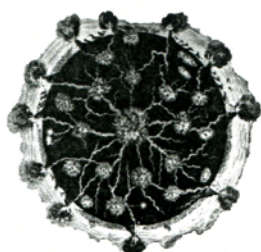
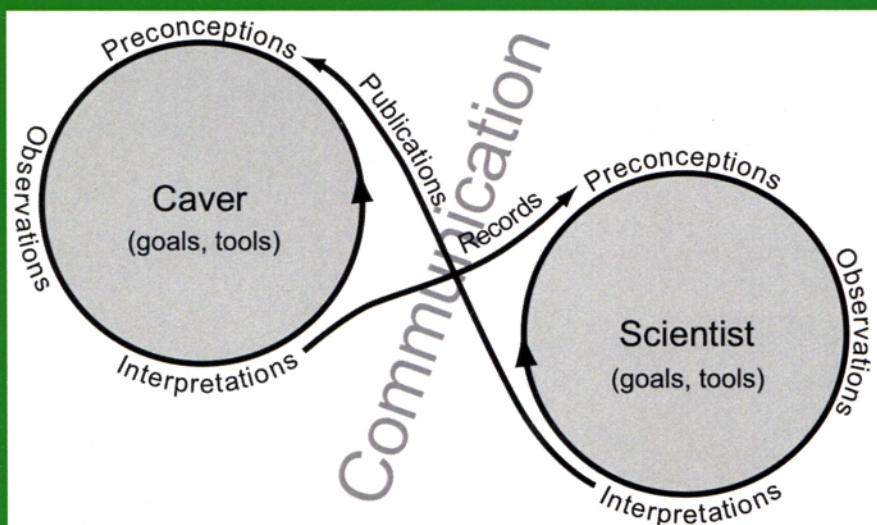


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EDITOR: David R. Oldroyd, School of History and Philosophy, University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW 2052, Australia. Tel: 61 2 9449 5559. Fax: 61 2 9402 7635. esh@historyearthscience.org

JOURNAL/SOCIETY WEBSITE: www.historyearthscience.org

BOOK REVIEWS EDITOR: Vic Baker, Department of Hydrology and Water Resources
The University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721, USA. Tel: 1 520-621-7875
baker@hwr.arizona.edu

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American geology; stratigraphy

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Denison University
Granville, OH 43023
USA
bork@denison.edu

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University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown
Johnstown, PA 15904
USA
wbrice@pitt.edu

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Bernhard Fritscher
Munich Center for the History of Science and
Technology
Museuminsel 1
D-80306 Munich
Germany
b.fritscher@lrz.uni-muenchen.de

Geophysics

Gregory Good
Center for History of Physics
One Physics Ellipse
College Park MD 20740
USA
ggood@aip.org

Tectonics

Homer Le Grand
Monash University
Caulfield East
Victoria 3145
Australia
homer.legrand@arts.monash.edu.au

Palaeontology; Latin America

Maria Margaret Lopes
Centro de Estudos de História e Filosofia da
Ciência
Universidade de Évora
Portugal
mariamargaretlopes@gmail.com

Meteorology

Cornelia Lüdecke
Fernpass strasse 3
D 53115, Germany
c.luedecke@lrz.uni-muenchen.de

Oceanography

Eric Mills
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3H 4J1 Canada
e.mills@dal.ca

18th and 19th centuries; American geology

Julie R. Newell
Southern Polytechnic State University
1100 S. Marietta Parkway,
Marietta, GA 30060
USA
jnewell@spsu.edu

Geomorphology and Quaternary geology

Antony Orme
University of California, Los Angeles
CA 90095-1524
USA
orme@geog.ucla.edu

History of fieldwork; palaeontology

Irina Podgorny
Carlos Pellegrini 1219, 8vo. B
C1009ABY, Buenos Aires
Argentina
podgorny@mail.retina.ar

Geology in Britain

James Secord
Cambridge University
Cambridge CB2 3RH
UK
jas1010@hermes.cam.ac.uk

Vertebrate palaeontology; geological education, conservation, Canada

David Spalding
1105 Ogden Rd
Pender Island BC
V0N 2M1 Canada
david@davidspalding.com

18th and 19th centuries; European geology

Ezio Vaccari
Università dell'Insubria
21100 Varese
Italy
ezio.vaccari@uninsubria.it

Invertebrate palaeontology; stratigraphy; museums; Ireland

Patrick Wyse Jackson
Department of Geology
Trinity College, Dublin 2
Ireland
wysjcknp@tcd.ie

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HESS logo: Athanasius Kircher's (1602–1680) *Systema ideale prophyllaciorum*—imagined view of subterranean fires and surface volcanoes, from *Mundus subterraneus*, 1678, Vol. 1, between pp. 186 and 187.

Front-cover image: The intertwined hermeneutic circles of cavers and scientists, according to Florea and Vlacher.

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

DAVID R. OLDROYD

With this issue, *Earth Sciences History* now passes its 'thirty mark'—from youth to maturity perhaps? We welcome Dr Cornelia Lüdecke to the Editorial Board to look after matters to do with the history of meteorology.

Davis Young leads off with Part 4 of his epic series of papers on the history of the CIPW system. He confided to me in an email that it was the most difficult paper he had ever written, and that is hardly surprising as the story is immensely complex, even if, thus far, it has only had four principal *dramatis personae*. But, I dare say the number of protagonists will increase in the next part, which will deal with the *reception* of the system.

In the next paper, **Kenneth Aalto** discusses the work of nineteenth-century American geologists in northern Japan, who introduced modern geological ideas and techniques to that part of the world, and trained the next generation of geologists, all Japanese. The story is quite well known to Japanese historians of geology but is not so well known in the West. Aalto reproduces a beautiful early geological map of Hokkaido.

Then **Alan Coode** writes about his role in the early ideas about sea-floor spreading, in relation to the thinking of J. Tuzo Wilson.

Robert Davis writes about the 'prehistory' of the notion of the Anthropocene as a unit in the stratigraphic column. That notion is controversial, but we do not think this article should be: it is intended to 'enlighten' the current debates by examining their antecedents.

Lee Florea and **Len Vacher** then consider the nature of the relationship and the interactions between practical cavers and cave scientists. How do their interests intersect and interact? A model for their cognitive interactions is proposed (see the cover of this issue).

Eric Swanson has spent a considerable part of his career investigating the volcanics of the *Sierra Madre Occidental* in Mexico, and especially the ignimbrites. Here he provides an interesting account of the early work in this region, coming through to later times. (It is interesting though that the term 'ignimbrite' was coined by a New Zealander.) It is a pleasure to receive a paper about a Mexican topic.

The paper by **José Leonardo**, **Décio Martins** and **Carlos Fiolhais** prompted the addition of Dr Lüdecke to the membership of the Editorial Board. It deals with the contributions of Portuguese meteorologists, and especially those associated with the University of Coimbra, to the collection of meteorological data—which are especially important for shipping forecasts for the eastern Atlantic and European weather more generally.

Léo Laporte, chiefly known to historians of science for his work on G. G. Simpson, here discusses the early work of his long-time friend John Imbrie and ponders the question of why this earlier work passed relatively un-noticed compared with his later studies on deep-sea Pleistocene cores and climate changes. He suggests that hitting on the right topic for research is every bit as important for fame and fortune as the actual quality of work, or the techniques deployed.

Finally, **Kenneth Taylor** pays his tribute to his late colleague at Oklahoma University, David Kitts. Kitts was more of a geologist-philosopher than a geologist-historian, but his acumen was such that he influenced the previous generation of historians of geology to a notable extent and *Earth Science History* mourns his passing.

This issue contains only one book review, of a book that displeased the reviewer **Vic Baker** considerably. Some in the pipe-line are being held over until 2011 No. 2.