



## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING/ STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

held on 3 November 2018 at 3. 30 pm in the Wolfson Room at the Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, London.

Present: Charlotte Alston (Northumbria); James Baker (Sussex); Sara Barker (Leeds); Nick Barnett (Swansea); Kristen Brill (Keele); Hannah Burrows (Aberdeen); Nandini Chatterjee (Exeter); Marc Collinson (Bangor); Kate Cooper (Royal Holloway); Stefan Collini (Cambridge); Catherine Crawford (Essex); Karin Dannehl (Economic History Society); Peter D'Sena (Hertfordshire); Serena Dyer (Hertfordshire); Bonnie Effros (Liverpool); Hugo Frey (Chichester); Helen Glew (Westminster); David Grummit (Canterbury Christchurch); Richard Hawkins (Wolverhampton); Ariel Hessayon (Goldsmiths); Alison Hems (Bath Spa); Sarah Holland (Nottingham); Vicky Holmes; Adrian Howkins (Bristol); Elin Danielsen Huckerby; Charles Insley (Manchester); Sihong Lin (Manchester); Sergio Lussana (Nottingham Trent); Frank Magee (Coventry); Lucie Matthews-Jones (Liverpool John Moores); Stewart McCann (St. Mary's University); Julius Morche (Durham); Adam Morton (Newcastle); Jack O'Connor; Glynn Parry (Roehampton); Mike Rapport (Glasgow); Lowri Rees (Bangor); Anna-Maria Sichani, Karen Salt (Nottingham); David Stack (Reading); Alex Titov (Queens University Belfast); Jonathan Watson (Brighton); Manuela Williams (Strathclyde); Jamie Wood (Lincoln).

### **1. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **2. Education Officer's Report (Peter D'Sena)**

#### **New to Teaching (NTT) Conference/Workshop, 11<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

Twenty participants attended this year's NTT. There was the usual varied programme with sessions about curriculum development and decoding the disciplines (Peter D'Sena); small group teaching (Jamie Wood); using Social Media (Helen Rogers); Digital Humanities (James Baker); the history lecture (Max Jones); and job applications (Catherine Armstrong). The event was funded by the RHS and hosted (at normal cost) by the IHR. There will be a discussion at the next RHS Education Policy Committee about an event for next year and it may be that a different venue will be chosen. Thoughts welcome. Useful to remember is: staff volunteer their time for free to lead sessions at this event (travel paid only); the proceedings are not fixed in stone – new personnel/subjects are always considered and welcomed; History UK very generously allocated up to £500 to support travel of participants who came from further than 100 miles. That is something that has been done, now, for the past two years.

▪ Charles Insley noted that the University of Manchester would be happy to host a future NTT event.

## **Launch of the RHS booklet, *Race, Ethnicity & Equality in UK History: a report and resource for change* (October 2018)**

This absolutely excellent report, which actually makes for really grim reading, was launched on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> October. The talks at the launch obviously focused on the high/lowlights. Here I point to just a few of them.

1. The report contains a number of useful statistics about undergraduate and postgraduate engagement with the discipline and breaks them down by ethnicity.
2. Additional data is generated from interviews carried out with over 700 historians.
3. There are a number of recommendations, sensible and unsurprising, including: the need for training; the need for improved data collection; the use of positive action; and the need for curriculum change because of a white-centred and Eurocentric curriculum is a racial problem within the discipline (p. 23).

Racial and ethnic privilege are difficult to address. Basic figures for 2018 give an indication of representation as: 93.7% of staff are white; 6.3% are BME; 0.5% are black. All-in-all, staff and student percentages are far less than in other disciplines (as a rule of thumb, about half – see figures on p. 22). The overall conclusion is that ‘Historical and Philosophical Studies’ is one of the whitest subjects in UK HE; and is one where the widely publicised ‘why is my professor not black’ agenda worth discussing.

Also in the report are brief analyses about the school curriculum; the issues associated with funding bodies and conference themes; the intersectionality with gender and class; the impact of micro-aggression in the workplace; and legal obligations and contexts.

I’m really skimming the surface about the contents of this report, but the long and short of it is that in my view as an organisation we need to develop and express a position about everything it has reported on in order to move the sector forward. For me, the most telling sentence in the whole report is about the most fundamental question of all: ‘Who really wants to be alerted to a structural system that benefits them at the expense of others?’ (p. 11).

In summary, this will be a useful report for departments to use in discussion – in fact it is recommended that all departments should do this. Perhaps we should play a role in ensuring that this happens. I recommend that everyone reads this report.

### **3. Nomination of new Steering Committee members (Charlotte Alston)**

Seven members of the Steering Committee are standing down this autumn, having reached the end of their term. Rachel Bright (Keele) is standing down after serving two full terms on the SC. Kate Bradley (Kent), Sabine Clark (York), Alison Hems (Bath Spa), Ian Talbot (Southampton), Sarah Miller Davenport (Sheffield) and Juliane Fuerst (Bristol) are all standing down after serving one full term. The AGM expressed its thanks to all of those members for their work on the Committee.

We have three new nominations for membership of the SC. These are for Adrian Howkins (Bristol, nominated by Simon Potter); Karen Jones (Kent, nominated by Kenneth Fincham); and Kristen Brill (Keele, nominated by Kate Cushing). The AGM confirmed all three appointments, and welcomed the three new colleagues to the Committee.

### **4. Co-Convenors’ Report (Lucie Matthews-Jones and Jamie Wood)**

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### **5. Treasurer’s report (Richard Hawkins)**

History UK enters academic year 2018-19 with a surplus for the year together with a substantial reserve carried through from previous years. We sent out the invoice later

than usual last academic year in order to include a co-convenor's message. This resulted in some challenges securing payment from some departments. However, as a result of the tireless work of our administrator, Sue Davison, we have now received 72 subscription payments for 2017-18. This means we are currently only about 4 or 5 short of the number received for 2016-17. We may well receive more of the outstanding subscriptions for 2017-18 after Sue sends out the subscription invoices for 2018-19 during the next few days.

#### **6. Media Officer's report (Jamie Wood)**

The website is in the process of being updated as University of Lincoln has changed its blog platform. We are also switching over the final elements of hosting from the University of London to Lincoln. I hope that this will be resolved in the next month but at the moment I'm not able to access the relevant admin section of the website to check stats, but Google Analytics suggests that we're getting about 150-200 visits per month, with a high of around 750 in May (boot camp etc.).

We've managed to generate a steady stream of blog posts from participants in events over the past year. More are always welcome.

We have nearly 2800 followers on Twitter.

All in all, we've seen significant growth in usage over the past year. Once the website is back up and running I'd hope that we can build on this further.

#### **7. Research Officer's report (Neil Fleming)**

##### **History UK Research Grant Workshop**

The one-day Research Grant Workshop held on 4 September 2018 was a resounding success. It followed a suggestion from the outgoing Co-Convenor, Professor Heather Shore, and was aimed principally at MCRs, though PhD students, ECRs and representatives of university research schools were among the 32 registered to attend. They heard and questioned representatives from the AHRC and British Academy, and expert contributions from Professor Emma Griffin (East Anglia), Dr Kieran Fenby-Hulse (Coventry), and Professor Martin Johnes (Swansea). Held at the Institute of Historical Research, attendees were charged £10 to cover catering expenses.

The success of the Workshop suggests that there is demand among MCRs for similar events. I would recommend therefore that History UK hosts a similar event in September 2019. Drawing on the feedback for this event, the focus could be on writing and handling 'Impact' in research grant applications, and again include expert contributions from the funders and awardees.

##### **Consultation Exercise on REF 2021 Draft Guidance and Criteria**

History UK was unable to submit a response that focussed on the position of historians as no one on the Steering Committee was in a position to submit a response by the deadline (28 September 2018).

##### **Open Access Monographs and the REF**

As discussed at a previous meeting of the Steering Committee, there is a proposal that monographs entered for REF2027 must be OU compliant. I continue to liaise with the Royal Historical Society which has expressed a number of concerns about the practical implications of such a policy on historians and HE institutions. The Society's briefing paper can be accessed via its website: <https://royalhistsoc.org/oa-briefing-march2018/>

Universities UK has since published its own report: <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/UUK-open-access-recommendations-and-guidelines-for-best-practice.aspx> In contrast to the RHistS, UUK focusses on facilitating rather than critiquing or scrutinising the transition to OU monographs. This appears to be borne out by UUK's event on 'Open Access and Monographs for Learned Societies and Subject Associations', held at the British Academy on 11 September 2018. As I was unable to attend, the Treasurer, Dr Richard Hawkins, kindly did so on behalf of History UK. His full and comprehensive report is found below. The following are the key points raised on the day:

It would appear that only limited institutional funding is available to support the publication costs of OA monographs. The implication is that if you do not have a research grant which covers this cost you might have to find perhaps £10,000 out of your own pocket to publish your OA monograph. This would disadvantage post-1992 academics in particular. But it would appear this is also an unresolved issue at elite Russell Group HEIs too.

It would appear that several Russell Group universities together with other pre-1992 universities have established university presses to publish their academics' OA monographs. These presses have the same standards as traditional presses – i.e. e.g. peer review. It would also appear that these new OA monograph focussed university presses are being subsidised by their HEI founders.

Several university librarian delegates pointed to the inconsistent university of OA repository practice across the sector; there is a need for the establishment of a national standard for University OA repositories.

It is reassuring to hear that the practical consequences of moving to OA monographs were raised in discussion at the British Academy event on Open Access and Monographs in September, not least by the RHistS representative. It is clear that the proposal has potentially far reaching consequences, for all types of HEI and career stage. I am particularly concerned with the potential financial impact on post-doctoral job seekers (or part time or zero hours employee) trying to secure a book contract for the ultimate purpose of securing employment.

## **8. Any Other Business**

**Mike Rapport** provided a report from the University of Glasgow, as follows:

**University of Glasgow, report to the AGM 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2018**

This item will be of interest to all of us concerned with history, the moral responsibilities of the historian and reparative justice. It also touches on what Karen Salt discussed in detail in her presentation to the History UK conference.

In October two of my History colleagues, Dr. Stephen Mullen and Professor Simon Newman, submitted a report to the University of Glasgow entitled *Slavery, Abolition and the University of Glasgow*. It acknowledges that the University never directly owned slaves, or traded in the goods that slavery produced. It also acknowledges that the University played a leading role in the abolitionist movement – petitioning Parliament to end slavery and giving William Wilberforce an honorary degree, for example. Yet it also makes clear that the institution did receive significant financial support from people whose money stemmed at least in part from slavery. After all, the University does inhabit a city that grew from commerce in tobacco, sugar and cotton. The report estimates that, in today's terms, the total accruing from slavery would amount to £200 million. The full report can be read on the University of Glasgow's website.

In response, the University of Glasgow has agreed on a rolling programme of reparative justice which will include:

- a) Scholarships for students of Afro-Caribbean descent to help address their under-representation at the University of Glasgow.
- b) Negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding between Glasgow and the University of the West Indies to forge a new partnership for both staff and students.
- c) The creation of an interdisciplinary centre for the study of slavery in the past, its legacies, modern slavery and human trafficking. This centre would also develop a creative arts and science programme of lectures, performances and other events.
- d) A memorial plaque to those who suffered under slavery, to be fixed to the main building – an appropriate spot because it was built on the site of Robert Bogle, a major West India trade merchant who owned a large number of enslaved people.
- e) Curate an exhibition at the University's Hunterian Museum to explore the ways in which some of the items in the collections relate to the history of slavery.
- f) Establish a new Chair, to be rotated among University of Glasgow academics working on slavery, both historic and modern, and on reparative justice.
- g) Name a major new building to commemorate a significant figure.

This last objective has been fulfilled, with our new learning and teaching building – currently under construction – has been named after James McCune Smith. McCune Smith was the first African-American to receive a medical degree, which he took at Glasgow in 1837. In the United States, he played an important role in the abolitionist movement.

The purpose of the programme of reparative justice is to acknowledge this part of the University's past, enhance awareness and understanding of slavery and to forge new partnerships with UWI. My understanding is that this initiative, which follows the

examples of several universities in the United States, is now being followed by the University of Edinburgh.

But it has, as one might expect, already unleashed some controversy. My colleague Stephen Mullen received a letter from an African nationalist organisation demanding to know why the programme did not involve Africa itself. I chatted with Stephen about this and we discussed the problematic nature of the issues of historic responsibility and the nature of the slave trade itself.

The report itself, *Slavery, Abolition and the University of Glasgow* is available via the University's website: [https://www.gla.ac.uk/news/headline\\_607154\\_en.html](https://www.gla.ac.uk/news/headline_607154_en.html)

The link will take you to the story about the programme of reparative justice. Within this story there is a link to the slavery studies page at Glasgow, including the report.

**Date of Next Meeting:** The next Steering Committee meeting will be on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February at 12 pm, at the National Archives in Kew. There will be back stage tours of the archives in the morning, so if SC members arrive earlier they will be able to join one of these. More precise details to follow.