one between the two types of society. Whereas the former are predominantly *agricultural* societies, the latter are predominantly *industrial* or *post-industrial* societies – a key economic fact that explains why some societies have developed and why others remain relatively undeveloped. Initially, therefore, *industrialisation* is the most important feature of development – where societies are able to industrialise they are able to create:

- **High-value economies** – a range of products is developed and traded.
- **Investment** and reinvestment opportunities that promote economic growth.
- **High-productivity** economies that create both profits for reinvestment and relatively higher wage levels to encourage domestic consumption.

The ability to produce a diverse range of goods and services, allied to making profits

to be reinvested in areas such as new machinery, research and products, represents the key to understanding the development process – or, as **Todero** and **Smith** (2005) put it: ‘Structural change focuses on the sequential process through which the economic, industrial, and institutional structure of an underdeveloped economy is transformed over time to permit new industries to replace traditional agriculture as the engine of economic growth.’ The focus, therefore, is on how structural relationships, both *internal* and *external*, act as *constraints* on the development process.

Internal constraints include:

- **Geographic factors**, such as the availability of natural resources (coal, gold, diamonds, etc.) that can be exploited to develop extraction/manufacturing industries, or the physical location of a country (whether it is landlocked, for example).
- **Human capital factors**, such as the size and demographic composition (age and gender structure) of the population. Also included here would be things like levels of general education and skills.
- **Government ideologies** in terms of attitudes to foreign investment, aid and trade, as well as economic and cultural development (inward foreign investment, for example, is likely to be attracted to low-wage economies, but if this is encouraged, social inequalities may widen).

External constraints relate to political, economic and cultural relationships with other countries. To take an extreme example, *Cuban* economic development has been hindered because, as **Hillyard** and

Miller (1998) note: ‘The United States government has maintained an economic embargo against Cuba for some 38 years . . . in 1996 the “Helms-Burton Act” extended the territorial application of the existing embargo to apply to *foreign companies* trading with Cuba.’

International constraints generally relate to things like the ability to attract foreign investment and technology as well as the nature of political relationships with neighbouring countries. Crucially, developing countries also need access to foreign economic markets for trade purposes.



Weeding the path

One strength of structural change theory is its recognition of how international relationships – and the fact that the world consists of countries with different levels of development – impact on undeveloped countries. This general position has similarities with modernisation theory in that it sees the key to development as being industrial production (at least initially) and the idea that development is a relatively linear, evolutionary process – once a society begins to industrialise. The development process is seen as both:

- **self-generating** – as profits are created they can be reinvested, and
- **self-perpetuating** – once the industrialisation process has been kick-started it takes on a life of its own, with successive developments building cumulatively.

This situation, however, depends to a large extent on the reinvestment of capital, either from indigenous capitalist or, more crucially

perhaps, foreign investors – and this may not happen because of:

Capital flight – the idea that foreign investors have little or no interest in the development of the country/economy in which they invest. Rather, profits are exported to an investor's home country, an observation that links to a further explanation of development.

Dependency

Dependency theories broaden the focus to examine the relationship *between* societies, with particular emphasis on the way developed societies relate to *underdeveloped* societies. In this respect:

Underdevelopment denotes the process whereby a society at a certain level of development becomes *less developed* as a result of its relationships with developed societies. **Chaliand** (1977) notes: 'Underdevelopment is marked by ... distorted and highly dependent economies devoted to producing primary products for the developed world and to provide markets for their finished goods ... the economies of underdeveloped countries have been geared to the needs of industrialized countries ... The prices of products are usually determined by large buyers in the economically dominant countries of the West.'

Although dependency theories come in a number of forms, we can briefly note two variations (*dual development* and *colonialism*) by way of providing a general overview of this position.

Dual development: Capitán and Lambie (1994) argue that, from this position, global development is *uneven* in the sense that developed nations represent:

Core or centre economies that dominate world trade. Their relationship with underdeveloped nations, for this perspective, is *exploitative*. Transnational corporations (TNCs), for example, from developed nations may operate within an underdeveloped nation to extract natural resources (such as coal or oil) or exploit opportunities for cheap labour.

Periphery economies, meanwhile, are those dependent on developed nations in three main ways:

- **Intellectual:** Ideas about economic and social development are imposed by developing countries.
- **Cultural**, whereby developing countries adopt, according to **Capitán** and **Lambie**, 'behavioural and consumption' features from developed nations – from their choice of dress, through films and magazines to fizzy drinks ...
- **Technological:** Underdeveloped nations import technology from developed nations rather than developing 'indigenous technologies'.



The potting shed

Identify and explain one behavioural and one consumption feature *our* society has adopted from the USA or the rest of Europe.

Ferraro (1996) identifies two 'key arguments' for this position:

- **Coexistence:** 'Powerful and wealthy industrialized nations compete with weak, impoverished peasant societies in the international economy.'

- **Persistence:** This is not a temporary situation where unequal and exploitative relationships gradually disappear. Rather, dependency is a *condition of the relationship itself*. In other words, dominant societies have an abiding interest in ‘creating and maintaining underdevelopment’.

Relations of dominance and dependence are not simply reflected by the superior economic power of one nation over another. Rather, this relationship is *integral* to their dealings in that developed societies are involved in the:

Economic penetration of under-developed societies through, **Ferraro** (1996) suggests: the activities of transnational corporations within the dependent society; the provision of aid to develop economic and political infrastructures that facilitate the operations of such corporations; the lending practices of world banking organisations ‘and any other means by which the advanced industrialized countries can represent their economic interests abroad’. In this respect the (in)ability of dependent countries to develop modern, industrialised economies is conditioned by their:

- **External** political and economic relationships (such as the ways under-developed societies are locked into international relationships with developed societies).
- **Internal** political and economic relationships and how their development is affected by external relationships.

A basic example here is the relationship between a relatively developed society such as the USA and its relatively under-developed neighbour Mexico. **Thompson** (2004) notes that ‘... about 85% of the

goods and services exported by Mexicans are sold in the USA’ and their relationship is one of:

Dominance and dependence – Mexico is economically dependent on the USA and the USA is ‘the dominant global economic and military power’. As **Thompson** summarises this relationship: ‘The USA is of great importance to Mexicans ... but Mexico is not in the forefront of the consciousness of most Americans.’

Colonial dependence models originate within *Marxist* perspectives, both classical, where the focus has tended to be on the earliest periods of aggressive capitalist development and exploitation, and *neo-Marxist*, where the focus in recent years has been less on:

Aggressive colonisation (one country invading and ruling another, for example) and more on subtler forms, such as:

Hegemonic colonisation, a situation in which underdeveloped societies effectively become ‘client states’ for a dominant power through economic, political and cultural penetration. A classic example here might be the way US and British popular music (‘Rock ’n’ Roll’) has, since the 1960s at least, become a global cultural phenomenon.

This type of dependency theory focuses on the way capitalist economies in the developed world (Europe and the USA in particular) have used their dominant economic position to exploit the natural resources and human capital of under-developed countries. As we’ve just suggested, colonial dependence models focus on the various ways (*aggressively* and/or *hegemonically*) dependent societies are kept in a state of underdevelopment. These include, by way of example:

- **Direct political rule** by dominant powers.
- **Indirect political rule** through the support of (corrupt) local elites who make political and economic decisions that favour the general interests of dominant nations.
- **Trade agreements** that give exclusive access to, for example, raw materials (such as oil) by transnational corporations.
- **Aid packages** conditional on the receiving society providing access to internal markets and the like.

Ferraro summarises this general position (one associated with a ‘neo-Marxist, neo-colonial view of underdevelopment’) by noting it ‘... attributes a large part of the developing world’s continuing and worsening poverty to the existence and policies of the industrial capitalist countries of the Northern Hemisphere and their extensions in the form of small but powerful elite or *comprador* groups in the less developed countries’.



Weeding the path

Dependency theories not only locate development within a global context, they also focus on the idea that international investment and trade are not necessarily mutually beneficial; on the contrary, they can be exploitative in situations where there is an imbalance (economic and/or political) between the various trading partners.

Todero and Smith (2005) therefore summarise this general position in terms of:

Power relationships: In a global context developed societies dominate on the world stage. Historically this has led to what **Capitán and Lambie** (1994) characterise as

‘a situation in which the economy of certain countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another country to which it is subservient’. For Marxist dependency theories, inequalities between developed and underdeveloped societies are not simply the result of ‘historical or demographic accidents’; rather, unequal development is built into the structure of global capitalism; developed societies dominate at the *expense* of underdeveloped nations. In some ways, therefore, dependency theories reflect, on a global scale, the concept of *class conflict* that is a feature of Marxist theorising; in this instance, however, conflict occurs on a vast scale, between developed and underdeveloped nations.



The potting shed

Identify and briefly explain one way the relationship between developed and underdeveloped societies reflects a global form of class conflict.

There are, however, problems with this general theory.

Persistence: In the first place, it is difficult to see how the dominated societies ever break away from the ‘vicious circle’ of dependence and underdevelopment – yet some formerly underdeveloped societies (such as China and India in recent times) do manage to break away.

Colonisation: Although dependency theory emphasises the exploitative relationship between colonisers and those colonised, it is possible to argue that the benefits of this relationship are not totally one-sided. *Former colonies*, for example, may benefit from the development of their

political and economic infrastructure, and their relationship with former colonisers may give them privileged access to technology, markets, capital investment and the like.

Externalisation: Dependency theory views underdevelopment in terms of the operation of factors external to the dependent society, with local elites co-opted into the exploitation process as agents of international capitalism. While this is true in many cases (elite corruption, for example, may contribute to underdevelopment), this is not always or necessarily the case – indigenous political movements, for example, have succeeded in developing the political and economic structures of formerly dependent countries while simultaneously developing a more equitable relationship with developed countries.

Trade and aid: It is possible to argue that some actions by developed nations to aid underdeveloped nations are not necessarily prompted by economic self-interest. The promotion of political stability, the alleviation of human suffering and the promotion of environmentalist policies are examples of a potentially *less exploitative* relationship (although, as with most things, it's possible to argue that such behaviour 'contributes to the maintenance of capitalism' as a global system of exploitation).

World system approaches

These argue we need to understand development in the context of:

Global systems and networks: In other words, the focus is on understanding how nations are locked into political and economic relationships that, in the widest

sense, make them interdependent. **Frank** (1995) abandoned his previous advocacy of dependency theory to explore the various ways, both historical and contemporary, 'world systems' developed:

- **Politically**, in terms of, for example, the spread of various empires (from ancient Rome to modern Britain) and their effect on international relationships.
- **Economically**, in the modern period, whereby the spread of capitalism has encouraged the development of a global economic system within which every country has some sort of stake.

In theoretical terms a world system perspective involves, for **Capra** (1983), seeing systems as being 'integrated wholes whose properties cannot be reduced to those of smaller units . . . the properties of the whole are considered greater than those of its parts'. In other words, to understand both development and underdevelopment we need to explore the complex interplay of political, ideological and economic relationships that characterise the globalised modern world.

This general perspective has a number of dimensions and arguments, but the original statement of this position comes from **Wallerstein** (1974), when he argues that, historically, we can chart the development of a world system from the:

Pre-modern period (the mid-fifteenth to late-seventeenth centuries) that represented a consolidation of individual Western European states (in particular) in terms of their internal political and economic cohesion. This consolidation laid the condition for the:

Modern period, where the development of industrial capitalism led, by the

eighteenth century, to economic expansion among many European states through the search for new sources of raw materials, labour and markets. This, he argued, was the beginning of a world economic system that would eventually be characterised by the complex and interdependent nature of relationships within a globalised economic system that was:

Interdependent in that we cannot make sense of ideas like development and underdevelopment except in the overall context of the relationship between nations – both their *direct* relationships (one country trading with another, for example) and their *indirect* relationships (the effect, for example, of one country choosing to trade with another to the exclusion of other nations).

World regions

Wallerstein's original formulation focused on the idea of a world economic system based around three concepts:

- **Core regions** represent the most highly developed economies in the modern world. They were the first to develop fully-fledged capitalist economies and are characterised by strong central governments, highly developed industrial bases and bureaucratic administration structures.
- **Periphery regions** represent underdeveloped countries defined, in this context, by their unequal relationship with the core regions. Peripheral states are characterised by weak governments under the control of indigenous elites or representatives of the core regions (where peripheral states are colonies of core societies). Peripheral regions serve as sources of raw materials, surplus labour

and captive markets for core regions, and their underdeveloped status is maintained, as **Chase-Dunn** and **Grimes** (1995) express it, by being locked into a world political and economic structure that serves to reproduce their subordinate status – to function as part of the world system, in other words, peripheral regions by and large have to accept economic practices that, in the long term, maintain their dependence on developed nations.

- **Semi-peripheral regions** occupy a space somewhere between the core and the periphery. Such regions may aspire to core membership or they may be former members of the core whose economic development has stalled or declined. Either way, such regions represent significant elements in the world system since, although they are frequently exploited by core regions, they in turn frequently attempt to exploit those on the periphery of the world economy.

In some situations (such as the former Soviet Union under communism) some societies could stand – at least temporarily – ‘outside’ the general world system for as long as their political and economic hegemony could be maintained over client states (those which were either under occupation or which cleaved to the dominant state).



Weeding the path

This type of analysis locates questions of development and underdevelopment within a global context, in the sense that political and economic relationships are governed by a nation or region's position in the global marketplace. In this respect, when we think about how or why societies develop or fail to

develop we need to consider the constraints and pressures that act on societies in this global context. More specifically, world systems approaches see:

Capitalism as a ‘world economic system’ in the sense that it is the *predominant* world economic system and the development of any society – core, semi-periphery or periphery – is constrained by the need to participate in this economic system.

Dependency and domination are features of a world system and entry into the world economic system is dependent on the adoption of capitalism. Dependency, in the contemporary world, is based on a mix of *hegemonic* factors, political and cultural as well as economic – an idea we can note in relation to a more contemporary take on this general perspective:

Complexity theories combine both a *Marxist realist* perspective (Urry (2002), for example), in terms of their understanding of social structures and systems, and the idea that, in terms of the development of global capitalism, the focus is not just on economic interdependencies but on a range of additional political and ideological factors. Dependency, for example, is not simply ‘one-way’ (from the periphery to the core); it has dimensions that relate to the behaviour of both semi-peripheral and periphery nations in terms of how their behaviour impacts on the behaviour of core nations (in relation to environmental policies, the consequences of rapid industrialisation in semi-peripheral regions such as China in recent times, and so forth).

Moving on

Having outlined some general ideas about the concept of development and how it can be theorised, in the next section we can look

more specifically at the related processes of industrialisation and urbanisation.

2. Development in relation to urbanisation, industrialisation and the environment

Although there are arguments surrounding how and why development occurs, an underlying theme of most theories (there are exceptions) is that of *industrialisation*; that is, although there are clear theoretical differences between, for example, modernisation and dependency theories, both assume that development involves some form of industrialisation process – a not unreasonable assumption in the context of global historical development. This section, therefore, explores some general ideas about industrialisation and its relationship to urbanisation and the environment.



Preparing the ground: Industrialisation and urbanisation

Industrialisation, as we’ve suggested, is central to a range of general theories of development, from *modernisation* theories that identify the process as crucial to developmental ‘take-off’, through *neoliberal* theories that see industrial production as the motor of development, to *structural change* theories that pinpoint the move from rural-subsistence to urban-industrial as the key to development and *dependency/world systems* approaches, which explore the role of industrialisation in relation to both national and international forms of capitalist

development. So significant is industrialisation, Breinlich (2004) notes, it is 'generally viewed as an essential part of a successful development strategy'. To understand how and why industrialisation occupies this relatively privileged position, we need first to think about what it involves.

At its most basic, *industrialisation* describes a process whereby:

- **Machine technology** is applied to the production of goods; this, in turn, results in the development of:
- **Factory-based** forms of economic production involving the:
- **Mass production** of consumer goods.

Breinlich (2004) further notes that industrialisation involves:

- **agricultural decline**, in terms of its share of *gross domestic product* (GDP), the number of people employed in farming, and so forth
- **dominance of manufacturing industry** (and, at a later point, service and knowledge industries)
- **rises** in income levels, living standards, economic consumption and the like

- **population movements** on a large scale, from rural to urban environments.



Weeding the path

Agricultural decline doesn't necessarily mean a gradual 'withering away' of agricultural production; although agricultural and industrial production are often, for the sake of illustration, portrayed as *separate processes* (which they may be in the later stages of agricultural subsistence farming/the early stages of industrial manufacturing), contemporary forms of agricultural production are generally heavily industrialised; farming, in this respect, becomes 'just another form' of industrial (factory-type) production.



The potting shed

Identify and briefly explain two examples of 'family-type' agricultural production in the UK.

WARM-UP: ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

In small groups, identify and briefly discuss as many changes to the 'human and physical environment' (both national and global) as you can (where 'environments' can be interpreted as broadly as you want).

Once you've done this, as a class, decide how many of the changes you've identified can be traced to the industrialisation process in developed and developing countries.

If you wish, you can expand this exercise into a general discussion of possible relationships between environmental changes, producer and consumer lifestyles, and so forth.

Industrialisation, therefore, represents a process of change, both:

- **Economic** (a new and different way of producing commodities) and
- **Cultural**, in the sense that wide-ranging economic changes, such as the development of factories, have a knock-on cultural effect, not only in terms of how social relationships are reorganised in the production process, but also in more general terms (such as the development and expansion of towns and cities).

We can encapsulate this process of change by noting that, *historically* (in terms of Western societies at least), the basic ‘blueprint for development’ appears to be that societies pass through three development phases:

- **pre-industrial society**, where the *dominant* form of production is agriculture,
- **industrial society**, where the *dominant* productive form is manufacturing, and
- **post-industrial society**, where both services and knowledge are the *dominant* productive industries.



Weeding the path

These phases are not *discrete* – one phase doesn’t simply replace the previous phase – the key idea here is *dominance*, considered in terms of productive capacity, wealth creation, levels of employment and the like.

Urbanisation

This involves the idea that as nations *industrialise* they experience a general population movement/redistribution, away from relatively small-scale, agricultural

settlements to larger-scale communities based on towns and cities. This relatively simple distinction between rural and urban areas can be firmed up by following the **US Population Reference Bureau** (2005) argument that *urban* areas have some distinctive characteristics:

- **Residents** in large numbers (although numbers alone are not necessarily a useful guide – an urban area in the USA, for example, is defined as having 2500+ inhabitants, while Botswana defines it as 5000+ and Portugal 10,000+).
- **High population density**: Canada defines an urban area as having a population density of 400+ people per square mile.
- **Industrial dependence**: Botswana defines urban areas as places where ‘75 per cent of the economic activity is non-agricultural’.
- **Developed infrastructure** of ‘public utilities and services such as electricity and education’.

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Theory and methods: The **UN Demographic Yearbook** (2003) notes: ‘Because of significant national differences, there is *no internationally agreed* definition of urban and rural that would be applicable to *all countries*’. The question of what counts as an ‘urban area’ illustrates the significance of *quantifying* concepts for comparative purposes.



The potting shed

Identify and briefly explain two methodological problems with defining levels of urbanisation across different countries.



Weeding the path

Problems of comparability can be resolved, in part, by using a *standard area definition*, like the **UN-Habitat** (2004) concept of:

Urban agglomeration that defines urban areas as ‘built-up or densely populated areas’ consisting of three subdivisions:

- **city proper** (representing the major areas of economic production)
- **suburbs** (representing major areas of habitation that serve the city)
- **commuter areas with continuous settlement** (areas of established habitation that exist beyond the city’s suburbs and from which people travel to work in the city).

In general the *process* of urbanisation involves a combination of two main factors:

- **Social migration** or population movement from rural to urban areas, something normally considered in terms of two types of *structural pressure*:
 - **Push factors** involve pressures that force people *away* from rural living. These include war, natural disaster, population pressures and a lack of physical resources (people find it difficult to earn a living, for example).
 - **Pull factors** *attract* people to towns and cities, usually for economic reasons. As the **World Bank** (2005) suggests, people move ‘from rural areas in search of jobs and opportunities to improve their lives and create a better future for their children’.
- **Natural increase**: The second factor involves differences between birth and

death rates within urban areas. If the former is higher than the latter, the population will increase, even if there is no *net social migration* (the difference between the number of people arriving and leaving urban areas) from the countryside to towns.

Urbanisation represents a significant feature of *modern, industrial societies*. Even though urban centres may exist in pre-modern, pre-industrial society (in the UK, London was an urban area throughout the pre-modern period), it is in the modern period that towns and cities become the *norm*. This suggests both a close relationship between industrialisation and urbanisation and that this relationship is not coincidental, especially given that urbanisation requires, as we’ve just suggested, an:

Economic infrastructure that supports and enhances the production and development of goods and services; factory-based production leads to the emergence of towns and cities as people are drawn from rural to urban areas to work.

In a global context, the number of people living in urban areas has now overtaken the number living in non-urban settings. According to the **World Bank** (2005), just over half the world’s population – more than *3 billion people* – now live in cities. On current trends, around 70% of the world’s population will be urban-dwellers by 2050 (compared with 30% in 1950 and 2% in 1800).



Digging deeper: Industrialisation and urbanisation

The close relationship between industrialisation and urbanisation (whereby

| Cities by selected region (2000) | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Region | Number of cities with 1 million + inhabitants |
| Asia | 206 |
| Europe | 64 |
| South America | 51 |
| Africa | 43 |
| North America | 41 |

Source: UN-Habitat (2001)

the former is the motor that drives the development of the latter) is not as straightforward as we've suggested. Although *urbanisation* is a global trend – and developed nations have a greater percentage of their population living in urban areas (around 75% compared with 40% in developing nations, according to the **US Population Reference Bureau**, 2005) – urbanisation is not a uniform process; it occurs in different ways in different societies. In developing nations, for example, the general *pattern* is one of:

Fragmentary urbanisation: A feature of urbanisation in developing countries is not so much the fact of urbanisation itself (even though, according to the **UK Communication and Information Management Resource Centre** (2006), around '90% of contemporary growth in urban populations' occurs in such countries), but rather *how* it occurs. For example, the **US Population Reference Bureau** (2000) notes that 90% of the population of Argentina lives in urban areas – the same

percentage of urban dwelling as the UK. However, the two countries are very different in terms of their industrial development and this apparent contradiction can be resolved by the fact that, in Argentina, around 40% of the population live in a single city (Buenos Aires).

This suggests that *patterns of urbanisation* are different for nations with different development histories; while early developers (such as the UK or the USA) have followed one pattern of development (with industrialisation producing a particular form of urbanisation), later developers have followed another, one whose development path has been influenced heavily by the presence and behaviour of developed nations. In part, this pattern of *fragmentary urbanisation* is expressed in terms of:

- **Megacities** (cities with over 5 million inhabitants) in developing nations. As the **US Population Reference Bureau** (2005) argues, 'by 2015, 59 megacities will exist, 48 in less developed countries' and, of these, '23 cities are projected to hold over 10 million people; all but four will be in less developed countries'.

The problem here is not so much the *size* of urban areas, but their *demographic relationship* to the rest of a country, whereby a *concentration* of urban development in a relatively small number of areas is indicative of:

Fragmented industrialisation: That is, industrial development, rather than taking root across the nation as a whole, is concentrated in a relatively small number of areas that, in turn, attract further migrants from rural areas. One consequence of this fragmentation is:

| The pace of urban change | | | |
|--|------------------------|------|----------------|
| In 1950, only New York had more than 10 million inhabitants. By 2000, 19 cities in the world had achieved this status. | | | |
| City | Inhabitants (Millions) | | City |
| Tokyo | 26.4 | 12.3 | Dhaka |
| Mexico City | 18.1 | 11.8 | Karachi |
| Mumbai | 18.1 | 11.7 | Delhi |
| Sao Paulo | 17.8 | 11.0 | Jakarta |
| New York | 16.6 | 11.0 | Osaka |
| Lagos | 13.4 | 10.9 | Metro Manila |
| Los Angeles | 13.1 | 10.8 | Beijing |
| Calcutta | 12.9 | 10.6 | Rio de Janeiro |
| Shanghai | 12.9 | 10.6 | Cairo |
| Buenos Aires | 12.6 | | |

Source: UN Habitat (2001)

Unemployment and low-wage work for many in the population, a consequence of a limited range of manufacturing/service industries, allied to a huge urban population chasing what jobs there are in the formal employment sector. **Khosla et al.** (2002) note that, in developing nations, 'there is little evidence of growing investments in industrial infrastructure that could absorb the influx of urban population. Unlike at the

time of the Industrial Revolution when the enormous rise in factory production and investment offered jobs to the urban migrants, today's developing world migrants often have few employment opportunities'. One consequence here, according to the **US Population Reference Bureau** (2005), is that migrants 'often end up not finding the opportunities they are looking for, but become part of the urban poor'.

Discussion point: Megacities

In small groups, consider the following questions:

- What reasons can you identify for the growth of megacities in less developed countries?
- What are the social implications of rapid growth in these cities (in terms of things like disease, for example)?

As a class, what conclusions can you draw from your discussions about the impact of megacities on developing nations?



Weeding the path

Of all the theories of development we outlined in the previous section, none satisfactorily explains the pattern of development we've just described, although dependency and world system approaches arguably come closest. Dependency theories, for example, highlight the importance of colonial and neocolonial political and economic legacies in developing nations, while world system approaches, using concepts like core, periphery and semi-peripheral regions, capture something of the piecemeal, patchy and fragmented nature of development in both the poor and semi-poor regions of the world.

Khosla et al. (2002), however, identify two key factors underpinning fragmentary industrialisation and urbanisation.

- **The post-colonial state:** The first factor, according to **Hobsbawn** (2000), involves the idea that for many developing nations the 'degree of external and internal order'

that was once imposed by a colonial power disappears in the post-colonial period, leaving a situation **Khosla et al.** (2002) pinpoint as one where developing nations 'are without effective central authority', with 'either an absence of, or the presence of weak, state structures'. The state, in other words, is not strong enough to effectively oversee planned internal development or to resist external influence from developed nations.

- **External influences:** The weakness of state structures in post-colonial developing nations opens them to external economic and political forces – either the national interests of developed nations (often, but not necessarily, using their past colonial links as leverage to gain access to things like natural resources and markets) or the international interests of global capitalism (in the shape of transnational corporations).



Weeding the path

The general argument here, therefore, is that fragmentary patterns of industrialisation and urbanisation are indicative of an unequal, exploitative and dependent relationship between developed and developing nations, a legacy of post-colonial political weaknesses that follow almost directly from past colonial dependence. We can develop this idea further when we look at *development strategies* and the role of international agencies and TNCs in the development process. For the moment, however, we can outline, by way of illustration, a couple of ways (*import substitution* and *export-led growth*) in which developing countries have chosen industrial development routes.

| Development routes by trade orientation | |
|---|--|
| <p>Strongly outward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No or low trade controls • High incentives to export • Low regulation of business • Exchange rates neutral or undervalued to encourage international buyers <p>Recent example: Singapore</p> | <p>Moderately inward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production for domestic market favoured • Relatively high protection from foreign competition for domestic market • Extensive controls placed on imports • Little incentive for export • Overvalued exchange rate <p>Recent example: Pakistan</p> |
| <p>Moderately outward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bias towards domestic consumption, not export • Low rates of domestic production • Limited trade controls • Limited incentives to export • Exchange rate slightly higher for imports <p>Recent example: Chile</p> | <p>Strongly inward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong incentives for domestic production and consumption • High protection for home markets • Strong controls on imports • Exchange rate overvalued <p>Recent example: India</p> |

Source: World Bank (1987)

Routes

Import substitution industrialisation (ISI) is an example of a *strongly inward* trade orientation, whereby a developing nation *substitutes* the goods it would normally import with domestically produced alternatives. In other words, the general orientation is towards producing goods for *export* with minimal importing of foreign goods, a strategy (classically pursued by the USA in the nineteenth century as a means of limiting the effects of competition from the UK, the major industrial power of the period) which allows developing nations the opportunity to:

- **earn** foreign exchange through high exports and low imports
- **protect** *infant industries* from foreign competition, giving them time to establish a strong foothold in both national and international markets. This

generally involves establishing and maintaining *trade barriers* (such as import taxes), as well as state subsidies for domestic industries.

Generally, this strategy requires a strong, centralised state structure committed to directing and overseeing the industrialisation process by:

- resisting foreign pressures to open up domestic markets to competition
- well-established and patrolled border controls for controlling imports and exports
- administrative oversight and implementation of taxation policies
- industrialisation policies that identify and encourage key domestic industries
- organisation of domestic labour policies to ensure a steady supply of industrial workers.



Weeding the path

Import substitution can have a range of both internal (*domestic*) and external (*international*) consequences. Domestic consequences may involve:

- **Decline in productive efficiency:** Although the strategy may encourage both industrialisation and economic growth, it runs the risk of becoming inflexible and structurally entrenched, whereby the strategy doesn't evolve to meet changing economic conditions. Where domestic industries benefit from state subsidies and the absence of foreign competition, there is little incentive for efficiency in the production process.
- **Interest groups:** This strategy encourages state involvement in the economy, either as regulators of economic behaviour or economic owners (through nationalised industries, for example), something that may create *powerful interest groups* which depend on the state for their power and influence (which opens up the possibility of collusion and corruption within and between economic and political elites).
- **Hardship** for those at the bottom of society. Pressure on domestic prices through lack of competition and choice, in addition to increases in taxation, create hardship for both the employed and unemployed workforce. Wage levels may become depressed as companies seek to raise profitability at the expense of their workforce as economic efficiency decreases.
- **Inequality increases** as the majority suffer high domestic prices and lowered wage levels, while a minority of upper income

groups benefit through guaranteed state support and the development of monopoly state and private industries.

International consequences, meanwhile, may involve:

- **Retaliatory** trade barriers and protections from developed nations. As developing markets are closed off, developed nations may retaliate by introducing measures (trade quotas and tariffs, for example) designed to protect their own industries from cheaper competition.
- **Uncompetitive pricing:** Where domestic companies lose their economic efficiency their products become more costly and can be undercut on world markets.
- **Fiscal deficits:** Where export earnings fall away, governments have to increase the level of support given to domestic industry, leading to a drain on state resources (and possible cuts in areas such as health and educational services).
- **Export-led growth** represents the opposite strategy to ISI – its trade orientation is *strongly outward*, with industrialisation and economic growth fuelled by orientating trade towards exports to attract both foreign currency and investment. In this respect:
- **The role of the state** is generally *less interventionist* and its economic actions are largely directed towards encouraging exports (through taxation, subsidy and exchange-rate policies – attempting, for example, to make domestic products attractive to international buyers by lowering exchange rates).
- **Competition** between domestic producers is encouraged by governments orientating

economic activity towards international markets and competing effectively in those markets. There is frequently little or no state action to protect domestic producers by restricting imports and foreign competition.

- **Specialisation:** Developing countries following this strategy normally focus on a limited range of export goods and services, the classic example, perhaps, being *Japan* in the 1950s specialising in the development of cheap, mass-produced, electronic goods (such as radios and televisions).



Weeding the path

Export-led strategies generally lead to higher levels of development and economic growth than those associated with import substitution strategies. Japan, for example, had sustained growth in the post-Second World War period and has consolidated its position in the 21st-century world trade hierarchy through its development, production and consumption of computer goods and technologies. Export-led strategies, however, may have domestic consequences, such as:

- **Commodity shortages** as goods are directed towards international rather than national markets.
- **Rising costs** as goods and services are priced beyond the range of domestic consumers.
- **Depressed wage levels** as the need to compete in international markets leads to domestic companies cutting wage levels to increase profitability (and high levels of internal migration to cities, as we've seen, can produce a ready-made pool of

domestic labourers, forced to compete against each other for employment).



Preparing the ground: The environment

At the start of this section we suggested that an *underlying theme* of the development theories we've examined was the almost synonymous relationship between development, industrialisation and urbanisation. More recently, however, this relationship has been questioned, in terms of both whether development is *necessarily* dependent on industrialisation and the relationship between development, industrialisation and the environment. We can, therefore, examine these ideas more closely, starting with the relationship between:

Human and physical environments, considered in terms of the various ways people *interact* with physical environments. This relates to a number of ideas, ranging from how people use *physical space* and natural resources to ideas about environmental damage and destruction resulting from industrialisation processes. Historically, for example, industrialisation has affected the global environment, as **Lebel and Steffen** (1998) argue, in a range of ways:

- the **over-consumption** of natural resources (such as coal, oil and gas)
- **Pollution** in a variety of forms (air, water and land)
- **Climate change**, such as the possible effects of global warming
- **Environmental damage** to the ozone layer, deforestation and desertification (two frequently interlinked processes –

the removal of tree cover (*deforestation*) can lead to rapid soil erosion (*desertification*)

- **Population growth** and pressure on urban areas and resources
- **Death/disease** caused by natural and man-made environmental disasters and so forth.

As this suggests, we need to think about ‘the environment’ in terms of the various ways human and physical environments are *interconnected*, in terms of a:

Reflexive relationship. That is, we need to think about how one impacts on the other in a kind of circular relationship. For example, while physical environments initially impact on human behaviour (in terms of where and how people live), social environments rapidly transform the relationship through the use to which physical resources, for example, are put (the various processes and consequences we’ve just noted in relation to industrialisation, for example).

When we think about changes to the physical environment we tend, understandably perhaps, to focus on ‘the present’ and think about areas like environmental damage and destruction (the exploitation of natural resources and ideas about global warming, for example); however, we can put human relationships with the physical environment in context by noting that throughout history people have interacted with their physical environment, changing it in various ways. In prehistoric times, for example, one of the greatest environmental changes involved the development of agriculture, with natural forest cover being systematically cleared to create farmland. Similarly, industrialisation



The potting shed

Air pollution from factories is an example of how the human and physical environments interact.



Identify and briefly explain one further example of how the human environment can be affected by changes to the physical environment and one further example of how the physical environment can be affected by changes to the human environment.

and urbanisation in the modern period have seen massive environmental changes over the past 200 or so years.

However, as **Stern** (2000) notes: ‘Only relatively recently has *environmental protection* become an important consideration in human decision making’, an idea echoed by **Porritt** (2000) when he argues: ‘It was only about thirty years ago that it started to dawn on people that . . . To generate prosperity we were literally laying waste to the planet, tearing down forests, damming rivers, polluting the air, eroding top soil, warming the atmosphere, depleting

fish stocks, and covering everything with concrete and tarmac.'

When thinking about the relationship between development and the environment, therefore, we need to recognise the changing nature of the interaction between the social and physical worlds in the context of:

Sustainable development, a situation defined by the **United Nations** (2000) as involving a balance between economic, social and environmental needs 'to ensure socially responsible economic development while protecting the resource base for the benefit of future generations'. This, in turn, relates to two further ideas:

- **Triple bottom line** – the idea that sustainable development involves the 'simultaneous pursuit of economic prosperity, environmental quality and social equity', and
- **Sustainable consumption/production** – 'Continuous economic and social progress that respects the limits of the Earth's ecosystems, and meets the needs and aspirations of everyone for a better quality of life, now and for future generations to come.'

Approaches

The idea of *sustainable development*, although relatively new, has been adopted and explained in a couple of distinctive ways (*consensus* and *conflict* approaches) that reflect the kind of theoretical work we've previously examined.

Consensus approaches reflect both broadly functionalist and New Right positions on development 'in the post-industrial world'; that is, they propose ideas about sustainable development that attempt to marry two apparently contradictory

positions, namely that 'classical development' has historically been driven by the economic processes associated with industrialisation, whereas sustainable development involves the need to include ideas about environmental protection and human development. This apparent contradiction is resolved in two main ways (*politically* and *economically*):

Politically – and reflecting *functionalist* approaches to conflict resolution – **Symons** (2002) argues that sustainable development should be seen in the context of:

- **International laws and agreements:** In other words, a global legal and moral framework needs to be established to regulate the behaviour of both developed and developing nations. Trade, for example, is regulated through the WTO, while conferences, such as the Rio Earth Summit (1992) and the Kyoto Conference (1997), have tried to establish ground rules and targets for a range of sustainable development aims. Rio produced a statement of 'eight principles' relating to the environment and development (from agreement to reduce poverty, through limiting environmental damage, to changes in production and consumption patterns). The *Kyoto Protocol*, among many other things, proposed limits on greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Engagement** between nations to produce voluntary agreements (such as *Multilateral Environmental Agreements* (MEAs) that promote controls on air pollution, the use of pesticides and the like). As **Symons** puts it, the 'essential provision is to keep everyone in touch – both those drawing up the environmental rules and those

drawing up the trade rules. Better informed policy making will further add to mutual supportiveness.’



Weeding the path

Although international conferences and agreements are important, they largely depend on the voluntary cooperation of governments, something that is not necessarily forthcoming. The USA, for example, has repeatedly declined to ratify the *Kyoto Protocol* on the basis that, as **President Bush** (2001) argued, it ‘... would cause serious harm to the US economy ... it is an unfair and ineffective means of addressing global climate change concerns’.

Economically, reflecting *New Right* approaches that focus on the discipline of the marketplace and consumer behaviour to regulate corporate behaviour. **Browne** (2000) argues that solutions to global problems can be theorised in terms of international capitalism and the concept of:

- **Enlightened self-interest**, an idea encapsulated by the observation that ‘business needs sustainable societies in order to protect its own sustainability ... very few businesses are short-term activities. Most want to do business again and again over many decades’. In other words, **Browne** argues that changes to the way companies do business represents the best way to solve global development and environmental problems, something that will be achieved through things like:
- **Technological developments** that improve the efficiency of businesses and make them more responsive to changing consumer and environmental needs.

Examples here might include the removal of lead from petrol in the UK, the development of ‘emission-free power stations’ and research into the use of ‘clean fuel technologies’ (where no harmful gases are produced) to power cars.

- **Trade liberalisation** to promote, as **Symons** (2002) argues, ‘the more efficient use of natural resources and the dissemination of cleaner technology’.
- **Consumer behaviour**: How consumers behave is an important influence on businesses in that consumer choices influence how companies develop. In this respect, if consumers demand ‘environmentally friendly’ products and services, then businesses that provide them will flourish at the expense of those that do not.

Conflict approaches (and Marxist theories in particular) take a different view of the relationship between development and the environment, with the general focus being on relations of:

Domination and exploitation, played out within and between societies in the developed and developing worlds. In this respect, the concept of class struggle underpins Marxist conflict approaches at both the national level (*within* societies) and international level (in terms of how developed societies use their political, economic and cultural hegemony to exploit developing nations).



Weeding the path

A fundamental difference between consensus and conflict approaches is that for the former businesses are part of the solution

to global environmental problems whereas for the latter their behaviour is part of the problem. At the heart of Marxist approaches is the argument that the destruction of physical and human environments is an integral part of:

Capitalist production and distribution processes: In other words, the primary concern of business corporations is the pursuit of profit – and when it comes down to decisions about environmental preservation *versus* loss of profitability, the argument here is that profitability always takes precedence. For conflict theorists, therefore, business claims about environmental responsibility and preservation should be regarded as:

Ideological constructions: While transnational corporations (and governments), for example, will promote sustainable development, they will do so only in contexts that preserve profitability.

Conflict positions, therefore, focus on ideas about:

Global inequalities and exploitations theorised at the levels of:

- **Class**, whereby rich, developed nations systematically exploit poorer nations (which, as we have seen, are kept in a situation of *underdevelopment* as they service the needs and requirements of developed nations).
- **Ethnicity:** Weintraub (1994) uses the term '*environmental racism*' to describe the 'intentional siting of hazardous waste sites, landfills, incinerators, and polluting industries' in both developing nations and areas within developed nations populated by minority ethnic groups.



The potting shed

Identify and briefly explain two reasons for Weintraub's claim that 'minorities are particularly vulnerable' to environmental exploitation.

- **Gender:** Exploitation, for Marxist conflict theorists, takes place primarily at the level of social class (with working-class men and women suffering greater levels of exploitation than their middle-class counterparts). For *ecofeminism*, however, as Jackson (1997) notes, male-dominated (patriarchal) societies are held to be more environmentally destructive.

Finally, a further area of inequality relates to:

Consumption differences between the developed and developing worlds that fuel

Discussion point: Where do you stand?

Thinking about the two general sets of arguments we've just noted:

- 1 Decide whether consensus or conflict approaches most closely match your view of 'sustainable development'.
- 2 If this produces two groups (one aligned to consensus and the other to conflict), each group should attempt to convince the other of the correctness of their position.
- 3 If the class is in complete agreement, your teacher should take responsibility for arguing the opposite position.

human and environmental exploitation. **Haub** and **Cornelius** (2000) calculate that the developed world, containing 25% of the global population, consumes 70% of the world's energy resources, and **Robbins** (2005) suggests this general pattern is repeated across all areas of consumption. He concludes that 'someone has to pay for our consumption levels, and it will either be our children or inhabitants of the periphery of the world system'.



Weeding the path

True (2002) argues that the two approaches we've just outlined represent 'conventional accounts' of international relationships, whereby *consensus* accounts have 'emphasised the freedom that comes with liberalisation and marketisation', and *conflict* accounts 'have been much more pessimistic' about the behaviour of developed nations. We can complete this section, therefore, by examining a range of 'non-conventional accounts' of the relationship between development and the environment.



Digging deeper: The environment

As regards sustainable development, consensus approaches interpret the balance between economic development and environmentalism in terms of economic behaviour that takes a more environmentally sensitive approach, whereas conflict approaches define the balance in terms of a radical reappraisal of political development, focused, for Marxists at least, on the creation of more equal societies.

There are, however, different approaches

we can consider, based around an interpretation of sustainable development that generally rejects the notion of *industrialisation* as the route to development. These approaches share the basic idea that we have to marry economic development to a concern about the environment that generally reverses conventional approaches. Where the latter focus on environmental protection as a by-product of economic growth, less conventional approaches place environmental protection at the centre of the equation, with economic production and consumption being shaped by environmental concerns. At the *softer theoretical edge* we can note ideas about:

Counter-urbanisation, a process involving gradual population devolution, away from urban and into rural areas. This process, somewhat ironically, perhaps, has been influenced, at least in developed nations, by the growth of communication systems, both in terms of:

- **Transport** – the widespread availability of cars, for example, makes it possible to live outside, while working in, urban areas.
- **Information technology** that allows for homeworking and lessens the need for travel to offices, thereby cutting pollution, congestion and the use of energy resources.



The potting shed

Identify and briefly explain one environmental advantage and one environmental disadvantage to counter-urbanisation.

Alternatively, **Khosla et al.** (2002) build on the work of **Sen** (1999) to argue that we should see development in terms of the *human environment*, something that involves ‘the enhancement of freedom for individuals to live the life they want to live’, and to make this possible we have to rethink concepts of development – to move away from seeing it in economic terms (as a debate over ‘poverty versus prosperity’) and reconceptualise in a way that ‘integrates economic, social and political considerations with equal weight’.

Following **Sen**, therefore, **Khosla et al.** identify five *instruments of freedom* against which ‘unfreedoms’ (or constraints on freedom) can be objectively measured (see table below).

Thus, the development objective is to remove as many ‘unfreedoms’ as possible, in order to increase human capabilities, using a combination of public and private, market-based and communal resources.

Ecological modernisation: According to **Mol** and **Sonnenfeld** (2000), the aim here is ‘to analyse how contemporary industrialised societies deal with environmental crises’, with a particular emphasis on seeing ‘environmental problems as challenges for social, technical and economic reform, rather than as immutable consequences of industrialisation’. In this respect, the focus is on:

Transformations of social and institutional practices as a way of adapting to changing environmental situations. For **Mol** and **Sonnenfeld** such transformations involve five clusters:

- **Science and technology:** ‘Science and technology are not only judged for their role in the emergence of environmental problems but also valued for their actual and potential role in curing and preventing them.’ In this respect

| Measuring unfreedoms | | |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Instruments of freedom | Example quantitative evaluators | Example qualitative evaluators |
| Political | Persons imprisoned Voting rights | Constraints on access to law and order services Access to voting booths |
| Economic | Male/female employment Income | Access to credit Access to transport |
| Social | Life expectancy Birth and death rates | Access to fuel Exposure to pollution |
| Transparency | N/A | Facilities to report crime |
| Security | Epidemic cases Catastrophic deaths | Access to emergency food programmes Access to communication networks |

Source: Khosla et al. (2002)

environmental concerns and considerations need to be built into technological development, but the solution to environmental problems will not be found by marginalising science and technology.

- **Market dynamics** involve building ecological reforms into the relationship between, for example, producers, customers and consumers.
- **The role of the nation state:** The objective of this transformation is to make the state more responsive to people's needs (*political modernisation*) through *decentralising* and consensual styles of governance. The development of supranational institutions (such as the WTO or UN) is seen to 'undermine the nation state's traditional role in environmental reform'.
- **Social movements:** Both public and private movements should occupy the centre of political decision-making on the basis that they are more in touch with people's ideas and behaviours and more responsive to their needs.
- **New ideologies** involve the *reimagining* of the relationship between the environment and economic concerns, whereby 'complete neglect of the environment and the fundamental counter-positioning of economic and environmental interests are no longer accepted as legitimate positions'.

If we turn towards considering the *harder theoretical edge*, we can note approaches like: **Ecofeminism** that, as we've suggested, considers environmental destruction as the inevitable manifestation of *patriarchy*.

Jackson (1997), however, argues its analysis

is 'weakened by a failure to link empirical and historical evidence to theoretical position'. As she notes, 'Ecofeminist assertions that male-dominated societies are more environmentally destructive are not borne out by evidence from countries like India, deeply patriarchal but with very low per capita rates of resource use and abuse.'

Deep ecology perspectives argue that people should strive to live in harmony with their environment in terms of:

- **Biological egalitarianism** – the idea that human societies should attune themselves with nature by orientating development away from industrialisation and the exploitation of natural resources. In this respect, people and nature are not separate and discrete; rather, each depends on the other.

Different positions within this general approach emphasise different ways of developing the human/nature axis:

Anti-consumerist positions, for example, reject the consumption patterns of industrial, developed societies and advocate a 'return to nature' lifestyle, based on traditional forms of consumption and production that stress a *symbiotic relationship* between people and the environment.

Post-industrial ecological groups advance ideas about *biodiversity* (ensuring diversity in relation to ecosystems and species, for example) and the importance of developing renewable forms of energy. Some groups advocate spiritual education focused on 'nature religions' (Wicca and various forms of neo-paganism, for example), which hold that everything in the world – including people – is connected by a web of energy (sometimes called a *life force*) embodied in nature.



Weeding the path

Post-industrial spiritual groups *reify* the concept of ‘nature’; that is, they treat an abstract concept (‘nature’) *as if* it were something concrete and real (references, for example, to ‘Mother Nature’, whereby the natural world is given human (female) qualities, are an obvious example here).

Neo-populist positions: Hettne (1995) summarises the general nature of these positions in terms of their relationship to – and differences from – traditional forms of populist politics, economics and culture. Thus, where *traditional populism* represented ‘a defence of the territorial community’ against the challenges and pressures created by economic growth’, *neo-populism* represents an attempt to ‘re-create community as an offensive against the industrial system’. In this respect, the development of neo-popularist movements (in both developed and developing nations) can be seen in terms of a desire for:

- **Community-based** social relationships that reflect ‘traditional’ or popular beliefs about life ‘in the past’ (usually in some nebulous period prior to the disruptive influence of modernisation, industrialisation and urbanisation).
- **Primary production** techniques, with the focus on localised development that reflects the influence of modern industrial forms of production, consumption and culture.
- **Non-industrial civilisation** – a rejection, as it were, of Western consumerism.

Neo-populism takes a number of forms, from rejection of ‘outside’ (usually Western) cultural and political influences to an

acceptance of some forms of aid and trade as a means of encouraging development processes. Where neo-populist movements and ideas are not *rejectionist* (that is, rejecting any involvement with the developed world), they may become incorporated into development systems through, for example, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), such as charities which provide aid and assistance in ways that build on local knowledge and skills, rather than imposing a ‘one size fits all’ model of development.

Moving on

Having looked at the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation in relation to current environmental concerns we can move forward, in the next section, to think about how the various theories and processes we’ve outlined in the first two sections relate to concepts of *globalisation*.

3. The cultural, political and economic inter-relationships between societies

One of the interesting features of world sociology is that it encourages us to think about relationships in a *global context*, not only in the obvious sense – the relationship *between* different nations – but also in terms of the ways being members of a ‘global community’ impact on our individual experiences and the relationships *within* nations.

It is not, however, simply a case of thinking about the variety of economic, political and cultural relationships that exists between contemporary societies; it is also necessary to think about how these

relationships are *changing*, and one way to do this is to put such changes into a sociological context – that of *globalisation*.

WARM-UP: GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

One way to start to think about globalisation is to identify ‘global connections’ – the various ways societies are connected economically and culturally, for example.

In small groups, identify some of the ways you are connected to other societies in terms of the things you *consume* (food, clothing, media, etc.). For example, think about the origin of various objects that surround you in the classroom (paper, pens, chairs) and expand this to objects in your home.



Preparing the ground: Globalisation

We can begin by noting **Sklair’s** (1999) observation that contemporary relationships ‘... cannot be adequately studied at the level of nation-states ... they need to be conceptualized in terms of global processes’. Globalisation, therefore, provides a context for understanding the relationship between societies in the contemporary world because it represents a *process* that both reflects and contributes to *change* – the idea that how nations relate to each other is different *now* compared with even the recent past. Before we think about how globalisation can be applied to an understanding of changing relationships, however, we need to consider initially how it can be:

Defined: Although we can refer, in vague terms, to globalisation as ‘a process’, it is much harder to pin down a definition that’s

broadly recognised and accepted within the sociology of development (**Rosamond and Booth** (1995) refer to globalisation, with good reason, as a *contested concept*). **Scholte** (2000) notes that some things that are *not*, in themselves, ‘globalisation’, although each has *global consequences*:

- **Internationalisation** (‘cross-border relations between countries’).
- **Liberalisation** of political and economic relationships (such as ‘removing government-imposed restrictions on movements between countries’).
- **Universalisation** of cultural forms (such as television) ‘in the sense of spreading various objects and experiences to people of all corners of the earth’.
- **Modernisation** involving the spread of the social structures of *modernity* (capitalism, rationalism, industrialism, and so forth) across the world.

The key to understanding globalisation, therefore, is to see it as a *process* that *facilitates other processes*, something **Virilio** (2000) expresses when he argues: ‘The speed of light does not merely transform the world. It becomes the world. Globalisation is the speed of light. And it is nothing else!’ In other words, globalisation is something that, through the speed of its occurrence, transforms the nature of other processes (such as the transfer of capital, physical movement and the flow of information around the globe) and, in so doing, becomes synonymous with change.



Digging deeper: Globalisation

We can develop these ideas in terms of the: **Distanciation** (of time and space): **Giddens** (1990) argues that a major feature of globalisation is the separation of *time and space* – something we can illustrate in the following way: when you watch a live broadcast on TV in your living room *time* is *separated* from *space* – although the event and your viewing occur at the same time, you don't have to be physically present at the event to view it (and if you record it for later viewing, time and space are even further separated). This feature of globalisation (in this example the *speed* at which television pictures can be transmitted and received) means communication can take place instantaneously *across the globe*, 'as if' people occupied the same physical space.

For **Virilio**, globalisation makes concepts of distance and physical space *irrelevant* in the contemporary world – something that contributes to what **Harvey** (1990) considers the:

Compression (of time and space): The speed at which things can be done shortens the time required to do them and, effectively, shrinks distances (not literally, of course). To illustrate this, think about the time it takes to write and send an email to someone on the other side of the world as opposed to writing and sending a letter or actually visiting them.

Both *distanciation* and *compression* represent, for **Ebeltoft** (1998), 'vital preconditions' for an idea with direct consequences for our understanding of changing social relationships:

Disembedding – something we can understand by thinking about its opposite. If something is *embedded* it is firmly fixed in its

surroundings (located in a particular context that gives it a particular meaning).

Disembedding, therefore, means things are separated from their original surroundings and contexts. This can include:

- **objects**, such as credit cards – disembedded from their original physical context (coinage)
- **processes**, such as the electronic transfer of money into and out of a bank account, and
- **people**, in two ways. First, in the sense where global communication between strangers is both possible and takes place in *indeterminate space* (a cyberspace chat room, for example), and second, in the sense of physical and cultural disembedding – the former in terms of *territoriality* and its associated meanings (how people define themselves in terms of national/global identities, for example), and the latter in relation to the various ways cultural hybrids (the mixing of different cultures to produce something new and different) develop out of the globalisation process.

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Theory and methods: These ideas can be given a *postmodern* twist by linking them to **Baudrillard's** (1998) concept of:

Simulacra ('representations that refer to other representations' – for example, a credit card is a *simulation* of coinage which, in turn, is a simulation of something like a piece of gold). Where disembedding takes place the 'origins of the original' are lost or concealed in time and space. In other words, the simulation has the same general status as whatever it is simulating, such that both are 'as real' as each other. Thus, a credit card payment is 'as real' as paying in cash;

similarly, a telephone call or an email is 'as real' as talking to someone in the flesh.

Disembedding has important consequences for a range of economic, political and cultural relationships, particularly in the context of what **Scholte** (2000) terms:

Deterritorialisation or **supraterritoriality** – something he relates to the argument that 'globalization entails a reconfiguration of geography, so that social space is no longer wholly mapped in terms of territorial places, territorial distances and territorial borders'. In other words, social interactions are no longer limited by notions of 'territory' (places that are fixed in time and space), an example here being the internet as a place where social interaction occurs in *indeterminate space*.

In addition, *deterritorialisation* also refers to the idea that *political and cultural identities* are no longer necessarily and intimately tied to physical spaces (such as towns, counties and whole countries); for example, one can be a Muslim in a Christian country or a British citizen permanently living in Spain. It also refers to the fact that, economically, capitalist forms of production, distribution and exchange (both manufacturing and services) operate on a global scale, cutting across national and international borders.

For **Scholte**, the significant point here is that the spread of 'supraterritorial connections' between societies, cultures and individuals 'brings to an end . . . "territorialism", a situation where social geography is entirely territorial. Although . . . territory still matters very much in our globalizing world, it no longer constitutes the whole of our geography'.



Growing it yourself: Embedded identities?

One way to think about embedding and disembedding is to link them to ideas about national identities:

- In small groups, decide how we can define 'national identity' (what, for example, are the cultural characteristics/indicators of this concept?).
- Identify the ways *your* national identity is embedded in notions of a territory (for example, does where you are born determine your national identity, and, if so, in what ways?).
- Have notions of national identity in contemporary societies become disembedded from ideas about territory, and, if so, in what ways?

A further aspect here, according to **Giddens** (1990), is 'the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa' – in other words, the processes of *disembedding* and *deterritorialisation* connect both nations and individuals in new and important ways; events on one side of the world can have significant – and unforeseen – consequences on the other side of the world. We can see this in terms of two examples: the *tsunami* that struck Indonesia on Boxing Day 2004 was an event that attracted worldwide publicity and aid – a local event with a

global economic, political and cultural significance – and in 2005 the price of oil in the West reached an all-time high, partly as a result of increased consumption in newly industrialising societies such as China.

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Theory and methods: The idea of global connectedness – and even relatively small events in one part of the globe triggering much larger events elsewhere in the world – is reflected in Lorenz's (1972) discussion of the 'butterfly effect' in the section on the nature of science.



Preparing the ground: Cultural, political and economic interrelationships

We can start to apply ideas about the impact of globalisation by identifying some of the economic, political and cultural interrelationships between societies.

Economic interrelationships

These are based around the idea of: **Trade**, involving the *production, distribution* and *exchange* of goods and services focused around manufacturing, financial services and, increasingly, knowledge industries.

A further dimension to the interrelationship between developed and undeveloped countries is:

Aid, something that may take a variety of economic forms, from loans, through development grants, to providing goods and services, and so forth.

We can outline how the general process of globalisation has impacted on – and in

many respects *changed* – the nature and extent of economic interrelationships in terms of:

Mobility, where we can note the increasingly global nature of stock markets and trading blocs – both *capital mobility* (companies and investments moving into and out of different countries as profitability and economic policy dictates) and *labour mobility* represent significant developments in economic interrelationships.

Transnational corporations are companies that, while *based* in a specific territory (such as Britain or the USA), *operate* in a range of countries and markets across national borders. Although TNCs are a feature of *modern society* (first established in countries like the USA in the nineteenth century), **Smith** and **Doyle** (2002) suggest that globalisation has increased their power and status in world economic terms.

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Stratification and differentiation:

Examples of economic globalisation involving TNCs are outlined in the section dealing with reasons for *changes in the class structure* – **Nike**, for example, 'is a global company that designs and markets footwear – but it owns no production facilities; rather, it contracts out the production of footwear across the world to smaller companies'.

Economic trading blocs, such as the European Union or the North and South American Trading Alliance, represent a further example of the economic interconnections between societies. In these instances, nation states develop political agreements and alliances that involve things like preferential trading privileges for member nations.

The development of the internet has complicated the nature of economic inter-relationships in the sense that an increasing amount of economic activity takes place in:

Virtual trading communities: That is, communities that have no physical contact, as such, but which are connected in cyberspace. These economic networks involve the distribution and exchange of *physical products* (such as books and electrical goods in the case of **Amazon**, the world's largest online company), *financial products, services* and *knowledge*. The implications for the future development of virtual trading communities are enormous, given the ability for companies (both large and small) to tap into a potentially global audience and market for their goods and services.

For example, one implication is the breakdown (through the types of globalising processes we have already noted – distancing, compression, disembedding and deterritorialisation) of distinctions between the local, national, international and global. We've seen, for example, how the process of:

Disembedding is both encouraged and accelerated by globalisation in areas like economic *exchange* (the development of credit cards, smart cards and the like). However, disembedding also occurs in terms of economic production and distribution. In highly developed countries, there has been a progressive *decline* in manufacturing – both *primary industrial production* (the extraction of raw materials like coal) and *secondary production* (things like car manufacture and shipbuilding, etc) and a consequent rise in service industries (such as finance and banking) and, in recent times, knowledge industries (such as computing). The production of goods hasn't stopped, of course

(people still want to buy these things); rather, manufacturing has shifted to less developed countries.

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Stratification and differentiation: Changes in global economic relationships can be related to changes in the class structure in modern societies.

Political interrelationships

These conventionally operate between nation states in terms of ideas like:

Trade: The development of transnational trading blocs (in North/South America, Asia and Europe, for example) involves some measure of political interrelationship. In the case of Europe, *economic* inter-relationships have developed alongside a range of *political* interrelationships – the European Union has an elected parliament, bureaucratic structure and single European currency (although member countries may opt out of specific parts of political agreements – the UK, for example, is not currently part of the single European currency).

On a global level, world trade agreements relating to the movement of goods, access to markets and the like provide some form of regulatory framework for economic activity. In some instances, these agreements override national law (as in the case of the European Union, for example, and the provision for the free movement of labour across national boundaries).

International law: Political relationships between societies also exist at the legal level, not just in terms of trade agreements (which can be legally enforced

and tested), but also in terms of areas like extradition treaties, cross-border policing (in the European Union, for example), membership of the United Nations and the like.

Military: How different countries relate to one another in military terms (through cooperation or antagonism, for example) also represents a political dimension to the interrelationship between societies.

Cultural interrelationships

On this level we can note how general cultural interrelationships are related to: **Economic** relationships that in some ways inform cultural connections and relationships, especially if we think about *culture industries* like television, film and print. In these areas reference is often made to the:

Cultural hegemony of Western society (and the USA in particular, post-Second World War, in the sense of the various ways this powerful country's cultural exports are received across the globe). Language is another area of cultural interrelationship, especially in terms of English representing a 'common cultural language' in many parts of the world.



Weeding the path

Held et al. (1999) note that simply because we can identify instances of one society (such as the USA) being dominant in the production and distribution of cultural products doesn't necessarily mean it is possible to 'read off in any simple way the impact of those sales on other cultures and identities'. However, we can think about how cultural relationships are changed (or

not, as the case may be) through the coming together of different cultural products, considered in terms of both:

- **material culture** – exposure to a range of cultural objects (such as food and clothing), and
- **non-material culture** – the ideas and meanings embodied in cultural objects (the various ways our experience of different cultural products changes both the way we live and, to some extent, our perception of other cultures).

We can consider these ideas in terms of two concepts (*diversity* and *homogenisation*).

Diversity

Cultural interrelationships relate to *cultural diversity* and *development* in, as **Lechner** (2001) notes, a range of ways:

- **Pluralisation:** Interactions between societies, through cultural products (such as film and television), the cultural influence of immigrants and the like can lead to the 'mixing of cultures in particular places and practices' – to create:
- **Cultural hybrids** – something new develops as the result of the meeting and mixing of different cultural ideas and behaviours.

For example, chicken tikka masala, according to the Food Service Intelligence (2001), is the most popular dish in the UK: 'Said to have originated between the 1950s and 1970s ... Legend has it one obstinate diner demanded gravy on tandoori chicken. A bemused chef responded by adding tomato soup and a pinch of spices, unwittingly partaking in an early example of *fusion cookery*.'



Chicken tikka masala



The potting shed

Chicken tikka masala (CTM) is an example of a *cultural hybrid*. Identify and briefly explain two further examples of cultural hybrids in the UK.

- **Contestation**, whereby the ‘spread of ideas and images provoke reactions and resistance’ within and between different cultural groups.
- **Glocalisation** (*sic*) – the meaning and impact of *global* cultural products (such as Hollywood films or McDonald’s restaurants) are interpreted and used differently in different *local* contexts. In India, for example, the traditional Hollywood musical has been reinterpreted to produce a new form (‘Bollywood’) specific to Indian culture.

- **Institutionalisation** operates on two levels. First, the cultural products of one society are accepted and incorporated wholesale – and largely unchanged – into the culture of another society. Second, the idea of cultural diversity itself – as something to be valued and encouraged – is ‘promoted through international organizations, movements and nation states’ (Lechner, 2001).

Homogenisation

Lechner cites a number of ways diversity can be *diminished*:

Lifestyles: The global reach of transnational corporations (such as Coca-Cola) creates a particular kind of ‘consumerist culture, in which standard commodities are promoted by global marketing campaigns’ to ‘create similar lifestyles’ – a form of *cultural hegemony* that Lechner calls ‘Coca-Colonisation’ (the idea that one culture is *colonised* by the cultural products and lifestyle of another culture). A related example is Ritzer’s (1996) concept of: **McDonaldisation:** This represents the idea that contemporary corporate cultural products are *standardised, homogenised* and *formulaic*; everyone who buys a McDonald’s hamburger, whether in London or Singapore, gets the same basic product made to the same standard formula. When this idea is applied to cultural relationships and experiences, the argument is that homogenisation occurs because *global cultural products* are designed:

- **efficiently**, using a limited range of themes around which products are created and recreated
- **rationally** – all aspects of the production

and consumption process are measured and evaluated to produce standard products in standard settings

- **predictably** – cultural products are designed to be safe and unthreatening: there is, to use **Beck's** (1992) idea, 'no risk' involved in buying and consuming a particular product – the consumer knows exactly what to expect *before* they buy it.

The consumption of cultural products is also related to:

Identity – the things we consume 'say something' about us and our status. If this is valid then corporations may be able to key into – or possibly create – *consumer identities* and *brand loyalties* that both increase profitability and homogenise cultural behaviours within and between societies.

Bryman (1999) suggests this idea involves the:

'**Disneyisation**' of cultural relationships, encompassing things like:

- **Theming** – the creation of 'consumption experiences' whereby people buy in to a general, standardised lifestyle.
- **De-differentiation** where consumers are locked in to a range of related products in ways that provide a seamless 'lifestyle experience' (a particular perfume, for example, is associated with a particular lifestyle, clothing, footwear and the like) – something closely related to:
- **Merchandising** – by consuming cultural products people take 'themed lifestyles' into their homes and social groups.

Discussion point: Homogeneity or diversity?

In small groups, using the following table as a template, choose a category, such as film (or add your own), and identify any common cultural products for your age group that you think conform to the idea of McDonaldisation and/or Disneyfication. Once you've done this, repeat the process – but this time identify cultural products that *don't* conform to McDonaldisation and/or Disneyfication.

| | Television | Music | Film | Magazines |
|-----------------|------------|--|---|-------------|
| McDonaldisation | Cartoons | Pop [bands are manufactured to appeal to a certain age and gender group] | Romantic comedies [follow standard themes and developments] | Heat FHM |
| Disneyfication | | | | |

- **Cultural imperialism:** a situation where a particular culture or lifestyle is held up as the ideal to which other cultures should aspire. Western lifestyles, values, customs and traditions, for example, may be introduced into non-Western societies and thus destroy traditional cultural lifestyles.



Weeding the path

Questions of cultural diversity and/or homogenisation frequently turn on:

- **Definitions:** ‘Diversity’, for example, is difficult to operationalise for a couple of reasons. First, its meaning is not simple and straightforward (how different does something have to be to count as diversity, for example), and, second, diversity (like homogenisation) is not necessarily an *either/or* condition (*either* cultural diversity exists *or* it doesn’t). It is possible for diversity to exist in some cultural relationships whereas others show the opposite – high levels of cultural homogenisation. In other words, diversity and homogenisation can *coexist* in the same *cultural space*.
- **Cultural homogenisation** – while we should not underestimate how global companies (like McDonald’s) influence cultural development, we shouldn’t *overstate* their influence. While McDonald’s may have restaurants across the world, it doesn’t necessarily follow that ‘all cultures are converging’ – mainly because *cultural production* and *reproduction* don’t work in a simple *behaviourist* way (if we consume similar, standardised, cultural products we consequently become identical

consumers). Cultural development can be both *filtered* and *changed* by the social contexts within which products are used by people in different situations.

Thus, although we might find instances of *cultural homogenisation* in different towns and cities across the world (as **Peace**, 2005 puts it, ‘If for instance, one was to find oneself in a high street in Sydney, Kuala Lumpur, Rio or Johannesburg we would find the same shops, selling the same products accompanied by the same background music’), we also find *diversity* in the same places – not just in the range of different shops, but also in terms of different products.



Digging deeper: Cultural, political and economic interrelationships

We can develop ideas about economic, political and cultural interrelationships by thinking about how these have been – or are potentially – changed by globalisation.

Economic interrelationships

Sporer (2000) suggests, ‘Globalisation is the latest stage in the permanent process of social change that started as industrialisation and modernisation in Europe but now is spreading globally’, and that, in economic terms, it ‘involves the process of converting separate national economies into an integrated world economy’. We can, in this respect, follow **McMichael’s** (2004) lead by noting the idea of:

Global commodity chains: In an increasingly globalised economic system, networks of production, distribution and exchange are linked across national

boundaries, and individual producers and consumers become locked into a global chain of economic events. The significance of this idea is not simply the various linkages involved (since trade across national boundaries can hardly be considered new), but the *network* of economic relationships that creates both:

- **Hierarchies** – whereby highly developed countries sit atop the global commodity chain, exploiting the fact that clothes or electrical goods can be manufactured using relatively cheap labour in developing countries, and
- **Dependencies:** Unequal economic relationships create a network of dependencies that is difficult to break – developing countries become a source of relatively cheap production whereas developed countries come to depend, in some respects, on the flow of (cheap) goods to maintain certain living standards. The nature of global networks, complexities and dependencies is illustrated, **McMichael** argues, by the fact that ‘the Japanese eat poultry fattened in Thailand with American corn, using chopsticks made with wood from Indonesian or Chilean forests. Canadians eat strawberries grown in Mexico with American fertiliser . . . The British and French eat green beans from Kenya, and cocoa from Ghana finds its way into Swiss chocolate’.

In this respect, **Held et al.** (1999) pinpoint three areas of economic globalisation and interrelationships:

- **Global trade**, involving the ‘globalization of production’, whereby products can be sourced from different places and

assembled in whatever country is able or willing to offer the most advantageous political and/or economic incentives.

- **Global finance:** The flow of global production and distribution requires an extensive network of financial arrangements whereby capital can be moved around quickly and easily. The development of global financial institutions (such as banks) is, like international trade, not a particularly new phenomenon, but the ease and speed by which money can be moved, tracked and managed have been increased by the development of computer technology and global networks. In addition, money has itself become a commodity traded on global markets as investors (and speculators) execute deals across global networks.



Weeding the path

The ability to speculate on the behaviour of stocks and shares is a form of gambling, albeit on a potentially massive scale. In 1995, for example, **Nick Leeson**, a 28-year-old stock market trader for Barings Bank, lost nearly *£1 billion* of his employer’s money in failed share dealings. When Barings was declared insolvent, 1200 people lost their jobs and **Leeson** served four years in prison.

- **Global products:** The opening up of *global marketplaces* means companies best positioned to take advantage of such developments (transnational corporations in particular) can sell products on a world stage. Corporations not only have access to markets and populations in different countries, they can also, as **Yip** (1995)



Nick Leeson being extradited to Singapore, where he was jailed for deception

argues, sell the *same product* (such as a car, computer game or film) across the globe with little or no alteration to the basic product.

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Stratification and differentiation: Ideas about global economic interrelationships link into ideas about global Fordism and flexible specialisation. Transnational corporations are also discussed in terms of modular consortiums and agile corporations.

Although business corporations have operated around the world since the nineteenth century, **Castells** (1997) argues that the way they operate ‘in a global context’ has changed – a new *form* of capitalism has developed, one related to older forms of capitalism, but sufficiently different to be considered in its own right. The key features of *globalised capitalism* are:

Information and knowledge: Whereas older forms of capitalism focused on the production of *things*, newer forms focus on knowledge, information and systems. This isn’t to say that companies no longer

produce things (like cars) or that information wasn’t significant in the past; rather, what we are seeing is a:

Reordering of economic production, with information being the *primary* product – something made possible by computer networks that traverse the globe (‘connectivity’). As **Smith and Doyle** (2002) put it, for developed societies ‘the balance between knowledge and resources has shifted so far towards the former that knowledge has become perhaps the most important factor determining living standards . . . Today’s most technologically advanced economies are truly knowledge-based’.



Weeding the path

Although there’s an agreement that *something* is changing in terms of global economic inter-relationships, not everyone agrees about what these changes *involve*. In basic terms, therefore, we can note three *general positions* in relation to *economic globalisation*:

- **Full** involves the changes we’ve just outlined, with globalisation considered the motor for a new phase of capitalist economic production, distribution and exchange (one with major consequences for the way economic interrelationships are formed and maintained).
- **Partial** or regional globalisation. The world, according to **Thompson** (2000), is divided into three major *regional economic blocs* (North and Central America, Europe and Asia), within which the processes we’ve described may be taking place. However, each of these regional blocs is effectively *closed* to competition

from the other – apart from a handful of global companies (although **Veseth** (1998) argues that **Nike** was the only truly global corporation in the twentieth century), most TNCs and nations trade predominantly and substantially within each bloc.

- **Mythical:** **Rugman** and **Hodgetts** (2000) note economic globalisation, as we've discussed, is often defined by 'the production and distribution of products and services of a homogeneous type and quality on a worldwide basis'. This, they argue, sees globalisation portrayed as encouraging the 'dominance of international business by giant, multinational enterprises (MNEs) selling uniform products from Cairo, Illinois to Cairo, Egypt and from Lima, Ohio to Lima, Peru'. **Rugman** (2001), however, argues that such economic globalisation is 'misunderstood – it does not, and has never, existed in terms of a single world market with free trade'.

His argument, backed by a range of *empirical data* relating to where and how businesses conduct international trade, both reinforces **Thompson's** argument and expands it by arguing that attempting to trade in 'globalised markets' does not make economic sense even for transnational corporations.

Political interrelationships

One of the main themes of globalisation theory, as **Sporer** (2000) notes, is the idea of the 'loss of power and authority of nation states', something echoed by **Smith** and **Doyle** (2002) when they note 'a decline in the power of national governments to direct and influence their economies'. This change

in the way nation states relate to one another has a number of significant features:

- **Economic:** The globalisation of trade (whether in terms of regional blocs or world systems) removes from national governments the ability to control major areas of economic policy in areas like:
 - **Employment**, where nations experience rising or declining levels of employment depending on how capital, labour and jobs move across national borders.
 - **Taxation** policies relating to businesses, especially transnational corporations. If business taxation is too high, 'capital flight' may occur – TNCs, for example, choose to locate and invest elsewhere. TNCs can also export profits, making it difficult for national governments to track what profit is being made and where.
 - **Investment:** In a global economic climate, where TNCs can potentially locate and relocate factories and businesses in the most favourable economic areas, there is increased pressure on governments to provide environments and packages to attract corporate investment.
- **Political:** Involvement in regional economic and political institutions (such as the European Union) further limits the decision-making powers of national governments, mainly because decisions are conditioned by things like international:
 - **agreements**, binding on member states and relating to areas like trading arrangements, levels of national debt, and so forth

- laws relating to, for example, the free movement of labour across national borders.



The potting shed

Identify and briefly explain one benefit and one drawback of the free movement of labour for the member states of the EU.



Weeding the path

Those who argue that economies are locked into a global financial system that limits the ability of national governments to act are conventionally seen as advocating:

Hyper-globalisation: Reich (1991) suggests that globalisation has created a world political, economic and cultural web that, as Veseth (1998) puts it, connects ‘... people and businesses without much attention to geography, government regulation, or anything else. High-tech, knowledge-intensive connections to the global web are the source of wealth and power in Reich’s world and a sort of global class system arises that is based on access to the web, much as an industrial class system based on access to capital appeared to Karl Marx’.

National governments, from this position, are ‘secondary players’ on the world stage – if they have a role at all. Ohmae (1995) suggests: ‘The modern nation-state itself – that artefact of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – has begun to crumble.’

The demise of the nation state (imminent

or otherwise) has, some argue, been overstated. Gray (2002) is sceptical about the idea that globalisation involves ‘the world becoming a true single market, in which nation-states have withered away ... supplanted by homeless multinational corporations’; he sees this – as do Hirst and Thompson (1996) when they refer to ‘the political impact of ‘globalization’ as ‘the pathology of over-diminished expectations’ – as ideological wishful thinking on the part of, in the main:

New Right/neoliberal theorists who argue, in broad terms, that *development* is related to the presence or absence of free economic markets. In other words, for countries to maintain their developed status they must adjust, politically, to the new demands of a globalised economy, while developing nations must be opened up to the economic benefits of free market economies. In this respect, the private sector is considered the motor of development – the way to achieve economic growth is through the adoption of free-market policies and initiatives that include things like private ownership of businesses, educational and welfare provision and the like. In these terms, a lack of development is caused by, among other things:

- **corrupt government** and political leadership in developing countries
- **government** economic intervention and ownership
- **state-controlled/financed** welfare systems.

Capitán and Lambie (1994) summarise neo-liberal development theories in terms of:

- **economic inequality** ‘as an important human incentive’



Growing it yourself: Roles and relationships

In small groups, identify and briefly explain examples of political roles and inter-relationships that exist between modern states in the twenty-first century.

| Role | Examples |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Military | Anti-terrorism? |
| Economic | Agreements/trading blocs |
| Environmental | Kyoto Agreement |
| Development | Aid |

- **non-intervention** by the state in economic markets ‘will maximise efficiency and economic well-being’
- **international trade** between developed and developing countries is ‘mutually beneficial’
- a **minimalist state** (in terms of welfare etc.).

* SYNOPSIS LINK

Crime and deviance: The basic theory behind New Right development thinking (rational choice, cost-benefit analyses and the like) can be applied to an understanding of crime.

Although *hyper-globalising* tendencies may, as **Veseth** (1998) argues, be over-exaggerated, this is not to say global economic developments have had no impact on political interrelationships; **Hirst** and **Thompson** (1996) suggest we should see nations as:

Pivotal institutions in terms of creating the stable political conditions under which trade and international development can continue. **Shaw** (1997), in this respect, argues we should not see nation states as being ‘in opposition’ to globalisation, since ‘globalisation does not undermine the state but involves the transformation of state forms’.

The main problem here, therefore, is one of interpretation – where nation states play an international role (such as Britain and the USA’s military involvement in countries like Iraq), do we interpret this as a changing and expanding set of political interrelationships between societies or merely the dying attempts of nation states to exert political influence in a globalised world?

Cultural interrelationships

Globalisation, as we've suggested, is frequently considered at the *economic level*, in terms of things like the growth in world trade, the development of transnational corporations and their respective impact on nations and political/cultural inter-relationships. However, if economic and political forms of globalisation are, at best, unsubstantiated and, at worst, as **Rugman** (2001) argues, *mythical*, cultural inter-relationships promise more fruitful ground for globalisation theorists, for a couple of reasons:

- **Cultural products** (such as films, radio and television) are not necessarily physical commodities – they can, for example, be easily transmitted across physical boundaries. This is not necessarily the case, of course, but digital cultural products are increasingly packaged and sold in this way.
- **The internet** is a potentially global medium for the transmission of digital products (although satellite and cable are also significant carriers of digital information).

Sklair (1999) suggests the study of cultural interrelationships, focused around the global spread of the *mass media*, is an important area for globalisation theorists because of the ability to *empirically* demonstrate something like the 'global diffusion and increasingly concentrated ownership and control of the electronic mass media, particularly television'. **Sklair** notes that even in relatively poor countries there has been a huge and rapid growth in television (and the cultural products/ideas it carries).

Cultural products, in this respect, have both substantial economic value and

political content – an idea we can briefly note in terms of:

Cultural imperialism: One argument about the relationship between politics and culture is that when we talk about something like the *globalisation of culture*, what we are actually talking about is the globalisation of *American* culture – the widespread export of US products, values and ideas around the globe. **Rice-Oxley** (2004) argues: 'America exports its culture on an unprecedented scale. From music to media, film to fast food, language to literature and sport, the American idea is spreading inexorably ... today's technology flings culture to every corner of the globe with blinding speed. If it took two millennia for Plato's *Republic* to reach North America, the latest hit from Justin Timberlake can be found in Greek (and Japanese) stores within days' (something that reflects back to our discussion of *cultural homogenisation*).



Weeding the path

One problem with notions of cultural imperialism and homogenisation is that the influence is assumed to be one-way – from the producer to the consumer. This model of *cultural domination* can be questioned on two levels:

- **Consumption:** Cultural consumers are assumed to accept passively whatever cultural influences are thrown their way, but consumers may, for example, actively interpret cultural influences, customising and filtering them through their own lives and lifestyles to create new, hybrid cultural forms.
- **Production:** Technological developments like the internet are changing the way

people relate to cultural influences in the sense that opportunities arise for *cultural production* as well as for consumption (the producer is the consumer and vice versa). This occurs in areas like chat rooms, blogs and the development of modifications ('*modding*') to computer games as well as through the exchange and sharing of online information (through photo albums, for example).

Although anecdotal evidence suggests some form of cultural homogenisation is at work (think, for example, about how American words and language use have found their way into everyday British language), there is little *empirical evidence* to support this argument. Even in the UK, where a common language arguably lowers the barriers to US cultural influence, it is debatable whether British culture – even among the young – is overly similar to US

cultures. There is also the question here of whether we can simply assume American cultural influences are homogeneous in themselves – the USA is, for example, a large, culturally diverse society.

Finally, we can note that in terms of cultural interrelationships, the ideas we've outlined suggest that tensions exist between two areas:

- **the local or particular** – characterised as showing high levels of cultural diversity, and
- **the global or universal**, characterised in terms of its homogeneity.

While we've suggested the two can be separated, at least in theoretical terms, we've also suggested there are points and spaces where the local and global meet, and **Robertson** (1992) expresses this in terms of a:

Dialectical relationship (which involves thinking about how both the local and the global interact – each both *influences* and is *influenced* by the other). In this respect, as **Sklair** (1999) suggests, globalisation at the cultural level involves understanding two processes:

- **The particularisation of universalism** – the idea that some forms of globalised cultural features are adapted and changed by particular (local) cultural behaviours (customised and changed for local consumption, for example).
- **The universalisation of particularism** – the idea that the features of local cultures (their uniqueness, individuality, and so forth) become a feature of globalised cultures. That is, rather than seeing the globalisation of culture as a homogenising process, we should see it in reverse –

Discussion point: Americanisation?

Thinking about your particular age group, identify some ways youth cultures have:

- 1 been influenced by American culture (think about music, fashion and the like)
- 2 adapted these cultural influences to produce new and different forms of culture.

As a class, discuss the extent to which you believe UK youth cultures are characterised by:

- cultural homogenisation
- cultural diversity.

globalisation involves the spread of diverse cultural beliefs and practices across the globe in ways that create new and diverse cultural forms.

Appadurai (1990) rejects the idea that cultural interrelationships flow ‘from the core to the periphery’ (globalised, homogeneous, cultural forms are picked up by individual cultures). Rather, we should see these interrelationships in terms of a variety of ‘scapes’ – imagined worlds that cut across territorial borders that can be connected in a variety of (electronic) ways:

- **Ethnoscaapes** that reflect the way people of different cultures physically interact.
- **Technoscaapes** that relate to the way different forms of technology (and its cultural adaptations and uses) interact.
- **Finanscaapes** that refer to the interplay of economic relationships and their effect on political and social cultures.
- **Mediascaapes** involving the flow of information across different societies and cultures.
- **Ideoscaapes** that refer to the way people interact in terms of the exchange of images and ideas.

In this way, he argues, local cultural concepts spread across national boundaries, both influencing and being influenced by the cultural ideas and relationships they encounter.

Moving on

Thus far we’ve looked at development and its associated processes – such as industrialisation and urbanisation – in fairly general terms. In the next section, however, we can look more specifically at the

development process in terms of strategic factors like the respective roles of aid, trade, corporations and international agencies.

4. The role of aid, trade, transnational corporations and international agencies in different strategies for development

As we’ve seen, industrialisation brings both potential *benefits* (in the shape of improved living standards) and potential *drawbacks* (in terms of environmental damage and destruction), and, despite the arguments involved, it is still arguably seen as the main way for societies to develop in the modern world. With this in mind, therefore, we can examine some of the main strategic routes to development currently in play around the world.



Preparing the ground: The role of aid

Before we examine the role of aid in the development process we need to think about how it is:

Defined – and we can follow the OECD (1995) lead by considering it in terms of:

- **Development assistance**, given to promote ‘economic development *and* social welfare’, involving:
 - **Grants** (non-repayable).
 - **Loans** (repayable) – although to count as *aid*, loans must have *favourable interest rates* (lower than the going market rate, for example) and must also have a *grant* element – the norm is

around 25% of the loan given as a grant, and

- **Non-monetary** assistance such as technological and military help, advice and training.
- **Development finance**, or aid in the form of *credit*, guaranteed by a developed nation, through which developing nations can establish trading links.

WARM UP: IMAGES OF AID

When you think about the idea of foreign aid, what kind of ideas and images fill your head?

What, for example, are your first impressions of this picture?



- Identify as many reasons as possible for and against the giving of aid by developed countries to developing countries.

Types of aid can, for the sake of theoretical clarity, be divided into two broad categories (*public* and *private*).

Public

Public (official) development assistance takes two main forms (direct or *bilateral* and indirect or *multilateral*).

Bilateral (direct) aid is given by one government to another, and its main purpose, as the American **Congressional Budget Office** (1997) puts it, is 'to encourage equitable and sustainable economic growth in developing countries'. The concept of *sustainable growth* is significant because it reflects the idea that *economic aid* should be directed towards the specific development needs of the receiving country in a way that will, in the long term, lead to the development of self-sustaining economic growth.

Other forms of aid, however, may have different objectives.

Military assistance, for example, can take a couple of basic forms:

- **Economic** – the provision of loans, grants and credit agreements – enables a developing country to purchase military hardware (from the country providing the assistance).
- **Political** – ranges from things like providing military advisors and trainers to a physical military presence in the developing country.

Humanitarian assistance includes:

- **Donations** made by a government for the alleviation of suffering (caused by war or natural disaster), usually – but not necessarily – in a developing country (many European governments, for example, offered humanitarian assistance to the USA following Hurricane Katrina in 2005 – the picture used in the *Warm-up* exercise was actually taken in New Orleans).
- **Physical aid** (food, clothing and the like) provided either directly or through non-

governmental organisations such as charities.



Weeding the path

Some forms of aid are called *tied aid* because *conditions* are attached by the donor country.

Tied by source, for example, means the aid can be used only to purchase specified goods and/or services from the donor country, while:

Tied by project means assistance can be used only for a specific purpose (such as the building of a road or hospital). Further conditions, such as the use of contractors from the donor country, may also be attached to this type of aid. **Boseley** (2006) cites a slightly different example when she notes how the USA has, since 2001, tied aid to a requirement that ‘any organisation applying for US funds sign an undertaking not to counsel women on abortion – other than advising against it – or provide abortion services’.



The potting shed

Identify and briefly explain one advantage and/or one disadvantage of tied aid to *both* the donor and receiving country.

Multilateral (indirect) aid involves assistance channelled to receiver countries through international agencies, such as:

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the:

The World Bank, both established in 1944. These are economic agencies whose primary development role is to lend money

at *concessional rates* to low-income countries (and at non-concessional rates to middle-income countries that find it difficult to raise loans in private markets). Certain political and economic conditions have to be met by the receiving country before assistance is given, and although these differ depending on specific circumstances, **Greenhill** (2004) argues: ‘The World Bank is still lending money to developing country governments on condition they adopt specific economic policies such as *privatisation*’ (whereby private companies must be allowed to develop/run industries like water, gas and electricity generation and supply).

The United Nations, through, for example, the *Development Programme*, currently (2006) operates in 166 countries, to ‘help develop the capacities required to achieve the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs)’; these, **Clemens et al.** (2004) note, represent ‘a set of quantitative, time-bound targets’ (as agreed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2000), for every country to attain by 2015.



Weeding the path

Although **Clemens et al.** doubt the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will be attained by every country by 2015, they argue that ‘development progress has been occurring at unprecedented levels over the past thirty or more years ... halving the number of people living in poverty will probably be met globally, but for most developing countries to achieve this at the national level, the growth rates required are at the bounds of historical precedent’.

In 1970 the major developed nations committed themselves to a target of contributing 0.7% of gross national income

Discussion point: The Millennium Development Goals

The eight targets (with an illustrative indicator included by way of example) are listed below.

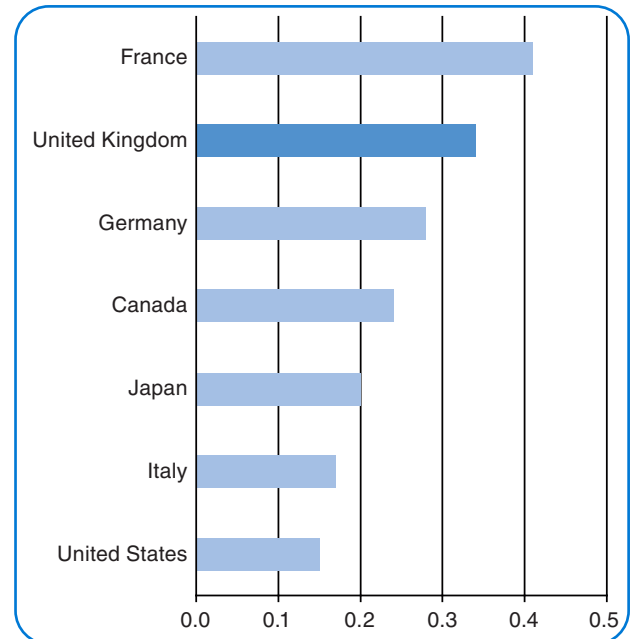
How many of these targets have already been met by the UK?

| Target | Key indicator |
|---|---|
| 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger | 1. Halve the number of people living on less than 60p a day |
| 2. Universal primary education | 2. Both boys and girls to complete primary school |
| 3. Promote gender equality | 3. End discrimination in primary and secondary schooling |
| 4. Reduce child mortality | 4. Reduce child mortality by two-thirds |
| 5. Improve maternal health | 5. Reduce by 75% the number of women who die in childbirth |
| 6. Combat HIV, malaria and other diseases | 6. Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV |
| 7. Ensure environmental sustainability | 7. Halve the number without access to safe drinking water |
| 8. Development as a global partnership | 8. Develop a fair and open trading system, providing debt relief or working for democracy |

to official development assistance. However, the number regularly meeting this target is small (only Netherlands and Luxemburg achieved it in 2003). None of the largest world economies had achieved this target by 2006.

Private

Private (or unofficial) development assistance is mainly related to NGOs – charities like Oxfam, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, *Médecins sans Frontières*, and so forth. The assistance provided to developing countries ranges from specific, targeted project work to acting as channels for both government and privately donated humanitarian aid.



Official Development Assistance: % of GNI, 2003
(Source: *Social Trends 35*, 2005)



Digging deeper: The purpose of aid

The broad categories of aid we've outlined only scratch the surface in terms of the range of types and forms of development and humanitarian assistance available. They are, however, sufficient for our general needs since we're more concerned with thinking about the general *purpose* of aid. In this respect we can outline some arguments about the nature of development assistance, while simultaneously relating these, where necessary, to the types of development theory we encountered in the first section. Thus, in general terms, aid may represent a crucial element for:

Modernisation theorists in helping developing societies achieve 'take-off'. Similarly, for:

Structural change theorists, carefully targeted economic aid may represent an important way for developing societies to stimulate the industrialisation process, allowing such societies to make the transition from agricultural to industrial society. For:

World system perspectives aid may provide one of the ways *periphery* and *semi-peripheral* societies develop their industrial and knowledge base in order to play a part in the overall development of global economic markets.

More generally, if the overall objective is to encourage developing countries to industrialise (and, in the long run, to reduce their dependence on developed countries), aid represents a way of 'easing the pain' of rapid industrialisation, while also bringing developing countries into the overall world political infrastructure – for example, aid gives donor countries a certain level of political leverage that can be used to ensure

environmental targets are met. Some further arguments in favour of aid include:

- **Reconstruction:** American aid played a significant part in the post-Second World War reconstruction of Europe (under the *Marshall Plan*).
- **Disease:** Aid has contributed to both the reduction of polio and the eradication of smallpox.
- **Humanitarian aid**, in areas like Africa and South East Asia, has lessened the effects of *natural disasters*. In recent years, NGOs have also worked towards reducing the impact of drought and famine by helping indigenous populations to improve their farming methods and sanitation, increase their overall levels of education and the like.

Public development is also instrumental in helping to develop economic infrastructures (sanitation, waste disposal, and so on) in situations where private companies are unwilling to intervene because opportunities for profit are limited.

While these are significant ideas – and key to *official* rationales and objectives of development aid put forward by donor countries – not everyone sees aid as either unequivocally beneficial to the recipient or necessarily *altruistic* on behalf of the donor. In this respect, criticism of aid programmes falls into three main categories (*exploitation*, *inefficiency* and *ineffectiveness*).

Exploitation

Dependency theorists argue development assistance contributes to the:

- **Client status** of receiving states:
Developing nations can be locked into a

cycle of economic development that serves to benefit companies from the donor country – as the **US Agency for International Development** (2005) puts it: ‘The principal beneficiary of America’s foreign assistance programs has always been the United States . . . 80% of Agency contracts and grants go directly to American firms.’

- **Ideological domination** of receiving states: According to the **Agency**, for example, ‘US foreign assistance has always had the twofold purpose of furthering America’s foreign policy interests in expanding democracy and free markets while improving the lives of the citizens of the developing world.’ In this respect, US development objectives since 1961, according to the **US General Accounting Office** (2002), include things like:
 - integrating developing countries into the international (capitalist) economic system
 - assisting the development of the private sector in developing countries
 - using private and voluntary organisations to implement development activities
 - eliminating illicit narcotics production
 - demonstrating US ideas and practices in education and medicine.

Inefficiency

New Right/market liberal approaches to development argue that ‘trade rather than

aid’ represents the most efficient and cost-effective solution to the problems of development, dependency and industrialisation. Although some forms of (mainly humanitarian) aid may be useful, the only *long-term* development solution is incorporation into the global market economy. This involves, for example, transnational companies operating freely in developing countries to develop and exploit natural resources (such as coal, oil and gas), provide employment and develop indigenous economic infrastructures.



Weeding the path

New Right approaches to aid mirror their general approach to welfare, education and health in developed countries – private companies, rather than the state, should provide these services. **Looney** (2005), however, while noting *neoliberal theories* of aid and development were ‘in vogue around 1990’, argues this position is no longer the ‘dominant global development paradigm’, although he does suggest the US-led reconstruction of countries like Iraq and Afghanistan is based around neoliberal economic and political ideas about the role of both private companies and the state in reconstruction work.

Ineffectiveness

The question here is whether aid is an effective way to promote political and economic development, not only in terms of achieving desired goals, but also in terms of whether aid actually creates more problems than it solves for the receiving society, relating to, for example:

- **Political environments:** Collier and Dollar (2002) argue the effectiveness of aid in stimulating economic growth is related to political environments and policies – developing nations that have, for example, stable political *superstructures*, benefit from aid, while those where the political situation is unstable do not.



Weeding the path

This begs the question of whether aid could and should be used to assist the development of stable political structures in the first place. However, Easterly et al. (2003) found no significant empirical relationship ‘between the amount of aid and economic growth of the recipient countries’. Similarly, Clemens et al. (2004) argue the relationship between aid and economic growth is empirically weak.

- **Waste:** Aid is sometimes used for schemes and activities that bring no long-term economic or cultural benefits – where, for example, the receiving country lacks the ability to develop projects once they have been completed. Building roads to develop communication systems has little or no benefit if a country doesn’t have the capacity to maintain those roads.
- **Harm:** Bauer (1971) argues, from a *neoliberal perspective*, that where aid is given directly to governments a major historical outcome has been an increase in the political power of ruling elites, using aid to consolidate their power base through things like *patronage* and *corruption*.

Discussion point: Ineffective aid?

Browne (2006) argues: ‘Poor Africans are condemned to live in poverty so long as they and their governments are encouraged to blame the West for all their problems, rather than confronting the real causes of poor governance, corruption and poor education.’

Do you agree or disagree with this statement (and why)?



Preparing the ground: The role of trade

All (Western) theories of development focus on the significance of trade as an integral aspect of the development process, usually in the context of a debate over *industrialisation* and its political, economic and cultural significance. Arguments surface, however, over the precise role of trade, the nature of trading relationships within and between nations and how these affect the development process – something further complicated by processes like ‘globalised trading markets’ and the changing relationship between trading partners.

We can begin to disentangle some of the complexities involved by focusing, initially, on the concept of:

Sustainable development: We can conceptualise this idea in terms of the objective of development being the promotion of long-term, self-sustaining, economic stability and progression, both in terms of developing nations and also in the

wider global context of the relationship between developed and developing nations.

We can illustrate the role of trade as part of a strategy for *sustainable development* by outlining two opposed approaches: *neoliberal* (free market) and *state interventionist*.

Neo-liberal approaches

These, as we've suggested, argue that the route to long-term sustainable development lies through free-market trading policies between nations, involving a number of fundamental principles:

Trade liberalisation involves opening national markets to international competition. This gives developing countries access to lucrative markets in the developed world and vice versa; corporations from the developed world gain access to markets and resources in the developing world. This, it is argued, brings significant benefits in terms of access to both capital investment and newer forms of technology.

Protectionism: If competition is the most effective way to encourage development (through things like the need to develop new and cost-effective ways of producing goods and providing services), the developed world must abandon protectionist policies (such as prohibitive tariffs on goods from developing nations and state subsidies to inefficient industries) and allow developing countries access to developed markets. In Europe, for example, the *Common Agricultural Policy*, which provides subsidies, guaranteed prices and markets for agricultural products, is seen as a barrier to trade liberalisation.

Non-interventionist state: The state ownership and control of businesses and industries distorts the workings of free

markets by giving some companies an unfair competitive edge (through access to cheap loans and the like). Private companies, disciplined by the need to be competitive or face going out of business, are the essential motor of economic development.

Light regulation: Although the state plays a role in outlawing and policing unfair competitive practices, it should not over-regulate business behaviour. Instead, business discipline comes from the need to be competitive in free markets.

Low taxation: People should be allowed to keep as much as possible of their earned income and wealth since this provides both individual incentives and structural incentives for businesses to invest, innovate and the like.



Weeding the path

The free-market approach does have arguments in its favour, not the least being that China – a nation with the highest level of economic growth in the world over the past few years – has adopted a range of free-market initiatives. **Morrison** (2000) notes the gradual *privatisation* of many formerly state-owned enterprises (SOEs) – around one-third of industrial production remains state-owned in this communist country – and the development of ‘private enterprise zones’ with lower rates of business taxation, less stringent labour laws, and so on. Similarly, the relative success of the ‘Asian Tiger’ economies may be attributable to the adoption of free-market policies (although as **Borrego** (1995) argues, the role of *cultural factors*, such as religious values, is an alternative explanation). Critics of this approach, however, note that:

Market restrictions generally apply in developed countries (as well as between developing countries), and a range of protectionist policies exists even in countries like the USA.

Free trade policies tend to give developed nations and transnational corporations significant economic advantages; they use both their greater political influence and economic strength to overpower indigenous industrial development. Where TNCs have access to markets, resources and labour in developing countries, their behaviour may be exploitative rather than developmental.

The state: Governments have a role to play in ensuring the self-interested activities of businesses are regulated to limit their impact on the environment. Similarly, the ability to prohibit uncompetitive practices, corruption and the development of *cartels* (where a group of companies, for example, secretly agrees not to compete against each other to maintain high prices) are all areas where the state has a significant role.

Interventionist approaches

These generally argue a *balance* between state involvement in economic activity and the behaviour of private corporations is *necessary* in the context of global economic activity. Action at government level is seen as the way the economic power of developed nations can be both *channelled* and *restricted* to provide a coherent development strategy that takes into account and balances the needs of all nations. As **Justino** (2001) puts it, a significant interventionist role of the state is as ‘conflict manager’.

Interventionist approaches, like their free-market counterpart, also focus on the importance of:

Trade: The ability of developing nations to participate equally in a global trading system is the cornerstone of any development strategy, for two main reasons. First, international trade encourages the development of indigenous industry and sustained self-development; it represents the means through which the world’s poorest countries can be weaned away from aid dependence. Second, trade represents a standard development model followed by the world’s richest nations; it has, in other words, been shown to work as a development strategy.



Weeding the path

Although these ideas have a basic similarity to their free-market counterparts (the significance of trade and the stigma of aid), the main *epistemological break* between the two approaches can be found in two areas:

- **The role of the state:** For interventionists, governments have a significant political and economic role to play in any development strategy, in areas like:
 - **Trade agreements** that give developing countries access to developed markets.
 - **Regulation** of economic activity to encourage competitive business practices.
 - **Aid** to encourage both economic diversity, by helping developing countries move away from monocultural production (over-dependence on the production of a single product like coffee or bananas that can make it vulnerable to price collapses on world markets), and the development of indigenous industries.

Economic self-interest: Nations start from different development points – something that makes it difficult for newly industrialising nations to gain a competitive foothold in established world markets, since developed nations have a certain self-interest in protecting their own markets and industries from the effects of international competition. This, for interventionists, makes the idea of ‘free markets’ in world trade something of an ideological illusion, since developed nations develop various (self-interested) ways to limit global competition (through trade agreements, economic quotas for goods from developing countries, taxation policies, subsidies, etc.).

Interventionist approaches argue, therefore, that international economic inequalities will not disappear without state intervention, both as a means of ‘kick-starting’ economic development and regulating the (potentially anti-competitive) activities of TNCs.



Weeding the path

Dependency theorists have been critical of free-market approaches in terms of the idea that it is possible (and desirable) to leave economic development (and, by implication, political and cultural development) to both the ‘hidden hand’ of market forces and the activities of large business corporations. As evidence of the problems created they point to various experiments in free-market liberalisations in South America in the 1990s – countries like Chile, Brazil and Argentina were encouraged to follow the neoliberal economic policies (popularly characterised as *monetarism*) of writers like **Friedman** (1962) and **von Hayek** (1973), with, dependency theorists argue,

problematic economic and social outcomes (in terms of development, poverty and social unrest).

Both free-market and interventionist policies may also, as **Short** (2001) notes, act more in the interests of developed countries and TNCs than those of developing nations: ‘Trade liberalisation can harm the low-skilled and hit the poor disproportionately hard . . . and where privatization is undertaken it needs to be properly managed to ensure access of services to the poorest.’

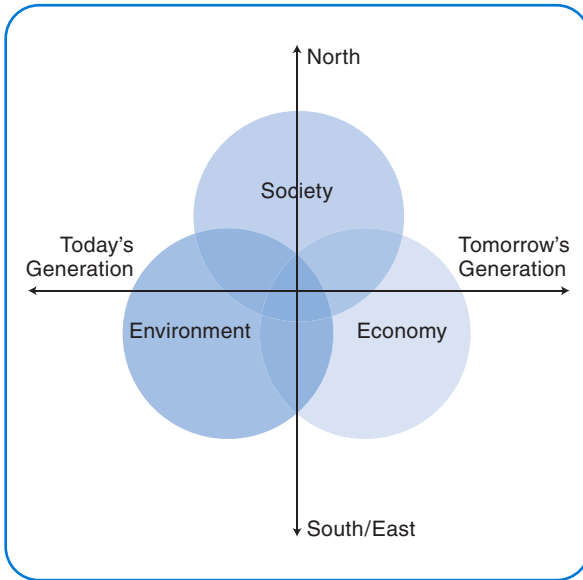


Digging deeper: The role of trade

Although arguments surround the precise and most effective role of trade in global development strategies, more recent thinking locates it within a second meaning of:

Sustainable development – one that reflects a general recognition among developed nations that trade and/or aid need to be located within a developmental context that, as the **Brundtland Commission** (1987) put it, ‘meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’. What this involves, according to the **European Commission** (2005), is the ability to reconcile ‘economic development, social cohesion, north/south equity and protection of the environment’. In this respect, sustainable development – in both developed and developing societies – involves what **von Stokar** and **Steinemann** (2004) term a:

Three-dimensional approach, involving ‘economic, social and environmental processes’, plus an indication of both time and region.



Sustainable development: The 3D Approach
(Source: von Stokar and Steinemann, 2004)

As von Stokar and Steinemann suggest, different regions and generations face different but interlinked problems. For developing countries in the South, for

example, the overriding need is to develop trade while protecting the environment. For the developed North, meanwhile, strong economies and some measure of environmental protection already exist. The main problem in this region is the adjustment to *cultural lifestyles* (society) that both encourage better environmental protection (producing less waste, using fuel-efficient transport and the like) that will benefit *future generations* and offer greater opportunities for economic development in the South.

As von Stokar and Steinemann (2004) put it: ‘Sustainable development calls for long-term structural change in economic and social systems, with the aim of reducing the consumption of the environment and resources to a permanently affordable level, while maintaining economic output potential and social cohesion.’

Discussion point: Aid or trade?

In two groups, use the following table as a template to identify the advantages and disadvantages of aid and trade (one group should cover developed nations, the other developing nations).

As a class, discuss whether or not you believe aid, trade or a combination of both provides the best strategy for development.

| | Aid | | Trade | |
|------------------|------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| | Advantages | Disadvantages | Advantages | Disadvantages |
| Economic | | | | |
| Political | | | | |
| Cultural | | | | |



Preparing the ground: The role of international agencies

Although international agencies are too numerous – and diverse – to examine individually here, we can illustrate their general role in development strategies in terms of their broadly economic, political or cultural focus.

Economic agencies

The two most significant international agencies we can examine are arguably the:

International Monetary Fund (IMF): In 2006 this had a global membership of around 180 countries, each paying a subscription based on its relative economic size (the USA is the largest net contributor). In general terms, the IMF plays two main roles in the world economic system:

- **Lending** to members to address and correct economic problems.
- **Crisis prevention** that involves providing advice, as well as funding, to encourage members to adopt ‘sound economic policies’.

In this respect the IMF functions to promote the:

- **balanced development** of global trade, and the
- **stability** of world exchange rates.
- In other words, its main (*official*) objective is to promote an orderly system of world trade within which member nations can develop their economic capabilities.

World Bank: This has the primary objectives of *poverty reduction* and the

improvement of living standards among its member states. To this end the Bank provides:

- **Educational services** relating to both economic (such as debt management, repayment and relief) and cultural concerns (such as health issues).
- **Economic services**, such as ‘low-interest loans, interest-free credit and grants’ to developing countries for education, health and infrastructure/communications development.

Political agencies

Although agencies like the IMF and World Bank play an *implicit political role* in world affairs, through the provision of economic advice, there are international agencies with a more explicit political role. These include:

The United Nations (UN), an organisation with a complex membership structure covering a range of:

- **Political institutions**, such as the General Assembly (a forum for political debate), the Security Council, which focuses on issues relating to international peace and security, and the International Court of Justice.
- **Economic institutions**, focused on development issues (such as international trade, finance and sustainable development).
- **Cultural institutions** that relate to social issues associated with development – areas like gender discrimination and health issues, for example.

The UN’s *official aims* include international:

- **peace and security**

- **cooperation** to resolve economic, political and cultural problems
- **dispute resolution**
- **promotion** of human rights and freedoms.

We can also note, by way of illustration, another major international political institution:

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) was established in 1995 with the primary aim of regulating world trade, something it attempts to achieve through:

- **negotiation** at government level
- **agreements**
- **rules**
- **dispute settlement.**

It attempts, in other words, to establish and enforce *political rules* relating to international trade.

Cultural agencies

A range of international agencies focuses on areas of social development, the majority of which have been established and funded through the UN. Examples here include the Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, the Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Non-government organisations, as we've suggested, represent a form of international agency (one frequently referred to as *civil society organisations* (CSOs), to reflect the separation between this type of agency and the state), although one important difference between NGOs and agencies like the IMF, UN or WTO is that they represent, as **Malena** (1995) notes, 'private

organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services or undertake community development'. This general definition, as **Shah** (2005) argues, covers a wide range of different groups, with different forms of funding, organisation and objectives, from 'corporate-funded think tanks', through 'community groups and development and research organizations', to charities and relief agencies.

Although a defining characteristic of NGOs is their economic and political independence from government, the diversity of these organisations makes them difficult to classify in any meaningful way; some, for example, work openly with national governments, but many others do not, and yet others, **Schuh** (2005) argues, work *covertly* with national governments to promote certain economic and political aims.

In the past 50 years NGOs have increased rapidly in type and number – the World Bank estimates there are upwards of 30,000 NGOs operating in developed countries – and **Robbins** (2005) suggests a number of reasons for this increase:

- **Communications:** New forms of communication (such as the internet) have made it easier for NGOs to create international communities of like-minded individuals and organisations.
- **Public awareness** of development issues is much greater now, as the mass media, for example, publicise humanitarian issues.
- **Ideological developments:** Changes to the way national governments view economic and political development have resulted

in a transfer of resources away from state-sponsored initiatives and assistance towards NGOs, partly because of their:

- **Responsiveness** to development problems. Many NGOs have developed networks *within* developing countries that allow them to respond quickly to issues and direct assistance to where it is immediately needed.



Weeding the path

A further dimension here is an *ideological shift* towards *neoliberal* ideas about the relationship between, for example, aid and trade as development strategies – this has involved a shift away from *bilateral* forms of assistance (seen as being ineffective, economically destabilising and open to corruption) and towards greater private (NGO) involvement.



Digging deeper: The role of international agencies

The political and economic roles of some international agencies have, in recent times, become a matter for debate and dispute; in particular, the focus has been on how such agencies *interpret* their roles as part of a general development strategy, an idea we can illustrate using the example of:

International debt: The development role of agencies like the IMF and World Bank has come under the critical spotlight in terms of the idea that such agencies have imposed a particular – and highly partial – model of economic reform (*monetarism*) on developing countries as a condition of both aid and trade. A classic illustration is the ‘debt crisis’ among developing nations that arose in the 1980s (beginning with Mexico

announcing, in 1982, that it was unable to meet its debt repayments). The World Bank’s response was the:

Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), designed to bring developing economies into line with developed nations and, by so doing, stimulate economic recovery. The programme focused on two strategies: powering economic growth through the private sector and encouraging foreign investment through high rates of interest. Structural economic adjustments in developing countries were encouraged by tying aid and debt repayment to a country’s willingness to adopt a range of political and economic measures related to *neoliberal free-market* principles. **Hong** (2000) notes that these measures included:

- **deregulation** of private industry and ending restrictions on foreign investment
- **privatisation** of state-owned industries and services
- **currency devaluation** (that increased the costs of domestic production and goods)
- **cutting government expenditure** on *social spending* (areas like health and education), food subsidies and the like
- **lower corporate taxation**
- **export-led strategic growth** that involved producing goods for foreign markets (to increase national income). This resulted, **Hong** argues, in agricultural changes that abandoned crop diversity for domestic consumption in favour of producing cash crops, such as coffee and cotton, that could be sold in developed markets.

The overall result of the SAP strategy, according to **Hong**, was that developing nations suffered:

- **Increased poverty.**
- **Corruption:** Hawley (2000) argues: 'Western businesses pay huge amounts of money in bribes to win friends, influence and contracts ... conservatively estimated to run to £50 billion a year – roughly the amount the UN believes is needed to eradicate global poverty.' Hanlon (2004) argues that corruption flourishes in developing countries precisely because of the 'economic liberalisation policies required of Southern countries by Northern donors'.
- **Deteriorating social conditions,** including the 'collapse of both preventive and curative care due to the lack of medical equipment, supplies, poor working conditions and low pay of medical personnel'.
- **Altered ecosystems:** The environmental impact of changes in land use and the introduction of *monoculture* farming (the widespread growing of a single crop) have resulted in more intensive farming methods, the increased use of pesticides and herbicides and the introduction of genetically modified (GM) crops. Illegal logging in areas like the Amazon Basin has resulted in *deforestation*, land deterioration and increased carbon dioxide emissions from burning woodland.
- **Social dislocation and unrest:** Hanlon (2005) argues: 'The World Bank stresses the free market, small government, and fiscal austerity' that, in countries like Sierra Leone have contributed to – if not caused – social unrest. He argues, for example, that cuts to education budgets meant many young people received no schooling, leading to both social

grievances and social exclusion, two contributing factors, he claims, to civil war during the 1990s.



Weeding the path

Although initiatives such as the SAP have raised questions about the strategic role of international agencies, Dalmiya and Schultink (2003) argue that agencies like the World Bank and WHO have 'played a significant role in' helping to raise nutritional standards and combat disease in developing countries. A couple of more recent initiatives are also worth noting.

Debt relief: In 2005 the G8 summit (a meeting of the finance ministers of the United States, Canada, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia) agreed to write off the debts of 18 countries (at a cost of around £22 billion), saving them around £1 billion in interest payments each year. A proposal currently (2006) exists to extend debt relief to nine more countries.

International Finance Initiative (IFI): Britain's proposal to raise around £27 billion in extra financial assistance for developing countries by selling government bonds on world capital markets has, thus far, been rejected by both the USA and Japan (France has proposed an alternative plan, involving an international aviation tax to raise further aid funds).



Preparing the ground: The role of transnational corporations

TNCs play an important role in world trade and, while it's difficult to measure their overall size and revenues with any great precision, both Raghavan (1996) and Gray

Comparing nation states and TNCs

In terms of size (measured by gross domestic product for nations and revenue for TNCs), Wal-Mart, the US supermarket chain, ranks 35th in world economic terms (with greater revenues than countries like Ireland).

| 5 largest nations | 5 largest TNCs | Wal-Mart larger than: |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. USA | 35. Wal-Mart | Switzerland |
| 2. China | 36. BP | Portugal |
| 3. Japan | 37. Exxon Mobil | Chile |
| 4. India | 39. Royal Dutch/Shell | Ireland |
| 5. Germany | 45. General Motors | Luxembourg |
| | | Nicaragua |

Sources: TNCs: Fortune Magazine (2005)/Nations: World Factbook (2005)

(1999) estimate that they account for around one-third of *total* world economic output.

Anderson and Cavanagh (2000) give a flavour of the immense size and economic scope of TNCs when they note:

- **Economies:** In terms of revenue, of the 100 largest economies in the world 51 are TNCs.
- **Sales:** The top 200 TNCs account for around 25% of the world's *daily* economic activity.
- **Trade:** Around 30% of world trade involves 'economic transactions among various units of the *same corporation*'.

The strategic role of TNCs in relation to economic development has attracted a range of criticism, mainly focused on the *negative impact* their presence and behaviour has had on both world trade and economic development. **ActionAid (2005)** identifies 'six reasons to regulate global food corporations':

- **Abuse of market power** that involves

forcing down prices paid to producers in developing countries.

- **Profiteering:** Despite forcing down prices for producers of, for example, coffee, rice and tea, (Western) consumers do not pay lower retail prices.
- **Marginalisation:** Producers who fail to comply with the economic terms laid down by corporations are 'forced out of the supply chain' – their produce remains unsold.
- **Human rights and the environment:** In developing countries TNCs 'operate in a "regulatory void" where they can weaken labour, environmental and public health laws'. **ActionAid** argues that TNCs 'behave more responsibly in countries with tighter regulation'.
- **Corporate social responsibility (CSR)** refers to 'voluntary efforts by companies to improve their social and environmental performance'. **ActionAid**, however, argues that such forms of self-regulation are ineffective, unworkable

and rarely observed in developing countries.

- **Social harm:** It is difficult, if not impossible, for the poorest sections of the global economy to seek redress for harms caused by the activities of TNCs. Weak national laws in developing countries and the difficulties of applying international laws contribute to this sense of injustice.



The potting shed

Identify and briefly explain two problems governments in developing countries might face when trying to regulate the behaviour of TNCs.



Digging deeper: The role of transnational corporations

Given **Madeley's** (2003) conclusion that TNCs have 'used their money, size and power to influence international negotiations and taken full advantage of the move towards privatisation to influence the policies of governments . . . they have especially used their power to cause hardship for millions of the poor in developing countries', you might be forgiven for thinking TNCs *simply* occupy a hugely destructive strategic position in the global economy. This, however, may not necessarily be the case.

Aisbett (2003) argues that although in the public consciousness 'benefit to transnational corporations . . . implies loss to everyone else, particularly the most poor and marginalized groups', this is not necessarily borne out by the empirical evidence. She

does, however, suggest that the various economic benefits of international trade are not always shared equitably between TNCs and the countries in which they operate – but this, it can be argued, is more a matter for national governments, international law and consumer behaviour in developed countries than an inevitable consequence of capitalist corporate behaviour.

Benefits

In this respect, we can note a number of benefits to developing countries that derive from TNC activities.

Trade and investment: These can be generally related to both growth and poverty reduction and, more specifically as **Contreras** (1987) argues, to benefits like:

- **Employment and income increases.**
- **Educational development:** Corporations need local workers with knowledge and skills.
- **Capital income** that develops from 'rents, dividends and other capital income for shareholders'. Indirectly, capital incomes also increase through the development of supplier and service industries linked to the primary economic activities of TNCs.
- **Taxation:** Increased levels of government income (for infrastructure development, welfare, health and educational services) result from economic activity stimulated by TNCs.

Technological developments, whose specific benefits, according to **Contreras**, include:

- **Regional development**, whereby economically isolated and underdeveloped regions can realise their productive capabilities.
- **Industrial growth**, as technological

developments provide a 'short cut' to economic development.

- **Technology transfer** that gives increased access to knowledge and skills.

International markets: Through TNCs, developing countries gain access to markets for domestic produce from which, ordinarily, they may be excluded. The technological benefits of TNC activity also include the ability to compete successfully in such markets. This, in turn, brings both foreign exchange and investment into host countries.

Breaking the cycle: The involvement of TNCs provides the 'industrial and technological spark' that modernisation and free-market theorists see as essential to escape from subsistence agriculture and poverty.

Consumption benefits: Western consumers benefit from the supply of goods from developing nations.

In general, **Contreras** (1987) argues, 'Transnational corporations have had a decisive influence in the development of Africa, Latin America and Asia ... particularly in those countries where rapid economic growth and industrialization have high priority and where sophisticated technology and massive capital investments are needed.'



Weeding the path

The overall argument about the role of TNCs in any development strategy is that their undoubted economic power has to be *regulated* – and since developing nations find this difficult, regulation has to come from both developed countries and international agencies. In other words, if TNCs engage in

exploitative economic and political behaviour it falls mainly on developed countries to ensure trade is fair and equitable. The regulation and oversight of TNCs therefore, needs to be included as part of a wider regulatory and behavioural framework involving aid and trade.

Moving on

In the final section we can apply some of the ideas we've discussed in this section to a number of different aspects of development (such as health, education and employment).

5. Employment, education, health, demographic change and gender as aspects of development

In this final section the focus is on a range of *quantifiable* aspects of development that outlines and explores a number of substantive developmental differences (in relation to areas like health, education and employment) between nations.



Preparing the ground: Development and demographic change

We can begin this section with the idea of: **Demographic change**, something that involves a statistical analysis of the *structure* of a population, in terms of *variables* like *geographic distribution*, levels of *disease*, *birth and death rates*, *age and sex distributions*, and so forth. In other words, it involves understanding populations in terms of *objective, quantifiable* characteristics and,

WARM-UP: THINKING ABOUT DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

In small groups, use the following table to identify and explain some of the ways our society has changed demographically.

How have the following changed and what has been the social impact of such changes?

Geographic distribution of the population

Diseases

Birth and death rates

Age structure

Gender relationships

using a *comparative analysis* of differences within and between populations, it allows us to build up a picture of demographic difference and, most importantly, *change*.



Weeding the path

The ability to establish statistical patterns and regularities in demographic data is significant because if we can demonstrate regular demographic differences across both:

- **time** – the historical analysis of change *within* a society, and
- **space** – considered in terms of a comparison *between* different societies,

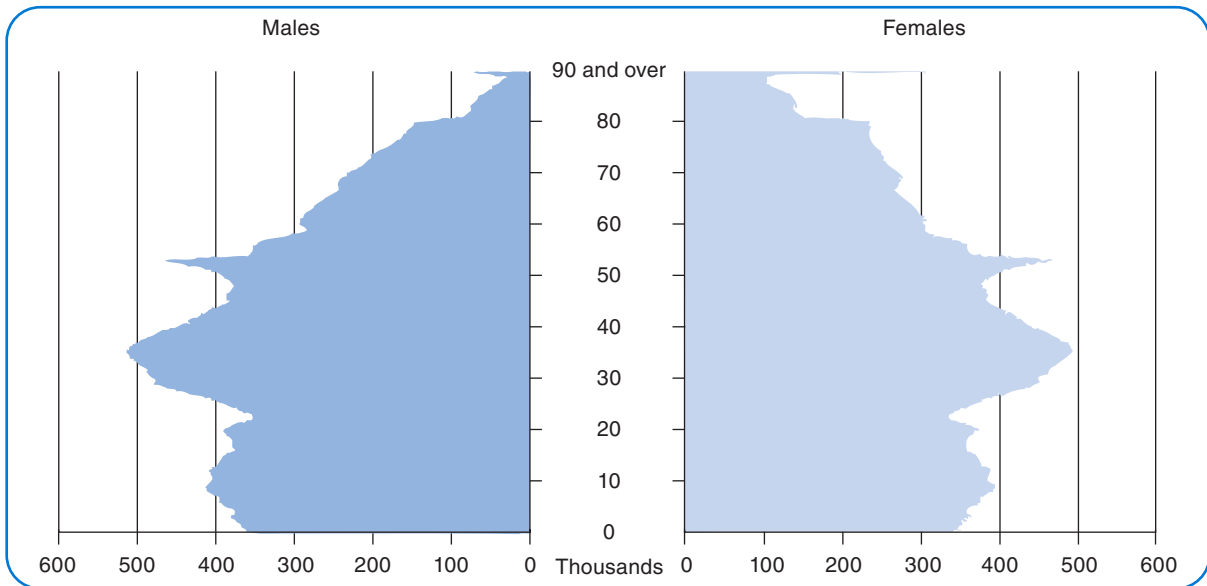
this will demonstrate the *empirical validity* of development itself (as a real process with consequences for human behaviour).

Demographic difference

On the principle that we need to understand demographic differences *before* we can explain both their causality and significance, we can outline some broad features of developed societies in terms of: **Age and sex structures:** The population structure of developed nations (as reflected in the UK population *age–sex pyramid* – see opposite) has a number of classic features.

Slow population growth: This type of age–sex pyramid reflects a steady population growth, something the **US Population Reference Bureau** (2006) links to development: ‘Pyramids where the proportions of the population are fairly evenly distributed among all age groups are representative of many highly industrialized societies.’ This general shape is indicative of:

- **Birth rates** generally falling: It also tells us that average family size and fertility rates are falling and suggests that average



UK Age-Sex Population Pyramid, 2000
(Source: Matheson and Babb, 2002)

child and infant mortality rates are relatively low (more children survive into adulthood and old age).

- **Death rates** falling (or not rising) and average life expectancy increasing (as shown by the number of people aged 90+).

Total fertility rates (TFR) are defined by the OECD as ‘the average number of babies born to women during their reproductive years’. For a population to *replace itself*, an annual TFR of 2.1 is needed.

Selected total fertility rates (TFR)

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| More developed countries | 1.6 |
| Less developed countries | 3.2 |
| Europe | 1.5 |
| United States | 2.0 |
| Asia | 2.7 |
| India | 3.2 |
| China | 1.8 |

Source: d’Addio and d’Ercole (OECD, 2005)



The potting shed

The TFR for *developed nations* is indicative of both an *ageing population* (an increasing proportion of the elderly in the population) and a fall in the overall population size, while for *developing nations* the opposite is true – population increase and a younger demographic profile. One exception is China. Identify and briefly explain one reason for this.



The potting shed

Identify and briefly explain one reason for the ‘population bulge’ in the UK pyramid around the 35–55 age group (a similar bulge is found in countries like Germany and the USA).

| Migrants residing in major regions 1990–2000 (millions) | | |
|---|------|------|
| Region | 1990 | 2000 |
| More developed regions | 82 | 104 |
| Less developed regions | 72 | 71 |
| Least developed regions | 11 | 10 |

Source: UN International Migration Report, 2002

Migration is a further demographic factor that links to population change, in terms of developed nations generally experiencing higher levels of *net inward migration* (more people enter the country to live and work than leave).

In the case of the UK, **Summerfield** and **Babb** (2005) note that ‘since 1983 there has generally been net migration into the UK’ – something that explains the discrepancy between a TFR *lower* than required for zero population growth (the number being born exactly matching the number dying) and the fact the UK population is increasing (56 million in 1971, for example, and 60.5 million in 2005).

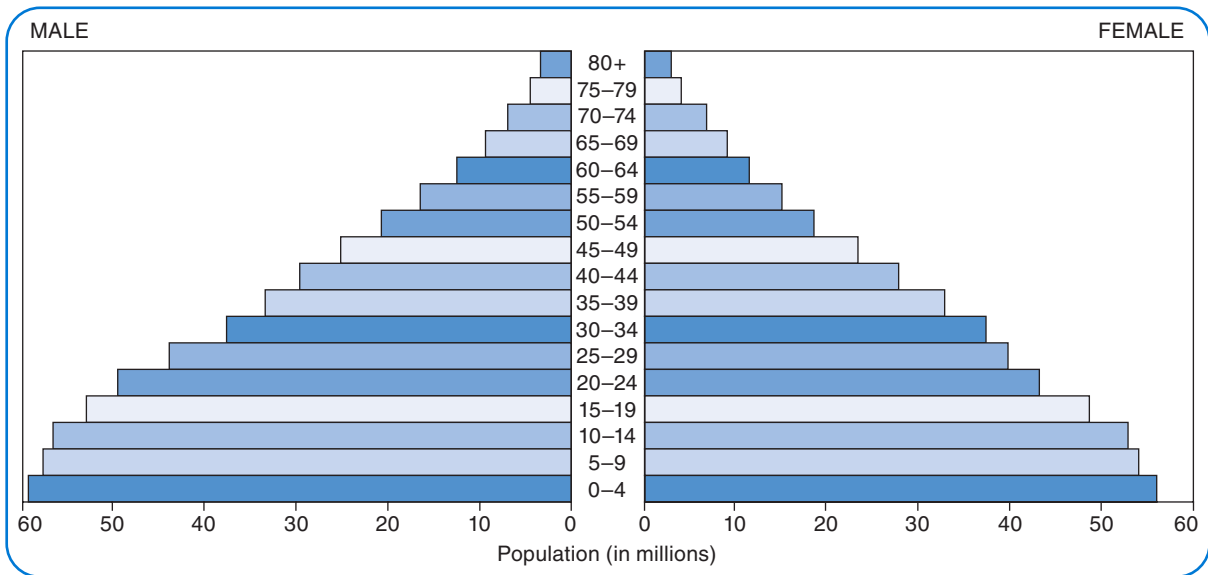
A significant pattern, linked as we’ve seen to both *industrialisation* and *urbanisation*, is the migration of people towards towns and cities. Population movements are, however, dynamic; **Summerfield** and **Babb** report a net population *loss* of 100,000+ from London in 2003, with the majority (around 60%) moving to the East and South-East – within relatively easy commuting distance of the capital.

We can contrast the above with some broad demographic features of *developing nations*.

Age and sex structures: The population structure, as reflected in the example of the India age–sex pyramid – see page 255), is significantly different in terms of both its overall shape (a classic pyramid) and characteristics.

Rapid population growth: This population shape is indicative of a young population:

- **Birth rates**, for example, are generally much higher than in developed nations. Although this is no guarantee, in *absolute* terms, of an expanding population, fertility rates (as we’ve seen) and average family size are generally higher in developing nations.
- **Death rates:** Average life expectancy in developing countries is lower, for a combination of reasons (disease, lower living standards, poorer working conditions and the like). Child and infant mortality rates are also much higher (as is the number of women dying during childbirth). However, high levels of childbirth represent a classic pattern of ‘adaptation to poverty’ – the birth rate rises to compensate for anticipated higher child and infant mortality rates.



India Age-Sex Population Pyramid, 2000
(Source: US Census Bureau, 2005)



Weeding the path

One way of testing possible differences between the population structure of developed and developing nations is to use a:

Historical comparison of the same society – in other words, to examine the historical age–sex pyramid for currently developed nations. Although the precise national data we need is unavailable, we can look at an *area* of the UK which shows a similar age–sex pyramid to present-day population demographics in developing countries (see the figure on page 256).

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Theory and methods: How would you assess the reliability and validity of this data?

Migration: Developing regions in the modern world generally experience higher levels of *net outward migration* (more people

leave the country to live and work). In addition, the majority of the population live in rural rather than urban areas. See the table of net migration flows on page 256.

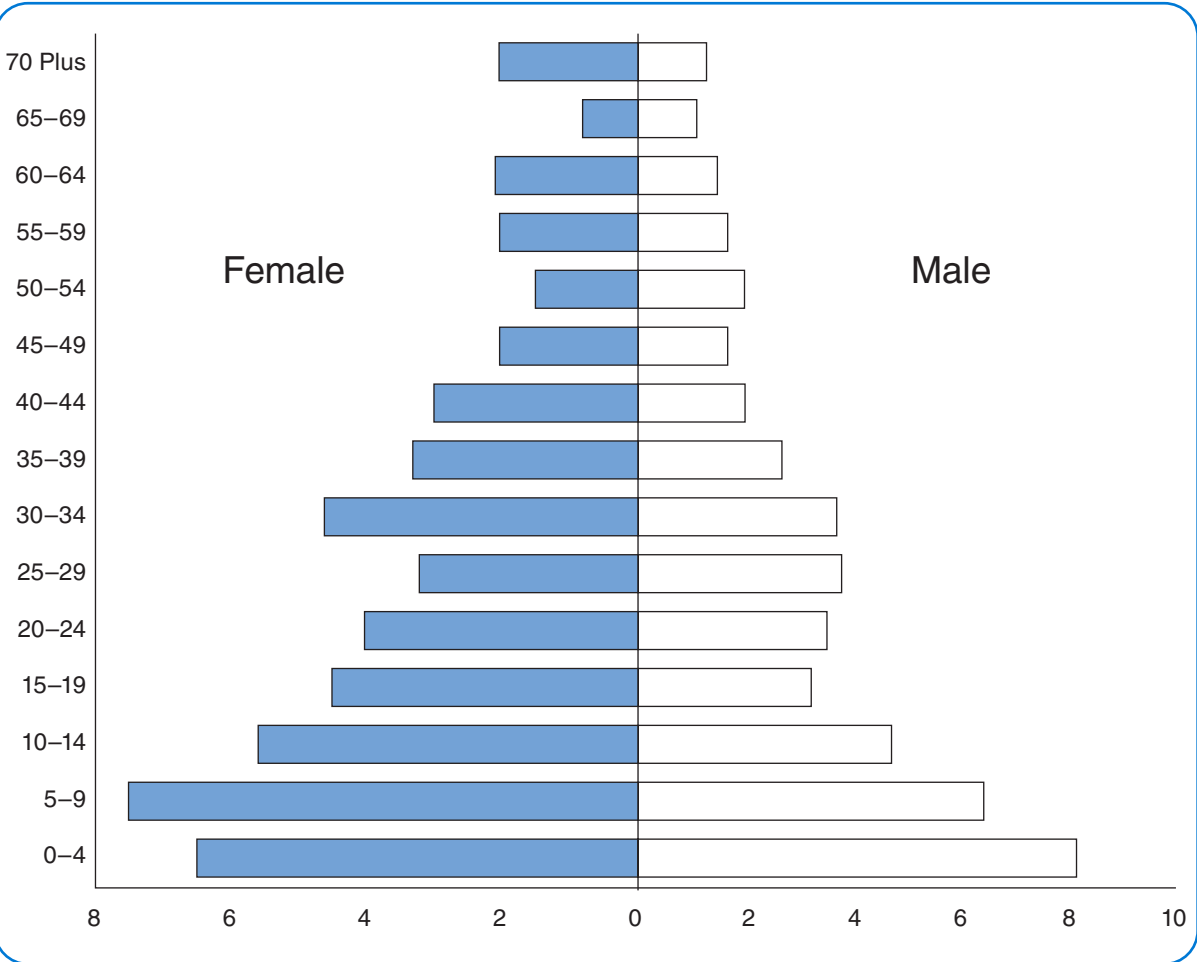


Digging deeper: Aspects of development

We can dig a little deeper by examining aspects of development that link into concepts of demographic change.

Health

Health and ill-health can be linked to a range of demographic factors, and, while it's tempting to see illness in terms of *chance factors* (the idea that illness may strike anybody, anywhere, at any time), this is not the complete story – ill-health can be *quantitatively* and *qualitatively correlated* with a range of structural factors closely related to economic development, ranging from extremes of wealth and poverty to lifestyle factors and choices.



Age-Sex Pyramid for Stoke-upon-Trent (UK), 1701
 (Source: Gatley, 2001)

| Net migration flows: selected regions 1995–2000 | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Region | Average annual net flow of migrants |
| North America | 1,394,000 |
| Europe | 769,000 |
| Africa | -447,000 |
| Asia | -1,311,000 |

Source: UN International Migration Report, 2002



Growing it yourself: Applying theories of development to demographic change

Divide the class into four groups. Each group should choose one of the following:

- modernisation theory
- dependency theory
- world system analysis
- neoliberal market theory.

Identify and apply the main features of each theory to an understanding of demographic change. (How, for example, does each interpret and explain the significance of demographic change?)

Each group should present its analysis to the other groups.

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Stratification and differentiation: Social differences in health and ill-health can be related to the concept of *life chances*.

To locate health and ill-health specifically within a development context we initially need to establish two things:

- **Structural relationships:** Robbins (2005) argues that ‘the fact each historical period has its characteristic illnesses clearly reveals that how we live . . . largely defines the kinds and frequencies of diseases to which human beings are susceptible’. In other words, the association between lifestyles and health can be demonstrated empirically. For example, some forms of illness (such as lung diseases like asbestosis and silicosis) can be related to industrial processes, while others (such as obesity leading to heart disease) can be related to *post-industrial* consumption patterns.

- **Risk:** Ill-health has two main dimensions:
 - **Individual:** This relates to the idea that anyone can potentially fall victim to disease and ill-health.
 - **Social:** The fact that ill-health is *not* randomly distributed across and within populations (the chances of contracting typhoid, for example, increase under conditions of poor sanitation) means we have to take account of social factors that impact on levels of health within and across developing and developed nations.

The idea that risk involves the relationship between both *social factors* (like different chances of exposure to disease) and *individual factors* (like lifestyle choices) can be applied to an understanding of ill-health in both the developing and developed worlds.

The developing world

One obvious relationship here is with ill-health and:

Poverty: **Braveman and Gruskin** (2003) note universally ‘strong and pervasive links between poverty and health ... For centuries, powerful associations have been noted between health and an absolute lack of economic resources’. This, in turn, is linked to different levels of:

Health spending in developing and developed nations. This occurs on two levels:

- **Individual levels** of personal spending on health care: The **British Medical Association** (2005) notes: ‘Roughly 1.2 billion people survive on less than 60p a day and have access to little or no healthcare ... Poverty also causes an increased susceptibility to disease through malnutrition and lack of access to life-saving treatment.’
- **Cultural levels** of societal spending: The **World Health Organization** (2003) reports that although Africa ‘accounts for about 25% of the global burden of

disease’, it involves ‘only about 2% of global health spending’.

Government health spending is also a significant factor in health care, given that a large proportion relates to:

Public infrastructure – the ownership or financing of things like hospital buildings and equipment, the employment of doctors, nurses, administrators, and so on. As the **OECD** (2005) notes: ‘The public sector is the main source of health funding in all OECD countries, except for the United States, Mexico and Korea.’



Weeding the path

The figures in the table below hide wide spending disparities within each category.

Smith et al. (2006) note that the US average yearly health spend in 2004 was £5300 (four times the average for HICs). Within specific countries, variables like *class* and *gender* also distort average spending (the wealthy, for example, spend more on health care than the poor, in both developing *and* developed countries).

| Yearly health spending per capita (£GB) | | |
|---|--------|------------|
| Level of development | Total | Government |
| Least developed countries [LDCs] | 7.70 | 4.20 |
| Other low income countries [OLICs] | 17.50 | 9.10 |
| Lower middle income countries [LMICs] | 65.10 | 35.7 |
| Upper middle income countries [UMICs] | 168.70 | 87.50 |
| High income countries [HICs] | 1,330 | 945 |

Source: Mathews (2001)

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Theory and methods: When we think about health spending we need to keep in mind issues of:

- **Reliability:** ‘Average spending’, for example, hides widespread differences *within* societies and may also be defined differently in different countries (for example, spending on vitamins, supplements, cosmetic surgery and the like in developed countries all contribute to health spending).
- **Validity:** There is no *absolute* relationship between health spending and health. The USA, for example, spends most on health, but is not necessarily ‘healthier’ than other developed countries. A significant proportion of spending may go on expensive technology designed to treat relatively small numbers. This isn’t to say that levels of health spending are insignificant, but rather that there may be diminishing investment returns. For example, some forms of spending (on sanitation, for example, or preventive medicine) produce significant improvements in overall health levels, while other forms do not.

Living conditions/standards can increase or decrease the risk of ill-health. World Health Organization (2003) research shows that communicable diseases (such as measles or HIV/AIDS) ‘represent seven out of the ten major causes of child deaths’ in developing countries. In other areas, such as child and infant mortality rates, lower standards of living contribute to the fact that, as Haub and Cornelius (2000) note, infant mortality rates in Japan run at 3.5 per year, compared with 116 in Ethiopia.

Robbins (2005) notes the impact HIV/AIDS has had on both the populations

and economies of developing countries – he terms it ‘the signature disease of the latter quarter of the twentieth century, serving as a marker for the increasing disparities in wealth between core and periphery ... 98% of deaths from communicable disease (16.3 million a year) occur in the periphery ... infectious disease is responsible for 42% of all deaths [in developing countries], compared to 1% in industrial countries’.



Weeding the path

The US Population Reference Bureau (2005) argues that in both the developing world and, to a lesser degree, the developed world, ‘Poverty is both a cause and an outcome of disease’; that is, the poor suffer more from disease, while those who suffer from disease generally suffer higher levels of poverty (through both an inability to work and a lack of state-supported welfare systems) than those who do not.

Discussion point: Causes of health

In small groups, identify as many causes of health *and* ill-health as you can (ranging from structural factors like poverty to lifestyle choices relating to diet) and then consider the following:

Are concepts of health and ill-health related to social factors or can illness be explained as a random condition that can strike at any time?

The developed world

While disease and ill-health are not, of course, confined to developing countries,

there is a range of quantitative and qualitative health differences between developing and developed nations. These include:

- higher levels of health care spending (both private and public)
- greater access to care and medical provision
- highly trained medical staff
- greater knowledge of disease transmission
- higher levels of sanitation and clean water
- higher levels of nutrition and better balanced diets.

In addition we can note differences in:

- **Types of disease:** As the **British Medical Association** (2005) notes: 'Poverty . . . is intertwined with major communicable diseases including TB and malaria.'
- **Effect:** We've noted, for example, that a communicable disease like measles kills very few children in developed countries, partly because of *immunisation programmes* (the recent rise in measles-related deaths in the UK, following a decline in the number of children being immunised, supports this idea). HIV/AIDS, although affecting large numbers in developed nations, has not had the same devastating impact as in Central Africa, for example, where it has caused an overall decline in life expectancy; **WHO** (2005) statistics also show that while 2.4 million have died from AIDS-related illnesses, European deaths number around 12,000.

Another way of looking at health differences is to think in terms of what **Gardner et al.** (2004) term:

Consumption diseases: Certain forms of ill-health are related to people's consumption *practices* and, in developed societies especially, *choices*. Where consumption is generally much higher in developed countries, it follows that certain types of ill-health are both unique (in their type and effect) or more prevalent. **Freund** and **Martin** (2005) argue that 'contemporary capitalism' has created:

Hyper-consumption, an important feature of which is:

Overeating – not just in terms of the personal consumption of food, but also in terms of how food is processed. **Meadows** (1999) notes that Americans consume '700 kilos of grain per person per year', most of which is fed to pigs and chickens to produce meat. She also notes (2000) that nearly 40% of the world grain crop is fed to animals.

Her argument is that 'contemporary capitalism with its hyperintensive modes of consumption . . . contributes to unhealthy environments and people'. In particular, according to the **WHO** (2003):

Obesity 'has reached epidemic proportions globally, with more than 1 billion adults overweight – at least 300 million of them clinically obese . . . Obesity and overweight pose a major risk for chronic diseases, including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension and stroke, and certain forms of cancer'.



Weeding the path

Over-consumption in developed nations is linked to under-consumption in developing nations, not just in terms of food and diet,



Growing it yourself: Applying theories of development to health

Divide the class into four groups. Each group should choose one of the following:

- modernisation theory
- dependency theory
- world system analysis
- neoliberal market theory.

Identify and apply the main features of each theory to an understanding of health. (How, for example, does each interpret and explain the significance of health?)

Each group should present its analysis to the class for discussion.

but also in terms of areas like developed nations recruiting doctors and nurses from developing nations.

Employment

If, as we've suggested, poverty is a major fact in ill-health in developing countries and developed countries suffer from problems associated with over-consumption, a related aspect of development we can examine is:

Employment, mainly because work is a major source of income that influences both lifestyles and life chances.



Weeding the path

Although the **International Labour Office** (2003) argues that 'employment is the way out of (absolute) poverty' in developing nations, this is not necessarily the case, either in terms of absolute poverty (common in developing nations) or relative poverty. What is more important here is whether work provides a:

Living wage that enables individuals and families to exist above any notional poverty line. The **International Labour Organization**

(2005) notes that 'in 1997 around 25% of the employed labour force in developing countries were working poor'. In addition, it notes (2006) that half the world's workers 'did not earn enough to lift themselves and their families above the \$2 a day poverty line – just as many as ten years ago. Among these working poor, 520 million lived with their families . . . on less than \$1 a day'.

In terms of general employment patterns and trends, we can briefly examine some major areas of difference between developing and developed nations.

Types: Global employment patterns are becoming increasingly complex under the influence of economic globalisation. For most of the twentieth century, for example, one of the major areas of difference has been the distinction between:

- **Industrialised**, developed nations, where the majority of employment has been in manufacturing industry (both *primary*, in terms of extractive industries such as coal mining, and *secondary*, in terms of areas like car production), with a growing service sector throughout this period, and

- **Non-industrialised**, developing nations where the main source of employment has been agriculture (and, in the case of the least developed nations, subsistence farming).

In the latter part of the twentieth century changing economic conditions in the developed world have seen a gradual switch from manufacturing towards service and knowledge-based employment that has led to a couple of significant developments. First, changing employment patterns in developed nations have seen an increasing number of women entering the full-time workforce. Second, manufacturing that was once the staple form of employment for developed nations has increasingly moved to middle-income developing nations. In this respect, the impact of globalised economic processes on employment patterns and trends across the globe has, for **Polaski** (2004), crystallised around two major areas:

Global labour market supply: There is 'currently a global surplus of workers', with China, for example, having around 200 million unemployed or underemployed workers (to put this into context, the UK currently has a *total* employed workforce of around 30 million).

Integrated labour markets involve seeing labour markets in global (*integrated*) rather than national (*segmented*) terms. Where there was once only competition *within* nations for work, now there is competition *between* nations for labour. The globalisation of labour markets relates to:

- **Employment emigration:** This involves workers in *different nations* competing for a limited number of jobs – a process called 'off-shoring'; work that was once done in a developed nation (such as call-

centre monitoring or financial services) is moved to a developing nation (such as India) where employment regulations are weaker, benefits and wages lower and governments offer a range of incentives for the relocation of jobs. At present this is generally occurring between highly developed and lesser developed nations (those, like India, with the economic, political and cultural infrastructure to compete for service and knowledge-based work).

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Stratification and differentiation: The changing nature of employment can be related to changes in the class structure in developed nations.

- **Labour mobility:** This occurs in two ways: labour movements largely between developed nations (such as increasingly occurs in the EU) and the recruitment of labour from developing countries to fill gaps in the employment situations of developed nations. Although this may involve work at the lower end of the economic spectrum (immigrants doing work the indigenous labour force doesn't want to perform, for example), it also involves work in the middle and upper employment ranges (such as doctors from developing countries working in the UK Health Service).
- **Unemployment** in lesser developed countries, resulting from the economic practices of developed nations. For example, **Polaski** notes farmers in developing countries find it impossible to compete in world markets because of 'agricultural subsidies to high-income



Growing it yourself: Applying theories of development to employment

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Each group should present its analysis to the other groups.

farmers in the United States and Europe’.



Weeding the path

Labour mobility between nations, as **Ghose** (2000) argues, is restricted by a range of political, economic and cultural factors: ‘Outside the United States, the share of migrant workers in the labour force showed generally insignificant growth and actually declined in several countries. More importantly, annual immigration flows were declining’. Given the current world labour surplus, developed nations are able to ‘pick and choose’ the labour they require from developing nations, something that **Ghose** argues contributes to a:

‘**Brain drain**’, whereby ‘the average skill level of the migrants from developing to industrialised countries tends to be much higher than that of the population of their home countries’. This, in turn, alters the balance of:

Human capital in both developed and developing nations, in favour of the former.

Barro and Lee (1994) consider human capital an ‘integral aspect of economic growth’, the loss of which seriously hinders development prospects.

Overall, the development company **GTZ** (2004) argues: ‘Increasing numbers . . . in developing countries are sliding into poverty because of economic and social conditions – a situation characterized by:

- lack of economic competitiveness
- unemployment
- unstable financial systems
- lack of access to economic resources such as capital, education, land, and information.’

Education

Peet and Hartwick (1999) suggest that ‘Development theories differ according to the political positions of their adherents . . . their place and time of construction . . . and their scientific orientation’, and while all development theories refer, in some way, to education in the development process they

generally offer different interpretations of the significance of its role.

Modernisation theories, for example, generally view education as an integral and broadly functional aspect of the development process. For **Rostow** (1960), basic literacy and numeracy in early industrialisation (the ‘pre-conditions for take-off’ phase) are functional requirements, whereas the ‘take-off’ stage requires a more highly educated general population if economic development is to be sustained and expanded.



Weeding the path

A classic example here is UK development from the late nineteenth century, when we start to see the emergence of a state-sponsored mass education system, to the present where a government aim is to have 50% of the workforce educated to undergraduate level.

Neo-modernisation theories focus on the social aspects of economic development, in terms of:

Human capital formation and education: **Fonseca** (2001) points to the work of **Schultz** (1960) and his emphasis on ‘education and training as pre-requisites of growth’. More recently, **Fonseca** notes a move away from linking education specifically to economic growth and towards seeing it in terms of its potential contribution to a wider range of social environmental concerns (such as health education).

* SYNOPTIC LINK

Stratification and differentiation: These ideas can be located in wider debates about

embodied capitals (**Gershuny, 2002a**) and their relationship to human capital and life chances (**Gershuny, 2002b**).

Neoliberal theories: Although education systems are fundamental to development and economic growth, the focus here is on the role of ‘rational economic actors’ within a market-based, private-sector-led social system. Educational development is considered an *automatic* consequence of economic growth in that, to maximise their economic potential, individuals act in their own ‘best interests’, and this means that to compete in international markets people appreciate the need for personal educational development. A classic example here might be India, where, as the Labour Party’s **National Policy Forum** (2003) noted, ‘... its increasingly well-educated, English-speaking workforce is becoming a significant competitor’.



Weeding the path

Tooley’s (2005) study of ‘low-income areas’ in India, Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya found that ‘private, unaided schools’, when compared with government schools, generally had better:

- pupil-teacher ratios
- teacher commitment and satisfaction
- facilities
- educational achievement.

Tooley concludes that the ‘private unaided sector is ... a dynamic demonstration of how the entrepreneurial talents of people in Africa and India can forcefully contribute to the improvement of education, even for the poor’.

Dependency theories focus on education as a *cultural institution* – part of, for Marxists, the *ideological superstructure* of capitalist societies. In this respect, while education *per se* is viewed as something valuable and desirable, their general issues are with the organisation, content and focus of educational development. In particular, building on concepts of *cultural capital*, *hegemony* and *imperialism*, **Noah and Eckstein** (1988) argue that education in (developing) capitalist societies reflects the interests, needs and preoccupations of the core/centre economies of developed nations that dominate world trade.



The potting shed

Identify and briefly explain one way education in developing countries 'may reflect the interests' of the developed world.



Weeding the path

It's important to keep in mind a couple of general problems with the kind of broad characterisations we've just made:

- **Positions change and develop:** Classical modernisation theory is, for example, different to neo-modernisation. They share the same basic premises, but involve different emphases and interpretations.
- **Empirical exceptions:** The broader the generalisation involved, the more likely that exceptions to the general rule occur. For example, although it is *broadly true*

that developing nations are either *pre-literate* (in the sense that the vast majority of the population have little or no general literacy) or *semi-literate* (people have a basic level of literacy), whereas developed nations exhibit high levels of literacy (a large proportion of university undergraduates in the general population, for example), there are exceptions. **Zachariah** (1998) notes that, by 1951, in Kerala (a state in India), 'nearly half the population ... were literate. By 1991, Kerala was a 100% literate state'. The cultural reasons for this included 'the importance given to education in Kerala culture' and 'the efforts of European missionaries, who finding Kerala already had a high proportion of Christians, turned their attention to education and health'.

Although theoretical positions are important for understanding the *general role* of education in the development process, it's useful to look more closely at some of the ways education potentially contributes to development, in terms of areas like gender relationships, health and employment. **Psacharopoulos and Patrinos** (2002) argue that education represents an 'important economic asset' for both individuals and nations, and **Archer** (2006) identifies various 'practical reasons' for government educational investment:

- **Participation** in decision-making processes, in both the *private* and *public* spheres, is increased, something particularly important for gendered involvement; female participation in community life, for example, increases by level of education.

- **Health:** Educational participation is strongly correlated with a decline in infant mortality and improved child health. In addition, child and adult educational programmes play a part in both responding to and reducing ‘the spread of HIV/AIDS’. **The Global Campaign for Education** (2004), for example, argues: ‘If all children received a complete primary education, the economic impact of HIV/AIDS could be greatly reduced and around 700,000 cases of HIV in young adults could be prevented each year.’ In addition, HIV/AIDS ‘is spreading fastest among young women (aged 15–24), not only because their physiology puts them at risk but also because they have little access to knowledge, economic resources and decision-making power’.
- **Education:** **Smith and Haddad** (2001) note that ‘young women with a primary education are twice as likely to stay safe from AIDS’. They also link education to the ‘empowerment of families to break the cycle of poverty’ – female earnings, for example are ‘10–20% higher for every year of schooling completed’. In addition, ‘educating women is the single most powerful weapon against malnutrition – even more effective than improving food supply’.
- **Economic development:** **Cameron and Cameron** (2006) argue child and adult education (the latter in terms of literacy) produces significant *micro* (individual) and *macro* (structural) economic benefits. In terms of the former, ‘people who had completed literacy courses tended to be more confident and more willing to take initiatives in developing their livelihoods’. In this respect, **Archer** argues that educational provision represents both a safety net for AIDS orphans (by providing the skills they will need to survive in adult life) and a way of reversing the economic exploitation of child labour (by keeping them out of the workplace and in the school).

Gender

Peace’s (2005) interesting observation – ‘Pick a signifier of development . . . and it’s almost guaranteed that the experience of women will be notably worse than their male counterparts’ – captures something of the general nature of gendered differences in relation to economic, political and cultural development, an impression we can firm up by looking at a couple of widely used *empirical measures* of gender inequality introduced by the UN in 1995:

- **The Gender-related Development Index** (GDI) was designed, as **Oxaal and Baden** (1997) note, to measure ‘inequalities in achievement between women and men . . . Countries with greater gender disparity in basic capabilities (life expectancy, educational attainment and income) will have low GDIs compared to their Human Development Index’.

The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) represents a ‘composite indicator



The potting shed

Identify and briefly explain one reason why ‘educating women’ helps prevent malnutrition.

| The Gender Empowerment Measure: selected countries (2000) | | | | |
|---|----------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| HDI rank | GEM rank | Female seats in parliament (%) | Female administrators and managers (%) | Female professional and technical workers (%) |
| 1. Canada | 8 | 23 | 37 | 52 |
| 2. Norway | 1 | 36 | 31 | 58 |
| 3. USA | 13 | 13 | 44 | 53 |
| 10. UK | 15 | 17 | 33 | 45 |
| 50. Trinidad and Tobago | 22 | 19 | 40 | 51 |
| 84. Sri Lanka | 66 | 5 | 17 | 27 |
| 146. Bangladesh | 67 | 9 | 5 | 37 |

Source: United Nations (2001)

which looks at women's representation' in areas like parliament, workforce participation and roles and their share of national income. It represents, as **Oxaal** and **Baden** note, a statistical measure of male and female participation 'in economic and political life and ... decision making'.



The potting shed

Seers (1983) argues: 'We cannot, with our own eyes and ears, perceive more than a minute sample of human affairs, even in our own country ... So we rely on statistics to build and maintain our own model of the world. The data that are available mould our perceptions.' Identify and briefly explain one advantage of statistics and one disadvantage of statistics in terms of understanding global gender inequalities.



Weeding the path

The two measures are complementary in that while the GDI focuses on a comparison, across different countries, of gendered inequalities, the GEM focuses specifically on areas of power and political/economic decision-making. **Anand** and **Sen (1995)** welcome this as an attempt to 'shift the focus of attention ... onto indicators that come closer to reflecting the well-being and freedoms actually enjoyed by populations ... [in addition to] inequalities in the opportunities of women and men'.

Jahan (2001) argues that the GEM is a useful way of reflecting the 'distributional aspect of development, particularly the issue of inequality', or, as **Kodoth** and **Eapen (2005)** put it, 'the extent to which women

are able to use their basic capabilities to acquire economic and political voice'. For Oxaal and Baden, 'the GEM shows that access to basic needs, education and health, does not in itself automatically mean empowerment for women'. In other words, although many countries (the UK included) do not have *legal barriers* to male and female equality, they do not necessarily have high levels of female participation and representation.



The potting shed

Outline, in your own words, the meaning of 'empowerment'. Give one example of male or female empowerment to support your definition.

Explaining inequality

We can apply a range of concepts to explain the nature and level of gendered inequalities in both developing and developed nations:

Patriarchy and patriarchal ideologies:

These reflect 'traditional attitudes' to gender, expressed in a variety of ways through traditional power structures, filtered through institutions such as the family, education and work. These may involve a combination of both *explicit* (patriarchal) discriminations and *implicit* discriminations based around traditional forms of gender relationship and practice. The **World Bank Gender and Development Group** (2003) has identified a range of global gendered inequalities based on patriarchal principles:

- **Legal, social and economic rights:** 'In no region of the developing world are women equal to men' in all three areas.

- **Access to resources:** 'In most countries, women continue to have less access to social services and productive resources than men'.
- **Representation:** 'Women remain vastly under-represented in national and local assemblies'.
- **Education:** 'In most low-income countries, girls are less likely to attend school than boys' and are 'more likely to drop out (in many cases after getting pregnant, often due to lack of access to reproductive health services)'.
- **Earnings:** Women earn on average 77% of male earnings in developed countries; in developing nations they average 73% – about 'one-fifth of the wage gap can be explained by gender differences in education, work experience, or job characteristics'.

Family life: The size of individual families impacts on both male and female lives in situations where traditional forms of gender relationship apply. In the case of the former, larger families means more mouths to feed and places stresses and strains on the breadwinner role; in the latter, both pregnancy and child care (especially, but not exclusively, in situations of poverty) place severe restrictions on the ability of women to participate in the public sphere, not least in terms of educational and paid work. In this respect:

Fertility rates impact on female participation in the public sphere. According to the **US Demographic and Health Surveys** (1991–99) there is a strong correlation between fertility rates (average births per woman) and educational levels. In Niger, for example, the fertility rate for women with no education was 7.8 in 1998,

whereas for those completing secondary education it was 4.6. The surveys also note that ‘within countries, rural women tend to marry earlier than urban women and . . . have larger families. Access to contraception is an important contributor to the differences in the fertility rates among countries, but culture and socioeconomics weigh heavily as well’.

Socioeconomic factors

Education: As the **US Population Reference Bureau** (2006) suggests, education is a key variable in improving the general status of women in developing countries (and, by extension, in developed nations). This follows because ‘educated women are more likely to know what social, community, and health services, including family planning, are available and to have the confidence to use them’. Education, in this respect, has some subsidiary effects:

- **Opportunities** outside the home, in terms of work/career development, are increased.
- **Status levels** are increased for women (and their families).
- **Family size** is reduced, leading to both *economic benefits* (income can be concentrated on fewer family members) and *health benefits* (the chances of dying in childbirth are reduced).
- **Life chances** are raised for both male and female children where the benefits of parental education can be passed on through the primary socialisation process.



Weeding the path

Although improvements in educational provision have been made in many developing countries, the rate of progress remains relatively slow. The **US Population Reference Bureau** estimates: ‘It will take more than 100 years before all girls in Africa go to primary school and hundreds more before they get a chance at secondary education.’

In addition, although education has certain gender ramifications (in terms of women working, for example), it doesn’t represent a panacea for gender inequality, since ‘women . . . face embedded disadvantage in labour markets, property ownership and sexual and reproductive choices’, related, broadly, to both *patriarchal practices* and *behaviours*. However, to relate female inequality *only* to these ideas is both simplistic and mistaken, an idea we can illustrate in relation to:

Work: **Connelly et al.** (2000) note, for example, a number of economic processes that have contributed to gendered inequality:

The feminisation of labour: For **Standing** (1999) this describes the idea that modern labour markets have become increasingly ‘flexible’ over the past 20 or so years, such that many forms of employment now mirror the conditions of what was once, in developed nations, called the ‘secondary labour market’ – a market dominated by women in part-time, low-skill, low-wage, low-status work. **Standing** argues these conditions are characteristic of work in developing nations (and, arguably, in some developed nations) that involves ‘sub-contracting, part-time and home-based work

... with low rates of unionization'. The 'feminised' aspect of this work, as **Connelly et al.** note, is that 'insecure, low-paying jobs with few prospects for advancement' are largely rejected by men and so are performed mainly by women. In addition, where some developing countries have pursued:

Export-led industrialisation, this has resulted in the creation of large numbers of relatively low-skill, factory-type jobs, performed mainly by women. **Gladwin** (1993) suggests one reason for this is that women have greater 'patience, dexterity and

are more prepared to do tedious and monotonous jobs'.

Finally, although most of this section has focused on the general situation of women in developing countries, we can note that poverty is a general problem that affects both males and females (although even here we find gender differences, with the condition of women being generally worse). The **World Bank** (2002) has summarised some dimensions of poverty in the following terms:

| Gender equality and its links to poverty | |
|---|--|
| Dimensions of poverty | Gender differentiated barriers |
| Opportunity | Women suffer more in economic downturns (more likely to lose their job) Gendered access to labour markets Pay discrimination favours men |
| Capacity | Unequal access to education Unequal access to health Time poverty (large amounts of female time spent securing daily necessities like water) |
| Security | Vulnerable to natural disasters Vulnerable to civic and domestic violence Vulnerable to environmental risks |
| Empowerment | Institutions not accessible to poor men and women Lack of voice in local and national politics Lack of voice in community decision-making |

Source: World Bank (2002)



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