



DUBLIN ECONOMICS WORKSHOP 2016

Panel

What is Ireland's Economic Future Beyond the Multinational Sector?

Radical Policy Rethink to Realise Rural Innovation Potential

Finbarr Bradley

Whites of Wexford
Co. Wexford

23 September 2016

The Road Not Taken



*"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both...."*

- Robert Frost [1874-1963]

*"Where is the Life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in
knowledge? Where is the knowledge we
have lost in information?"*

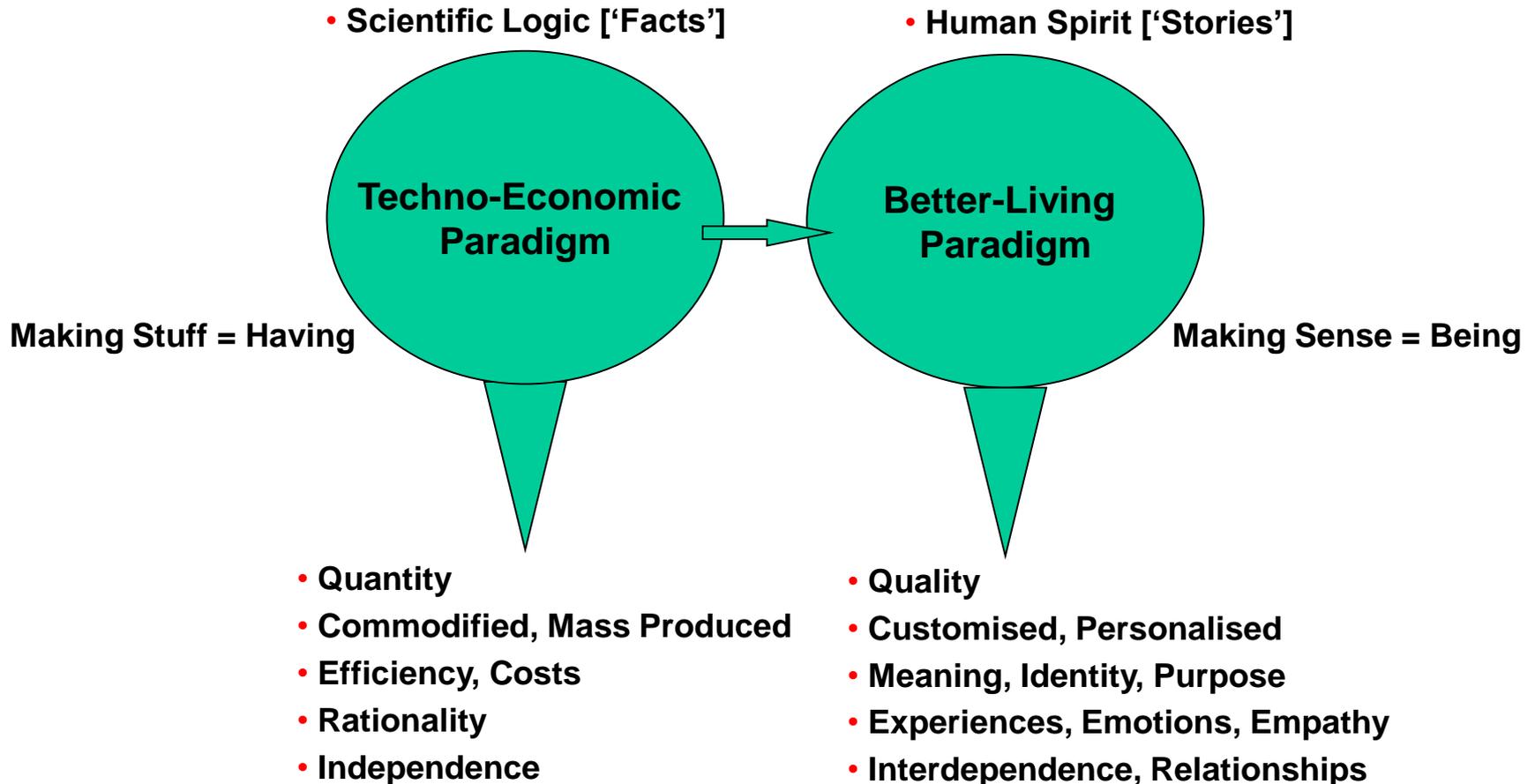
- T.S. Eliot [1888-1965]

"In order to get on the road toward modernization, is it necessary to jettison the old cultural past which has been the raison d'être of a nation?.... Whence the paradox: on the one hand, it has to root itself in the soil of its past, forge a national spirit, and unfurl this spiritual and cultural revindication before the colonialist's personality. But in order to take part in modern civilization, it is necessary at the same time to take part in scientific, technical and political rationality, something which very often requires the pure and simple abandon of a whole cultural past.... There is the paradox; how to become modern and to return to sources...."

- Paul Ricoeur [1913-2005]

Valuable Knowledge

“The enemy of the conventional wisdom is not ideas but the march of events.”
- John Kenneth Galbraith [1958]



Celtic Revival (1890-1920)

- Self-reliance, self-respect, idealism, character, ...
 - Gaelic League [*Douglas Hyde, Eoin MacNeill*]
 - Co-operative Movement [*Horace Plunkett, Æ, Tom Finlay*]
 - Gaelic Athletic Association [*Michael Cusack*]
 - Abbey Theatre [*W.B. Yeats, Lady Gregory*]
 - Ulster Literary Theatre [*David Parkhill, Bulmer Hobson*]
 - An Túr Gloine [*Sarah Purser, Edward Martyn*]
 - Natural History Societies [*Robert Lloyd Praeger*]
 - Irish Decorative Art Association [*Mina Robinson, Elta Lowry*]
 - Sean Van Vocht [*Alice Milligan, Anna Johnston*]

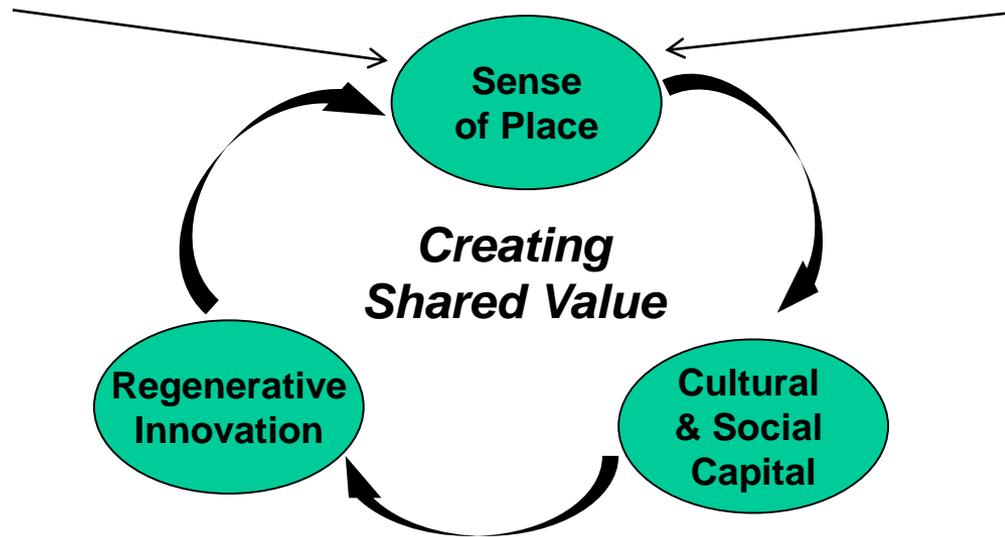
“Many of the important contributors to the national conversation a century ago were characterised by a marked idealism but also by a conviction that ideas could become a basis for practical action: a deep investment in the future was born out of an intense engagement with the past.”

- Declan Kiberd & P.J. Mathews [2015]

Who Am I? Where am I?

Place [culture + nature] = 'meaningful location'

- *Terroir*
- *Dinnsheanchas*
- *Genius Loci*
- *Dwelling*



- **Authenticity**
- **Beauty**
- **Belonging**
- **Character**
- **Memory**
- **Pride**
- **Purpose**
- **Responsibility**
- **Uniqueness**

Valuable resources emerge from 'global-rooted' identity

- self-reliance, sharing, solidarity, subsidiarity, sustainability,....

Innovating milieu: 'competitive collaboration'

- 'co-opeting' clusters - industrial districts - learning regions
 - **Austria & Germany: Mittelstand (rooted, innovative, excellent)**
 - **Italy: Sassuolo (tiles), Emilia-Romagna (engineering)**
 - **Denmark: food cluster, wind energy sector**
 - **US: Napa/Sonoma (wine)**

Consumer Research

Keeping it real



"I am looking for products and brands that are real, authentic and honest, because I know I can trust what's in them and where they come from"

- ✓ As the recession struck, brands that had stood the test of time and remained true to their values became points of stability and comfort amongst the turmoil. But as life has settled into new routines the meaning of authenticity is changing.
- ✓ The past has to have modern relevance to maintain its meaning and value; genuine benefits need to lie behind the origins or craftsmanship that is used in their making. Provenance or sourcing need to deliver unique or distinctive product attributes.
- ✓ Locality and seasonality are becoming increasingly important; and are seen as a way of accessing products at their best whilst protecting local interests.
- ✓ The sub-trends for Keeping it Real are;
 - ✓ **Back to Basics** – adopting traditional approaches and skills to meet today's needs
 - ✓ **Celebrating Tradition** – taking the best tradition and heritage to meet modern tastes
 - ✓ **Craftsmanship** – there is a rising interest in the people and artisan skills behind products
 - ✓ **Behind the Scenes** – Transparency is now a mark of quality and trust
 - ✓ **Passion for Place** – We are seeing a growing interest origin as a mark of quality and trust
 - ✓ **Embracing the Seasons** –growing interest in consuming seasonal produce



"In a world where almost anything could be made anywhere, identity is everything."
- Peter Mandelson [2007]

Selling Authenticity



***“....inspired by the traditional dress of the islanders with a touch of luxury... to produce modern versions of the ancient classics.
....inspired by the fields... This season we have revived a hundred year old sweater which is called the "Máirtín Beag" after the local fisherman who used to wear it.”***



“...none of this had really prepared me for the sense of place that I felt throughout dinner, triggered initially by a bowl of steamed periwinkles gathered from the shore. Looking up at the far wall I spotted a blown-up black-and-white photograph from 80 years ago of a local fisherman in his windproof sweater, cleaning the periwinkles he had just caught.....”

- Nicholas Lander, 'Financial Times' [2011]



www.inismeain.com

International Story

- Sonnentor: Austrian manufacturer of organic herbal teas,...
- 2014 sales = €30m, employees = 180
- Since founded (28 years ago), annual growth rate = 10-20%

“We did not grow because I was greedy. We have been growing because I saw possibilities – possibilities of cooperation, and not possibilities of maximizing profits.”

- J. Gutmann, Founder & Owner [2013]

- Company character

- CEO not very profit-oriented
- committed to deep purpose: *“live & let live”*
- uses manual labour rather than cheaper machines
- no clear yearly goals: emphasis on long-term
- no bonuses for managers or salespersons
- pays suppliers/farmers twice price paid by competitors
- no dividends paid to owner
- highest to lowest salary ratio = 3.5
- social competence as important as qualifications in hiring
- ‘embedded sustainability’ at the core of its success



Challenge [& Potential] Today!

- 20 Irish SMEs per 1,000 inhabitants
 - ½ EU average
- 300 Irish Speciality Food Producers
 - ⅛ New Zealand
- 50 Irish farmhouse cheese producers
 - ½ Netherlands
- 3% Irish SMEs in manufacturing
 - ⅓ EU average
- 10 Irish apprentices per 1,000 employees
 - ¼ Germany, ⅓ Denmark
- 40 US Companies account for
 - ⅔ Irish exports, 3% of Irish workforce
- 4,000 Irish Companies export
 - 30,000 Denmark

“The provincial has no mind of his own; he does not trust what his eyes see until he has heard what the metropolis - towards which his eyes are turned - has to say on any subject....The parochial mentality on the other hand is never in any doubt about the social and artistic validity of his parish...In Ireland we are inclined to be provincial not parochial, for it requires a great deal of courage to be parochial.”
- Patrick Kavanagh [1904-1967]

Flourishing Indigenous Sector

- Small, distinctive, independent, self-reliant, ‘global-local’ firms
- Co-create dynamic, innovative & regenerative places
- Mediate future through prism of heritage & tradition
- Stewardship/trusteeship [‘inheritance conserved/passed on’]
- Place-based learning; focus on apprenticeships
- Dense interrelationships [civic pride, mutual trust, *res publica*]
- Co-operate, collaborate & sacrifice for common good [*meitheal*]
- Tacit know-how/aesthetics + scientific knowledge/skills
- Local/citizen investment schemes [crowd-funding, DPOs]
- Reimagine Ireland’s ‘green’ identity: ‘green growth’
 - ***“.....pursuit of material prosperity must be accompanied by the pursuit of spiritual prosperity in such a way that they enhance each other.....The Irish look at the world and see it whole, which gives them not only a more balanced perspective on life but a more ‘green’ perspective on the planet.”***

- John Fanning [2011]

Go Raibh Maith Agaibh!



“...native traditions have a vitally important emotional role to play in our future development, for it on sources like these that we must draw on for much of the inspiration to thought and action in the years ahead. Unless our society is proud of its origins, and feels closely linked with its past, it might develop a rootlessness which could be inimical to the establishment of any stable society.”

- Garret FitzGerald [1964]

Capitalising on Culture,
Competing on Difference

*Innovation, Learning and
Sense of Place in a
Globalising Ireland*

Finbarr Bradley
and James J. Kennelly

THE IRISH EDGE

How Enterprises Compete on Authenticity and Place



FINBARR D. BRADLEY and JAMES J. KENNELLY



GOMBEENS AT THE GATE

*Renewing the Rising through
Ideals, Character and Place*

FINBARR D. BRADLEY
JAMES J. KENNELLY

Finbarr Bradley

tel: 087 - 283 5511

email: info@finbarrbradley.ie

website: www.finbarrbradley.ie