

Figure 3.11 Vance's mercantile model: a simplified version  
Source: Adapted from Potter (1992a)

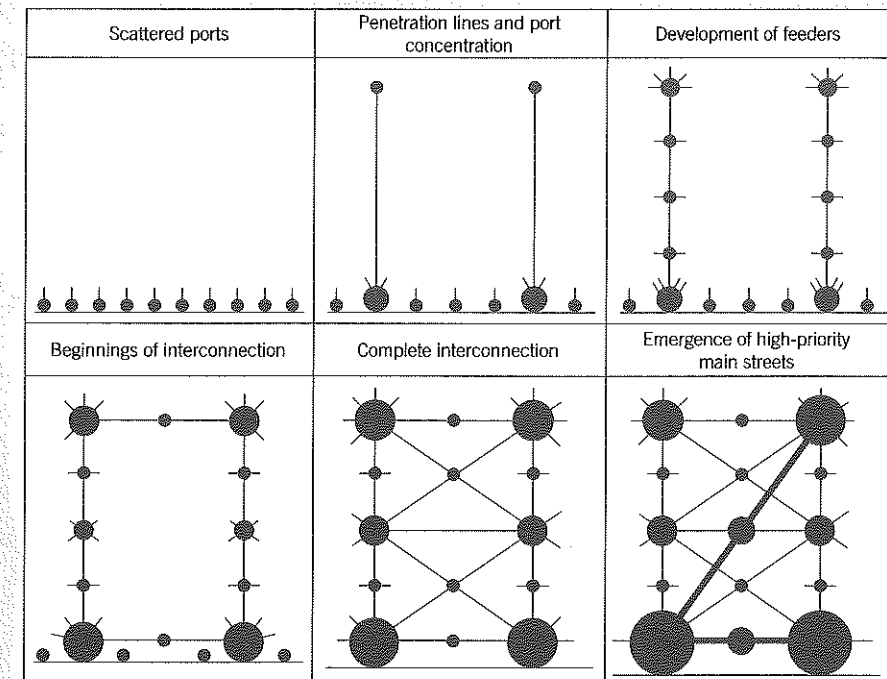
in less developed countries, as shown in Figure 3.12a. The model was based on the transport histories of West African nations such as Nigeria and Ghana, plus Brazil, Malaya and East Africa. Hoyle's (1993) application of the framework to East Africa is shown in Figure 3.12b.

Figure 3.13 deals specifically with the example of Brazil, showing the foundation of the earliest towns. The early ports along the Atlantic coast were small and served thinly settled hinterlands. The evolving plantation economy later focused on sugar mills and gave rise to small inland settlements. The concentration of the first 12 towns of Brazil on the seaboard is very apparent from Figure 3.13.

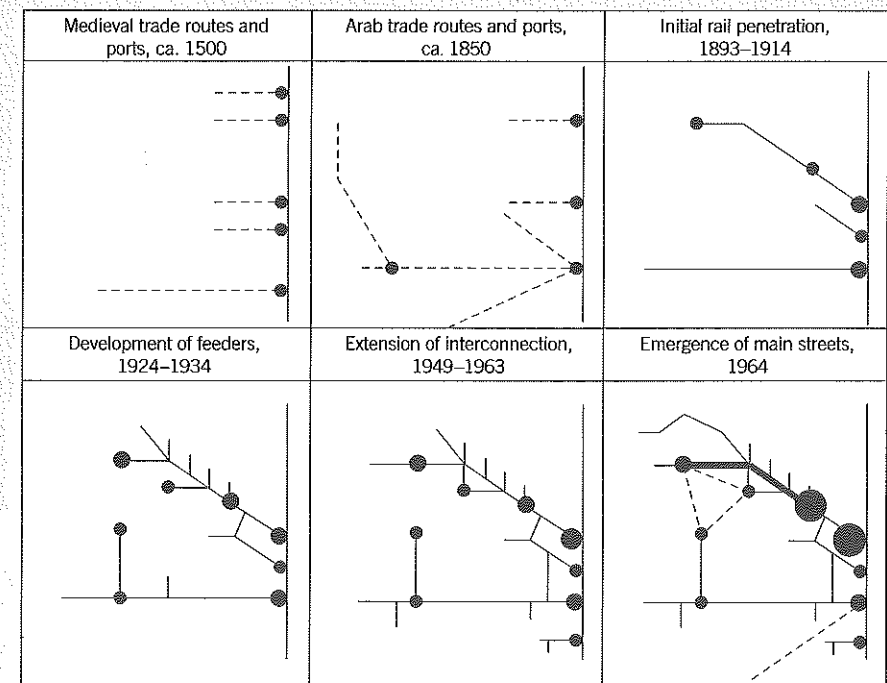
### Plantopolis and uneven development

In plantation economies such as those of the Caribbean, a local historical variant of the mercantile settlement system is provided by the plantopolis model. A simplified representation of this is shown in Figure 3.14. The first two stages are based on Rojas (1989), although the graphical depiction of the sequence and its extension to the modern era have been effected by Potter (1995a, 2000):

- 1 In the first stage, plantopolis, the plantations formed self-contained bases for the settlement pattern, such

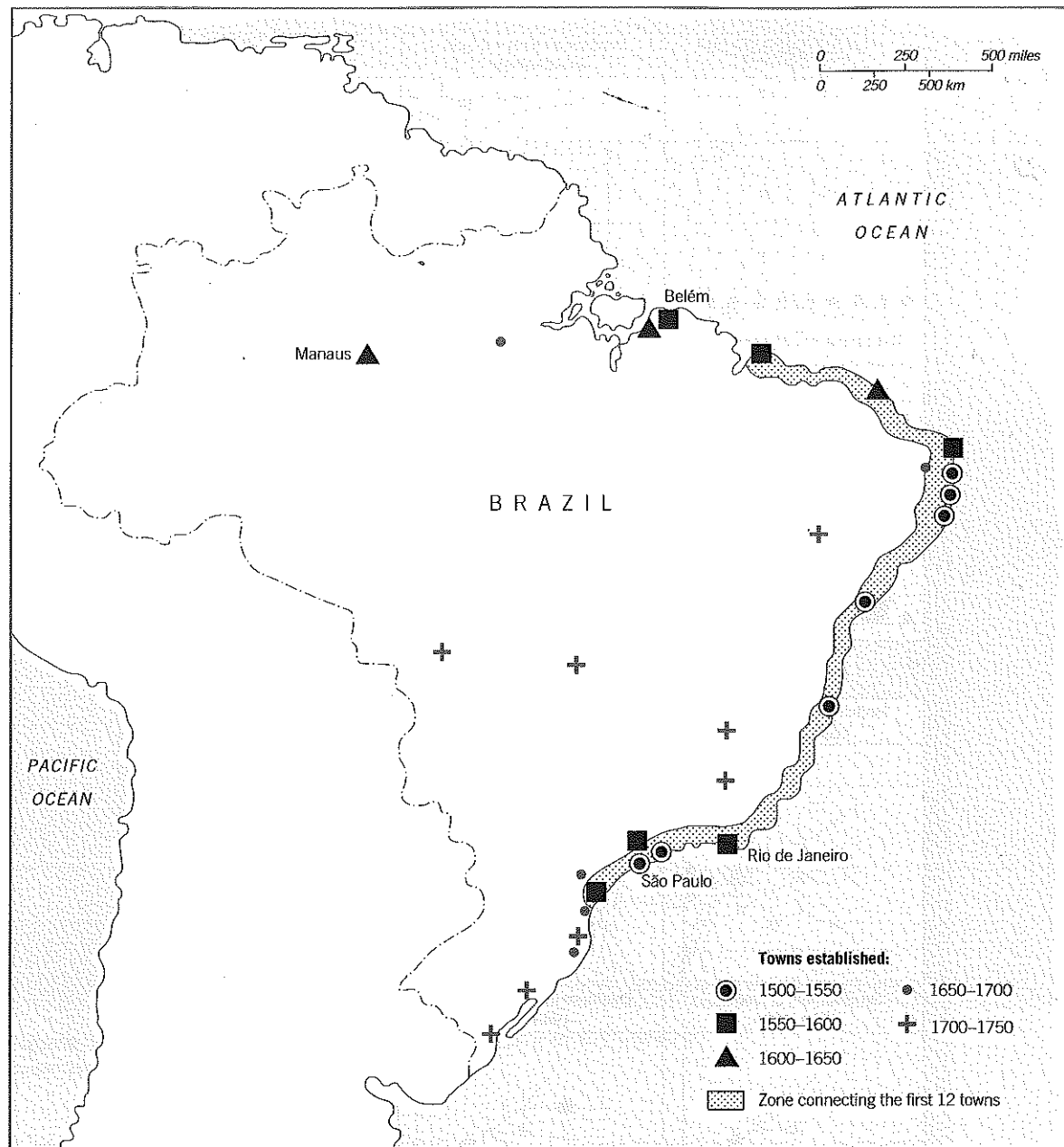


(a)



(b)

Figure 3.12 The Taaffe, Morrill and Gould model of transport development and its application to East Africa  
Source: Adapted from Hoyle (1993)

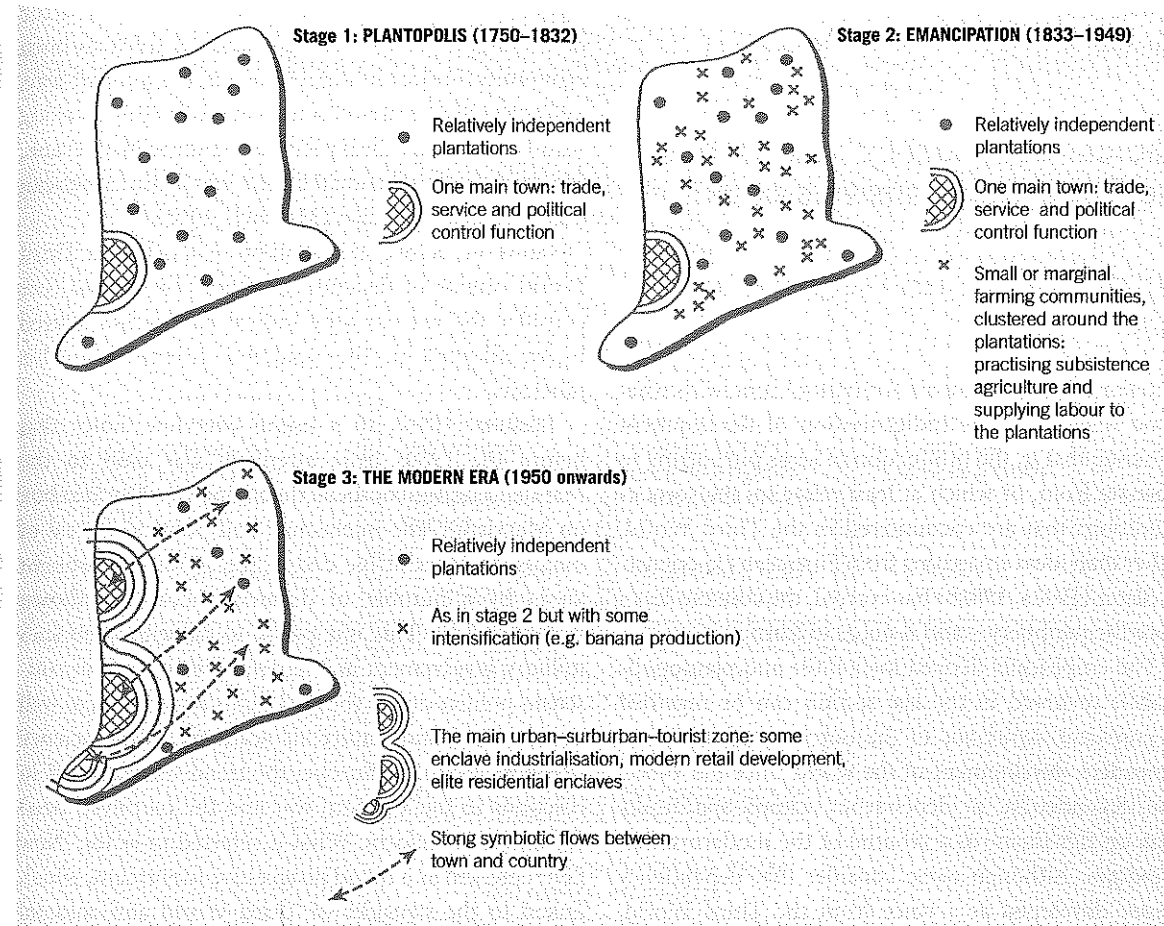


**Figure 3.13** The foundations of the earliest towns in Brazil, 1500–1750  
 Source: From *Latin America and the Caribbean: A Systematic and Regional Survey*, (Blouet, B.W. and Blouet, O.M.), © 2002 John Wiley & Sons inc. Reprinted with permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

that only one main town was required for trade, service and political control functions.

2 Following emancipation, the second stage, small, marginal farming communities – clustered around the plantations, practising subsistence agriculture and supplying labour to the plantations – added a third layer to the settlement system. The distribution of these communities would vary according to physical and agricultural conditions.

3 Figure 3.14 suggests that, in the Caribbean, the modern era has witnessed the extension of this highly polarised pattern of development; this is the third stage. The emphasis is placed on extension, for this may not in all cases amount to intensification per se. This has come about largely as the result of industrialisation and tourism being taken as the twin paths to development. In 1976, Augelli and West (1976: 120) commented on what they



**Figure 3.14** The plantopolis model and its extension to the modern era  
 Source: Adapted from Potter (1995a)

regarded as the disproportionate concentration of wealth, power and social status in the chief urban centres of the West Indies. As shown in Figure 3.14, such spatial inequality is sustained by strong symbiotic flows between town and country. This theme is picked up in detail in Chapter 9 in respect of the nature of rural–urban interrelations in developing countries.

### An evaluation of the mercantile and plantopolis frameworks

The virtues of the mercantile and plantopolis models are many. Principally, they serve to stress that the evolution of most developing countries amounts to a highly dependent form of development. Certainly we are reminded that the high degree of urban primacy and the littoral orientation of settlement fabrics in

Africa, Asia, South America and the Caribbean are all the direct product of colonialism, not accidental happenings or aberrant cases: hence the comment that modernisation surfaces essentially chart colonial and neo-colonial penetration.

According to these models, ports and other urban settlements became the focus of economic activity and of the social surplus that accrued. The concept of surplus product, defined as an excess of production over need or consumption, is developed more fully in the next major section, which deals with radical approaches to development. A similar, but somewhat less overriding spatial concentration also applies to the colonial power. Hence a pattern of spatially unequal or polarised growth emerged strongly several hundred years ago as the norm due to the strengthening of this symbiotic relationship between colony and colonial power.

The overall suggestion is that, due to the requirements of the international economy, far greater levels

of inequality and spatial concentration are produced than may be socially and morally desirable.

### Radical dependency approaches: the Third World answers back?

#### Introduction: an indigenous approach?

A major advance in theory formation came with what some refer to as the indigenisation of development thinking; that is, the production of ideas purporting to emanate from, or which at least relate to, the sorts of conditions that are encountered in the Third World, rather than ideas emanating from European experience. As Slater (1992a, 1992b) has averred, the core can learn from the periphery – and it needs to learn.

The empirically derived mercantile and plantopolis models reviewed in the last section can be regarded as graphical depictions of the outcome of the interdependent development of the world since the 1400s. The dependencia, or dependency school, specifically took up this theme as a rebuttal of the modernisation paradigm. Although some consider that dependency theory developed as a voice from the Third World, others have maintained that its most cogent formulation

represents Eurocentric development thinking by virtue of the origins of its leading author, a German-born economist, Andre Gunder Frank. Or, put another way, as Clarke (2002) states, although in the English-speaking world dependency theory focused on the work of Frank, the main body of contributions was Latin American and Caribbean in origin (Marshall, 2008).

However, before we look in more detail at the Third World origins of dependency theory we should first consider the reasons why radical approaches started to be adopted in the academic literature at this juncture.

Preston (1996), in a useful overview, notes that before the 1960s little attention was paid to the Marxian tradition of social theorising (see Key idea box on Marxism). The intellectual and political revival of interest in Marx at the end of the 1960s was brought about by a number of different factors, as shown in Figure 3.15. This was partly to do with America's military involvement in Vietnam, the collapse of consensus politics due to the civil rights movement, as well as the moribund nature of academic social science (Preston, 1996). In Europe, the trend was reflected in reactions to the Vietnam war and the perceived need for university reform. What is referred to as the 'New Left' emerged as a broad progressive movement, which linked to the struggles of Third World anti-colonial movements (Figure 3.15).

#### Key idea

##### Marxism

The terms 'Marxism' or 'Marxist' can be applied to sets of ideas or practices that are based on the writings of Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895). Marx was a German-born political scientist and revolutionary, who together with Engels published the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, an early statement on their general principles. Their writings were strongly class-based, stressing the struggles of the working classes and the need to replace the capitalist system if the lot of ordinary people was to be improved. They regarded all history as the history of class struggles. An essential view was that control over the forces of production is critical, giving rise to a two-fold class division. On the one side are the owners of the means of production (land and

capital), and on the other there are the workers, who only have their labour to sell. Workers have to toil long hours and the value of what they produce is far higher than what they are paid. Thus, an economic surplus is accrued by the owners of capital and the economy is exploitative of labour. The early forms of surplus were created by merchants' 'primitive accumulation', acquired by 'raiding' non-capitalist societies for commodities such as gold and silver. Later the surplus represented the value expropriated from workers. In the views of Marx and Engels, due to the inhumane nature of capitalism and its inherent contradictions, in time the system would ultimately fail and be replaced by socialism.

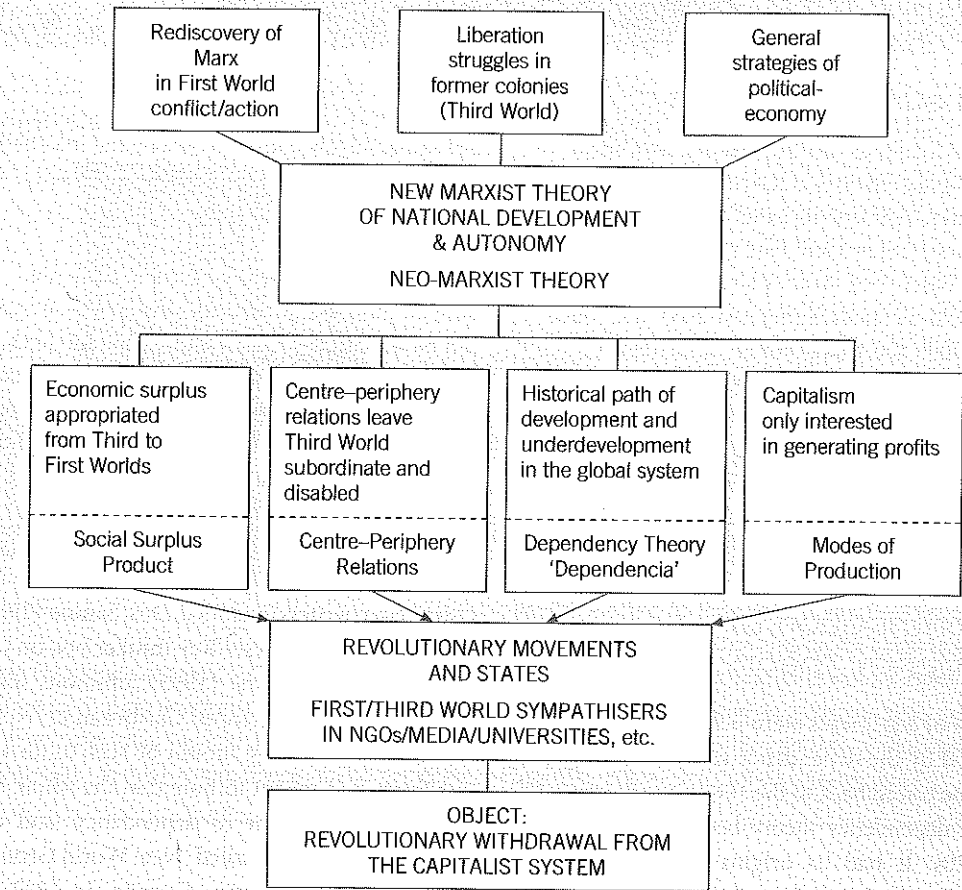


Figure 3.15 An overview of Marxist development theory  
Source: Adapted from Preston (1996)

### Paul Baran and the critical role of the economic surplus

Paul Baran, reflecting the general mood of the time, turned to a radical perspective in respect of development theory, promulgating a clear neo-Marxist approach (Baran, 1973; Baran and Sweezy, 1968). The principal idea was that of economic surplus, which is created by the inherent working of the capitalist system, and which therefore exists as a material quantity of goods.

The basic point is that once surplus production is redistributed within society, it effectively becomes a surplus of time and energy (Potter and Lloyd-Evans, 1998). Those who do not have to produce their own means of subsistence are freed for other activities. Part of the surplus can be redistributed to parasitic groups,

and part can be used for conspicuous consumption or for state monumentalism – in other words it can be concentrated both in space and among different groups. It can be argued that this surplus redistribution has characterised the mercantile period onward, and has witnessed surplus value being expropriated from developing countries.

Baran's Marxist framework also envisaged that during the colonial period advanced nations entered into special partnerships with powerful elite groups in less developed and pre-capitalist countries. By such means, surplus was extracted and appropriated by elite groups. Thus, for Third World countries, Baran saw the key to development as disengagement from the deforming impact of the world capitalist economy, as capitalism creates and then diverts much of the economic surplus into wasteful and sometimes immoral consumption (Baran, 1973).

## Key idea

### Social surplus product

The idea of a surplus can be looked at as a social surplus product – that is, a surplus of production over societal need. This first occurred when human groups were able to produce more food than they needed on a daily basis. This meant that some members of society could be released from the need to produce their own food and could take on other roles in society, such as religious, military and political leadership. In other words, the food surplus became a surplus of time and energy within society, and it is this that can be referred to as social surplus product. This surplus can be concentrated in space and

distributed highly unequally among the members of society. It is thus central to the development process.

### Critical reflection

It is an interesting exercise to think about the different places and contexts in which social surpluses can be witnessed – from monumental buildings, regional variations in house prices, art collections, to personal displays of wealth. Make a list of regions, places, organisations, buildings where signs of the accumulation of social surplus value have been accrued and can be witnessed.

## The contribution of dependency theory

These types of arguments were perhaps most cogently promulgated by the dependency school, the origins of which can be traced back to the 1960s (see Figure 3.15). Full-blown dependency theory became a global force in the 1970s. It had its origins in the writings of Latin American and Caribbean radical scholars known as structuralists, because they focused on the unseen structures that may be held to mould and shape society (Clarke, 2002; Conway and Heynen, 2002; Girvan, 1973; Marshall, 2008).

The approach was the outcome of the convergence of pure Marxist ideas on Latin American and Caribbean writings about underdevelopment. Essentially, by such a process, the Eurocentric ideas of Marxism became more relevant to the Latin American condition. Marx and Engels had seen capitalism as initially destructive of non-capitalist social forms, and thereafter progressive (Preston, 1996). Prebisch (1950) and Furtado (1964, 1965, 1969), who wrote about Argentina and Brazil respectively, are the best-known Latin American structuralists. Raul Prebisch stressed the importance of economic relations in linking industrialised and Latin American less developed countries, and observed that these were primarily prescribed in the form of centre-periphery relations (see Figure 3.15). Furtado (1969) argued that present-day Latin American socio-economic structures were the result of the manner of incorporation into the world capitalist system, an argument which is close to the full dependency line.

Other later writers included Dos Santos (1970, 1977) and Cardoso (1976) (see Key thinker box on Cardoso).

As noted by Hettne (1995), opinions differ as to whether the well-developed Caribbean or 'New World' school of dependency should be seen as an autonomous form. It is salient to note that the whole history of the Caribbean is one of dependency, and this issue was central to the so-called 'New World Group', which first met in Georgetown, Guyana, in 1992, in order to discuss Caribbean development issues. Key names include George Beckford (1972), Norman Girvan (1973) and Clive Thomas (1989).

The development of the Caribbean-based New World Group has recently been charted in some detail by Marshall (2008). The founders of the group aspired to identify indigenous paths for the region's development. They were convinced that the twin strands of modernisation and industrialisation were not suited to the region. They were particularly resistant to Arthur Lewis' (1955) call for industrialisation by invitation. Beckford (1972) then added a strong case that the historic plantation slave economy had led to underdevelopment in the region and the evolution of what he termed 'persistent poverty'.

## The contribution of A.G. Frank

However, the dependency approach proper is strongly associated with the work of Andre Gunder Frank (see Key thinker box). Frank's key ideas were outlined in an article published in 1966, 'The development of underdevelopment', as well as in the book *Capitalism*

## Key thinker

### From radical Latin American structuralist to political figure Fernando Cardoso

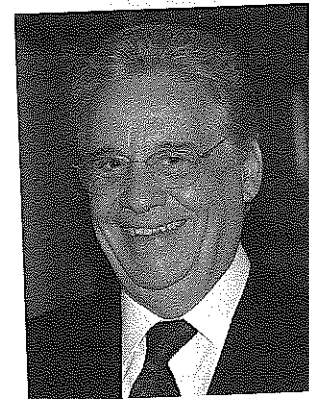


Plate 3.6 Fernando Cardoso  
Source: PA Photos

Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1931–) offers a fascinating case of an academic interested in development who later became a political figure on the world stage, thereby exemplifying afresh the close

relationship between development and politics. Cardoso was born in Brazil and was trained as a sociologist and political scientist with his study of *Dependency and Development in Latin America* (1969). Cardoso is seen as neither stable nor permanent and there is no any simple link between dependency and underdevelopment (see Sanchez-Rodrigues, 2006). In the 1970s Cardoso became actively involved in the pro-democracy movement in Brazil and from there he moved into politics, becoming a member of the Brazilian Social Democrat Party in 1982. He was made Foreign Minister in 1992/93 and in 1995 he was elected as President of Brazil. He served two terms of office, with his presidency extending through to 2003. Some argue that in power he abandoned the Marxist roots he showed as a structuralist, and that he served the neo-liberal interests of multinational business elites (Sanchez-Rodrigues, 2006).

## Key thinker

### Andre Gunder Frank

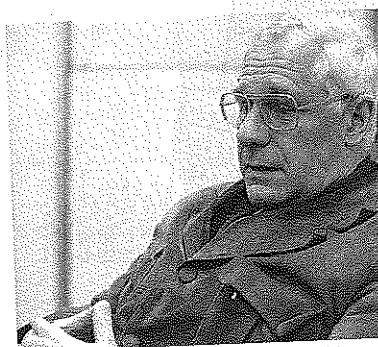


Plate 3.7 Andre Gunder Frank  
Source: with kind permission from Andre Gunder Frank

Andre Gunder Frank (1929–2005) was born in Germany, but his family fled to Switzerland during the ascendancy of Adolf Hitler, and then in 1941 moved to the United States. Frank undertook a PhD at the University of Chicago, where in 1957 he received his

doctorate for a thesis on agriculture in the Ukraine. After working in a number of American universities, Frank moved to South America, and at one point was Professor of Sociology and Economics at the University of Chile. During this period he underwent a rapid and thorough radical conversion (Brookfield, 1975). The time he spent in Chile is seen as the foundation of his work on dependency theory. His seminal ideas were summarised in the phrase 'the development of underdevelopment'. The large body of books and papers written by Frank were directly shaped by the ideas of Marx, especially the concept of accumulation on a global scale (Watts, 2006). Throughout his career Frank moved from post to post and from country to country. Watts (2006: 90) has argued that Andre Frank was 'at once too radical, too ornery and too unconventional for most universities on both sides of the Atlantic'.

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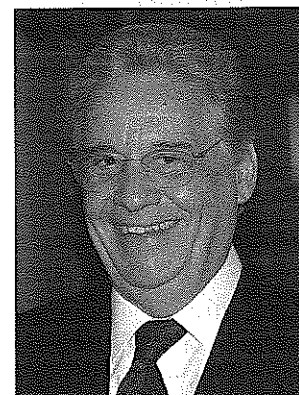


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and *Underdevelopment in Latin America*, which appeared in 1967. Although a scholar of European origin working in the USA, Frank had researched in Mexico, Chile and Brazil.

Frank (1967) maintained that development and underdevelopment are opposite sides of the same coin, and that both are the necessary outcome and manifestation of the contradictions of the capitalist system of development.

The thesis presented by Frank was devastatingly simple. It was argued that the condition of developing countries is not the outcome of inertia, misfortune, chance, climatic conditions or whatever, but rather a reflection of the manner of their incorporation into the global capitalist system. Viewed in this manner, so-called underdevelopment, and associated dualism, are not a negative or void, but the direct outcome and reciprocal of development elsewhere (Figure 3.16). The

only real alternative for such nations was to weaken the grip of the global system by means of trade barriers, controls on transnational corporations and the formation of regional trading areas, along with the encouragement of local or indigenous production and development (see Plate 3.8).

The phrase 'the development of underdevelopment' (Frank, 1966) has come to be employed as a shorthand description of the Frankian approach, which, as noted previously, has a strong graphical tie-in with the mercantile and plantopolis models. Quite simply, if the development of large tracts of the Earth's surface has depended upon metropolitan cores, or 'metropolises', then the development of cities has also depended principally upon the articulation of capital and the accumulation of surplus value (Figure 3.17).

The process has operated internationally and internally within countries. Viewed in this light, so-called

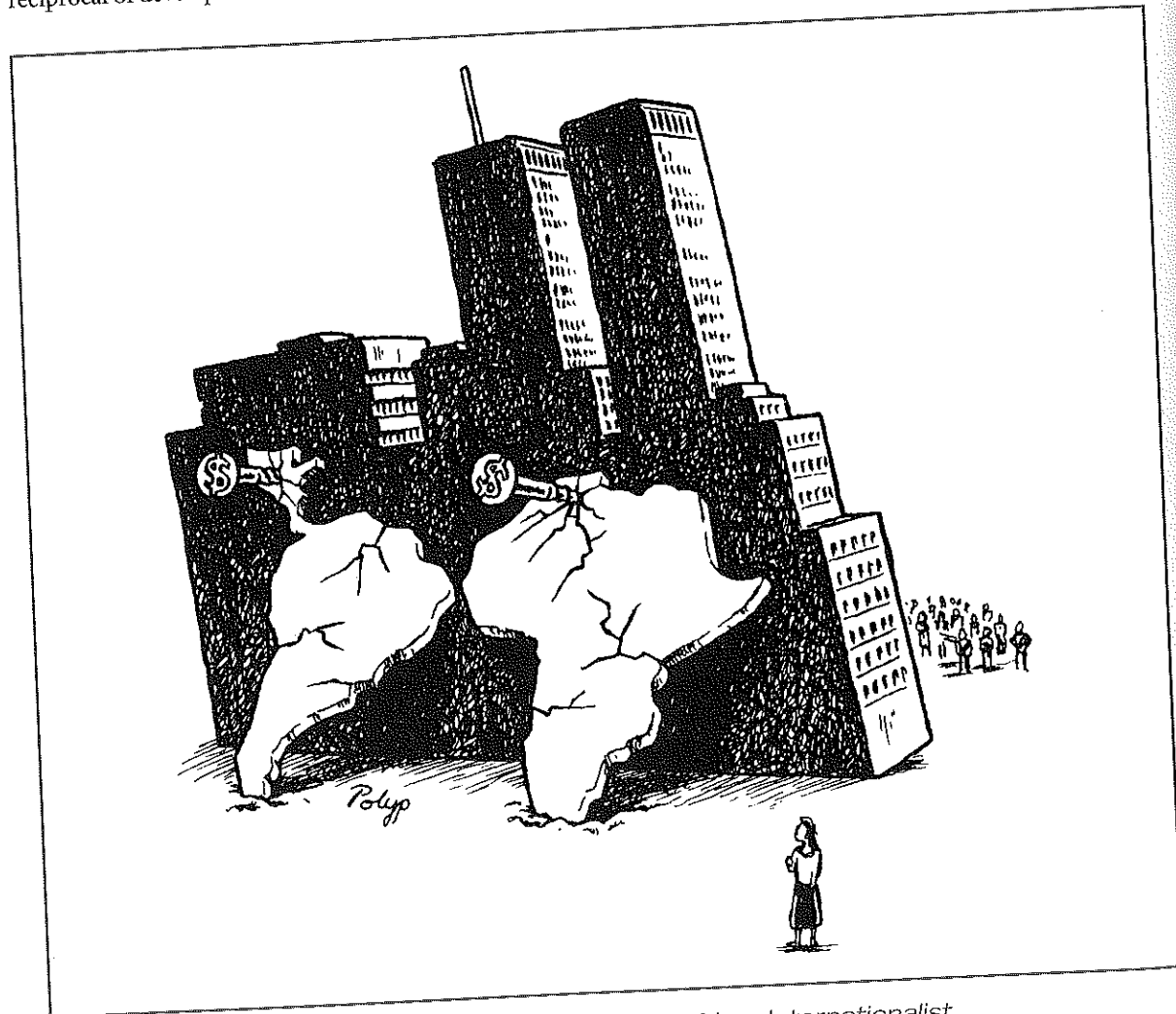


Figure 3.16 Dependent relations according to the *New Internationalist*

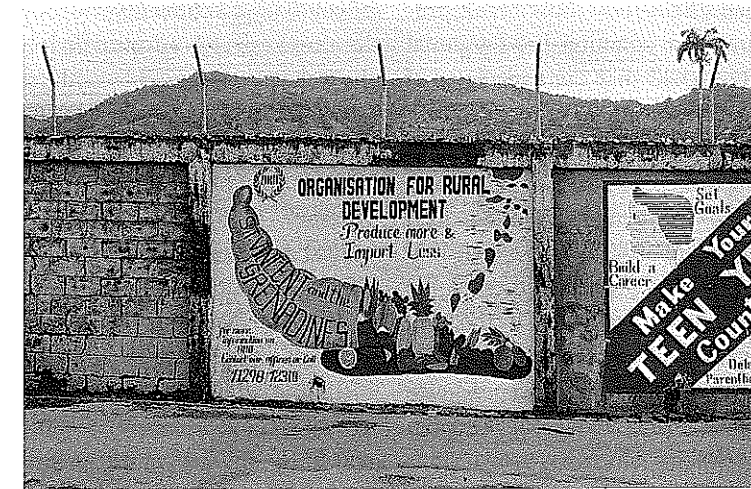


Plate 3.8 'Organisation for Rural Development' poster advocating more domestic production and fewer imports in St Vincent (photo: Rob Potter)

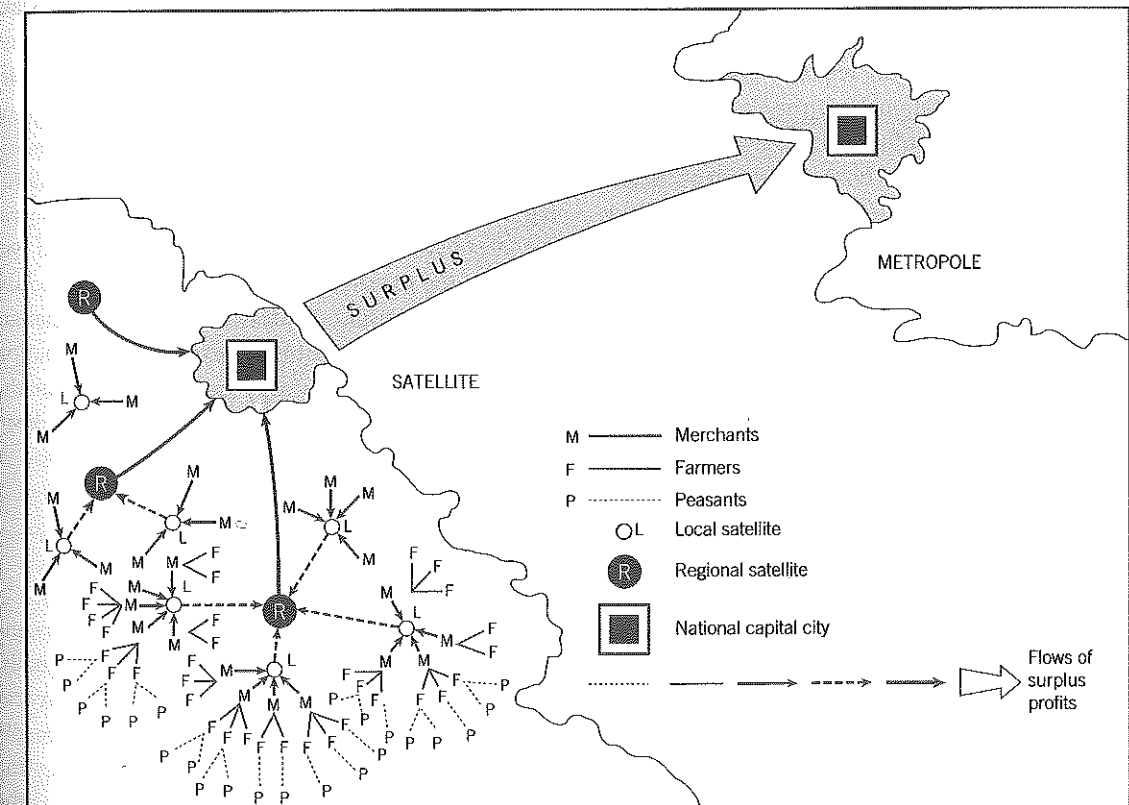


Figure 3.17 Dependency theory: a graphical depiction  
Source: Adapted from Potter (1992a)

backwardness results from integration at the bottom of the hierarchy of dependence, not a failure to integrate within the global economy. Frank argued that the more 'satellites' are associated with the metropolises, the more they are held back, and not the other way around. In

this connection, Frank specifically cited the instances of north-east Brazil and the West Indies as regions of close contact with the core, but where processes of internal transformation had been rendered impossible due to such close contact.

Conway and Heynen (2008) note how Frank presents Brazil as the clearest case of national and regional underdevelopment. He argued that the expansion of capitalism beginning in the sixteenth century sequentially incorporated urban cores and their extensive hinterlands into the global economy as exporting nodes. Cities such as Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Paraná figured most prominently in this expansion. Frank (1967) argued that this process witnessed the apparent development of these nodes, but in the long run led to the underdevelopment of the wider region.

As shown by the example of Brazil, dependency theory represents a holistic view because it describes a chain of dependent relations which has grown since the establishment of capitalism as the dominant world system, so its expansion is regarded as coterminous with colonialism and underdevelopment.

The chain of exploitative relations witnesses the extraction and transmission of surplus value via a process of unequal exchange, extending from the peasant, through the market town, regional centre, national capital, to the international metropole, as shown in Figure 3.17. The terms of trade have always worked in favour of the next higher level in the chain, so that social surplus value becomes progressively concentrated (Castells, 1977; Harvey, 1973).

By such means, dependency theorists argue that the dominant capitalist powers, such as England and then the USA, encouraged the transformation of political and economic structures in order to serve their own interests. According to this view, colonial territories were organised to produce primary products at minimal cost, while simultaneously becoming an increasing market for industrial products. Inexorably, social surplus value was siphoned off from poor to rich regions, and from the developing world to the developed.

### The critique of dependency and the rise of world systems theory

The chief criticism of dependency theory is that it is economistic, seeing all as the outcome of a form of economic determinism, conforming with what Armstrong and McGee (1985: 38–9) have described as the 'impersonal, even mechanical analysis of structuralism'.

Furthermore, the theory only appears to deal with class structure and other factors internal to a given nation, insofar as they are the outcome of the fundamental economic processes described. Another point

of contention is how dependency theory suggests that countries can only advance their lots by delinking from the global economy, whereas the capitalist world system is busily becoming more global and interdependent. For all these reasons, dependency theory has largely been out of fashion in the First World since the 1980s (Preston, 1996). But again we should stress that in radical quarters such ideas and ways of thinking have never gone out of fashion.

Wallerstein (1974, 1980) attempted to get around some of the criticisms of basic dependency theory, including the internal–external agency debate, by stressing the existence of a somewhat more complex and finely divided 'world system' (Taylor, 1986). The essential point is that Wallerstein distinguishes not only between the core nations, which became the leading industrial producers, and the peripheral states, which were maintained as agricultural providers, but also identifies the semi-peripheries (see also Klak, 2008).

It is argued that the semi-peripheries play a key role, for these intermediate states are strongly ambitious in competing for core status by increasing their importance as industrial producers relative to their standing as agricultural suppliers. For the semi-peripheral capitalist nations, read the NICs. Within the world system since the sixteenth century there have been cyclical periods of expansion, contraction, crisis and change. Hence it is envisaged that the fate of a particular nation is not entirely externally driven, but depends on the internal manner in which external forces have been responded to and accommodated.

### Dependency theory: final comments

Frank's ideas are seen by many as being near to the orthodox Marxist view that the advanced capitalist world at once both exploited and kept the Third World underdeveloped. Although many would undoubtedly refute this view as extreme, if one can clear away the moral outrage, it may be argued that elements of the analysis, even if in a world-systems form, are likely to provide food for thought for those interpreting patterns of development.

As Hettne (1995) notes, dependency theory stressed that the biggest obstacles to development are not a lack of capital or entrepreneurial skill, but are to be found in the international division of labour. As already observed, certainly the graphical representation

of pure dependency theory exhibits many parallels with the spatial outcomes of the core–periphery, mercantile and plantopolis models of settlement development and structure (see Figure 3.17).

### Articulation theory

One final element of radical development theory stressing exploitation is the so-called theory of the articulation of the modes of production. The basic argument is that the capitalist mode of production exists alongside (and is articulated with) non-capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production. The capitalist system replaces the non-capitalist system where profits are to be accrued in so doing. However, the pre-capitalist form is left intact wherever profits are unlikely to be made and it is therefore advantageous to do so.

A frequently cited example is low-income housing, where the poor are left to provide their own folk or vernacular homes whereas the formal sector provides

for the middle and upper classes (Burgess, 1990, 1992; Drakakis-Smith, 1981; McGee, 1979; Potter, 1992b, 1994; Potter and Conway, 1997).

A macro-spatial but more specific example of the modes of production approach was provided by the operation of apartheid in South Africa. In this, the so-called 'homelands' preserved the traditional mode of production in order to conserve black labour, which was then allowed to commute to 'White South Africa'.

Hence, according to this radical perspective, dualism is a product of the contradictions of the capitalist system, not some form of aberration. Similarly, according to this view, underdevelopment can be described as a stalemate in the process of articulation. In other words, underdevelopment continues where there is no direct interest in the capitalist system in transforming the existing situation. Case study 3.2 discusses the position of aborigines in Australia, using the modes of production framework of analysis as an example.

## Case study 3.2

### Aborigines, development and modes of production

As noted by Drakakis-Smith (1983), Australia has experienced many different facets of colonialism. For much of the last 200 years it was a direct colony of Britain and was exploited as such for its mineral wealth and agricultural produce. However, throughout its history as a White nation state, whether colony or independent, Australia has harboured its own internal process of exploitation – that of its indigenous Aboriginal population by Whites. There can be little doubt that Aborigines do in fact comprise a subordinate, deprived and exploited group within Australian society.

Close investigation reveals how government measures have effectively institutionalised Aboriginal dependency in an unequal relationship which brings benefits principally to the White middle classes. Before the initial settlement by the British in 1788, Aborigines lived in what Meillassoux (1972, 1978) has termed a natural economy where land is the subject rather than the object of labour. The technology was simple but effective, with human energy alone being employed to tap the environmental resources

through systems of hunting and collecting. Although life was primarily organised around the collection and consumption of subsistence food, a considerable amount of time was given over to ritual and ceremonial activities and to the production of consumer durables in the form of hunting weapons, tools and items with religious significance.

The mode of distribution was based on sharing the hunted and gathered food, and was therefore strongly related to the mode of production. One of the most important features of the pre-capitalist Aboriginal economy was an intense involvement with the land, both in physical and spiritual terms, with a strong emphasis on the spiritual. The small numbers, simple lifestyle and apparent lack of political organisation among the Aborigines convinced the British that there was no need for negotiation or treaties with such a 'primitive' people. Accordingly, all land was declared to be Crown land from the outset, so no compensation was paid to the Aborigines and no pre-existing rights were recognised. This legalistic appropriation of the land itself has been a fundamental

### Case study 3.2 (continued)

factor in the subsequent exploitation of the Aboriginal people in Australia. Simply on the grounds that the indigenous population appeared to be disorganised and primitive, the British removed at one administrative stroke both the economic and spiritual basis of Aboriginal society.

For several decades after these developments, Aborigines appeared to be unimportant within the Australian colonial economy. In the first instance, labour was provided by assigned convicts, and later by larger landowners buying out many of the initial smallholders. By the 1830s, however, the rapid development of sheep farming to supply wool for export had led to the encouragement of large-scale labour migration from Britain.

But this rapid expansion of pastoral farming in the second half of the nineteenth century brought Aborigines once more into direct contact with the vanguard of White settlement. Hitherto, they had been virtually ignored – despised, destitute and decimated by starvation, anomy and disease. By the mid nineteenth century pastoral settlement was beginning to push into the central and northern regions of the country, where conditions were harsher and Aborigines more numerous. Thus, Aboriginal labour was for the first time becoming a necessity on those properties where sheer size and harsh climate led to a sharp reduction in the enthusiasm of recruited White labour to move north.

Thus, Aboriginal labour, either as station hands or domestics, was extensively used from the 1880s

onwards. Bands and families were encouraged to stay on the land after its appropriation, where they received payment in kind for work undertaken on the station. Labour relations were at best paternalistic, but more often than not the property owners or managers had little interest in the reproduction of Aboriginal labour, considering the supply to be limitless and the individuals unworthy of detailed attention. Living conditions and diet were often totally inadequate and populations were decimated. As the value of the Aboriginal labour began to be more appreciated, so the Australian government began to establish a series of expanded reserves and settlements.

Australia has changed markedly since 1945. Although it still makes a notable contribution to the production process, the Aboriginal community is now more important as a consumer group for the goods and services of an extensive tertiary system operated almost entirely by Whites. In effect, this comprises a third stage in the institutionalisation of Aborigines within a dependency framework, following the appropriation of their land and labour power.

In the contemporary situation in Aboriginal Australia, therefore, the dominant capitalist mode of production has conserved the Aboriginal pre-capitalist mode of production largely for its role as a consumer of goods and services. The class position and economic prosperity of the White population is largely dependent on this relationship.

The concept was born at the Seventh Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly and the allied publication by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation of *What Now?* The session stressed the need for self-reliance to be seen as central to the development process, and for the emphasis to be placed on endogenous (internal) rather than exogenous (external) forces of change (see also Chapter 1).

It also came to be increasingly suggested that development should meet the basic needs of the people (see Chapter 1). At the same time, development needed to be ecologically sensitive and to stress more forcefully the principles of public participation (Potter, 1985).

## Alternative, bottom-up and participatory approaches: perspectives on 'another' development

### Introduction

The somewhat inelegant and uninformative expression *another development* has been used to denote the watershed in thinking which has characterised the period since the mid 1970s (Brohman, 1996; Hettne, 1995).

Thus, from the mid 1970s a growing critique of top-down policies, especially growth-pole policy, argued that such approaches had merely replaced concentration at one point in space with concentrated-deconcentration at a limited number of new localities. In other words, the status quo had been maintained, even if the pattern had changed.

However, at long last, assertions that there is only one linear path to development and that development is the same thing as economic growth came to be seriously challenged, at least in some quarters. Liberal and radical commentators averred that top-down approaches to development were acting as the servants of transnational capital (Friedmann and Weaver, 1979). In a similar vein, other commentators argued that what had been achieved in the past was economic growth without development, but with increasing poverty (Hettne, 1995).

### The territorial bases of development

In their book *Territory and Function*, John Friedmann and Clyde Weaver (1979) presented the important argument that development theory and practice to that point had been dominated by purely functional concerns relating to economic efficiency and modernity, with all too little consideration being accorded to the needs of particular territories, and to the territorial (indigenous) bases of development and change (Plate 3.8).

Since 1975 a major new paradigm has come to the fore, which involves stronger emphasis being placed on rural-based strategies of development. As a whole, this approach is described as 'development from below'. Other terms used to describe the paradigm include agropolitan development, grassroots development and urban-based rural development. In the context of wider societal change, such developments can be related to the rise of what is called neo-populism. Neo-populism involves attempts to recreate and re-establish the local community as a form of protection against the rise of the industrial system (Hettne, 1995: 117). The territorial manifestation of neo-populism has been the rise of the green ideology as a global concern, allied to green politics.

### Basic needs and development

The provision of basic needs became a major focus during the early 1970s. The idea of basic needs originated

with a group of Latin American theorists, and was officially launched at the International Labour Organization's World Employment Conference, which was held in 1976. Preston (1996) argues that the pessimistic view of the Club of Rome's Limits to Growth (Chapters 5 and 6), was the motivating force behind basic needs strategies.

The approach stressed the importance of creating employment over and above the creation of economic growth. This was because the economic growth that had occurred in developing countries seemed to have gone hand in hand with increases in relative poverty. Development, it appeared, was failing to improve conditions for the poorest and weakest sectors of society.

The argument ran that what was needed was redistribution of wealth to be effected alongside growth. During this period, the basic needs approach was accepted and adopted by a range of international agencies, not only the International Labour Organization (ILO), but also United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank. However, it has to be recognised that many basic needs approaches used the aegis of the poor in cheap basic needs programmes in place of greater state commitment to poverty alleviation. This is why the World Bank became such a rapid convert to the approach. In these circumstances it has to be acknowledged that the practical implementation of basic needs had little to do with socialist principles per se.

The principal idea is that basic needs, such as food, clothing and housing, must be met as a clear first priority within particular territories. In the purest form, it is argued that this can only be achieved by nations becoming more reliant on local resources, the communalisation of productive wealth, and closing up to outside forces of change. This aspect of development theory is known as selective regional and territorial closure.

### Development from below or bottom-up development

In basic terms, therefore, it is argued that Third World countries should try to reduce their involvement in processes of unequal exchange. The only way round the problem is to increase self-sufficiency and self-reliance. It is envisaged that later the economy can be diversified and non-agricultural activities introduced. But it is argued that, in these circumstances, urban locations are no longer likely to be mandatory, and cities can in





**Plate 3.9** Environmental costs of development; pollution near Witbank, Eastern Transvaal, South Africa

(photo: Eric Millex, Panos Pictures)

this sense be based on agriculture. Thus, Friedmann and Weaver (1979: 200) comment that 'large cities will lose their present overwhelming advantage'.

Clearly, such approaches are inspired by, if not entirely based on, socialist principles. Classic examples of the enactment of bottom-up paths to development have been China, Cuba, Grenada, Jamaica and

Tanzania under the *ujamaa* policies inspired by African socialism. As Hettne (1995) notes, self-sufficiency has frequently been perceived as a threat to the influence of superpowers, as in the case of tiny Grenada (Brierley, 1985a, 1985b, 1989; Potter, 1993a, 1993b; Potter and Welch, 1996). This example is discussed in some detail in Case study 3.3.

### Case study 3.3

#### Paths to development: the case of Grenada

The experience of Grenada in the eastern Caribbean is useful in demonstrating that alternative paths to development do not have to be revolutionary in the Marxist political sense (Potter and Lloyd-Evans, 1998). In March 1979, Maurice Bishop, a UK-trained lawyer, overthrew what was regarded as the dictatorial and corrupt regime of Eric Gairy. Maurice Bishop led the New Jewel Movement (NJM), the principal theme of which was anti-Gairyism allied with anti-imperialism. The movement also expressed its strong commitment to genuine independence and self-reliance for the people of Grenada (Brierley,

1985a, 1985b; Ferguson, 1990; Hudson, 1989, 1991; Kirton, 1988; Potter, 1993a, 1993b).

On the eve of the revolution, Grenada suffered from a chronic trade deficit, strong reliance on aid and remittances from nationals based overseas, dependence on food imports and very substantial areas of idle agricultural land. After the overthrow of Gairy, the NJM formed the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG), the movement taking a basic human needs approach as the core of its development philosophy. The PRG stated its intention of preventing the prices of food, clothing and other

### Case study 3.3 (continued)

basic items from rocketing, along with its wish to see Grenada depart from its traditional role as an exporter of cheap produce. The government also set up the National Cooperative Development Agency in 1980, the express aim of which was to engage unemployed groups in villages in the process of 'marrying idle hands with idle lands'.

Between 1981 and 1982, two agro-industry plants were completed, one producing coffee and spices, the other juices and jams. A strong emphasis was placed on encouraging the population to value locally grown produce together with local forms of cuisine, although the scale of this task was clearly appreciated by those concerned (Potter and Welch, 1996). The PRG also pledged itself to the provision of free medicines, dental care and education. Finally, it was an avowed intention of the People's Revolutionary Government to promote what Bishop referred to as the New Tourism, a term which is now widely employed in the literature. New Tourism meant the introduction of what the party regarded as socio-logically relevant forms of holidaymaking, especially those which emphasised the culture and history of the nation, and which would be based on local foods, cuisine, handicrafts and furniture-making (Patullo, 1996). Such forms of tourist development, it was argued, should replace extant forms based on overseas interests and the exploitation of the local environment and socio-cultural history.

The salient point is that, throughout the period, 80 per cent of the economy of Grenada remained in the hands of the private sector, and a trisectoral

strategy of development that encompassed private, public and cooperative parts of the economy was the declared aim of the PRG. In this sense, the so-called Grenadian Revolution was nothing of the sort. The economy of Grenada grew quite substantially from 1979 to 1983, at rates of between 2.1 and 5.5 per cent per annum. During the period, the value of Grenada's imported foodstuffs fell from 33 to 27.5 per cent. Even the World Bank commented favourably on the state of the Grenadian economy during the period from 1979 (Brierley, 1985a).

For many it was a matter of great regret that Maurice Bishop was assassinated in October 1983, and the island invaded by US military forces, because this saw the end of the four-year experiment in alternative development set up in this small Commonwealth nation (Brierley, 1985a). This deprived other small dependent Third World states of the fully worked-through lessons of grassroots development that Grenada seemed to be in the process of providing.

#### Critical reflection

Grenada provides a good example of how a small island nation can endeavour to localise and indigenise development. Most countries are, of course, far larger than Grenada and have more extensive resource bases. Think of the wider strategies that nations can employ in a number of different economic sectors in order to promote bottom-up development. How easy is it to implement such approaches in the global economy of the present day?

Walter Stöhr (1981) provides an informative overview of development from below. In particular, his account stresses that there is no single recipe for such strategies, as there is for development from above. Development from below needs to be closely related to specific socio-cultural, historical and institutional conditions. Simply stated, development should be based on territorial units and should endeavour to mobilise their indigenous natural and human resources. More particularly, the approach is based on the use of indigenous resources, self-reliance and appropriate technology, plus a range of other

possible factors, many of which are shown in Table 3.1.

It is noticeable that bottom-up strategies are varied, with alternative paths to development being stressed. They share the characteristic of arguing that development and change should not be concentrated at each higher level of the social and settlement systems, but should focus on the needs of the lower echelons of these respective orders. It is this characteristic which gives rise to the term *bottom-up* development, for such strategies are in fact often enacted by strong state control and direction from the political 'centre'.

**Table 3.1 Stöhr's criteria for the enactment of development from below**

Broad access to land
A territorially organised structure for equitable communal decision making
Granting greater self-determination to rural areas
Selecting regionally appropriate technology
Giving priority to projects which serve basic needs
Introduction to national price policies
External resources used only where peripheral ones are inadequate
The development of productive activities exceeding regional demands
Restructuring urban and transport systems to include all internal regions
Improvement of rural-to-urban and village communications
Egalitarian societal structures and collective consciousness

Source: Based on Stöhr (1981)

## Environment and development

Perhaps the major development since the 1970s has been the emergence of environmental consciousness in the arena of development thinking (see Plate 3.9). Central to this evolving concern was the Brundtland Commission on Environment and Development which reported in 1987 (WCED, 1987). Even more important was the Earth Summit held in Rio in the summer of 1992. This United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) brought together some 180 nations. It was at this stage that principles of environmental sustainability became a political issue in the development debate (Pelling, 2008). This interest continued in the Rio plus 10 (years) conference, or the Second Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, South Africa in August–September 2002.

## Ecodevelopment becomes sustainable development

Ecodevelopment, now known as sustainable development, has become one of the leading development paradigms since the 1990s, stressing the need to preserve the natural biological systems that underpin the global economy (Elliott, 1994; Redclift, 1987); and such approaches are fully explored in Chapter 6.

Sustainability constitutes the ecological dimension of territorialism discussed previously (Hettne, 1995). Territory, it is argued, should be considered before function, and developing countries should not look to developed nations for the template on which to base their development. Rather, they should look towards their own ecology and culture (see Case study 3.3).

In this context, too, it is recognised that development does not have a universal meaning. Strongly allied to this, the need for emancipatory views on women and development, and ethnicity and development has started to receive the attention that it merits, not least in the guise of ecofeminism.

It is in this sense that sustainable development means more than preserving natural biological systems. There is the assumption of implicit fairness or justice within sustainable development, so the poor and disadvantaged are not forced to degrade or pollute their environments in order to be able to survive on a day-to-day basis (Drakakis-Smith, 1996; Eden and Parry, 1996; Lloyd-Evans and Potter, 1996).

The much-quoted definition of sustainable development was provided by the Brundtland Commission as development 'that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WCED, 1987: 43). This is a far cry from the unilinear, Eurocentric functional perspectives advanced during the 1960s and 1970s, and demonstrates the wide-ranging changes that have occurred in development theory, development policies and geographies of development over the past 40 years.

However, as noted at the outset of this chapter, the promotion of sustainable development is occurring in a context where neo-liberal economic policies are dominant, and many would stress the incompatibility of these two forces of change at their extremes – as is witnessed in the current debates about cheap air flights and global warming.

## Alternative development: a summary

Brohman (1996) provides a useful summary of what he sees as the main elements of alternative development strategies, and this provides a useful summary of the discussion so far in this section:

- A move towards direct redistributive mechanisms specifically targeting the poor.

- A focus on local small-scale projects, often linked to urban or rural community-based development programmes.
- An emphasis on basic needs and human resource development.
- A refocusing away from growth-oriented definitions of development, towards more broadly based human-oriented frameworks.
- A concern for local and community participation in the design and implementation of projects.
- An emphasis on self-reliance, reducing outside dependency and promoting sustainability.

## New forms of governance: civil society, social capital and participatory development

The account thus far has considered the provision of basic needs, and the promotion of redistribution and self-reliance, and these can certainly be seen as some of the basic characteristics of alternative development, both in terms of its origins and its early practice. But alternative development has now come to be associated with new and wider conceptualisations of planning and development.

The main distinguishing feature here is the fostering of participatory development, associated with more equitable principles of growth. Given the long hegemony of so-called 'top-down', Western, rational planning and development, increasing the involvement of people in their own development is seen by many as imperative. Chambers (1983) averred that it was time for the last to be put first (see also Mohan, 2008).

In this context, participation means much more than involvement or mere consultation (Conyers, 1982; Potter, 1985). While these calls seem eminently reasonable, how is this to be achieved, and who exactly is to participate? Clearly, not everybody can participate in all decisions all of the time. Indeed, it has to be recognised that it is a democratic right not to participate.

These changes have become involved with wider issues, suggesting the need for the evolution of new forms of governance. In turn, the account on governance is closely associated with buzz words and new concepts. Not that many years ago, the terms 'civil society' and 'social capital' had little or no currency. But as the state has progressively withdrawn from specific areas during the neo-liberal era, so the organisations existing between family groups and the state (leaving

aside businesses), have become more and more important. This is referred to as the rise of 'civil society' (Edwards, 2001a; Fukuyama, 2001). Civil society may be regarded as forming a so-called 'third sector', in addition to the traditional two of the state and the marketplace.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) form a vital part of civil society, along with other types of civil associations. These have come to play an increasingly important role in local and community-based initiatives in developing societies (Desai, 2002; Mercer, 2002). Brohman (1996) cites 2200 developed world NGOs operating in 1984, with as many as 10,000 to 20,000 in the Global South working in partnership with northern counterparts. NGO projects tend to be small-scale and stress the employment of local resources and appropriate technologies, in tandem with grassroots participation.

One of the principal merits of NGOs is seen as their extreme sensitivity to local conditions and their dedication to the tasks at hand (Brohman, 1996). NGOs are also often linked to wider forms of global citizen action in the form of popular movements in the fields of health, education, welfare and employment. Further, much of the work of NGOs has involved poverty reduction measures. On the negative side, there is a strong argument that NGOs have been used to fill the vacuum left by the rolling back of the state as part of structural adjustment programmes and neo-liberalism more generally.

The rise of civil society is also based on the importance of social capital (Bebbington, 2008; Fukuyama, 2001). The expression 'social capital' first emerged in the early 1990s, and has quickly become a key term used by international agencies, governments and NGOs.

An American academic, Robert Putnam (1993), who studied community linkages in southern Italy and the USA, is often mentioned as the key figure in the field. However, many difficulties surround both the definition of, and attempts to measure, social capital. One commonly employed definition sees social capital as comprising the informal norms that promote cooperation between two or more individuals. These norms also lead to cooperation and the pursuit of mutual benefit in groups and organisations. The idea that promoting development is about increasing the stock of social capital within a given societal context is one that has come to be articulated by a number of authorities since the 1990s. Perhaps the most realistic perspective

is to see an awareness of social capital as critical to understanding, fostering and guiding development (Fukuyama, 2001).

But it would be naive to see 'social capital' as a miracle cure for development problems wherever they are encountered. In any given territorial context, social capital is likely to be the product of a wide range of factors, including shared historical experiences, local cultural norms, traditions and religion. Thus, it is hard to suggest ways in which the ties which bind people together can easily be created or manufactured as a part of developing different areas.

Further, it has to be recognised that social capital can have as many negative connotations as positive ones. As a simple example, the ties which serve to bond together members of a criminal fraternity also, simultaneously, serve to exclude non-members, who are among those likely to be exploited. In this manner, we are left with a similar argument to that encountered in relation to wider civil society; namely, that the concept can be employed to paper over the cracks left by the withdrawal of the state under World Bank and IMF neo-liberal economic packages. Thus, while some may see social capital as a key concept in promoting participatory development, it must be recognised that it can also meet many of the needs of the neo-liberal right.

A changing paradigm is also discernible in the field of planning, where since the late 1990s there has been a clear move away from expert-based and top-down systems. The argument runs that all too often planning and development in the past have been directly associated with 'outside' experts being brought in to solve problems (see, for example, Potter and Pugh, 2001; Pugh and Potter, 2000).

It is increasingly being argued that all stakeholders relating to particular issues need to be brought into the framework as part of a 'good governance' agenda (see Chapter 7). Indeed, the World Bank itself has increasingly adopted this stance in its public pronouncements.

An early representation of such an argument in the field of development was Chambers (1983; see also 1997). Chambers stressed the Eurocentric and other biases which have customarily pervaded development and urged the use of participatory rural appraisal (PRA) to counter such tendencies. PRA rejects written means of investigation. Rather, it is argued that in exploring local community development issues, visual and oral techniques should be employed. Thus, PRA advocates the use of oral histories, mapping exercises, and the ranking of preferences to explore community-

based issues. The aim is to articulate and listen to a wider set of local voices as part of community planning and development.

Fundamentally, it must be recognised that all meaningful participation in planning and development practice is about changing existing power relations in the arena of decision making. Thus, changing the ways in which planning and development are carried out involves the empowerment of new groups of stakeholders. More recently, this move towards 'people power' or 'citizen control' (Nelson and Wright, 1995) has given rise to what are referred to as collaborative approaches to planning.

In collaborative planning, the accent is placed on developing collaboration among the various stakeholders, in respect of both policy development and delivery. The approach has been explored in the European context by Healey (1997, 1998, 1999) and Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger (1998). Essentially, it is recognised that reactive institutional frameworks need to be fostered which will allow a wide range of stakeholders to be involved in decision making, and not just trained experts, professionals and elites. It is a prime requirement of the 'communicative turn' that the many different forms of local knowledge that exist are taken into account.

All such approaches basically involve consensus-building in decision making. The approach is sometimes also referred to as 'communicative planning', as it is in part based on Habermas' concept of communicative rationality. It also takes in Foucault's ideas concerning the centrality of power in all social spheres.

Debate continues concerning exactly how practical such ideas are in reality, and whether consensus can ever be established in areas where fragmentation and conflict seem to be built into the system. However, collaborative and communicative planning must be seen as new perspectives in development thinking, which are likely to have a direct bearing on development theories and strategies.

All such approaches, involving greater participation and empowerment, witness a movement toward considering development at the local scale. But such approaches are not without their potential problems. Thus, Mohan and Stokke (2000) argue that the focus on the local carries the danger that the power relations and inequalities that underlie development issues and problems may be lost sight of. The authors argue that a stronger emphasis must be placed on the politics of the local if such 'dangers of localism' are to be avoided.

More recently, Purcell and Brown (2005) have argued that there is no inherent reason why decision making at the local level should be more efficient or just. Scale, they argue, is a backdrop to good decision making.

## Development theory, modernity and postmodernity

### A postmodern age?

Abandoning the evolutionary and deterministic modernisation paradigm associated historically with the enlightenment opens up several postmodern options for future development, and some of them have been reviewed in the previous section on bottom-up, alternative and participatory conceptualisations of development.

These trends in development thinking can be linked with the idea that, globally speaking, we are entering a postmodern age, associated with the rise of a knowledge-based post-industrial economy. It is also associated with greater plurality and hybridity. This theme is briefly addressed here, and receives, further, more explicit attention in relation to globalisation trends and development in the next chapter. Some aspects of postmodernity in relation to development ideologies have already been outlined in Chapter 1.

## Postmodernism as twenty-first-century development

In simple terms, postmodernity involves moving away from an era dominated by notions of modernisation and modernity (Plate 3.10a,b and Figure 3.18). It is therefore intimately associated with development theory and practice. It involves the rejection of modernism and a return to premodern and vernacular forms, as well as the creation of distinctly new post-modern forms (Harvey, 1989; Soja, 1989; Urry, 1990). It can be seen as a reaction against the functionalism and austerity of the modern period in favour of a heterogeneity of styles, drawing on the past and on contemporary mass culture (Plate 3.11).

As argued earlier in this chapter, there is much in the idea that the whole ethos of the modern period privileged the metropolitan over the provinces, the developed over the developing worlds, North America over the Pacific Rim, the professional expert over the general populace and men over women (see Figure 3.19).

In contrast, the postmodern potentially involves a diversity of approaches, which may serve to empower 'other' alternative voices and cultures (Figure 3.19). A strong emphasis on bottom-up, non-hierarchical growth strategies, which endeavour to get away from the international sameness, depthlessness and



Plate 3.10a Modern Hong Kong towers above traditional sampans (photo: Rob Potter)