



## The Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth

### Minutes AGM 6 July 2016, Durham

**Attendance:** Veronica Strang (chair), Cathrine Degnen (minutes), Rohan Jackson, Nicole Bourque, Bob Simpson, Katharine Tyler, Marloes Janson, Felix Ringel, Tom Yarrow, Jeanette Edwards, Marilyn Strathern, Helen Lambert, Maia Green, Lucy Pickering, Zem Moffatt, Tim Ingold, Paul Sillitoe, Maria Nakhshina, Joe Long, Maya Unnithan, Nayanika Mookherjee, Sarah Green, Elisabeth Kirtsoglou, David Shankland, Ben Campbell, Joy Hendry, Stephen Lyon, Tamara Kohn, Christine McCourt, Laura Rival, Catherine Alexander, Joe Long, Maria Nakhshina, Mitch Sedgwick, Jennifer Speirs, Jeanne Féaux de la Croix, Judith Okely, Joy Hendry, Rebecca Bryant, Stavious Pipprou, Daniel Knight, Dimitrios Theodossopoulos, Christine McCourt. **Apologies:** Lotte Hoek, Henrike Donner

#### 1. Minutes of last meeting

From 15<sup>th</sup> April 2015 University of Exeter; accepted as a true record.

#### 2. Matters arising

Welcome to new ASA officers – Paul Gilbert (Media Officer); Cathrine Degnen (Honorary Secretary). Warm thanks were expressed to Zem Moffatt as outgoing Honorary Secretary. A list of new members since the last AGM was circulated to the membership and is appended at the end of these minutes.

#### 3. Report on financial accounts to the membership

Ro Jackson (ASA Administrator) presented the financial accounts in Lotte Hoek's (Treasurer) absence. He noted that student travel grants for next year's conference might need to be higher as the conference is in Adelaide. The membership approved the accounts and passed a motion to continue with Cavehill Accountants for another year.

#### 4. Post holders' reports

Since the Committee reports (DOC A) were tabled, VS has attended liaison meetings with the ESRC and the British Academy and reported on these meetings to the HoDs. Key points emerging are the need to retain qualitative/narrative forms of impact case study presentation for the REF, and the need to have a fuller conversation with HEFCE about about rewarding/encouraging community service (reviewing etc.) and the contribution that this makes to the academy.

VS invited questions from the membership on the reports. NM asked about the discussion of ethics and the submission of data that occurred at the WCAA meeting at the AAA in Denver; VS offered to circulate details from NM to the membership.

**5. A motion was proposed to change the rules of procedure in relation to ratifying the election of officers.** This is usually linked to AGM meetings, but can now be done on-line (DOC B). There was some discussion over wording and the proposal was amended to have objections raised throughout the process rather than awaiting the point of ratification. It

was also agreed to add a caveat about confidentiality of the process. The proposed text was amended accordingly and the motion seconded and passed. No objections.

**Action:** CD to amend wording as above.

**6. A proposal for an ASA advisory council** was considered by the membership (DOC C). The goal is to ensure the ASA has more continuous involvement of senior members of the profession over time and to benefit from having them as ambassadors for the ASA amongst their contacts and networks. It was stressed that this group would have a purely advisory role – this is not a proposal for a governing council.

After some discussion the membership supported the proposal and identified the following priorities: that the advisory group should be diverse; that membership should rotate over three years; that its membership should include a representative from EASA (to ensure a good link between the Associations) and possible contract researchers / anthropologists working in non-academic sectors; that the emphasis should be on ‘experience’ rather than ‘seniority’; that the ASA committee should clarify what kinds of ‘experience’ are required.

**Action:** VS to circulate the revised proposal to the membership; the membership to forward nominations to the committee and the committee to appoint a first tranche of members for a three year term (this should be staggered to enable continuity).

#### **7, 8, 9. Notice of vacancies for a new Chair, Treasurer, and Networks officer**

VS’s term comes to end 1 June 2017; LH’s term comes to end 30 September 2016; KT’s term comes to end 30 September 2016. All ASA Committee posts are openly advertised.

Members are asked to think about potential candidates and encourage applications.

#### **10. Report on Federation of Anthropology (FAB)**

Update since last AGM. By working more closely with sister organisations, the ASA is seeking to generate a more collective and audible voice for Anthropology to promote its interests with policy and decision makers on key issues such as the REF, metrics, open access and funding. This is also an intellectual agenda to encourage more exchanges of ideas between the various areas of the discipline.

During the year VS has discussed this proposed collaboration with Chairs/Presidents of EASA, WCAA, AAA and the IUAES; and with AcSS and the British Academy (all of which expressed support for this initiative). She has corresponded with a number of UK anthropology and archaeology associations, and also had an initial meeting 5 July 2016 with three of these. Some associations have responded with enthusiasm, and although the RAI has formally rejected any notion of Federation, it has indicated enthusiasm for closer collaboration. A key point to emerge from these discussions and the preliminary meeting was an agreement that a joint annual conference, as well as being intellectually productive in itself, might provide the basis for further collaborative developments. It was felt that the ideal convener would be a major interdisciplinary department (or constellation of departments within a University) plus a major museum.

The ASA AGM similarly agreed that it would be best to begin with a ‘collaborative network’ rather than a Federation, and to explore ways of taking smaller steps to pool resources. It also supported the idea of a one-off joint conference and a Wenner-Gren (or British

Academy) application to buy time for someone to facilitate the organisation of this, and to assist inter-association collaborative processes more broadly.

Each association might commit to providing some match funding to help support the Wenner-Gren/BA bids for the proposed conference, with a proportional contribution to be rewarded with proportional sharing of the profits. The RAI confirmed that it will support a joint conference, and there was some discussion as to whether this might compose the ASA's 2018 conference, for which bids are about to be sought.

UK Anthropology Network (UKAN) was proposed as name for the network.

**Action:** VS to develop an outline plan for an interdisciplinary UKAN conference and network, and circulate this to the ASA membership. This could form the basis of an application to the Wenner-Gren and possibly the British Academy.

#### **11. Adelaide ASA/AAS/ASAANZ 2017 meeting:**

The Head of School in Adelaide is not willing to underwrite the joint conference and the risk of the event making a loss. Normally ASA expects the host department to take this risk, but this is not possible in this case. The ASA has therefore negotiated an agreement to cover the possible risk with the other two associations. Ro outlined the various figures/scenarios for the membership on the basis of numbers of attendees and relative amount of risk/profit, as well as the possibility of adjusting the conference fees. His analysis suggested that with three major associations involved, the likelihood of not having enough participants to break even is highly unlikely. A worst-case scenario and estimates of potential loss were put forward to the membership. A suggestion was accepted that a disclaimer of *force majeure*, or similar, should be included at the point of paying registration. Ro will look into this. The membership agreed to share risk (and potential income) as long as the ASA (via NomadIT) has oversight/control over the budget and publicity.

**Action:** RJ to seek advice on the legality of the inclusion of a *force majeure* clause.

**12. ASA 2018 conference** The call for the 2018 conference will be reopened for UK universities as the original hosts now no longer able to go forward. If no UK bids are forthcoming, the committee will reactivate contact with Malta, which has expressed an interest. VS also notified the membership of an upcoming UK anthropology event in 2017 (*Powering the Planet* – energy and anthropology). This is a collaboration between members of EASA/WTWNA, the ASA Apply Network, Durham's Institute of Advanced Study and the Durham Energy Institute. This will provide a UK-based ASA event in 2017.

#### **13. Updating the ASA Aims and Objectives (DOC A, page 6)**

Some updates to these have been proposed. These will be recirculated to the membership and commented on via email, and updated in a few weeks' time if no comments are received.

**Action:** RJ to include in next ASA newsletter.

#### **14. Reminder of opportunities**

The ASA will sponsor an AAA Executive Session panel (to be advertised autumn 2016 with deadline of 5th January 2017). Members are also reminded about the ASA Teaching Award (to be advertised September 2016).

### **15. Scottish Qualifications Authority (Joy Hendry)**

JH drew members' attention to an opportunity for writing anthropology units for Scottish schools. She is seeking contacts with people who teach anthropology in Scottish schools. She would also like to find people to speak on Radio Scotland about current issues and Anthropology. More information will be circulated in the next ASA newsletter.

**Action:** JH to send details to RJ for inclusion in next ASA newsletter.

### **15. AOB**

Some concerns were expressed (it was noted also at the HoDs' meeting) about direct approaches to departments inviting them to become contributing members to the HauNet. The meeting requested that a letter should be sent expressing a range of concerns to Hau.

**Action:** VS to write to Hau.

The membership supported a proposal to publish the Firth Lecture in a peer-reviewed publication rather than online.

In light of the Brexit decision, the meeting agreed that it would be good to carry a message to EASA's upcoming annual conference that we hope to continue and indeed increase our collaboration with European colleagues at all possible junctures.

An Autumn HoDs' meeting will be arranged.

**Action:** CD to seek appropriate date and organise meeting.

**Next meeting.** There will be an ASA AGM at the annual conference in Adelaide, but given that many members will be unable to attend this, key issues will be dealt with during the coming year via email.

### **New members**

Raul Gerardo Acosta Garcia, Harini Amarasuriya, Anna Arnone, Daljeet Singh Arora, Joe Arun, Paul Basu, Christina Beard-Moose, Eona Bell, Aleksandar Boskovic, Don Brenneis, Stephanie Bunn, Elena Burgos Martinez, Weining Cheng, Jean Comaroff, Alberto Corsin Jimenez, Jamie Cross, Giovanni da Col, Inge Maria Daniels, Geraldine Datuin, Nicola Desmond, Jeremy Eades, Kate Nialla Fayers-Kerr, Emilia Ferraro, Abhik Ghosh, Marie Gillespie, Katharina Graf, Gareth Hamilton, Ian Harper, Paul Heelas, Elizabeth Hull, Samantha Hurn, Fabiola Jara Gomez, Ann Kelly, Tobias Kelly, Dylan Kerrigan, Elisabeth Kirtsoglou, Monica Konrad, Seth Kunin, Kristin Kuutma, Francis Levesque, Amy Levine, Jan Peter Laurens Looovers, Marta Magalhaes Wallace, Fiona Magowan, Gerasimos Makris, Ainhoa Montoya, Roxana Morosanu, Benson A. Mulemi, Deborah Nyirenda, Sarah O'Neill, Pauline Oosterhoff, Mary Patterson, Nicolas Peterson, Cesare Poppi, Juan Javier Rivera Andia, Jude Robinson, Fiona Ross, Juan Pablo Sarmiento Barletti, Almut Schneider, Elisabeth Schober, Tian Shi, Salma Siddique, Katherine Smith, Andrew 'Mugsy' Spiegel, Maila Stevens, Eisuke Tanaka, Olga Ulturgasheva, Richard Vokes, Joanna White, Samuel Williams, Matthew Wood