

CRG African History Annual Business Meeting, Lisbon (ECAS 5) 28 June '13

Present: Quite a few people, but the President did not bother to take a list. From his memory the attendants included at least:

Adam Jones, Odile Goerg, Dmitri van den Bersselaar, Geert Castryck, Camille Lefebvre, Henri Médard, Miles Larmer, Oystein Rolandsen, Chris Vaughn, Matteo Grilli, Klaas van Walraven, Vincent Hirribaren, Achim von Oppen, Romain Tiquet.

Excused:

Andreas Eckert, Cherry Leonardi

Agenda:

1. Announcements
2. CRG Website
3. 2<sup>nd</sup> Biannual African History Conference
4. 3<sup>rd</sup> Biannual African History Conference Leipzig
5. ECAS panel selection

1 Announcements: Henri Médard announced that he received a position in African History at the Université Aix-en-Provence – Marseille. Aix is where the French colonial archives are located (Centre d'Archives d'Outre-Mer). All who pass there to do research are welcome to contact him for a visit and a chat. Camille Lefebvre announced that the latest issue of *Afriques: Débats, Méthodes et Terrains d'Histoire* is out and online at <http://afriques.revues.org/> it is a special issue on the Sahel.

2 CRG Website: Harro Westra, the AEGIS webmaster in Leiden, has created a serious webpace for the CRG African History on the AEGIS website, where we can communicate whatever we feel we need to communicate.

The URL: <http://www.aegis-eu.org/index.php/thematic-groups/crg-african-history.html>

So far the website has categories for:

Upcoming African History Events in Europe

Jobs and Grants in Europe

About Us

Contact Us (seems to work, already one new members through website since it aired)

A section with member information

A section on the Biannual CRG conferences

Now we need content: please send information on all events, jobs, grants etc to: [crgafricanhistory@gmail.com](mailto:crgafricanhistory@gmail.com). send information preferably as a URL to an already existing website with information, or as a pdf document that can be uploaded to the website!

Any suggestions for other sections that can contain other important forms of information are welcome!

It was again discussed how to present members' information on the website, which should facilitate members to find and contact each other. It was proposed to not have email addresses listed, but to have links to all members' websites. However: not all members have personal websites. For these the email address can be given as contact. Those members who want to

have their contact data on the CRG site expanded with a link to their personal website on the CRG website should send the URL (with who it belongs to) per email to the CRG email address.

3 2<sup>nd</sup> Biannual African History Conference: Will indeed take place at Durham University, and will be organised in collaboration with Durham University Department of History's professors Cherry Leonardi and Chris Vaughan. Durham is easily accessible from the continent via Newcastle Airport or by ferry to Newcastle, then onwards to Durham by bus or taxi. The conference takes place around 3-5 July '14 (given the differences in semester endings in different countries and holiday desires following that semester end, it will be difficult to find a date suitable to all). The conference can either take place on Thursday 3 and Friday 4, or on Friday 4 and Saturday 5 July. The organisation now aims for 4-5. Those who have clear preferences for either set of dates should make these known as soon as possible. Preference of date can be accommodated within the limits of the organisation's possibilities regarding accommodation etc. More news follows mid September.

Two meeting attendants volunteered to complete the committee to select proposed Roundtables and the 'Exciting lecturer' for this conference: Dmitri van den Bersselaar and Camille Lefebvre. The committee will further consist of the Durham organising committee (Cherry Leonardi, Chris Vaughn and Justin Willis), and Baz Lecocq.

4 3<sup>rd</sup> Biannual Conference: Adam Jones has volunteered to have the 3<sup>rd</sup> Biannual conference organised at Leipzig's Institut für Afrikanistik in March 2016. The reason for an early conference is that Adam will retire in June 2016, hence the CRG conference will allow him to "leave with a bang, rather than with a whimper" (to paraphrase his words). The meeting agreed to have this "bang", while urging that the March dates should be found that coincide with 'spring breaks' for a maximum number of participants, so as not to disrupt classes too much and allow maximum participation. End of March in any case corresponds with German end of winter semester.

#### 5 ECAS Panel selection

The European African History community, that we more or less represent, at least within AEGIS, remains quite dissatisfied with the underrepresentation of African History at ECAS conferences. The Historians are not alone in this sentiment. Among those scholars represented in AEGIS who do not work in political science (especially conflict and/or development) and other 'development'-related fields, there is growing dissatisfaction with the extreme overrepresentation of these domains to their detriment.

The attempt to improve matters proposed at the AEGIS plenary in June 2011 (prior to ECAS 4, Uppsala) did not work. This proposition boiled down to all CRG's being allowed to propose an number of panels that would be automatically accepted by the ECAS panel selection committee. CRG African History was the only one to propose two such panels for ECAS 5, of which one was turned down despite agreements made.

The AEGIS plenary board this year now more or less (this is unfortunately the best description) proposed to allot each CRG one (1) panel that will be automatically accepted. This, so the CRG meeting felt, will not solve the history underrepresentation, nor that of other subject matters or disciplines that now feel underrepresented at ECAS (as not all of them are organised by discipline and, moreover, the CRG does not strive to 'sequester' African History in a niche of its own, but to simply have more history involved in ECAS and AEGIS, and in Africanist scholarship in general).

The meeting agreed the CRG should undertake steps towards the AEGIS plenary and board to

A) make panel selection more transparent and

B) more in line with demands from the AEGIS community, being a closer representation of the variety of fields within African Studies

C) instead of allowing the CRG's one panel each at every ECAS, which the meeting felt would not resolve the issue of underrepresentation, have the CRG's structurally involved in panel selection in one way or another.

To obtain this the following steps were proposed during the meeting:

A) a formal letter of complaint / petition about the state of affairs by the CRG African History, signed by as many individual members as possible.

B) the CRG should support its members in proposing as many history panels as possible for ECAS 6 (Paris). Perhaps a 'campaign' to this end could be organised.

The meeting decided to have a longer and more organised discussion on this subject at the CRG business meeting during the Biannual Conference in Durham '14, which should lead to formal proposals towards the AEGIS Plenary and AEGIS board, as well as to, possibly, practical propositions regarding panel selection offered to the ECAS 6 organising committee. All proposals to these ends are welcome from all members. They can then be discussed in Durham.