

ALERT Module B2 „FIELD BASED VIDEO“

Istanbul/Ankara, May 26 and June 1, 2015

Report

The two-day 'Field based video workshop' was held in association with Field School III and the workshop 'Neotectonics' to focus on the communication of seismic hazard and risk in Turkey. In total, 12 doctoral and postdoctoral level researchers participated in the course which was led by Professor Iain Stewart from Plymouth University and co-designed, organised and filmed by Johanna Ickert as part of her PhD research within the ALERT project.

The B2 workshop was aimed at supporting the participants to develop a theoretical and practical expertise in scientific knowledge transfer and interactions with non-scientific individuals and groups, particularly those within high seismic-risk communities. The workshop adopted a transdisciplinary approach, encouraging the students to communicate their science to a broad lay audience but one occupying a contested and at times overtly politicised public arena. Within this challenging context, we explored the role and responsibilities of Earth scientists in communicating their technical knowledge to those individuals and communities who could potentially benefit from their expertise.



Taking the example of seismic risk communication in Istanbul, the course combined place-based encounters with citizens of risk communities in Istanbul with a video-based interview and communication training.

During the first workshop day, a field visit to two earthquake-prone neighbourhoods in Istanbul (Zeytinburnu and Okmeydani) took place under the guidance of the local urban historian Orhan Esen. In conversations with

inhabitants and a representative of a neighbourhood association, central issues were discussed, such as the inhabitants risk preparedness, their perceptions of the socio-political context of risk mitigation, and their expectations towards geo-communication. The aim of such exchanges were to foster the participant's awareness for the complex socio-cultural contexts of risk communication. On the back of this inner-city field visit, a programme of workshop activities was facilitated to help examine the perceptions and attitudes of the ALERT investigators to the prospect of communicating their science more broadly. Initial activities were held on the afternoon of the field visit and involved the researchers working in small groups to place themselves in the position of a resident of an earthquake-prone area, searching out information via the internet about the basic questions relating earthquake risk and seismic safety.

After briefly reporting back their findings about the accessibility and credibility about information

that would constitute actionable risk, there was an extended round-table group discussion in which the researchers were able to voice their own individual views and concerns about their potential roles and responsibilities as geo-communicators.



There then followed a 5-day technical field course along the North Anatolian Fault during which the students were encouraged to have informal discussions among themselves about the broader issues of geo-communication. At the end of the field school, a day-long 'wrap-up workshop' was organised to air and more clearly formulate the contrasting viewpoints

that had evolved amongst the group over the intervening days. Two groups worked simultaneously on the documentation of the key challenges and questions in the field of geocommunication they identified in the framework of the workshop. In a follow up session, the results were exchanged and revised in order to elaborate possible solution approaches and outreach strategies, according to the individual researchers requirements. In the afternoon, a video-based interview and communication training took place, in which the participants produced short interview films / video-based field diaries and evaluated them collectively.



In addition, both the kick-off and wrap-up workshops, discussions and group interactions were filmed by Johanna Ickert and will lead to a participation-based, visual anthropological research film.