

The rural routes of globalisation

Trajectoires rurales de la mondialisation

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Outline

- Three myths of globalisation
- A relational perspective of globalisation and the 'global countryside'
- Rural places in globalisation – case studies
 - Dairy farming in rural New Zealand
 - Immigration to rural Ireland
- Peri-urban areas in globalisation
 - Case study: I-lan county, Taiwan

Three Myths of Globalisation

Myth 1: Rural areas are less affected by globalisation than cities. They are places that are less connected to global networks and are refuges where authentic national cultures persist.

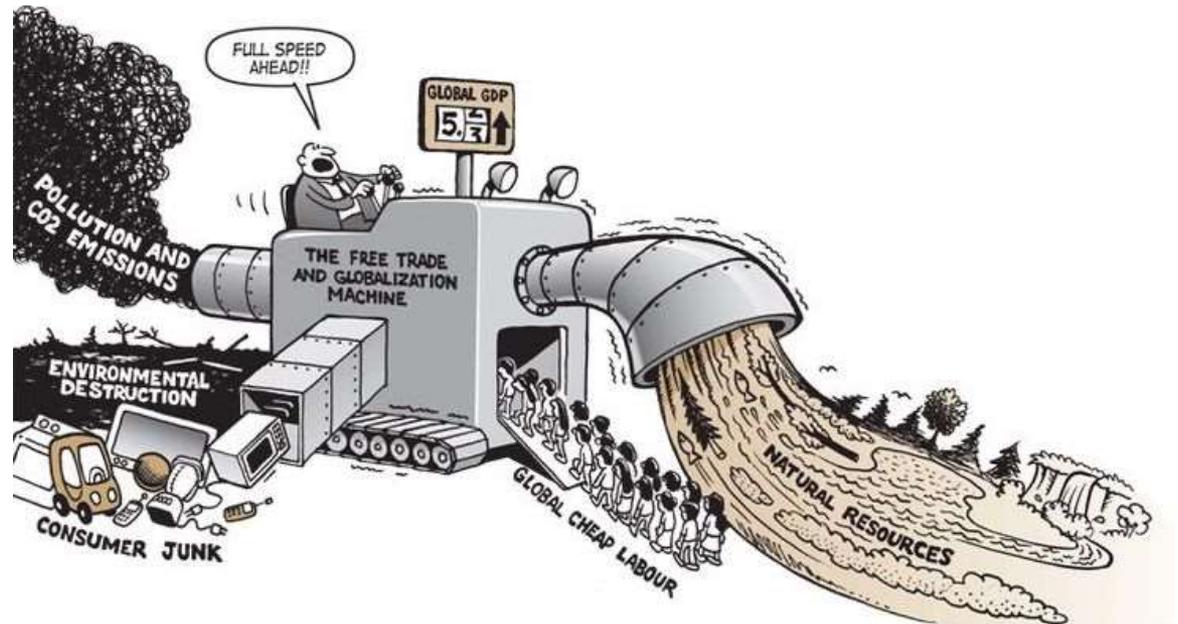
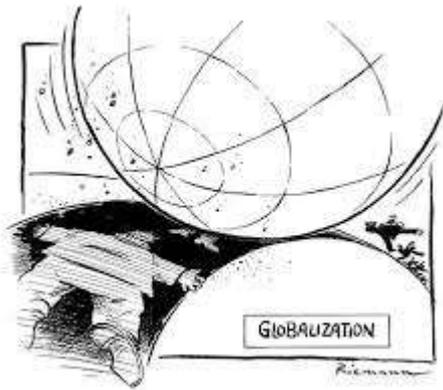


Myth 2: Rural areas will benefit from globalisation as time-space compression and the spread of global communications technologies erode the geographical disadvantages of rural space and allow rural localities to compete on equal terms with urban localities in the global economy.



Three Myths of Globalisation

Myth 3: Rural areas are the victims of globalisation. Rural economies and cultures are crushed by the dominant, homogenising force of globalisation processes and there is nothing that they can do about it.



Three Myths of Globalisation

Critique of the myths:

- They have a partial view of globalisation
- They mis-represent globalisation as top-down and monolithic
- They incorrectly equate globalisation with homogenisation

Relational View of Globalisation

- Globalisation is about shifting relations between different places in different parts of the world
- Globalization involves (cf M. Steger, 2003, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*):
 - The *creation* of new and the *multiplication* of existing social networks and activities that increasingly overcome traditional boundaries
 - The *expansion* and *stretching* of social relations, activities and interdependencies
 - The *intensification* and *acceleration* of social exchanges and activities
 - A growing *awareness* of deepening connections between the local and the distant

Relational View of Globalisation

- There is no global command centre or a core from which globalisation spreads out
- Globalisation is reproduced through local places
- Local actors engage with globalisation processes and have the capacity to mediate, facilitate, manipulate and contest globalisation
- The outcomes of globalisation are different in different places

Relational View of Globalisation

“In a relational understanding of neoliberal globalisation ‘places’ are criss-crossings in the wider power-geometries that constitute both themselves and ‘the global’. On this view local places are not simply always the victims of the global; nor are they always politically defensible redoubts against the global. Understanding space as the constant open production of topologies of power points to the fact that different ‘places’ will stand in contrasting relations to the global.”

Doreen Massey (2005), *For Space*, p 101



A Rural Trajectory?

The 'global countryside' imagined as a hypothetical end-point of globalisation for rural regions (Woods 2007):

1. Primary sector and secondary sector economic activity in the global countryside feeds, and is dependent on, ***elongated yet contingent commodity networks***, with consumption distanced from production.
2. The global countryside is the site of increasing ***corporate concentration and integration***, with corporate networks organized on a transnational scale.
3. The global countryside is both the ***supplier and the employer of migrant labour***.
4. The globalisation of mobility is also marked by the ***flow of tourists*** through the global countryside, attracted to sites of global rural amenity.

A Rural Trajectory?

5. The global countryside attracts ***high levels of non-national property investment***, for both commercial and residential purposes.
6. It is not only social and economic relations that are transformed in the global countryside, but also the ***discursive construction of nature and its management***.
7. The landscape of the global countryside is ***inscribed with the marks of globalization***.
8. The global countryside is characterized by ***increasing social polarization***.
9. The global countryside is associated with ***new sites of political authority***.
10. The global countryside is always a ***contested space***.

The Global Countryside

“As this emergent global countryside is not a uniform, homogenous space, but rather is differentially articulated, and contested, through particular rural places, so the question... how are rural places remade under globalization?... becomes central to our understanding of the global countryside.”

Woods (2007), p 51

- The globalisation of rural areas is not a linear process. Some rural localities are less integrated into global networks than they have been previously.
- The exposure of a rural region to globalisation processes will be shaped by structural factors such as natural and cultural resources, accessibility and location, human capital and political-economic policies.
- Actors in different rural localities have differing capacities to engage effectively with globalisation processes.

The Global Countryside

“The reconstitution of rural spaces under globalization results from the permeability of rural localities as hybrid assemblages of human and non-human entities, knitted-together intersections of networks and flows that are never wholly fixed or contained at the local scale and whose constant shape-shifting eludes a singular representation of place. Globalization processes introduce into rural localities new networks of global interconnectivity, which become threaded through and entangled with existing local assemblages, sometimes acting in concert and sometimes pulling local actants in conflicting directions. Through these entanglements, intersections and entrapments, the experience of globalization changes rural places, but it never eradicates the local. Rather, the networks, flows and actors introduced by globalization processes fuse and combine with extant local entities to produce new hybrid formations. In this way, places in the emergent global countryside retain their local distinctiveness, but they are also different to *how they were before.*”

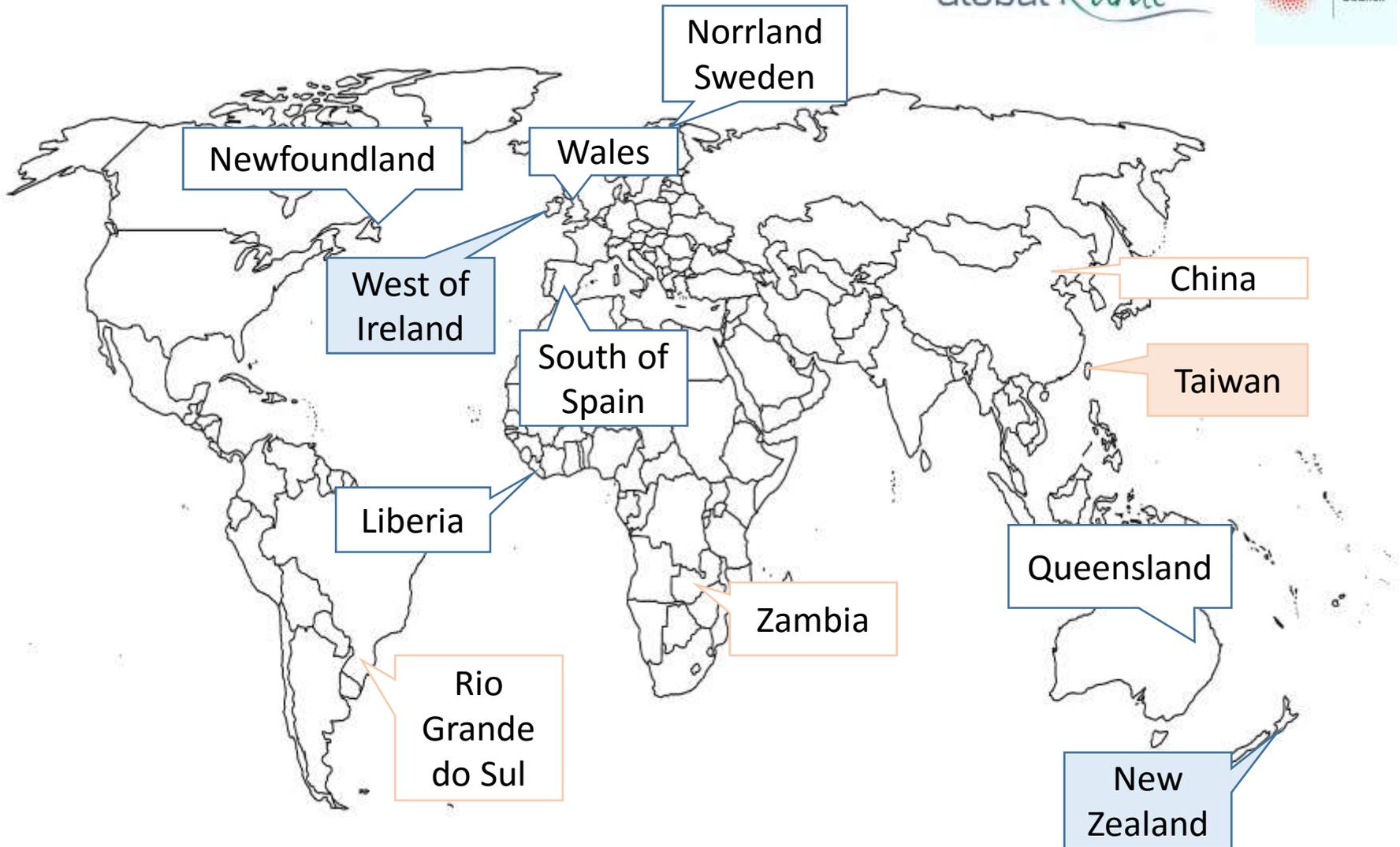
Woods (2007), in *Progress in Human Geography*, pp 499-500

The Rural Routes of Globalisation



- How globalisation advances through the rural landscape
- How globalisation reshapes rural places
- How the agency of rural actors has global implications

Case Studies



Dairy farming in New Zealand



Rural New Zealand

- Rural New Zealand ‘created’ through global encounters with Pacific Maori and European settlers
- Agricultural economy based on commodity exports to Britain (lamb, wool, butter)
- Facilitated by transnational circulation of people, capital, livestock and technologies (e.g. refrigeration, modified Cocksfoot grass seed)



Rural New Zealand

- British market closed by UK entry to European Economic Community in 1972
- Search for new export markets for New Zealand produce
- Substantial restructuring of New Zealand agriculture to make it competitive in a global market
- Underpinned by 'globalization discourse' (Larner, 1998)

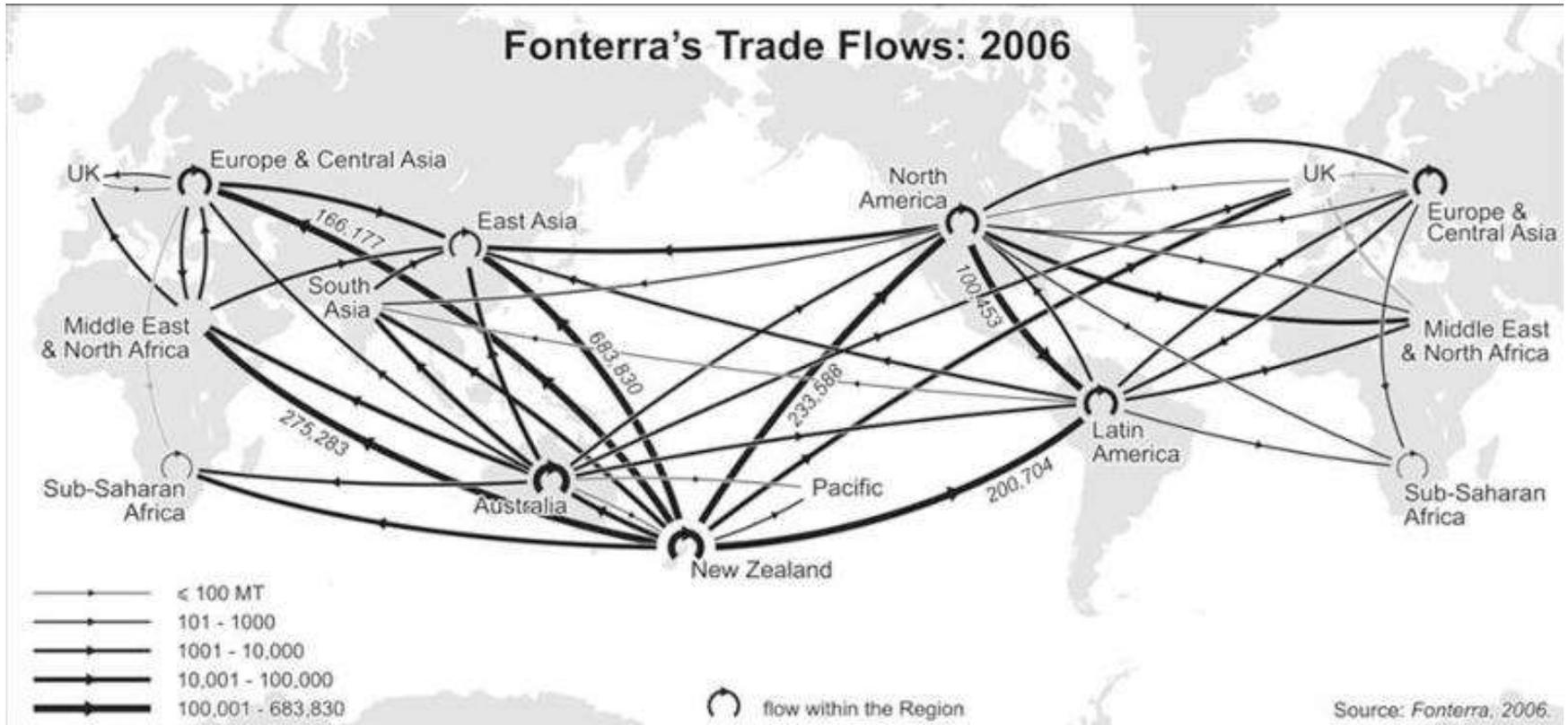




Trade flows of New Zealand Dairy Board 1972

Source: Gray and Le Heron (2010) in *New Zealand Geographer*

Fonterra's Trade Flows: 2006



Trade flows of Fonterra (successor to NZDB) 2006

Source: Gray and Le Heron (2010) in *New Zealand Geographer*

Rural New Zealand

- New Zealand is largest exporter of milk powder to China
- Market penetration dependent on:
 - Proactive negotiation of trade opportunities by farmer-owned industry bodies
 - Investment in R&D in milk powder processing technologies
 - Productivity improvements by farmers
 - Active marketing of 'Pure New Zealand' brand convincing Chinese consumers to switch to NZ milk powder as a 'safe' product



Rural New Zealand

Dairy conversions facilitated by the assemblage of transnational components

- Demand for cattle feed met by imports from Australia
- Planting of maize for silage using hybrid seed developed by US companies Pioneer and Corson
- Irrigation systems bought from US-based companies and manufactured in China
- Capital from foreign-owned banks; recycling of profits from Auckland property boom; and international investors (including farmers, Asian state-owned companies and EU & NA pension funds)
- Increased labour requirement on dairy farms met by Filipino and Indonesian migrant workers



Rural New Zealand

Dairy conversion impacts on rural communities:

- New Asian migrant populations – helping to support community services, revitalise churches etc
- New requirements for professional services (e.g. vets)
- Increased traffic on rural roads from milk tankers (increased cost for road maintenance)



Rural New Zealand

Dairy conversion impacts on the rural environment and landscape:

- Higher pollution from dairy farms
- Capture of water resources for irrigation
- Deforestation
- Change in colour of landscape in irrigated areas

“I feel it would be a catastrophe to see the Mackenzie Basin as green pasture land with herds of dairy cows grazing across the vista with a mountain backdrop. The reason I go to the Mackenzie is to see the different landscape; the barren yet beautiful tussockland is unsurpassed.”

Letter to *Timaru Herald*, 4 June 2009



Rural New Zealand

- New Zealand farmers have profited from new Asian markets in global economy
- But, also more vulnerable to changes in the global economy
- Decrease in demand for milk powder in China and fall in world milk prices have hit incomes of NZ dairy farmers
- Some farmers struggling with debt repayments
- Sale of dairy farms (sometimes to foreign investors)
- Direct investment by Chinese companies in farms and processing plants in New Zealand



Rural New Zealand

- Conditions of NZ dairy farmers engagement with global economy have global repercussions
- Trade between NZ and China affects world milk price
- NZ farmers' cooperative Fonterra plays role in setting world milk price through its 'Global Dairy Trade' electronic market
- Impacts on income of dairy farmers around the world
- 'Off-shoring' of New Zealand dairy industry
 - Export of cattle to establish farms in China
 - NZ dairy farmers investing in Chile



Brittany



Sweden



Immigration in Rural Ireland

Rural Ireland

- Historically Ireland is an exporter of emigrants
- Irish diaspora has helped to globalise cultural representations of rural Ireland
- In 1990s & 2000s, 'Celtic Tiger' boom attracted Foreign Direct Investment to small towns, boosting the rural economy
- Encouraged Irish migrants to return
- New job opportunities for rural workforce, creating labour shortages in more menial occupations





Gort

County Galway

'Rio on Shannon'

Population 2,644 (2011)

Over 40% of population in 2008
was Brazilian

Ballyhaunis

County Mayo

'Ireland's most diverse town'

Population 2,312 (2011)

43 nationalities recorded in 2011 census

48% born outside Ireland



Rural Ireland

Gort

- Brazilians first recruited to work at meat processing plant due to local labour shortage in late 1990s
- Recruited from area near Annapolis where an abattoir had closed due to global competition
- Mediated by Irish emigrant working in export industry in Brazil
- Further migration formed Brazilian community of around 1,000 in Gort



Rural Ireland

Gort

- Brazilian shop, beauty salons, internet café and money transfer
- Brazilian Pentecostal churches
- Brazilian participation in local football club and Gaelic sports association
- Bilingual newsletter
- Community celebration of Brazilian Quadrilha festival



Rural Ireland

Ballyhaunis

- Local meat factory bought in 1970s by Pakistan-born, London-based entrepreneur asked by Kuwaiti government to establish reliable supply of halal meat
- Recruited workers from Pakistan and Syria with halal butcher skills
- Syrian migrants later formed separate company exporting halal sausage casings
- Polish, Lithuanian and other Eastern European migrants after 2004, working in food processing and care sector
- Asylum reception centre opened 2001 with around 200 residents at any time, some of whom opt to live in town after receiving asylum.



Rural Ireland

Ballyhaunis

- Muslim community built first purpose-built mosque in Ireland
- Halal food shops and Polish shops
- Polish Saturday school and Muslim madrassa
- Pakistani migrants established cricket club
- Multi-cultural participation in local Gaelic sports association
- Inter-cultural activities by Family Resource Centre (e.g. community garden)



Rural Ireland

- Ballyhaunis and Gort are integrated into global migration flows (both in and out), and specialist labour markets
- Continuing cultural engagement by migrant residents with home cultures
- Globalisation experienced not as homogenisation, but as the creation of new hybrid formations, practices and identities
- Rural setting has provided a 'safe' environment, necessitated interaction and promoted integration rather than segregation

Rural Ireland

- Residents of Ballyhaunis and Gort are active agents in negotiating globalisation
- Influenced by national and international economic and political circumstances
- Post-2008 economic recession stimulated return of migrants from Ireland
 - Brazilian population in Gort fell from 1,000 to under 300
- Geopolitical events shape arrival of asylum seekers in Ballyhaunis and thus the cultural profile of the town
- Political, economic and security concerns reflected in changing attitudes towards migrants, including tensions between different migrant groups
- Developments in Ballyhaunis and Gort have reverberations in home regions of migrants, through changes in remittances and migration flows

Globalisation and Periurban Areas

- Peri-urban districts can have lower levels of international economic interaction than remoter rural regions as proximity to urban market reduces incentive for export-led growth
- The proximity of peri-urban districts to major transport infrastructure can mean that they are favoured for international amenity migration and tourism
- Peri-urban areas may also be affected by the spill-over of globalisation impacts in urban economies, as global capital is re-invested in rural properties and lifestyles

Gentrification in I-lan county, Taiwan



I-lan County, Taiwan

- I-lan county is close to Taipei but separated by a mountain range
- Recent new tunnel has cut travelling time to less than an hour and stimulated gentrification in I-lan county
- Farmland being built on with new houses by Taipei-based investors, often as holiday homes or places to entertain business clients
- Capital accumulated through Taipei's engagement in the global economy



I-lan County, Taiwan

- Developments in I-lan county also influenced by globalised culture
- Traditional Taiwanese rural architecture neglected for international styles
- Architect-designed (post-) modern buildings
- Pastiche of European 'rural' architecture (villas, farmhouses)



I-lan County, Taiwan

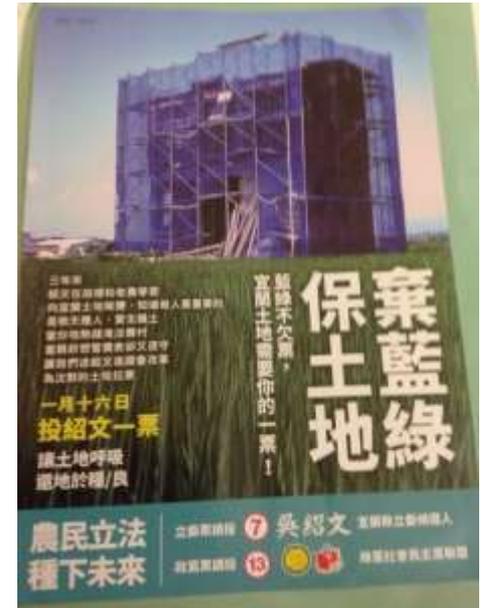
Mr and Mrs Chen

- Owned factory producing fabrics for export in Taipei
- Under-cut by cheaper production in China
- Decided to sell business rather than relocate manufacturing to China
- Invested capital in a lifestyle change, buying land and building a 'dream' house
- Deliberately in faux-European 'fortified farmhouse' style



I-lan County, Taiwan

- Local opposition to loss of farmland
- ‘New farmer’ movement
 - Ex-urban migrants going ‘back to the land’
 - Mainly young from professional background, but without accumulated wealth
 - Include participants from Singapore, Hong Kong and Cambodia who first came to Taiwan to work in Taipei
 - Motivated by global concerns about environment and food safety
 - Influenced by Japanese and western alternative farming movements



Globalisation and Periurban Areas

- Globalisation is reconfiguring and stretching rural-urban relations
- Rural-urban interactions no longer necessarily between spatially proximate urban and rural areas
- Other forms of proximity may be more important
- Rural areas drawn into closer relations with distant cities
 - Migration flows and translocal communities
 - Tourism and recreation
 - Energy, waste and ecosystem services
 - Capital accumulation (investments by public bodies, pension funds etc)
- Need to rethink ideas of peri-urbanity?

Summary

- Rural and periurban areas are as entangled in globalisation as cities
- Globalisation is producing a homogenous global countryside, but a heterogeneous and hybrid re-fashioning of rural space
- There are a multitude of different trajectories for the global countryside, as different aspects of globalisation processes work in different ways in different structural contexts, and are manipulated, mediated and contested by interaction with local actors



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Presentation slides available at:

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