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In the bleak mid-winter it's time to honour those pesky email reminders on overdue work. Have an eggnog and consider it.

RGRG's official website ([www.dur.ac.uk/geography/rgrg\\_newsletter/](http://www.dur.ac.uk/geography/rgrg_newsletter/))

has updated the section on members' books, Publications. Please send book citations, conference reports, photos & news to the editor.

Best wishes, Bruce

Editor, *RGRG Newsletter*

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## 1. CONFERENCES & EVENTS 2013.

- AAG Los Angeles 9-13 April
- IGU Kyoto, Japan, 4-9 August
- RGS-IBG London 28-30 August
- CCRI Winter School tba

### 1a. Los Angeles 9-13 April 2013 (<http://www.aag.org/annualmeeting>)



Among RGRG members at the Association of American Geographers annual meeting, 2 speak in 'Africa's Green Revolution: Critical perspectives on new agricultural technologies and systems', sessions organised by Matthew Schnurr (Dalhousie University), Rachel Bezner-Kerr (Cornell University) & William Moseley (Macalester College. Note: Moseley has been publishing pieces on the Mali coup in *Al Jazeera*, etc.). Bruce Scholten (Durham) presents 'Linking Dairy Development to Africa's New Green Revolution';

Imogen Bellwood-Howard (King's College London) presents on 'Credit groups and sustainable Soil Fertility Management in Northern Ghana'.

### 1b. RGS-IBG London Annual Conference 28-30 August 2013

Chaired by Jon Rigg [www.rgs.org/AC2013Timeline](http://www.rgs.org/AC2013Timeline)

For RGRG-linked sessions or paper proposals email Keith ([k.h.halfacree@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:k.h.halfacree@swansea.ac.uk)) and Carol ([Carol.Morris@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Carol.Morris@nottingham.ac.uk)) by 31 December.

- 13 Feb. – Deadline to submit sessions (with paper, author info & abstracts) to organisers.
- 12 April – Deadline to submit to open sessions.



-----Original Message-----

From: [K.H.Halfacree@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:K.H.Halfacree@swansea.ac.uk) Sent: 13 December 2012  
Subject: RGRG list: Call for sessions for Annual Conference 2013

Dear RGRG member

The theme of the next annual RGS-IBG conference is New Geographical Frontiers (to be held at the RGS-IBG Headquarters in London, 28-30 August 2013). At and since a committee meeting in Sheffield last month we had some ideas for sessions, listed here together with potential convenors (thanks esp to Sonya for getting the ball rolling...):

- 'Rural in the New Dawn'... possibly research from new Administrations, whether linking to the UK Coalition from 2010 and subsequent changes; rural in an age of austerity (from across the World) and/or after conflict /change, etc. (Sonya Rewhorn & a.n.other?)

- 'Available Rural'... accessibility (in its widest context) and rural - engaging with rural as a commodity and as a tourism destination, accessibility from rural areas, multifunctionality and wider economy (Sonya Rewhorn & a.n.other?)

- 'New and Emerging Rural Researchers' - postgrad session - (Andy Grayson / Sonya Rewhorn)

- 'Rural beyond Rurality' - where does the rural 'end' (and where does it begin)? What are the borderlands of the rural today? What of the rural 'in' the urban? 'How' is the rural beyond representation? (Keith Halfacree & a.n.other)

RGRG members are invited to suggest further sessions but they must include at least one named convenor willing to pull the session together, so not too speculative please! For a bit more help on what I mean by 'session', here is some text from RGS-IBG:

Sessions may take the form of presented papers, panels, practitioner forums, discussions or workshops. Innovative sessions and formats are encouraged. Sessions are 1 hour 40 minutes long. Most sessions will contain five 20-minute presentations which include time for questions, or four 20-minute presentations with discussion and questions at the end. Interactive short papers sessions (5 to 10 min presentations with plenary discussion at the end) usually accommodate up to 8 papers.

Please can all sessions be sent to [carol.morris@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:carol.morris@nottingham.ac.uk) by 31st December 2012 [Editor: ASAP] so that we can sort this out promptly and then make a call for papers in the early New Year! Further information on the conference can be found at the conference website: [www.rgs.org/AC2012](http://www.rgs.org/AC2012). I look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks, Carol

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## 1c. IGU Kyoto 4–9 August 2013



(<http://www.unil.ch/igu-urban/page92968.html>)

If you can't be in beautiful Kyoto at cherry blossom time, visit the International Geographical Union meeting in 2013.

Deadline for travel grant apps: 31 Jan. 2013: <http://www.igu-online.org/site/?p=1555>



## 2a. RGS-IBG Edinburgh Annual Conference 3-5 July 2012

**Security of geography/geography of security, chaired by Chris Philo**  
Edinburgh was a refreshing change from London for the annual conference. RGRG an ambitious schedule, beginning with 3 sessions on **Tuesday 3 July** of New and Emerging Rural Researchers.

**Wednesday 4 July** featured Rural Stayers in the Mobile Countrysides convened by Keith Halfacree et al. Also Land Ownership, Governance and Delivery of Sustainable Rural Development convened by Jayne Glass & others.

**Friday 6 July** was a marathon of Scaling sessions (some with DARG), capped by Securing Sustainable Rural Livelihoods in the Global North and South.



*'The rural is where land parcels are bigger than elsewhere.'* - Andy Grayson  
(Editor's favourite quote from Edinburgh)



## RGRG Edinburgh 2012 Sessions.

Abstracts in Winter 2011 RGRG Newsletter: <http://www.dur.ac.uk/geography/rgrg/newsletter/>

**New and Emerging Rural Researchers (1): Rural Development and Farming (RGRG). Tuesday 3 July, Session 2 (11:10 to 12:50).** Convenors: Stacey Coppock (University of Nottingham) & Daniel Keech (Southampton); Chair: Sarah-Anne Munõz (University of the Highlands & Islands)  
Recognition, redistribution and power: the concept of Food Sovereignty in Bolivia and Ecuador from the perspective of Political Geography. Benno Haupt (University of Kiel, Germany)

Impact of cooperative membership on farmers' uptake of technological innovations in south-west Nigeria. Oluwasun O. Kolade (London South Bank University); Michal Lyons (London South Bank)

The role of trust and social capital in increasing the response capacity of farmers towards bovine tuberculosis. Rhiannon Fisher (Countryside and Community Research Inst.)

Agri-tourism in the global south: sustainable development and the ecological landscapes of Mumbai-Pune region. Rohit Madan (Cardiff University)

Community scale organisation gives No.Ghanaian smallholders access to farm vehicles Imogen Bellwood-Howard (King's College London, **right**)

**New and Emerging Rural Researchers (2): Rural Economy and Society (RGRG). Tuesday 3 July, Session 3 (13:10 to 14:50).** Convenors Stacey Coppock (Nottingham) & Daniel Keech (University of Southampton); Chair(s) Keith Halfacree (Swansea)

Exploring counterurbanization in a post-socialist context: case of Czech Republic. Martin Šimon (Charles University, Czech Republic)

Community Sponsored Social Integration Initiatives for Immigrants in Rural Ireland Shane O'Sullivan (Mary Immaculate College, Limerick)



Popular Rurality – Success of German country magazines (*Landzeitschriften*) Christoph Baumann (Univ. Erlangen-Nürnberg)



**New and Emerging Rural Researchers (3): Rural Policy and Planning (RGRG).**

**Tuesday 3 July, Session 4 (15:20 to 17:00).** Convenor(s) Stacey Coppock (University of Nottingham) & Daniel Keech (University of Southampton); Chair Keith Halfacree (Swansea).

Mental Health Services and Social Inclusion in Remote and Rural Areas  
Clare Daly (University of the Highlands and Islands)

Presences and absences: reviewing the third sector and volunteering in rural Scotland  
Mike Woolvin (Scottish Agricultural College)

Planning for Demise: The Restriction of Adaptation and Change in Rural Areas  
Andrew Grayson (University of Sheffield)

Participatory Mapping of Health Indicators and Services as a Tool for Anticipatory Co-Planning  
Sarah Bowyer (University of the Highlands and Islands)



Is there Proof in the rural pudding? - Has the mechanism of rural proofing become effective and inherent in policy development process in England?  
Sonja Rewhorn (University of Chester)

(Cartoon: *The Journal* 5 June 2012)

Landscape discourse and the social politics of rural wind energy. Rebecca Eastman (Univ. Plymouth)

**Rural Stayers in the Mobile Countrysides (RGRG).**

**Wednesday 4 July, Session 3 (13:10 to 14:50).** Convenors: Tialda Haartsen (Groningen) & Keith Halfacree (Swansea); Chair: Tialda Haartsen.

Decoupling land, farm and place: recombinant attachments of globally-engaged family farmers  
Michael Woods (Aberystwyth University), Lynda Cheshire (University of Queensland, Australia) & Carla Meurk (University of Queensland, Australia)

Rural stayers, rural leavers, urban migrants  
Dianne Looker (Mount Saint Vincent University, Canada)

Highly qualified rural stayers: motivations and strategies of young graduates returning to their home region  
Patrick Rérat (University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland)

Why do I remain in the rural?  
María Jesús Rivera (Public University of Navarre, Spain)

Beyond representations and into everyday life:  
exploring why and how British migrants stay in rural France  
Michaela Benson (University of Bristol)



(Foreign Policy Blogs 2011)

**Land Ownership, Governance and the Delivery of Sustainable Rural Development (RGRG).**

**Wednesday 4 July, Session 4 (15:20 to 17:00).** Convenors: Jayne Glass (Perth College University of Highlands and Islands) & Rob Mc Morran (Perth College University of the Highlands and Islands). Chair(s) Jayne Glass. Discussant: Jayne Glass

Governing the Forests: Evolving relationships between public policy and private management in English woodlands. Clive Potter (Imperial College London) & Charles Watkins (University of Nottingham)

National identities for sale? Might economic opportunities outweigh ethno-national allegiances to pave the way for Northern Ireland's first national park?  
Jonathan Bell (Queen's University Belfast)

Duality of Land tenure systems and irrigated agriculture models: is schizophrenia a good way to develop the Office du Niger area in Mali? Adamczewski Amandine (CIRAD, France), Jean-Yves Jamin (CIRAD, France) & Jean-Philippe Tonneau (CIRAD, France)

Land as a community asset: community empowerment?  
Tim Braunholtz-Speight (University of the Highlands and Islands)

'Working Together for Sustainable Rural Communities': comparing and contrasting different models of land-based stakeholder cooperation and rural governance – lessons from case studies of community and private landownership in the Scottish Highlands. Convenor(s) Annie McKee (The James Hutton Institute) & Rob Mc Morran (Perth College University of the Highlands and Islands)

**Scaling the Food Security Challenge (1): Politics, Policy and Practice (RGRG/ DARG). Thursday 5 July, Session 1 (09:00 to 10:40).** Convenor(s) Moya Kneafsey (Coventry University), Ruth Little (University of Sheffield), Hannah Lambie-Mumford (University of Sheffield), Ivan Scales (University of Cambridge), David Nally (University of Cambridge). Chair: Ruth Little.

The Codex Conspiracy; globalized conspiracy theories, social movements and food in-security.  
Matthew Reed (Countryside and Community Research Institute)

Peasants, Pastoralists and Participation in Policy Processes: Civil Society Engagement in Global Food Security Governance. Jessica Duncan (City University, London)

Beyond production efficiency? Climate change mitigation for UK agriculture in a context of food security. Isobel Tomlinson (Birkbeck, University of London)

Biofuels and the emerging political economy of agriculture in Senegal  
Ivan Scales (University of Cambridge)

Supermarkets and urban value chains: rethinking the developmental mandate  
Caryn Abrahams (University of South Africa)

**Scaling the Food Security Challenge (2): the roles of producers, consumers, and communities (RGRG, DARG). Thursday 5 July, Session 2 (11:10 to 12:50).** Convenors: Moya Kneafsey (Coventry University), Ruth Little (University of Sheffield), Hannah Lambie-Mumford (University of Sheffield), Ivan Scales (University of Cambridge) & David Nally (University of Cambridge). Chair: Moya Kneafsey

Irrigators in the Firing Line! Producers' Responses to Policy Change in Australia's Food Bowl. Guy M. Robinson (University of South Australia, Australia & past head of RGRG)

Reconnecting the local: situating food at the heart of sustainable community development  
Daniel French (University of Glamorgan) & Suzanne Jenkins (University of Glamorgan)

Serving society? The role of soup kitchens and soup runs in urban social order  
Jane Midgley (Newcastle University)

Food banking as community resilience? Negotiating localised scales in discussions of food security in the UK. Hannah Lambie-Mumford (University of Sheffield)

Coping with food insecurity in a European metropolis: The effects of current economic crisis in food consumption in Athens. Sophia Skordili (Harokopio University, Greece)

 **RGRG AGM: Thurs 5 July 2012, Session 3 (see below)**

**Scaling the food security challenge (3): Critique and Research Agendas (RGRG, DARG).**  
**Thursday 5 July, Session 4 (15:20 to 17:00).** Convenors: Moya Kneafsey (Coventry University), Ruth Little (University of Sheffield), Hannah Lambie-Mumford (University of Sheffield), Ivan Scales (University of Cambridge), David Nally (University of Cambridge). Chair: Ivan Scales.

Food security agendas in UK research: a preliminary investigation of sites and spatial imaginaries. Susanne Seymour (University of Nottingham) & Carol Morris (University of Nottingham).

The Food Security Meme  
Jonathan Cloke (Loughborough University)

Panel Discussion: Isobel Tomlinson (Birkbeck, University of London), Paul Milbourne (Cardiff University), Stephen Hinchliffe (University of Exeter), Geoff Tansey (independent writer and broadcaster), Marisa Wilson (University of the West Indies), Julia Wright (Centre for Agroecology and Food Security / Coventry University), Drawing on the papers presented in the previous 2 sessions plus the opening paper in this session, the rest of Session 3 will be devoted to a panel discussion which will focus on drawing out critical perspectives on policy and research agendas for food security both in the UK and internationally.

*Key questions:*

- Where should geographers focus their research agendas around food security?
- What, in particular, can geographical perspectives contribute to current debates about food security?
- What are the latest policy imperatives and who is driving policy agendas around food security?
- What are the critical alternatives to current dominant food security paradigms?

**Securing Sustainable Rural Livelihoods in the Global North and South (RGRG report below).**  
**Thursday 5 July, Session 5 (17:20 to 19:00).** Convenors: Bruce Scholten (Durham University) & Daniel Keech (University of Southampton). Chair: Bruce Scholten

Re-engaging with the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Framework: Livelihoods of self-settled refugees in the Global South. Charlotte Ray (Coventry University)

Integrated Soil Fertility Management and maize commercialisation in Northern Ghana. Imogen Bellwood-Howard (King's College London)

Rural social enterprise in England and Germany: Continuity, connectedness and the commercial revival of traditional orchards. Daniel Keech (University of Southampton)

Cooperative Dairying in the Global South: Better incomes for smallholders & women. Bruce Scholten (Durham University)

Exploring the effectiveness of social capital as a strategy for sustainable rural livelihoods. Sharon Flanigan. The James Hutton Institute) & Keith Matthews (Hutton Institute)



**Securing Sustainable Rural Livelihoods session: Charlotte Ray (Coventry, above left)** described patterns of self-settled refugees and their relations with their home countries.

**Imogen Bellwood-Howard (KCL, writing)** detailed smallholder access to farm vehicles in Ghana.

**Dan Keech (red stripes)** compared British and German efforts to sustain community orchards.

**Bruce Scholten** lauded recent focus by UN-FAO on smallholders and women in Rural Southern dairy development, while warning of temptations to costly, inappropriate technology.

**Sharon Flanigan (below)** explored the effectiveness of social capital in sustaining rural livelihoods. (Editor: C.S. Sundaresan, Ford Foundation Fellow in Ahmedabad, employs similar themes in Amartya Sen's Capacity Approach to people on the Human Development Index (HDI).)



In a previous session **Charles Howie (top right)** suggested soil science is more relevant to the Rural South than post-modernism. **Read Howie's article on Mekong River rice farming below.**

## 2b. RGRG AGM: Thurs 5 July, Session 3.

Discussion included bilateral meetings on other continents, and we agreed to minimise travel costs and maximise exchanges in multi-country meetings. Committee elections followed.



RGRG members at the AGM. Back L-R including Sharon Flanigan, Ally Beale, Gareth Enticott, Michael Wood, Susanne Seymour. Front: Moya Kneafsey, Carol Morris & Keith Halfacree.

### AGM voting confirmed the 2012/13 RGRG Committee

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Chair: Dr Keith Halfacree<br/><a href="mailto:k.h.halfacree@swansea.ac.uk">k.h.halfacree@swansea.ac.uk</a></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ordinary member: Mr Daniel Keech<br/><a href="mailto:mdk1g09@soton.ac.uk">mdk1g09@soton.ac.uk</a></li></ul> |
|--|---|

<i>Until 2013</i>	<i>Until 2015</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secretary: Dr Carol Morris carol.morris@nottingham.ac.uk <i>Until 2013</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ordinary member: Dr Ruth Little <a href="mailto:ruth.little@sheffield.ac.uk">ruth.little@sheffield.ac.uk</a> <i>Until 2015</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletter editor: Dr Bruce Scholten <a href="mailto:bruce.scholten@btopenworld.com">bruce.scholten@btopenworld.com</a> &amp; <a href="mailto:b.a.scholten@durham.ac.uk">b.a.scholten@durham.ac.uk</a> <i>Until 2015</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ordinary member: Dr Sharon Flanigan <a href="mailto:sharon.flanigan@hutton.ac.uk">sharon.flanigan@hutton.ac.uk</a> <i>Until 2013</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Treasurer: Dr Gareth Enticott <a href="mailto:enticottg@cardiff.ac.uk">enticottg@cardiff.ac.uk</a> <i>Until 2013</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ordinary member: Dr Moya Kneafsey <a href="mailto:m.kneafsey@coventry.ac.uk">m.kneafsey@coventry.ac.uk</a> <i>Until 2013</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Postgraduate representative: Mr Andy Grayson <a href="mailto:a.g.grayson@sheffield.ac.uk">a.g.grayson@sheffield.ac.uk</a> <i>Until 2013</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ordinary member: Dr Natalie Beale <a href="mailto:n.beale@tees.ac.uk">n.beale@tees.ac.uk</a> <i>Until 2013</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Postgraduate representative: Ms Sonja Rewhorn <a href="mailto:s.rewhorn@chester.ac.uk">s.rewhorn@chester.ac.uk</a> <i>Until 2013</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ordinary member: Dr Julie Urquhart <a href="mailto:j.urquhart@gre.ac.uk">j.urquhart@gre.ac.uk</a> <i>Until 2013</i></li> </ul>
Former 2011/12 Committee: <a href="https://www.dur.ac.uk/geography/rgrg/committee/former/">https://www.dur.ac.uk/geography/rgrg/committee/former/</a> <i>Thanks!</i>	

### 3. CCRI Winter School.

By Gillian Cope & Rhiannon Fisher

The CCRI Winter School was held at the University of Gloucestershire's Park Campus in Cheltenham 21-22 November 2012, writes Damian Maye. Below is Stephen Pritchard (Gloucestershire) presenting work on landscape conservation projects.



THE COUNTRYSIDE and Community Research Institute's (CCRI) Winter School presents current thinking in the area of rural research. The annual seminar brought together PhD students nationally and internationally to share research and discuss their findings over two days in November.

Although speaking from a range of disciplines, including anthropology, agriculture and human geography, a variety of compelling themes linked the presentations. A number of papers focused on how people emotionally and physically engage with a place, from Germanic heritage in Jamaica, to visitor experiences of National Trust properties and driving in the Peak District.

Another key theme was social capital, which was shown to be intrinsic to successful communication and partnership working. A range of papers incorporated social capital in a variety of contexts from farmers' attitudes towards bovine tuberculosis to the creation of permissive access in the Irish countryside.

Rural resilience was also a popular theme in a number of papers, ranging from rural governance to local economic investment and farmers' attitudes to climate change.

Novel research approaches were also discussed including film diaries and participant observation. In addition to student presentations, academics at the CCRI provided useful advice on the PhD process, surviving the viva and publishing PhD findings.

As always, the CCRI Winter School was a great opportunity for students to get together, share PhD experiences and emerge with new ideas and knowledge.

**For details about next year's Winter School please email [jharper@glos.ac.uk](mailto:jharper@glos.ac.uk)**



*Winter School: Ian Humphrey (Sheffield) presenting on Community Supported Agriculture (CSA).*

## 4. FEATURE

**Combine harvesters in An Giang Province, Việt Nam: Presaging social change**  
By Charles Howie ([chowie@rac.ac.uk](mailto:chowie@rac.ac.uk))

***'the first trials... were opposed by labourers who spread nails in the fields.'***

One Sunday, riding my pedal bike on the dike, I saw combine harvesters cutting and threshing rice. The land was covered in water, 20 cm in places, but this didn't seem to be a problem. On the bank a crowd of men and women sat watching and joking. Overhead grey clouds hung heavily and the weather forecast predicted heavy rains, but this crop would not be lost. From the chatter and animation this was a moment for celebration. Later, I met a man taking home a bunch of 'rats' for eating: 'Ngong (delicious)!' he said when I nodded at them. From across the canal I was offered a meal—which no doubt would have been accompanied by shots of 'rice wine' (*aka vodka*).



*Combine harvester in wet rice land in the Mekong Delta, Việt Nam (October 2012).*

Further along the path was a traditional threshing machine with a crowd of men and women. and just beyond it was a bullock-drawn cart delivering sheaves for threshing and taking away the sacks of grain - the way rice has been harvested here for decades. This looked like a step-change in technology, and beyond that social change may happen with fewer workers needed to work the land. Later I learned the first trials of cutting machines in 2007 were opposed by labourers who spread nails in the fields. Looking at the large area being harvested I was struck by another apparent change: there were no low field boundaries dividing it up. Was all the land being farmed by one household, or were two or more households cooperating?



*Unusually large field being combined.*



*'Delicious' rats for dinner*



*Traditional threshing machine. On the right a sheaf of newly cut rice about to be loaded, in the foregrounds a bag of seeds. Chaff blows out of the top.*

This looks to be a rich area for research, with questions such as: *Who will be put out of work by mechanisation and what will they do? Who owns the machinery and who is benefiting from the change, farmers or big business? Are farmers cooperating voluntarily in amalgamating their land, or are some farmers willingly selling land in the face of uncertainty about future land use rights when the Land Law is due for revision in 2013? This could reset farmer-state relations. Intriguing stuff.*



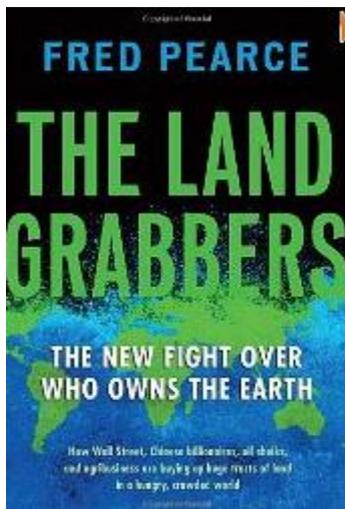
*Traditional cutting and threshing in the field.*



*Rice straw travelling in a bullock-drawn cart.*

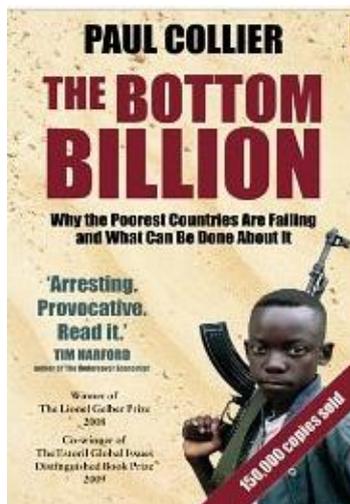
## 5. BOOKS

REF 2014 draws nigh. Send book & publication news to editor.



*The Landgrabbers: The New Fight Over Who Owns the Earth*

By Fred Pearce (2012) Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press



*The Bottom Billion: Why the poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*

By Paul Collier. Oxford: Oxford University Press, USA (2008)

FRED PEARCE'S protagonists are actors in what David Harvey's (2003) *New Imperialism* terms 'accumulation by dispossession'. Pearce notes land grabbing is dominated by anonymous institutional investors, trillion dollar pension funds (p.119), and hedge funds. Not to mention sovereign funds in Mideast countries

fearful of food embargoes, after once vast aquifers have been depleted by cubic kilometres – making it impossible to continue wheat or dairy farming.

Cash rich investors drove global food commodity investments from roughly \$30 billion to \$300b from 2003 to 2010, after digital and housing balloons burst. The last third of the book reads like an annotated list of landgrabs. But that's useful, as these seem well researched, and retrievable with its index. Pearce closes by rebuking Paul Collier's *The Bottom Billion*. (OUP 2008) which claims Africa needs big farms of GM crops (pp.343-346).

Pearce's jeremiad reflects an open letter to Collier posted by Lucy Jarosz and colleagues ([www.seattleglobaljustice.org/2009/01/open-letter-to-paul-collier-in-response-to-%E2%80%9Cpolitics-of-hunger%E2%80%9D/](http://www.seattleglobaljustice.org/2009/01/open-letter-to-paul-collier-in-response-to-%E2%80%9Cpolitics-of-hunger%E2%80%9D/)) at the Seattle-based Community Alliance for Global Justice.

Comparing Collier's prescription to Lenin's disruption of Kulak farmers, Pearce lambasts IMF and World Bank structural adjustment programmes for stopping farm extension, while praising recent success with subsidise farm inputs in Malawi (see also Marie Javdani, *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability* Vol. 10(2) 2012).

Paul Collier's *Bottom Billion* is worthwhile if only to note widespread institutional praise for his diagnosis of African countries. These include: 1. Conflict Traps (p.17: recurring coups and wars), 2. Natural Resource Traps (p.38: which tempt coups and distort trade; 3. Landlocks (p.53: Collier agrees with Jeffrey Sachs on the need for road-building), and 4. Bad Governance (p.64).

*Upshot?* Collier's primer on development economics somehow stimulated this reviewer's hopes that life *can* improve for the poorest billion, as it has for the rest of us. But, Pearce cites instances of people deprived of their land, even when documents supported their ownership. He calls landgrabs what they: accumulation of land, water and resources from the poorest, least able to resist.

I raised such questions with Kenyans on a visit last April. Were the Chinese building roads out of altruism? 'No, they expect some payoff,' was the gist of answers on farms and streets. But the Chinese were doing quality work with little or no corruption, they added. So, final judgements are pending.

Reviewer: BAS

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## 6. NEWS

- RGRG Undergraduate Dissertation Prizes 2013. Email Keith for deadlines & more info: [K.H.Halfacree@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:K.H.Halfacree@swansea.ac.uk)
- Daniel Keech has a new position at the Countryside and Community Research Institute (CCRI), alongside several other RGRG members. Dan's interest in German and UK ruralities bodes well for those of us maintaining research links with the Continent.
- Publications. This section has been recently updated on the official RGRG website/homepage (<http://www.dur.ac.uk/geography/rgrg/publications/>). Please send complete citations for your new books or seminal journal articles.
- *RGRG Newsletter* invites your contributions to the Summer 2013 edition. Deadline is 4<sup>th</sup> July. Please send reports & photos from AAG or RGRG linked events, advice, awards, book reviews, features, fieldwork, or jobs to Editor: [bruce.scholten@btopenworld.com](mailto:bruce.scholten@btopenworld.com)



[Http://www.rgs.org/OurWork/Research+and+Higher+Education/ResearchGroups/Rural+Geography+Research+Group.htm](http://www.rgs.org/OurWork/Research+and+Higher+Education/ResearchGroups/Rural+Geography+Research+Group.htm)



*Thanks! to Steven Allan, Web Coordinator at Durham University Geography Dept.*

