

**ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY RESEARCH GROUP**  
**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, 27<sup>th</sup> August 2009, RGS-IBG Manchester**  
**1.10pm, Room 2.218**

1. Apologies for absence: none received
2. Minutes of the 2008 AGM – available on the EGRG website
3. The current committee:

Chair (outgoing): Neil Coe (University of Manchester)\*

Chair (incoming): Andrew Jones (Birkbeck, University of London)\*

Secretary: Al James (Queen Mary University of London)

Treasurer: Martin Hess (University of Manchester)

Events Officer: Sarah Hall (University of Nottingham)

Events Officer: Laura James (University of Birmingham)

Book reviews/ James Faulconbridge (University of Lancaster)\*

Working papers John Harrison (University of Loughborough)\*

- a) Neil Coe stepped down after three years of excellent service and hard work as Chair of the EGRG. He is replaced by Andrew Jones, who will provide necessary management continuity based on his previous experience as Treasurer of the EGRG.
  - b) James Faulconbridge and John Harrison are also due to step down after three years work as Book Review / Working Papers Editors. Whilst both expressed willingness to continue in these roles if required, the outgoing Chair would send an email to see if any other EGRG members might be interested in taking over. A selection process would then be determined.
4. Last year's activities:
    - a. It was noted that having been allocated 7 sessions for the 2009 RGS-IBG Conference, the EGRG compiled and successfully submitted 18 sessions (of which 8 were co-sponsored with other research groups):
      - 2 x Boom, crunch, ouch: exploring possibilities in the spaces of financial disruption
      - 4 x The rise of China and its implications for the developed world
      - 2 x Retail and the city: The urban geographies of retailing
      - 3 x Follow the things: new cultural / economic geographies
      - 3 x Geographies of expertise and experts
      - 2 x Geographical Perspectives on International Labour Migration
      - 1 x Governing Temptation. The emerging geographies of soft paternalism
      - 1 x Acknowledging Ethical EconomiesOverall, it was felt the EGRG continues to demonstrate a very strong presence at the RGS-IBG conference through a wide range of high-profile sessions, and through co-sponsorship of sessions with other research groups.
    - b. It was noted that the EGRG had sponsored two guests at the 2009 RGS-IBG Conference: Grahame Thompson (Open University, 1 day) and Corinne Nativel (University of Franche-Comté in Besançon, France, 1 day).
    - c. It was reported that the new EGRG textbook '*Reading the Economy: the UK in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*', will be submitted in its final form to the publishers (Sage) at the end of September 2009. The book is edited by Neil Coe (Manchester) and Andrew Jones (Birkbeck) and is intended to replace the previous (1997) EGRG textbook '*Geographies of Economies*' edited by Roger Lee and Jane Wills. All funds generated from the sale of the new textbook will go to the EGRG.

d. It was reported that the very successful, cost-neutral 2009 EGRG Annual Symposium took place from 6-7th May 2009 in the Department of Geography, Queen Mary University of London. There were eight postgraduate presentations on day 1 structured around 3 core themes: (i) Economic Geographies of Environmental Change (Alexia Rogers-Wright, Carl Lewis); (ii) Economic Geographies of Post-Socialist Transition (Adam Novak, Helen Lowther; Piotr Niewiadomski); and (iii) Economic Geographies of Work and Finance (Yajing Li, Rachel Mulhall, Sejeong Ha). Day 2 was co-sponsored with the journal *European Urban and Regional Studies* and was entitled 'Reflections on the Spaces of Economy and Society Twenty Years After the Collapse of State Socialism'. This was comprised of 7 presentations from Judit Timár and Adrian Smith, John Pickles, Simon Reid-Henry, Stefan Bouzarovski, Vlad Mykhnenko and Adam Swain, John Round, and Alison Stenning. The two days were attended by approximately 40 people in total, and thanks to the organisers – Al James, Sarah Hall, Laura James and Adrian Smith – were recorded. It was noted that all materials relating to the 2009 symposia are archived on the EGRG website, and that the papers presented on Day 2 will be published as a special issue of *European Urban and Regional Studies* in early 2010. It was also noted that attendance at the 2009 postgraduate symposium represented a significant improvement on previous years thanks to the hard work of Sarah Hall and Laura James in compiling a database of contact details for all economic geography PhD students (broadly defined) in the UK. It was decided that this database will be maintained and used to encourage even more postgraduates to present their work at the 2010 EGRG Symposium.

e. It was noted that, in response to the RGS-IBG's recent concern for research groups to archive fully their activities, that the EGRG website (<http://www.egrg.org.uk/>) has long provided this function. It was also noted that the EGRG website is in the process of being migrated from the University of Manchester to Birkbeck, to coincide with Andrew Jones taking over as EGRG Chair. Thanks were recorded to Graham Bowden at the University of Manchester for his excellent unpaid work on the EGRG website over the last 10 years. It was agreed that EGRG funds would be used to purchase a suitable gift for Graham Bowden to honour his contribution to the group.

f. The postgraduate book review and working paper series were discussed. It was noted that the first working paper prize had attracted a reasonable filed of submissions, with the prize awarded to: Franz Huber (University of Cambridge): 'Social capital of economic clusters: towards a network-based conception of social resources'. It was also noted that the recently compiled database of UK PhD students in economic geography might provide a useful means for generating a greater number of applications for next year's prize.

g. It was noted that the annual postgraduate prizes were awarded to:

Karen Lai (University of Nottingham, now at University of British Columbia): 'Approaches to 'Markets': The Development of Shanghai as an International Financial Centre' (PhD Prize)

Lucie Edwards (Newcastle University): 'NewcastleGateshead Place Marketing and the Attraction of a Creative Class' (Masters Prize).

It was noted that there were highly competitive fields for both awards.

#### 5. Forthcoming events:

It was agreed that the 2010 Annual Symposium would be hosted by the University of Nottingham, and that the topic would be 'The UK Economy in Crisis'.

The next RGS-IBG Annual Conference will take place from 1-3 September 2010 in London. A formal session selection process will be implemented in due course.

#### 6. Treasurer's report:

The Treasurer presented the accounts for 2009 (balance £980.38 as of August and before the RGS subvention). Two points were noted in particular: the successful budgeting for the annual symposium, and the need to attract sponsorship for the annual thesis prizes in 2010. Overall it was agreed that the finances were reasonably healthy and could support the new working paper prize (see

above) but that we should continue to seek sponsorship for the prizes in 2010 and should also continue to charge a £25 fee for waged attendees at the annual symposium.

7. AOB

Thanks was recorded to Neil Coe for all his hard work as Chair of the EGRG for the last three years. There was a discussion as to whether the EGRG could provide any additional services beyond those already provided to members. It was agreed that the committee was already doing a fine job, but would continue to benchmark its activities against those of other research groups.

Date of next meeting: tbc

AJ, September 2009