

Historical Geography Research Group

(ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY with THE INSTITUTE OF BRITISH GEOGRAPHERS)



NEW WEB-SITE: <http://www.uec.ac.uk/HGRG>

HGRG Newsletter, Autumn Issue 2007

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Copy for the HGRG newsletter should be sent by e-mail or on floppy disc (PC, MS Word files preferred) to:

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Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences,
University of Wales, Aberystwyth,
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 3DB
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E-mail: p.merriman@aber.ac.uk or

Copy deadlines are: **25 May** for the Summer edition, **25 September** for the Autumn edition, and **16 December** for the New Year edition.

HGRG Electronic Mailing List: if you would you like to be added to the list, please contact Peter Merriman, p.merriman@aber.ac.uk

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Please inform the Membership Secretary if you change your postal address, and the Membership Secretary and Publicity Officer if you change your e-mail address

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY RESEARCH GROUP

PRACTISING HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

13TH ANNUAL POSTGRADUATE & UNDERGRADUATE ONE-DAY CONFERENCE

Wednesday 7th November 2007
UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

9.30am-4.45pm

PROGRAMME

- 09.30 Conference Welcome and Coffee
- 10.00 Keynote Lecture, Prof James Ryan (University of Exeter)
'Photography, famine and empire in nineteenth-century India'.
- 11.00 Historical Geography Workshops
- I. Prof Catherine Brace (University of Exeter)
Literature and literary archives
- II. Dr Hayden Lorimer (University of Glasgow)
The possibilities of a historical geography of natural and recorded sound:
the first recording of birdsong in Britain
- 12.00 Lunch
- 1.00 Historical Geography Workshops
- I. Prof Catherine Brace (University of Exeter)
Literature and literary archives
- II. Dr Hayden Lorimer (University of Glasgow)
The possibilities of a historical geography of natural and recorded sound:
the first recording of birdsong in Britain
- 2.00 Coffee Break
- 2.30 HGRG Undergraduate Dissertation Prize winner announced
- 3.30 Keynote Lecture, Prof Charles Watkins (University of Nottingham)
(title tbc)
- 4.30 Closing Comments

*To register for this free conference please contact Dr Yvonne Whelan at the
School of Geographical Sciences, University of Bristol: yvonne.whelan@bristol.ac.uk*

Call for HGRG Sessions at RGS-IBG AC2008:

HGRG invites suggestions from its members and the wider community of historical geographers for sessions at the RGS/IBG Annual Conference in London, August 26th to 29th 2008.

The deadline for sessions to be proposed to the RGS/IBG is likely to be November 1st as in previous years. However, the HGRG committee would like the opportunity to review and approve sessions offered in the name of the Group prior to them being submitted to the RGS/IBG.

Please send an abstract of not more than 250 words by email to Nicola Thomas, Honorary Secretary, by 16th October 2007 (Nicola.J.Thomas@exeter.ac.uk). When you receive confirmation from HGRG that the group are willing to sponsor your session, you will then be responsible for completing the RGS/IBG paperwork and liaising with the RGS/IBG in all session arrangements. It would be helpful if you could copy the Honorary Secretary in when the session proposal is submitted to the RGS/IBG.

Thesis Abstracts:

HGRG are keen to provide a forum for disseminating abstracts of recently completed doctoral theses in historical geography. We encourage graduates from geography and related disciplines to submit abstracts for publication in our tri-annual newsletter. Abstracts of no more than 250 words (with relevant contact details, and following the format below), should be sent via e-mail to the HGRG Publicity Officer, Peter Merriman, p.merriman@aber.ac.uk

“Memoryscape and sound walks: mapping oral history on the River Thames in London”

Toby Butler

(abstract of PhD awarded by Royal Holloway, University of London (UK), July 2007)

This thesis is concerned with memory and place. It aims to explore how verbal memory (oral history) can be related to the present landscape (particularly cityscapes and riverscapes) using outdoor audio walks constructed with memories, or ‘memoryscapes’. Locating the audio tour in the context of historical and geographical thought, the thesis critically examines how local history of this kind can be used to engage with a public audience. Ultimately, the aim of the dissertation is to use theory, reflection and practice to gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which recorded oral history can be used ‘unlock’ hidden aspects of the landscape.

The thesis explores the process of applying oral history to landscape by comparing a series of existing sound walks and sound art practices. The core of the thesis reflects on the artistic, intellectual and practical process of actually creating memoryscape trails from oral history. Spanning the gulf between ‘proof of concept’ prototype and a usable, marketable product, the author’s experience of professionally producing memoryscape audio walks at the Museum of London plays an integral part of the thesis. To forestall criticism of difficult to measure aesthetic arguments about the construction of the walks, an evaluation is made of the effectiveness of these memoryscapes in the ‘real world’ with a public and a professional audience. Finally the thesis weighs up the future potential for this kind of application of history and geography. As supporting material, this thesis includes two CD recordings of memoryscape trails along contrasting sections of the river Thames in London: *Drifting*, from Hampton Court to Kingston, using original interviews,

and *Dockers*, from Greenwich to the Millennium Dome, using interviews archived at the Museum in Docklands. These recordings are also available from www.memoryscape.org.uk
Contact: Dr Toby Butler, Project Director, London East Research Institute, University of East London, 4-6 University Way, London E16 2RD Email: tobybutler@boltblue.com

Conference and Fieldwork reports:

Report on fieldwork in Zambia, Summer 2007, by John W. Donaldson (Durham University)

The Historical Geography Research Group contributed funding to my recent fieldwork undertaken in Zambia from 13 July to 10 August. My research mainly concerns the colonial motivations for and techniques of boundary demarcation, looking specifically at the case of the Belgian Congo-Northern Rhodesia (DRC-Zambia) boundary. This boundary was surveyed and marked by two Anglo-Belgian boundary commissions on either side of the First World War. Like many other early colonial boundary commissions around Africa, the first Anglo-Belgian boundary commission prioritised broad geographical survey and conducted only rudimentary demarcation. However, the second boundary commission undertook rigorous demarcation, literally etching the boundary onto the physical landscape. Using this case study alongside its regional contemporaries, I examine this disparity in boundary development and its relationship with perceptions of state territory.

The majority of my fieldwork was undertaken at the National Archives of Zambia in Lusaka where I examined material concerning the two Anglo-Belgian boundary commissions and other processes (both local and imperial) of demarcation around Northern Rhodesia. This included how local issues/disputes have influenced boundary demarcation, and the role played by the Northern Rhodesian and Zambian administrations in demarcation and maintenance. While in Lusaka, I also met with Zambia's Surveyor General and other officials to discuss how the boundary has been marked and maintained since independence. From 2 to 7 August 2007, I was able with the kind assistance of the Zambian Survey Department to visit two of the boundary pillars (BP 16 and 18) erected by the 1927-33 Anglo-Belgian boundary commission along the watershed of the Congo and Zambezi rivers just north of the Zambian town of Ndola. This provided a fascinating insight into how local conditions (both environmental and human) have affected the way in which the boundary is materialised on the physical landscape.

Report on the AAG 2007, by Bertie Mandelblatt

In April 2007, I attended the annual conference of the Association of American Geographers in San Francisco, with some assistance from the Historical Geography Research Group of the RGS (IBG). I presented my paper "Two and a half pots of manioc flour, or three cassavas': the *Code noir*, the consumption of slaves and slaves' consumption in the *ancien régime* French Atlantic" in one of the three sessions entitled "Historical Geographies of Embodied Practice" organized by Carl Griffin and Adrian Evans. The paper was drawn from research conducted for my PhD, which is on food provisioning and food practices in the prerevolutionary French Caribbean, and in particular, from a chapter on slaves' gardens and their creolized dietary regimes. The paper contextualized the slave subsistence crisis within the legal framework of the *Code noir*, Louis XIV's 1685 edict which purported to regulate the mutual obligations between slaves and slave-holders in the French colonies, including the provision of food from the latter to the former. The paper underscored the

inherent contradiction in the document between the dehumanisation of slaves and the need to recognize them as consuming bodies.

All the presentations in the second of the three sessions were grouped around the notion of “the exotic” (for better or for worse). Jennifer Knopf and Alex Vasudevan both discussed aspects of German culture: celebrations of difference in Berlin in the first instance and modern dance during the Weimar Republic in the second. Jamie Lorimer examined the interactions between British visitors and elephants in Sri Lanka over a span of 150 years; and Merle Patchett explored the practice of taxidermy in relation to human understandings of animals. Lastly, Adrian Evans’ presentation on the British consumption of foreign (read colonial) goods in the eighteenth century was of particular interest to me because of its focus on material culture and Atlantic colonial history. In general, this AAG (my first) was an extremely rich experience, particularly because it widened my understanding of current American and British historical geography.

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New Books in Historical Geography:

In this new section of the newsletter we will be printing the bibliographic details of new books in historical geography. Members are invited to forward details of appropriate books to Peter Merriman, p.merriman@aber.ac.uk

Atkins, P.J., Lummel, P. and Oddy, D.K. (Eds)(2007) *Food and the City in Europe since 1800* Aldershot: Ashgate 260pp ISBN: 0 7546 4989 X, £55

Roza I.M. El-Eini (2006) *Mandated Landscape: British Imperial Rule in Palestine, 1929-1948*, London: Routledge.

Raymond Gillespie and Stephen A. Royle (2007) *Belfast c. 1600 to c. 1900: the making of the modern city*, Dublin: Royal Irish Academy.

D. Hooke (2006) *England’s Landscape. The West Midlands*, English Heritage/Collins. ISBN 000715751.

Rhys Jones (2007) *People/States/Territories: The Political Geographies of British State Transformation*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, RGS-IBG Book Series, ISBN: 1405140348 paperback, or 140514033X hardback (£24.99 or £50)

Roy Jones and Brian J. Shaw (eds)(2007) *Geographies of Australian Heritages: Loving a Sunburnt Country?* Ashgate, Aldershot (Heritage, Culture and Identity Series).

David Lambert and Alan Lester (eds), *Colonial Lives Across the British Empire: Imperial Careering in the Long Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, 2006, xv1 + 822 pages.

Peter Merriman (2007) *Driving spaces: a cultural-historical geography of England's M1 motorway*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, RGS-IBG Book Series, ISBN: 1405130721 paperback, or 1405130738 hardback (£24.99 or £55)

Miles Ogborn (2007) *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago) xxii + 318 ISBN-13 978-0-226-62041; ISBN-10 0-226-62041-7 (Hardcover \$40)

Harold O'Sullivan (2006) *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, no. 16, Dundalk*, Dublin: Royal Irish Academy.

Stephen A. Royle (Sep. 2007) *Irish Historic Towns Atlas, no. 17, Belfast, part II, to 1900*, Dublin: Royal Irish Academy.

Brian Short (2006) *England's landscape: the South East* (English Heritage/ Collins) 256pp.

Brian Short, Charles Watkins and John Martin (Eds) (2007) *The front line of freedom: British farming in the Second World War* (British Agricultural History Society Supplement no. 4, 2007), 256pp

Brian Waites (2007) *Monasteries and Landscape of the North York Moors and Wolds*, Stroud: Tempus Publishing, ISBN: 979 0752440996, 256pp, RRP £17.99

Charles W J Withers (2007) *Placing the Enlightenment: Thinking Geographically About the Age of Reason*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN 0 226 90405 9 330pp. Hardback. US\$45

J. David Wood (2006) *Places of Last Resort: The Expansion of the Farm Frontier into the Boreal Forest in Canada, c. 1910-1940*, Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Seminar Series:

LONDON GROUP OF HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHERS

Seminar Programme, Autumn Term 2007

PLACING ANIMALS

9th October 2007

Danielle Schreve (Royal Holloway,
University of London)

*The return of the native: Half a million years of wild
horse and human interactions*

23rd October 2007

Louise Curth (Bath Spa University)

*'A Remedy for his Beast': Popular veterinary texts in
early modern England*

6th November 2007

Garry Marvin (Roehampton University)

*Wolfsapes: Intersections of human and wolf lives (and
deaths)*

20th November 2007

Daniel Allen (University of Nottingham)

River valleys, hunted otters and identity

4th December 2007

Stephen Daniels (University of Nottingham)

Equestrian landscape: George Stubbs and Creswell Crags

These seminars are held on **Tuesdays at 5pm** in the Wolfson Room at the Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, University of London. For further details, contact David Lambert, Royal Holloway (01784 443640) or Miles Ogborn, Queen Mary (020 7882 5407). We are grateful to Queen Mary, Royal Holloway, Kings, UCL, the Open University, Sussex University and the IHR for supporting this series.

The History of Gardens and Landscapes

Institute of Historical Research
Senate House, London

All interested in research in garden and landscape history are welcome at the seminars held at 5.30 pm in the Wolfson Room of the Institute of Historical Research, on alternate Fridays.

The theme for the autumn term is the Edwardian landscape and garden.

- October 5 ‘The lost garden of Witanhurst: Harold Peto’s forgotten gem’.
Kristina Clode, Birkbeck, University of London.
- October 19 ‘A literature of her own’: garden diaries and women’s writing on gardens’.
Dr Monica Brewis, Brighton University.
- November 2 ‘The Arts and Crafts house and garden: size doesn’t matter’.
Yvonne Hungerford, Birkbeck, University of London.
- November 16 The Anglo-Japanese Exhibition of 1910: flowers and goldfish.
Dr Jill Raggett, Writtle College.
- November 30 Maker of the City Beautiful, or colonialist planner? The work of Thomas Mawson in Canada and Greece.
Dr Janet Waymark, Birkbeck, University of London.

Convenors: Dr Janet Waymark, Birkbeck; janetwaymark@yahoo.co.uk
Dr Rebecca Preston, Kingston University; r.preston@kingston.ac.uk

For further information, and to check the venues at the IHR:
www.history.ac.uk/gardens.htm/

Please photocopy and distribute to potential members/new postgrads in your department.

Historical Geography Research Group Membership

The HGRG is a very large (around 400 members) and active research group of the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers). The Group aims to initiate and foster research in the field of Historical Geography; to promote discussion by means of meetings and conferences; to further co-operation between cognate disciplines and organisations; and to effect publication of monographs, collected papers and discussion materials. Membership is open to all those who subscribe to these aims.

The Group publishes three issues of its newsletter every year updating members on activities and the working of the Group. It also publishes the Research Series (38 issues published since 1979) which is designed to provide scholars with an outlet for extended essays of an interpretative or conceptual nature that make a substantive contribution to some aspect of the subject; critical reviews of the literature on a major problem; and commentaries on relevant sources.

The HGRG differs from most other RGS-IBG Research Groups in that it charges a membership subscription for the additional services that it offers. Subscriptions are due on 1 October each year. We have different membership rates for Ordinary Members and Postgraduate Members

The two categories of membership are:

Category A membership: Receive HGRG research series and HGRG Newsletter, eligible for various grants, reduced rate on back issues of HGRG research series.

£8.00 for Ordinary Members, £6.00 for Postgraduate Members

Category B membership: Receive HGRG Newsletter, eligible for various grants, reduced rate on back issues of HGRG research series.

£2.00 for Ordinary Members, free for Postgraduate Members

For further details of how to join the HGRG, please e-mail Dr David Lambert, the Honorary Membership Secretary, at d.lambert@rhul.ac.uk. Alternatively, please write to...

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