

Everyday Globalization in a Rural Small Town



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Background

- European Research Council Advanced Grant
- GLOBAL-RURAL
- February 2014 – January 2019
- Understanding globalization and its impacts in rural localities
- 5 work packages
 - (Re-)assembling the global countryside
 - Mapping and narrating the global countryside
 - A (counter-)topography of everyday globalization
 - Differential global engagements in emerging rural economies
 - Rural assemblages and grounding global challenges

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Geographical research on globalization

- Bias to the 'global city'
- Focus in rural research on transnational processes, flows and networks
- Tendency to study spectacular examples
- For most rural places, the impact of globalization is more subtle and mundane

Everyday globalization



Everyday globalization



How do these processes work together to change our experience of rural places?

Newtown: an ordinary town



Newtown: an ordinary town



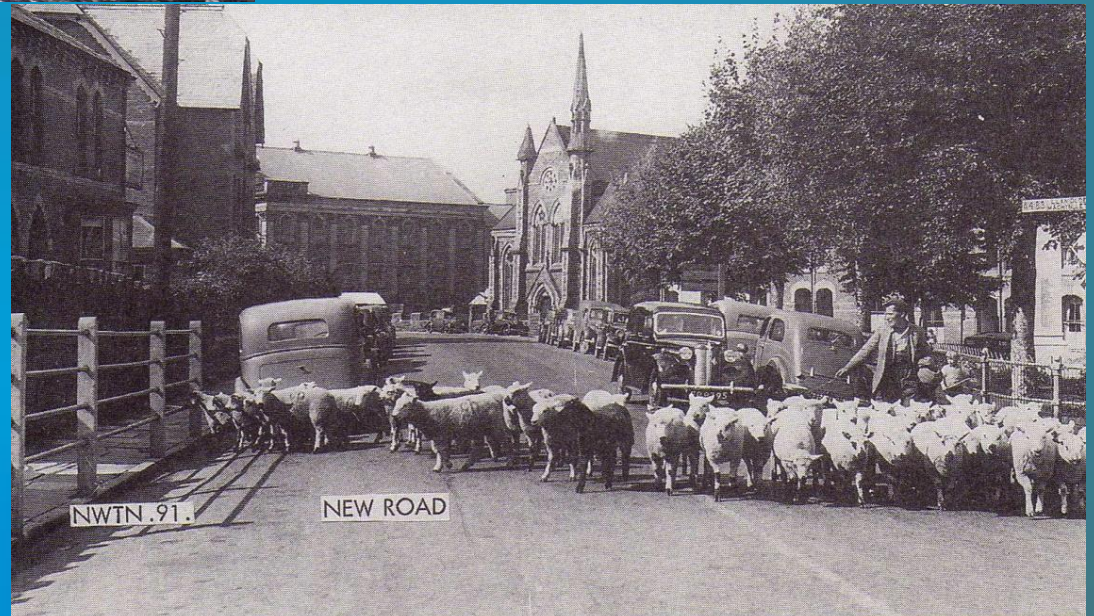
Population (2011): 11,317

Historical basis of Newtown economy

Textile industry

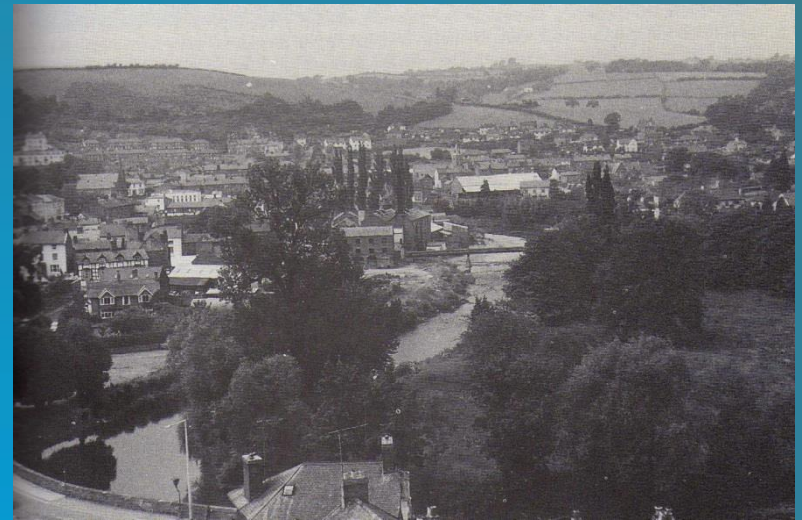


Agriculture



Redevelopment, 1960s-1980s

- Development Board for Rural Wales
- New housing
- New factories
- Growth of manufacturing industry
- Inward investment from UK and abroad





Control Techniques
Owned by US firm
Emerson
Factory in Newtown 1974
Employs around 500
people

Laura Ashley

Relocated to mid Wales
Major employer in 1980s
Bought by Malaysian firm
1997
Production moved to Asia



Population and migration

- Significant increase in population
- Migration from England

Census 2011:

- Born in Wales 44.5%
- Born in England 49.1%
- Born in EU 3.8%
- Born outside EU 2.0%

Ethnic entrepreneurs



Professionals

e.g. Greek, Polish & Egyptian dentists



Refugees

e.g. Vietnamese 1978, Belgian musicians WW1

Research questions

- What social, economic, political and cultural connections link Newtown with the wider world?
- What have been the key factors in shaping the connected geographies of Newtown over the last 50 years?
- What has been the effect of evolving global connections on the social, economic and cultural life of the town?
- Have evolving global connections contributed to the development of a 'global consciousness' among residents of the town?
- What do the dynamics and experiences of everyday globalization in Newtown tell us about how globalization is reproduced through local places?

Topography and Countertopography

Cindi Katz (2001) 'On the grounds of globalization: a topography for feminist political engagement', *Signs*, 26, 1213-1234.

- “I want to get at the specific ways globalization works on particular grounds in order to work out a situated but at the same time scale-jumping and geography-crossing, political response to it.” (Katz 2001: 1216)
- “These outcomes can be scrutinized through means of a topography that at once expresses and enlivens the operation of globalization while bringing them to bear on material social life” (Katz 2001: 1219)

Topography and Countertopography

- “To do a topography is to carry out a detailed examination of some part of the material world, defined at any scale from the body to the global, in order to understand its salient features and their mutual and broader relationships ... producing a critical topography makes it possible to excavate the layers of process that produce particular places and to see their intersections with material social practices at other scales of analysis” (Katz 2001: 1228)
- “threads of local globalizations can be seen in the landscape, and doing a topography brings them into sharp relief to expose their tensions, contradictions and affiliations.” (Katz 2001: 1228)

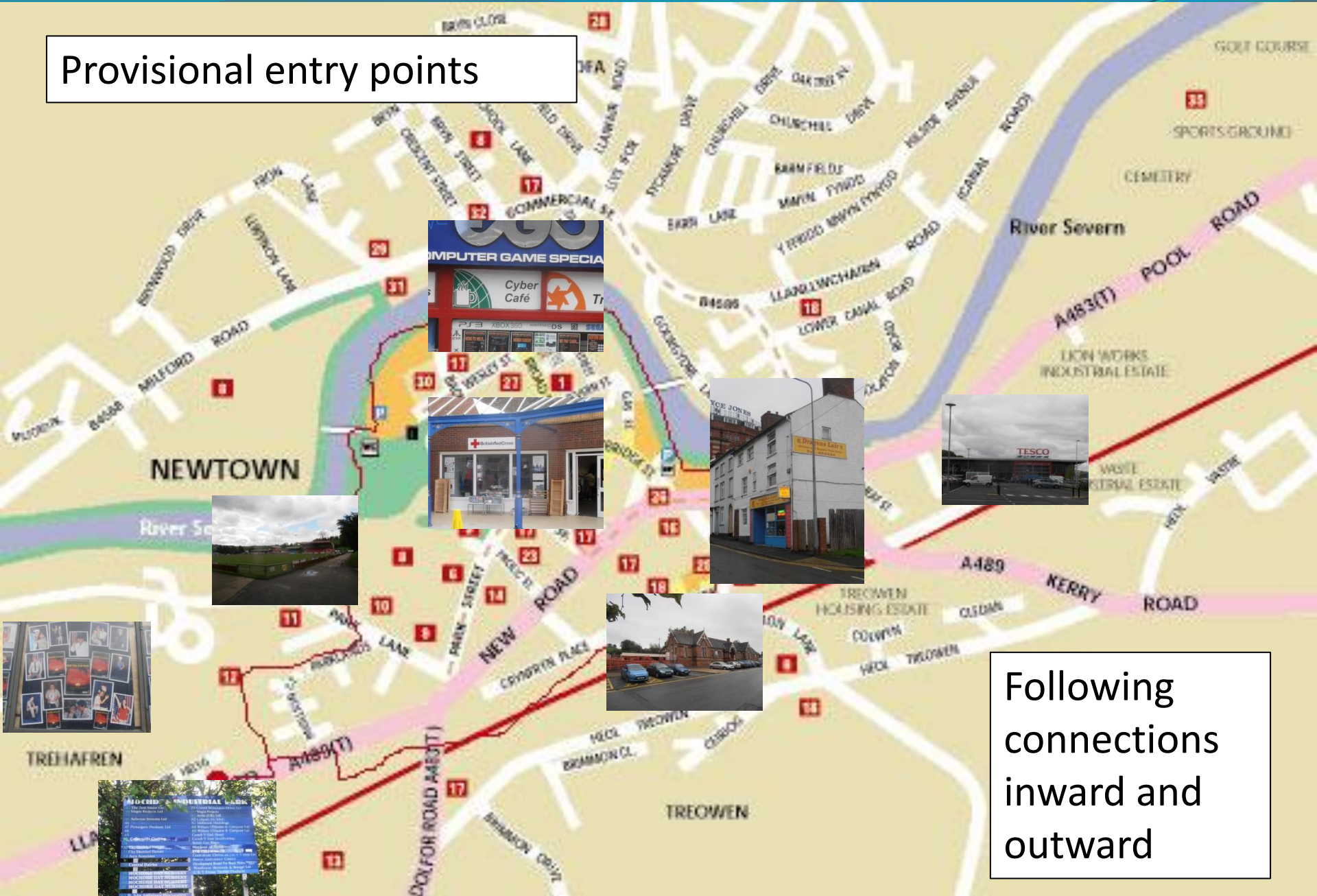
Topography and Countertopography

- “If what I have produced here is a critical topography intent on showing certain traces of globalization on particular grounds, how can the significance of these forms and practices be made translocal and connected to other specific topographies affected by global processes in analogous ways?” (Katz 2001: 1229)
- A *counter-topography*
- Uses metaphor of contour lines to identify lines of affinity and shared experience between places
- Following connections from the bottom-up

Research methods

- Ethnographic observation
- Interviews
- Discussion groups
- Questionnaires
- Archives and documents
- Participatory methods
 - Participant diaries
 - Map of the world
 - Bring-and-share dinner
 - Photography
 - Workshops
 - Interactive walks

Provisional entry points



Following connections inward and outward



The Railway Station

*Travel
(Holidays, business,
group travel)*

MOCHDRE INDUSTRIAL PARK

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 42 The Zest Sauce Co. | 79 Control Techniques Drives Ltd |
| 43 Virgin Projects Ltd | 80 Virgin Projects |
| 44 | 81 Actia (UK) Ltd |
| 45 Selwyns Systems Ltd | 82 Cellpath Plc (Dist) |
| 46 The Onhouse | 83 Millbrook Mouldings |
| 47 Pamargarn Products Ltd | 84 William O'Hanlon & Company Ltd |
| 48 | 85 William O'Hanlon & Company Ltd |
| 49 | Castell-Y-Dail Hostel |
| 50 Constructiv Clothing | Castell-Y-Dail Smallholding |
| 51 | British Gas Wales |
| 52 City Electrical Factors | Morgans of Newtown |
| 53 City Electrical Factors | DYFED STEELS Mid Wales LTD <small>TURN RIGHT
LOOK LEFT</small> |
| 54 Aura Associates | Confederate Chemicals Ltd & Catron Ltd |
| | Powys Ambulance Control |
| 56 Central Dairies | Development Board For Rural Wales <small>Maintenance
Depot</small> |
| | Woodhouse (Removals & Storage) Ltd |
| 58 MOCHDRE DAY NURSERY | G & T Evans Timber Products |
| 59 MOCHDRE DAY NURSERY | |
| 60 MOCHDRE DAY NURSERY | |
| 61 MOCHDRE DAY NURSERY | |
| | |
| 63 St. John Ambulance Headquarters | |
| 64 Nottingham Rehab Supplies | |
| 65 Custor | |

The Industrial Estate
Business and trade



The Chinese Take-away *Food Migration*

The Theatre Entertainment Culture



The Football Club

Sport



The Internet Cafe

Social networking

Online shopping

COMPUTER GAME SPECIAL



Cyber Café



Tr

PS3

XBOX 360

NINTENDO DS

PC
CD

SEGA



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- Data Recovery



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 - MP3'S
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NEWTOWN COMP

- Pc's
- Laptops
- Apple Mac
- Phones
- Tablets
- Consoles
- ETC...



The Charity Shop

Global awareness and solidarity



The Supermarket

Shopping

Food and agriculture



Outward connections

- Global commodity chains
- Globalization of agriculture
- Influence of supermarkets
- Tesco corporate network



Inward connections

- Changing eating habits
- Changing shopping habits
- Closure of local shops
- Ethical shopping?
 - Fair trade
 - Local produce





- Former cattle market
- Nearest cattle market now at Welshpool (16 miles)
- Altered relationship between farmers and town
- Time-Space Expansion



Lines of affinity?

- Opposition to construction of Tesco supermarket in 2006
- Parallels with anti-supermarket protests in other towns



Torrington, Devon

Maleny, Australia



Sherborne, Dorset

- Other local campaigns
 - Opposition to McDonalds'
 - Objections to town-twinning with Les Herbiers in 1998 due to beef export ban
 - Protests against windfarms and electricity pylons



Conclusion

- Early stages of the research
- Complex patterns of everyday globalization
- Diverse connections to wider world
- Impacts on diverse dimensions of local life
- Hybridization not homogenization
- Lines of affinity and shared experience
- Differentiated experiences within locality
- Empowering the community?