



EDITORIAL

Welcome from the Editors

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Welcome to volume one of the seventh series of the *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*. We hope this series, and more particularly, this volume, marks a new departure for the *Transactions*. We have been working as the editors of the journal since January 2022, the year that marked its 150th anniversary. From the beginning of our tenure, we have been keen to shape the journal in new ways to ensure it represents the relevance, dynamism and diversity of the historical discipline today. We have worked together with our UK Editorial Board and International Advisory Board to foster such change.

At its core, the purpose of the *Transactions* remains to publish excellent historical scholarship. Academic journals are fundamental to the ecology of the discipline, providing a space where original research is shared, reviewed, communicated and discussed. They create spaces in which scholars come together and talk with each other. The ways in which journals foster such engagements are not always obvious. Peer review is the lifeblood of academic journals. It continues quietly in the background of academic life, but often shapes our research anew, generating fresh lines of enquiry and prompting different questions or approaches. We are deeply grateful to our peer reviewers who make ready their expertise and set to reading, analysing and commenting on submissions. The engagements with research begun at the peer review stage continue as the piece is reworked, published and read. In publishing new research, the *Transactions* seeks out work that is methodologically exciting and geographically, conceptually and chronologically diverse. It does so and will continue to do so by identifying and promoting new voices, approaches and ways of working across the discipline.

In editing the journal, we are particularly committed to ensuring it reflects the full diversity of geographical and chronological areas at stake in the field. We seek to further the journal's current work in this area by particularly welcoming submissions from historians whose research sits outside British and European history. Alongside geographical diversity, we want the *Transactions* to demonstrate the dynamic nature of the field. We are

particularly energised by methodologically innovative and cutting-edge work and have sought to encourage such publications through our workshop scheme. Begun in 2022 and funded by the Royal Historical Society, we have set up an annual call for proposals for workshops. The purpose of this scheme is to support scholars at different career stages by providing the funds needed to bring colleagues together to discuss a particular historical, historiographical or methodological problem. The organisers of funded workshops work closely with us as editors to also develop a publication which has the potential to be included in the journal. The scheme funded four workshops last year on topics such as environmental history and parliamentary culture in colonial contexts. In 2023 the scheme has allocated funds to five workshops on topics such as barter in the Global Middle Ages, the role of historical scholarship in video games, and mothers and motherhood on the left in the twentieth century. Rather than simply benefiting UK-based scholars, the workshops support the work of historians in different countries. For instance, a workshop considering ‘Collective Reflection on Oral Histories of Pakistan’s Women Constitution-Makers’ will take place at the Institute of Development & Economic Alternatives in Lahore, Pakistan, in November this year.

As well as the workshop scheme providing support to enable new discussions to take place, we have also worked to create new spaces for different forms of publication. The Common Room is a new section within the *Transactions* and has been introduced this issue. The name of the section plays upon the long history of the journal and the changing nature of the institutions in which we work. With perhaps fewer common rooms in which to sit and discuss (and less time to do it), the *Transactions’* Common Room creates an alternative site in which issues pertinent to our discipline can be shared, discussed and collectively worked through. It is a space open to all interested in History, which welcomes shorter pieces that might focus on methodological problems, historiographical issues, intellectual debates or engage with recent publications.

While we have made these changes and seen their fruition in this issue, we have further plans afoot for the next volume. With one volume a year, it is not feasible for *Transactions* to host special issues, but we are introducing the possibility of a ‘Special Section’. There will be one Special Section per issue made up of around four articles and a brief introductory text explaining the theme at stake. The Special Section will allow scholars to contribute a range of research articles on a particular theme or problem, giving more space for different perspectives to be represented. As such they provide the possibility of unpacking the different facets of an issue from various angles and to work together to show their complexities.

Together we seek to ensure that the *Transactions* publishes research which is original and vital. It is a space where we come together as a field to see what is new and where we might be going next. In an age when humanities scholarship seems to be under threat, the *Transactions* seeks to underscore the ways in which our discipline is thriving, a place in which historical scholarship is seen to be ever more relevant. With over 150 years of publishing the highest-quality pieces

across the discipline we hope that *Transactions* will not only build on those traditions, but with its changes in scope and approach will reach a wider readership and represent the full diversity and dynamism found in History.

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