

## **'Being a Minority in Times of Catastrophe'**

Birkbeck, University of London (Department of History, Classics and Archaeology)

**Date: 25-26 June 2021**

The deadline for proposal submissions is **14th January 2021**.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, surveys by the British Medical Association and other organisations reported that persons from black and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds have suffered disproportionately, both in health and economic terms. While it is too early to draw conclusions regarding the reasons and outcomes of these inequalities, this conference wishes to explore historical parallels in which minority groups were similarly affected by sudden or prolonged periods of crisis. The organisers wish to bring together scholars to discuss the experiences of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe's minorities in times of historical disaster, natural and man-made, and the responses these engendered such as the provision of relief and medical aid or maintaining law and order. Papers exploring the impact of, or reactions to, specific environmental and public health emergencies, such as famines, floods or epidemic disease, from the late eighteenth century onwards are especially welcome.

Key themes to consider include:

- **The challenges minorities faced during these times of historical crisis**
- **How minority communities self-organised in response to such crises**
- **The impact of these disasters on inter-communal relations**
- **Government responses in relation to minorities**
- **How times of disaster influenced or reshaped state-minority relations**
- **The cultural, religious and/or economic consequences of specific crises**
- **The role of international relief organisations, particularly in relation to medical aid**
- **The role of civic organisations and diasporas in providing aid to minorities in host countries**

The conference is organised by the [BASEES Study Group for Minority History](#) and is a part of the Public History Festival ran by [The Raphael Samuel History Centre](#). The format of the event (online, hybrid or face to face) will be subject to the evolving public health situation.

**Confirmed keynote:** Dr [Mark Levene](#), Emeritus Fellow in History, University of Southampton

Please send an abstract – of no more than 300 words – and a short academic biography to [sgmh.basees@gmail.com](mailto:sgmh.basees@gmail.com) no later than **14th January 2021**. Successful applicants will be notified by 10<sup>th</sup> February. The participants will be expected to circulate their presentation scripts before the conference.

Selected papers will also be considered for publication as part of a post-conference volume (further details to follow). For more information please visit the Study Group's website: <https://studygroupforminorityhistory.wordpress.com/>.