

Tephrochronologie et Co-existence Hommes-Volcans

BRIVES-CHARENSAC, FRANCE, AUGUST 24–29, 1988)

A wide-ranging interdisciplinary meeting entitled “Tephrochronologie et Co-existence Hommes-Volcans” took place in the Haute-Loire, south-central France, with support and sponsorship from PAGES, the INQUA Commission on Tephrochronology and Volcanism, and UNESCO. This meeting joined geologists, volcanologists, tephrochronologists, palynologists, paleoclimatologists, and archeologists to discuss connections and relationships between volcanic eruptions, environmental and climate change, and archeological records of human response to volcanic events. Prof. Etienne Juvigne, a tephrochronologist from the Université de Liège and Prof. J. Raynal, an archeologist from the Université de Bordeaux, jointly organized the conference.

Participants at the meeting came from many countries in Europe, as well as North America, Asia, Africa, and New Zealand. PAGES support allowed scientists from former eastern-block countries to attend this meeting, including Dr. Vera Ponomereva, a noted volcanologist and tephrochronologist from Kamchatka, Dr. Oksana Savoskul, a geologist from the University of Moscow now residing in Ghana, Africa, who uses tephrochronology to date geologic records of climate change, and Dr. Alicia Stach-Czerniak, a palynologist and paleoclimatologist from the Institute for Quaternary Research in Poznan, Poland.

Highlights of the meeting came in sessions which made sometimes surprising interdisciplinary connections between aspects of tephrochronology, palynology, ice core records, climate and environmental change, and archeology. Prof. Rewi Newnham (University of Plymouth) and Prof. David Lowe (University of Waikato) gave an important talk concerning tephrochronologic

dating and the geologic and palynologic evidence of a Younger Dryas climate signal in New Zealand. Prof. Takaaki Fukuoka presented new data on tephras discovered in the Japanese Mizuho Station ice core in Antarctica, and their possible source and age. Dr. Ponomereva suggested that during times of intense volcanism in Kamchatka the environment was strongly affected, and human colonization was inhibited while Dr. Begét presented evidence of very similar volcanic constraints on the human occupation of Alaska during the Holocene. Prof. Juvigne showed that tephra layers can be used to precisely calibrate the timing of paleoclimatic events across wide areas, raising questions about the recognition of local vs. global environmental forcing in palynologic records. Prof. John Hunt (University of Cheltenham) presented a provocative model suggesting global climate and glacier fluctuations control volcanic eruption frequencies. Important talks were also given on new developments in geochronology by Prof. Edward Rhodes of Oxford and Prof. John Westgate of the University of Toronto. Dr. Jerome Lécointre talked about volcanic processes at recent eruptions in New Zealand (and also was a tireless scientific translator).

The meeting included visits to interesting geologic and archeologic sites in the Haute Loire, including the museum at Chilhac, where volcanoclastic deposits contain a diverse upper Pliocene fossil assemblage, and associated, controversial, possibly human artifacts. A post-conference field trip visited numerous volcanic localities in the French Massif Central.

At the end of the meeting a visit was made to the PAGES distillery in Le Puy, where a curious green liqueur is produced in enormous copper-clad vats connected by dripping tubes. Although there is no known connection between IGBP-PAGES and the PAGES distillery, samples were forwarded to the PAGES office in Bern just to be sure.

JAMES BEGÉT

Dept. of Geology and Geophysics, University of Alaska, Fairbanks AK, USA
ffjeb1@uaf.edu

PEP II Meeting

FREMANTLE, AUSTRALIA, JULY 1–3

Australia hosted its first PEP II Workshop meeting over three days in the depths of a mediterranean-type winter. Two days were devoted to talks and discussions on PEP II science themes and one day was spent on biomisation of Australia and nearby tropical regional pollen data sets.

The talk fest, Day 1 and Day 3 of the meeting, attracted 23 oral papers and an audience of about 50 people attended the presentations. The meeting began with a series of reviews of the big picture climate change science questions for PEP II, including the links between PEP II questions and the those for other PEP transects (Dodson, Liu, Markgraf, Ono, Brooke). Cocklin covered the significance of climate change for human societies in the Pacific region. Harvey summarized the state of knowledge of palaeosea-level investigations in southern Australia while Heijnis, Harle, Magee, Hesse, Soons and Shulmeister presented recent and ongoing work on long climate change records from a range of environments in Australia and New Zealand, and what they tell us from the perspective of at least one glacial cycle. Taylor, Pickett, Boyd (two papers) and Suparan presented analyses of climate changes based on recent work on Late Pleistocene and Holocene records from northern and southern Western Australia, New Britain, Thailand and Indonesia while Colhoun and Haberle applied records from Tasmania and the tropics to raise and review questions about glacial refugia and fire history. The last group of presentations concentrated on high resolution data series from tree-rings, corals and lake sediments (Barbetti, Cook, Mooney, Hantoro).

The second day of the meeting was held in the Department of Geography at the University of Western Australia and was devoted to the BIOME 6000 project. Eighteen people spent the day discussing biomisation of pollen data from the Australia-Indonesia-New Guinea and Western Pacific Islands region. Participants were not allowed to go until a first pass at defining viable Plant Functional Types (PFTs) and biomes, based on the collective knowledge of pollen repre-

continued on next page

All PAGES–Publications are available as hardcopy and/or in electronic form from:
<http://www.pages.unibe.ch/publications/publications.html>