

Video Project: City of Coventry

For the Political Geography module
2013/2014, by:
Smith, Lewis

Objective

The general objective of this collection of photographs was to capture some of the diverse themes covered over the course of the Political Geography module in the city of Coventry. The most striking thing, an observation perhaps obvious to those who have taken this course, is the sheer ubiquity of political geography: from the securitisation of space (see Golden Cross TV) to the multifaceted demonstrations of the impact of regionalism and globalisation. I was particularly intrigued by Coventry market, which was replete with food stalls from around the world, and found it a fascinating example of the ways in which national or regional identities are produced and reinforced through foodstuffs.



Partly funded by the EC

“Partly funded by the EC” was taken in an underpass on the outskirts of the city centre. The underpass boasts a painted mural, highlighting the funding given by the EC to allow its construction. While reflective of the importance of Europe in reconstructing Coventry in the post-war era, I found it equally powerful for reflecting the very partiality of its role: the slightly decrepit feel of the underpass somewhat representative of the waning – indeed never fully convincing - engagement with the European project in the UK.



Globalisation

The final image depicts a busker on the streets of Coventry. I was particularly drawn to the juxtaposition of the Che Guevara sticker on his guitar, with the fact that he stood outside the Starbucks coffee shop. That a local man was singing old English folks songs on a Mexican-made guitar with stickers of an Argentine rebel while standing outside an American multinational corporation seems indicative of globalisation's scale.

