

Towards an Ethical Food Policy for Scotland

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WHEN ADAM DELVED AND EVE SPAN,
WHO WAS THEN THE GENTLEMAN?

*O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
For whom my warmest wish to
Heaven is sent!
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic
toil
Be blest with health, and peace,
and sweet content!
And O! may Heaven their simple
lives prevent
From Luxury's contagion, weak
and vile!
Then, howe'er crowns and
coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the
while,
And stand a wall of fire around
their much-lov'd Isle.*

*The Cotter's
Saturday Night
Robert Burns*





KENT FLANNERY

JOYCE MARCUS

The Creation of Inequality

How Our Prehistoric Ancestors
Set the Stage for
Monarchy, Slavery,
and Empire



Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's. And as for the people, he removed them to cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other end thereof. (Gen. 47. 20-1)

The Civilisation of Agriculture

In all agrarian societies with cities, until the European Middle Ages, slavery and coercive relations between city landlords and food planters and gatherers were normal

To this day castism in India underwrites extreme poverty & social exclusion of 500 million low caste persons who are descendants of rural farmers & forest dwellers

In Christian Europe the idea emerged that a peasant *ought* to be a free person, not a serf or slave

In the 12-16C use rights to strip fields & common land were the source of the emerging idea of freedom for commoners

Liberty, Equality and Fraternity

Yeoman farming, smallholding and their equivalent in Scotland, declined after the dissolution of the monasteries, who governed one half to two thirds of rural land

The Enclosures and Clearances were State-making projects which took property from the people in return for coercive work, polluted skies and damp cramped housing

Ave. age of death for Victorian labouring/servant class was
18

20C freedoms from coercive hunger, inadequate housing, early death closely associated with charitable, cooperative and Trade Union activism which reduced *inequality*

commerce and manufactures gradually introduced order and good government, and with them the liberty and security of individuals, among the inhabitants of the country, who had before lived almost in a continual state of war with their neighbours, and of servile dependency upon their superiors. This, though it has been the least observed, is by far the most important of all their effects. Mr Hume is the only writer who, so far as I know, has hitherto taken notice of it.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*

Agrarianism versus Liberalism

In Ten Commandments of Moses agrarian property relations underwrote earliest Western ethical code and post-slavery relations

Agrarians such as H Belloc, HJ Massingham, A McIntosh believe true wealth, freedom from slavery, and *ethics*, rest upon the family farm, or relatively equitable land distribution between commoners

But for Smith and Hume wealth of nations comes from freedoms of the city - to foster banks, crafts, manufactures, to trade with colonies, to buy up unused or unproductive land, to improve agriculture

So where artificers and manufacturers decline through State or Market practices so too do farms, soils and species (Smith, *Wealth of Nations*)

Institutions of Market and State are the sources of wealth and freedom and farms, fields, forests and species are secondary

The Planned Economy and Neoliberal Revolt

After Great War and Great Depression Keynesians, Fabians and socialists argued government had duty to manage banks, manufacturing and agriculture to restrain wealth inequality

After 2WW wealth inequality declined through Trade Unions, Welfare State, and through public ownership of mining, steel, water, electricity, trains, hospitals, universities, postal and telecommunication services

Friedman and Hayek, Reagan and Thatcher argued liberty was threatened by State underwriting of liberty and fraternity

But as crafts and manufactures were exported so there was a downward pressure on wages, and on food producers

Inequality levels already back to 1920 in UK and globally 1% own 48% of land, property, investments and stocks

Before 1980 40% of UK householders owned shares, in 2013 only 15%

Food and Wellbeing Decline

350,000 admissions for malnutrition in UK hospitals in 2013

3 million householders using food banks regularly or irregularly since post-2010 'austerity' cuts

National Insurance is now fraudulent - 30 years of contributions count for nothing & older claimants malnourished, hungry, indebted

Obesity is rising, especially among low waged, as the cheapest foods are the most heavily subsidised and marketed

Millions of tons of food and drink are wasted annually

Nervous and stress disorders reaching epidemic proportions among young adults

*SWEET-SMILING village, loveliest of the lawn!
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green;
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain;*

*Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade—
A breath can make them, as a breath has made:
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.*

*The Deserted Village
Oliver Goldsmith*

Ethics as Intrinsic or Utilitarian

Christ taught that what is morally right is what reduces the coerced suffering of others

Hence reversing the social order between those who impose and endure suffering was a frequent theme in his teaching - 'first last, last first'

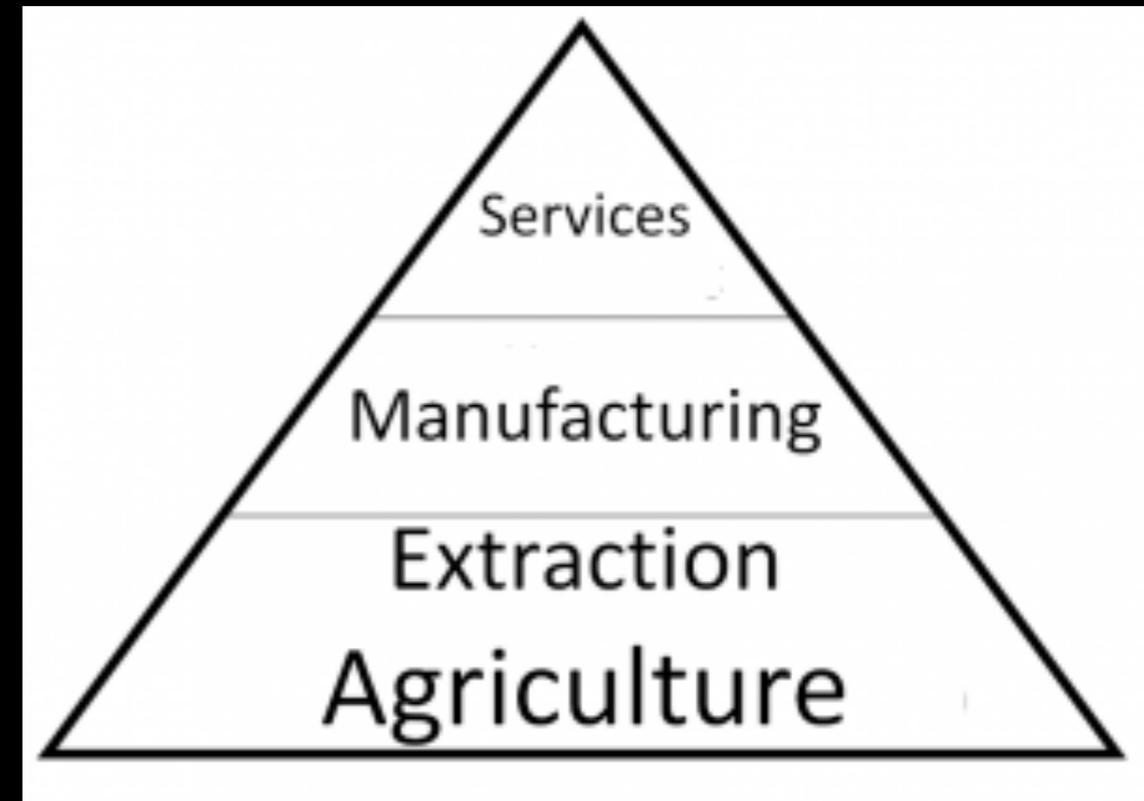
The parable of the Good Samaritan set love - compassionate relief of a stranger's suffering - as the highest good

For Hume and Smith beneficence is an *honourable* sentiment but its goodness derives from its social *utility* not from the nature of persons

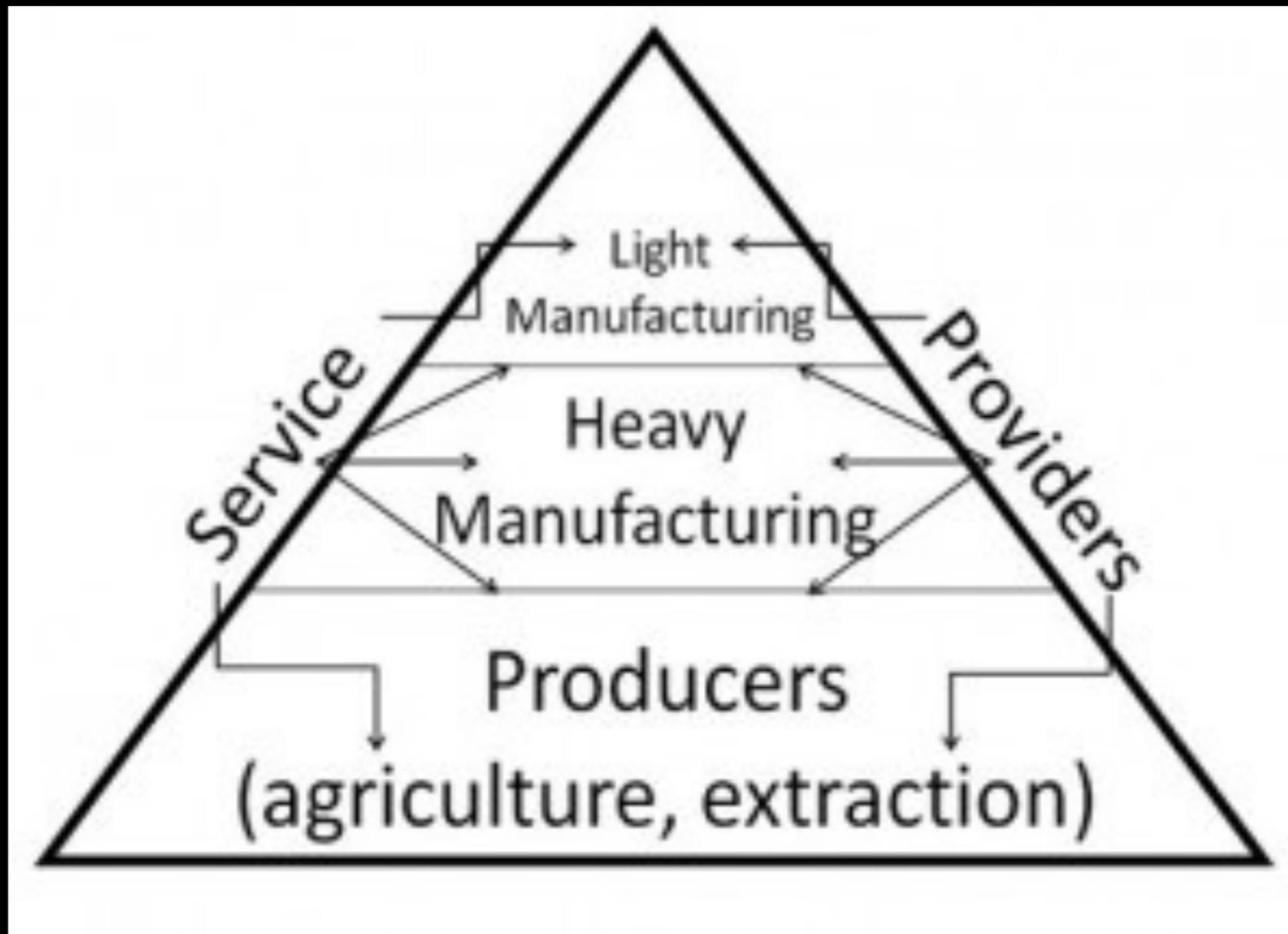
J S Mill turned utilitarian liberalism into the founding philosophy of the modern political and economic order

Neoliberals neglect suffering that the growth of the Market-State imposed on our ancestors, & still imposes on other nations, lands, species, and the Earth System

Liberalism neglects *social* and *ecological* limits to growth

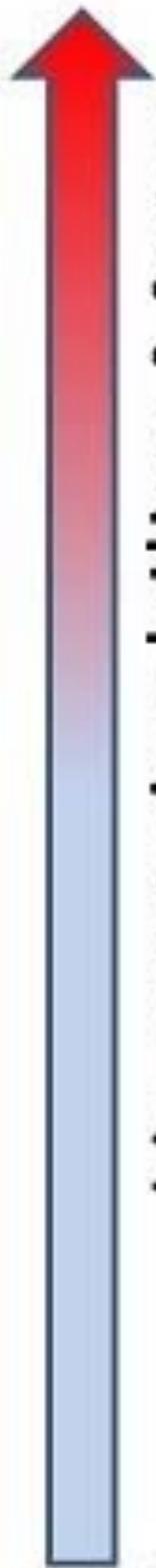


Every economy on the planet, and every polity, rests upon an agricultural and extractive base. From the financial services of London and Edinburgh to the smart phone factories of China, it is agricultural and extractive surpluses, garnered by persons somewhere on the earth's surface, that free other persons for the division of labor. B Czech, *Steady State Blog*



Services and retail providers are like pollinators (bees) and scavengers (mackerel)

They link the trophic (bottom) layers of the economy to householders, public agencies & businesses



Unsustainability Meter,
Pressure for Lebensraum

Maltese Falcon, Castle
with Moat, Richard Mille
Watch, Weekends in
Dubai, etc.



“Regular”
Yacht, Vacation

Car, Bike, Some
Fun on the Town

Food, Clothing,
and Shelter

Scottish agriculture looks relatively healthy from a production perspective:

What we grow/what we eat in Scotland

	Produce/person/year	Consume directly	%	notes
Beef	34kg	c.20kg	160	export
Lamb	12kg	0.8kg	1500	export
Pigs	10kg	25kg	40	import
Chickens	16kg	31.5kg	50	import
Eggs	200 eggs	192 eggs	100	
milk	260 litres	200 litres	130	
Sea fish	72kg	7.5kg (wild and farmed)	1500	export
Farmed fish	32 kg			
wheat	180kg	30-40kg as bread, 85kg all cereals	600	Biofuel animal feed, whisky beer
barley	340kg	Minimal		
Oats	20kg	Some as porridge		
Potatoes	260kg	40kg	600	export
Vegetables	55kg	50kg	100	
Soft fruit	5kg	Total fruit 40kg	12	import
Oilseed rape	20kg	minimal		



Vegetables –
carrots,
swede, leeks,
broccoli,
cabbage

Unsustainable Land Pressures from Scots Food Economy

Large scale sheep and deer grazing denude hills of trees, creating soil erosion, soils that emit carbon, lost biodiversity

Groundwater pollution and air pollution from agrochemicals, animal faeces/animal factories

Promotion of dangerous pathogens in animal factories and use of antibiotics to keep animals alive in life threatening conditions

Greenhouse gas emissions from denuded soils, domesticated animals, & animal feeds inc. Amazon-derived soya and corn

Declining biodiversity and threat of extinction inc. caipercaille, hedgehog, Scots wildcat, red squirrel, cuckoo, turtle dove

Unsustainable Social Pressures from Scots Food and Land Economy

Food poverty, malnutrition and obesity

Cancers from excess animal protein consumption, pesticides, herbicides

Declining connection to food growing and wild lands of esp. urban low waged leading to ignorance about healthy food, 'nature deficit disorder', loss of wellbeing, depression

Imports - flowers, nuts, fruits, palm oil, fish farm feed, animal feeds, biofuels lead to malnutrition/rising food prices, declining fish stocks, slavery, coerced labour in global South (TTiP)

Ethical Food Policy Objectives for Scotland

Food availability, quality, and related land use should not visit unnecessary suffering on farmers, pickers, factory workers

Should promote health of citizens

Should promote highest animal welfare standards

Should minimise use of agrochemicals

Should conserve soils, groundwater, biodiversity and reduce fossil fuel use

Pathways to Ethical Food Economy for Scotland

1. Minimise imported foods by diversifying land use (e.g. sporting estates) to horticulture (inc polytunnels), forest products so biofuels, timber, fresh fruit, flowers locally sourced
2. Increase distribution of use rights to food growers including allotments, urban farms, hutting land
3. Land reform and land taxation designed to raise food/fibre/craft productivity of land, & promote community management for household horticulture, biodiversity, local biofuels
4. Raise animal welfare standards and require phasing out of antibiotics in factory farms except for treatment of infection
5. Reduce marketing of red meat and use full cost accounting



Community energy project - Isle of Eigg



Rural repopulation through low carbon, low cost housing
of the North Harris Trust



Community forestry - Isle of Eigg



Kilchoan Vegetable Garden - Ardnamurchan Peninsula



Ormiston Grows - connecting urban-edgeland food growing with needs of urban dwellers to reconnect with nature, including disabled, depressed