

Welcome to the 2019 edition of Ex Historia!

Our Five Year Plan for world domination in the field of postgraduate history journals across the entire EX4 postcode continues apace, and this edition sees an eclectic mix of high-quality scholarship from postgraduate students from a wide range of different institutions and areas of historical study. Exeter's very own Julius Guthrie writes about 'The Charismatic Emperors', and the nature of political authority in those fateful years following the Roman Republic's transformation into empire. Then, we jump forward into the late medieval period, as Francis Mickus shares his research on Henry V, and how that most celebrated of monarchs skilfully used books and images as propaganda. Lest any ancient historians begin to suffer nosebleeds at this point, Luca Ricci skilfully returns readers to the classical world, using Social Network Theory to shed light into the polis religion of 5th century BC Athens. Lindsey Williams then explores the development of the Valkyrie from the Viking Age through to its depiction in culture today. The edition ends with 2 book reviews; Moara Crivelente looks at 'Global, Regional and Local Dimensions of Western Sahara's Protracted Decolonization: When a Conflict Gets Old', while Joseph Wagner casts his eye over 'Postnarrativist Philosophy of Historiography'. Their work is testament to the extraordinary calibre of research being conducted by postgraduate students, and their ability to analyse and contribute to the work of their seniors. The future of the historical profession is in safe hands!

Yet, for all the work it takes to produce our annual journal, Ex Historia continues to be about far more than this. Our symposia series continues to go from strength to strength, and offers postgraduate students the chance to present their work to their peers in a friendly and relaxed environment, whilst bringing the History postgraduate community together as we learn about each other's work. Our role continues beyond the seminar room, as we've helped postgraduate students to drink, socialise and, above all, laugh together during our trips to the Impy. The film night and theatre trip that we organised as a committee this year was also greatly enjoyed. I'm delighted that the History Department has recognised Ex Historia's contribution to the postgraduate community by granting us our own budget, which I hope will enable future generations of Ex Historia committees to build on our contribution for many years after we have donned the gown of graduation.

One of the things I've been most proud of during my time as editor is how Ex Historia has also engaged with the world beyond History PhD students. We reached out to our MA students, even putting on a workshop about what life as a PhD student, and the (deeply joyous!) application process entails. We also managed to obtain significant RLI funding to host a conference, with 7 speakers from 3 different Universities, to shed light on the Brexit phenomenon; one of the great political issues of our age. The keynote speech by Queen Mary's Dr Robert Saunders, author of the critically acclaimed 'Yes To Europe!', was particularly well-received. As were the chocolate brownies, which disappeared with remarkable haste. That Emil Sokolov was at the front of the queue was perhaps less remarkable!

Emil was, of course, at the centre of the annual Ex Historia scandal; future historians will refer to this year's effort in hushed tones as 'EmailEmilGate'. Amidst the blizzard of messages that you doubtless all received as a result, and which made my attempts to work

productively in the Bristol archives that Friday afternoon increasingly futile, I was incredibly touched by all the people who took the time to send nice messages to either Emil or myself. It's difficult to describe how much they brightened what turned into a horrible day. I made sure I replied to each one, but please allow me to briefly repeat that thanks here.

As many of these messages pointed out, Ex Historia is run entirely by unpaid PhD volunteers, that give up time they don't really have, in order to provide a service to their fellow PhD students. With that in mind, I'd like to say an enormous thank you to Emil, who was Communications Director, Assistant Editors Lisa Berry-Waite, Rowena Cockett and Sveta Yefimenko and Book Review Editor Issy Sawkins. All are unbelievably hardworking and talented people, who I'm sure will all go onto great things. None of what we achieved this year would have been possible without you, and I hope you think all the hard work was worth it!

Issy is, of course, the new Ex Historia editor for 2019/20, along with Matt Beebee. I know that they will both be a tremendous success, and I hope you all will give them every support.

On behalf of the 2018/19 committee, we hope you enjoy this fantastic, felicitous and first-class edition of Ex Historia!

Josh Hockley Still,

Ex Historia Editor, 2018/19