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More news from our DHR

Centre for Medieval Studies GW4 Building Communities Programme - Accelerator Grant: ‘Power, Knowledge and Identity’

Ian Wei and Carolyn Muessig, co-directors of CMS 2013-14, were successful in a GW4 Initiative Bid to host a medieval studies networking and workshop event at Clifton Hill House in Bristol in June 2014. This involved medievalists from Bristol, Exeter and Cardiff. As a result of that meeting, and a great deal of hard work on the part of Ian and Carolyn, with Bronach Kane in Cardiff, and James Clark in Exeter (against the now customary very short deadline for such funding opportunities), an application for a GW4 Accelerator Grant was submitted. We heard in September that this had been successful. This means that in 2014-15 we are funded to the tune of £45,715 to run a number of strands of activity that will be taking place across the three partner institutions, under three sub-themes: ‘Sex and Gender’, ‘Authority and Ethics’, and ‘Wales and the South West of England’. The overall organizing committee is now Ian Wei and Beth Williamson, (2014-15 co-directors of the Centre for Medieval Studies), Bronach Kane, and James Clark. Committees to lead on the three sub-themes have been put together, and the committees will be organizing a half-day conference each, and will lead on a large external funding application to be prepared in the Spring.

Professor Helen Fulton, newly arrived in Bristol, has very kindly agreed to coordinate the Wales and the South West of England strand. So we have:

Wales and the South West of England
James Clark (Exeter) J.G.Clark@exeter.ac.uk
Bronach Kane (Cardiff) - chair KaneB@cardiff.ac.uk
Helen Fulton (Bristol) - chair helen.fulton@bristol.ac.uk

Sex and Gender
Emma Cayley (Exeter) E.J.Cayley@exeter.ac.uk
Bronach Kane (Cardiff) - chair KaneB@cardiff.ac.uk
Beth Williamson (Bristol) Beth.Williamson@bristol.ac.uk

Authority and Ethics
Rob Gossedge (Cardiff) GossedgeRA@cf.ac.uk
Sarah Hamilton (Exeter) - chair S.M.Hamilton@exeter.ac.uk
Anke Holdenried (Bristol) A.Holdenried@bristol.ac.uk

Certain papers in each of the three university’s medieval research seminar series in 2014-15 have been designated GW4 seminars, and there is funding available for researchers from the partner institutions to be able to attend these seminars. (Details for these will be circulated soon.)

A Research Assistant has been appointed: Dr James Doherty will be available to assist us for three days a week from 1 February 2015 to 31 July 2015. James has a BA and MA from the University of Liverpool, and a PhD from Lancaster University (‘Count Hugh of Troyes and the Early Crusading Era’). He has experience of conference organisation. He has been a research assistant at Birming ham University. Details about how to take up his support will follow in due course.

Dates of Half-day conferences
Afternoon of Wednesday 22 April - Sex and Gender
Afternoon of Wednesday 29 April - WASWE
Afternoon of Wednesday 20 May - Authority and Ethics

Conference in June
A day conference will be held at Clifton Hill House on 16th June. Three sessions (one on each of the three sub-themes) have been accepted in the programme of the International Medieval Congress in Leeds in July 2015.

Beth Williamson
Deputy Head Research
January 2015

Environmental Humanities

Environmental Humanities is catching fire. It is something between a buzzword and an interdisciplinary field, as well as the title of a journal (since 2012). A quick Google search reveals recent Environmental Humanities conferences, seminars and research groups across the academy, from Princeton to Oxford to the Australian National University. But what is it?
Environmental Humanities (continued)

Environmental Humanities assumes two things. First, that relationships between humans and the natural environment are of overriding importance in the modern world. Secondly, that scholars in the humanities have something vital to contribute to debates on issues ranging from global climate change to the experience of being an animal. In short, it aims to bring the non-human firmly into the humanities.

Bristol academics in and beyond the School of Humanities are advancing work in the Environmental Humanities. Not all of us would choose the label, but scholars here take the importance and complementarity of our work seriously. The strong interdisciplinary links forged by the Cabot Institute and the Elements of the Anthropocene event series located in the Institution for Advanced Studies, help to connect HUMS faculty members to colleagues in cognate fields such as English and Geography, as well as to natural scientists and environmental engineers. These links also extend across the A4 and M5 to our peer institutions in the GW4 group of universities, which has its own Environmental Humanities research group. Such connections help us to develop ideas and research agendas, which grow out of our own fields, into projects in dialogue with the most exciting work that crosses the boundaries between humanities and sciences.

This university’s strength in Environmental Humanities is the main reason I applied for my present job as Lecturer in Environmental History. My work on the tribulations of international river-sharing in India and Pakistan is naturally interdisciplinary, using an archival history methodology alongside conceptual insights from political geography and environmental policy studies. Bristol offered a research environment where colleagues would ‘get’ what I was trying to do, and why, and help me to articulate its importance to the as-yet-unconverted. Better still, with the history department’s friendly attitude towards exciting new taught units, this post gives me unparalleled opportunities to teach environmental history themes at undergraduate level. Engaging with colleagues and students in reading groups, seminar rooms, and the bar above the Watershed cinema has helped me bolster my love of research and big ideas against the rising tide of a first-year lecturer’s teething troubles. With so many enthusiastic people involved, our collective contribution to the Environmental Humanities can only grow.

Dan Haines
January 2015

Thatcher’s Pension Reforms

How to provide people with a decent income in retirement is one of the great problems of our age. In part the crisis is a product of demographic: an ageing society produced by rapidly rising longevity (in itself something greatly to be welcomed of course) coupled with the imminent retirement of the postwar baby boomers. Another important element, however, is the legacy of past decisions taken on pensions over many decades by governments, the private pension industry, occupational pension funds (take a bow USS), and individuals. Yet to date, whilst much attention has been focused on the demographic aspects of the problem, there has been remarkably little attention to its historical roots.

‘The Thatcher Pension Reforms and their Consequences’, an AHRC-funded project based in History, will research a key period in the historical development of Britain’s pension crisis during which the government attempted to shift responsibility for pension provision away from the state and onto individuals. The many consequences, both intended and unintended, of those reforms will also form an important element of our study. Thereby, we hope both to contribute to a better understanding of how we got where we are today and, by extension, contribute to solving the crisis in a more sustainable way.

‘Thatcher’s Pension Reforms’ has four team members: Hugh Pemberton, Roger Middleton, Aled Davies (the project’s research assistant) and Tom Gould (our PhD student). Research began in September and is scheduled to run for three years. The project will be operating at the frontier of archival-based historical research in the UK, taking advantage of the accelerated release of official records as the government moves to a ‘20-year rule’ for access. Extensive research in other archives and interviews with key players will also be conducted. As well as an array of scholarly outputs we will also have an extensive impact agenda – already underway with the announcement of a project board including a financial journalist, a DWP official, a consulting actuary, and the MPs David Willetts and Frank Field.

Hugh Pemberton
January 2015

Professor Tim Cole

Professor Tim Cole

REACT

REACT – Research and Enterprise in the Arts and Creative Technologies – is a knowledge exchange hub that brings together five universities (Bristol, Bath, Cardiff, Exeter and UWE) and the Watershed to encourage innovative collaborations between academics and creative technologists.

Members of the school have played a key role with the Bristol co-director role being filled initially by Robert Bickers and more recently Tim Cole. Members of the school have also been involved in some of the REACT Sandboxes – Heritage (Tim Cole) and Objects (Victoria Bates, Andy Flack).

After running five themed sandboxes (alongside Heritage and Objects, these have explored Books and Print, Future Documentary and Play) and funding multiple feasibility projects, REACT is now turning to nurture sandbox projects to a position of being market ready by the end of REACT in Spring 2016.

Hugh Pemberton
January 2015

Tim Cole
January 2015
Hellenomania was held from 16-18 October 2014 in Athens at the École française d’Athènes and at the Institut français d’Athènes

This international and interdisciplinary colloquium on modern responses to the material culture of ancient Greece was co-organised by Nicoletta Momigliano, Deputy Director of the Institute of Greece, Rome and the Classical Tradition (IGRCT), and Alexandre Farnoux, Director of the École Française d’Athènes (EFA), with the support of the Institut français d’Athènes (IFA) and the British School at Athens (BSA). The colloquium involved 21 speakers and respondents from the UK, several other EU countries, and the US, whose expertise covered a variety of disciplines – from ancient history and archaeology to architecture, literature, anthropology, and film studies. The colloquium was open to (and well-attended by) the scholarly community in Athens, including both senior colleagues and post-graduate students. One PhD student from Bristol (Klairi Angelou, History of Art) also took part in the colloquium. Scholars who presented papers at this colloquium included one of the IGRCT’s Vice-Presidents, Dr Ian Jenkins OBE, Senior Curator at the British Museum, and Dr Katherine Harloe (University of Reading), a former IGRCT’s Post-Doctoral Fellow. The poetess Eleni Sikelianos, great-granddaughter of the Nobel-nominated poet Angelos Sikelianos and theatre director Eva Palmier Sikelianos, presented a new work entitled ‘I’ll make this little myth for you’, which was inspired by her great-grandparents’ production of Prometheus Bound for their Delphic Festival in 1927. Dr Pantelis Michalakis (University of Bristol), in addition to presenting a fascinating paper on “Grecian Dance and the Transformations of Corporeality in the Age of Moving Images”, organised an event open to the general public, entitled ‘Ancient Greece in Silent Cinema’ and held in conjunction with the Hellenomania colloquium. This event involved the screening of rarely seen silent films set in ancient Greece, and was enriched by the live performance of original musical compositions and improvisations by the musicologist and composer Minas Alexiadis. This public event was hosted by the IFA, and was attended by well over a hundred people, including pupils from various Athenian secondary schools, musicologists, film aficionados, and some Bristol alumni. The Director of the BSA (Prof. Cathy Morgan, OBE) chaired one of the sessions, offered hospitality to participants of the colloquium, and hosted the final dinner. Katherine Harloe, Nicoletta Momigliano, and Alexandre Farnoux are now engaged in the editing of a volume based on the contributions presented at Hellenomania.

Nicoletta Momigliano
January 2015

Early Career Research Network (Arts and Sciences)

The Faculty recently awarded Andrew Blades and Josie Gill £500 to set up this Network for early career researchers. With their £500 Andrew and his team are setting up a networking initiative. This Network will bring together early career researchers across the Faculties of Arts, Medicine and Dentistry, Medical and Veterinary Science, and Science, in order to identify areas of common interest and generate new ideas for collaborative, interdisciplinary research projects.

Researchers in the arts and sciences are increasingly looking for ways to engage with each other across the boundaries of discipline, school and faculty. Researchers in the sciences work on themes, ideas, concepts or experiences that are also of concern to arts researchers and vice versa, and the differing perspectives that the arts and the sciences bring to particular ideas or issues enrich our understanding of them. This network will offer models and examples of best practice for interdisciplinary working and provide a platform from which interdisciplinary groups of ECRs can apply for external funding.

There is an initial event planned for 4 February, being hosted in the Vernon-Smith room at the IAS. The Team is hoping these events will be regular. For details see:

http://www.bris.ac.uk/ias/diary/2015/402
http://www.bristol.ac.uk/red/events/2014/86.html

Co-ordinators: Josie Gill (English), Andrew Blades (English), Jessica Smyth (Chemistry)

Andrew Blades
January 2015

Posters produced by the EFA for the Hellenomania colloquium and public screening of silent films, showing Ava Gardner in the 1948 film ‘A Touch of Venus’, and a scene from the 1927 film ‘The Private Life of Helen of Troy’.
Research & Enterprise Development (RED) Team

Funder Engagement
Building relationships with pertinent funders is a RED objective and, to help facilitate this, RDMs organise institutional visits. Events include:

- Leverhulme Visit. Professor Gordon Marshall, the Director of the Leverhulme Trust, visited Bristol on 28 January as one of Leverhulme’s top funded universities. Professor Marshall confirmed that Leverhulme ultimately funded individuals with novel ideas. The methodology and outcome of the research are important; they value less the impact of the research outside of academia. They do not fund research in areas prioritised by other funders.

Wellcome Trust. We are currently organising a visit in May 2015, date to be confirmed. The Wellcome Trust has recently launched new funding mechanisms for collaborative research across their Medical Humanities and Society and Ethics funding streams: http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/Funding/Medical-humanities/index.htm

Research Training
An afternoon of Research Workshops will take place on **Wednesday 11 February 2015**. Venue: LT1, 43 Woodland Road:

- 1.30pm - Concise writing, by Tamar Hodos
- 2pm – PolicyBristol, an introduction, by Deborah Wilson
- 2.30pm - Practical steps for open access publishing, by Catherine Dack and Kathryn Smith
- 3pm - An introduction to research data management, by Kellie Snow
- 3.30pm - Next level research data management, by Stephen Gray
- 4pm – Horizon 2020 for the Faculty of Arts, by Tiernan Williams

Please register at: https://www.survey.bris.ac.uk/red/artresearchworkshop/

EU ERC Advanced grants, **internal deadline 17 March 2015**
http://www.bris.ac.uk/red/development/international/erc.html

Welcome!

Our friendly and ever-helpful Faculty RED RDMs: Valérie Aspin and Jean Pretlove

Welcome!

Jamie Doherty

December 2014

Jamie has just joined us as PDRA for the CMS’s GW4 Horizon 2020 for Building Communities Programme Accelerator Grant: ‘Power, Knowledge and Identity’.

News flash!

ERP system (Enterprise Resource Planning) to be rolled out this summer.

This system integrates: Finance/HR (including sickness absence reporting)/procurement (PROACTIS)/payroll/budget planning.

… and no routine checks for expenses under £100.

Expanding a doctoral dissertation: Salvator Rosa (1615-1673)

My current research project expands upon work conducted for my doctoral dissertation on the Neapolitan painter and satirist, Salvator Rosa (1615-1673). I’m preparing a two-volume monograph on the artist, to be published in 2015, which re-examines the significance of Rosa as a pre-Romantic and a key protagonist among seventeenth-century artists in their collective quest for professional freedom. I argue that Rosa’s ventures and successes in this regard were facilitated by the rituals and discourses of friendship – both of which are embodied in his paintings, prints and satirical poems, but also find a particularly succinct expression in the over 400 surviving letters that Rosa wrote to his closest friends and patrons. The second volume of the monograph will include a comprehensive Italian transcription and annotated English translation of these letters, some of which are previously unpublished. This project on Rosa has in turn inspired my next research undertaking, which will explore the phenomenon of autonomy more broadly within the context of that critical moment of transition between early modernity and modernity proper - a ‘cusp’ on which Rosa and many of his contemporaries seem to teeter, the nature of which itself requires fresh examination. This project will include an interdisciplinary conference at Bristol, in which I hope to involve scholars and postgraduates working in a range of disciplines within the arts and sciences, in Bristol and further afield.

Alex Hoare
January 2015

The National Football Museum has received a grant of £199,900 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Collecting Cultures scheme in order to expand its collection of artworks inspired by or depicting the beautiful game.

Mike O’Mahony will advise the NFM on acquisition as well as setting up workshops with the Museum curatorial staff to develop programmes for promoting and presenting the extensive art collection of the museum to the public. The three-year project will conclude with an exhibition displaying new acquisitions alongside other works from the collection.

Mike O’Mahony has previously worked with the museum advising them on loan acquisitions, including Picasso’s Footballer (1965) and Charles Ernest Cundall’s A Chelsea Cup Tie (1923). The project will enhance public access to and understanding of art inspired by football, from poster art and advertising inspired by Pop Art and mass media in the 1960s & 70s, to the little-researched subject of football-related art in the public arena.

In the official press release, David Pearson, Deputy Director of the National Football Museum, said: “We are very excited about the opportunity to develop our art collection. Football-related art is such a rich and expanding subject, from poster art, to sculptures, to video and new media. This project will also enable us to expand our ambitious programme to engage increasingly diverse audiences through art and football.”

Mike O’Mahony added that he was “very much looking forward to working with the National Football Museum to explore the fascinating subject of football inspired art and to assist the museum to select and acquire some key works that can inspire and engage their many thousands of visitors.” For more information visit the National Football Museum website.

Mike O’Mahony
January 2015

C. Burton, Poster Advertising the FA Cup Final of 1925 (Collection: National Football Museum)

From the editor

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this very inspiring Newsletter. There is so much going on in HUMS that our Research Special Edition had to be edited in two parts! The next Newsletter will be going out at the end of TB2 — I’ll let everyone know the exact date in due course. In the meantime, please send anything you would like included to me at r.jacks@bristol.ac.uk. Note: this Newsletter substituted the original publication date of Bulletin 8. This will be issued on Friday, February 13.