

Geography Department News

Monthly Newsletter
Royal Holloway, University of London

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STAFF AND STUDENTS

Rong Zheng, Shkulla Khpal and Lisa Howell have been welcomed into the Society of Women Geographers (SWG). Rong is a doctoral candidate researching water governance in China, while Shkulla is a second year BSc student, originally from Afghanistan, who is interested in Afghan political geography. Lisa, a 2008 Nuffield Bursary student who researched the public perception of Konik horses at Wildwood (Kent) with Dr Mary Dengler, plans to join the incoming first year class in September 2009. Please go to address for further information http://www.rhul.ac.uk/messages/press/message.asp?ref_no=1880

Amanda Rogers gave a seminar on "Creative Configurations of Transnational Asian Identity" at the Department of Geography, University of British Columbia on February 10th.

Mustafa Dikeç has been invited to serve on the advisory board of UCL Urban Laboratory, an interdisciplinary centre for urban research and graduate study.

Tim Unwin has been invited to serve on the Programme Committee for the ICT and Sustainable Development Stream at the World Computer Congress, 2010, in Brisbane.

OUTSIDE ENGAGEMENTS

David Simon gave a talk to the Cambridge University International Development student society on 3 February on the topic of '(Still) Doing Development: altruism, self-interest or sexy subject?

Tim Unwin chaired and moderated a meeting at Chatham House on "Do you need a bank to be 'banked'" on 12th February, at which DFID's Facilitating Access to financial Services through technology (FAST) programme was launched. The speakers were: Rt Hon Douglas Alexander MP, Secretary of State for International Development; Robert Annibale, Global Head of Microfinance, Citigroup; Nick Hughes, Global Head, International Mobile Payment Solutions, Vodafone; Alexia Latortue, Senior Microfinance Specialist, CGAP; Alastair Lukies, Chief Executive Officer and Co-founder, Monitise plc; Brian Pomeroy, Chair of the Financial Inclusion Taskforce.

Felix Driver served as an external member of the appointments panel for a Chair in Human Geography, Kingston University, 18 February 2009.

Mary Dengler presented a paper 'active learning to teach sustainability' and a poster with **Danielle Schreve** 'large herbivores and sustainable landscape management in the EU' for Royal Holloway's Centre for Research in Sustainability's re-launch event in February.

The RESET consortium group had their 2008/9 progress meeting in Oxford recently. This reviewed the recent efforts in the various working groups and outlined next steps on research in Europe and North Africa. The meeting was chaired by **John Lowe** and was attended by **Simon Blockley**, **Anna Bourne**, **Rupert Housley**, **Mark Hardiman**, **Chris Sato** and

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NOTICES

📍 Departmental Seminar - Paul Laris, University of California, Long Beach - 'Humanizing models of tree grass co-existence in African Savanna landscapes' - 12th March, 1-2pm, room 136.

📍 Departmental Seminar - Rafida Nawaz, University of Multan - 'Pakistan: Contemporary Geopolitics' - 2nd April, 1-2pm, Room 136.

🌍 CQR Seminar - Dr Ian Candy, RHUL - 'When was Britain HOT! Interglacial Warming Over the Past 800,000 yrs' - 11th March, 5-6pm, Room 136.

🌍 CEDAR Seminar - Pamela Were Wesonga, Executive Director of Youth Initiatives Kenya (YIKE) - 'Youth Groups as a Tool for Urban-Poor Development in Nairobi, Kenya: Experiences & Lessons of Youth Initiatives Kenya' - 9th Marchm 1-2pm, Room 136.

🌍 CEDAR Workshop - Ben Wisner, International Crisis Group, United Nations - 'Blending Local Knowledge & Outside Specialist Knowledge in Development & Risk Reduction: Easier Said Than Done!' - 11th March, 1 - 3pm, Room Q136.

Alumni Careers Evening - 10th March at 6pm, Room Q170.

🏠 PERG Seminar - David Newman, Ben Gurion University of the Negev - 'The Geopolitics of Borders in the Israel-Palestine peace process' - 19th March, 1-2pm, Room 136.

Ian Candy, as well as colleagues from the various RESET partner departments.

Mustafa Dikeç gave a seminar at the Centre for Ethnicity Studies, University of Bristol on 5 February. His talk was entitled 'A thirst for citizenship: politics and/of difference in contemporary France'.

Mustafa Dikeç gave a keynote address at the Space, Contestation and the Political: A Workshop on Planning, Development and Resistance, 12-13 February, Zurich, Switzerland. His keynote was entitled 'On space, politics and the political with Rancière'.

Ed Derbyshire attended the 4th meeting of the core group of the NERC-subsidised UK Natural Dust and Health Network (UKNDHN) at St Mary's Medical School, London, on 16 December 2008.

Ed Derbyshire attended the 6th Meeting of the UK National Committee Chairs Working Group of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Science Programmes at the UK National Commission for UNESCO in Whitehall, London, on 18 December 2008.

Ed Derbyshire attended the 5th meeting of the Board of the International Year of Planet Earth at the Geological Society, Burlington House, London, on 26 January 2009.

Ed Derbyshire attended a residential meeting of the Council of the Geological Society, Burlington House, London, on 28 and 29 January 2009.

PUBLICATIONS

David Mandiyanike (2009) The dilemma of conducting research back in your own country as a returning student - reflections of research fieldwork in Zimbabwe, *Area 41(1): 64-71*

Katherine Brickell (in collaboration with Ayona Datta at the LSE) has received a contract

from Ashgate for an edited collection entitled 'Translocal Geographies: Spaces, Places and Connections'. PhD student Madeleine Dobson is also contributing a chapter.

Bialasiewicz, L. (2009). Europe as/at the border: Trieste and the Meaning of Europe. *Social and Cultural Geography 10(3):325-342*.

BOOK REVIEWS-ABSTRACTS-CONFERENCE REPORTS

Simon Blockley and colleagues from the University of Oxford organised this years Quaternary Research Association annual discussion meeting in Oxford in January. This meeting was sponsored by the Geologists Association, with a key session being organised by Danielle Schreve and also the Association of Environmental Archaeologists. Tom Stevens and Ian Candy presented papers at the meeting in the GA organised session. It has now been agreed by the conference steering committee that a special issue of the meeting will be undertaken covering the theme of the "Human Dimension to Quaternary Climate Change".

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Simon Blockley has been awarded a NERC small grant with colleagues in Southampton (Pete Langdon, PI) and Oxford (David Pyle) to examine the potential for tephrochronology to provide a framework for dating Late Quaternary climate change in South America. The project will involve fieldwork in Patagonia in spring followed by sampling for micro-tephra in RHUL and chemical analyses in Oxford and RHUL. It is hoped that this project will act as a primer for a larger grant in 2010.

Ed Derbyshire received notice on 30 January of the award of 34,000 Euros for team research on "The textual and mineral characterization of wind-borne natural mineral particles (NMP) and their impact on the

population of the Canary Islands". The award from the Government of the Canary Islands is in support of a 3-year programme led by Dra. Inmaculada Menéndez González (Dept. of Physics, Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria) and involving scientists from Spain, the United States and the UK.

VISITORS-MEETINGS IN THE DEPARTMENT

Dan Wagner, Director of National Centre on Adult Literacy/International Literacy Institute, University of Pennsylvania presented the CEDAR Seminar on 9th February. The title of his presentation was 'ICT4D for the Poorest of the Poor: Linking Literacy & Technology in India & South Africa'.

David Hollow, Department of Geography, RHUL presented the CEDAR Seminar on 23rd February. The title of his presentation was 'The Challenges of Effective Evaluation in ICT for Education Initiatives in Africa'

Christine Lane from University of Oxford presented the QUISS Seminar on 18th February. The title of her presentation was "Exploring Geochemical Variability of Microtephra: Characterisation & Discrimination Methods".

Vicky Little & Lisa Dockery, National Autistic Society presented the Departmental Seminar on 18th February. The title of the presentation was 'Supporting Students with Asperger Syndrome in Higher Education'.

Paul Cloke, Exeter University presented the Departmental Seminar on 12th February. The title of his presentation was 'Something's happening out there: Possibilities for Postsecular spaces in the City'.

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On 10 February 40 Year 12 students from Charters School, Sunningdale visited the department with their Geographer teacher Dan Cowling. The students were given lectures from **Simon Blockley**, **Klaus Dodds** and **Katie Willis** to give them an insight into university-level study. Kate Foster and Lucy Fenner (Geog Soc) also gave a talk on 'Studying Geography at University'. This event was part of the Department's schools liaison activities.

Simon Armitage, RHUL presented the Evening Lectures in Geography to AS and A level students on 9th February. The title of his presentation was 'Deserts: Past, Present and Future'.

Stephen Young, University of Washington presented the PERG Seminar on 19th February. The title of his presentation was 'Mobilizing Microfinance: the gendered geopolitics of debt in India'.

FIELDWORK- CONFERENCES- OVERSEAS

Katherine Brickell presented a paper in February on 'Youth and Mobility in Southeast Asia' as part of the ASEF Alliance Workshop Series conference. The conference is titled "Perspectives on Children's Active Engagement with Migration in the Southeast Asian Context" and was being held in Bangkok. This will be followed by an introductory research trip to Vietnam.

David Simon participated in a mid-term review workshop on 'Conceptual and methodological challenges in analysing local governance, urbanisation and climate change' for an ESRC-funded research project of Michael Redclift and Mark Pelling at King's College London on 16th February.

Philip Crang was an invited plenary speaker at the Sixth Annual Conference in New

Cultural Geography in Germany, held at the University of Osnabruck January 23rd to 24th.

Rupert Housley undertook fieldwork on the open-air Late-glacial site of Munzingen located near the town of Freiburg im Breisgau in the Upper Rhine region of Germany for RESET. Samples were taken for tephrochronology analysis and radiocarbon dating. The sampling was carried out in conjunction with Professor Clemens Pasda of the University of Jena, 27 February - 2 March.

Simon Blockley and **Mark Hardiman** have been sampling long core records from late Quaternary lake sites in Spain. The work was done in collaboration with colleagues from Oxford as part of the RESET consortium grant and will allow us to test the distribution of tephra markers into the region.

Katherine Brickell presented a paper entitled 'Youth Rural-Urban Migration in Contemporary Cambodia' at an ASEF Alliance Workshop Series in Bangkok, Thailand. The workshop was entitled 'Perspectives on Children's Migration in the Southeast Asian Context' and held between 19-20 February.

Katherine Brickell was in Fieldwork preparation in Vietnam with consultations held with the Institute for Family and Gender Studies and Institute of Social Development studies in Hanoi; formal research co-operations also forged with Hue University and the Centre for Social Research and Development in Hue, Central Vietnam.

Ed Derbyshire attended a meeting with members of the Department of Physics, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria 1100-1300h on 16 February, together with Prof. Johann Engelbrecht (Desert Research Institute, Reno, Nevada, USA), to consider initial stages of work under the recent grant award from the Canarian Government. The discussion continued at a working lunch in Tafira Alta 1400-1600h on 18 February.

Ed Derbyshire visited the Upper Pleistocene aeolianite series (dated to 31.2 - 39.8 ka BP) at Tufia (NE coast of Gran Canaria) on the morning of 23 February under the guidance of Dr. José Mangas-Viñuela and in the company of Dr. Johann Engelbrecht (DRI, Reno, USA) and a television crew from the Canarian Television Network.

ANY OTHER NEWS

The Royal Holloway and Oxford Tephrochronology Research network (RHOXTOR) has now set up a new website at <http://c14.arch.ox.ac.uk/rhoxtor/embed.php?File=index.html> The group exists to support, promote and facilitate tephra research between Royal Holloway and Oxford and is a key element in developing new grant initiatives. The new website contains details of the working of the group, new research activities and information about laboratory and equipment availability.