



**HISTORICAL
GEOGRAPHY
RESEARCH
GROUP**



Historical Geography Research Group NEWSLETTER

- December 2021 -

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Copy for the next issue:

31st May 2022

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Letter from the Chair

Dear HGRG Members,

Welcome to the December edition of the newsletter and to everyone who has recently joined the Group and the Committee. It is great to see new members joining and to witness a renewed sense of community within the group as we tentatively make steps towards more face-to-face interactions. The research group has been extremely busy over the last few months. At the RGS-IBG Annual Conference the HGRG sponsored six sessions, including our incredibly popular New and Emerging Sessions, and it was fantastic to see so many people presenting their research and sharing ideas. You can read a full report of these sessions by Dr Patrícia Silveira in this newsletter. As part of our increased support for postgraduate and early career researchers within the group, we held an online lunch as a sister event to the conference. This was well attended and a great opportunity to share ideas, concerns and possibilities with one another. We hope to run more of these events in the future and would welcome thoughts and suggestions from the group about these.

The first of two Practising Historical Geography events took place in November to the theme of International Historical Geographies. Professor Mike Heffernan (University of Nottingham) presented the keynote lecture to the title of Internationalising Historical Geography. The talk asked us to consider the rise of internationalism as a political mechanism, particularly in relation to the environmental movement, and encouraged us to think beyond traditional archives for research that seeks to find ways to examine performative sets of processes. It was a fantastic opening to the event and led to a number of important questions that many of us will follow up on in future events. Dr Archie Davies (University of Sheffield) guided the participants through a fascinating workshop entitled Thinking with translation in Geography. Topics explored included translation in the archive, translation as practice and translation ethics. I would like to thank our speakers and Dr Patrícia Silveira, newly elected Conference Officer, for all their hard work and contributions to the event.

A further part of the PHG event was the presentation of work by our HGRG Dissertation Prize Winners. This year we awarded joint winners to Bethany Walsh (University of Edinburgh), 'Nature,



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Nation and Narrative: The Visual and Discursive Representation of National Park Tourism in Brochures for Riding Mountain National Park, Manitoba, 1932-1970' and Jamie Arnaud (University of Cambridge), 'Roads to Improvement: The Construction of "Destitution Roads" by the Edinburgh Section of the Central Board as a response to Highland Famine, 1847-1850'. We also awarded a Highly Commended prize to Sorcha McKee (University of Glasgow), for her dissertation 'The 1984-85 Miner's Strike: An investigation into the spaces of political involvement constructed by women during the strike in mining communities.' It was great to hear the prize winners speak so eloquently about their work and I would like to thank them all for coming along and sharing their work with us. Thanks to Dr James Kneale for coordinating the HGRG Dissertation Prize again this year, and to Dr Paul Griffin (Northumbria University) and Dr Ed Armston-Sheret (Royal Holloway) for judging the submissions. We would like to continue to promote submissions to this scheme and you can find out more information about the process and deadlines on our HGRG website.

The second part of our PHG event will take place on Wednesday 26th January 2022 and will showcase postgraduate voices, discussions around teaching historical geography and a keynote lecture by André Reyes Novaes (Rio de Janeiro State University, Brazil) entitled 'Combining Archives: different gazes on border mapping and exploration in South America'. Information about how to sign up for this free event is available on the HGRG website and we hope to see many people join us from across the world.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this issue of the newsletter. Dr Caroline Bressey's wonderful reflections on her journey as a historical geographer highlights the importance of connecting with others and certainly reminded me of the kindness and opportunities that we can offer one another (alongside the joys of photocopying!). Dr Ed Armston-Sheret laments the lack of recent archive visits in his fantastic piece From the Archives. Discussing the new trajectories of his work, post-PhD, Ed signals the usefulness of revisiting archival data and delving into online worlds, and we look forward to seeing his book in print sometime in the future. The 'Shelfie' section is taken over in this edition by Cameron Byron who eloquently takes us on a tour through works relating to his interest in the geographies of deathscapes and territory. Here the dead are given voice through reference to Peter Sloterdijk's *Spheres* trilogy and their geographies reimagined through connections to emerging mobilities scholarship.

The RGS-IBG Conference will take place at Newcastle University from Tuesday 30 August to Friday 2 September 2022. The theme of the conference is Geographies Beyond Recovery and is Chaired by Professor Rachel Pain. The HGRG will shortly begin planning the launch of our Sponsorship Call for the conference and we wish to pay particular attention to carefully considering how we wish to create safe and inclusionary spaces for conversation within our sessions. We welcome all thoughts from the community and will provide further details about these plans in the new year.



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We would also like to remind all members that we have a number of funding schemes available on the HGRG website. The page also includes information about our Postgraduate Support Scheme, Small Conference and Seminar Funding, and Undergraduate Dissertation Prize. The deadlines for the first two schemes are 1st April, 1st August, and 1st December in any year, so postgraduate readers might like to consider making an application for the next round. The Group are also keen to support conferences dedicated to the advancement of historical geography and supporting the profile and careers of postgraduate and early-career historical geographers. Applicants should be members of the HGRG and application forms can be found on the website.

Members keen to contribute to any of these regular features are encouraged to get in touch with our newsletter editor, Jenna Kirk (j.kirk.1@research.gla.ac.uk), or to drop me a line.

I would like to wish you all a safe and happy December.

Take care,

Cheryl McGeachan, HGRG Chair



A note from the editor

Last year, due to the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, two issues of the HGRG newsletter were circulated. As the effects of the ongoing pandemic continue to make themselves felt, this is an arrangement which we have chosen to continue this year. Thus, our next issue will be circulated early in June 2022, with copy for the next issue due 31st May 2022.

In addition to our regular features (How I became a historical geographer; From the Archives; and the Shelfie) I would be very keen to hear from anyone interested in contributing original pieces of writing on any aspect of their work in historical geography. If this has sparked an idea, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me- I would be delighted to work with you to find a home for your piece in the newsletter.

With warm regards,

Jenna Kirk- HGRG Newsletter Editor



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How I became a historical geographer

Caroline Bressey

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Dr Caroline Bressey is a Reader in Cultural and Historical Geography at University College London. She is the author of *Empire, Race and the Politics of Anti-Caste* (Bloomsbury, 2013) which explores the place of the journal *Anti-Caste* (principally curated by Catherine Impey) in early anti-racist movements in Britain. *Empire, Race and the Politics of Anti-Caste* won the Woman's History Network Book Prize 2014 and the Colby Scholarly Book Prize 2015. She is also co-editor of *New Geographies of Race and Racism* (Ashgate, 2008). Her research centres upon the historical and cultural geographies of the Black Presence in Britain, with a particular focus upon London.

I am often asked why I became a historical geographer or why I work in a Geography department. It is a question that is usually posed when I am presenting work at conferences or seminars convened by historians. I don't think Geography polices its boundaries as forcefully as some subjects do, and so when I was first asked the question, I was rather perplexed by it. I attended conferences in History and Geography, because friends and colleagues who were essential to my work came from both disciplines. It was odd, and unsettling, to be othered in this way. Why did it matter? Weren't we all simply undertaking historical research? The answer I usually give now has two parts. The first is short: because I have always been a geographer and I have always worked in a Geography department. But, a bit like the question, "where are you from?" (which thankfully I don't really get asked any more), I sense it isn't the answer people are looking for. This is because it doesn't answer the question why are you *not* a Historian?

The second part of my answer reflects a legacy of the school system and the opportunities I perceived Geography to offer when I chose my first degree. When choosing which courses to apply for at university, like Stephen Legg, I was also interested in Town and Country Planning - that was a degree with an understandable employment outcome. But I remember hoping to find something that would hold together my interests in local lives and identity and international politics and Geography seemed closest to what I was interested in; an opportunity to learn about the present and the past and an acknowledgement that Britain was part of a world geography. At Cambridge, where I read Geography, Historical Geography was a strong strand of study and I was taught by Gerry Kearns and in all three years by Phil Howell, whose 3rd year weekly lectures also came with recipe print-outs which I still have.

On reflection I think I remained in Geography because it was, or appeared to me to be, somewhat more open to ideas from



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How I became a historical geographer

cultural studies and postcolonial scholars which became essential parts of how I approached my research on the Black Presence in Britain. This itself began as research for my undergraduate dissertation while I was at Cambridge. In a simple narrative arc, I completed my dissertation and graduated, returned home to London and a year later began my PhD research at the Geography Department at UCL. This was a department which, as Linda Newson pointed out in her reflections, also had strengths in historical geography, and so my studies were logically continued in Geography developing the research I had laid the foundations for while an undergraduate.

But behind that is the work of individuals committed to supporting and developing a community of scholars. That includes for me former supervisors like Linda McDowell who has written many references for me over the years. When I began my undergraduate dissertation, I had written to the Geography department at UCL asking if anyone there knew of any archives in London that might be of use. As I remember I got a reply which didn't hold any answers, but wished me luck in my research. It was no matter, I completed my dissertation and graduated, returned home to London and went on the dole. I started a part time BTEC in photography and did some volunteering. I considered working for a charity, but the unpaid 'work experience' required was not remotely feasible.

During this time, I received a letter from UCL. The UCL Graduate Tutor at the time was Phil Crang and he wrote to me directly asking how my undergraduate dissertation had gone, if I was interested in pursuing the research further and if I was, perhaps I'd be interested in coming into the department and talking through the possibilities. I did and met with Phil and either then, or sometime soon after, with Claire Dwyer who would, along with Richard Dennis become my PhD supervisor. That Claire and Richard co-supervised me reflects the intention I had to hold together an interest in historical recovery with an exploration of how the absence of Black History marred the narratives of belonging and heritage sites in England. I worked on a funding application to the ESRC which wasn't successful, but the department had access to grants then that allowed PhD students to be funded while employed offering administrative support for staff. I did a lot of photocopying that year, but was able to reapply for research funding in the following round and that time I was successful. The opportunities for funding a diverse range of students and their research interests seems now far reduced compared to the late 1990s and early 2000s when I became 'an academic'; but for me, if Phil Crang hadn't written me that letter it's unlikely I would have become a Historical Geographer.



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From the Archives



Dr Ed Armston-Sheret was awarded his PhD in 2021. His thesis- entitled ‘Exploring Bodies: Recentring the Body in Histories of British Exploration, 1856-1913, uses the body as a lens through which to reassess histories of exploration, giving voice to those typically neglected within these accounts, such as women, people of colour, the working class and the non-human. He is currently writing a book, *On the Backs of Others: Rethinking the History of British Exploration*, to be published by the University of Nebraska Press.



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From the Archives

Ed Armston-Sheret

I must start this column with a confession: it is longer than I'd like since I've physically set foot in an archive. The pandemic coincided with the period I'd set aside to write up my doctoral thesis on the history the Victorian and Edwardian exploration. The demands of writing and editing, the restriction of the pandemic, and the stresses of moving house, have meant it's been a challenge to get back into the archives. Consequently, I've spent much of the last year analysing research I carried out before the pandemic. It's surprising how being unable to go to archives to gather new material can force you look more closely at what you have and to re-examine it in new ways.

I've also developed a new awareness of the multitude of online resources available for historical geographers. I was fortunate enough to be awarded a subscription of the Adam Matthews Digital Archive, but I've also drawn on resources such as [Livingstone Online](#) and on Adrian Wisknicki's new [One More Voice](#) project, previously discussed in [this newsletter](#). In many ways, it was fortunate that one of the last in-person events I attended before the pandemic was the November 2019 Practicing Historical Geography conference. Dr Caroline Bressey gave a fantastic keynote lecture on the possibilities and challenges of using digital archives to surface subaltern bodies (drawing on work [now published in the JHG](#)). If I'd known then how much I'd been using digital archives over the next year, I'd have taken better notes! Now that my PhD has been awarded, I've started to reflect on my longer-term research and publication plans.



Figure -1 It's amazing how many books you can accumulate.

I'm currently turning my thesis into a book, titled *On the Backs of Others: Rethinking the History of British Exploration*, to be published the University of Nebraska Press. This book argues that focusing on the body and the 'body work' of nineteenth and early twentieth century British exploration, allows us to see it in fundamentally different ways. I focus my attention on the records of well-known travellers and explorers such as Isabella Bird, John Hanning Speke, Richard F. Burton and Robert Falcon Scott. But, in my work, I seek to shift attention away from these individuals onto the numerous others involved in travel and exploration.



From the Archives



Figure -2 Happier times in the idyllic gardens of the Huntington Library.

I do this by focusing on different kinds of work carried out on expeditions. Doing so draws attention onto the broader networks that made explorers' journeys possible. This includes East African porters, chair-bearers who carried Isabela Bird across China, working-class sailors, and Russian dog handlers on Scott's expeditions. I'm also fascinated by the interdependence of humans and animals on many of these expeditions. The project involved archival research at the RGS-IBG archives, the Scott Polar Research Institute, the National Library of Scotland, and the American Geographical Society Archives; it also involved a trip to the Huntington Library in California to examine the library and archive of Richard Burton (which was a particular highlight).

In turning my thesis into a book, I'm drawing on the detailed and insightful feedback provided by my examiners Professors Dane Kennedy and Felix Driver. But alongside this project, I'm keen to pursue new projects. I'm eager to expand my analysis beyond the case studies in my thesis and am looking forward to getting back into the archives to do this. But there are a few other archives I'm keen to examine. One possible line of research is the historical geographies of labour, drawing on research I conducted on post-war migration at the London Transport Museum. As with my doctoral research, I'm eager to examine this material, looking at how questions of location and identity shaped the way work was valued and rewarded.

Another important theme I wish to pursue further is the relationship between health, globalisation, and Empire. I'm particularly interested in the role of alcohol in relation to questions of Empire, internationalism, and anti-colonial resistance. The regulation of drinking was central to both imperial rule, anti-colonial resistance, and post-colonial development.



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From the Archives

As much historical and geographical scholarship on drink has shown, where and when people drank was central to how socially and medically accepted such practices were. But travel and intercultural encounters often push people into new and unexpected situations. I'm interested in how such processes changed the way people approached questions of drink. I recently published [a paper](#) with my friend and colleague Kim Walker, examining the ways that Victorian explorers used alcohol as a tropical medicine. But, as always, I left this piece of writing with more questions than answers.

Similarly, I'm also interested in the relationship between technology, taste, and diet, particularly canned food. I found a lot of interesting material on the ways that travellers and explorers approached, tested, and used tinned food. I think there's scope for a broader project here examining the important role that canning played in processes of globalisation (but also investigating the anxieties it produced).

I end this piece in very much the same frame of mind as I started it: lamenting how long it's been since I've been in an archive. Just writing and reflecting on what I'd like to do next, leaves me desperate to get back there.



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Shelfie



Cameron Byron is a third year PhD student in the department of Geography and Planning at the University of Liverpool. His work (in collaboration with the Wirral Archive Services) examines the geographies of deathscapes and territory through a multitude of intersecting perspectives, considering the material, political, economic and legal forces which shaped 19th century cemeteries in the Wirral, Merseyside. He employs a volumetric ontology to understand the dynamics of containment and capacity within both historical and contemporary burial practices.



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Shelfie

Cameron Byron



The books that feature on my *shelfie* are an insight into part of my work on the historical geographies of deathscapes, and specifically, the practice of territory that shaped newly built municipal cemeteries in Merseyside during the late nineteenth century. I have been particularly interested in how feminist geopolitics has shifted the focus of territory beyond the confines of state and military-led endeavours towards the more everyday, affective and embodied, and also towards alternative ways of being and of knowing in the world. There is a growing set of literatures attending to feminist and material historical geographies that methodologically speak to how we can understand intimate historical spaces in respect of the accounts we draw and put together from the archive, and the texts here I find largely reflect the ways that theory can be a useful tool in this way.

What makes nineteenth century death culture so interesting is how dynamics of power between competing practices of (non)secularity became both political and strategic during the burial reform period. The political dimensions of burial are about drawing lines and borders (for example, between consecrated and unconsecrated ground) and creating order through governing bodies of both the living and the dead. My work here has been largely inspired by the volumetric and voluminous. The cemetery is a space of depth, but also dimension in both the material and



Shelfie

immaterial sense. How bodies have historically mobilised certain practices, of ideology, belief, and language for example, has been a useful lens for me to think about world-making practices and power relations that animate the seemingly mundane acts of death, dying and burial. The books featured here have each given me a particular perspective towards the approach I have taken when conceptualising the politics of the burial.

Embodied politics of death and burial

I, like many others I imagine, bought this particular set of books I will come to first, philosopher Peter Sloterdijk's *Spheres* trilogy, as a sort of lockdown reading challenge, and also just out of general interest in theory (needless to say I haven't read the collection in its entirety.. though maybe one day?!..) Across the volumes, Sloterdijk offers quite a tentative set of opinions and a lofty chronology of the history of the earth through a spherical perspective. The people and the accounts Sloterdijk draws on are strange, intimate, mystical, and sometimes discomfiting, but that is where the appeal in such a set of books lies. Death and dying feature here quite heavily, given it is itself something that is such a large part of life, but this fact is something Sloterdijk is seemingly puzzled by. Why has it been that across time we have been so *close* to our dead? What are the territorializing ways we look after and attend to our dead? These are questions Sloterdijk ponders, and attempts to answer by looking at the world-making practices that surround the afterlives of the dead. What stuck me in his accounts are the very emotive and affective ways that modes of respect, but also control are placed onto dead bodies and spaces for the dead. His theorizing has been influential in drawing out and expressing the way different exercises of power take place through the medium of death. When I came across texts such as the Catholic Rite in the archive, and its reading during the consecration of Flaybrick Cemetery, I was struck by the language of consecration and the way it gives meaning to spaces that are immaterial and beyond the earthly. As Sloterdijk draws out, such different ontologies, however real or not, still have rules and modes of order. The dead are part of these systems.

Governance

When thinking about the cemetery and its development across the end of the nineteenth century specifically as a practice of territory, Stuart Elden's work has been especially influential in respect of territorial thinking. Elden draws out in his work different technologies of spatial governance and thinks about how we draw, maintain, or disrupt territorializing acts and behaviours. In this particular book *Shakespearean Territories* however (combining Elden's long standing work on territory and his love of Shakespeare) we get what feels like a contextual historical account of territory across various societies. Though the empirical data Elden works with is fictional, it is still drawn out from its historical context. How Elden draws on Shakespeare's characters, and traces facets of geopolitics through money, the law, and rulership, allowed me to make connections between similar acts - the sale of land, the mapping of boundary lines - and I found myself at times taking what felt like a similar



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approach to the historical voices of the archive in terms of understanding the operationalities of power that were actively writing and shaping the geopolitical arena of the cemetery. This is where I find making connections between empirics sometimes helpful, particularly in this case of 'reading' geopolitics.

Experiencing territory

When it comes to theorising territory, a lot of work from across political geography has done much of the groundwork, and still continues to do so, placing the body as site and practice of territory in various accounts. In their book on territorial animation, Andrea Mubi Brighenti and Mattias Kärrholm trace across different spaces how exactly territory is experienced and felt, how it is encountered, and how it is imagined. Ontologically speaking, cemetery space means different things to different people, and it was interesting to look at, both in the archive, and more widely, the very practices that different denominational groups adopt in respect of their dead, and the ways these practices draw lines and borders between different bodies and identities. Mubi Brighenti and Kärrholm show how the very *active* territorial forces that come into play are part of the more everyday ways territory is made and experienced, and I found the more everyday practices that were detailed in letters and in the record books to be interesting given they were fundamentally decided by territorial actors who were responsible for making decisions and applying the law (that changed throughout the implementation of the Burial Acts). As well as this, when it comes to experience and encounter, a book I recently read (purchased after attending an AAG author panel) *Feminist Geopolitics Unbound*, struck me through how it considers temporal relations and dynamism and the way structures and hierarchies in seen and unseen ways are still are embedded into the present. In the cemetery you cannot simply *erase* territory. This book asks a lot of questions about pasts, presents and futures and does so through the place of the body, its discomforts, frictions and vulnerabilities. The territorial violences of the dead affect the living in profound ways, as do the power relations across the archive itself, and the very ways records are written (or not), kept and understood. You often find there are a lot of questions you need to ask yourself before you commit to an idea or an understanding, partially when interpreting the past.

Moving on..

Finally, I take inspiration from work from mobilities scholars, and *Stillness in a Mobile World*, a book I came across earlier on in my PhD, seems an apt title itself to describe the dead. Yet this almost paradoxical relationship was something that emerged quite early in my research, and it seemed to be that the Victorian dead were hardly still at all. Not just their placement, removal or re-admittance, but their very chemical movements were deeply under scrutiny during the sanitary movement. Cemeteries had to be inspected by a medical officer and had to follow numerous guidelines in order to 'secure' the dead to the subsurface. These knowledges are particularly interesting,



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and the ways they were responded to (rules in regards to where cemeteries could be built, the depth of bodies in the earth, and their distance to dwelling houses) were very contentious issues, especially as the volume of England's dead readily grew throughout the century. This book has been a way for me to think about how mobility configurations are created and understood in the cemetery as well as how they became a tool of political action. Ideas here, and across the texts as a whole, speak to the ways that theory helps us to understand and express (often in ways we can't) our place and practices in the world and towards others.

REPORTS

RGS-IBG Annual International Conference, London (online)
August 31 to September 3, 2021

Patrícia Gomes da Silveira,
Conference Officer

Borders: practices, processes, scales. The worsening of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 was decisive for the postponement of one of the biggest, oldest, and most important academic events in Geography on the European continent: the RGS-IBG's Annual International Conference.

Fortunately, in 2021, the event was resumed in an online format, which largely contributed to a broad engagement of the geographic community. Researchers, professors, and students from different parts of the world were able to follow the diverse and extensive programming of this edition in a virtual environment. The Conference had more than 2,300 delegates from around 60 countries, more than 500 sessions, as well as Conferences, Panels and Workshops. On social networks, the four days of the event were marked by #RGSIBG21. Following delegates' posts on Twitter was very exciting and encouraging! The tweets brought a sense that the event's geographic reach has extended each issue.

Being online, I was able to participate in the Conference for the first time and, from what I read on social media, the same happened to many participants. Despite not being able to walk through the historic halls and beautiful gardens of the RGS, attend the Tea Room and participate in small meetings, I



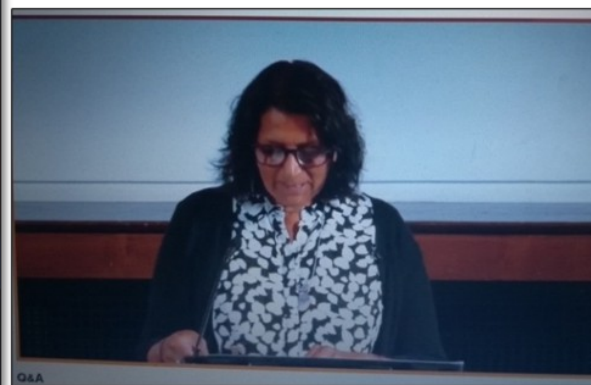
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recognize, dear readers, that the online participation was a very productive academic experience, with pleasant moments of work and interaction.

With the selected theme 'Borders, borderlands and bordering', the opening event was chaired by the Chair of conference, Professor Uma Kothari (University of Manchester, UK). Her opening lecture was about the actuality of the most different types of borders, as well as their multi-scalar character. Socio-spatial processes and practices of construction, reconstruction, representation, and transgression of borders are on the current agenda in Geography. The relevance of the selected theme made me think about the role of Geography and geographers in the study of borders and bordering practices. At the end of her lecture, Professor Kothari praised the efforts of the geographic community to meet (virtually) at the event, which was of great importance for establishing dialogues, connections, and exchanges among participants (Figures 1 and 2).

Sessions in Historical Geography: Due to my insertion in the field of Historical Geography, I prioritized attending the papers in the sponsored sessions by the Historical Geography Research Group (HGRG/RGS). Of the six sponsored sessions, two of them attracted my interest, by the theme and affinity with my doctoral research, as follows: 'Bound by Craft: Material Culture and Bordering within Histories of Geography' and 'New and Emerging Research in Historical Geography'.

The 'Bound by Craft' session was coordinated by Professors Peter R. Martin (University of Cambridge, UK) and André Reyes Novaes (Rio de Janeiro State University, Brazil). The five works presented focused on material culture and the circulation of technical, scientific, and cultural objects (such as museum collections, photographs, instruments and maps) in different parts of the world, whether in Greenland, Brazil or India.



Figures 1 and 2: Professor Uma Kothari at the Opening of the Conference at Ondaatje Theater (RGS-IBG) on 31st August. Credit: Patrícia Silveira.



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Figure 3: 'Botanical biopolitics': presentation of Anna Lawrence's paper in New and Emerging (session #3).

'New and Emerging' sessions was chaired by Ruth Quinn (University of Hull, UK), Jenna Kirk (University of Glasgow, UK) and Ed Armston-Sheret (Royal Holloway, University of London, UK). With twelve papers, we had three sessions for the presentations. As it is impossible to summarize all the papers, I will limit myself to synthesizing the themes. In the first session, the papers were mainly about the concept of landscape, whether in its relationship with heritage in Scotland or with the idea of re-placing past landscapes; as well as works on the historical geography of the territory (deathscapes), and the emergence of localism in the administration of the Greater London Council. In the second session, the papers addressed issues related mainly to power, gender, and resistance, such as the history of Radical Geography in Denmark, the implementation of railways in South Africa and its relationship with resistance movements, feminist historical geography, and politicization of trips in the USA in the early years of the Cold War. In the last session, I highlight the production and circulation of scientific knowledge (Figure 3). Presentations included analyses of landscape and its tourist-cultural use in Italy, historical geography of plant-human involvement in Victorian England, history of science in Antarctica, and the resurgence of eco-fascism in Germany.

Participating in the New and Emerging sessions was an enriching experience for a Brazilian geographer, as I got to know a little more about the Historical Geography developed in other contexts, the historical sources used, the themes, and the objects of study. The thematic, methodological, and geographic diversity of the works must be highlighted, especially the high conceptual and methodological level of the research presented in the three sessions. Furthermore, I also verified the vitality and strength of Historical Geography, mainly among PhD students, who managed to send great abstracts for the conference, even in times of global pandemic.





Reports

In the New and Emerging sessions, a concern of several PhD students was to report the limits and challenges of conducting archival research in times of pandemic, as many institutions were closed for months. For many students, this meant having to rethink their doctoral research (theme, clippings, sources) or looking for historical documentation in digital collections. Some students also mentioned the difficulty in carrying out fieldwork or even interviews with experts, residents, activists, among others, due to social isolation. In many field photographs featured in the papers, the mask was a frequent accessory - a mark of our time.

HGRG Initiatives: On Thursday at the HGRG AGM meeting, the new Committee members and ideas for events and workshops for the next semester were presented. As I had never participated in this meeting, I had the pleasant opportunity to get to know in detail the structure of the HGRG, the publications, the calendar of events, and of course, talk to professors and colleagues in my research area.

On the last day of the event, the HGRG promoted a 'virtual lunch' with PhD students, which was attended by students from the United Kingdom, Hungary, Sweden, Brazil, China and Canada. In a relaxed and light atmosphere, we briefly talked about our experiences as postgraduates, especially in the current period full of online activities (meetings, events, classes, thesis defenses). At that time, the importance of the Sunday Scholarly Writing Sessions, organized in 2021 by Dr Joanne Norcup (University of Nottingham; Ordinary Member of HGRG) was mentioned. I recognize that this initiative has favored the establishment of links (academic, but also friendships) among the historical and cultural geographers who participate in the meetings on Sundays, in which we dedicate a moment to writing, researching, and dialoguing. International connections are in evidence in Geography and the initiatives organized by the HGRG were another important step to connect people, places, and projects.

Before closing the report, a huge thank you to the Conference Organizing Committee and its technical team, as well as to the chairs of the sessions. I will see you all - hopefully in person - at the 2022 Conference to be held at Newcastle University. Save the date!





Announcements

LONDON GROUP OF HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHERS

Seminar Programme, Spring Term 2022

MOUNTAIN HISTORIES

- 11 January **Jason König** (University of St. Andrews)
Geography and identity in the mountains of the ancient Mediterranean
- 25 January **Lachlan Fleetwood** (University College Dublin)
Empire on high: mountains, measurement and the 'world altitude record' in the nineteenth century
- 8 February **Nokmedemla Lemtur** (Universiät Göttingen)
'Lagerleben': Visualising high-altitude labour in German Himalayan Expeditions, 1929–1939
- 22 February **Ben Anderson** (University of Keele)
The politics of extremes: danger, morality, and mountaineering, 1885–1936
- 8 March **Jonathan Westaway** (University of Central Lancashire)
Bodies of ice: post-mortal (im)mobilities and Mount Everest as a mortuary landscape

Seminars take place online on **Tuesdays at 5.30pm**. Register at [Details about how to join the seminar](#), which will be hosted on Zoom, will be circulated via email to registered attendees 24 hours in advance. The event's online waiting room will be open 15 minutes prior to the advertised start time.

For further details, please contact one of the co-convenors of this term's programme: Jonathan Westaway and Felix Driver. LGHG seminar organisers are Ruth Craggs (King's), Felix Driver (Royal Holloway), Innes M. Keighren (Royal Holloway) and Miles Ogborn (Queen Mary).



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Announcements

130 years of Historical Geography at Cambridge 1888-2018- Chinese translation announced.

We are delighted to announce that a Chinese translation of *130 years of Historical Geography at Cambridge 1888-2018* will be published by The Commercial Press, Beijing. *130 years of Historical Geography at Cambridge 1888-2018* was first published in 2019, and is number 46 in the Research Series of the HGRG. The authors- Dr Alan Baker; Dr Iain Black and Professor Robin Butlin- trace the history of historical geography itself at Cambridge, tracking changes in how the sub-discipline was formulated and disseminated both within this setting and beyond.



Image credit: Charles Newton

27th Annual Practising Historical Geography Symposium

The first of two sessions of this year's Practising Historical Geography Symposium was held on the 24th of November, 2021. The second session will take place on the 26th of January 2022, from 12-3pm GMT, so save the date in your diaries!

Both sessions run online- this decision was taken due both to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, but also with issues surrounding conference accessibility highlighted by the pandemic fresh in the minds of the symposium organisers. An online setting was thus chosen to allow for the engagement of a larger audience, from a more diverse range of geographical locations. This was certainly borne out in the first session, with over 50 participants in attendance, sharing diverse reflections and exemplars of historical geography research from all over the world. Appropriately then, the theme of this year's conference is International Historical Geographies.

Abundant thanks are due to the symposium organiser (Patrícia Silveira) and those who contributed to the first session; Professor Michael Heffernan, who provided the keynote lecture, '*Internationalising Historical Geography*'; Dr Archie Davies, who ran a workshop on '*Thinking with Translation in Geography*' and the HGRG dissertation prize/highly commended recipients, Bethany Walsh, Jamie Arnaud, and Sorchá McKee, who each presented on their work.

Information on the next session of the symposium- including a full programme; a workbook to accompany the programme; and information on how to sign up to attend- can be found on the HGRG website, and also [at this link](#). Both sessions are free to attend.



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Announcements

HGRG - RGS Virtual Writing Retreat 2022

The HGRG will be running its 5th January Writing Retreat which will take place over **10th, 11th and 12th January 2022 between 10:30 and 20:30 GMT to which all are cordially invited.**

Whatever career stage of historical geography you are at, and wherever you are in the world, you are invited to join in this non-directed writing retreat as much or as little as you would like in the virtual company of fellow historical geographers. This has become a much looked forward to time in the HGRG calendar for colleagues to get started on their new year scholarly writing goals

As with all previous sessions, the retreat will be run by Dr Jo Norcup (Geography Workshop) and updates about these sessions - and during the Virtual Writing retreat itself - will be via twitter #HGRG_VWR2022

Joining #HGRG_VWR2022

If you wish to join in via Twitter, **there is no need to register**, just update how you are getting on (if you want) and let fellow historical geographers on social media know you are taking part using the hashtag #HGRG_VWR2022

If you would like to register to join in with others via Zoom, you will need to register [via Eventbrite for a link](#).

The Zoom option is a 'pay-what-you-like' donation system and 20% of funds raised this way will be split equally between the humanities charities Arts Emergency and Black Curriculum in line with the core values of Geography Workshop. Please make donations via the Eventbrite link when you register or else via Geography Workshop's [Ko-Fi page](#).

For those wishing to join via Zoom who are precariously employed or unwaged there are a limited number of places for free access.

Please sign up at your earliest convenience to ensure you get a Zoom place if this is how you would like to work on your HGRG virtual writing retreat.

Details of previous years events plus support resources can be found [here](#).

Thank you

Dr Joanne Norcup
(Geography Workshop Productions on behalf of the HGRG)



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HISTORICAL
GEOGRAPHY
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ARE YOU A FULL MEMBER OF THE HGRG?

Some of you reading this newsletter and, perhaps, participating in our activities will not be a full member of the HGRG. Some of you, for instance, will have expressed an interest in the work of the group when you became a member of the RGS/IBG and so joined that way. And that's just great! We welcome and celebrate the breadth of our membership.

Nevertheless, there are some important benefits to be gained by switching to Full membership and we would encourage you to consider doing so. It would be of immense benefit to the Group and we promise to make you feel 'special' in return! As it stands if you are with us as a RGS/IBG member only, we receive a minimum contribution (as little as £2 *per annum*) from that. In return all you receive is this newsletter.

In short we would be delighted to welcome you to join us as a full member of the HGRG community! Membership subs are essential for us to continue to provide the full range of support and we are grateful for the collegiate generosity of members in this regard.

Full Membership £12.00 *per annum*.

Should you choose to become a full member you will be added to the e-circulation list, will receive the HGRG Research Series and the HGRG Newsletter. Your subs will help support the grants that we provide to the HGRG community and you will be eligible to apply for these. Finally, you will get a reduced rate on back issues of the HGRG Research Series and have the opportunity to take up an Officering role.



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