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BAJS Annual General Meeting – 11 July 2017

University of Edinburgh

Present: Philip Alexander, George Brooke, Yulia Egorova (President Elect), Maria Diemling (Bulletin Editor), Eva Frojmovic, Charlotte Hempel, Hannah Holtschneider (President), Larry Ray, Andrea Schatz, Helen Spurling (Secretary), Holger Zellentin (Treasurer) and other members.

Apologies: Martin Goodman, Francois Guesnet, James Renton (Social Media Officer) and Zuleika Rodgers (Web Officer)

1. Welcome, Apologies and Matters Arising

Helen Spurling opened the meeting and welcomed members.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were confirmed as an accurate record of the previous AGM at Birmingham.

3. Committee and Officers

Helen Spurling reminded the AGM that Yulia Egorova (Durham) would be President for the next year. The approval of the AGM was requested for the election of Hindy Najman (Oxford) to the position of President Elect 2019, which was granted.

4. BAJSS Essay Prizes

Helen Spurling reported that there were 10 entries for the essay prize this year, which consisted of 8 UG entries and 2 PG entries from a range of institutions in the UK. The submissions were of a very high quality, covered a range of chronological periods and disciplines, and were submitted from diverse institutions. One prize at UG level was announced: Anna Mullins (Birmingham) for 'A Gendered Analysis of Prisoner-Physicians in Auschwitz, with a focus on Dr Gisella Perl'. Congratulations were offered to Anna on her excellent work.

5. President's report

Hannah Holtschneider reported that the conference was proceeding well, with some insightful papers and key-note lectures on the theme of 'Jews on the Move'. HH thanked all those who were giving papers, and also the committee for all of their support. HH reported on the action the Committee had taken to protest the threat to the status of Central European University through a letter to the President of the Republic of Hungary. Philip Alexander reflected that the role of BAJSS to defend Jewish Studies and its providers was essential.

6. Treasurer's report

Holger Zellentin presented a financial report for the year, which showed that BAJSS is in a healthy position. The main expenses were the BAJSS studentship, the annual essay prize and the travel costs of committee members. HZ noted that subscriptions are too frequently unpaid and the committee would like to make the method of payment of subscriptions more effective to help with this issue. HZ requested that anyone with outstanding subscription dues should get in touch with him. HZ reported that 11 new applications for membership had been received since the AGM at Birmingham, including 2 student applications, 7 associate applications and 2 full membership applications. The list of applicants approved by the committee for membership was circulated for information. HZ closed by emphasising that the Association needs to grow, and appealed to members to encourage colleagues to join.

7. Secretary's report

Helen Spurling reported on communications with members. HS reminded members that the AGM last year had agreed to switch from hard-copy mail outs to electronic newsletters and an online Bulletin in order to save money and promote more regular contact. HS hoped that members had enjoyed receiving these newsletters, and asked for members to get in touch with news throughout the year. The money saved is now being used to fund initiatives to support postgraduate students. The BAJIS studentship was established in 2015 to provide a career development opportunity for a postgraduate in Jewish Studies. Katie Power is the current holder of the studentship and has been working with Zuleika Rodgers to redesign the BAJIS website. Katie would not be renewing her studentship past August, and so applications had been invited for the role with interviews taking place in July. HS noted that it is only due to members' support that we are able to offer this studentship so thanks were offered on behalf of the committee. Last year's AGM agreed to establish a PG/ECR Representative on the BAJIS committee. Marton Ribary was appointed and it was noted that it is really good to have a PG/ECR voice on the committee to help provide support for future scholars in the field. HS had attended the AGM of TRS-UK to assess whether affiliation would be beneficial to BAJIS. TRS-UK are trying to bring together societies to address subjects of mutual concern such as HE policy, REF and impact, and working with schools. The committee had agreed to affiliate.

8. Web officer's report

Helen Spurling reported on behalf of Zuleika Rodgers. Zuleika had taken over as Web Officer this year and sent apologies that she could not be with us. Everything is going well with the website, and there is a good amount of usage. Members are encouraged to pass on announcements to ZR for posting on the website. Members are also reminded to sign up for automatic notifications at <http://britishjewishstudies.org/>. There is a project underway to rejuvenate the BAJIS website and members are asked to send images/photos and information about their institutions to ZR. HS thanked ZR and Katie Power for all their work.

9. Bulletin editor's report

Maria Diemling reported that the Bulletin was now available and an excellent opportunity to celebrate our achievements and safeguard the future of Jewish Studies by showcasing our work in the field. It is important that we keep a record and do not take Jewish Studies for granted. MD issued a call to members to share news and be proactive in offering input. The Bulletin had identified key themes this year: Scottish Jewish Studies; the impact of Brexit; and a focus on our student community. Philip Alexander noted that some articles on the origins of the Association may be interesting for members. HS thanked MD for all her hard work.

10. Social media officer's report

Helen Spurling reported on behalf of James Renton. JR reported that BAJIS social media was progressing well. There were a number of new followers via Facebook, which seemed to be more popular than Twitter. JR asked that members send news that they would like to share via social media to him.

11. PG/ECR Representative's report

Marton Ribary noted that he had provided a full report in this year's Bulletin. He was pleased that the role also included ECR's as it was important to help with the transition from being a student to holding an established position. MR had been building a network of PG/ECR members, which utilised a dedicated Facebook page. A mentoring programme had been established, as well as a dedicated PG/ECR event at the annual conference. HS thanked MR for his excellent work.

12. Conference 2018

Yulia Egorova reported that she was honoured to be President for 2018 and was looking forward to taking on the role. YE presented the CFP for the 2018 conference to be held in Durham. The conference will run from 9-11 July 2018. The current theme is 'Theories and Histories: Jewish Studies across Disciplines', which should bring together scholars from different disciplines and chronologies.

13. Any Other Business

Thanks were offered to Tim Lutz for generously donating to BAJIS to support postgraduate students. On behalf of the membership, Helen Spurling thanked Hannah Holtschneider for organising an excellent conference this year. HS noted that the theme was well chosen and there have been some excellent papers so far. Larry Ray seconded the vote of thanks.

14. Date of next meeting

The next AGM will take place during the 2018 conference in Durham.