

EVOLUTIONARY ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY: THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL PROGRESS, edited by D.F. Kogler, Abingdon: Routledge, 2016.

Economic Geography is a well-established field of enquiry that investigates the spatial behaviors of economic agents and activities – namely firms, capital and labor. Evolutionary economic geography (EEG) is an emerging subfield that applies theories based on evolutionary economics to understand the dynamics of economic activities in regions. The main idea that inspires EEG is that the economy takes place in space and is in a constant state of flux and change that is never in equilibrium. In this unstable context firms are born, grow, mature and die based on laws that have similarities to the principles of Darwinism of survival of the fittest as well as complexity theory. The main driver is the constant need for novelty that gives the firm the upper edge over its competitors. The result is an economic landscape characterized by uneven development of knowledge, production and innovation, trapping labor, capital and routines in some regions and encouraging discovery and experimentation in others.

Numerous EEG studies have been published in recent years contributing to the gradual establishment of the field. In this respect a special volume dedicated to EEG is both timely and of added value to students and researchers. Unfortunately, this book does not serve well this goal. While, the title and back cover are promising, the book remains only a reprint of a special issue of the journal of *Regional Studies* (Vol. 49, 2015) including all its original papers. This makes it extremely difficult for a reader who is unfamiliar with the EEG framework and its concepts to understand its unique contribution to the economic geography discourse. Although it is not uncommon to publish a book based on a special issue of a journal, the reader still expects to receive some additional benefits for her investment, such as a new introduction and a concluding chapter that provides an overarching discussion. Here sadly the editor made no such attempt. The introduction is based on the original editorial with very little explanation in laymen terms of what makes EEG important and unique while a concluding chapter is very much absent. The only two additional materials I could find is: (1) a 100 word abstract for each chapter (apart for the Introduction) in 5 languages (English, Chinese, French, German and Spanish) which I doubt will significantly help readers who are not fluent in English anyway; (2) an Index. I therefore see little of what the book contributes beyond the original special issue.

As this is a book review I should at this stage describe and comment on the individual chapters. Even these are not marked clearly but only by reference to the original paper titles. Ch1 is mostly an epistemological essay that calls for a developmental turn in EEG that goes beyond the Neo-Darwinism concepts of variety, selection and retention and embraces thoughts and practices from other geographical knowledge bases like institutional geography and political economic geography.

Ch. 2 discusses and develops the concept of regional resilience which relates to the ability of regions to absorb shocks in industry, network or institutions that over

the longer term may contribute to the development of new growth paths by overcoming the trade-offs between adaptation and adaptability .

Ch3 introduces the concept of relatedness and its role in regional economic development, through a study of the input-output relations in metropolitan areas of the United States. The empirical results suggest that relatedness is positively associated with the portfolio of industry membership and industry entry and negatively associated with industry exit.

Ch. 4 evokes the concepts of related and unrelated variety as engines of regional innovation through the empirical study of patenting. Related variety is positively associated with innovation output. However it is unrelated variety that has impact on breakthrough innovation that contributes to building connections between previously unrelated things.

Ch. 5 investigates the role of external linkages and gatekeepers in the renewal and expansion of US cities. Direct external relations are necessary for the renewal of local knowledge bases mediated by gatekeepers – inventors in the city that connect to externally located inventors. These are especially important for cities with localized and specialized knowledge bases as they promote the transcoding and absorption at the local level of external knowledge sources.

Ch. 6 presents an empirical study based on patenting data of the biotechnology (rDNA) industry from its birth in the San Francisco Bay Area and its diffusion to other sectors and regions across the US. Event history models applied show how social contacts between co-inventors and the absorptive capacity of host cities are important for diffusion and adoption processes to flourish.

Ch. 7 examines interactions between firms in Norway in six different sectors: manufacturing, construction, retail, accommodation and food, transport and services. Innovation drivers vary widely among sectors. Whereas proximity to universities and research institutes promotes process and product innovation in all the sectors, relationships between customers and suppliers affect it negatively in trade, retail and services.

Ch. 8 investigates the question why clusters decline by looking at the data from the wireless communication industry in Denmark. Technological and cognitive lock-in and exit of key firms are contributors to the decline trend. Entrepreneurship is important for the cluster's adaptation but is also quick to withdraw in times of crisis.

Ch. 9 examines the role of regional innovation policy in facilitating industrial renewal in old industrial regions. Drawing on a case study of the forest industry in northern Sweden, it is shown that radical emergent technology is necessary but not sufficient for new regional path development. Non-technical social learning processes are important to supplement this.

Ch. 10 shifts to the perspective of the labor force using an analysis of transition of Italian university graduates to the workforce and the job education (mis)match. While migration is a positive force in job finding and over-education at the national

level, differences are found at the subnational level especially the North-South divide.

Ch. 11 is the only paper in the volume that examines the urban-neighborhood scale. Using data from Canada (Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver), the study finds difference in attraction of knowledge-based industries to particular urban form settings. Whereas creative industries tend to locate in dense mixed use inner neighborhoods where inter-firm networks flourish, science-based industries that rely on intra-firm interaction and learning prefer to concentrate in low-density single-use suburban neighborhoods.

As the reader may well understand, there is very little common thread across the different chapters, thus as I mentioned above, the book heavily maintains the style, form and allure of the original special issue. In this sense the editor and authors I believe missed a remarkable opportunity to attract new and unfamiliar readers to this exciting field.

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COMPUTATIONAL APPROACHES FOR URBAN ENVIRONMENTS,
 Edited by Marci Helbich, Jamal Joker Arsanjani & Michael Leitner. Berlin: Springer
 International Publishing, 2015.

In the past few decades, with the advances in computers and their applications, the field of geography has become significantly more "computational" in its approach. Today, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) is, in most cases, considered a fundamental and vital tool for current research. Nonetheless, increased availability compounded by the complexity of geospatial and spatiotemporal data demand ever more complex methods. This book provides novel geo-computational examples and methods used in recent research providing a better understanding of the complexity of urban environments.

The book contains 16 chapters divided into five sections, each presenting a different area of research that deals with urban environments: Section 1 is dedicated to spatial planning and decision-making; Section 2 focuses on housing and real estate; Section 3 deals with urban transportation and mobility; section 4 is focused on remote sensing; and Section 5 is devoted to urban sensing and social networks. The editors rightly claim that, while the book is divided into sections, the boundaries are not rigid and, in some cases, overlap. While one can question the editorial choice in this partitioning, in most cases I found it helpful. I further believe it can provide an easy starting point for readers that are interested in a specific field. The main concern in approaching such a mixed set of studies is that the reader will, most