

ESSAY 5. Designing your dream city

Final Version

Mu Jin Choi, 19/07/2009

If I were to be an architect and build a new ideal city, I would build it in hitherto undeveloped coastal regions. It is because building more cities in an area already overloaded with population would cause inflation and insufficiency of resources. Building a city by the coast can also help it to achieve rapid growth because of the coast's conveniences for trade and transport. Furthermore, the regions around the Northern Atlantic are currently the center of the economic and political world, which I would choose as a good background for my new city to prosper quickly. There rarely exist undeveloped areas in that coastline but for a few countries such as Ireland and Mauritania. First, let us talk about Mauritania. It is placed in West Africa, on the tip of the Sahara Desert. The dry climate there makes water scarce, cultivation difficult and the development of large cities almost impossible. All the major cities in the region are still placed on the Atlantic coast where it is comparatively easier to cultivate land and trade with other states. But the development of cities on the Atlantic coast of Ireland is in severe contrast to that in the western coastline of Mauritania. The biggest city and capital, Dublin, is placed near St. George's Channel and the second city, Cork, is placed deeply mainland. The development of cities in the western coast is primitive, with no major urban areas except for a few towns such as Galway or Limerick.

Ireland is also one of the rarely unindustrialized and poor countries in Western Europe, a region famous for the well-developed life standard and welfare of its people. Its industrial activities are entirely focused on agriculture, the conditions for development having been very bad through the last century following its independence from Great Britain, which stopped the little aid it had received from the British to build more factories in Ireland as they could not build any in already overindustrialized England. That is why I would like to build my city in the western coast of Ireland, specifically in the bay near Donegal which is a thoroughly rural area though located in a bay and an ideal location for a big city. My chief purpose would be to effectively industrialize Ireland from a starting point, which would be my new city on the western coast.

I would like to design my city on the Atlantic coast of Ireland to become a major trading port across the Atlantic with the US and Canada. It is also my aim to develop it to become a flourishing centre of Irish industry, something historically undeveloped throughout the nation which has a completely agricultural economy. This would enable the establishment and development of other coastal cities and the urbanization of western Ireland. It is also where 2 highways meet with one leading eventually to Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland, making it an important place for traffic between the overseas part of the UK and the Republic of Ireland. My city would have a population of between 150,000 and 200,000, making it the second largest city in Ireland after Dublin and the biggest port in the country.

Diversity will be the theme of the design of the new city. As a first measure to create diversity, it would be divided into different parts according to the major uses of each section of the city. One part, located about 4 miles to the mainland, would harbor more than 60% of the city's population with some farms in the outskirts around the housing area, which will be very eco-friendly as I will mention later. The second will be the industrial area, with many manufacturing factories located at the seaside where a harbor would be constructed. The range of industrial facilities to be built in the port area would include a variety of product-manufacturing such as ship-building, car-manufacturing, steel-refining and the production of electronic objects. The third would be the financial area, the downtown between the

housing area and the industrial area where large buildings and offices will serve as the headquarters of industrial enterprises and trade companies located in the city. A stock market will be created to increase investment from outsiders. Lastly, a tourist area will be made at the beaches where the city will be able to gain extra income. As the new city will lack cultural heritage, it will be filled with natural tourism resources such as a safari zoo and an outside botanical garden in a park downtown to model London's Hyde Park.

In spite of being an industrial port city, I would design the other parts of my city so as to be very environmentally friendly and filled with nature on the outside. The buildings will all have fuel saving systems, which will include the solar and geothermal heat generation of electricity. Trees and plants shall be planted on the streets. The construction will be entirely focused on eco-friendly and green design to lessen the pollution that is inevitable because of the factories and also in order to attract tourists by giving a fresh look about the city. The population would mainly consist of the rural people near the city, attracting newcomers, especially the poor, by giving them a hope of rise in economic status and an end to endless farming. My ideal city will still provide opportunities for all people, educated or uneducated, rich or poor, urban or rural, by presenting a wide range of job choice. The houses will be in traditional European style, rather than apartments which give off a feeling like that of concentration camps. A contrast would be made between the houses and the offices by placing multistory, big buildings of very modern and new design as if we took a time machine into the near future. We would build some buildings of eccentric appearance, which will help to attract tourists. Anti-earthquake technology will also be applied in the architecture of the buildings as the coastline is a geologically active area. The streets will be all different, some very antique 19th century style and some very modern to establish diversity. A wide range of transportation will be offered. For example, the main street will have 6 lanes on each side - one for pedestrians, one for bicycles, one for buses, one for monorails (to replace the subway) and two for personal cars. Citizens will be encouraged to take public transportation rather than personal cars.

This is the design that I have laid out for the city I will build. I will divide it into sections: an eco-friendly housing area in the suburbs, an urban finance zone in downtown, a coastal industry area with a harbor and lastly a tourist hotspot in the beaches. Although it may not be perfect, it would be ideally constructed to become an important trading port and a successful industrial area. The environment will always be put first despite the percentage that the manufacturing industry takes in the total of the city's industrial activities. The happiness of the citizens will be ensured through a nature-friendly and convenient city structure. I say with conviction that this city would be further able to effectively ensure the rapid economic growth of the Irish economy which has been too focused on agriculture and thus caused the traditionally low economic status among West European nations to become one of the biggest economic nations in the world.