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[Tribute to the Memory of] Charles Cooper¹

Charles is rightly remembered by many of us for his contributions to the economics of under-development and for his active role in many organisations in a variety of countries designed to overcome the poverty of the Third World. However, in this note I would like to recall his participation in a less well-known piece of research of the 1970s - Project BACCHUS. This project gave full scope to some of his most attractive characteristics - above all his sense of humour, his imagination and his originality. BACCHUS was about the consumption of beer - bitter beer.

Like its sister project SAPPHO, BACCHUS was concerned to measure and explain important aspects of social behaviour. But whereas SAPPHO concentrated on User/Producer relationships, BACCHUS recognised the important distinction between Producers (Breweries in this case) and Servers (Barmen and Barmaids) whose interests and behaviour were sometimes far from identical. Of course, there are pubs where the Owners are also the Servers and may even directly represent the Producers. These formed a clear-cut sub-category in our Survey. But the much larger separate category of wage-earning Servers and their relationship with Consumers (Drinkers) was the central feature of BACCHUS.

Some said that the BACCHUS methodology was a direct technology transfer from the bars of Capetown or even the Australian Outback. Personally, I doubt this and my recollection, although hazy, is that Charles played a central role both in the design of methods and of the key hypotheses which were investigated. Contrary to some malign rumours and the critiques of rival research groups, BACCHUS was never concerned with the indiscriminate consumption of a large quantity of beer. In fact, the design of the project absolutely excluded any such possibility because it was specifically focussed on the consumption of only *one and a half* pints of beer per persons per trip. Why one and a half pints?

Each case study began by ordering in the traditional way a pint of draught beer (*not* bottled beer or lager) for each person. Following convivial consumption of this pint, to which Charles always contributed from his fund of anecdotes, the crucial next step was to order *not* another pint but a *half* pint and to proffer the now empty pint mugs to the server to refill with this order.

¹ http://www.intech.unu.edu/highlights/feb_05/tribute_freeman.doc; 01 May, 2006.

From then on, the behaviour of Servers was carefully monitored because it was then (and still is) highly variable and the various different forms of response, together with some characteristics of the Server, the pub, the weather and the time of the day or night. These were the basis for numerous hypotheses on server-consumer relationships, e.g. independent barmaids on wet and cold Monday evenings soon after opening time will tend to provide about 3/4 pint for the second order rather than a measured 1/2 pint. Many Servers tended simply to guess when they had pulled the additional half pint into the empty pint mugs. Often they pulled far too *much* - almost an additional pint - even when they clearly understood that only half pints had been ordered and would be paid for.

Another group of Servers ignored the proffered one pint empty mugs and started afresh with clean half-pint mugs. This ensured that they did not deliver more than the half pint and indeed gave very often *less* than a strict half pint. Both Charles and I favoured a “regional” hypothesis - the further North of Birmingham, the fuller the half pint (or pint for that matter). However, our travel arrangements at that time did not permit sufficient testing of regional hypotheses. In fact, this was true of most of our interesting hypotheses. We never had the time to test them thoroughly. Like all great research projects BACCHUS remained an unfinished project. Perhaps it will merge with efforts to complete Einstein’s great work in a Theory of Everything. However, provisional data indicated that friendly server-consumer relationships were probably the decisive factor in getting more than half a pint, as in most areas of life.

Cheers Charles! *Amor omnia vincit*

Chris Freeman
22nd January 2005

[Tribute to the Memory of] Charles Cooper²

My research career owes a lot to Charles Cooper. As I often told him, I seemed to have spent most of my time following in his footsteps as he moved from one research organization to the next.

I met Charles Cooper for the first time in 1973, when I was a young graduate student from the University of Ghent on a study visit to the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at the University of Sussex, Brighton. Charles was a Fellow there and my group had an opportunity to interview and talk extensively to him and another of his colleagues, Raphael Kaplinsky. This first encounter with Charles, who was extremely witty and entertaining, left quite an impression, at least on me. As a result of these discussions, I became convinced that the issue of the transfer of technology to developing countries and technology adaptation in these countries would be the focus of my Masters Research thesis. And indeed I proceeded to do so. This was the beginning of a close research relationship that was to span 30 years.

Thereafter I successfully applied for a British Council fellowship and became a PhD student at Sussex University with Charles as my promoter. Upon completion of my PhD training, I applied to join the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at the same university as a research

² http://www.intech.unu.edu/highlights/feb_05/tribute_soete.doc; 01 May, 2006.

fellow. But once I got there, Charles had moved to the Science Policy Research Unit (now SPRU - Science and Technology Policy Research), also at Sussex. It was May 1979 and IDS had just been declared a so-called “quango” (a quasi autonomous non-governmental organization) by the newly elected Mrs Thatcher. As a result most of the government resources on which IDS had been dependent - including my salary – were suddenly frozen. So, I followed Charles to SPRU and quickly learned to survive on research contracts. The time spent here with Charles and Chris Freeman on the so-called TEMPO (Technology and Employment) was to be my most productive research period.

But Charles was on the move again. The Netherlands was calling and he became a professorial fellow at the Institute of Social Studies. I moved to Stanford and we lost contact for a few years. But then extraordinarily when I applied for a professorship at the University of Maastricht in 1985, Charles called and told me about the feasibility study he had been asked to carry out in Maastricht on what was to become UNU-INTECH. So I came to Maastricht and again had the chance to collaborate on the feasibility study with Charles and other colleagues, including Martin Fransman and Jeffrey James. Getting funding for the new institute was no easy task and at one stage when the probability of getting the funds together seemed low, Charles suggested that I should explore other options. I took his advice and proceeded to set up MERIT in 1988. But with the creation of MERIT the opportunities for funding a UNU institute suddenly increased. Why and how, is something I will probably write in my own memoirs - suffice to say that Charles persevered and wrote the final draft of the UNU proposal the night of the Herald of Freedom disaster.

Now, and as an ultimate twist of fate, I find myself taking over the directorship of UNU-INTECH, precisely at the time of Charles passing away. I will treasure the knowledge that he knew, and approved of my appointment, and cherish his memory, his wit and the many in depth discussions we had about life, his cherished South Africa, his extraordinary rediscovery of his youth love Anne, and of course Bridget and Lillian.

Luc Soete

February 2005