

Institution: Birkbeck College, University of London

Unit of Assessment: 30

Overview:

History at Birkbeck is distinguished by exceptional vitality, a sustained record of success, and collaboration across fields and disciplines. The department of History, Classics and Archaeology (HCA) is situated within the School of Social Science, History and Philosophy. Its members collaborate across teaching and research without heavily demarcated disciplinary boundaries. Our research spans all human history across time and space, from antiquity to the contemporary world. Our breadth of scope is matched by a shared focus on key areas of historical enquiry (such as the relationship between people, society and power) and emergent fields of growing importance (such as the subjective experience of culture). In the previous two research assessments we have done notably well. For RAE 2001 we were ranked 5* nationally; in the RAE 2008 we submitted 33.5 category A staff, and our research was graded as 35% at 4* and 35% at 3*. Since 2008 we have been able to build further on our existing strengths, with additional posts. This expansion – in hard times – signals the College’s on-going recognition of our international excellence and the department’s vitality in conducting research of the highest originality and significance. For REF 2013, we are submitting the publications of 35.63 FTE.

b. Research strategy

In line with Birkbeck’s ‘College Research Strategy’ and following our success in previous RAE cycles, the department’s strategy has been to maintain and develop excellence in research and provide the highest quality research training; to sustain existing momentum; to make available the results of research, and the expertise acquired; and to identify and develop new areas of possibility by providing an inclusive working and learning environment for all researchers, including postgraduate research students.

The four cornerstones of our departmental strategy have been:

- Integration of junior and senior researchers via ‘thematic clusters’ of research activity; with the aim of consolidating our shared strengths at the same time as fostering new opportunities and avenues for collaboration.
- Continued investment and development in new and junior academic staff as well as postgraduate research students with the aim of creating and sustaining a sense of intellectual and academic community that embraces all researchers within the department.
- Building international networks with the aim of consolidating the department’s international reputation for research excellence as well as enabling the dissemination of our researchers’ work to audiences across the globe.
- Making explicit a culture of support for small and large grant applications with the broader aim of supporting world-leading research across the department.

HCA’s research strategy is kept under continual review by the department’s research committee and its aims are fostered by formal committee discussions as well as by departmental away-days and other research-led events. The success of the department, however, also derives from its shared sense of mission. We see the study of the past (whether via history, classics or archaeology) as crucial for current understandings of society, culture and politics and we share a particular interest in issues of social justice.

Environment template (REF5)**(1) Integration of Junior and Senior Researchers via 'Thematic Clusters' of Research Activity:**

Whilst our work can of course be described in disciplinary and period-specific groupings (archaeological, classical, medieval, early modern, modern, world), in practice our intellectual interests tend to cross such boundaries. We share an interest and expertise in questions of historical method and theory and in the changing forms of historical writing and inquiry, with particular strengths in genres of social and cultural histories. A distinctive feature of the department is that we think primarily in themes and method rather than periods. This is the intellectual foundation for the integration, vitality and stability of the department. We currently have active research discussion groups on material cultures and archives; the body and health; and racism and religious intolerance. At the broadest level, our research focuses on:

- (i) embodied and material experiences of culture – with topics on pain and death, belief and gender – where the approach is theoretically informed and interdisciplinary (Arnold, Bourke, Brady, Cook, Edwards, Laite, McFadyen, Meyer, Pudsey)
- (ii) the social and cultural operation of politics and the state (Anscombe, de Vivo, Figes, Feldman, Goodson, Howard, Humfress, Innes, Lovell, Rüger, Sapire, Shimazu, Swann, Wachsmann)
- (iii) the social and political histories of economies, materialities and consumption (Baird, Constantakopoulou, Stewart, Trentmann, Waddell, White)
- (iv) the social, cultural and intellectual histories of technology and medicine (Amrith, Cuomo, Harding, Henderson, Mangion, Pick, Reinisch, Shapiro, Sengoopta, Taylor).

Across these themes, we have a shared interest in the transnational flow and exchange of ideas, cultures and people. Building on our strength in global and comparative history in the previous RAE, members of the department have added to the richness of transnational history, especially in the study of migration, consumption, cultures of violence, and international organisations.

Our strategy has been to sustain this sense of a shared project. We have done so with the help of regular research seminars, focused cluster meetings, collaborative activities and informal exchanges. To assist thematic collaboration further, the department and School have supported several conferences, including on “Power and the State in Early Modern History” (Stewart, 2010) and “Encounters with Athens, Rome and Jerusalem” (Edwards and Feldman, 2013).

In addition to nurturing research and publications, this shared pursuit of thematic and interdisciplinary inquiry has been effective in encouraging research leadership by senior members of staff, building a research culture with a shared sense of purpose, attracting high calibre younger scholars (Howard; Waddell) and assisting with the retention of leading senior scholars.

(2) Continued Investment in New and Junior Researchers: The department has further grown since RAE 2008, and has done so consistently with early career researchers rather than via professorial appointments. Our strategy has been to invest in new talent, supporting junior colleagues via formal systems of mentoring and leave, but also by integrating them in an embedded culture of research and collaboration. Research students play a key role in the research environment of HCA and our strategy has been to expand the financial, administrative, technological as well as professional resources for our PhD community (see below section c). A further noteworthy element is the research-led emphasis in MA teaching, to which all colleagues contribute: this links teaching with research in a sustained and meaningful fashion, and, in particular, facilitates the development of early career researchers.

(3) International networks: The department currently holds two large ERC grants (Amrith; DeVivo): one testament to our successful international focus. The ability to think and act internationally is

partly due to our status within the discipline, but also to an active strategy of international engagement at all levels. We have benefitted enormously from the leading example set by Eric Hobsbawm. Hobsbawm's Balzan prize provided HCA with an international platform to study the reconstruction of Europe after the Second World War. We have an active international fellowship scheme which has brought 29 visiting fellows from 9 countries to HCA. In addition we have several doctoral student exchange schemes; Queen's University, Canada; Columbia, USA; Pisa, Italy; Verona, Italy; Beijing, China. Humfress is currently leading an international postdoctoral training network (PIMIC) funded by EU/Marie Curie. Colleagues play leading roles in international conferences and networks, from work on Vitruvius (Cuomo with Ghent and support from the German DFG) to the Asia research group (Shimazu with Singapore and others in JEANIEN) and the International Consortium for Research on Antisemitism and Racism (Feldman, co-founder). These connections have enabled us to identify opportunities for funding and collaboration and to ensure HCA is in the vanguard of new developments in international research and method.

(4) Support for large grant applications: The department has long been successful at grant applications. In the recent cycle we have made a conscious decision to aim not only at single-researcher grants and fellowships but also at larger scale projects, typically involving postdoctoral researchers. This has clearly been successful; we have far exceeded the strategic objective for the College of increasing the number of grants and of staff holding grants by 5%. One major project has recently been completed (Wachsmann on camps), another is in its final stages (Bourke on pain). Two others are currently in train (de Vivo on archives, Amrith on migration) and three more are poised to begin (Trentmann, Reinisch, Humfress). Several factors have made this strategy possible, such as working closely with a dedicated administrator in the college's excellent Research Grants Office, departmental visits from grant-giving bodies (Leverhulme, Wellcome), and consistent college support for such bids. Above all, the department has fostered a culture of grant-writing, which demonstrably facilitates projects by staff at all career levels. This is done partly through formal mentoring and facilitation events (such as at away days and by inviting representatives of grant-making bodies to brief the department) but as importantly through an embedded culture of peer-to-peer support, advice and collaboration, with successful grant holders sharing details of the bid-making process with other colleagues – from original conception of an idea to submission of the proposal – and assisting with future applications.

Future strategy

For the next five years, our strategic plan focuses on:

(1) a longer term, evolutionary balance of grant applications: We will continue to foster a culture of grant application via peer-to-peer support. We will also aim to extend our strategic plan toward a balanced portfolio of grant applications, to encourage colleagues to see how different kinds of grant (single-researcher/research-team etc) may best fit into their longer term research plans. This can be achieved via a number of mechanisms, including annual meetings with representatives of the departmental Research Committee to discuss future research plans, departmental away days and mentoring. The aim will be firstly to help colleagues to be proactive and identify suitable methods of funding research well in advance of need; and secondly to achieve a balanced portfolio of grants with a healthy overlap of projects coming to an end and others about to commence.

(2) Communicating our focus: In Spring 2014 we will be hosting, in collaboration with *Past & Present*, an international conference on 'History after Hobsbawm'. The department will seek to consolidate its profile in the fields of socio-cultural history via various activities such as an annual lecture, a regular 'Birkbeck' conference, and other intellectual 'outreach' activity. With our centres

Environment template (REF5)

(Pears Institute; Raphael Samuel Centre), thematic clusters and collaborative research projects, HCA has additional instruments to maximise research achievements and to communicate the distinct kinds of histories and methods practised at Birkbeck. These steps are in part about consolidating and communicating more effectively the shared focus we have already achieved. It will also help with facilitating future research collaboration, nationally and internationally, and attract high quality PhD and postdoctoral students of the next generation.

(3) Sustaining strengths in challenging times: In the next five years medieval and early modern subjects will face some pressure due to future retirements or major administrative roles undertaken by staff in these areas. Our strategy is to defend and cultivate these subjects, to identify potential postdoctoral fellows in these areas, and to support applications by them to the Wellcome and Leverhulme Trusts, building on our success in the past.

c. People, including:

i. Staffing strategy and staff development

Our staff development strategy includes for all members a college-wide professional development review. The College and HCA are committed to mentoring all staff. Publications and research plans are monitored by the Research Director and Research Committee, which consists of junior and senior colleagues. The departmental seminar series and research clusters serve to integrate new members of staff, including postdoctoral fellows, honorary research fellows and visiting professors. It is not department policy to give early career researchers a lighter teaching load, but we do exempt them from large administrative jobs in their first few years. Our teaching is strongly research led and our Masters programmes in particular – now the largest in the country – facilitate research development. In collaboration with the School of Arts & Humanities, the Birkbeck Institute of Humanities and the Birkbeck Institute of Social Research (BISR), the department also contributes financial and administrative support to encourage young colleagues in particular to organise research networks and workshops. We have thus supported conferences on ‘the Queer 50s’ (Cook, 2009), ‘Forty Years Crisis: Refugees in Europe 1919-1959 (Reinisch, 2010), colloquia on a variety of interdisciplinary medieval topics (e.g. ‘The Politics of Speech in Late Medieval Britain’; ‘Landscape and Belief’), and most recently a conference on ‘Between Words and Walls: Material and Textual Approaches to Housing in the Graeco-Roman World’ (Baird, 2013). In many cases, collections have subsequently been published, such as *What is Masculinity?* (Arnold and Brady, 2011).

All members of staff are entitled to apply for one term paid sabbatical leave after every 9 terms. We allow them to apply for one year of leave after 18 terms of service. We also support all research grant bids which provide additional leave.

HCA follows the College’s procedures for annual review panels, which consider applications from all groups of staff for promotion, allowances, probation and conferment of title. All members of staff are automatically informed of the procedure and deadlines each year. The Head of Department together with the Dean also conduct a systematic review to encourage applications from members showing “exceptional levels of performance”. The great number of promotions during this REF cycle are witness to the successful working of these procedures as well as to the academic success of those promoted. Between 2008 and 2013, 12 were promoted from Lect to SL; 5 from SL to Reader; 5 from SL/Reader to Professor.

Other than for retirement, we have been able to retain every member of staff since 2008 (Riall is on a fixed-term secondment to the EUI). Younger colleagues who held fixed-term research fellowships have either won posts in HCA (Reinisch) or gone on to permanent posts elsewhere (Goeschel,

Environment template (REF5)

ANU and Davies, Western Connecticut State University).

Post-doctoral researchers continue to make a vital contribution to the department's research culture. We currently have 3 Post-Docs via the ERC projects on migration and on archives (Das, Guidi, Silvestri), 1 on the Wellcome project on pain (Hide); 1 British Academy post-doc (Sialaros); and another Wellcome funded post-doc (Taylor). In the REF census period we have had a total of 19 postdoctoral researchers, including *Leverhulme Early Career Fellows and RCUK Early Career Fellows* who have become permanent members of staff (Reinisch: Leverhulme ECF, commenced 2007 and ended 2009; Goodson: RCUK ECF, started 2006 ended 2011).

Evidence re equal opportunities: Birkbeck is firmly committed to the development of positive policies to promote equal opportunities. The college belongs to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers which stipulates that equality and diversity must be promoted at all times (principle 6). The College's new Equality Strategy, which succeeded the Single Equality Strategy, was approved by the Governors in spring 2013. HCA is committed to equal opportunities in all regards, as evidenced in the gender composition of the department – 19 women, 20 men. Every member of staff making decisions about staffing has EQ training. The School has a dedicated Equality Lead.

In addition to protecting colleagues' time for research – via its support of research grants, leave and a balanced teaching load – the department lends its support to exchange and collaboration with non-academic stakeholders and publics. HCA recognises that such exchanges are valuable and that part of our regular time should be devoted to them; in the case of Riall, currently at EUI, this involves a formal secondment. Honorary research fellows include journalists, free-lance authors (Beevor) and professional leaders in the museum sector (Boon, Science Museum). Several colleagues have served as consultants for museums and for media and film. These are detailed in our Impact Statement.

ii. Research students

We have a flourishing PhD research community, consisting currently of 27 full time and 59 part-time students. In this REF census period, 41.83 students have successfully completed their PhD; the uneven number reflects the fact that a few students were shared with other departments. We have succeeded in winning a steady proportion of the AHRC funded studentships allocated to College – between one and two every year –, plus a competitive College studentship and a Bloomsbury studentship. In addition, 2 PhD students were attached to the AHRC project on concentration camps (Wachsmann, 2006-09) and 2 began working on the ERC Archives project (deVivo) in 2012-13. A further one will begin on the Wellcome-funded post-war health project (Reinisch) in 2013-14. We have been resourceful and successful in seeking additional outside support for the many outstanding young historians applying to us. Three fully-funded studentships were awarded to the department by an alumnus donor in recognition of its success in research and teaching. In addition, and thanks to generous donations, HCA is about to launch the first set of Eric Hobsbawm research scholarships. These will provide a total of at least 10 MA studentships for the next five years (two full-time or four part-time per year), and thus create a bridge for students towards a PhD. They will also provide an additional research fund for existing PhD students. These private donations in recognition of the excellence of our department, point to the potential for attracting additional outside funds in the future.

Since the last RAE, we have further expanded the intellectual, financial, administrative,

technological and professional resources for our PhD community. PhD students run their own dedicated research seminar series and are fully integrated into the staff seminar and other lunchtime lecture series and departmental activities, such as the Rome in Bloomsbury series (Pudsey) and events by the Wiener Library and Pears Institute for the Study of Antisemitism. They have reading groups and a web-site which, in addition to serving as a notice board, functions as an interactive medium where students write reports and exchange ideas. The department supports it, the students run it. We introduced two annual research days, where students present work in progress and discuss it with peers and staff; these are now co-organised with students. We also offer induction evenings, regular doctoral writing workshops – attended by 20+ students per session – and special sessions for professional development, including workshops on applying for jobs, writing and placing reviews, and on publishing, to which the history editor of CUP, History Today, Antiquity and free-lance editors have contributed.

Our postgraduate students also participate in the seminars at the IHR, including the student-run “History Lab”, and they are further part of a wider School-network of joint PGR-academic staff research seminars (including seminars organised by GEDS, Politics, Psychosocial Studies, the Birkbeck Institute of Humanities and the Birkbeck Institute of Social Research) which connect our PhD students with debates and methodologies across the social sciences and humanities. Students benefit from activities organised by the BISR, including a fortnightly research students’ seminar and workshops on “developing your research career”, on new media, blogging and bibliographic software. The School offers additional sessions on “Giving a conference paper” and “Finishing the thesis”.

PGR skills training is designed at departmental level and covers both key subject-specific skills and key transferrable skills (in line with the RCUK 'delivery plan'). All of the training courses supported by Birkbeck 'Generic Skills Funding' are open to students from HCA and across the School of SSHP, Birkbeck and the Bloomsbury Consortium. This ensures a breadth of opportunities and availability not only within the department and institution, but also across partner academic institutions within London. Every research student's training needs are assessed by their supervisors at registration and formally reviewed at the student's annual review. Students are also required to self-evaluate their training needs, working closely with their supervisor(s), and with support of the head of the research committee (Wachsmann) and the Senior Tutor for PGRS (Pick). We run further sessions for current MA students and potential MPhil candidates to introduce them to the experience of doing a PhD. HCA's Research Committee consists of eight members of staff who meet formally at least once a term to discuss PGR matters. Progress of students is reviewed annually.

Full-time students are expected to meet their supervisor at least three times a term for consultation – part-time, two meetings. These are monitored in the annual report form, which also keeps track of their attendance of conferences, giving papers, submitting papers for publications. Students have a second supervisor who acts as a mentor. We have a rigorous process to monitor and support progress at a departmental level – including an up-grade where a committee assesses a substantive research-based chapter, plus introduction, outline of thesis and bibliography; our procedure asks for this review to take place no later than 21 months from registration for full-time students – 40 months for part-timers.

The various kinds of support mentioned above have materially helped our students to establish themselves in the profession through conference experience, publications and interviews for posts.

Our PhD Students have secured lectureships at Queen Mary, King's College (London), Goldsmith's, Leicester, Copenhagen and Stellenbosch, among others. Others have gone onto 5-year post-docs at Cambridge (UK) and fellowships in South Africa, at the British School at Athens and at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Our on-going success in generating research income is evidence of the department's energetic research culture and of the national and international recognition of the originality and significance of our work. Since January 2008, members of the department have won grants at all stages of their career from major British and international bodies in the humanities and social sciences, ranging from Leverhulme early career fellowships and AHRC grants to an ESRC director fellowship, and from two large collaborative grants funded by the Wellcome Trust to two grants by the European Research Council. In total, staff has secured £5,098,246.

Principal research grants and fellowships in HCA by year since 1 Jan 2008:

This selective, chronological list gives an overview of the sustained success of our research grant strategy and of our ability to support research across the main thematic clusters discussed above:

2008

Feldman – AHRC: Migrants, immigrants, welfare in England, 1/4/08-31/7/08 (£26,150)
 Lovell – Brit Acad: customs and finance, late Qing, 1/5/08-30/10/08 (£11,626)
 Trentmann: ESRC Director's Fellowship, 10/2007- 9/2008 (£81,786).

2009

Swann – AHRC: Exile in pre-Revolutionary France, 1/1/09-31/3/09 (£20,307)
 Sapire – Leverhulme: Loyalty and Royalty, Africa 1860-1947, 1/9/08-31/8/09 (£23,401)
 Pick – Wellcome: In Pursuit of the Nazi Mind – 1/9/08-30/4/13 (£103,358)
 Harding – ESRC: Life in the Suburbs– 1/6/08-31/5/11 (£12,671)
 Figes – Leverhulme: Mishchenko-Ivanova correspondence – 1/1/09-31/7/10 (£33,740)
 Rüger – National Maritime Museum: Heligoland, 1/10/09-31/3/11 (£37,500)
 Humfress – Leverhulme: Philip J Leverhulme Prize, 1/4/09-31/8/12 (£70,000)
 de Vivo – Leverhulme: Philip J Leverhulme Prize, 1/4/09-31/8/12 (£70,000)
 Swann – Brit Acad: Crisis of the Absolute Monarchy, 14/12/09-15/12/09 (£4,613)
 Davies – Leverhulme: European Knowledge of Distant Peoples, 1/8/09-31/7/12 (£67,508)
 Wachsmann – Brit Acad: Nazi Camps, 1/8/09-30/4/10 (£64,179)
 Goeschel – Leverhulme: Organized Crime in Germany, 1/10/09-31/12/11 (£58,000)

2010

Wachsmann: Leverhulme – Nazi camps, 1/5/10-30/4/11 (£40,718)
 Arnold – Leverhulme: Communities of Belief in Medieval Languedoc, 1/5/10-31/8/11 (£43,012)
 Riall – Freiburg IAS – Bronte: An Anglo-Italian conflict, 1/9/10-31/8/11 (£42,570)
 Amrith – Centre for History & Economics: Migration, Health and Economic crisis, 1/1/10-30/6/10 (£25,028)
 Hunter – Wellcome: Sloane printed books project, 17/4/10-16/9/11 (£64,074)
 Reinisch – Brit Acad: Refugees in Europe 1919-1959, 15/9/10-17/9/10 (£9,150)
 Shimazu – Brit Acad: Diplomacy as Theatre, 1/9/10-31/8/11 (£94,210)
 Harding - Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek: Rubicon fellowship, 1/9/10-31/8/11 (£60,825)

2011

Bourke – Wellcome: A history of pain, 1/1/11-31/12/13 (£319,883)
 Cuomo – Leverhulme: Ancient numeracy, 1/10/11-30/9/14 (£136,215)

Environment template (REF5)

Wachsmann – Guggenheim: Nazi camps, 3/10/11-2/10/12 (£16,164)
 Lovell – Leverhulme: Philip J Leverhulme Prize, 1/9/11-31/8/14 (£70,000)
 Feldman – Rothschilds: Anglo-Jewish Childhood – 1/10/11-30/9/12 (£24,955)

2012

Goodson – Brit Acad: Early medieval Mediterranean cities – 30/3/12-30/9/13 (£5,130)
 Cook – AHRC: Queer Domesticities – 1/1/12-30/9/12 (£65,805)
 de Vivo – ERC: ARCHIVES project – 1/2/12-31/1/16 (£962,669)
 Amrith – ERC: Coastal Frontiers – 1/1/12-31/12/16 (£771,503)
 Rüger – AHRC: Anglo-German relations 1807-1952 – 1/1/12-30/9/12 (£66,358)
 Sengoopta – Leverhulme: Satyajit Ray – 1/10/12-30/9/15 (£138,617)
 Feldman – Pears Foundation: postdoct. researcher – 1/9/12-31/8/14 (£90,958)
 Taylor – Wellcome – Public health and outsiders – 1/9/12-31/8/15 (£179,071)
 Sialaros – Brit Acad: Euclid's Geometry, 1/9/12-31/8/15 (£222,110)

2013

Reinisch – Wellcome: Reluctant Internationalists, 1/10/13-30/9/17 (£729,605)
 Humfress – ERC - PIMIC: Power in Medieval Islam and Christendom 1/1/13-31/1/16 (£248,488)
 Trentmann – Leverhulme: Cultures of Energy – 1/1/13-31/1/2014 (£9,998)

The scholarly infrastructure supporting research includes the Wiener Library which Birkbeck – led by HCA – successfully persuaded to relocate to Russell Square, next door to the department. In addition, the (then) Faculty of Arts at Birkbeck contributed a grant to Michael Hunter's British Printed Images to 1700 website. Figes' project on the Whisperers made a large number of sources available via a dedicated website, as did Pick's work on the Nazi mind. The department has dedicated IT support and a Research grant officer who has been crucial for the success of our grant applications.

e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

We are at the forefront of research in our respective areas of expertise and through our publications, keynotes, papers and research networks have played a leading role in the development of both the discipline of history and cross-disciplinary research.

In the REF period, we have published 18 monographs, 99 articles in peer-refereed journals, 51 edited collections and 169 other chapters. In addition to the above-listed fellowships and Philip Leverhulme prizes, the quality of our work has been recognised by several awards, including the Premio Antico Pignolo, awarded by the city of Venice for the best book in Venetian studies (de Vivo); the Przeglad Wschodni Award for the best foreign book on East European history (Figes); Il Premio della Corte costituzionale della Repubblica italiana (Humfress); the Samuel Pepys Award and also the Roy G. Neville Prize for his book on Boyle (Hunter); the Jan Michalski Prize for Literature for her book on the Opium War (Lovell), the first non-fiction work to receive this accolade; Julian Swann was made a Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques; Trentmann was joint recipient of the Royal Historical Society's Whitfield Prize for "Free Trade Nation". Joanna Bourke was awarded the prestigious Treaty of Utrecht chair by that city – the first female incumbent.

Members of the department have given keynotes in all continents. Bourke gave the 2012 Prothero Lecture at the Royal Historical Society (a new history of pain). Humfress gave the 2013 Carlyle Lectures at Oxford (on laws' empire). We have collectively contributed several hundred papers to research seminars. We are editors or co-editors of 24 peer-reviewed journals and serve on 28 editorial boards. We have edited book series, notably "Gender and Sexualities in History" (Arnold, Bourke and Brady), and the 'Oxford Studies in Medieval European History' (Arnold).

All members belong to research networks that have advanced knowledge through cutting-edge research, new methods, and interdisciplinary exchange. In addition to the international networks mentioned in earlier sections, Amrith (together with Dr. Harper) directs the Cambridge Centre for History and Economics' project on Sites of Asian Interaction, and collaborates with Dr. Clavin (Oxford) on a global history of food, poverty and development. Cook is one of the directors of the Raphael Samuel History Centre which brings together leading historians, stakeholders and members of the public on topical subjects. Humfress has been a member of several international working groups on law and empire. Lovell won a network grant from Leverhulme that brought together scholars from Britain and East Asia. Reinisch is a member of the History of International Organisations Network. Wachsmann has collaborated with a network studying the international history of concentration camps.

The scholarly interest from neighbouring disciplines and multidisciplinary collaboration attest to the significance of our work. In 2010, Amrith co-organised a conference at Harvard on economic crises and health, which brought together economists, public health scholars and anthropologists as well as historians. Feldman has organised several lectures and workshops on racism that have created dialogue between scholars from law, sociology, psychosocial studies, politics and history; e.g. a workshop on Muslims and Jews: Citizenship, Identities and Prejudices in Europe, USA and Israel (2012). Hunter has collaborated with the philosopher Anstey in his work on Boyle. Laite's workshop on organised crime attracted criminologists, sociologists and journalists. Rueger is an active member of the interdisciplinary group of international experts advising the National Maritime Museum. Sapire has collaborated with colleagues from Film Studies on South Africa. Shimazu's current project on diplomacy as theatre is interdisciplinary at the core, drawing on theatre and performance studies as well as international relations and geography. The 29 international visiting fellows who have chosen Birkbeck as their base during the census period are a testimony of the vitality and reach of our work.

We have provided expert advice to leading international as well as national funding bodies, including European Union (FP7), MacArthur Foundation, Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Humboldt Foundation, the Norwegian Research Council, Austrian Science Fund, VQR (the Italian REF), National Research Foundation, South Africa, and the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada. In the UK, we have done service for the British Academy, ESRC, AHRC, Leverhulme Trust and the Wellcome Trust.

Our contribution to international networks extends to advice and guidance for international PhD students and younger scholars; e.g. Humfress' work for the Marie Curie (FP7) Initial Training Network on medieval power and institutions, which oversees and organises PGR training for a dozen PhD students; it links eight academic institutions and two private companies from across the EU. We regularly examine PhD theses at leading British and international universities and serve as external examiners of taught courses (BA and MA). We have also been external assessors for chairs at major universities including London, EUI, University of California and Princeton. All members regularly review scholarly articles for top journals and leading publishers, including OUP, CUP, Princeton UP, Penguin and many others.

Our work with non-academic experts, professions, media and policy-makers is discussed in the Impact Statement.

