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BAJS Annual General Meeting – 5 September 2010

University of Southampton

Present: Maria Diemling, Lars Fischer (Secretary), François Guesnet, Dan Levene, Sarah Pearce (President), Alison Salvesen (President-elect 2011) and ca. 15 other members

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Jim Aitken, Hannah Holtschneider, Seth Kunin, Daniel Langton, Larry Ray (President-elect 2013), and Joachim Schlör.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

LF noted that among the new members elected last year, Michael Mack had been nominated not only by LF but also by Michael Berkowitz. With this amendment the minutes were confirmed as an accurate record of the previous year's AGM.

4. Presidents elect 2012 and 2013

LF reported that Sacha Stern kindly agreed to act as BAJIS President but expressed a preference for 2012 rather than 2013. Larry Ray very generously agreed to the swap for which the committee sought the AGM's agreement which was duly received. In the name of the committee, LF thanked the AGM for its consent and both Larry Ray for being so accommodating and Sacha Stern for agreeing to take on the role.

5. New committee members

LF informed the AGM that the committee had nominated Maria Diemling for re-election and Daniel Langton for election. Both were duly elected by the AGM.

6. New BAJIS members

LF presented the following list of applicants for BAJIS membership approved by the committee and requested their election by the AGM:

6.1 Regular members

Jonathan Stökl (Cambridge), nominated by Alison Salvesen and Jim Aitken;
Daniel Weiss (Cambridge), nominated by Nicholas de Lange and Jim Aitken;
Daniel Wildmann (LBI and QMUL), nominated by Lars Fischer and Michael Berkowitz;
Rebecca Rist (Reading), nominated by Anna Abulafia and Miri Rubin;
Mathias Seiter (Portsmouth), nominated by Sarah Pearce and Dan Levene;
Josef Meri (CJCR), nominated by Lars Fischer and Ed Kessler.

Former student members now eligible to become regular members:

Sandra Jacobs (UCL);

Emma Harris (UCL).

6.2 Associate members

Sara Offenberg (Ben Gurion University), nominated by Danny Lasker, Katrin Kogman-Appel, and LF;

Eva-Maria Ziege (MMZ Potsdam), nominated by Lars Fischer and Ed Kessler;

Haim Sperber (Western Galilee College), nominated by Tony Kushner and Piet van Boxel;

Emmanuel Tukasi (Christ the Redeemer College, London), nominated by Judy Lieu and Michaiiah Olaniyi

6.3 Student members

Helen Bartos (UCL), nominated by Lars Fischer and Michael Berkowitz;

Alana Vincent (Glasgow), nominated by Sarah Pearce and Julie Clague;

Francesca Frazer (Manchester), nominated by Daniel Langton and George Brooke;

Natalie Wynn (Dublin), nominated by Sarah Pearce and Zuleika Rodgers;

Rahel Fronda (Oxford), nominated by Piet van Boxel and Eva Frojmovic;

Nadja Janssen (Sussex), nominated by Nathan Abrams and Clive Webb.

All applicants were duly elected by the AGM.

7. Constitutional issues

LF explained that the committee had agreed to seek the consent of the AGM to two changes in the passage on committee members in section 7 of the constitution. Firstly, given that we now tend to have more than one president-elect at any one time, all presidents-elect should be ex officio members in the run up to their presidency. Secondly, given the demanding nature of the presidency it seems unreasonable to expect of presidents another three years' service on the committee after their presidency. Former presidents should henceforth remain ex officio members of the committee only for one more year after the end of their presidency:

Current version

7. The Committee of the Association

... Committee Members

Eight members shall be elected to the Committee for the following year at the Annual General Meeting, to serve for five years. Members who have completed a full term of office shall be eligible for re-election for one further term, but thereafter cannot be re-elected for a period of 3 years. **The President-elect for the following year shall be an ex officio member of the Committee.** The ex-President shall be an ex-officio member of the Committee for a period of **three years**. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt up to two additional members.

Proposed new version:

7. The Committee of the Association

... Committee Members

Eight members shall be elected to the Committee for the following year at the Annual General Meeting, to serve for five years. Members who have completed a full term of office shall be eligible for re-election for one further term, but thereafter cannot be re-elected for a period of 3 years. **Presidents-elect shall be ex officio members of the Committee.** The ex-President shall be an ex-officio member of the Committee for **one year**. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt up to two additional members.

The AGM agreed to amend the constitution accordingly.

8. Essay prizes

8.1 LF reported that the committee had agreed to award the undergraduate prize to Rebecca Coll (Birmingham) for her dissertation, *Who should be permitted to represent the Holocaust visually?* The quality of the work submitted for the postgraduate rubric did not merit the award of a prize this year.

9. President's report and Conference 2010

9.1 Sarah Pearce noted the very good response to the CFP (though most of it had come just before the deadline) and expressed her thanks to all those who helped to drum up interest. Overall, the conference now comprised 5 key-note lectures, 21 panels of 3 papers each, and an address by Geza Vermes, looking back at the beginnings of BAJIS and celebrating its 35th birthday in 2010. A significant number of speakers and delegates came from European countries outside the UK, from Israel, and from the USA.

Sarah Pearce expressed her enormous gratitude to the colleagues in the Parkes Institute (especially Tony Kushner and James Jordan) for their work in developing the conference programme; Chris Woolgar, Karen Robson and Jennifer Ruthven (Special Collections) for their exceptional support in all things relating to the organization of the conference in the Hartley Library, and for putting on the special exhibition on the Anglo-Jewish Archives at Southampton, to coincide with the BAJIS conference; to Hannah Ewence for unfailing assistance in all matters relating to conference bookings. The generosity of a number of sponsors had been invaluable in facilitating the conference and providing bursaries for graduate students and early career scholars.

9.2 Sarah Pearce noted a significant increase in the numbers entering the essay competition but added that its profile should be raised further.

9.3 Sarah Pearce appealed to all colleagues to consider means of influencing the composition of the REF sub-panels and announced an informal meeting to consider how the many historians among the BAJIS membership might be able to ensure appropriate representation on the history panel.

9.4 Sarah Pearce reported (jointly with Helen Spurling) that following the recommendation from the BAJIS AGM in 2008, Helen Spurling (Southampton) ran a very successful one-day BAJIS/Parkes Institute Summer School for sixth-form students and teachers in the South, to promote the idea of taking Jewish Studies-related degree programmes (as reported in the Bulletin). All funds to support this (including the costs for the teaching rooms and the students' travel and food) were raised by Helen Spurling from within the University of Southampton.

10. Treasurer's report

LF explained that Jim Aitken had been taken ill at short notice. He apologized on behalf of the committee for the fact that it could not present the AGM with up-to-date accounts. Given the late date of this year's conference the gap until the next committee meeting was shorter than usual so that the up-to-date accounts would be received and confirmed fairly soon.

11. Secretary's report

LF expressed his regret at not having been able to fulfil the role of secretary in a more pro-active way, not least because he had taken on the role during his first year in his new position in Cambridge. He had attended a number of subject association meetings dealing with funding and the REF and hoped in future to be able to relay more information on these issues to the committee and the membership in general. It was currently hard to know what exactly to expect until the precise nature and implications of the expected spending cuts became clear.

12. Web editor's report

LF reported that Hannah Holtschneider was generally content with the progress of the website but that any ideas as to how awareness of our web-presence could be increased would be most welcome.

13. Bulletin editor's report

LF reported that the Bulletin had come out just in time for the conference and all members present at the conference would be receiving their copy in Southampton. He hoped that the new features introduced the year before and the new A4 format and inclusion of images would help make it more attractive.

14. Conference 2011

Alison Salvesen reported that the conference would take place from 19–21 July 2011 at Yarnton and include a joint session with SOTS. The conference theme was *Jewish Languages*.

15. Any other business

Martin Goodman suggested that the association needed to be more pro-active in its response to the cuts that lay ahead and were in part already beginning to bite. It was important that colleagues felt they could count on BAJIS. At the very least it was imperative that BAJIS kept a record of the cuts. LF explained that he had contacted departments when he was aware of problems but all too often only found out about crises by coincidence when gathering information for the Bulletin. Evidently colleagues did not automatically turn to the association when facing difficulties and it was agreed that the committee should take the initiative to encourage colleagues to do so.

16. Date of next meeting

During the 2011 conference; exact date to be confirmed.

Provisional minutes, lf 03/01/11