

Renaissance Centre Online Committee/SSLC Meeting

Wednesday 3rd June 2020, 12.30pm via Zoom

MINUTES (Part One) Unreserved

Present: Paul Botley (English), Louise Bourdúa (History of Art), Bryan Brazeau (Liberal Arts), Marta Celati (CSR Leverhulme Fellow), Claudia Daniotti (CSR Leverhulme Fellow), Giulia De Stefano (CSR Erasmus), Aysu Dincer Hadjianastasis (History), Vendula Hoppe (CSR PGT), Beat Kümin (History), David Lines (Chair; Director, CSR), Anna Manzato (CSR Erasmus), Aidan Norrie (CSR PGR), Iván Parga Ornelas (CSR PGR), Paloma Perez-Galvan (CSR PGR), Lorenzo Pericolo (History of Art), Costanza Prenassi (CSR PGT), Rich Rabone (SMLC [Spanish]), Lucy Rayfield (CSR MHRA research fellow), Emil Rybczak (CSR MHRA research fellow), Esther van Raamsdonk (BA research fellow), Penny Roberts (History), Jayne Sweet (CSR Administrator), Giorgio Tagliaferro (History of Art), Kat Waters (Subject Librarian), Bobby Xinyue (CSR BA research fellow)

Apologies: Jenny Alexander, Catherine Bates, Bernard Capp, Rebecca Carnevali, Alison Cooley, Jonathan Davies, Rebeca Earle, Cathy Hampton, Carol Rutter, Margaret Shewring, Karin Sprang, Sarah Wood

1. Minutes

Part one (unreserved) of the previous meeting were discussed and approved (Doc1).

2. Chair's Business

- a) We welcomed Claudia Daniotti who is our new Leverhulme early career fellow who started in April, working closely with her mentor, Giorgio Tagliaferro.
- b) The current climate is one of 'belt-tightening' with uncertainty about how things are going to run exactly next year. Departments and centres are being asked to make some cost savings, so we're going to have to be even more careful than usual, but things like conferences are going to be greatly reduced, if not eliminated altogether. We are still making plans for the undergraduate and MA modules for next year; we are still in business from a teaching and research point of view. We will try to make sure that the CSR continues to be as much of a community as it can be, with a blended working environment.
- c) Some of our activities for 2019-20 had to be either cancelled or postponed, including the Warwick-Warburg doctoral training programme. This was tentatively postponed until September 2020, but it was decided to cancel altogether and re-schedule for May 2021. Some STVDIO and ECC events were also cancelled.

3. Matters arising:

- a) The previous minutes had mentioned that 15 colleagues from Warwick were going to the RSA in Philadelphia, but the event was of course cancelled. RSA 2021 is due to take place in Dublin; the CSR can sponsor 2 panels, as can Caroline Petit (science/medicine related). Proposals to David or Caroline, deadline 15th of August.
- b) Also mentioned in the minutes last time was that we were having discussions with Classics about academic language skills classes, for example German, for academic purposes. Conversations are ongoing, but nothing new to report. Penny Roberts reported that these classes have been run before (French & German), in liaison with Classics and under the auspices of CADRE, who

provided funding for tutors. It was agreed that this should be a faculty initiative, not just CSR providing input/funding. Obviously in the present circumstances, finding resources for anything is going to be a bit of a challenge.

ACTION: DL to speak with Jenny Burns

- c) We talked about the Brepols book series, and the possibility of starting one associated with the centre; DL has had discussions which are ongoing. Moving towards September as a possible deadline for a proposal. Ideas welcome.

4. Library

Kat Waters shared library news, including that it will not open in any way shape or form before 15th of July. This is likely to be for library-staff only at first, to put preparatory steps in place, i.e. deep-cleaning and organising etc. Eventually they hope to run an appointment only / click and collect type of service, but this is likely to be in August. Kat recently moved from Social Sciences to a full-time position at the Business School, but at the moment is covering both roles.

It was confirmed that book acquisitions are presently on hold; all purchases have to be teaching based and authorised by the registrar; nothing will be purchased that isn't available digitally. Official policy should be distributed soon. Kat Waters said that the library was only able to acquire books through the University's approved suppliers, Amazon etc., so it is quite difficult if it's a niche publisher/publication that is required. They do try to borrow books on an inter-library basis to meet with student requirements, but with all other major libraries still closed, including the Warburg, this is not currently possible.

Penny Roberts added that the priorities at the moment are very much student-facing expenditure. She has also asked the question whether staff may be able to use their research allowances to buy books, and is waiting for a reply.

5. SSLC

- a) Aidan Norrie (SSLC rep) gave a congratulatory mention to Rebecca Carnevali who had had her viva 2 weeks ago. It was felt that the University's response to the Covid-19 pandemic so far had been very undergraduate focused, and that there was very limited support for PGRs. He had still not had a reply to his request regarding additional funding/extension to his PhD term. He will take this further with CP's help. Regarding Warwick's PhD research allowance budget, he reported that it was fairly low by sector standards, the average of which fluctuates at around £600pa.
- b) Vendy Hoppe reported that she and Karin Sprang had found significant difficulty with library acquisitions, which has affected essay writing and that of their dissertations. She also said that their supervisors had been helpful in directing them to alternatives sources.
- c) DL & CP reiterated to students, that they must signal to supervisors/markers if they have experienced this kind of difficulty in finding sources for their research. There is a form available for this.

6. Current CSR activities

- a) Reading Group on Augustine, *City of God* (Bryan Brazeau). This group has met all year and will finish by the end of next week. They are considering keeping the reading group going over the summer and are debating what to read next. Everyone is welcome to join.
- b) Medieval Reading Group (Emma Campbell). Activity for the Medieval Seminar primarily took place in the autumn term. In that term, we held a work in progress seminar involving Dr Louise Campion and Dr Sarah Wood, hosted a talk by Prof. Elizabeth Robertson (University of

- Glasgow), and organised a celebration for PhD students working on medieval topics who had successfully passed their viva examinations. In January, the seminar supported a talk by Professor Christiania Whitehead, which was organised by the English and Comparative Literatures Department to mark Professor Whitehead's departure for Lausanne. The rest of this year's seminar programme was disrupted by strike action and the COVID-19 pandemic.
- c) STVDIO (Rich Rabone). It was reported that there were no seminars in term 3, but that speakers are happy to postpone until next year, virtually or otherwise. STVDIO is funded by the HRC, and it is unknown yet as to whether this funding will be forthcoming for next year.
 - d) Early Career Club (Rebecca Carnevali + Marta Celati). It was reported that they had four meetings during the year, but the last one was cancelled. The meeting with James Green proved very popular with over 20 in attendance. They are yet to decide whether to host any of these meetings virtually during term 1.
 - e) Warwick–Warburg Doctoral Training Programme (Michael Bycroft). As already mentioned, this was cancelled for 2020 and is being rescheduled for May 2021. It was noted that the CSR will try to recreate elements of this induction programme in the Autumn term, for incoming PhD students and for PhD students who are in their first year, something that will work in terms of a mini induction. Suggestions were requested from students for elements of training that they felt they would benefit from early in their studies, both PhD and PGT
 - f) Community Course (Aysu Dincer). This was cancelled for 2020 and is being rescheduled for term 3, 2021
 - g) A group including CSR research students and fellows (RPR Club, led by Lucy Rayfield and Esther van Raamsdonk) had its third session yesterday, with 10 people in attendance. They are focusing on creating a community for people who are writing at home, to tune in and socialise
 - h) HRF and HRC funding was discussed, the former having been cancelled for 2021 and the latter is still being decided. For context, the HRC funds the STVDIO programme with £500pa. Regarding whether departments and centres will be *allowed* to host face-to-face meetings/seminars on campus next year, we are awaiting official guidance, both from the government, and also the university; obviously this is a very changing situation.

7. Current research projects for report

Bobby Xinyue, BA postdoctoral fellow, project entitled 'Redesigning Time: Cultural Politics in Renaissance Poetic Calendars'. In his third year, recently became a father so general progress is slower, but about 70% towards a full manuscript. Several articles submitted and currently writing the introduction to a collected volume, based on his 2019 Venice conference.

Marta Celati, Leverhulme early career fellow, project entitled 'The 'Mirror' of History. Prince and Tyrant in Italian Renaissance Literature, between Political Theory and Historiography'. In her second year, various chapter submissions and planning a joint conference with Maria Pavlova next year (hopefully June 2021).

Lucy Rayfield, MHRA research scholar, project entitled, 'The Poetics and Politics of French and Italian Renaissance Comedy'. Just putting the finishing touches to her book, which is based on her thesis; also finalising a critical edition that she's editing. Hopefully talking at a conference in January in Utrecht, also at the RSA next year. Writing an article on Franco Italian ballet in early in the early 17th century.

Esther van Raamsdonk, BA postdoctoral fellow, project entitled, 'The Politics of Biblical Narrative in a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-Dutch Context', started in January 2020, going well so far. Various articles / edited collections under way and hosting a roundtable on 'cheese' on the 15th of June. Monograph due to appear shortly.

Claudia Daniotti, Leverhulme early career fellow, project entitled 'Morally Ambiguous Ancient Women in European Art, c. 1350-1620', started in April 2020. Currently trying to finish the very final version of the manuscript of her monograph, which is on the visual/textual tradition of Alexander the Great.

Catherine Bates, CSR research professor. Summary of her latest research will be available in the upcoming Director's report for the CSR advisory board (Nov 2020).

Emil Rybczak, MHRA research associate, project entitled, The Oxford University Press Complete Works of James Shirley - MHRA Research Associateship 2018-19. Press proofs for book chapter ready, he and Tess Grant continue to work on the second volume and they now have an idea of what's going on with the third volume. Emil is editing one of the plays, as well as a volume; he also recently passed his viva.

8. Research development / Future research bids

- Continues to be one of the CSR's important points of concentration; a call was issued for Marie Curie postdoctoral fellowships, but no responses received as yet. Attendees were asked if they knew of anyone who might be interested; if so, they should contact DL asap.
- It was reported the Emil Rybczak and Tess Grant are planning to submit a joint Leverhulme proposal for a long-term project on James Shirley, 17-19th century.

9. Next year's teaching/training activities

- a) UG modules (DL & CD). These will continue next year, with Claudia Daniotti jointly convening with David Lines. Thanks were given to everyone who taught on and marked essays this year, their help was very much appreciated.
- b) MA course and modules, including term in Venice (CP & DL). The MA course will run next year, with at least three students. The term in Venice will take place in term 2 instead of the usual term 1. Therefore all of the teaching that we usually do in term two is transferred to term 1, including the core and optional modules.
- c) Option: Critical Foundations of Renaissance Studies (DL). We will be offering an advanced study option in 'Critical foundations of Renaissance studies'. PhD students are welcome to take the class, but not for credit.
- d) Induction for PhD students (DL & CP). We will offer an induction for PhD students probably digitally at the beginning of term.
- e) Palaeography and modern languages (DL). This programme is being developed for palaeography and modern languages, so that we can offer English and Latin at the very least, for next year, and possibly also Italian, depending on how much interest that gets. Perhaps RR might want to offer Spanish at some point, if there's interest.

10. Ideas for future development of CSR

No ideas put forward

11. AOB

- Query by Costanza Prenassi as to whether Latin palaeography will run next year, and it hopefully will
- It was reported that Ivan Parga Ornelas will teach the 'Latin for Research' next year, using some different texts to those used previously.

Students left the meeting at 2pm