



46th Annual SLAS Conference, University of Bristol

Conference Report for SLAS Committee

2010 Organising Committee

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Introduction

The 2010 Conference was held at the University of Bristol on 9-10 April 2010. A total of 31 panels took place over the two days of the conference, of which one was a panel consisting of undergraduate and postgraduate students from the Universities of Bristol and Bath. On the evening of Friday 9 April, a well-attended question-and-answer session took place, with a panel of speakers including Chris Bryant MP, the Minister for Europe and Latin America, and Samuel Moncada, the Venezuelan Ambassador to the U.K. Professor Steve Stern, of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, delivered the Plenary Lecture, "The Paradoxes of Truth: Reckoning with Pinochet and the Memory Question in Chile and World Culture, 1989-2006" on the evening of Saturday 10 April.

With the exception of the Conference Dinner, held in the Victoria Rooms, all other events and activities took place in venues along Woodland Rd. and its immediate vicinity. The Registration and Help Desk was set up in the Source Café (Social Science Complex), the venue for coffee breaks and Saturday lunch, and it remained open throughout the days of the conference. The publishers' stalls were set up alongside the Desk. We had a team of student helpers wearing distinctive T-shirts – two at the desk and four located at various points within the Arts Faculty/Woodland Rd. – to assist and to guide delegates through the complicated layout of the Arts Faculty. We also purchased a basic mobile phone to provide a dedicated emergency number, highlighted in the conference booklet.

Planning for the Conference began in the spring of 2009, with the booking of the venues and the costing of events and entertainment. The call for panel proposals went out over the summer with a deadline of 30 August. This date proved to be too early, and it was subsequently extended to 30 September. Panels were confirmed in early November, although numerous changes were made to many of these over the following months, meaning that it was not until the end of March printing deadline that the programme was finalised. Future conference organisers should be aware that we found that panel convenors, sometimes unaware of the need for an accurate printed conference programme and the complexities of scheduling panels, were in many cases slow to update details; they may require prompting in the weeks leading up to the conference to provide updated lists of participants and titles of papers. The Conference website proved invaluable in this respect, allowing

us regularly to update conference information, and to make last-minute changes in response to, for example, unforeseen withdrawals.

Panels

Our call for papers was deliberately broad – we invited panel proposals dealing with any theme, period or country. A total of 37 panels were initially approved, of which 31 took place. Of the 31 panels, 3 were allocated 3 x 90-minute sessions; 28 were allocated one or two 90-minute sessions (18 x 2, 10 x 1). We ran five parallel sessions over the two days, and some 160-170 papers were delivered.

Registrations

The deadline was 1 March, but we processed many late registrations. In the week after the deadline we checked our list of participants on the various panels against registrations, and found that we had many more of the former than the latter. We asked convenors to send reminders to speakers on their panels; this proved particularly helpful in that it enabled us to update our records and, most critically, our catering arrangements. Nonetheless, we continued to receive late registrations (and withdrawals) through to early April. We were assisted greatly by the flexibility of the catering manager and her team. Their cooperation accounts in large part for the substantial surplus.

The registration form offered four options:

Full Fee	
Full Conference	£170
Saturday Only	£105

Postgraduate/Retired/Unwaged	
Full Conference	£115
Saturday Only	£90

Non-members were also required to pay a supplement of £25 (students £12), or to join SLAS for the same rate. We found that many delegates, especially from outside the UK, opted to pay the supplement.

Payments were made by cheque or credit card. This posed some problems, however, particularly for delegates from outside the UK, as UoB does not accept international bank transfers, and does not have facilities for secure online payments. Some types of non-UK credit/debit cards were also not accepted. This meant that in some cases we had to accept payments on registration at the conference. Where payments were taken on the day, in almost all cases, we requested that these be made in cash, rather than by credit card. Late registration fees were not charged where registration, but not payment, had taken place.

Delegates and Fees

We estimated our income on the basis of registrations for the Leeds 2009 conference – anticipating approximately 65% of registrations at the full academic rate, and 35% at the p/g rate. At Bristol, we had a higher proportion of postgraduates, who accounted for 43% of registrations. Future organisers should take account of what may represent a shift towards higher participation from postgraduates, as this has a bearing on income.

Many non-UK delegates requested formal, personalised invitations for presentation to their home Universities. After the conference, many also requested of the organisers formal certificates of attendance for the same purpose.

Other Income

Wiley Blackwell sponsored the Friday night wine reception (£600), and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office funded the travel and accommodation costs of our Plenary speaker, Steve Stern (1,436.90). In addition, income from publishers (for stands at the conference, leaflets in the conference pack, adverts in the conference booklet), totalled £1,190.

Costs were as follows:

Single stand/table	£150
Additional stands/tables	£50
Leaflet in conference pack	£30
Half-page advert in booklet	£95

Publishers – SLAS 2010:

Zed Books	Stand
Cambridge University Press	Advert
John Wiley & Sons	Stand/advert
Manchester University Press	Stand
Liverpool University Press	Leaflet
T & F Academic	Stand/leaflet/advert
Iberoamericana de libros	Leaflet
Gazelle Books	Leaflet
Combined Academic Publishers	Leaflet

Refunds

Prior to the deadline of 1 March, we made refunds where delegates were forced to withdraw for personal or financial reasons. In cases of last minute withdrawals, we made the decision to wait until we were able to reconcile the conference accounts before confirming that we would refund registration fees. In the event, our surplus enabled us to make refunds to all delegates who had registered but were not able to attend.

SLAS Conference 2010 - Income & Expenditure

Budget Heading	Income	Expenditure
Delegates Fees (as per table below)	24,210.00	
Late fees (9 x £20)	180.00	
SLAS Supplements	296.00	
Stands & conference advertising	1,190.00	
Wine sponsorship (Wiley Blackwell)	600.00	
FCO Contribution to Plenary Speaker costs	1,436.90	
Plenary speaker costs (travel, accommodation, subsistence)		1,436.90
Band costs		600.00
Admin Support and Student helpers		2,012.09
Printing, pens, bags, conference packs		968.12
Misc charges (AV equipment, portering)		909.66
Room Hire & Catering costs		16,283.64
Miscellaneous travel costs		64.80
Miscellaneous conference weekend expenses: rooms/helpers/porters		133.15
Totals	27,912.90	22,408.36

Summary

Income	£27,912.90
Expenditure	£22,408.36
Total	£5,504.54

Fees Table

Postgrad Saturday	£90.00	5	£450.00
Postgrad Both days	£115.00	70	£8,050.00
Full fee Friday	£65.00	3	£195.00
Full fee Saturday	£105.00	15	£1,575.00
Full fee Both days	£170.00	82	£13,940.00
Postgrad Saturday	£90.00	5	£450.00
Total		175	£24,210.00

Timetable

Friday 9 and Saturday 10 April 2010

Friday	
11.00 - 12.00	BLAR Editorial Meeting
12.00 - 13.00	SLAS Committee Meeting
12.00 - 14.30	Registration
13.30 - 15.00	Panels
15.00 - 15.30	Coffee break
15.30 - 17.00	Panels
17.15 - 18.15	AGM
18.15 - 19.15	BLAR Wine Reception
19.15 - 20.30	Buffet Dinner
20.40 - 22.00	SLAS Evening Debate

Saturday	
08.00 - 10.00	Registration
09.00 - 10.30	Panels
10.30 - 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 - 12.30	Panels
12.30 - 14.00	Buffet Lunch PILAS Lunch
14.00 - 15.30	Panels
15.30 - 16.00	Coffee break
16.00 - 17.30	Panels
18.00 - 19.00	Plenary Lecture: Professor Steve Stern (Wisconsin-Madison)
19.15 - 20.00	Wine Reception
20.00 - 22.00	Conference Dinner
22.00 - late	Music by Que Chevere