

CFP: Memory and watercourses. Study day, Liessies, France, Thursday 25th September 2008

Meetings of Liessies Call for papers and posters. Course of Memories and watercourses. Study day, Thursday 25th September 2008. The 10th anniversary of the Meetings of Liessies was the opportunity to lay new basis while including more comprehensive viewpoints. Indeed, the set of themes, which was until then focused on techniques and environment, was widened to the connections between societies and environment. Main beds, minor beds, wayfaring beds...

The steering committee, gathered on the 26th September 2007 and formed by researchers from the Universities of Arras, Lille1 and Valenciennes, representatives from state and regional institutions (INRAP, the Regional Council of Nord and the eco-museum of Fourmies) thought of setting up courses of study leading to an annual study day.

The first course has been dedicated to Memories and watercourses and, hence the first meeting in September 2008 will focus on main beds, minor beds, and wayfaring beds.

The courses of streams and rivers have evolved or have been modified throughout centuries by anthropic and natural factors (tectonic, climatic, ecological, river phases...).

For centuries, the changes of the hydrographical network in the North of France have been radical and mainly due to human actions. Since the Middle Ages, they were stimulated by urban development and economic needs (driving force of water mills, improvement of river navigation) and organised by the secular or the monastic power. In the Escaut basin, slow flows, slight slopes and a convenient landscape made these changes easier. In modern times, the industrialization of the region accentuated them, and they are still going on today with the huge project of the Seine River-North interconnection.

Canalizations (with multiple purposes), diversions and interconnections follow one another up to deeply alter the course and the functioning of rivers (flow, ecology, landscapes...) and to modify noticeably environment (canalized banks, fauna and flora modifications...) and the quality of water. The changes are sometimes so important that the former aspect of a river has been erased, becoming the matter of geomorphologists, archaeologists and historians.

The next Meetings of Liessies, open to all disciplines, will deal with the modifications of watercourses, the impact and the perception of these changes. Papers on North of France and the nearest basins will be privileged. However, there is no geographical restriction. The "water records" and other kinds of sources (whether written, cartographic, archaeological, legal, geographical or sociological) should be taken with the greatest care.

The following themes will be particularly developed:

- Modifications of watercourses: kinds of modifications (forcing, deviation, channels...), their direct (anthropic) or indirect (climatic fluctuations, hydromorphism...) causes, their chronology and importance.
- Impact of these modifications on the riverside societies and their environment (modified plots of land, new town and country planning, risks linked to rivers, rivers facilities in urban areas...).
- Perceptions and representations of these changes by local societies.

Suggestions of papers and posters have to be given in on the 30th April 2008 at the latest as a short summary with the names and function of the authors.

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