



# The Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth

## COMMITTEE MEETING

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19 Amherst Road, Manchester. 12 November, 2005, 14.00 – 19.00

#### MINUTES

**Present:** John Gledhill, Lisette Josephides, Alberto Corsin-Jimenez, Ian Harper, Rohan Jackson, Andrew Garner, Simone Abram

**Apologies from:** Iris Jean-Klein. Minutes taken by SA, AG, RJ.

**1. Minutes** of the previous meeting were accepted.

#### **2. Matters arising**

Most of the matters arising were addressed in the chair's report. The Chair welcomed AG to the committee.

He reported that he had not yet had a response from Henrietta Moore about stepping down as Anthropology rep, but will pursue that.

Lisette reported that the question of distribution of moneys from the different Firth funds is still open and needs to be followed up through discussions also involving RAI.

SA, ACJ and IH are still to meet.

#### **3a Chair's report.**

The chair indicated that the benchmarking panel is progressing with appointment of Don Breneis as chair and the international panel should be constituted shortly as letters were sent out to those shortlisted at the 19<sup>th</sup> October meeting before the end of that month.

JG has coordinated responses from HoDs to the ESRC bibliometric methods consultation and RAE criteria and working methods consultations. Responses from departments have been very varied, since some chose not to participate, while others offered quite comprehensive views and there was some internal debate between these more engaged units. But the ASA collective responses were judged helpful by the ESRC consultants and RAE sub-panel.

RAE: The chair has brought to the attention of HoDs that the new rules of this RAE include specific allowances for appointing newly qualified staff. There is some indication that departments are not making these allowance when appointing staff, and the chair would be grateful for evidence of any instances where individuals have been told they have not been considered for a post because they are too newly qualified (ie, don't already have a full RAE submission).

Chair suggested that the rules and guidance for ASA conference organisation should be discussed at another meeting. Given existing (inaccurate) stereotypes that the ASA is run by old men, it is important to actively counteract them. The first rule of conference organisation, however, is that all conference organizers **MUST** be members of ASA and we must ensure that this is complied with in future.

#### **3b Administrator's report.**

RJ apologized for the late appearance of the annals, due to problems with timing with the editor. Annals should be returned from the editor very soon. JG will proof read the annals if the proofs arrive before he leaves for the AAA. Annals should then be distributed before the end of the

calendar year. The editor, Mary Warren, may not continue as editor.

**Action:** RJ has contact with alternative editors and will negotiate.

The directory will be generated next week, and any errors can be amended by members themselves for the next issue.

There was a problem with the server this week, which led to a loss of email, and some may have been permanently lost. RJ is chasing the host and hopes to have all services resumed this week.

**Action:** However, he will also investigate alternative hosts, especially if service is not consistent in the near future.

New members must submit applications by December, and members are urged to remind prospective new members.

RJ circulated a review of the final accounts of the last three ASA conferences. Admin costs have averaged at £30 per delegate or 15% of turnover. On average 30-40% of delegates do not want the accommodation offered. Moneys from the Durham conference should be transferred from RJ's conference account to LJ's ASA account this week.

Tim Ingold made a request for support for the cost of images in the ASA volume from the Aberdeen volume, to be taken from what would have been Aberdeen's share of the surplus generated (£1, 500, but effectively more from ASA's point of view since Tim did not request the £500 start-up and the conference covered the registration fees of the ASA Chair, Secretary and Treasurer).

**Action:** *It was this agreed that this proposal should be accepted as the best way to deal with the immediate problem created by Berg's asking for subsidies for illustrations (which are contract states must be negotiated with the press on a volume by volume basis).* But further consideration will need to be given to how to handle illustration costs for future monographs.

### **3c treasurer's report**

Movement in the accounts this year has been much quieter because no monetary contributions were made to the ESRC-funded training courses, as Stella M-K secured external subventions to cover ASA contributions. This was a relief because our funds will not support paying out large lump sums for these courses.

Royalties from Taylor & Francis remain high, while Berg royalties have begun to trickle in. However, we cannot transfer royalties to the Radcliffe-Brown Fund until we recoup the initial lump sum that was paid out to Berg under the new arrangement.

RAI sent details of their investments for the Radcliffe-Brown Fund, whose balance stands at £47k. At present ASA has around £25,5k in the Firth Fund, which has remained high as a result of giving fewer awards in the last two years. Following suggestions at the last meeting to explore the possibility of consolidating the various Firth Funds, the committee felt it could not proceed without examining the terms of the trust funds. AG offered to collect the relevant documents.

**Action:** JG will ask Richard to facilitate this.

The treasurer expressed some concern over the prospects of a lack of return to the Association from ASA06 as the budgets so far received are not clear.

### **3.d Ethics report**

IH and RJ to work at promoting the blog when the Dec AT is distributed.

### **3.e Media**

IH suggested James Staples as a contact for disability. ACJ pointed out that he was largely

recommending either younger anthropologists to these TV enquiries, or was referring to AM. In future ACJ to consider sending the request round the AM list (as production companies may not wish to go to the length of signing into the list themselves). Ro said the membership database could be made available to ACJ if he wanted to search it for relevant interests.

### **3 g Networks report**

AoB - organising a panel in ASA06; collating member interests to distribute; discussing an ESRC seminar series grant proposal for Feb 06.

Apply - 160 members, within and without academia and UK; meetings in London, Durham, Sheffield; info shared incl theoretical and practical opportunities; working papers on website and developing book series with Berghahn; involved in ESRC Research Methods Festival planning and new initiative on mixed methods; panel in upcoming ASA06.

### **3.h AM**

AG reported on ideas arising from his meeting with AM members.

**Action:** Committee agreed to 500-750 pounds funding: an AM member to put together an intro pack aimed at PGs which would point out all the resources available, promoting both AM and ASA membership. This would be printed, distributed via dept post grad admin (Ro to gather addresses for these), as well as made available online.

### **3.i PG courses**

ESRC rejected the four courses we proposed to Researcher Development Initiative Scheme, which included our long-established course. There may be another opportunity to submit in January 2006, following a meeting of the RDI board scheduled for December.

**Action:** JG to circulate latest email from Stella regarding feedback from the ESRC. She suggests that the Chair write a letter to the RDI board chair, and that we accumulate data on the value of the course in the past to satisfy ESRC's desire for evaluation (now to be continuous – see message).

### **Item 4. ASA 2006**

Committee discussed general rules for conferences and particular details submitted by Pnina Werbner. Committee is liable to share any losses/profit from ASA conferences, but only does so once a budget is approved. Committee agreed the following points to put to PW:

1. contingency should be set at 10%
2. fees for attendance by chair, secretary and treasurer of ASA should be included in the budget.
3. £500 transferred to conference organizers by ASA is a loan and must be repaid by the organizers where there is a surplus.
4. AnthropologyMatters should have the option of running a panel at all ASA annual conferences.
5. fees for members should be lower than those for non-members. Members of other WACC associations are eligible for the ASA discount.

**Action:** Committee requires a final budget by December 1<sup>st</sup>. ASA will only agree to share conference losses if the expenditure corresponds with the agreed budget.

PW attended the meeting from 4pm and presented a further version of the budget. After lengthy discussion and revisions, consideration of student bursaries, W-G funding, and day attendance, Pnina agreed to supply a revised budget which should show the extent to which low attendance could impact the bottom line. It was re-stated that the ASA would only be liable to losses indicated in an agreed budget.

It was decided that day attendance should be made more affordable than the current 100 pounds fee.

It was agreed that AM could run a panel within the conference - IH to liaise with PW.

The exhibition was discussed. It was decided that this was not a priority for funding by the ASA, and hence PW will seek funds elsewhere (depts, RAI, etc).

**Action:** PW agreed to rework the budget again and send it to RJ, who would convert the presentation into a spreadsheet that would facilitate examination of different loss and surplus scenarios depending on numbers of delegates and their composition.

#### **Item 5, EASA 06 Firth lecture**

It was agreed to have a Firth lecture - possibly looking for a Euro-based ASA member or other.

**Action:** JG to take this forward with further virtual consultation with the committee.

#### **Item 6 ASA 08**

Theme of Food was original preference of the organisers, but it had already been suggested that consumption would offer a broader and more inclusive framework and that issues of property rights and privatization could also be related to this. The committee agreed that this could be a timely moment to revisit the entire anthropology of consumption theme. Timing was likely to be Dec 08, which offered cheapest accommodation and best date for combining with NZ Association meeting. However this was not felt to impinge too much on the April 09 conference, as only a relatively small number of UK members would be likely to go to NZ in comparison with those normally attending a UK meeting.

**Action:** JG to maintain contact with Veronica Strang, and committee to meet with Veronica at ASA 2006 to finalize theme and date.

#### **Item 7 Publications**

The ASA05 proceedings proposal was given committee approval. As noted earlier, the profit from ASA05 to be used to fund the images in the ASA05 monograph.

JG suggested that we could informally float the IH ethics book as a taster for the Issues series at SAGE, since it looked an excellent fit to Sage's list and market, and he would be meeting with Caroline Porter of Sage at the AAA in a couple of weeks time anyway. If there was interest, we could submit a formal bid for the whole series. JG did not think that pitching the Issues series at the undergraduate market would be viable given the aims of the series and expressed doubt about the extent to which an undergraduate market existed for all but the most basic course books and readers: but Issues has the advantage of clearly appealing to readers beyond anthropology, and should sell to pgs and professionals alike.

**Action:** JG to discuss informal approach to sage with TM.

It seemed clear that Berg is facing cost rises that make it desirable for them to digitally print in-house (which precludes images). So our solution to the ASA 2005 volume illustrations problem does not solve the longer term one and more discussions with Berg will be needed.

The '05' mono (proceedings of ASA04) to be sent to members in June 06; the '06' mono (proceedings of ASA03) to go to members in Nov 06.

#### **Item 8 Membership**

AG and Ro to liaise.

**Actions:** Ro to garner a direct mailing list from websites and database analysis. AG to pen a direct email, which would then be sent to these folk directly, inviting them to join.