



IN THIS ISSUE:

- ◆ Report on Practising Historical Geography
- ◆ HGRG-Sponsored sessions at the RGS-IBG Annual International Conference
- ◆ LGHG seminar series for Spring 2014

CLICK FOR...

[HGRG Website](#)

[HGRG Twitter Stream](#)

COPY FOR NEXT ISSUE:

23rd May 2014

Please send to:

O.Dunnett@qub.ac.uk

Letter from the Chair

Dear HGRG members,

Welcome to this 'Winter' edition of the newsletter – and to our 41st year as the Historical Geography Research Group. 2013 was a year of both reflecting on the history of the group and of considerable creative energy. The year ended with a very successful and well-attended Practising Historical Geography conference, held at the University of Central Lancashire in Preston. I would like to thank Hannah Neate (UCLAN) and Lucy Veale (Nottingham) for their efforts in organising the conference, and the School of Built and Natural Environment at UCLAN for their generous backing. In many ways, the Practising conference is the most important way in which we fulfil our mission to support research in historical geography, so my thanks to Dave Featherstone (Glasgow) and Alan Rice (UCLAN) for their lectures, Merle Patchett (Bristol) and Hannah Neate for their workshops, and especially to Rebecca Ford (Nottingham) who spoke on her postgraduate experience the day before her viva. You will find a full report elsewhere in this newsletter. This year – provisionally on 5 November – the 20th Practising conference will be held at the University of Bristol. Watch this space for details.

2014 promises to be an exciting year for the group in other ways. Hot on the heels of the two excellent HGRG monographs published in 2013, we are delighted to announce the publication – hopefully this autumn – of Alison Hess' study of the 'journey' of the BBC's first radio transmitter. We have also announced details of the sessions HGRG will be sponsoring at the annual conference of the RGS-IBG. Further in the future, members will no doubt be looking forward to the 16th International Conference of Historical Geographers in London (RGS, 5-10 July 2015: <http://www.ichg2015.org>). As ever, HGRG will offer bursaries to support postgraduate attendance. Details will follow in the next year. More immediately, may I remind postgraduate members that the deadline for applications to our postgraduate support fund is 1 April (<http://historicalgeographyresearchgroup.wordpress.com/grants-and-prizes/>). We also hope soon to announce our revised conference organisation support fund. Similarly, the committee continue to work on our strategy to maintain and catalogue our archives, and will soon be making a call for past committee members – and others – to make accessions of printed and digital material.

With best wishes for 2014,

Carl Griffin, Chair HGRG



HGRG-sponsored sessions at the RGS-IBG Conference, 26-29 Aug 2014—Calls for Papers

Narrating ruin, ruining narrative: Co-producing sites, materials, and stories

Convenors: **Hayden Lorimer** (University of Glasgow), **Caitlin DeSilvey** (University of Exeter), **Michael Gallagher** (University of Glasgow)

The term 'ruin', understood in its broadest sense, refers to the physical destruction or disintegration of something, or the state of disintegrating or being destroyed. In this session we invite papers that grapple with how ruins, and processes of ruination, are brought into circuits of geographical knowledge through narrative practices. In their engagement with ruins geographers often aspire to co-production, attempting to share narrative authority with other voices, actants and forms of life. Experiments with sound, story and image have drawn out the potential for co-production, but exposed a paradox at the heart of this kind of work. What attracts us to ruins is often their radical indifference and their apparent autonomy; but any attempt to 'story' the ruin involves acts of selection, editing and framing that impose an order on disorder, and threaten to domesticate destruction. To narrate these places requires a willingness to allow for the disintegration of conventional narrative forms, and an openness to other ways of presenting animals and plants, weather and water, absent people and other beings. Papers are invited that reflect on these themes. Creative approaches to presentation are welcome.

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 12th Feb

Email to: Hayden.Lorimer@glasgow.ac.uk

C.O.Desilvey@exeter.ac.uk

Michael.Gallagher@glasgow.ac.uk

Geographies of colonial & postcolonial exile

Convenor: **Andy Davies** (University of Liverpool)

The concept of exile is inherently geographical. Individuals or communities are dislocated from their 'true' homes and re-positioned 'out-of-place'. Edward Said (1984) encapsulated the contradictions of exile as a space of trauma and loss, yet simultaneously a potentially productive space of encounter, transition and resistance. As a result, geographers have productively explored the concept of exile and its effects (Folch-Serra, 2006, Murphy, 2011, McConnell, 2013, Yeh, 2007). In this session we seek to build on this literature by exploring practices of exile, and exiling, as they occurred in (post)colonial contexts. Exiling lay at the heart of colonial administrations' attempts to limit the spread of sedition and to spatially restrict the movements of 'dangerous' individuals.

...

HGRG Committee 2013-2014

Chair

Dr Carl Griffin
School of Global Studies
University of Sussex
Falmer
Brighton BN1 9SJ
C.J.Griffin@sussex.ac.uk

Secretary

Dr Harriet Hawkins
Department of Geography
Royal Holloway,
University of London, Egham
Surrey TW20 0EX
+44 (0)1784 414673
harriet.hawkins@rhul.ac.uk

Treasurer

Dr Briony McDonagh
School of Geography
Sir Clive Grainger Building
University of Nottingham
University Park
Nottingham NG7 2RD
+44 (0) 115 67153
briony.mcdonagh@nottingham.ac.uk

Research Series Editor

Dr Alastair Owens
School of Geography
Queen Mary, University of London,
Mile End Road
London E1 4NS
+44 (0)20 7882 5401
a.j.owens@qmul.ac.uk

Membership Secretary

Dr Ruth Craggs
Department of Geography
King's College London
King's Building
Strand Campus
London WC2R 2LS
ruth.craggs@kcl.ac.uk

Conference Officer

Dr Lucy Veale
School of Geography
Sir Clive Grainger Building
University of Nottingham
University Park
Nottingham NG7 2RD
+44 (0) 115 84 66071
lucy.veale@nottingham.ac.uk

Web Editor

Dr Innes Keighren
Department of Geography
Royal Holloway
University of London, Egham
Surrey TE20 0EX
+44 (0)1784 443570
innes.keighren@rhul.ac.uk



...Recent transnational and translocal understandings of empire (Ghosh & Kennedy, 2006, Metcalfe, 2007, Ogborn, 2008) have helped us understand the implications of these colonial practices such as how they provided a fertile space for exiles to resist colonial rule through networks of nationalist anti-colonialism (Kothari, 2012). We seek papers that explore the varied historical geographies of exile as both a disciplinary practice but also a potential space of co-production of anti-colonial knowledge, politics and resistance. We welcome contributions from across geography, and particularly from scholars situated in the global south and from postgraduate students.

Themes/questions which could be explored include, but are not limited to:

- Theoretical & empirical engagements with colonial regimes' attempts to exclude and manage undesirable populations
- The geographies of co-production, encounter and power between and amongst exile communities
- The lived experiences of translocal exile, from resistant practices through to acts of complicity & acceptance
- Exile and nationalism – from 'orthodox' nationalist movements, to the development of pan-nationalist and movements in exile
- Studies that incorporate the 'more-than-human' into their analysis – for example, the sea as an agent for those who were exiled to small islands
- Exile experiences after the end of formal colonialism – from communities suddenly 'unwelcome' from newly independent states through to issues faced by exiles returning home
- Discussions of how colonial exile was and is a forbear of contemporary exile and/or diasporic communities. This could include implications of colonial forms of exile for the contemporary world.
- Theoretical reflections on the nature of exile and how 'colonial' exile relates to other time periods

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 12th Feb

Email to: addavies@liverpool.ac.uk

Geographies of the Ancient City: Lessons to Learn from Diachronic Comparisons

Convenor: **Benjamin Vis** (University of Leeds) *Co-sponsored by UGRG*

Cities have a diverse history that stretches several millennia. Faced with the challenges of a rapidly urbanising world, urban geography traditionally emphasises the present and future of cities. Historical geography, on the other hand, is criticised for not usually penetrating into the past beyond a couple of centuries (Jones 2004; Lilley 2011), limiting the geographical perspectives and comparisons produced. It therefore is the realm of (ancient) historians and archaeologists to fill the gap left by geographers in the study of cities (Smith 2009). The ancient city has recently been a burgeoning area of research, especially through advances in archaeological data acquisition revealing an increasing diversity of precursory urban patterns (Smith 2003; Atkin & Rykwert 2005; Storey 2006; Marcus & Sabloff 2008; Gates 2011).

HGRG Committee 2013-2014

Newsletter Editor

Dr Oliver Dunnett
School of Geography,
Archaeology and Palaeoecology,
Elmwood Building
Queen's University Belfast
Belfast BT7 1NN
+44 (0)28 9097 3360
o.dunnett@qub.ac.uk

Dissertation Prize Co-Ordinator

Dr Hilary Geoghegan
Department of Geography and
Environmental Science
University of Reading
Reading RG6 6AB
h.geoghegan@reading.ac.uk

E-Circulation Officer

Dr Hannah Neate
School of Built and Natural
Environment, University of Central
Lancashire, Preston PR1 2HE
+44 (0)177 289 3493
HNeate@uclan.ac.uk

Teaching and Learning Officers

Dr Edwin Aiken
School of Geographical Sciences
University of Bristol
University Road, Bristol BS8 1SS
+44 (0)117 331 7223
ej.aiken@bristol.ac.uk

Dr Nicola Thomas
College of Life and
Environmental Science
University of Exeter
Rennes Drive, Exeter EX4 4RJ
+44 (0) 1392 264449
Nicola.J.Thomas@exeter.ac.uk

Postgraduate Representatives

Julian Baker
School of Geosciences
University of Edinburgh
Edinburgh EH8 9XP
J.C.T.Baker@sms.ed.ac.uk

Natalie Cox
Department of History
University of Warwick
Coventry CV4 7AL
N.R.Cox@warwick.ac.uk

Alice Insley
School of Geography
University of Nottingham
Nottingham NG7 2RD
lgxaain@nottingham.ac.uk



Contemporary geographical and social perspectives and techniques are regularly utilised to elucidate the urban life and structures of the past (e.g. Lilley et al. 2007; York et al. 2011; Stanley et al. 2012; Vis 2014). However, rarely is research on deeply historical human processes and 'alternative' urban traditions brought in direct relation to current global urban issues. Only through the lens of the past can long-term societal processes — the successes and failures of different kinds of urban form, urban life, and sustainability — be better understood and can an evidence-base be built for the planning and interventions, which facilitate social prospering, adaptation, and endurance in urban settings.

It would be of mutual benefit to facilitate an informed dialogue between the historical sciences and present-day urbanists, which could identify the common grounds and formulate appropriate frames of reference and methods for comparisons (e.g. Nijman 2007; Smith 2012). Rigorous comparisons can explicate processes and their determinants as well as revealing the specific regularities and differences between them. Therefore, this session aims to open a direct debate between urban geographers thinking their views and methods offer important cues to the deeper history of cities and the historical geographers thinking their urban research holds relevant lessons for current urbanisation and urban life. These fields of interest will be broadly defined in the context of the 'comparative social science history' of cities and contributions from cognate disciplines are warmly welcomed.

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 10th Feb

Email to: B.N.Vis10@leeds.ac.uk

Historical geographies of co-operative praxis

Convenors: **Nicola Thomas** (University of Exeter), **Briony McDonagh** (University of Hull), **David Harvey** (University of Exeter)

This session aims to explore the complex historical geographies of co-operation in a broad perspective, seeking to problematize a singular story of co-operative development that can be traced from the foundation of the Rochdale Pioneers. Thus, while much attention tends to be paid to the Rochdale-led enterprise, elements of co-operative practice can also be traced through much earlier craft Guilds and utopian movements (e.g. the Diggers, or the Owenites). Similarly, as well as forming a binding principle for many consumer movements, an ethos of co-operation also appears at the heart of numerous producer business organizational practices, especially within the spheres of agriculture and small scale worker collectives. Hence while some elements of co-operation appear to be accommodating to the emerging development of capitalism, others aim to provide a critical alternative to it. In this sense, the broad co-operative movement can be seen as both a business model and a way of life through which communities and individuals socialized.

This session examines historical geographies of co-operatives and co-operation from a range of perspectives, seeking to instigate a collaborative conversation about the nature of co-operative praxis more broadly. Thus, we welcome papers that explore any element of co-operative practice in the UK or beyond. Papers might engage with historical geographies of the British co-operative movement and its forebears. Alternatively, contributors may choose to engage more generally with co-operative organization circulating at different times and in different places. We are also interested in papers that engage with the activities and practices of those who drew on a co-operative ethos, even if not formally involved in modes of co-operative organization; and in different modes of co-op (across producer, consumer, and into other modes). We would like to explore the range and depth of co-operative scholarship within historical geography.

Our aim in this session is to allow space for full paper length pieces which reflect on the historical geographies of co-operative praxis alongside 'shards' of evidence of co-operativism, including those that have emerged within your own research practice. This maybe something you do not wish to pursue in any great detail but opens out the ubiquitous way in which elements of mutualism spread across spheres of social exchange. We are therefore able to make space for alternative presentation formats (e.g. 5 minute portraits, posters, discussion cameos) for stories that you would like to share in this session, but which you do not feel able to make a full paper. We would like to use these sessions to explore establishing a co-operative historical geographies network to develop a publication from the papers, cameos and discussion.

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 14th Feb

~

Email to: Nicola.j.thomas@exeter.ac.uk



New and Emerging Research in Postgraduate Historical Geography

Convenors: **Natalie Cox** (University of Warwick), **Julian Baker**, (University of Edinburgh), **Alice Insley** (University of Nottingham)

This session aims to provide an informal and relaxed forum for postgraduates undertaking research in historical geography to present at a major conference. Building upon past successful HGRG postgraduate sessions, it is hoped that a friendly and supportive atmosphere will produce stimulating debates on the issues raised and provide postgraduates with helpful feedback on their work. There is no chronological or geographical limit to papers and they can be variously theoretical, empirical and/or methodological in orientation. Papers are encouraged from postgraduate students at any stage of their PhD research, or Masters dissertation topics.

Papers to be given with time for questions after each presentation; four or five papers of 15 minutes (max) with 5 minutes for questions and comments.

Deadline for submissions: 7th Feb

Email to: lgxaain@nottingham.ac.uk

Commemorating and Remembering the First World War at its Centenary

Convenors: **James Wallis** (University of Exeter), **David Harvey** (University of Exeter)

The 2014 RGS-IBG Annual Conference will be situated in the midst of the opening commemorations for the First World War Centenary, one hundred years on from when Britain entered the conflict. Subsequent commemorative anniversaries and its presentation within popular culture have meant that the 'War to End All Wars' remains a subject never far from the British national consciousness. Simultaneously, it has attracted much academic analysis, and predominantly within the last two decades, it has received notable attention from geographers. In particular, work has illuminated our understanding of the broad concepts of national identity, (local and individual) remembrance and memorialisation, and thus provided new insights into the relationship between warfare and space.

This session aims to chime with the centenary by showcasing and exploring geography's continued contribution to a new chapter of First World War understanding, at a time when it will be in both the academic and public spotlight. The session will bring together those who have worked, or are currently working, on research connected to the First World War. The session seeks papers that will engage with the broader themes of historical geography and we also encourage interdisciplinarity, particularly from those working within the heritage and museum sector, and with historians and archaeologists.

Deadline for submissions: 10th Feb

Email to: jw278@exeter.ac.uk

Information sourced from [RGS-IBG conference website](#)

**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning



Practising Historical Geography Preston

Despite the date of the 19th HGRG Annual Postgraduate and Undergraduate Conference being Wednesday 6th November, the reality was that it began with drinks at the Black Horse pub the evening before. This 'unofficial' programme of events allowed us to whet our academic appetites in our newly constructed site of social exchange as we began to build a network of enthusiastic and emerging historical geographers from across the UK.

Congregating the next morning at the UCLan Greenbank Building (heads thankfully clear), the official programme opened with the HGRG Chair Dr. Carl Griffin giving us one of his inimitable welcomes. Professor Alan Rice then delivered his keynote lecture, *'The Politics of Black Bodies in Lancashire and the Atlantic World: The Legacy of Ghostly Mementoes and the Redemptive Power of Guerrilla Memorialisation'*. Prof. Rice expanded the 'ghost' metaphor haunting his research through a grisly anecdote of a severed limb. He read a vignette in which a young girl played with a mummified slave's hand in 1940s rural England. This quote served as a verbal 'artefact' through which Prof Rice weaved three centuries of Atlantic slaving history, from Fanny's birth - the owner of the hand - in c.1750 Caribbean to walking tours in present day Lancashire, all joined along a seam of memories, memorials and heritage. It revealed an evocative way to 'expand' the archive and bind past events to present day vestiges. In addition, this vivid account palpably foreshadowed the actual material artefacts we later engaged with, using our feet, hands and eyes.

Before that, was *the coffee break*. These caffeinated interludes of banter, biscuits and a jam doughnut or two punctuate any worthwhile conference. It can't all be keynotes and workshops. Personally and professionally, these chats enliven more 'scholarly' matters. In the Greenbank Building's tall foyer we shook hands, traded ideas and planted the seeds for amiable conferences down the line.

Congregated together again and back in our seats, Carl returned to amuse and entertain us all with a compressed history of the HGRG. He traced how the 'Agrarian Landscape Terminology Study Group' evolved into today's 'Historical Geography Research Group'. We found ourselves as the current performers of the HGRG's culture of collaboration and exchange, in an event that was first unveiled at Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education in November 1995. Rebecca Ford then took up the lectern as our 'postgraduate voice'. She recounted her experiences as a PhD student in the 'hidden archive' researching watercress - a vegetable, which Rebecca noted, holds "an incredibly elusive presence in the archive". She shared stories and deciphered marginalia to elaborate how patience, persistence and serendipity (in the form of helpful librarians) allowed her to collect the records she needed. And well done to Rebecca for not just showing up, but presenting - the following day she was to sit her Viva at Nottingham University (and yes, she passed - congratulations!)

On either side of lunch lay the day's workshops. Hannah Neate led us down the wet pavement on our very own '*Walking and Talking*' Tour to a contentious architectural landmark: the Preston bus station. Hannah exemplified her participatory approach to historical research by bringing us into contact with the stark material presence and dimensions of this infamous modernist structure, which is now a Grade II listed heritage building. Rain failed to dampen interest in the empty, almost eerie rooftop car park. Indeed the day's cold grey skies seemed to compliment the exposed, raw concrete all around us. Prompted by post-card questionnaires, we reflected on where historical geographers carry out research and the role of fieldwork in helping us to understand our topics. More broadly, it prompted us to contemplate the role of researcher subjectivities in the archive - whatever form that 'archive' may take.



"Walking and Talking: Architectural Tours and Built Heritage" Workshop

Led by Hannah Neate

Merle Patchett continued this practical theme of material engagement indoors and dry. She introduced us to 'bird bits' to tell the story of millinery practices in the late 19th century 'plume boom' and to teach us how to '*fashion feathers*' (and other material objects) into our historical research. We played the role of curator and labelled specimens to consider the historical geographies of these feathered artefacts. These 'unclassifiable' objects commonly lie forgotten in the backs of museum store-rooms, but through handling them, inspecting, and investigating them we were able to see how a bird of paradise existing without eyes or body, but only tail feathers, could become a wealth of information: an 'archive' in itself.



"Fashioning Feathers: Material Archives in Historical Research" Workshop

Led by Merle Patchett

Following on from these workshops we were back in the lecture hall, listening to our second keynote speaker David Featherstone. He closed the Conference with his talk on *'Labour, agency and decolonisation: the political trajectories of Harry O'Connell'* which fittingly drew upon many of the themes of the day. David mapped the many different threads that could be traced from the life of O'Connell. He demonstrated how in reconstructing O'Connell's role as organizer in Cardiff's multi-ethnic seafaring community could carve a new historical and geographical approach to link labour organization to anti-colonial politics. Good byes were then said and we all prepared to leave; or more accurately, walked to the local pub to wait out the couple of hours until the train home.

The practical advice gleaned from the day was that artefacts are always in a state of 'becoming', with the geographies and histories of their making waiting to be (re)told – we, as postgraduate historical geographers, are now poised to become their possible story-tellers.

Julian Baker, Natalie Cox, Alice Insley

Practising Historical Geography 2014

We are pleased to announce that the 20th Annual Postgraduate and Undergraduate one day Conference for students of historical geography will be held at the **University of Bristol**. The provisional date is **Wednesday 5th November**.

Please check the HGRG website for further details over the next few weeks.



LONDON GROUP OF HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHERS

Seminar Programme, Spring 2014

INDIGENEITY & LOCALITY: KITH & KIN

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 21 January | Catherine Nash (Queen Mary)
<i>Geographies of Genetic Indigeneity</i> |
| 4 February | Helen Gilbert (Royal Holloway)
<i>Walk the Talk: Indigeneity, Dwelling and Performative Routes to Reconciliation</i> |
| 18 February | Chris Gosden (Oxford)
<i>Indigeneity and Englishness at the Pitt Rivers Museum</i> |
| 4 March | Ben Rogaly (Sussex) and Becky Taylor (Birkbeck)
<i>Making Strangers Out of Locals: Oral Histories of Trans-Spatial Connection among the 'Indigenous' English</i> |
| 18 March | Henry Stobart (Royal Holloway)
<i>Dancing in the Fields: Virtual Locality and Imagined Histories in Indigenous Andean Music Videos</i> |

These seminars are held on **Tuesdays at 5.15pm** in the Gordon Room, G34, Senate House, University of London. For further details, or to have your name added to our e-mail list, please contact one of the convenors. We are grateful to Royal Holloway, Queen Mary, Kings, Birkbeck, UCL, LSE, University of Sussex, Open University and the IHR for supporting this seminar series.

Convenors: Ruth Craggs (Kings), Felix Driver (Royal Holloway), Innes Keighren (Royal Holloway), Miles Ogborn (Queen Mary)



Abstracts of Recently Completed PhDs in Historical Geography

Ayuka Kasuga, University of Nottingham

Views of Smoke in England, 1800-1830

In the early nineteenth century, a number of English towns experienced accelerated industrialisation and many of them first experienced air pollution. In 1821, Michael Angelo Taylor, MP, passed a parliamentary bill on smoke abatement, Taylor's Act. Although it has generally been believed that the Act did not have much of a social impact, it argues that the Act diffused the usage of smoke abatement technology and triggered dozens of legal cases. The geographical focus of this thesis is Leeds and London. The Leeds case study examines the Leeds smoke abatement campaign and the smoke nuisance court case against Benjamin Gott, a leading merchant / manufacturer in Leeds. It shows that the confusion over the effectiveness of smoke abatement technology represented the main difficulty in the smoke abatement campaign. By introducing arguments in geography of knowledge into environmental politics, it reveals success and failure in early smoke abatement campaign. The London case studies examine how the printing business became a polluting business after the introduction of the steam press and how one of the conventional polluting businesses, water companies, reacted to Taylor's Act. The differences in two industries' reactions indicate that urban geography is a key to understand smoke conflicts.

Ayuka's thesis was supervised by Prof. Georgina Endfield (Nottingham) and Prof. Stephen Daniels (Nottingham), and was examined by Dr. Paul Elliott (Derby). Her PhD was awarded in December 2013.



Rebecca Ford, University of Nottingham

Historical and Cultural Landscapes of Watercress in England since 1800

Scholarly works on agricultural and food history, on cultural geography and on landscape have long informed and enriched geographical thinking. However few researchers have drawn from these extensive bodies of work in order to investigate the cultural landscapes of food. This thesis aims to address that. It proposes the notion that foods can and do have cultural landscapes; landscapes that exhibit temporal changes which reflect changes occurring in the wider society. It goes on to investigate this notion through an historical case study of one particular food: watercress.

Watercress itself has received little attention from geographical researchers. It was in 1997 that the distinguished scholar Joan Thirk published *Alternative Agriculture* and revealed the important role that has been played by horticulture and market gardening in the history of English agriculture. However, watercress has still not been the focus of a dedicated study, despite the fact that it has long been both grown and consumed in England, with commercial cultivation of the crop beginning around 1808 in Kent.

This thesis suggests that not only can watercress be said to have a cultural landscape, but also that the study of it reveals thickly textured geographies that have previously been hidden. Examination of a wide range of archival, written and pictorial sources reveals the engagements that have taken place between watercress growers and government officials, as well as the inspiration its wider associations have provided to artists and writers. Watercress emerges as a food with a rich cultural hinterland; a potent carrier of fears and desires, diseases and enterprises, dreams and salvation. It crosses the boundaries between the countryside and the city and, by so doing, reveals that those boundaries are less rigid than have traditionally been perceived.

Rebecca's thesis was supervised by Prof. David Matless (Nottingham) and Dr. Carol Morris (Nottingham), and was examined by Dr. Susanne Seymour (Nottingham) and Prof. Brian Short (Sussex). Her PhD is to be awarded in 2014.



Benjamin N. Vis, University of Leeds

**Mapping the Inhabited Urban Built Environment:
The Socio-Spatial Significance of the Material Presence of Boundaries through Time**

This thesis develops a comparative methodology and research practice enabling the interpretive social study of urban built environments (cross-culturally and diachronically). Its contribution to comparative urbanism is framed specifically as a method for studying the socio-spatial significance of the material presence of the composition of urban form (conceptualised as boundaries) to the interactional process of human inhabitation. This perspective results from formulating a theoretical and conceptual rejoinder to questioning the nature of the role of the built environment as emergent from the human process of inhabiting the world and the functioning of urban life and development. On that basis an empirically operational method (Boundary Line Type (BLT) mapping) for the conceptual re-mapping and analysis of ground level spatial data on the urban built environment (city plans) is devised, so the comparative socio-spatial study of cities from this perspective through time and across geographical areas and societies or cultures becomes enabled.

This foundational development of a research process and ontology is informed by a material adaptation of a critical realist philosophy of science. The practical and technical implications of executing the mapping process on spatial data of varying nature (archaeological, historical, historically reconstructive, and contemporary maps) are comprehensively worked through. The comparative functional ability of the method is demonstrated by exemplifying two case studies, the cities of Chunchucmil (Mexico, Classic Maya) and Winchester (UK, 16th, 19th and 21st century), on the basis of which two test cases are taken forward for preliminary visualisation and analysis with the aid of Geographical Information System (GIS) techniques. The findings confirm its potential, replicating common expectations about contemporary urban life as well as laying a novel foundation for insights into Winchester's historical development and Chunchucmil's archaeology, from which future research and development can burgeon. These are expected to contribute significantly to the deeper understanding of urban life and urbanisation across past and present urban traditions and provide an improved appreciation of urban alternatives which could inform planning and urban design in the long term.

Benjamin's thesis was supervised by Dr. Andrew Evans (Leeds), Dr. David Bell (Leeds) and Dr. Penelope Goodman (Leeds, Classics), and was examined by Prof. Ray Laurence (Kent) and Dr. Martin Purvis (Leeds). His PhD is to be awarded in 2014.



Work in Progress



CENTRE FOR URBAN ECONOMIC STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA
1, REFORMATORY STREET, KOLKATA-700 027, INDIA

Telefax : +91-33-24790156

E-mail : cuescu@gmail.com

Dr. Aditi Chatterji, University of Calcutta, Kolkata, India

Landscape and the Bengali Diaspora

This ICSSR-funded project focusses on qualified, professional Bengali migrants who have left Kolkata, West Bengal, India to settle in other Indian urban centres as well as the UK and USA. It will be an urban, social and cultural study in a definite historical perspective, as it commences with the Bengali students who went to the UK and USA to study from the 19th century from Kolkata (then Calcutta, capital of British India) as well as subordinate clerks and superior government officials who moved to other Indian cities, and proceeds to study the 'Brain Drain' of qualified doctors, engineers, academics and other professionals who have migrated to the UK and USA since the 1960s and 1970s as well as infotech professionals in Bangalore and elsewhere. Its a two year project and I hope to go to the UK (Oxford, London and Aberdeen) and the USA (New York, Silicon Valley) next year, following initial library and archival work in Kolkata.

