

## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Once again, 'Chimera', true to its name, appears in hybrid form. It reflects the diverse nature of a discipline which potentially acts as a bridge between varied and often conflicting fields of interest. It is appropriate that Chimera, once hovering on the frontier between the known and the unknown, should now provide scope for instruction, and in so doing create new avenues for thought, challenging our assumptions, making us aware of what has been relatively unexplored.

Those who have contributed papers to 'Chimera' have worked to produce a collection which is at once informative and questioning. The papers come from both undergraduates and graduate geography students, some of whom are currently working as postgraduates within the discipline. The topics discussed to an extent reflect some of the range of interests within the department.

There is evident in many of the papers an appraisal and often a critique of the manner in which Western civilisation has developed. The constructs upon which our society has evolved and to which the individual conforms is challenged in paper one. Aidan O'Kelly a graduate student examines how our perceptions are shaped by our largely inherited cultural and social values. He explains the world of religious belief systems, specifically that of the Church of Ireland Protestant, from both an historical and contemporary perspective, in an attempt to reveal the associated cultural and social constructs. He attempts to create an awareness of these for what they are without seeking to negate them, as they provide an identity for the individual in what can otherwise be an alienating reality.

The next two papers look at the nature of economic development on a global scale. Alice Strain, a second year student, operating within a historical framework, illustrates the evolution of the twin processes of development and underdevelopment, in an attempt to destroy some of the myths surrounding the imbalance of wealth and power between countries. Sean Maher a first year student compliments this with a critical look at the contemporary situation focusing on international economic relations and developmental aid in particular. Inherent in both is a criticism of the manner in which the western industrialised nations have developed.

Paper four, by Kieran Donoghue a graduate student, criticises the Cluster Concept of industrial location as a key strategy for Irish Industrial development, tracing it from its origins in the early seventies. His evaluation of the policy is based on a case-study in the Buttevant area of Co. Cork.

Paper five, written by Paul Ryan a postgraduate student, is concerned with the development of Kinsale's waste-disposal system. He highlights the importance of adequate infrastructure in a town where tourism, the economic mainstay, is dependant upon a clean and attractive environment. He traces the history of the present system, the role of the topography in its formation and its implications for planning the location of housing.

Kieran Hickey, a graduate student, provides paper six. He traces the changes which have occurred in environmental perception over the last century and points to some of the factors responsible for this. He goes on to highlight the importance of institutions and movements to which this increased awareness had given rise.

John Ronayne and Dermot Allister, both graduate students, have combined the results of a project which analysed the process of slope development by means of topographic surveys and soil analysis in an area of the Lee Valley in Co. Cork to provide paper seven.

The final paper, contributed by G. John Delaney the first, who will no doubt be recognised as a current member of the postgraduate community, forms a spirited (intoxicated) defense of the MNC within the Irish economy.

This year's foreign field trip took place to La Rochelle, France, and Ken Hogan, a second year student gives us some fleeting glances at the life and landscape.

Bernard Dee the outgoing auditor of the Geographical Society has the final word with a summary of this year's exploits.

Finally there is a summary of research, ongoing and completed, within the geography department for the year 1986/87.

The survival of any new venture is in doubt until it gains momentum and becomes a tradition in its own right. So it has been with 'Chimera'. Not only has it at times appeared on the horizon as a monster, often out of control, but at times also as intangible and elusive as a phantom. It is for this reason I wish to thank all those who helped to bring it together. Special thanks go to the committee; Susan Kirwan, the secretary, for her patience and willingness to help; David Storey and Gerard Delaney who between them helped to obtain the sponsorship to fund this publication; Connell Foley who designed the cover with his, as ever, indefatigable pen; and Barry Keane who prepared the maps and advertisements with great care. Then there are those otherwise anonymous people who through their invaluable assistance helped to make the work load lighter; Michael Healy who, with the patience of a saint, gave up much of his time to help with the editing; Dave Rush who read many of the papers and was always ready to give a second opinion when needed; Jim McLaughlin, Raymond O'Connor, Anne Phelan, Dan Murphy and many others who helped in various ways. Thank you to the typist Eileen McSweeney for an excellent job; to the Geographical Society and the sponsors for their financial support; the department for its backing and support; and last but not least to all those who contributed papers to this year's journal.

Last year's number one created high expectations and it is hoped that this year's journal in some measure fulfils the promise. Here's wishing 'Chimera' many more years of success.

Catherine Ketch.