



The Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth

COMMITTEE MEETING

Brunei Gallery (SOAS), Room B203, 6 NOVEMBER, 2004, 13.30 – 17.00

MINUTES

1. Present: Marcus Banks, Maureen Bloom, Sarah Pink, Richard Fardon, Alberto Corsin-Jiménez, Iris Jean-Klein, Rohan Jackson, Lisette Josephides.

Apologies from: Mukulika Banerjee, Ian Harper, Trevor Marchand, James Staples.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting on 7 June 2004

Accepted without corrections.

In future the secretary will not bring printed copies of minutes to meetings for acceptance but remind members to consult the website version ahead of the meeting.

2.1 Editing ASA Committee minutes from November 2003, March 2004, July 2004.

The committee asked Rohan to remove named references to discussion of candidates for nomination as members or officers of the Committee in versions of Minutes on website. IJK to do likewise with Secretary's versions.

3. Matters arising

There will be an ASA Committee meeting (probably in March) before the next ABM at Aberdeen, however the due notice of the ABM will need to be sent to ASA members 6 weeks before the ABM and hence before the next committee meeting.

Action: *IJK to prompt RJ in the middle of February 2005 to send out notice of ABM.*

4. Updates

4.1 Nomination of Chair and Committee members (Updates)

The Chair reported on the search for a nominee as Chair from the next ABM. One candidate was willing in principle but had still to square other work-related issues before making a firm commitment. Part of any arrangement might involve the present Chair continuing in office to summer of 2005, which RF confirmed he was willing to do. This matter will need to be resolved by the next Committee Meeting ahead of ABM.

The Chair reported that Dr Simone Abram (Sheffield) had agreed to nomination replacing Sarah Pink as the committee's networking officer. The committee took this opportunity to record its thanks to Sarah for her pioneering example in this new role which has resulted in workshops, networks and an invigoration of the ASA's links outside the academy. They wished her and her family well on the arrival of a (second) new baby during her period of office, and noted her apologies for absence from the Spring 2005 meeting on these grounds.

Action: *Simone Abram to be invited to attend the Spring 2005 committee meeting, prior to the ABM. (IJK)*

The committee has yet to decide whether to nominate a replacement for Mukulika Banerjee at the next ABM, who was on maternity leave and hence ended her term of office early. Mukulika had undertaken a new role as recruitment and membership drive officer; however, it seemed likely that

her circumstances had permitted little activity in these respect. Marcus Banks offered to add this function to his responsibilities for media and publicity for the time being. Marcus reported that he had discussed the possibility of Laura Peers' nomination to replace him. However, should she be able to accept, she would be unable to start until autumn 2005. Marcus offered to continue until that time, for which the Committee was grateful.

4.2. Membership (recruitment drive & application process)

The committee took this opportunity to discuss the importance of keeping up momentum in the recruitment drive (particularly to raise the numbers of ASA monograph subscribers).

Action: Marcus would identify non-members in anthropology departments by comparing the 2004 Annals accounts of UK Departments' staff with the ASA Directory. Maureen and Richard had used this route to identify non-members to Heads of Department in 2001, and it had paid some dividends. However, only the most obvious non-members were identified this way, and those who were not new staff had presumably been invited to join previously and not done so.

Rohan Jackson reported that his efforts to collect outstanding membership subscriptions were yielding steady returns (ASA's current membership stands at 600 members, of whom 160 owe either back membership payments or have not paid the 2004 increase to cover the monograph subscription).

The importance of finding incentives for new members to join the association was discussed. Clearly ASA networks were important in this regard.

There are only nine new applicants so far this year (Ademola, Sutton, Hills, Buckler, Kockel, Daryn, Roberts, Fontein, Pantelis), but the committee anticipates applications should pick up in the run-up to the 2005 ABM. Rohan reported on his streamlining of the application process. Applicants will now receive notification of their 'provisional acceptance, subject to ratification of the Committee's recommendation by the general membership at the next ABM', as soon as the reference letters are returned to the administrator.

Maureen Bloom raised the problem of new members whose applications are accepted but then do not pay their membership fee. Of those whose membership was ratified at the 2004 ABM: Garner, Dransart, Huber, Brenneis, and Rile.

Action: Ro was asked to use email addresses supplied with the applications to chase first payment from these new members.

To resolve the problem of collection of first membership fees, the chair proposed, and the committee approved, the following changes:

- (a) abolishing the reduced rate in the first year of membership and
- (b) making payment in advance (at the time of provisional acceptance) a prerequisite (with the understanding that money will be returned to the applicant if s/he is not accepted). Along with notice of provisional acceptance, therefore, Ro will henceforth send a Standing Order form for immediate membership payment without which membership will not be ratified at ABM.

With Annals and Directory expected to appear after the ABM in 2005, new members could expect to be listed in the biennial Directory, and this prospect might be made known as an incentive to prompt application.

An invitation from the Committee to apply for membership was extended to Dr Maureen Bloom, the Committee's previous administrator, who kindly attended this meeting to help sort out loose ends in the nearly-complete process of administrative handover (and who had organized the mailing of the 2004 Annals although her term of office had been completed).

Action: Revised procedures to be reported to ABM and formal approval sought.

4.3. Annals and Directory 2005

The Committee decided to defer the final production stages of 2005 Annals until after the ABM so that the identities of the new Chair and Committee Members would be available. This would allow more time to chase up reports from Heads of Subjects for the academic year 2003-4 (request for updates and reports to be sent out in December). It would also be possible to include in the Directory the names of new members admitted at the ABM at Aberdeen, which might be an incentive to membership.

Action: Rohan will ask email Heads of Subjects their previous Reports of Activities 2003-4 (UK departments only) and Staff Profiles as Word file attachments; they will be requested to edit these and return them without re-formatting; these will then be collated by Rohan before sending to Mary for sub-editing. Secretary and Chair will then take editorial responsibility from first proofs. (Rohan needs to keep track of responses.)

Rohan offered to organise space and recruit labour required for the packaging and posting of the 2005 Annals and Directory. (Storing them at SOAS will not be a viable option when Richard is no longer Chair. Please note that mailing to late subscribers continues during the year.)

4.4 Back subscriptions

The Committee thanked Rohan for his patient and persuasive pursuit of outstanding subscriptions, and noted that arrears are declining. Members in default represent a drain on the Association's resources since they continue to receive Annals and Directory.

Action: A list of non-respondents to Rohan's multiple approaches by the end of the year will be circulated to committee members for comment on likely reasons (ill-health, change of address, deaths unknown to us ...) with the intention of issuing letters terminating membership at the Spring Committee meeting (Iris to liaise with Rohan).

4.5. Ethics

Unanticipated rail problems prevented Ian Harper reaching the meeting, so discussion of his proposal to set up an ethics sub-committee was deferred until the next meeting, when it will be at the top of the agenda. The committee would like to know more about the remit of the proposed sub-committee. The Committee also suggests Ian might hold an open discussion with the members about ASA Ethical Guidelines at 2005 ASA Conference in Aberdeen.

Action: Richard to contact Ian to invite his thoughts on the proposal.

4.6. RAE/ Nominations to ESRC Priority Board

The Chair (on behalf of ASA/RAI/SCHAD) submitted recommendations for nomination to sub-panel J42. From nominations made by Heads of Subject, and with advice, he had attempted to square considerations of regional expertise, UK distribution, experience of RAE, gender, old and new universities. The necessarily imperfect results of this were: four renominations from the last RAE (Hastings Donnan, as sub-panel Chair, Richard Fardon, Olivia Harris, Bob Layton); four newly nominated social anthropologists (Roy Ellen, Sarah Green, Jonathan Spencer, Christina Toren); two biological anthropologists (Ann MacLarnon, Nick Mascie-Taylor). [Since the Committee Meeting Richard learns from Hastings that he has been invited to serve as sub-Panel Chair and has written to accept this, which suggests RAE may accept our nominations.]

Professor Marilyn Strathern had been prevailed upon to apply to chair panel J but was unsuccessful.

The Association will still need to respond to requests for: international experts, users and specialist advisers (in such subjects as, for instance, East Asia, visual anthropology, development – if there is no anthropologist on the development panel – and so forth ...)

4.6 ASA Publications

Trevor Marchand submitted a detailed report and apologised for unavoidable absence. The Committee noted the very energetic way in which the Association's publication interests were now pursued. Trevor noted that he and Richard would be meeting Kathryn Earle (MD Berg) to discuss continuation of the ASA Research Methods Series (a last volume of which appeared with

Routledge this year). The relaunch might be led by Ian Harper's volume of edited papers from the current Edinburgh seminar series, "Anthropology, Ethics and Interdisciplinarity."

The committee welcomed the agreement reached with Berg, which Rohan recently publicised to members, that ASA members may now receive a 20% discount on all Berg books (quoting code ASA6). Berg is now using the ASA's mailing list as part of our agreement. ASA Monograph 41 is on the point of appearing, and Trevor is actively pursuing our options on ASA 42.

4.7. ASA Conferences 2006 (Jubilee celebration) & 2007 (Commonwealth)

The Chair's report confirmed that Aberdeen 2005 is in good shape. Pnina Werbner has been quick to organise an impressive list of papers for the Keele 2006 ASA Diamond Jubilee conference. She is open to ideas and will attend the Spring 2005 Committee Meeting. Rohan has designed a distinctive ASA logo for the Diamond Jubilee which the Committee endorsed with enthusiasm.

There has been no progress, apparently, on organizing a 2007 Commonwealth conference – either in India or elsewhere else. The Committee felt compelled to issue a call for proposals to host a UK conference in 2004. Departments which submitted proposals for the 2006 conference should be encouraged to resubmit for the 2007 conference, on the understanding that no preference would be given their proposals on this account (though they should benefit from the opportunity for reflection since the previous submission).

Action: Iris to ask Heads of Subject to invite Conference proposals for the Agenda of the 2005 ABM.

4.8. World Council of Anthropological Associations

The chair reported on his attendance at a meeting to establish a World Council of Anthropological Associations held during the Annual Conference of the Association of Brazilian Anthropologists (funded by Wenner Gren). He invited the Committee to endorse a recommendation to ABM that ASA be a founder member of the Council. Several Associations had already ratified membership, and the AAA would be debating doing so at its 2004 conference. Apart from the benefits of global networking, the Council offered reciprocal material benefits in the form of admission at members' rates to conferences of all the Associations. This would cost ASA little (given we did not demand membership to attend our conferences) but might potentially benefit our members substantially. (Discussion suggested that EASA was already looking for some wriggle room on this benefit.) The committee recommended ASA's joining WCAA to ABM.

Action: Iris to note Agenda item for ABM.

5. Other reports from Committee

5.1. Matters arising from various officers' and members' reports were covered under points 1-4, except for the following:

Treasurer's report

Prompted by the administrator, who is concerned to streamline payment arrangements and ASA accounts, the committee discussed the consolidation of bank accounts. Currently the association has accounts with both Barclays and Lloyds; the Barclays' account processes standing orders from members but apparently will not provide a chequing account. Hence payments are made from the Lloyds' account.

Action: Rohan, in consultation with Lisette, to see whether there were likely to be efficiency gains from changing these arrangements.

Networks officer

The committee discussed the request made by a recently formed network for a contribution of £500 from ASA towards a themed seminar series (4x2 days). The ASA contribution was expected to strengthen the network's application to the ESRC for seminar funding. The chair had already declined, but the committee discussed the principles on which the request had been rejected. The committee stressed that the association had already given its support by

providing the associational framework; our revenue position did not permit us to act as a funder.

The committee thanked Sarah for agreeing to write a report on networking for inclusion in the 2005 Annals during her maternity leave.

anthropologymatters

Since the representative for *anthropology matters* was not at the meeting, full discussion of issues arising from the Chair's report was deferred until the next meeting. However, the committee took notice of the urgent need for a broader discussion of issues of postgraduate funding. *Anthropology matters* has been costed by its coordinators to require £3,000 per annum to run. The ASA cannot support this initiative with curtailing some others, for instance its continued funding of bursaries to attend ASA conferences. (Thanks to applications, ay Stella's instigation, to RAI and Government the ASA will no longer pay a 10% contribution to its Training Courses; but this does not release funds since we could no longer afford these courses anyway). *Anthropology matters* is currently considering approaches for funding (Emsley Horniman, Fagg and Sutasoma), and has produced a budget (though this needs discussion). At an *anthropology matters* committee meetings, which the Chair attended, it was proposed that a letter might be sent to all HoDs suggesting a level of support for the postgraduate network (c. £10 per staff capita). This will be raised at the next HoDs meeting on 8 December, but there are potentially problems (including uneven take-up and invoicing).

Action: Issues surrounding the funding of *Anthropology matters* need to be discussed thoroughly with the postgraduate representative at the next committee meeting.

5.2. The Chair's report stressed the importance of Committee Members precirculating reports (however brief) to Committee Meetings three times per annum. These can be sent to everyone directly via committee@theasa.org which also copies to Rohan who post reports on the website. Regular reports to Committee Meetings make it easier to produce consolidated reports for the Annals.

Action: Committee Members are asked to produce reports for the 2005 Annals, and updates to sections of the Annals for which they are responsible, by the end of January 2005.

6. AOB

None

7. Time of the Next Meeting

March 2005 at SOAS; date to be announced nearer the time. Members coming from outside of London are asked to make travel arrangements early in order to take advantage of lower travel fares.

ABM in Aberdeen 6 April 5-7pm.