Newsletter

Department of Geography, Planning and
International Development Studies

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Agenda
Tue 25 November AMIDSt lecture by Michael Droß, Title of lecture: Airport and city. Evolving functional urban areas around large international airports. 15.30-17.00 hrs, room C2.10. Drinks afterwards
Wed 26 November Farewell drinks to the occasion of Len de Klerk as Departmental Chair, and Robert Kloosterman as Director of AMIDSt, 16.00 hrs in hall first floor G-building
Tue 2 December Lunch lecture by Oscar Valiente
Tue 9 December Lunch lecture by Rodrigo Fernandez
Wed 10 December PhD Defense Tineke Lupi, 10.00 hrs Aula
Tue 20 January Lunch lecture by Edith van Ewijk
Fri 23 January Inaugural speech Prof. Dr. ir. Luca Bertolini

Letter from the director, Ton Dietz

Dear colleagues,

Thanks for your positive remarks about my ‘quick communication’ in the October newsletter of the Department. I was not wrong with my assumption that it would be appreciated that I share with you my observations about our direct work environment, and AMIDSt’s position in it. I will add to it in this letter.

1. Faculty

The Faculty was quick to respond to a possibility offered by KNAW to get ‘Academy Assistants’: these are very good Master’s students who will be linked with prominent researchers and with interesting research projects, for 0.2 positions during a period of ten months. I think we wrote a convincing proposal and we hope KNAW will give us the funds to be among the first experimenting Faculties with this new phenomenon (by the way, not so new: when I started my job at the UvA, somewhere during the Middle Ages, ‘kandidaatsassistenten’ were the normal way of linking good ‘doktoraal’ students with staff and their projects, and it was even one of the ways to ‘test’ future members of staff. When we started to appoint PhD candidates we used the funds for ‘kandidaatsassistenten’ and since 1986 they only exist occasionally). At the level of the Faculty we will have our ‘toogdag’ of all people in leadership capacities on November 25th.

2. Social Sciences

Most important here is the fact that the three directors of AMIDSt, ASSR and IMES ‘officially’ sent a proposal for a new PhD training architecture in the Graduate School for the Social Sciences to the new (interim) director of the Graduate School, Len de Klerk. We hope to discuss this proposal soon and our intention is to start with this new way of dealing with a complex issue from February 2009 onwards.
At the level of the social sciences groups (‘Grote Vierhoek’) our monthly meeting a.o. discussed the basic teaching qualification (Basiswklificatie Onderwijs) for all staff. We also discussed a typical example of academic horror: the institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM) used to be a collaboration between Leiden, Amsterdam, Utrecht and Nijmegen. Its evaluations were all excellent. The New Parochialism that is a killing disease in current Dutch academia resulted in a breakdown of that collaboration, despite these excellent results. Leiden plays a pretty dubious role here. Our Faculty will discuss a possible solution.

Another issue that was discussed is a request by a group of Master’s students and PhD candidates from the new Graduate School to get funds and support from AMIDSt to start a new journal (Amsterdam Social Research). We are not so enthusiastic, as there is Rooijin and Agora with the same function in our domain (although both in Dutch; and we also have the Geographica), and although we think Master’s students might benefit from an outlet to learn how to publish, PhD candidates should not spend too much time publishing in non-refereed, low-profile journals.

3. Department

We have welcomed Joos Droogleever Fortuijn as our new Departmental Chair, taking over from Len. The official ‘handing over ceremony’ will be on the 26th, but Joos has started and we already met a few times to discuss the umptey things happening in our mid-size joint enterprise. On the 26th we will also have a ritual to hand over the directorship of AMIDSt from Robert to me.

One of the things that will be clear soon is a 100% fit of all individual staff members of the Department (and AMIDSt) in ‘authority structures’ with regard to ‘jaargesprekken’ (under the overall responsibility of the Departmental Chair). The AMIDSt structure of four research groups will be the guiding principle. In addition to that, each PhD candidate will know who will be the person who is responsible for ‘jaargesprekken’.

We discussed a proposal to adopt a sabbatical leave arrangement for all non-temporary members of staff. We need to fine-tune it and I really hope we can soon start implementing it.

4. AMIDSt research programme

All four (future) research groups within AMIDSt are busy designing their 2009-2013 research plans. Together with Gert I made a format for the way we will present this plan in writing and with the programme leaders and with the ‘klankbordgroep’ we discussed first ideas about the ‘launching’ of this new plan during the first half of 2009.

I participated in a very interesting and lively discussion of the Planning research group, where all members presented themselves to me (‘speed dating’) and positioned their research in a framework, which will be the core of the new research plan for this group. I hope to have this experience in all research groups.

5. Academic meetings

On the 28th of October Manuel Aalbers gave a very interesting analysis of the current financial crisis, based as it is in a very geographical setting of clusters of bad lending on the US housing market (AMIDSt lecture). The lecture also attracted visitors from outside the Department. Manuel’s ideas can also be read in an article he contributed to the latest Geografie, which I recommend reading.

On the 6th of November I briefly attended a PhD workshop, organised by AMIDSt (and NETHUR and CERES) discussing ‘research for policy and practice’, a.o. with interesting points of view from management ‘guru’ Prof. Van Aken about our research philosophy as mostly being ‘design science’: not only doing research to understand the world, but also contribute to improving the human condition.

On the 10th of November a strong delegation from AMIDSt was visibly present at the occasion of Nicky Pouw’s PhD defence at the Free University. Nicky: we are proud!

On the 18th of November Marjolein Blaauboer gave an overview of her PhD work at the AMIDSt lunch lecture, which I could (briefly) attend.

I had two more beoordelingsgesprekken with PhD candidates, both with positive results.

6. Preparing for performance valuation

While the AMIDSt 2007 Annual Report is finally getting ready, we really want to speed up preparing for the 2008 Annual Report. Please make sure that all your publications and other results for 2008 are included in the list our secretariat is preparing. If you did not do so, please do it now!

We would like to have a complete overview on February 1, which will enable us to look at all your publications since the start of AMIDSt (so: 2004-2008) and compare that with your research input. Using the CERES valuation method (see: http://ceres.fss.uu.nl/ under: Ceres valuation system – rating system) we will approach each member of AMIDSt with an assessment of her/his publication profile. In a first round of ‘updates’ (in March 2009) we will allow everyone to add publications and performance achievements, which do not yet feature, and also to get comments on the valuation tool and outcome. In a second round (in April 2009) we will use the updated lists as a management tool, and it can be used as input for the ‘jaargesprekken’ afterwards.

Ton Dietz, November 18, 2008
Call for papers for New Towns for the 21st Century: the Planned vs. the Unplanned City conference
June 4-5, 2009 - International New Town Institute, Almere, The Netherlands
What happens after planners leave the brand new New Town and complexity of society takes over? Does overruling of the planners’ concepts imply the failure of planning? Or are these ‘unplanned’ additions and unforeseen use of the planned city actually the key to its success? In a two-day conference in June 2009 the International New Town Institute (INTI) wants to explore the relations between the planned city and the unplanned city.
INTI invites researchers and professionals of a variety of disciplines (economists, historians, architects, planners, artists, sociologists, anthropologists, politicians, policy makers, etc.) to take part in our call for papers and to contribute to this conference. Deadline for papers is January 5, 2009
More information can be found on http://newtowninstitute.org/?q=node/2

AMIDST lecture by Michael Droß, 15.30-17.00 hrs, room C2.10
Airport and city. Evolving functional urban areas around large international airports
Developing functional urban areas around airports are important for whole Mega-City Regions. The main drivers of this development are the requirements of knowledge-intensive firms. Instead of the traditional institutional perspective, which defines airport cities just as development on airport sites, we should rather study all spatial developments at the airport and in its vicinity in their interrelatedness. The lecture develops a functional perspective on these spatial development processes, presenting the concept of an intended research project.

Conference: Researching transnational families, children and the migration-development nexus
December 8-10, 2008, Amsterdam, organised by the Research team on Transnational Migrant Networks, University of Amsterdam
The purpose of the conference is to bring together international scholars from different disciplines who are conducting cutting-edge research on transnational families, children and migration so as to build a multidisciplinary perspective on this research topic. A second purpose is to work on methodological developments to study the effects of migration on children from a transnational perspective using matched samples.
The 1st day, on December 8th is open to the public; the preliminary program, registration form and other information are available online: http://www.fmg.uva.nl/amidst/transnationalfamilies.cfm. Registration is due by Dec. 1st.

New research partnership
AMIDST has recently entered a research partnership with the Ivorian Research Institute ROCARE/ERNWACA (Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa). Funding was generously provided by Save the Children Nederland (31,500 EUR).
The aim of the partnership is to study the impact of the war on primary education in four strategic locations in Côte d’Ivoire and to answer the following questions: 1) What factors have hampered or impeded the continuation of schooling since the beginning of the war in the research areas? 2) How have these factors been mitigated at the level of the community, at the level of the school, at the level of district educational authorities, at the level of the Ivorian Ministry of Education? Special attention is given to how public spending in the education sector has evolved over the period 2000-07.
Magali Chelpi-den Hamer (AMIDST) acts as team leader in conducting this project. The research design and the instruments for the data collection are developed jointly with the ROCARE. Dr. François Joseph Azoh (ROCARE Director / University of Cocody, Abidjan) and Dr. Koutou N’Guessan Claude (University of Cocody, Abidjan) are in charge of the empirical research and are responsible for the organization of two workshops.
For more information, contact: Magali Chelpi-den Hamer - m.l.b.chelpi@uva.nl

PhD defense Tineke Lupi – 10 December, 10.00 hrs Aula
Buiten wonen in de stad. De place making van IJburg
Van nieuwe wijken wordt vaak verondersteld dat ze geen karakter hebben. Het nieuwe land heeft echter ook de associatie op met sociale vernieuwing en niet zelden zijn de verwachtingen daarom hooggespannen. Dit roept de vraag op in hoeverre een nieuwe wijk maakbaar is en welke partijen en processen daar invloed op uitoefenen. Deze vraag staat centraal in het proefschrift Buiten wonen in de stad waarin de ontwikkeling van de nieuwe Amsterdamse wijk Ijburg beschreven wordt. Uitgangspunt vormt het concept place making die uitdrukking geeft aan het sociale proces waarin ruimte vorm en inhoud krijgt. Geanalyseerd is hoe de gemeente, woningcorporaties en projectontwikkelaars samen de aanleg van IJburg hebben proberen te sturen en hoe de eerste bewoners hun wijk in gebruik hebben genomen. Beiden deden en doen hun uiterste best om uit te stijgen boven het gemiddelde nieuwbouwproject door IJburg
neer te zetten als een unieke stedelijke buitenwijk aan het water. Uit het onderzoek kan geconcludeerd worden dat nieuwe wijken als IJburg in de eerste fase in hoge mate maakbaar zijn, specifiek wat betreft hun beeldvorming en uitstraling. Ze bevinden zich echter niet in een vacuüm waardoor gevestigde institutionele structuren, veranderende economische conjunctuur hen op den duur steeds meer beïnvloeden. Door hardnekkig vast te houden aan de eigen ruimtelijke visies weten de professionals en bewoners de wijk in elk geval deels naar hun hand te zetten, maar dit heeft ook perverse, vervreemdenende trekjes. De partijen hebben grote moeite mee te bewegen met de sociale dynamiek van de wijk en komen mede hierdoor steeds meer tegenover elkaar te staan.

New AMIDSt publication: Revisiting peripheral capitalism in Zambia

In October 2008 Dr Ton van Naerssen celebrated his farewell from active service as development geographer at the Radboud University in Nijmegen. Friends and colleagues had written a farewell book for him, published by Van Gorcum Uitgeverij in Assen. Two of his former students (Paul Hebinck -now at Wageningen University- and Sef Slootweg -now at SNV- edited this book, together with Ton van Naerssen's successor in Nijmegen, Lothar Smith (who did his PhD research at AMIDSt and graduated in 2007). Ton van Naerssen was the supervisor of the Master's thesis of Ton Dietz, Annemieke van Haastrecht -now at the Faculty's project office- and Rudolf Scheffer -now at OxfamNOVIB-, when they studied in Nijmegen, which was about the impact of growth pole strategies in Zambia, linked to the theory of peripheral capitalism, which was popular at the time. For the farewell book for Ton van Naerssen they revisited these issues, looked back at the interpretations then, and studied the developments in Zambia and in the study area between 1976 and 2008. They conclude that the theory of peripheral capitalism did not provide a good framework for understanding Zambia's development in the early 1970s, but much more so nowadays, in which China partly is in a process of taking over the role of central power for Zambia's economy, and years of external pressure from the Bretton Woods institutions and the western donor community has succeeded to dismantle the relatively strong state interference in the Zambian economy of the 1970s and 1980s.


Your publication in the next newsletter? Send the reference + abstract to amidst-fmg@uva.nl by Dec. 17

ICT – Harmonisation FMG

The past weekend data on the M-disk has been moved to the P-disk. From now on you have to use the P-disk for files that you share with others.

During the coming weekends a number of important ICT activities will be implemented. This has the following consequences:

- From Friday 21 Nov, 17.00 hrs - Monday 24 Nov 7.00 hrs: No access to UvA(web)mail
- From Friday 28 Nov, 17.00 hrs - Monday 1 Dec 7.00 hrs: No access to UvA(web)mail. This is the second mail harmonisation weekend. In order to prevent that any data in Outlook is lost, e.g. 'signatures' or 'favourite folders', we strongly advise you to follow the instructions on the following website: http://www.medewerker.uva.nl/fmg_harmonisatie-english/object.cfm/A037CCF7-1321-B0BE-6841C095E1BA631A

Training/workshops for PhD students

- 13 én 20 februari 2009 Projectmanagement voor promovendi, 9.30-17.00, Inschrijven voor 3 april
- 13 én 20 maart 2009, 9.30-17.00 uur: Promoveren en Communiceren. 9.30-17.00, Inschrijven voor 27 februari
- 29 mei én 5 juni 2009, 9.30-17.00 uur training Loopbaan Oriëntatie voor Promovendi, Inschrijven vóór 15 mei
- 23 january 2009 13.30-17.00 Research and finance (for PHD students), deadline for registration 9 january.

More info: www.uva.nl/promovendi

Update your CV on the AMIDSt website

- Updates for your personal page on the AMIDSt website (http://www.fmg.uva.nl/amidst/staff.cfm): send the relevant information/ changes/photo to the AMIDSt secretariat at amidst-fmg@uva.nl

Personal webpage

For all staff members there’s a possibility to make their own personal page, which you can update yourself. It’s accessible at: https://home.medewerker.uva.nl/homepage; log in with your UvAnetID. When you’re done, click on “Activate” to publish your personal page.
**Out of office**

In order to be more helpful towards our colleagues it's important that the secretariat has a good overview of the room occupations. Therefore, we kindly ask you to report to the secretariat the days you are out of office (due to holidays, fieldwork, illness, etc.)

**Common room**

The common room and kitchen is communal space. We would appreciate it if everyone keeps this space tidy and does his/her own washing-up. It should not be seen as the task of the secretariat.