



4th International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Emotional Geographies 1-3 July 2013 at the University of Groningen, The Netherlands

Session Summary	
Session Title	Representations and experiences of the rural good life
Session Abstract	<p>Representations, images and ideas of the idyllic rural good life (may) influence people's decisions referring to their spatial behaviour in or towards rural areas (e.g. residential, recreational). Increasingly, the importance of actual experiences of rural good life in such spatial behaviour is acknowledged. Emotional and affective aspects play an important role in people's representations and experiences of 'rurality'. What do rural areas mean for their inhabitants, or for temporary users of rural space? How can people find a good life in rural areas? Which emotions do people link with rurality or with special rural places? Can rural life be considered a good life? Or is there also a rural 'bad life', and if so, what are the negative emotions attached to the countryside or rural world? Are there any absolute categories, which define a good (or a bad) life? Or should we deal with individual, relative perspectives? How far have we come with developing ways to explore rural representations and experiences?</p> <p>This session explores new insights in people's emotional relation to and attachment with rural areas. Papers will discuss different perspectives on representations and emotional experiences of the rural good life.</p>
Keywords	

Presentations		
#	Title	Author Name
1	Representing and experiencing rurality - a "more-than-representational" geography of German country magazines	Christoph Baumann
2	Mapping embodied meanings: emotion and affect in the daily activities and social networks of contemporary villagers	Diana Beljaars
3	Emotions in counterurbanisation research: a lesson learnt from the field	Martin Šimon
4	Is it a town? Or is it a village? What's the difference and does it matter?	Hilary Ramsden
5	The Rural as an Idyllic Chronotope of Counter-Globalisation	Esther Peeren

Session Convenors and Chair	
Session Convenor Name	Affiliation
Julia Rössel	Cultural Geography, Department of Geography, Johannes Gutenberg-University of Mainz, Germany
Tialda Haartsen	Cultural Geography, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, the Netherlands

Session Chair name	Affiliation
Julia Rössel	Cultural Geography, Department of Geography, Johannes Gutenberg-University of Mainz, Germany
Tialda Haartsen	Cultural Geography, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, the Netherlands

Session presentation details

Presentation 1

Title	Representing and experiencing rurality - a "more-than-representational" geography of German country magazines
Abstract	<p>The emergence and popularity of so-called "Landzeitschriften" (country, countryside or rural magazines) – multi-thematic lifestyle magazines about good rural(-like) living, about nature, traditions, gardening, handcraft, cooking, recreation, travelling etc. – is one of the most astonishing phenomena in the German media scene in the past years. While sales figures of printed journals, magazines and newspapers are generally declining, "Landzeitschriften" such as Landlust, Landidee, Landspiegel, mein schönes Land or Liebes Land are sold more and more. Among others, this media success indicates a contemporary boom of rurality in German society. In my presentation I am going to explore this boom of rurality as a sociocultural phenomenon with spatial dimensions.</p> <p>Using and combining theories of discourse (following Foucault) and theories of practices (following Schatzki and Bourdieu) I am going to examine both the media texts (and their producers) as well as the readers in order to analyze the representation and the experience – including emotional and affective aspects – of rurality.</p> <p>Questions I want to approach are: Which lifestyles, everyday practices and spatial arrangements are considered to be rural in that field? Which desires and emotions are linked to rurality in general and to the reading (and writing) of "Landzeitschriften" in special? How is this motivated and justified?</p> <p>In this way, I am going to show possible elements (respectively a variation) of a "more-than-representational" rural geography.</p>
Author name	Author affiliation
Christoph Baumann	Department of Geography, Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany

Presentation 2

Title	Mapping embodied meanings: emotion and affect in the daily activities and social networks of contemporary villagers
Abstract	<p>European villages have been researched extensively in rural geography. To date, however, experiential accounts of dwelling in contemporary villages have mainly been contextualized in urban-rural migration and are often built on the relation between pre and post migratory motivations and expectations. Subsequently, current knowledge seems limited to representational factors pertaining to general depictions of the meaning of a village. In doing so, the embodied aspect of daily life for the meaning of a village has not been fully explored. This paper argues that this is important for understanding contemporary rural lifestyles as villagers increasingly spend their daily activities and sustain their social networks in urban areas. Therefore, this study aims to deepen the understanding of the meaning of the contemporary village by investigating the role of the locations of social networks and daily activities through mappings of the bodily, emotional and affective aspects of contemporary village life. This allows for relational thinking about the emotions associated with the material and social fabric of the village, resulting in mappings of spatial negotiations and emotional boundaries.</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 villagers living in two Dutch villages. It appeared that the meaning of the village was especially rooted in places characterized by sensory stillness. Differences between the location of a social network in or outside the village only showed in the appreciation and bodily, emotional and affective negotiation of public meeting places. Differences between location of most daily activities spent in or outside the village showed mainly in negotiations of experienced lifestyles and sense of privacy in places. In effect, this study shows that in the meanings of villages, the embodied,</p>

	emotional and affective aspects of experiencing everyday places in and outside the village were evident.
Author name	Author affiliation
Diana Beljaars	Faculty of Geosciences, Utrecht University, The Netherlands
Presentation 3	
Title	Emotions in counterurbanisation research: a lesson learnt from the field
Abstract	The difference between lifestyle in urban and rural areas has been relatively important topic in Czech geography and sociology. Unfortunately, due to the long term tradition in quantitative research emotional and affective aspects has been rather excluded from research and writing. The presented paper seeks to explore representations of rural life as reflected in narratives of counterurban migrants. The different perceptions of rural areas and their connections with emotional attachment will be presented in the first part. Subsequently, examples of rural representations as revisited after migration event will be explored. The final part will focus on self reflection of researcher based on field research experiences which highlights how emotions shape the researchers `detached` and `neutral`perspective.
Author name	Author affiliation
Martin Šimon	Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Faculty of Science, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic
Presentation 4	
Title	Is it a town? Or is it a village? What's the difference and does it matter?
Abstract	I moved to rural West Wales from the city of Bristol just over a year ago. Although I had grown up in another rural county, Devon, I wasn't quite prepared for this kind of rural, where bus services are being discontinued, banks are open on just Tuesday and Thursday and artisan bread only seems to be made in the city. Employing photography, video and audio material, this presentation looks at the experience of transitioning from urban to rural through a series of documented walks taken through my village (or town?), talking to locals and searching out the meaning and relevance of the concept of 'rural' today. Asking questions about past and future, this research problematizes myths and realities of 'rural life', lived experiences, memories and identities, sheep and cows. Drawing on work by Mike Pearson, Dee Heddon and Raymond Williams among others, and on stories and interviews with neighbours and residents in Llandysul, West Wales, I attempt to create pictures of a rurality which is not fixed or even consistent, but that is rather shifting and changeable, depending on seasons, emotions, landscape, people and animals.
Author name	Author affiliation
Hilary Ramsden	Faculty of Business, Oxford Brookes University Wheatley Campus, England

Presentation 5	
Title	The Rural as an Idyllic Chronotope of Counter-Globalisation
Abstract	Today, rural living is often perceived as a means of evading the excesses of globalisation's re-organization of time (as relentless acceleration) and space (as compressed and uprooted). This is obvious, for example, in the fascination of television audiences with programs such as Britain's Escape to the Country, in which people chase "the good life" by house-hunting in rural areas, and Boer zoekt vrouw, a Dutch dating show in which single farmers are pursued by those attracted to a more "down-to-earth" existence. The multiple positive affects that are, in Sara Ahmed's terms, made to "stick" to the imagined idyllic space of the rural have little to do with its actuality. Rural life, far from being immune to globalisation, is intimately intertwined with its progression, not least in the growth of transnational agribusiness and the pursuit of energy sources (renewable or not), which often impacts rural areas more than urban ones. The view of the rural as an antidote to globalisation – the actual village versus McLuhan's global village – exists less among those actually living its space than among those

	seeking to leave urban/suburban spaces for a “purer” realm. This paper supplements existing accounts of the rural idyll (cf. Williams; Short; Bell) by tackling its present-day status as an affective narrative of counter-globalisation through the Russian literary scholar Mikhail Bakhtin’s account of the idyll as a chronotope. The latter concept emphasises how spatiality – in literature and in life – is always intertwined with temporality and how constructions of space-time interact with each other dialogically; most significantly, its inclusion of an explicit affective dimension in being “always coloured by emotions and values” makes it eminently suitable for exploring the rural as an “emotional geography.”
Author name	Author affiliation
Esther Peeren	Associate Professor, Amsterdam Centre for Globalisation Studies/Media Studies Department, University of Amsterdam

Short biographical notes of session organisers and presenters

Christoph Baumann	<p>2003-2010: studies of Cultural Geography, Science of Theater and Media and History at the FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg; Degree: M.A.</p> <p>2005-2011: parallel studies to become a teacher in secondary schools for Geography and German at the FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg; Degree: state examination</p> <p>since 2011: Ph.D student and assistant lecturer at the Chair of Cultural Geography, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg</p> <p>since 2011: admission to the “Bavarian Elite Network”</p> <p>Feb 2012-Jun 2012: visiting teacher at a escola secundária in Lisbon, Portugal for German and Geography, enabled by an EU-scholarship</p> <p>research fields and interests: Cultural / Social Geography, Geographies of Rurality, Geographies of Lifestyle, Media Geography, Didactics of Geography</p>
Diana Beljaars	<p>Diana Beljaars obtained her BSc title in spatial planning at Wageningen University with a specialisation in social and cultural geography at Utrecht University. her BSc thesis focussed on the socio-spatial characteristics of village conflicts. She continued with a Research Master in human geography and planning at Utrecht University. There she further developed a passion for the emotional, relational and non-presentational elements of life. For her thesis study, supervised by Martin Dijst, she conducted a qualitative study based on these concepts in order to come to a better understanding of the meaning of contemporary villages in the lives of their inhabitants. Performing this research awakened a deep interest into (different) conceptions of space and place.</p> <p>Currently she awaits NWO funding for her PhD on the spatialities of place experience and behaviour of people with Tourette syndrome at Wageningen University supervised by Claudio Minca, Martijn Duineveld and Tourette expert Cara Verdellen. While awaiting the decision of the NWO she has worked with children and performed a small independent research into the perceptions and experiences of a rural village for Alterra, part of Wageningen UR.</p>
Tialda Haartsen	<p>Tialda Haartsen is assistant professor at the Faculty of Spatial Sciences, Department of Cultural Geography at the University of Groningen, The Netherlands. Her research focusses on rural areas. Tialda has done research into representations of the rural, rural in-migration, rural youth culture(s), and senses of identity and belonging in rural coastal regions. Currently, she is specifically interested in population decline and how people ‘who stay’ experience living in depopulating areas and how they (re)organize village life.</p> <p>http://www.rug.nl/staff/t.haartsen/index</p>
Esther Peeren	<p><i>Esther Peeren</i> is Associate Professor of Media Studies and Globalisation at the University of Amsterdam and researcher at the Amsterdam Centre for Globalisation Studies (ACGS) and the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA). She is the author of <i>Intersubjectivities and Popular Culture: Bakhtin and Beyond</i> (Stanford UP, 2008) and co-editor of <i>The Shock of the Other: Situating Alterities</i> (Rodopi, 2007), <i>Representation Matters: (Re)Articulating Collective Identities in a Postcolonial World</i> (Rodopi, 2010), <i>Popular Ghosts: The Haunted Spaces of Everyday Culture</i> (Continuum, 2010) and <i>The Spectralities Reader</i> (Bloomsbury, 2013).</p>
Hilary Ramsden	<p><i>Hilary Ramsden</i> is a researcher and activist whose practice involves a particular (and possibly peculiar) weaving of walking, physical and visual theatre, street arts, rebel clown and movement which seeks to interrupt our assumptions and perceptions of our surroundings and the wider environment. Her interest in the potential of walking as a different way to access creativity and provoke dialogue leads her to work and walk collaboratively with others as much as possible.</p> <p>Her interests revolve around creating opportunities for conversation and communication</p>

	<p>with a specific interest in how we inhabit and engage with our neighbourhood and local environment. These interventions invite participation from anyone walking and moving in a neighbourhood and provide an opportunity to engage people in conversation – from topics as mundane as the weather to personal histories, and discussions on architecture, urban planning, transport and consumerism. They also bring together unexpected and unpredictable groupings of people who might not normally converse with each other. She is currently working as Researcher in the Faculty of Business & Management at Oxford Brookes and in the Faculty of Law at Birmingham Universities and lives rurally in Wild Wet West Wales.</p>
<p>Julia Rössel</p>	<p>Julia Rössel is a teaching assistant and PhD student in the fourth year at the Department of Geography at the Johannes Gutenberg-University in Mainz. In her dissertation project she explores the process of in-migration to the Uckermark, a peripheral rural area in north-eastern Germany. For the analysis she combines a theoretical perspective of the good life with the ideas of the production of space by Henri Lefebvre and develops a concept of the production of spaces of good life.</p>
<p>Martin Šimon</p>	<p><i>Martin Šimon</i> is a researcher at Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic / Faculty of Science at Charles University in Prague. He is focused on population geography and rural sociology. In previous research his focus was on migration into rural areas, counterurbanisation, and lifestyle migration. His current research addresses (i) demographical change in Central Europe, (ii) adaptation strategies to demographic changes/population shrinkage and (iii) cost-saving solutions for infrastructure in shrinking regions.</p>