

## 'Y Ffwrwm' 2005 Lecture Series: Main Points

### **LECTURE 1:**

DRWM /THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF WALES, ABERYSTWYTH / SATURDAY,  
7 MAY, 2005

PROFESSOR **SUZANNE ROMAINE**, MERTON PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

## **PLANNING FOR SURVIVAL**

### **LANGUAGE**

The 10 'largest' languages of the world are spoken by 50% of the world's population, and the percentage is increasing. 6,000 languages are spoken by 10% of the world's population. Only about 100 languages are official languages for writing, government, education and the media.

Language summarises specialist information.

Vocabulary = a list of the things that people from the same culture talk about.

### **LANGUAGE CHANGE**

The myths need to be demolished – e.g. that there is no difference between a 'natural' change in language and a change that leads to extinction.

It is not the formal arrangements – such as education – that will ensure the prosperity of a language, but rather the social use made of the language.

Language shift does not happen because of increased choice, rather because of less choice, through the use of undemocratic power.

### **LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY**

Linguistic diversity gives us a unique view on the human mind.

There is a co-relation between areas where biodiversity is threatened and areas where languages are in danger.

Linguistic diversity and biodiversity are interdependent elements within the same environment: both face the same threats, and the solution is the same in both cases, namely to empower the local people.

### **ACTION**

One must not lose sight of the power of individuals to have things changed:  
*"Never underestimate the power of individual advocacy"*

**LECTURE 2:**

THEATR FELIN-FACH, FELIN-FACH CAMPUS, DYFFRYN AERON,  
CEREDIGION / WEDNESDAY EVENING, 29 JUNE, 2005

**EUROS LEWIS**, CHAIR OF 'Y FFWRWM'

## **COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE WELSH-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES**

### **THE MEANING OF 'CYMUNED' (COMMUNITY)**

The vocabulary of central planners betrays their inability to understand, or to cope with, the needs of Welsh-speaking communities and their inherent ( and nonconformist) potential.

'*Cymdogaeth*' (*neighbourhood*) rather than '*cymuned*' (community) as '*cymdogaeth*' includes the networks of belonging and of sharing responsibility that are at the core of Welsh rural culture.

"One of the characteristics of a '*cymdogaeth*' is that it is the '*cymdogaeth*' itself – in its various forms, in its various attires – that identifies and defines its boundaries". Acknowledging this is an essential part of the process of embarking on the development journey. A '*cymdogaeth*' continuously changes and adapts its definition of itself.

### **THE MEANING OF 'EDUCATION'**

Raymond Williams: '*A culture, essentially, is unplannable. We have to ensure the means of life and the means of community.*'

Informal/Community Education = a '*cymdogaeth*' of learners/people asking questions/finding the answer together.

Community Education is a means of challenging the negative clichés, and to turn 'there's nothing we can do about it' into 'what shall we do first?'

### **THE OPPORTUNITY OF THE MOMENT**

The potential of combining formal and informal education in order to create a continuum that ensures that every '*cymdogaeth*'...cherishes the intention to extend and to improve its self-awareness; and has the desire and the ability to question, to observe and to discuss for the future.'

The small schools crisis offers a golden opportunity to develop an uniquely Welsh education model – one that responds to the challenge of the current situation.

**LECTURE 3:**

SOCIETIES' PAVILION / THE NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD OF WALES / FRIDAY,  
5 AUGUST, 2005

**GARETH IOAN**, A MEMBER OF THE FFWRWM AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF  
LANGUAGE PLANNING AGENCY IAITH *cyf*.

## **INSPIRED ACTION**

### **PRINCIPLES**

We hold as essential: the value of society, the geographical community, the cultural heritage that comes from being involved with place and nation, and to the process of travelling together and searching for meaning together within that cultural framework.

A Language Act does not secure a language – although helpful. It is communities that sustain languages.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

When working with Welsh-speaking communities, the community development field needs to start acknowledging the need for actions that are both linguistically and culturally appropriate.

Current community development practices in Welsh speaking communities and networks are often blind to the cultural reality of the local community and alien to the local context. They are often essentially urban, post-industrial models. e.g. The term 'capacity building' can be patronising and 'participation' often means that 'you' are supposed to approach 'them'.

It is about time for us to start recording our own practice and publishing our own development literature as a resource for training and reflection in appropriate practices in cultural action and community language planning.

### **BUILDING AND ACTION**

'Regeneration', as a concept and programme, is also often inappropriate. The aim should be to build on that which we already have; to use aspects of Welsh speaking culture as a direct and specific tool to create social change at a local level.

Community language plans need to be looked at in a professional, systematic, composite, intellectual and intentional manner.

We should work not for bilingualism alone, but for *biculturalism* as well.

**LECTURE 4:**

THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, LLANDDEWI BREFI / FRIDAY EVENING, 30  
SEPTEMBER, 2005

PROFESSOR **TIM INGOLD**, THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL  
STUDIES, THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

## LANDSCAPE AND WEATHER

### PERCEPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Our way of describing the relationship between ourselves and our environment has a considerable effect on our perception of ourselves as individuals and as a society.

Our experience of the world is an experience not of looking at the world, but of *being in* the world. We look at the world from inside the world – but our language does not always enable us to acknowledge this.

Our multiple ways of speaking about the experiences gained through our senses suggests that each individual has more than one way of perceiving the world:

- we mention *seeing* 'things' (seeing is an 'authoritative' way of perceiving)
- we mention *hearing* 'sounds' (hearing is an 'experiential' way of perceiving)

'Is perception a *fact* or a *report*?'

### INTELLECTUAL RESPONSIBILITY

The concept of 'objectivity' can be misleading as a way of representing the environment as it suggests that it is possible for us to disconnect ourselves from the environment.

The world constantly changes, and we constantly view the world afresh. However, we must place ourselves *in* the world at all times.

'*Perceptual engagement is the basis of all knowledge.*'

### ECOLOGICAL INTELLIGENCE

Anthropology: '*Philosophy with the people in*'. It is not studying people, but studying *with* people.

People and things are the paths of their movements through the world: '*A root exists as the path of its own growth.*'

We should be thinking in terms of the weather, rather than landscape, when considering our relationship with the environment.

**LECTURE 5:**

DRWM / THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF WALES, ABERYSTWYTH /  
SATURDAY, 3 DECEMBER, 2005

PROFESSOR EMERITUS **ANN BUTTIMER**, THE DEPARTMENT OF  
GEOGRAPHY, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

## **GEOGRAPHY, INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AND SUSTAINABLE WAYS OF LIFE**

### **SCALE AND WAYS OF LIFE**

Decisions being made far away, sector by sector, without consideration being given to the local effect:

- the processes of our ways of life are being driven by a global market and global technology.
- the side-effects of the problems are being driven to 'other' places that are 'far away' – e.g. to the environment.
- even environmental groups specialise and operate in a sectoral manner across geographical boundaries.
- prosperity within a sector is being considered more important than the prosperity of an area or region – e.g. the milk industry
- people lose control and the decisions go beyond their horizons.

Conflict within European policy – between emphasis on 'subsidiarity' on one hand and economic growth on the other.

### **LOCALLY/HORIZONTALLY**

Horizontal processes are more important than processes from the 'top down' or from 'bottom up'.

An appropriate 'scale' needs to be defined and established for economic and environmental developments.

More thought needs to be given to sustaining *geographical* ways of life.