RaAM

Researching & Applying Metaphor

www.raam.org.uk

MINUTES of the 3nd Annual General Meeting of RaAM held at the Paraninfo, Facultade de Filosofia y Letras Building, University of Extremadura, Spain, Spain, at 12.00 hr, on 31 May 2008.

Present: *From the Executive Committee:* John Barnden, Tony Berber Sardinha, Rosario Caballero, Lynne Cameron (Chair), Alan Cienki, Anna Kaal, Jeannette Littlemore, Graham Low (Sec), Fiona MacArthur, Elena Semino.

From the membership: 65 members (see attached attendance sheet)

Apologies: *from EC* Seth Lindstromberg

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

1.1 The minutes of the 2nd meeting were agreed (nem con).

1.2 There were no matters arising.

2. Charity status

GDL reported that RaAM was now a UK charity, No. 1119686. As such it had a duty to operate 'for the public benefit'. While part of this work involved encouraging PhD students worldwide who were researching metaphor, and creating a supportive forum for metaphor researchers, members were encouraged to suggest new public benefit activities.

3. Reports and accounts

3.1 The Chair's report (Lynne Cameron)

LC reported that 2007-8 had been a good year. It had seen RaAM consolidate and establish itself as a serious organisation for metaphor research. It had also acquired a solid financial basis rather more quickly than had been projected. JL was thanked for her work as treasurer. The schemes for offering two prizes had been realised and the first winners were about to be announced. In both cases, the juries had been very pleased with the range of topics and with the high quality involved. LC thanked all those involved. Supporting PhD students had been generally successful and AK was thanked for her work organising meetings and establishing preferences. LC was particularly pleased to note that Spanish government funding had allowed the conference to offer 6 bursaries to PhD students, and that the local organisation had been able to fund student accommodation. The RaAM web pages had on the whole worked smoothly this year, supporting the conference and registration. TBS was thanked for his hard work as website editor. The website was to be developed further in 2008-9, with the addition of a page outlining metaphor research grants and projects. 2007-8 had also seen the appearance of two successful electronic newsletters, and a third was in preparation. ES was thanked for her work on these. The Executive Committee had held two meetings since the last AGM and its members were thanked for their work. In short, RaAM was in a very healthy state.

3.2 The Treasurer's report (Jeannette Littlemore)

 JL presented a summary of the accounts for the year ending 5 April 2008, noting that at 30 April the balance was £6,638 and that this meant that £5,000 could be transferred to a savings account. She also noted that membership for the year had been agreed as thanks for a 'user's report' by a PhD student of the RaAM7 conference. Lastly, she reported that she had had the accounts checked by an independent reviewer (this being the requirement for small charities with a turnover of under £10,000). No items were queried by members and the accounts were approved.

The Executive Committee was authorised to arrange to have the accounts for 2008-9 checked and to agree a fee as appropriate.

3.3 The Web Editor's report (Tony Berber Sardinha)

TBS summarised the use of the website in 2007-8, noting that there had been 67% more hits than in the previous year, though this was probably due to the RaAM7 conference, as most web activity related to that. He noted that the Forum had now been closed. TBS asked members for ideas and suggestions for how the website facilities could be developed and there was a short discussion. Two members said they wanted a discussion forum and members should be encouraged to contribute; there was then a discussion about whether an email discussion board should be implemented, and it was agreed that this would be considered further. Two members asked for RaAM conference slides to be made available and this too would be considered, but it needed to be borne in mind that the RaAM site had limited storage space.

3.4 The Conference Secretary's report (Fiona MacArthur)

FM reported that a procedure and documentation for making bids for RaAM conferences had been established, and both were being monitored via the bidding for the RaAM8 conference in 2010. The experience of RaAM7, being the first conference to be organised in association with RaAM as a charity, would be used to help create in 2008-9 a set of Guidelines for Future Conference Organisers. It was therefore extremely important that members completed and returned the feedback forms in their conference packs.

With reference to the 2010 conference, RaAM8, two high quality bids had been received, and the winner, she and the EC were pleased to announce, was the VU University, Amsterdam, and the theme of the conference would be 'Metaphor and Domains of Discourse'.

3.5 The Postgraduate Liaison & Development Officer Officer (Anna Kaal)

AK reported that she had worked across the year to try and create a network for PhD students and that she was currently asking them to submit summaries of their projects to go on the RaAM website. The conference forum for PhD students had also worked well and she asked PhD students attending the AGM to make sure they returned the preferences and interests questionnaire. Lastly, she pointed out that the two PhD prize schemes were valuable for students and their future careers and she was very pleased to note how many PhD students had managed to attend the conference.

3.6 Report on Newsletter (Elena Semino)

Although Newsletter Editor is not yet an EC officer role of, LC asked ES to add a brief report about the RaAM Newsletter. ES reported that RaAM had sent two newsletters thus far, both in electronic format. It was unclear whether members wanted hardcopy as well as electronic

versions; an informal show of hands suggested that only 2 members were keen on a hardcopy version, so it was agreed to continue with purely electronic dissemination.

ES reported that Newsletter Number 3 was in preparation. It would contain a report on the conference by a PhD student (similar to the report on RaAM6). ES asked members to send in items for the newsletter: new books, summaries of new research projects, details of theses which had recently been passed, and details of relevant conferences, by 15 June. She noted that No. 3 would introduce squibs, where the author would take a topical and/or controversial issue and write a short discussion paper on it. This could take the form of a reflection and suggest solutions without having full empirical backing, as would be needed for a paper in a research journal. LC had agreed to write the first, if required, but offers were invited for squibs in subsequent issues.

4. RaAM workshop 2009

LC announced that the 2009 workshop would be held at the University of Amsterdam, would be entitled 'Metaphor, Metonymy and Multimodality' and would be run by Charles Forceville with Alan Cienki and Irene Mittelberg. CF talked briefly about the intended programme and indicated that it would be held in early June, probably the 4th-5th. Full details would be circulated later.

5. Location of RaAM8 (the 2010 RaAM 8th biennial conference)

The announcement was handled under 3.4 above.

6. Appointment of Executive Committee

Nomination sheets were put on the conference noticeboard on 29 May and nominations had closed at 17.00 hr on the 30th. Members had been asked to nominate people at the Opening Ceremony and on the pre-circulated Agenda.

Election of Post-Graduate Liaison and Development Officer (2 year tenure)

There was just one nomination, and Lettie Dorst was nominated nem con.

Election of three Ordinary Members (2 year tenure)

There were 6 nominations for the three posts, so members attending the AGM voted (using preprinted anonymised voting sheets). It was emphasised that only members could vote. 62 sheets were returned, of which 3 did not have the 'member of RaAM' box ticked; the latter were treated as invalid. The new elected members were: Alice Deignan, Rosario Caballero and John Barnden. LC thanked all 6 for standing, noting that if RaAM was to work smoothly, it was really important that members were prepared to contribute their time and effort.

7. Any other business

7.1 Relationship between RaAM conferences and the RaAM organisation

LC explained to the AGM that although this item had not been put on the pre-circulated agenda, it had become clear in recent weeks that it was important and needed agreement by the membership as a whole.

The biennial conferences were essentially a joint venture between the RaAM association and the local planning team. There were several dimensions to the relationship between the conference, the conference hosts and the parent association. Apart from topics like the provision of help and support, there was quality assurance, protecting and enhancing the RaAM name and maintaining the financial stability of RaAM.

LC gave a brief explanation of the last point. Essentially RaAM needed a certain amount of income to be able to do its job. The RaAM association had been funded initially in 2006-7 by a surplus from the Leeds conference (RaAM6) and since then by membership fees. As surpluses could not be transferred from some universities, like the University of Extremadura, this approach had proved impossible in 2007-8, and an alternative scheme had been agreed by the EC in which conference registration was be divided into two parts, with money from the first part, the pre-registration, going to RaAM. There was also a differential conference registration rate for members and non-members, such that there was a financial encouragement for conference participants to join RaAM. There was no coercion, however, and several participants chose not to join. The result of the scheme was that RaAM now had a reserve and was in a healthy financial state (see reports above).

What was now needed was to plan for future years and to establish a set of basic principles relating the conference and the Association. She began by putting to the membership the principles agreed by the EC at its meeting on 28 May, namely that:

> 1) The conferences were currently the main activity of RaAM. Conference literature should therefore have the name 'The Association for Researching and Applying Metaphor' as an initial heading, above the wording 'The (DATE e.g. 2010) International Conference'

> 2) The RaAM association does not cover financial losses incurred by conferences.

> 3) Conferences were to be organised by members and that this should be interpreted as at least the chair of the organising team being a member of RaAM.

> 4) Conferences should operate a system of differential registration fees, with non-members being charged more than members.

> 5) The difference in fees should be equivalent to or greater than the cost of one year's membership of RaAM (at the relevant levels: student, ordinary etc).

> 6) Participants would be encouraged to join RaAM at registration, but would not need to do so.

> 7) Local organisers should agree the title and the registration procedures (and webpages) ahead of time with the RaAM Conference Secretary.

Each item was taken one at a time, discussed and voted by a show of hands, except for item 2, which was non-negotiable at the present time. Items 1, 3, 6, and 7 were agreed nem con. There was considerable discussion with respect to items 4 and 5. The AGM agreed that the they should revisit the principles in 2 years time and the items were passed with 1 vote against.

Much of the discussion centred on technicalities of how money might be most easily and cheaply be passed to or held by the association (Zouhair Maalej), and whether it was genuinely difficult to have post-conference money transferred (Dirk Geeraerts). It was pointed out again that financial regulations differed markedly between many countries and the UK and that many would not allow all or part of surpluses to be transferred out. There was also the problem that some institutions would fund conference registration, but would not reimburse membership fees (Alice Deignan); LC noted that this was recognised in items 3 and 4 and was something RaAM could do little about. The best that could be done would be to make it advantageous to join the Association when registering. However, (in answer to ZM) RaAM itself had limited ability to handle large numbers of financial transactions, and was simply not in a position to take all registration money and partition them itself.

Ning Yu noted that Lifetime Membership was an option used by several similar associations and LC agreed that the EC would investigate this and bring a proposal to the next AGM.

Action: JL

7.2 Gerard Steen spoke very briefly about RaAM8 noting that the Free University had been renamed the VU University (pronounced [vy:]).

The meeting closed at 13.00 hr

NOTE

The 2009 AGM will take place in Amsterdam at the 'Metaphor, Metonymy and Multimodality' seminar. Final details will be circulated later.

Graham Low

Secretary

29 July 2008/4 April 2009

Signed

L.J. Cameron (Chair)