

ISLANDS: PLAYFUL HUMAN GEOGRAPHIES?

FIELD TRIP WITHIN THE PARTICIPATORY MAPPING COURSE (MRS/PGIS) – ON GOZO, MALTA

23rd MARCH – 2nd APRIL 2015

Aims

- To introduce the contested worlds of island studies and its links to the geoinformatics, geography and development studies
- To appreciate the ambiguous and hybrid nature and practice of 'islandness'
- To investigate the potential of playful ways in geographical learning
- To carry out field investigation to reinforce the above aims

Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course unit, you should:

- Appreciate differing contributions to the field of island studies and your respective field
- Be aware of the significance of geography for understanding landscape and environment
- Recognize the links between culture, economy, society and nature in contexts of insularity
- Have investigated different playful ways of approaching thematic aspects of islands
- Have used field investigation to explore a particular island context

Skills and Employability

During this course unit, you will be encouraged to develop the following abilities and skills:

- information handling skills involved in researching team-based thematic presentations and individual evaluative essays
- critical skills involved in understanding different conceptual frameworks
- creative skills involved in setting up a practical game-based field investigation
- problem solving skills
- communication skills used to develop sustained logical arguments in written and oral forms
- taking responsibility for active self-critical learning, including time management
- team work and sharing of abilities amongst small self selected groups

Course Outline

Alcatraz, Krakatoa, Ibiza, and Treasure Island. Gauguin in Tahiti, Darwin in the Galapagos, Bob Marley in Jamaica, The US Military in Diego Garcia and Nelson Mandela on Robben Island. Islandness evokes often contradictory but always fascinating geographies. Islands are at once exotic and offshore, but also bounded

places for islanders and visitors, serving as experimental and often 'othered' sites. This course introduces a human geography of islands, exploring how size, isolation, relations to the nation state and the colonial project, have led to vulnerability, subjugation, and often contested relations to continental hegemony, but also to a love of the island as a refuge, to notions of islands as liminal places of escape, and pleasure, and also to powerful and contested imaginary geographies across human culture and history. Organised around a practical island-based field course, during which all of the course will be delivered, *Islands* offers a challenging exploration of an emerging sub-discipline, inviting students to engage with different conceptual framings and ways of encountering some of the more remote places in the world and showing the potential of playful methodologies in framing understandings of disciplinary and national differences.

Teaching Methods and E-learning

The course unit will be completely delivered in the field, via mix of lectures with associated small group tutorials and seminar groups, drop in support sessions, student reading groups and presentations. It delivered through **free ten days residential field course on the island of Gozo, in 23rd March – 2nd April**. This field programme is fully funded as part of an Erasmus + partnership between Manchester, Warwick, Utrecht, Malta and Olomouc universities. 35 students from 5 different disciplines will come together in a practical and playful investigation of insularity. **5 places are allocated to Olomouc**.

The field course brings together four different learning opportunities.

1. lectures will deliver central concepts of the course in -situ in an island context
2. students will present formative thematic group projects and participate in immediate feedback and discussion
3. introductory field visits will explore central themes in the human geography of Gozo
4. student investigations will reinforce and apply core concepts in an active and playful everyday engagement with a particular island world.

How to apply?

Send short CV (in Czech or English) and motivation letter (in English – 250-300 words) to

JirkaPanek@gmail.com. Deadline is 28th November 23:59:59. Late applications will be deleted.