IGU International Geographical Union *Union Géographique Internationale UGI*

IGU/Home E-Newsletter

Quarterly

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This Newsletter is circulated to more than 1000 individuals and bodies. Announcements, information, calls for participation in scientific events, programmes and projects are welcome. Please send them to <g.bellezza@homeofgeography.org >

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Home of Geography Update

1) MESSAGE OF IGU ACTING PRESIDENT, JOSE LUIS PALACIO PRIETO

I take this opportunity to send all best wishes for a successful 2008. This year, the major geographical event organized by the IGU will take place in Tunis, from the 12th to the 15th of August. The XXXI International Geographical Congress in Tunis will give all geographers in the world the opportunity to meet in a country specially important for its contributions to geographical knowledge, both in the past and present. Efforts have been made by the Host Organizing Committee led by Prof Adnane Hayder to ensure the participation of colleagues from all over the world. The organizers have met and have established permanent contact with the IGU Executive Committee to update us about the progress and exchange ideas and suggestions that have been always seriously considered. Information on details of the Congress is available in the web site (http://www.igc-tunis2008.com).

It is also important to point out that during the Congress, the General Assembly shall hold an ordinary meeting. On this occasion, the General Assembly shall elect an Executive Committee consisting of a President, seven Vice-Presidents and a Secretary-General. Details on the candidates for these positions are included in this issue of the IGU E-Newsletter. Given the Statute changes agreed at the General Assembly in Glasgow, the current Executive Committee will not be recommending a particular slate. Thus the election for all of these posts depends on the majority vote of the members present at the General Assembly in Tunis.

According to the IGU Statutes, Executive Committee members have specified duties: They shall stimulate activities and coordinate IGU Commissions while also representing the Union and furthering contacts within their own regions. One Vice-President shall act as a Publications Officer. The Vice-Presidents shall be chosen as widely as possible from amongst member countries of the Union, and at any given time the Executive Committee shall not include more than one representative from any one country. One of the Vice-Presidents shall be appointed by the Executive Committee as First Vice-President. He or she shall take the place of the President should the President be unable, temporarily or otherwise, to act.

The Secretary-General shall also act as Treasurer and shall maintain a permanent administrative office or secretariat. With the approval of the Executive Committee and in order to provide for the efficient administration of the Union's affairs, he or she may arrange for an Assistant Secretary-General or Assistant-Treasurer. The Secretary-General shall make arrangements for the publication of a Bulletin or other means of keeping geographers informed, through their Committees for the IGU, of the activities of the Union and for the circulation of information on publications sponsored or assisted by the Union.

The President of the Union shall be elected by the General Assembly and shall normally be chosen from among those who have had experience as elected officers of the Union. He or she will assume office after the conclusion of the General Assembly or, if this is held during a Congress, after the conclusion of the Congress. He or she will remain in office until after the conclusion of the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly, or, if a Congress is being held at the same time, until after the conclusion of the Congress.

2008 is therefore a specially important year for IGU. I encourage you to take part of the IGC in Tunis and all chairs of National Committees to participate in the renewal_of the Executive Committee.
Sincerely,

José Luis Palacio Prieto
Acting President of the International Geographic Union

2) COMMUNICATIONS FROM IGU SECRETARY GENERAL, WOO-IK YU

Nominations for IGU President and IGU Secretary General and Treasurer
Following my letter to you of December 16 2007, the IGU Executive Committee met on 28-29 December to review various aspects of planning for the Tunis Congress and IGU governance. You will recall that I noted in that letter that IGU First Vice President José Palacio-Prieto had announced that he would not be a candidate for President of the IGU in the election to be held in the Tunis meeting of the IGU General Assembly.
To allow time for national committees to respond to Palacio-Prieto's recent decision, the Executive Committee has extended the deadline for receipt of nominations for the positions of IGU President and IGU Secretary General and Treasurer at the IGU Secretariat to **31 January 2008**.
As noted in my 16 December 2007 letter, nominations should be accompanied by 1) a photograph of the nominee suitable for reproduction in the *IGU E-Newsletter*, 2) his or her curriculum vitae, 3) a statement of intent of no more than 500 words, written by the nominee, describing his or her priorities for the IGU if elected, and 4) a letter of recommendation by the nominating national committee.
Please contact me if you have any questions about this deadline extension. Best wishes for 2008.

Sincerely,
Woo-ik Yu ,
Secretary General and Treasurer

I deem it useful to repeat the last points of the Secretary General's letter, relative to issues still to be accomplished. ***GB***
4. Application for the 2014 Regional Conference/2016 IGU Congress
National Committees wishing to host either the 2014 IGC Regional Conference or the 2016 IGU Congress are requested to send their applications to the Seoul IGU Secretariat by **December 31 2007**. The applications must include: a) an official letter of invitation; b) a brief proposal

containing information on the invitation background, meeting location, tentative conference theme, available conference facilities, and other matters deemed relevant to the proposal and invitation. The Executive Committee will conduct a preliminary review of applications, and representatives of proposals deemed competitive will be invited to meet with the IGU Executive Committee in March 2008. The final decision on the sites of the two meetings will be made by the IGU General Assembly at the Tunis Congress.

5. Official voting delegates

No later than **31 May 2008**, I will need to know the identity of each country's official voting delegate at the 2008 IGU General Assembly. You may, if you wish, designate an alternate to cast your country's vote if the delegate must be absent from a meeting of the assembly.

6. Agenda for the Tunis General Assembly

You will receive the agenda for the Tunis General Assembly on or about 1 April 2008. The Executive Committee will invite your suggestions for items of business to be placed on the agenda in early 2008, but I would be pleased to receive any suggestions for agenda items that may occur to you before then.

Plans for the Tunis congress are well in hand. The congress website is operational, and the local organizers have done an excellent job of attracting Commission and Task Force meetings to be held in the Tunis area in conjunction with the Congress. The second Congress Circular is scheduled for distribution this year.

Candidates proposed by National Committees for an IGU VP Position

1) Australia. Professor Ruth Fincher, University of Melbourne
2) Belgium. Professor Eric Lambin, Université Catholique de Louvain
3) Canada. Professor Mark Rosenberg, Queens University, Kingston, Canada
4) China-Beijing. Academician Qin Dahe, Academy of Sciences of China
5) China-Taipei. Professor Chang-yi David Chang, National Taiwan University
6) Czech Republic. Professor Ivan Bicik, Charles University of Prague
7) Denmark. Professor Christian Wichmann Matthiessen, University of Copenhagen
8) Egypt. Professor Mahmoud Mohamed Ashour, Ain Shams University
9) France. Professeur Gérard Salem, Université de Paris X
10) Germany. Professor Dietrich Soyez, University of Cologne
11) Israel. Professor Aharon Kellerman, University of Haifa
12) Italy. Professor Giuliano Bellezza, University of Viterbo
13) Japan. Professor Yukio Himiyama, Hokkaido University of Education
14) Mexico. Professor Irasema Alcántara Ayala, National Autonomous University of Mexico
15) Netherlands. Professor Jef Vandenberghe, Free University of Amsterdam
16) Nigeria. Professor Michael O. Filani, University of Ibadan
17) Russia. Professor Vladimir Kolossov, Russian Academy of Sciences
18) Saudi Arabia. Professor Mohammad S. Makki, King Saud University
19) South Africa. Professor Michael Meadows. University of Cape Town
20) Tunisia. Professor Habib Dlala, University of Tunis

Woo-ik Yu,
Secretary General and Treasurer

3) NEXT IGU INITIATIVES: TUNIS INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS 2008 AND TEL AVIV CONFERENCE 2010

3.1) Tunis International Congress, 12-15 August 2008

the Congress URL is http://www.igc-tunis2008.com/)

3.1.1) 3.1.1) Contributions from IGU Commissions and others

Note of the General Editor: *Some Commissions sent announcements of their programmes for the Tunis congress to the Home are being posted in the Home's website. Others sent their announcements to the IGU General Secretary, and these notices were later transmitted to the Home by the Editor-in-Chief. In this newsletter we publish the parts deemed of general interest, even to scholars not directly involved in the specific Commissions.*

a) Mediterranean Renaissance Project

The Mediterranean Renaissance Program (MRP) is a special project of the IGU, initiated by its Past President, Prof. Adalberto Vallega. The project aims at the establishment of a Mediterranean regional network, focusing on the study of the region from all geographical perspectives, discussing the present problematic of the Mediterranean in respect to the North-South economic collaboration, the need to mitigate geopolitical stress in the region, and to encourage intercultural dialog, extending the geographical focus towards Black Sea and more oriental perspectives.

1. MRP sessions for 2008 IGU Congress in Tunis

MRP has begun to plan sessions and joint initiatives for the IGU 2008 TunisCongress. MRP should provide Mediterranean contents for the congress theme: "Building together our territories!". A call was launched to Commissions and National Committees for the receipt of initial, unbinding, ideas for sessions and initiatives focusing on the geographical study of the Mediterranean.

The current collection of sessions, covers such topics as: Culture and tourism, politics, climate change, communications and information, and physical geography.

Sessions chairs issued calls, selected papers and prepared the internal organisations and further communication with speakers. The MRP Executive Secretary will continue to ensure advisory collaboration.

Sessions co-organized by MRP with Commissions

Climate change from the geological eras to the 21rst century in the Mediterranean region: characteristics, impacts and governance

a) Co-organized with the inter-commissions group of Climatology, Arid lands and the "UN International Year of Planet Earth" (IYPE). Organisers Professors Mahmoud Ashour, Anne Buttimer, Annick Douguedroit.

b) Co-Organised with Commission Climate Change and MedCLIVAR Program. Organisers: Prof. Annick Douguedroit, University of Aix en Provence Prof. Piero Lionello, University of Lecce

c) Co-organized with the Commission on the Geography of the Information Society: Mediterranean Information Geographies: Challenges and Prospects, Chair Prof. Theano Terkenly, Aegean University

d) Co-organized with the Commission on Political Geography, Geopolitical Trends of the Mediterranean in a 21st Century Globalized World, Chair Anton Gosar, University of Primorska, Koper

Sessions proposed by research groups

a) Tourism, Heritage and Politics in the Mediterranean

b) Religious, Heritage and Spiritual Tourism

(See the complete MRP document in www.homeofgeography.org/Tunis2008/January)

b) C04.12, Commission on Geographical Education

As chair of the Commission on Geographical Education visited Tunis and Le Kram in April 2007. After this visit and consultation with members of the Commission, I recommended that we make the Tunis Congress the major venue for our meeting in 2008. Members of the Commission considered organising a meeting in Tunisia before the Congress, or organising a meeting close to the Congress in another venue, but the Tunis Congress option (while undoubtedly expensive) became the only practical option when we looked at our capacity to organise a meeting without a local Commission member. For the Tunis meeting, the Commission will work with The International Network on Learning and Teaching Geography (INLT, Eric Pawson) and colleagues in Herodot (Karl Donert).

I offer now the best current advice on logistics of travel, accommodation and working in Tunis. I did not find many direct long-haul direct flights to Tunis, but there are discounted fares from many European destinations (Frankfurt, London and Rome). Please check visa requirements; not needed for UK or Australian citizens for example, but required for New Zealanders.

I looked at a number of hotels, including some of those listed in the Second Circular. My view is that the Belvedere Park options, although cheaper, are some distance from Le Kram. Concorde (overlooks Berges du Lac, close to airport), The Sheraton (Belvedere Park, some distance from Le Kram) and El Mouradi Africa (main street downtown, near Medina) are international standard plus, but expensive with it. Personally, I stayed in a 5* standard room (Abu Nawas, not listed) which was quite acceptable. The advantage of Barcelo Carthage Thalasso, Kathago Le Palace, and Mouradi Gamarth is that they are on the seaside at Gammarth and reasonably close to Le Kram (<10 minutes by taxi for last two, <15 minutes from Barcelo). These are in the very good range. In terms of location alone in the 4* range, I think the Sol Phébus is an option; I have not

been there, but it is coastal (Gammarth) and reasonably priced (I note 3* on the web, not 4* (?)). The cheaper hotels in Belvedere Park and the City Centre had less appeal, but were adequate for international congress delegates. My recommendation is for Commission delegates to consider Mouradi at Gammarth as the first option to explore on the web.
The Commission will organise some activities for corresponding members (either at Le Kram or at a hotel like Mouradi), so make sure that all parties who are planning to contribute to our programme are on the Commission's mailing list (correspondence to Margaret Robertson at M.Robertson@latrobe.edu.au).
Prof. Lex Chalmers, *Chair of the Commission*
(See the complete document in www.homeofgeography.org/Tunis2008/January)

c) C04.15, Commission on the Geography of the Information Society

1) Information Society: A Regional Perspective

The geography of the information society has normally been studied from urban and global perspectives. In this conference we would like to examine the two rather regional dimensions of the geography of the information society. First, we would like to shed some light on global regions, with a special focus on the Mediterranean basin, focusing, for example, on the question of *digital divides* between coastal regions and in-land ones, which may take several patterns in different parts and countries of the Mediterranean basin. Another question of interest is the role of Mediterranean face-to-face communications culture in the era of virtual communications. Could regional communications cultures deter or sustain the emergence of information societies?

The second regional dimension of interest is intra-national regions. Of major interest could, for instance, be questions such as: do there exist regional information geographies or is the geography of information society rather global in nature? If there exist regional information society geographies what are there patterns? Another aspect is regional interplays between virtual, electronic and physical spaces and places which may pose significant challenges and opportunities for individuals, businesses, policy makers and certainly for academic study.
We encourage paper submissions and session organization around any of these dimensions and issues. As customary in our annual meetings, we welcome also papers and sessions dealing with other topics within information/telecommunications geography.

2) Proposal for the Commission on the Geography of Global Information Society: Rationale

The evolving information society and its associated spatial, technological and political dimensions, has become a worldwide phenomenon linked by networks of information and communications technology. The complexity and scope of social and economic change connected with global information society has rapidly outpaced our ability as social scientists to understand and predict how social change will evolve. The primary objective of the Commission on the Geography of Global Information Society is to address the spatial context for the relationship between places, people and the information society.
The Commission on the Geography of Global Information Society builds on the strong foundations of prior commissions including the Commission on Telecommunications and Communication (IGU 96-CO4) with its focus on technology and communications, and the successor Commission on the Geography of Information Society with focus on the intersection between information technology and the emerging knowledge economy. The Commission on the Geography of Global Information Society builds on a sixteen-year tradition of active research and

engagement across six continents, and advances geographic scholarship around several core spatial and social phenomena.
(See the complete document in www.homeofgeography.org/Tunis2008/January)

d) C04.29, Commission on Health and the Environments

Proposed Statement for 2008-2012

Members of he IGU **Commission on Health and the Environments** (CHE) carry out research on health and health care in the natural and built environment recognizing the importance of gender and diversity in a globalizing world. Three strategic foci for 2008 to 2012 are: 1) the analysis of quality of life with an emphasis on health, health care, and the environment at various geographic scales; 2) the links among global change, health, and environment and 3) urban and rural health and the role of migration and immigration. These foci reflect outcomes of the previous work carried out by CHE (2000-2008) and the new initiatives based on the IGU's support of the Year of the Planet Earth (IYPE), IHDP Task Force on Global Change and Human Health, the Earth System Science Partnership's Joint Project on Global Environmental Change and Human Health, and ICSU's Planning Group on Health and Well-being in the Changing Urban Environment. CHE members will continue to represent IGU in these international initiatives over the period 2008-2012 strengthening geography's contributions to the international efforts to improve global health.

In addition, we will need to propose, a new chair and secretary because the IGU Constitution requires that commission chairs and other steering committee members must step down after eight consecutive years. The new chair and secretary will then create a new steering committee once we know that our proposal for a new commission has been accepted by the General Assembly at the IGC in Tunis. We will propose **Professor Wuyi Wang** (People's Republic of China) as the new chairperson and **Dr. Thomas Krafft** (Germany) as the secretary of the new commission.

The proposed statement and the nominations of Professor Wang and Dr. Krafft are the results of discussions I have had with almost all of the current steering committee members during the International Symposium in Medical Geography in Bonn in July 2007 and/or the Italian Medical Geographers International Seminar in Medical Geography in Rome in December 2007 and a meeting with Professor Wang and Dr. Krafft and I had in Beijing in November 2007. To ensure that the General Assembly votes for our new commission, please let your national committee know how much we value support of the national committees and would appreciate it if they would vote for the a new CHE for 2008-2012.
(See the complete document in www.homeofgeography.org/Tunis2008/January)

e) C04.09, Commission on Dynamics of Economic Spaces

Our participation in Tunis international Geographical Congress will take the form of Special sessions dedicated to five themes:
a) Climate change and new economic spaces
b) Relational economic geographies
c) Spatial perspectives on economic change and development
d) Economic geographies yet to be written
e) Globalising economic geographies in a globalising world'

Moreover, a collaboration with IGU Commission on Climatology re the Tunis Congress is in hand, and a similar outcome will likely be decided with IGU Commission on Gender and Geography, during a meeting in Barcelona (3-5 August).

f) United Nations International Year of Planet Earth

Special sessions on the International Year of Planet Earth (www.yearofplanetearth.org) are planned for the XXXI IGC in Tunis (August 2008). IGU, as founding partner with IUGS and UNESCO on this endeavour, has since Autumn 2006 promoted contributions from the international geographical community through the voluntary leadership of colleagues who are experts in the ten thematic domains of IYPE science and outreach. Groundwater: Anthony Jones (jaj@aber.ac.uk); Climate: Annick Douguédroit (Annick.Douguedroit@univ-provence.fr; Earth and Health: Mark Rosenberg (rosenber@post.queensu.ca); Deep Earth: Irasema Alcantara Ayala (irasema@igg.unam.mx); Megacities: Frauke Kraas (f.kraas@uni-koeln.de); Resources: Yukio Himiyama (himiyama@asa.hokkyodai.ac.jp); Hazards: Susan Cutter (scutter@sc.edu); Soil: Marek Degorski (m.degor@twarda.pan.pl); Oceans: Norbert Psuty (psuty@imcs.rutgers.edu); Earth and Life: Udo Schickhoff (schickhoff@geowiss.uni-hamburg.de). Specific guidelines for each of these themes can be found at the websites of IGU (*igu-net.org*) and Home of Geography (*homeofgeography.org*). Each leader plans to present results of their activities to date in association with the XXXI IGC in Tunis. In some cases several themes are combined in order to encourage more general geographical perspectives on humanity and planet earth. Proposed contributions are warmly welcomed and should be submitted directly to the relevant theme leaders before February 15, 2008. This should enable the leaders to submit their full session proposals to the local organization committee by the announced date of May 31, 2008.
Programme coordinator: Anne Buttimer (*Anne.Buttimer@ucd.ie*).
Local host co-ordinator: Adnane Hayder (*a.hayder@igc-tunis2008.com)*

g) Cultures and Civilisations for Human Development

Benno Werlen, chair of the IGU Commission C04.07 (Cultural Approach in Geography), charged by the IGU Executive Committee to develop the CCHD Program, is organising two meetings for the Commission to be held in May in Quebec and in June in Santiago de Campostela, and still trying to realize a Round Table in Boston during the AAG Conference. One more restricted Meeting is to be held in the Home of Geography in May. One of the aim of this activity is, of course, the organization of special session(s) in the Tunis Congress.

h) C04.01, Commission for Applied Geography

The International Geographical Union's Applied Geography Commission focuses on improving understandings of the basic research-applied research interface and the needs of geographers based in universities, government, business, and non-governmental organizations for the services provided by professional organizations. It also considers the ways that the IGU and other existing geography organizations might better serve the enormous population of geographers in business, government, and NGOs.

Objectives:

- Develop a network of professional geographers and a system of information on applied geography in coordination with the Roma IGU Center and with the IGU Commissions and Study Groups.
- Develop information on NGOs. International organizations, private firms, and public agencies using geography, working in partnership with other IGU Commissions and study groups interested in applied geography. Information gathered includes addresses and emails for key persons and descriptions of the geographic skills and perspectives demanded.
- Organize meetings with the goal of producing publications on what geography can offer to public and private enterprises and on geographers views on sustainable development.

The 2008 Meeting of the AGC will be held in conjunction with the 2008 IGU Tunis Congress.
At the Tunis Congress, Bob Stimson will become President of the AGC and current President Antoine Bailly will move to the International Advisory Committee. Secretary Lay Gibson will also step down at the Tunis Congress and move to the International Advisory Committee. A search for his replacement has been initiated.

i) C04.26, Commission on Local Development

The 2008 annual meeting of the commission will take place during the coming IGU Congress in Tunis in August 12-15. The main reason for having the meeting parallel to the main Congress is that there are difficulties to organise the annual meeting in Tunis before or after the main congress.
The following congress internet site contains the required information:
http://www.igc-tunis2008.com/
We are in the process of structuring the programme within the Congress. The organisers have allocated five (5) sessions for the commission's meetings. These sessions can be concentrated in one day or spread into two days. While we could have themes for five sessions and twenty papers, we may have some themes that occupy two sessions. Details for the submission of abstracts are provided in the congress site. The organisation of commission sessions is based on 90 minute blocks, in which we insert four oral presentations followed each by a discussion.
The IGU executive committee encouraged all commissions to have, during the Tunis congress, one session related to Mediterranean Basin issues. I have already received the acceptance of Rassem Khamaisi, from the University of Haifa, to organise a session around the general topic of "Issues of Local Development in Mediterranean Countries". Possible themes are the following; nevertheless additional ideas could be well accepted:
1. What is local development and for whom
2. The nature of local development in a mobile society
3. The role of talents and creative industries for local development in a globalising economy
4. Issues of Local Development in Mediterranean countries

Early concerns have been expressed regarding the cost of registration, and the risk that this may seriously affect the number of participants. The IGU Executive has recently discussed the matters with the organisers and my understanding is that there will be some reduction in the registration fees.
We asked the organisers to organise for the commission a two-day field trip. The excursion proposed is the Sahel region of Tunisia (Sousse, Monastir, Mahdia), a program that has to be confirmed. The excursion will take place immediately after the congress. We need a minimal number of participants in order to reduce the costs. We may try to run the field trip as a joint project with another commission.

l) C04.36, Commission on Islands

The IGU Conference will be held in Tunisia from August 12th -15th 2008 in conjunction with The Tunisian Geographers Association. The conference page is located at: http://www.igu-net.org/uk/news_and_events/tunisia2008.

Any queries can be sent to The Conference Organizer: Email: Toumi@fshst.rnu.tn
The **IGU COMMISSION ON ISLANDS** plans to hold a commission meeting and organize a set of sessions at the upcoming IGU Conference in Tunis. To this end we solicit *proposals for organized sessions* and *submissions of abstracts* for papers.

Island studies spans a broad spectrum of themes and topics. Therefore, rather than propose a theme for the meeting in Tunis, we urge island researchers to submit proposals for themed sessions and papers in the theme of their special research interest.

Preliminary plans include sessions on *historical-political ecology of islands*, *island tourism*, and *conflicting models of island development*. Additional themes are very welcome.

Those interested in submitting an abstract (maximum length 250 words) and/or proposal for thematic session(s) please send your proposal and the pre-registration form (next page) by February 15, 2008 (email or fax) to contact persons:

Huei-Min Tsai,
Secretary, IGU Commission on Islands
P.O. Box 97-145, Taipei 116, Taiwan
Fax: +886-2- 29325570
E-mail: hmtsai@ntnu.edu.tw
Website: http://igu-islands.giee.ntnu.edu.tw/

Eric Clark,
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Department of Social and Economic Geography
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Lund, Sweden
E-mail: eric.clark@keg.lu.se

3.2) Tel Aviv Regional Conference, 2010

The complete brochure can be seen in:
http://www.igu-net.org/uk/news_and_events/IGU_Conference_2010.pdf

4) REPORTS FROM CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

Note from the Managing Editor: *In previous issues of the Newsletter, we published some brief reports on meetings which Anne Buttimer or I myself had attended. This time I asked the organizers of the meetings signalled as "forthcoming" in the previous issue to send a report, and they all responded positively. I am delighted to see that The Home of Geography is going forward to be always more a "de facto" Home of Geographers (but with no intention at all to change name).*

4.1) XI Iberian Geographical Colloquium

Alcalá de Henares, 1-4, October 2008

Geographical perspective in front of new social and environmental challenges on Iberian context

The colloquium aim to review the environmental aspects in Geography since a unified perspective by the objective to recognize the applied point of view in Geography. The main topics will point in relation geographical perspectives in front of new social and environmental problems. Aspects as sustainability development, environmental conflicts, territorial problems, the citizens participation, the new models in government, the relation between local, regional, national and supranational scales, the enormous reports in relation of territorial and

environmental problems. Are fascinating aspects to geographical point of view. The colloquium aims an Iberian perspective in relation transfrontier environmental problems, the contrast between Mediterranean and Atlantic, and the specific problems in insular atlantics regions.
Rafael Mata,
President Association of Spanish Geographers,

4.2) Commission on Gender and Geography, Taipei 23-26 November 2007

With a long history of almost twenty years, the IGU Commission on Gender and Geography held two meetings in 2007: one in Europe (Zurich), and one in Asia (Taipei). The symposium "Transnational Lives: Feminist Perspectives on Citizenship, Home and Belonging" was held in Taipei on November 23-26, 2007. The title of the conference came about due to abundance of on-going scholarly work on gender and transnational migration, an aspect of globalization which is (about to be) eagerly explored at personal, institutional and national levels.
The local organizing committee also initiated a "Gender and Geography Week" which includes the Symposium, special lectures on Gender and Geography Research, posters and a display of publications from different countries.
Twenty-four papers coming from the U.K., Ireland, Norway, Netherlands, U.S.A., Canada, Israel, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Mainland China, Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand, U.S.A. and Canada were presented in two days. The papers were organized under four themes: 1) Citizenship, rights and identity formations; 2) Homemaking, everyday life and transnational families; 3) Mobility aspirations, decisions and adjustments; and 4) Cosmopolitanism, belonging, and transnational subjectivity. Besides the speakers, about 50 people from Taiwan attended the two-day conference.

During the two days, visits were made to two of the six landmarks of Women's Culture in Taipei. They are: Fembooks (www.fembooks.com.tw) and Homemakers' Union and Foundation (http://www.huf.org.tw/). On the third day, thirty two people, including the conference speakers, two of their family members and six students headed for a day trip in Yangmingshan and Beitou hot spring region. It started with a visit to Zhon Shan Building which was meticulously designed by noted female architect Hsiu Tze-lan. The trip also included lunch at the Shann Garden, which was once a Japanese officers' club in 1920 and a Japanese Kamikaze reception site during World War II. The fieldtrip ended in a two-hour visit of a tea factory: the visitors were shown how Taiwanese tea was manufactured and were invited to sample the tea by their hosts, whose ancestors started the business back in 1890 in Xiamen, China.

The organizing committee wishes to express thanks to the Department of Geography at NTU which provided the venue, and also to the graduate and undergraduate students who participated in the final planning stages and helped to put on the Gender and Geography Week and the fieldtrip. The greatest thanks must go to the sponsors, who include the National Science Council, ROC, the NTU Office of International Affairs and the NTU College of Science, and the Geographical Society of China (Taipei).

Top: From left to right, N. Chiang and T. Fenster, D. Conlon, R. Longhurst
Bottom: From left to right, R. Fincher, R.Jongwilaiwan, N. Chiang and J. Monk

The symposium, though small, ran smoothly. According to our participants, it set a high standard for other symposiums, attended to details and has maintained a high level of participation throughout. As the papers are of high quality, original and cover a wide spectrum on the subject of transnational lives, we hope to publish them in several journals in the near future.

Report by:

Nora Chiang, Professor, Department of Geography, National Taiwan University
Tovi Fenster, Chair of IGU Commission on Gender and Geography

4.3) Conference on Spatial Restructuring of Slovenia and Neighboring States. Advantages for Border Regions.

The Department of Geography and the Institute of Mediterranean Studies of the University of Primorska in Koper-Capodistria, Slovenia, organized an international symposium devoted to the problems of border regions, under the patronage of the Association of Slovenian Geographers and the Commission on Political Geography. The meeting took place from November 30 – December 2, 2007, in the Adriatic port town of Koper-Capodistria, in the wake of Slovenia's inclusion into the EU Schengen zone (together with other 7 EU members). Topics related to the future of border areas, where the physical border between nation-states are going to be eliminated, and of those on the EU periphery, where they will be strengthened, have been discussed. The opening statement were delivered by the member of the EU parliament Mr. Lojze Peterle, by the leading senior political geographers of Italy and Slovenia Prof. Maria Paola Pagnini and Prof. Vladimir Klemencic, and by Prof. Milan Bufon, who's fieldwork report enlightened participants on the reality of the border area situation. In addition, papers were presented by 28 participants from Slovenia, Italy, Croatia, Austria, Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Out of about 75 participants, a small group took the opportunity to criss-cross the Italo-Slovenian border under police auspices for the last time, and to encounter the rigid cross-border regime at the Croato-Slovenian border as well. Papers presented at the international conference *"Spatial Restructuring of Slovenia and Neighboring States: Advantages for Border Regions"* will be published in the proceedings of the conference in 2008.

Anton Gosar, *Univerza na Primorskem (University of Primorska)*

4.4) The 5th International Conference of Critical Geography – Mumbay, India, 3-7 December 2007

Over 200 participants from over 20 countries participated in the conference, which was centered on the overarching theme of *Imperialism and Resultant Disorder: Imperatives for Social Justice.* The meeting opened with a keynote address delivered by Utsa Patnaik on *Imperialism and Contemporary Disorder in World Resources and Food Security* and closed with David Harvey's address on *Marxian Theory in the Present Conjuncture*. The conference included thematic paper sessions, panel discussions and debates, documentary films and other cultural programs, and ample possibility to meet and talk with researchers and activists in India and from around the world. Four fieldtrips focused on SEZ-affected Villages of Raigad District [SEZ: Special Economic Zones]:

a) Dharavi, known as The Biggest Slum of Asia or Economic Hub for Millions;
b) Mankhurd and Washi Naka: Displacement and Resettlement;
c) Borivali National Park: Conflict of Power, Class and Environment.

The conference program is available at: http://www.5thiccg.org/conf_sess.html , and abstracts are available at: http://www.5thiccg.org/5thICGG_Abstracts_Final.pdf .

An important outcome of the conference is the Open Letter included below.

Swapna Banerjee-Guha, Eric Clark, Salvatore Engel-DiMauro

Open Letter to the Prime Minister of India and the Chief Ministers of the States of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Manipur, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Arunachal, Tripura and West Bengal
From the International Critical Geography Group (ICGG)

On the occasion of the Fifth International Conference of Critical Geographers
Mumbai, Maharashtra, India, 7 December 2007

Geographers, other social scientists and activists from tens of countries around the world met at the Fifth International Conference of Critical Geography in the city of Mumbai at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences between the 3rd and 7th of December, 2007. The purpose was to facilitate lateral flows of knowledge and identify, discuss, and propose alternatives to many of the world's prevailing patterns of development. A key concern arising from the research results presented at the conference was the destruction of the livelihoods, if not the very lives of millions of people, in India and worldwide.

We are shocked and pained by the state supported/sponsored repression and outright violence and atrocities in many parts of India such as, the brutally suppressed Adivasi uprising in Kalinganar in 2005 when 14 local activists were killed; the recent attempts to evict peasants and Adivasis by force so as to enable corporations to invade and make profits from their lands; the massacres in Nandigram, West Bengal in March and November, 2007 and the deadly attacks in late November, 2007 in Orissa. All these illustrate a lack of interest by the National and local State governments to prevent such attacks, which are designed to force people off their land to create Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and the like for a few, such as, the Salim Petrochemical Plant SEZ and the Posco iron and steel project in West Bengal and Orissa respectively. The horrific situation of Adivasis in Jharkhand is another case in point. Projects of resource extraction for wealth accumulation by and for the few have entailed massive forced migrations and impoverishment for Adivasis. It is astonishing that such projects are being promoted by the State and Union governments. We also strongly condemn the continuing colonialism within the existing borders of India and the violent repression on movements towards protecting the fundamental rights and condemning State atrocities in places like Manipur in North-east India.

These ongoing atrocities compel us to demand that the National and State governments immediately desist from supporting, either directly or indirectly, current repressive actions against national minorities, peasants, fishing folk, Adivasis and similarly situated marginalised communities. We urge upon academics, activists and common people from other countries to come forward with similar demands to end such state-sanctioned violence and displacements of poor people, and reinstate and defend the rights of the dispossessed to their lands and resources.

In solidarity with all oppressed peoples of India and the rest of the world,

On behalf of the International Critical Geography Group,

Abel Albet i Mas, Swapna Banerjee-Guha, Eric Clark, Caroline Desbiens, Salvatore Engel-Di Mauro, David Harvey. Jeronimo Montero, Joe Painter, Geraldine Pratt, Saraswati Raju, Blanca Ramírez, Susan Ruddick, Neil Smith, Judit Timár
and participating activists

4.5) 9th International Seminar on Medical Geography: Health and Work Rome, 13-15 December 2007

Last December 2007, from 13th through 15th, Rome hosted the 9th International Seminar on Medical Geography, whose main topic was "Health and Work". The first day the Seminar was hosted in the Società Geografica Italiana, in the wondeful seat of "Villa Celimontana", and the following two days it has been held in the Department of Human Geography of the University of Rome "La Sapienza". Local Organizers were Cosimo Palagiano and Giovanni De Santis, assisted by Riccardo Morri, Cristiano Pesaresi and Miriam Marta. The first day works were opened with

an address of Franco Salvatori, President of the Società Geografica Italiana, the second day with the address of the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Prof. Guido Pescosolido.
About 50 experts, coming from different countries and representing several research fields and local and national administrations, participated in the Conference promoting an interesting exchange of knowledge and experience in the complex issue of the relationship between health and work. Among them we should quote Professors M.Rosemberg, Chair of the IGU Commission on Health and Environments, Thomas Krafft and Alexandra Ziemann (Bonn University), Svetlana Malkhazova (Moscow State University).

Left: M.Rosenberg, C.Palagiano, G.De Santis. Right: G.De Santis, F.Salvatori, G.De Vecchis

The main items of the Conference were: the influences and consequences of work on health; the health safeguarding to create a better quality of work; the contribution of medical science in the treatment of illnesses; the negative consequences of workers' "illness" on the world of work. Since the first edition in 1982 this international meeting provide an important framework for an interdisciplinary and comprehensive debate on health, promoting at the same time new research methodologies, case studies and suggestions for practical applications.
Miriam Marta, ***Assistant Professor***

5) IN Memoriam

5.1) Mohammad Shafi (1928-2007)

The departure of our dear distinguished colleague, Mohammad Shafi, sends a wave of sadness among geographers throughout the world. A pioneer of agricultural geography and world renowned expert on the food systems of India and southern Asia, Professor Shafi consistently championed the interests of developing countries and was keenly sensitive to the social and ecological implications of current development policies. Over fifty years ago he studied at the London School of Economics where he imbibed much of the ecumenical spirit of Professor Dudley Stamp. Remarkably, it was in

the year of the latter's death (1956) that he was conferred with his Ph.D.degree from that institution. How nobly he pursued the ideals of his mentor!

Shafi's work has been recognized with honorary degrees and awards from universities throughout India. Abroad, too, his work has earned applause. He was awarded honours by the Royal Geographical Society of London, the American Geographical Society, the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the World Cultural Council and was invited to undertake a number of missions on behalf of United Nations and UNESCO. A man of indefatigable energy, Professor Shafi built a strong geography programme at Aligarh Muslim University. In addition to serving as Chairman of the university=s Department of Geography, he was also at various times Dean of the Faculty of Science, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, and Pro Chancellor of the university. Along the way, he published 11 books and 130 research papers in national and international journals. His death will be particularly mournful for those 34 scholars whose Ph.D. dissertations he supervised.

For geographers in India Professor Mohammad Shafi was undoubtedly the *doyen*. For the International Geographical Union, too, he was a generous and renowned contributor. A faithful participant in more than 25 International Geographical Congresses and Regional Conferences since 1964, he was Chairman of the IGU Commission on Comparative Research in Food Systems of the World from 1980 to 1984, and was Vice- President of the IGU from 1984 to 1992. In 2004 the International Geographical Union conferred its *Lauréat d'Honneur* on Professor Mohammed Shafi for his deep humanitarian commitment to feeding the world's peoples, for his skill and dedication in employing geography toward that noble goal, and for the many ways through which he had enhanced and advanced geography throughout a highly productive career.

As we mourn his loss we celebrate his great life achievements and pray:

Requiescat in pace!

Anne Buttimer, *Past-President, International Geographical Union*.

5.2) Maria Ángeles Diaz

Dear collegues,

I have very sad news to circulate. The past 28th of December 2008 Maria Ángeles Diaz lecturer in the Alcalá University and Executive secretary of the Association of Spanish Geographers (2003-2007) died in Madrid. She was a generous person, active and enthusiastic professional and excellent professor. Her successful initiatives and particularly the spirit with which she was able to design and undertake actions that contributed effectively to the scientific advancement of geography in relevant topics as gender, social geography, urban and planning and environmental problems. The Geographical community in Spain and Latin America is mindful of her activity, friendship, sympathy and cordiality. The XI Coloquio Ibérico de Geografía, held in October 1-4, 2008, is going to misses her presence and contribution. Since the Spanish geography we invited all the international geographical community to accompany us.

Rafael Mata,

President Association of Spanish Geographers,

6) FORTHCOMING 2008 EVENTS

DIAMONT Final Conference, Innsbruck, 1 February 2008. E-mail valerie.braun@uibk.ac.at

Mountains of the World - Ecology, Conservation and Sustainable Development, Muscat, Oman 10-14 February 2008. URL: www.squ.edu.om/cesar/introduction.htm.

Environmental Analisys and Geomorphological Mapping, Ethiopia, 25 February - 6 March 2008. E-mail: dramis@uniroma3.it.

EURAC, Workshop on Applied Remote Sensing in Mountain Regions, Bolzano, Italy, March 2008. URL: http://www.eurac.edu/Org/AlpineEnvironment/RemoteSensing/workshop0208.htm

International Conference on Mediterranean Studies, ATHENS, 20.23 March 2008. URL: http://www.atiner.gr/docs/Mediterranean.htm.

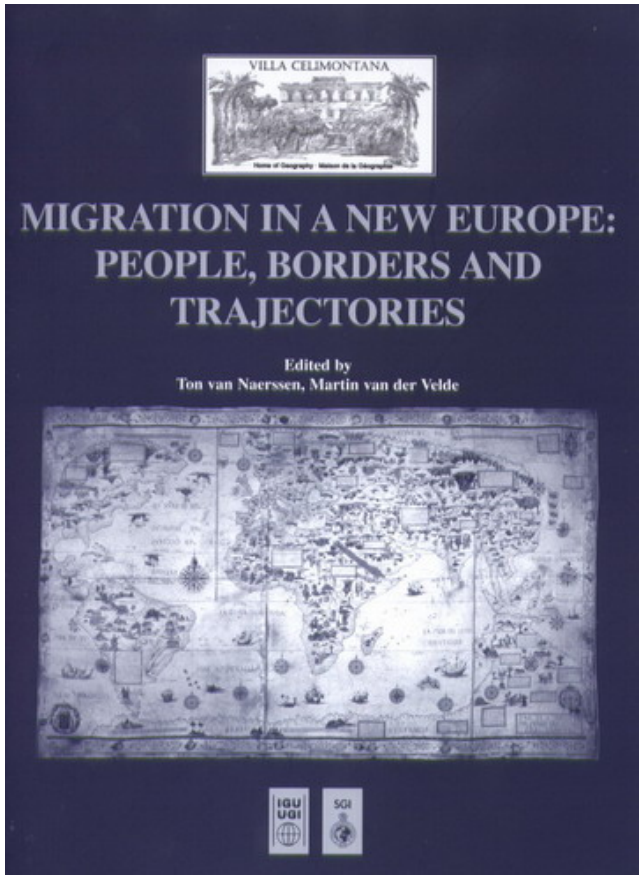
American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Boston, 15-19 April 2008. URL: http://www.aag.org/annualmeetings/2008/index.htm.

Home of Geography Update

Since the previous newsletter the main material work has been the publishing of the Volume VIII of our Series (please see below).
As about mental commitment, the greater worry is, as ever, the fund raising. A very unlucky circumstance made us miss a great chance with an Italian Ministry, but luckily the Società Geografica Italiana will generously finance the Home in the coming months.
An important initiative is on the way, to organize Festivals of Geography, following the success of Saint Dié des Vosges, in France. Thanks to Antoine Bailly, tight relations has been established

between the Home and the Portuguese town of Mirandela, than we assured the participation of the Italian town of Piacenza, and are looking for a partner from a third country: this will enable us to apply for funding from the European Community.
A delegation of Slovenian Geographers, lead by Anton Gosar, will visit the Home on the next 8th February, while on 13th and 14th March we will host a meeting of the Earth and Space Science Informatics Summit, in the frame of the International Geophysical Year + 50.

Home of Geography Publications Series: Vol. VIII



This volume within the Home of Geography publication series, edited by Dutch scholars Ton van Naersen and Martin van der Velde, refers to migration in the context of the always expanding European Union.

The enlargement process of the European Union has raised a considerable number of academic, political and public debates about a wide variety of related issues. Perhaps the most controversial debate in this respect concerns the issue of east-west migration after enlargement, equally feared and desired in and by the old EU 15 member states. In the majority of the old EU countries, the enlargement of May 2004 led to a diversity of adaptations and responses to the new situation, in particular temporary restrictions on labour migration from Central and East European countries.

It was within this context that a workshop was organised in June 2004 which focused on east-west migration issues as part of the research programme 'Governance and Places' (GaP) of Radboud University Nijmegen. Among the participants who were quantitatively oriented, the focus was on 'positivist' forecasting and impact studies – estimating either flows of migration or their influence on labour markets and/or social welfare systems. Others, positioned within a more qualitative tradition, made use of 'social constructionist' approaches in order to scrutinise the de- and re-bordering of the European Union with regard to migration and mobility. In addition, the workshop highlighted from an academic perspective the problem of borders with respect to migration in the framework of an enlarged European Union. The success of the workshop provided the impetus to revise the core papers and publish them in a book. Four other contributions have been added to the collection of core papers from the aforementioned workshop, among others on Roma migration and sex trafficking**.**

The first 'Global Migration in the Middle East and Eurasia: Security and Human Rights Challenges to Europe' (GLOMIG) workshop, held at the Radboud University in September 2006, provided further insights into migration and borders, leading to the elaboration of a geographical model of migration, borders and trajectories in the final chapter. Finally, the further expansion of the EU in January 2007 and restrictions imposed by EU countries on labour migration from Bulgaria and Romania added urgency to the publication of this book.

(We like to signal here one more volume edited by Ton van Naerssen together with Ernst Spaan and Annelise Zoomers: Global Migrations and Movements, published by Routledge in November 2007).

Home of Geography Publications Series: Sale

A 10% discount will be applied when ordering 2 books, and 15% when ordering 3 books or more.

To obtain copies of the following volumes, please contact Giuliano Bellezza at: g.bellezza@homeofgeography.org. Payment can be made by bank transfer or by credit card (Visa or Mastercard). Costs (incl postage and packing) are as follows:

Vol I - ***Human Mobility in a Borderless World?*** (2002) Ed: A. Montanari (OUT OF PRINT)

Vol II – ***Food and Environment – Geographies of Taste*** (2002) Ed: A. Montanari
(EU: € 13 / non-EU: € 19)

Vol III – ***Rights to the City*** (2005) Eds: D Wastl-Water, L. Staeheli & L. Dowler
(EU: € 18 / non-EU: € 24)

Vol IV – ***The New Geography of Human Mobility – Inequality Trends*** (2003) Eds: Y. Ishikawa & A. Montanari
(EU: € 20 / non-EU: € 26)

Vol V – ***Migrations in Europe – The Four Last Decades*** (2004) Eds: C. Vandermotten, G. Van Hamme, P. Medina Lockhart & B. Wayens
(EU: € 13 / non-EU: € 19)

Vol VI – ***Gendered Cities: Identities, Activities, Networks – A Life-course Approach*** (2004) G. Cortesi, F. Cristaldi & J. Droogleever Fortuijn
(EU: € 20 / non-EU: € 26)

Vol VII – ***Managing Water Resources in a Changing Physical and Social Environment*** (2007) Eds: P. J. Robinson, J. A. A. Jones & M-K. Woo
(EU: € 18 / non-EU: € 24)
Vol VIII – ***Migration in a new Europe: Peoples, Borders and Trajectories*** (2007) Eds: T. van Naerssen and M. van der Velde.
(EU: € 18 / non-EU: € 24)