

**Minutes of the sixth and final Management Committee meeting
of COST Action A35: PROGRESSORE,
held at the University of Girona, 6 and 8 September 2009.**

Sunday 6 September

1. Welcome

Members of the Committee were welcomed to the meeting by Gerard Beaur (GB).

2. Agenda

The Agenda was approved

3. Minutes

The minutes of the Fifth Management Committee meeting held at Paris on 28 March 2009 were approved.

4. Accounts

GB introduced the financial report. He reported that the Action had not spent the funds allocated for STMS [academic exchanges by young scholars]. Too few had been arranged, and in one case, an STMS which had been approved by the MC had not taken place. In reply to a question from Juergen Schlumbohm, GB said that it was too late to arrange further STMS.

The Action had formally ended at the end of June: Cost had allowed a three-month extension to accommodate the conference.

5. Publications

Discussion then turned to publications. GB reported that the first volume had appeared and another was expected to be received during the conference. A further volume was completed and would go to press as soon as the introduction was approved; one more was complete except for its introduction and two more were more or less finished.

Some money was held in a reserve account at the Centre de Recherches Historiques funds for the subventions for the remaining volumes. The subventions would be released to Brepols when the completed volumes were submitted. GB said that there was some urgency to spend this money as dormant accounts might be closed by the administration there. He therefore hoped that all the remaining volumes would be completed and submitted for publication by the end of 2010.

The meeting then discussed the problem of several volumes where progress was not as fast as desired, and one where the editor had ceased to answer email enquiries about progress. It was suggested that a further editor could be appointed, but the problem was referred to the editorial board.

There were complaints that Brepols were reluctant to send out review copies of the first volume to be published. This prompted much discussion. GB was asked to speak to Brepols about this and ensure that an adequate number of copies were offered for review, particularly to appropriate English language journals

6. The Girona conference

GB ran through the arrangements for the papers. There was some discussion of the structuring of the sections and how the external experts present could be best used.

The list of invited participants was discussed and the identities of each described. Sessions were responsible for finding their own chairs.

Discussion for the publication of the four papers were considered. The meeting restated its earlier decision not to add the four papers to the Brepols series as a thirteenth volume, but to either look for a journal which might publish them as a group or to seek individual publication. It was asked whether some of the reserve might be used to cover publication costs: this was felt inappropriate.

It was important that the papers were further developed after the meeting and would be presented a second time at a round table at the ESSHC at Ghent in 2010.

7. Rural History 2010

Richard Hoyle briefed the MC on the Rural History 2010 meeting at Brighton on 13-16 September 2010, drawing especial attention to the website, www.ruralhistory2010.org.

Tuesday 8 September

8. Final conference papers

A general discussion of the final papers identified the following points: namely, that any revisions would have to accommodate the need to refine and reflect regional and national distinctions; to ensure that concepts were used critically and carefully; to find ways to include particular examples in relation to and support of the general statements; and, as appropriate, to ensure the structure of each paper was sound. It was also expected that the papers, which should be in the region of 8,000 to 10,000 words, would be fully set within appropriate historiographical contexts, would reflect COST materials as much as possible and would seek to discuss long-term historical views in relation to present day concerns.

A timetable for further work on the same, with a view to publication, was discussed. It was agreed that revised versions of the four papers would be prepared for presentation at European Social Science History meeting at Ghent in April 2010, with revised versions pre-circulated in mid-March.

It was also agreed that Phillipp Schofield would present the papers, as circulated in March, to the Cambridge University Press journal *Continuity and Change*, this as a pre-submission with a view to generating an initial response from the editorial team by the time of the Ghent conference. Any further discussion of possible alternative journals or next steps was left until the Ghent meeting and after the report of the *C&C* editors.

10. Relations with other networks

It was suggested that members of the present Action might, as this Action concludes, seek opportunities through association with other COST Actions. It was however noted that most other relevant Actions, e.g. A34, appeared to be coming to an end and no relevant new Actions were about to commence.

9. Perspectives for the future of the network

It was noted by the chair that a report of the Action was to be submitted within three months of the conclusion of the same. The structure of the report was explained and the expectations from the assessors outlined.

Discussion of new funding opportunities followed and potential future applications to COST in terms of a co-operative programme regarding both 'small

projects' and 'challenges' were briefly considered. It was recognised that the present COST Action would not fit closely with the expectations of the much larger future funding initiatives and that it was more likely that members of the Action, individually or collectively, might wish to align themselves with a larger, and inter-disciplinary bid to COST when the new funding is announced (2011).

PB noted that the Brighton conference on rural history (September 2010) would provide a valuable opportunity to maintain some of the Action's energy and work. Further to this and in anticipation of that meeting, it was also agreed that work would begin on the establishment of a European Rural History Association, which might well be allied to the existing European Rural History Network and which could complement its work. A small working group (PB, EL, PM, GB, RC) was established in order to consider the creation of such an Association and to report at the Ghent meeting on particular points (including the nature of a possible secretariat, the legal status of the Association, any points of comparison with similar bodies).

11. AOB

The distribution policy regarding publications arising from the Action was discussed and some concern expressed that not all members of the MC were to receive copies of each of the volumes produced by the Action.

Finally, the meeting concluded with a vote of thanks from the MC to GB for initiating and overseeing such a successful and rewarding Action.

PRS/RWH
20 September 2010