

IGU Commission on the Dynamics of Economic Spaces (CDES)

Report of Commission Activities, 2008-12

1) Membership

a. Steering Committee Members

The members of Steering Committee of the IGU Commission on the Dynamics of Economic Spaces (CDES) are as follows:

Chair¹: Neil Reid, Department of Geography and Planning, University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio 43606 USA. Email: nreid@utnet.utoledo.edu.

Vice Chair: Michael Taylor, Department of Geography, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom. Email: m.j.taylor@bham.ac.uk.

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Martina Fromhold-Eisebith, Department of Geography, RWTH Aachen University, Germany. Email: m.fromhold-eisebith@geo.rwth-aachen.de.

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Paul Plummer, Department of Geography, University of Calgary, 2500 University Dr. NW, Calgary, AB T2N 1N4, Canada. Email: pplummer@ucalgary.ca.

¹ Michael Taylor of the University of Birmingham served as Chair of CDES 2008-10. Neil Reid of the University of Toledo served as Vice Chair during this period. Between 2010-12 Neil Reid served as Chair and Michael Taylor as Vice Chair.

Bill Pritchard, School of Geosciences, University of Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia. Email: b.pritchard@geosci.usyd.edu.au.

Henry Wai-chung Yeung, Department of Geography, National University of Singapore, 1 Arts Link, Singapore 117570. Email: HenryYeung@nus.edu.sg

Jici Wang, Geographic Science Research Centre, Peking University, Beijing, China. Email: wjc@pku.edu.cn.

b. Membership

CDES does not have a formal membership base. However the 7 conferences that CDES have organized or participated in (5 CDES conferences, the IGU Conference in Santiago, Chile, and the Third Global Conference on Economic Geography in Seoul, Korea) during 2008-12 have had 191 individuals from 20 countries present papers. Countries represented were Australia, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and USA.

2) Meetings

a. CDES held 5 conferences between July 2009 and May 2011. These were:

- i. 2009, July 13-17. Perth, Australia. **The Dynamics of Local Economic Growth**. 23 papers presented.
- ii. 2010, May 20-22. Cologne, Germany. **Industrial Transition – New Patterns of Production, Work, and Innovativeness**. 15 papers presented.
- iii. 2010, July 1-3. Groningen, Netherlands. **Wellbeing, Innovation, and Spatial Transformation**. 66 papers presented.
- iv. 2010, August 3-7. Toledo, Ohio, USA. **Local Food Systems in Old Industrial Regions**. 31 papers presented.
- v. 2011, May 19-21. Vechta, Germany. **Globalizing Rural Places**. 27 papers presented.

b. Key Issues

- i. 2009, July 13-17. Perth, Australia. **The Dynamics of Local Economic Growth**. Organizer: Matthew Tonts: University of Western Australia.
Processes of globalization are putting increasing stress on local economies and communities who are progressively more challenged in their attempts to develop locally based coping strategies. This meeting explored these issues

putting particular emphasis on local processes and local planning and policy practices. The issues addressed at this conference included theories and approaches to creating local growth, policies, practices and the role of government, drivers of local economic growth and change, the facilitation of and barriers to local growth, human capital formation, labor markets and skills, innovation and new business formation, social enterprise, social capital formation, and the role of enterprise, companies and corporations.

- ii. 2010, May 20-22. Cologne, Germany. Industrial Transition – **New Patterns of Production, Work, and Innovativeness**. Organizers: Martina Fromhold-Eisebith, RWTH Aachen University and Martina Fuchs, University of Cologne. The conference took up the scientific challenges associated with the recently accelerating changes that affect enterprise and process configurations in internationalised production and global-local industrial development. A major objective was to coin the new conceptual notion of ‘industrial transition’ and to collect some empirical underpinnings. The key questions were: How are regions and localities affected by the increasingly volatile shifts of product mandates between countries? In which ways do changes differ between industrial sectors and regions? And how can localities adequately prepare for or react to changes: how can regional resilience and response capacities be built and enhanced? The conceptual considerations and case studies presented have strongly supported assumptions on new trends linking, for instance, the internationalisation of production, the emergence of new institutional players, and new alliances formed between economic actors. This illustrates that relevant interdependencies deserve more emphasis in empirical work as well as scale-bridging policy approaches.
- iii. 2010, July 1-3. Groningen, Netherlands. **Wellbeing, Innovation, and Spatial Transformation**. Organizer: Philip McCann, University of Groningen. This conference was the largest CDES conference held during the period and was hosted by the Faculty of Spatial Sciences at the University of Groningen. The faculty had recently developed a new mission focus around the theme of Wellbeing, Innovation and Spatial Transformation and used the CDES conference as one mechanism to celebrate and promote this refocused mission. The topics covered by this conference included population change and spatial transformation, social capital and social networks, transportation as an urban amenity, self-employment, industrial clusters and economic growth, agglomeration externalities, multinational investment, ageing and

human well-being, migration and health care, and entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial diversity and economic growth.

- iv. 2010, August 3-7. Toledo, Ohio, USA. **Local Food Systems in Old Industrial Regions**. Organizers: Neil Reid, University of Toledo; Paula Ross, University of Toledo; Jay D. Gatrell, Indiana State University.

The conference brought together both academics and practitioners to share their knowledge, experience, and expertise with regard to developing and maintaining local food systems in old industrial regions. Topics covered at this conference included the structure and nature of supply chains/dominant and alternative, implications of local food systems for family, neighborhood, urban, and regional economies, food safety and security, individual and public health issues, environmental impact of local food systems, issues surrounding environmental justice, equity, access, and social justice issues, impact of local, national, and international policies on local food systems, and best practices and success stories. A major theoretical discovery of this conference was the appropriateness of the “wicked problems” framework as a conceptual prism through which the theme of local food systems could be viewed. The conference included presentations from a number of practitioners (e.g. food system planners) and non-geographers (from sociology, public health etc.). This mix of academics/practitioners and geographers/non-geographers made for a particularly rich series of discussion, debates, and deliberations.

- v. 2011, May 19-21. Vechta, Germany. **Globalizing Rural Places**. Organizer: Christine Tamasy, University of Vechta and Javier Revilla Diez (Institute of Economic and Cultural Geography, Leibniz University Hanover).

The conference took place at the Institute for Spatial Analysis and Planning in Areas of Intensive Agriculture (ISPA) at the University of Vechta. 40 experts from all over the world discussed the topic Globalizing Rural Places. Richard Le Heron (University of Auckland, New Zealand) was the guest of honour and keynote speaker and reported about the topic “Doing Economic Geography – Initiatives and Insights from Globalizing Rural Places”. The IGU conference is closely linked to the new Masters course “Rural Geography – Change via Globalization” which started at the University of Vechta in winter term 2011/12. Current research projects from Canada, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Sweden Israel and the USA among others were presented within the two-day conference. The following six topics provided the primary

focus of the conference - globalization and rural spaces, rural entrepreneurship, rural labour markets, value chains, innovation and learning, and rural policies. The conference included a field trip through the Oldenburger Münsterland which was led by Werner Klohn.

c. 2012 and Beyond

- i. CDES has already planned one conference for 2012. This will take place in Krakow, Poland (May 3-5) and will focus on the theme "Innovation & Creativity in Emerging Economic Spaces: Local Entrepreneurship & Transnational Corporations".
- ii. CDES has a number of conferences planned for 2012-16. CDES is sponsoring three sessions at the IGU Conference in Cologne, Germany in August 2012. The theme of these special sessions is "Emerging Economic Spaces".

3) Networking

- a. CDES did not engage in any collaboration with any other IGU Commissions and task forces during 2008-12.
- b. CDES did collaborate with the Third Global Conference on Economic Geography that was held in Seoul, Korea in June/July 2011. CDES organized 3 special sessions within the framework of this conference on the theme of Recession, Resilience, and Recovery.
- c. CDES engaged in no cooperative efforts with either the International Social Science Council (ISSC) or the International Council for Science (ICSU) during 2008-12.

4) Publications

- a. CDES produced 5 edited volumes and 1 journal special issue during 2008-12.
 - i. **Industrial Transition: New Global-Local Patterns of Production, Work, and Innovation.** Edited by Martina Fromhold-Eisebith, RTWH Aachen University and Martina Fuchs, University of Cologne, In Press, Ashgate Publishers.

Recently, the international division of labour in industrial production has grown increasingly more volatile. The separation between 'high-end' tasks undertaken in the traditional core economies and 'low-end' tasks undertaken in newly emerging economies has become increasingly blurred. The new

dynamics and unpredictability of actor and process configurations in internationalized production bring new challenges for research in economic geography, regional economics and management sciences. The allocation of R&D and production mandates within or between enterprises, the setting up, closing down, purchase or sale of subsidiaries at different localities, the shifting patterns of collaborative innovation, together with newly evolving forms of capitalism, all appear to interact in ways not seen before. It appears we have entered a new era termed 'industrial transition'.

This book forms the first approach toward conceptualising the term and compiling illustrative empirical underpinnings. Contributions by an international set of renowned economic geographers highlight the major features and case studies of 'industrial transition' and address various questions that matter for the future of our global economy: How are regions and localities affected by the shift of product mandates? In which ways do changes differ between industrial sectors and economic regions? How can regions and localities adequately prepare for or react to foreseeable changes; and how can regional resilience and response capacities be built and enhanced?

- ii. **Local Food Systems in Old Industrial Regions: Concepts, Spatial Context, and Local Practices.** Edited by Neil Reid, University of Toledo, USA, Jay D. Gatrell, Indiana State University, USA, and Paula Ross, University of Toledo, USA. In Press, Ashgate Publishers.

In recent years there has been an explosion of interest in the topic of local food systems. This heightened interest can be found among policy makers, planners, public health professionals, environmentalists, community developers, academics, farmers and ordinary citizens. While there are common characteristics that most local food systems share the purpose of this book is to explore the unique challenges and opportunities associated with local food systems located within mature or declining industrial regions. The "local food" movement is a growing phenomenon that has been under examined across the academic literature. This volume explores the growth of local food initiatives and more fully interrogates the scale, scope, and economic context of local food systems in de-industrialized cities.

- iii. **Special issue of the journal Applied Geography, Volume 31 (4) (October 2011)** contained 9 papers on the theme of “**Local food systems, deserts, and maps: The spatial dynamics and policy implications of food geography**”

Food geography and the geography of local food systems are emerging sub-fields in the discipline that demand increased attention insofar as they have explicit implications for public policy, everyday life, and the socio-spatial politics of inequality). In contrast to traditional geographies of agriculture, the papers in this volume investigate an entirely new collection of inter-related socio-spatial dynamics such as accessibility, consumer decision-making, production, race, poverty, community development, sustainability, public health, and economic development policies that shape and define the contemporary foodscape. Consequently, understanding the everyday geography of food and emerging local food movements, as well as the social context within which local food systems have evolved will inform not only agricultural policy, but social programs and economic development practices.

- iv. **Globalising Worlds and New Economic Configurations.** Edited by Christine Tamásy University of Auckland, New Zealand and Mike Taylor, University of Birmingham, UK. Published: December 2010, Ashgate Publishers.

Over the last few decades, circuits of capital have been stretched through processes of economic globalization, leading to complex and hybrid outcomes that result in different modes of production and consumption. Understanding these new economic configurations and their geographic patterns requires incorporating new theoretical arguments based on, for example, chain and network concepts. This edited volume brings together theoretically-informed analysis from Asia, Europe and North America to illustrate the way in which new economic configurations have been developed and to understand individual, local and regional responses to a variety of global challenges, threats and opportunities. The different examples presented illustrate that economic structures and flows have changed dramatically over the past decades with profound impacts for the economic and regional actors involved.

- v. **Missing Links in Labour Geography.** Edited by Ann Cecilie Bergene, Work Research Institute, Norway, Sylvi B. Endresen, University of Oslo, Norway and Hege Merete Knutsen, University of Oslo, Norway. Published: July 2010, Ashgate Publishers.

Addressing a number of 'missing links' in the analysis of labour and its geographies, this volume examines how theoretical perspectives on both labour in general and the organizations of the labour movement in particular can be refined and redefined. Issues of agency, power and collective mobilizations are examined and illustrated via a wide range of case studies from the 'global north' and 'global south' in order to develop a better and fuller appreciation of labour market processes in developed and developing countries.

- vi. **Agri-Food Commodity Chains and Globalising Networks.** Edited by Christina Stringer and Richard Le Heron, both at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. Published: July 2008.

Within the international agri-food community at least four theoretical targets are attracting increasing attention. They are: (1) the established notions of networks and commodity chains that are being revisited by way of critical engagement informed by the insights of in-depth empirical work, (2) the metrics of calculation and institutional embedding that underpin the rise and functionality of governance technologies, (3) the place of regional networking in creating conditions that make possible agri-food producer participation in local provisioning and supply, and (4) the geo-historical dimensions of interconnection and interdependency in the agri-food sphere. This volume brings together an interdisciplinary team of anthropologists, economists, business and management academics and geographers to examine a wide range of case studies illustrating various agri-food commodity chains and networks around the world and to discuss how they link globally.

b. **Salient Insights or Conclusions**

- i. See paragraph under each publication

c. CDES Website

- i. For more information about the IGU Commission on the Dynamics of Economic Spaces please visit our website at http://uac.utoledo.edu/igu_commission/index.htm.

5) Archival Contributions

- a. CDES has not provided any archival materials available but would be willing to do so.