

British Academy Review • 26

**NEW
DISCOVERIES
IN BRITISH
RENAISSANCE
ART**

Also
**Meeting Hitler's
biographer**
**How
terrorists
learn**



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The articles in this issue give a flavour of the range of activities undertaken by the British Academy in the last six months. And there are also articles showcasing the work of British Academy-supported early and mid career academics.

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Cover: Katherine Parr, c.1545, attributed to Master John.
National Portrait Gallery (NPG 4451)



BRITISH
ACADEMY

for the humanities and social sciences

The British Academy



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The British Academy, established by Royal Charter in 1902, is the UK's national academy for the humanities and social sciences. It is funded by a Government grant, through the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

The Academy is an independent, self-governing organisation of 1,000 Fellows (with a further 300 overseas) elected for their distinction in research. The British Academy's mission is: to inspire, recognise and support high achievement in the humanities and social sciences throughout the UK and internationally, and to champion their role and value.

The British Academy's work is shaped by six strategic priorities.

1. Championing the Humanities and Social Sciences

Our objective is to take a lead in representing the humanities and social sciences, promoting their interests and vigorously upholding their value.

2. Advancing Research

Our objective is to provide distinctive and complementary funding opportunities for outstanding people and innovative research.

3. Fostering Excellence

Our objective is to strengthen, extend and diversify ways of recognising and celebrating high achievement in the humanities and social sciences.

4. Strengthening Policy Making

Our objective is to provide independent contributions to public policy development, enhancing the policy making process.

5. Engaging with the Public

Our objective is to stimulate public interest in and understanding of the humanities and social sciences, and to contribute to public debate.

6. Promoting Internationalism

Our objective is to promote UK research in international arenas, to foster a global approach across UK research and to provide leadership in developing global research links and expertise.

Further information about the work of the Academy can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk

An irresistible argument

NICHOLAS STERN

In his address to the Annual General Meeting on 16 July 2015, Lord Stern of Brentford presented the case for continued investment in the humanities and social sciences. This article is an edited version of that Presidential Address.

A major event this year was, of course, the General Election. Following the outcome of the Election, I have sought to engage with the new Government and its policies. I have exchanged correspondence with the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it is clear that the role of the British Academy and its ability to contribute the best of scholarship to help examine the great issues of our time is well understood.

There was a special Budget last week. The Chancellor affirmed continued support for research excellence. We know that he is personally committed to science and research – and that can only be encouraging – as is the Prime Minister, as I know from my membership of the Council for Science and Technology, the highest advisory body on science and research.

We will not know the outcome for the ‘science budget’ – which funds research in universities, including humanities and social sciences, and also the national academies¹ – until the Government Spending Review in the autumn. The new Minister for Universities and Science, Jo Johnson, has declined to be drawn on likely funding levels, but it was encouraging that the science budget was excluded from in-year cuts recently announced. BIS – the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, which funds universities and research – has to shoulder major cuts in its budget. I understand that efforts are being made within BIS to accommodate those cuts while protecting the science budget so far as possible. There is also a major capital commitment running currently. Nevertheless the funding prospect is tough.

Together with partners, the British Academy will contribute creatively and positively to this debate. We have

1. The British Academy, the Royal Society, the Royal Academy of Engineering, and the Academy of Medical Sciences.

a powerful story to tell about the importance of research for innovation, growth and quality of life. Research is, of course, important in its own right as well as for its practical benefits. It is natural that governments will want to prioritise those benefits, especially at a time of major economic challenges. Here our argument is surely irresistible: it is knowledge that drives innovation and growth, and enables us to prosper wisely. It is important to stress that prosperity has many dimensions, not all of them easily measurable, and not to forget the ‘wisely’. This is not just about economic growth, important as that is – it is about quality of life and community and the full range of human flourishing – the things that are at the front of the humanities and social sciences.

In the past few weeks I can report that – in consultation with the Cabinet Secretary – the British Academy has drawn together senior policy-makers, Fellows and other experts to discuss ways in which policy could be developed to tackle two major national challenges: how to improve the UK’s productivity (on which the Government released a policy paper last week),² and how to respond to rising levels of obesity, especially among the young. We plan to engage further with both issues this coming autumn.

Building a stronger future

Yesterday I joined with Presidents of our sister national academies in an appearance before the new Commons Science and Technology Committee. We followed the Minister, in what to my mind was powerful symbolism, recognising that the four academies speak for the research community, and that they speak with one voice. We were able to reinforce the message of our joint publication from earlier this year, *Building a stronger future*:³ that if you are serious about seeking growth and innovation, it

2. HM Treasury, *Fixing the foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation* (Cm 9098; July 2015).

3. In February 2015, the British Academy, together with the other national academies – the Royal Society, the Royal Academy of Engineering, and the Academy of Medical Sciences – issued a joint statement, ‘Building a stronger future: Research, innovation and growth’. The statement may be found at www.raeng.org.uk/resandinnov

is vital that you invest in science and research.

We urged four priorities to make the UK the location of choice for world-class research, development and innovation.

- Place research and innovation at the heart of plans for long-term economic growth.
- Secure prosperity by strengthening public investment in research and innovation.
- Meet demand for research skills through a flexible and diverse workforce.
- Strengthen policy by embedding expert advice across government.

We also urged government to raise investment in research and development to that of comparable international levels. As a proportion of GDP our expenditure is substantially below the OECD average and around half that of leading countries. The Minister made the point that UK research is world class, and vital for innovation and growth: to which the obvious response is that that is where we should be investing.

The British Academy has for some years now sought to emphasise a community of interests with the other disciplines. I firmly believe the humanities and social sciences should avoid any kind of false competitiveness with science, technology, engineering and medicine. The disciplines are intertwined and mutually supportive. It is not zero-sum: if the overall settlement is strong, then our disciplines will do well too. I continue to be struck by the support that the other academies express for our subjects: they too see that the major challenges cannot be tackled by science and technology alone, but need understanding of history, society, languages, cultures, behaviour. It is hard to develop effective interdisciplinary responses without strength across all areas of research.

Of course, national policies are not only about growth and the economy. The Academy has an important part to play in informing discussion on major issues across



At a public event held on 5 March 2015 entitled 'Tackling the Great Challenges of the 21st Century', Lord Stern, President of the British Academy, and Sir Paul Nurse, President of the Royal Society, discussed the new opportunities – and need – for collaboration between the different academic disciplines to respond to the big issues of our time. A video recording of the event can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/events/2015

the board, including such things as constitutional developments in the UK, the forthcoming EU referendum, housing,⁴ productivity, obesity, and so on. In this, the Academy seeks to make expertise available to shed light on the issues – its approach is analytical, rather than advocacy. The Academy is not a think-tank.

And while much of the focus is on the major challenges of public policy, we do not forget the many fascinating issues that scholars explore in their work that do not have a direct link to policy. Most of the British Academy's activities – lectures, conferences, fellowships, workshops, etc. – are of that nature. But you will at this time forgive me if I have focused on matters of consequence for the funding of research – and the Academy – on which all else depends.

Higher education matters

Whilst the Academy is studiously neutral on most matters of general public policy, we do have strong views on matters closer to home, those with a direct connection to research and higher education (HE).

In the Budget the Chancellor noted the excellence of the UK's universities: 'Britain's universities are one of the jewels in the crown of the economy and are vital to the country's future. The UK has four of the world's top 10 universities, second only to the US'.⁵ There are record numbers of students in HE, including record numbers from disadvantaged backgrounds (we must be watchful that the latest changes to grants do not undermine that), and record numbers of graduates in work (the latest Graduate Labour Market survey showed the highest employment rate for working age graduates since 2007, at 87.5 per cent). It is true that the 'graduate earnings premium' has slipped from 55 per cent to 45 per cent over the last decade, but HE is still an excellent investment for a young person or their family. And we all have a shared interest in sustaining the excellence of the HE system.

4. *UK Housing: Setting out the Challenge*. Output of a joint ESRC British Academy Conference, 29 October 2014 can be downloaded via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/uk-housing

5. HM Treasury, *Summer Budget 2015* (HC 264; July 2015), p. 58.



Humanities and social sciences are real strengths for the UK: international league tables show that there are more UK institutions highly ranked for humanities and social sciences than for other disciplines. And, in open competition for European Research Council awards, it is in our disciplines that the UK has the strongest record.

Value

It is in the nature of this moment and the role of the British Academy that the emphasis of my words has been on arguing the case with government for the value of research and of the Academy's disciplines. We have a very powerful case to make. We should not be defensive. Indeed defensiveness can be self-defeating. At the same time we have to stand for quality and independence and must be clear and robust in our arguments.

Thus, amid ongoing discussion of how universities are funded, it is worth reminding ourselves *why* they are funded. And, in particular, why there is a value to university work and life that exceeds their ability to transfer specific skills and stimulate economic growth. A university is about more than the acquisition of competences, more than the total of 'impact' and 'learning outcomes' – terms that represent a narrow but sometimes dominant discourse of higher education. A university must be much more than a production arrangement for generating skills and qualifications. I certainly think that it is proper for an academy like this one to underline that education should have an exalted purpose, and a special place in society. We must

emphasise that a university is a place where a student learns to think and academics are free to pursue their thinking wherever it might lead, regardless of its potential cash value or the inconvenience to some of the ideas or conclusions that follow. When we put together *Prospering Wisely* a year ago, in which we sought to articulate the value of our disciplines, we deliberately did not put the economic case first.⁶ In a contemporary economy and society our disciplines do have enormous practical and economic value – but that is not the only or indeed the primary reason we should cherish and support them.

Farewell

The phrase 'and last but by no means least' has special poignancy for me and for all of us this afternoon. For today we also bid farewell to Dr Robin Jackson, Chief Executive and Secretary for the past nine years.

Onora O'Neill and Adam Roberts, my predecessors as President, and myself have all relied on Robin enormously. His steering, guidance and judgement have been hugely valuable. And it has been a working relationship which has brought warmth and friendship. I am deeply grateful. I am sure that this AGM will want to express its deepest gratitude, on behalf of the whole Academy, to Robin for all that he has done and achieved. We have been extraordinarily fortunate in having such an outstanding Chief Executive and Secretary.

6. *Prospering Wisely: How the humanities and social sciences enrich our lives* (February 2014). www.britishacademy.ac.uk/prosperingwisely



Elizabeth Mortimer was commissioned to create a bust of Dr Robin Jackson, who was retiring as the British Academy's Chief Executive and Secretary, having served since 2006. The finished bronze was unveiled at the Annual General Meeting on 16 July 2015.

Interview Alun Evans



Alun, you have just started as Chief Executive of the British Academy, the national academy for the humanities and social sciences. What was your own field of study as a student?

I studied Politics, or what was then called Government, at Essex University as an undergraduate. I then went to Birmingham to do a postgraduate MPhil in Russian and Russian History, in which I studied the relationship between the Soviet Union, the Communist International and the British Labour movement between the wars. I then took a decision in the early 1980s that the study of Russian politics was not going to go anywhere and nothing was going to change in the Soviet Union, and that I would therefore do something else – so I joined the Civil Service.

Did you come from a particularly political family? Did you have ambitions of your own to become a politician?

My father was very political. And I did have ambitions to go into politics, but that didn't really work out. Once one joins the Civil Service one has to put aside political ambition in order to serve the Government of the day – which I think I did reasonably well, originally serving a Conservative Government, then a Labour Government, and then under the Coalition a Lib Dem Secretary of State.

Were there any academics who particularly influenced you?

The best lecturer I had as an undergraduate was Professor Anthony King, now a Fellow of the British Academy.¹ I was then very fortunate to become a research assistant working for him part time for three years upon finishing

my undergraduate course. I have kept in touch ever since and have done occasional pieces of work for him, and sometimes read through something he has produced and offered one or two off-the-wall suggestions for how it might be improved. He is still producing books galore.

Five years ago, having been prodded by my friend Professor Peter Hennessy,² I started to think about doing a PhD. I had become very interested in the way in which private offices in the Civil Service work – the relationship between Ministers and their civil servants, and the changing pressures on private offices. Peter and I realised no one had really studied this in any way. I have been working on that part time through the last five years.

What has it been like looking at Ministers' private offices from an academic perspective when you yourself had been principal private secretary to three Secretaries of State?

I enjoyed enormously my time as principal private secretary. I realised all the time that I was very close to where events were going on and history was being made. But I also got thinking about how the process could be run better, or how it could be done differently. Twenty years ago it was almost a completely different world compared with now. It was at the time when the role of the Civil Service as the only source of advice – or gateway for advice – to Ministers was declining. The role of special advisers was growing, as was the role of the internet and 24/7 media. Ministers now have access to vast amounts of information and analysis – some of it good, some of it bad, some of it in-between – and the challenge of assimilating that information into the best possible source of advice for Ministers is a very big challenge for the private offices. Some do it well now, but too many of them don't.

1. Professor Anthony King was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2010.

2. Lord Hennessy of Nympsfield was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2003.

Was that the transition from *Yes Minister* to *The Thick of It*?

Yes, I think it is part of that. In *Yes Minister*, the source of advice to Hacker was either his permanent secretary or his department, filtered by Bernard, his principal private secretary. In *The Thick of It*, one sees the absolute dominance of modern communications, and the eclipse of the traditional form of learned, thoughtful policy advice from civil servants. All that was represented in a quite light-hearted way, but it is not a bad comparison.

Has your own experience helped your research by providing you with insights, or have you felt you've had to acquire a distance from the subject?

My own experience gave me insights and a context. But I don't think I could have studied it at the time I was doing the work. It is now 15 years since I left the private office, so I can do it with a certain detachment. Also, I have to be careful not to assume that what I saw as a principal private secretary in private office was necessarily the standard model. I have tried very much to interview people who have worked for different Ministers and different Prime Ministers over time, so that I can get quite a big spread of opinions on the ways of working. For example, I have had interviews with one of the private secretaries to Harold Wilson in the mid '60s, and with the current principal private secretary to David Cameron. That gives me a range of views of how the job has changed, how the context has changed, how the media has changed.

Presumably your own background has made it easier to get those interviews.

Yes, undoubtedly!

You have also acted as secretary to a number of Government inquiries: Foot and Mouth Disease 2001, Foot and Mouth Disease 2007, and the Detainee Inquiry. How does that kind of investigation differ from academic research?

Yes, I did three reviews. One was a really major one into the first outbreak of foot and mouth disease in 2001. The second was a smaller one just to see how the Government had handled the smaller outbreak of foot and mouth disease in 2007. I'll come back to the Detainee Inquiry.

If we take the first of those, we were very much looking for analysis of what happened. What went wrong? What were the lessons learnt? And how could we in a relatively quick amount of time – a year – produce a report with recommendations that could be implemented by Government? I think we did quite a good job. And I remember being very pleased when I heard that the American Government had used our report to inform their crisis-management work in the States: that was quite impressive.

So there was the academic pursuit of analysis, questioning the evidence, and asking for reports and comments from a range of players and people who had been affected. But then there was the discipline of bringing it into lessons learnt for Government. I think that was where there was a slight difference from what you would get in the academic world. We had a very tight

deadline of a year. You don't want a completely open-ended inquiry, because then you get into the Chilcot area – where it is now over 10 years since the Iraq war and there is still no end in sight for a review started in 2009. Somehow you have to get the balance between, on the one hand, the rigour and depth of analysis of trying to look at everything in detail, and, on the other, short, sharp lessons learnt that can be applied. It is often difficult to get it somewhere in between.

The Detainee Inquiry was an unusual event, in that we were asked to inquire into the treatment of detainees in Guantanamo and elsewhere. We started on that work, but in the end the inquiry was put on hold because of police investigations of possible criminal activity – which are still ongoing, I understand. At some stage in the future, the Government will no doubt, possibly under pressure, restart the Detainee Inquiry. But it is a very, very difficult area to work in.

That was obviously a more sensitive inquiry.

It was very sensitive. Firstly, most of the material one was dealing with was very severely classified. Secondly, you were dealing with the security services, who have to operate if not in the dark, not totally in the light. Thirdly, there was an international dimension with the Americans and their views on Guantanamo, which had to be handled extremely sensitively. For all those reasons it was an unusual but fascinating period of my life.

You were Head of Strategy at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). Between 2009 and 2011 you attended three British Academy Forums on different aspects of Government: on anticipating what might go wrong;³ on reacting when things go wrong;⁴ and on who to blame when it has all gone wrong.⁵ How valuable do policy-makers find these exchanges with academics?

I think they are very useful and helpful. I remember those seminars, and I remember enjoying them. I remember the quality of the people who attended them, and the fact that the outputs were pretty useful in helping to understand why, for example, people did not predict the banking crisis and financial crash of 2008.

But not enough of that goes on. I have asked myself: 'Is that the fault of Government through not being open and welcoming enough to outside challenge and outside perspective? Or is it the fault of the British Academy and the other national academies for not shaping the offer that they can make to Government in an attractive and sympathetic way which addresses the concerns of Government?' I suspect, as ever, it is a bit of both.

On the whole, the senior echelons of the Civil Service don't generally say, 'We don't have the answers; we must go outside and find the answers elsewhere'. I suppose that, if you look at where we are at the moment – at the start of a new Government with a clear policy agenda

3. December 2009, 'Financial and Economic Horizon-scanning'. See *British Academy Review*, 15 (March 2010), 12-14.

4. March 2010, 'Political/ministerial decision-making during a crisis'. See *British Academy Review*, 16 (October 2010), 9-12.

5. April 2011, 'Malfunctioning in British government: people or systems?'



Professor Tim Besley FBA and Professor Peter Hennessy FBA convened the British Academy Forum held in December 2009 to consider better ways of conducting 'Financial and Economic Horizon-scanning'. One fruit of the forum was a letter sent to the Queen, to help address her famous question as to why nobody had noticed that a financial crash would happen.

shaped by their manifesto – Ministers perhaps aren't going to be saying, 'Let's have some external challenge to that.' But I think it is a sign of confidence when you *are* willing to ask other people in to challenge you. And it is quite a refreshing thing to do.

But I do also think there is a task for the national academies to be creative in saying, 'What could we do that might be of help to Government?' I think the British Academy should be using what I call its convening power to bring the vast expertise of its Fellowship to bear on issues of concern to Government. When you do that, as recently we have done with some seminars for the Government on issues such as productivity, it can be a very powerful process.

Can academics learn from the process too?

When I was in Government, I was often struck by how little some people who are remarkably knowledgeable about their subject know about the way in which Government itself operates. Unless you have been within it, or unless you have been an academic who has specifically studied the hidden wiring of the machinery of Government, you don't necessarily have any idea of how Government works – why should you? And if you don't know how it works, you don't know either how you can influence it. So it can be useful when a Minister wants to share his experiences of how he dealt with a particular problem – as Charles Clarke did in the British Academy Forum on crisis management, when he talked about 7/7.

The third British Academy Forum you attended helped gather information which led to a book, *The Blunders of Our Governments*.⁶

That is a favourite book of mine, because it is so painfully direct to read. If you look at one area which I was involved in tangentially – the public-private partnership for London Underground – you realise just how much money was wasted as a result of a Government desire not to go down the traditional route of throwing more money at a public-sector organisation. There had been the difficult experience of building the Jubilee Line, when Government had been forced to spend a lot of money to

6. Anthony King and Ivor Crewe, *The Blunders of our Governments* (2013).

get it built in time for the millennium; and there had been the politics of dealing with Ken Livingstone, when he and Government had held completely different views. Those political drivers determined a model under which the Underground should be part-privatised – which turned out to be a complete money loser. Tony King and Ivor Crewe write it up in an extremely attractive way. There are many more examples like that as well, but they are painful to read.

You joined the British Academy from serving as Director of the Scotland Office. You certainly held that post during interesting times. Working together with the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the British Academy did a lot of work on the UK constitution, and put into the public domain a lot of analysis on possible outcomes that might flow from different results in the independence referendum. Were you aware of that? Did you think that was a useful contribution?

I was very aware of that, and very impressed by the contribution. The piece of work that the British Academy and the Royal Society of Edinburgh did on *Enlightening the Constitutional Debate* was measured, detailed and independent.⁷ It was everything that was needed in a debate that became increasingly polarised and increasingly difficult both for policy-makers at the centre of Government and for members of the public to understand. Having that type of analysis and evidence was very good for getting a more balanced assessment of where the two sides were. Working for the UK Government, which wanted to see a 'no' vote and the Union remain together, I was struck by how much the analysis we put out was always open to challenge from the Scottish Government. For example, on the issue of currency, there was never real agreement. It became extremely heated and extremely political. And in the Civil Service, both in the UK Government and in the Scottish Government, it was very difficult to see where the political argument finished and evidence and analysis started. The things that the British Academy and the Royal Society of Edinburgh produced gave a detachment that was actually really useful, both to us and to the public and concerned opinion formers.

Did you predict the referendum result?

I predicted the outcome, but I didn't predict the exact numbers. I predicted a victory for 'no' by 52:48 per cent, whereas in fact it was 55:45 per cent. So I predicted a 4 per cent gap,



7. Between January 2013 and March 2014, the British Academy and the Royal Society of Edinburgh held 11 events that examined the issues affecting Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom leading up to the Referendum on Scottish independence. In April 2014, they published a volume, *Enlightening the Constitutional Debate*, which summarised the evidence. See www.britishacademy.ac.uk/scotland

and it was actually a 10 per cent gap.

I was in Scotland during the final weeks of the campaign, and it was fascinating how raw and emotional everything was – particularly when finally the ‘no’ side began to get its act together, perhaps personified by some of Gordon Brown’s final speeches. It was striking how the referendum really did engage the whole of Scotland. Civic Scotland was engaged in debates at all levels, from sixth formers to old-age pensioners. There was an 85 per cent turnout – I think the highest voting turnout since 1945. I was surprised that it wasn’t even a 90 per cent turnout.

It is clear from the various contributions in *Enlightening the Constitutional Debate* just how much would be left unresolved by the referendum and how much would depend on the haggling that would follow – which you could say is ongoing now.

It is one of the ‘what ifs’ of history – if there had been a ‘yes’ vote, what on earth would the negotiation from hell, as I have called it, have been like? There would have been a rightly triumphant Scottish Government who were determined to have a heads of agreement on independence by March 2016. On the other side, there would have been a Government of the UK – whose existence as a nation would have been in question – having to negotiate a practical settlement to a timetable that they thought was totally impossible. All I would say is that I think the Civil Service would have then really come into its own, because that is what the Civil Service does and does well. But it would have been very strange days. As it happened we had the Smith Commission, which was done to an extraordinary tight deadline, and we will see where that ends up with the new Scotland Bill.

You are planning an event at the British Academy on 16 September 2015, one year on from the referendum, entitled ‘Getting ahead of the curve: how to stop playing catch up on Scotland’.

Yes, I hope to give something of an inaugural lecture. As a civil servant, one cannot speak publically on one’s own views. I would like to give some reflections on what has happened in the year since then and what a way ahead might be.⁸

From your experience of that referendum, do you think there are any lessons for the EU referendum, or are they completely different?

I think the most important thing I learnt from the Scottish referendum is that you do need as impartial and as detached an assessment as possible of the pros and cons of either side in discussion. When you have frenetic, party-political attitudes and differences, and very personal attacks going on, it is very difficult to get that. You don’t get it from the media. The print media were very pro the ‘no’ campaign in the Scottish referendum. And you didn’t get it, although you should have done, from the BBC, because the poor old BBC was accused of bias whichever way it went, and I suspect will

be again.

Specifically in terms of research and innovation, the British Academy can play a role in providing an assessment of the impact of EU membership.

More generally, how do you see the British Academy and the disciplines it represents continuing to play a role in informing policy-making?

I tend to focus on the disciplines with which I am slightly more familiar – politics, economics, the social sciences more generally. I would like to hear what the Fellows of the British Academy think as to how we can use *all* the disciplines that the Academy represents to inform public policy in the widest possible sense. What is the information that we can bring into play in policy areas across the field – from climate change to tackling obesity, and from Ebola to tackling productivity?

What does ancient history teach us? I remember when I was at university studying Thucydides’ *History of the Peloponnesian War* in the 5th century BC. You look at the Athenian adventure to Syracuse in Sicily, and how they over-reached themselves. Since then you can still see nations over-reaching themselves: from Napoleon’s France in Russia, to Hitler’s Germany in Russia, and to America in Vietnam. And so there are lessons from any discipline, it seems to me, that can be used.

It goes without saying that, in the academic disciplines that the Academy represents, there is value in learning as an end in itself. Studying an area just to understand how it works seems to me to be intrinsically valuable. But one of the challenges is how you bring those disciplines to life in a way that people can relate to and see their inherent value.

At one point you were Head of Strategic Communications at Number 10. What lessons did you learn there about presenting messages effectively?

Those were the heady days of New Labour, before they got into some difficulties around Iraq and elsewhere. One of the things I learnt is that it is not good enough to have arguments and analysis on your side; you have to think of the way you present and communicate them. I think there is something here that the British Academy can learn from the people who communicate best. It is not about the art of modern spin-doctoring. It is about explaining and bringing alive what you do, and using all of the communication tools now available to society. We need to look at our traditional forms of communication and at how we are embracing new media. How well in particular do we use our own Fellows to communicate? They are the core of British Academy, and they are its greatest asset. The richness, the breadth and depth of knowledge, and the recognition and respect that Fellows have – both in the academic community and more widely – are a massive communication plus, and we need to use that to its maximum advantage.

What perception did you have of the British Academy before you took up this post?

When I was at BIS, I was responsible for the funding of the science and research budget – which included the

8. Further information can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/events/2015

British Academy and the other national academies. It was striking that a lot of people asked, 'What are the national academies for? How do they add value in their own sense?' It is good that there is an academy that covers all the humanities and social sciences, whose responsibility it is to promote those disciplines, to help ensure the health of those disciplines, and then to make clear to everybody from Government downwards what those academic studies can offer. I think the British Academy does that pretty well, but we could do it better. There are too many people who still say to me, 'What is the British Academy for?' And that is going to be one of my big challenges as Chief Executive: to make sure people know what it is for.

In which circles does the British Academy need to be known better?

Among the people who have an interest in the areas in which we work. Obviously Government. The academic and education world. The international community with whom we deal. Opinion formers. Others, be it in the City, be it in science, be it in the third sector, or in policy areas that we have been interested in, such as housing.⁹ The key movers and shakers, so that they know that the British Academy can talk to them and contribute things that are valuable.

We have a number of really strong positives which some people would die for. We have the Fellowship – 1,000 of the nation's greatest thinkers across the humanities and social sciences. We have what I have described as our convening power: via our President, Lord Stern, and other Fellows, we can bring groups of people together, so that we can put our disciplines at the service of those who can benefit from what they can offer. We have in 10-11 Carlton House Terrace an extremely attractive location in which to run seminars and events.

We need to reach out to the communities I have listed. We need to engage with the media – the BBC and other broadcast media, and all forms of print media, particularly the specialist media who are interested in our subjects. And we do also need to think about how we can attract a wider, more popular audience via the website, social media and less traditional forms of communication.

These are challenging times financially. How do you want the Academy to go about making the case for funding research in the humanities and social sciences?

Unless we get a good settlement we have difficulties, so getting money is fundamental. It is a complex question with a quite multifaceted answer.

We have to engage with Government. Eighty per cent of our money comes from Government via BIS. We need to explain to them – and I think we are doing it quite well, to the Chancellor, to Sajid Javid, to Jo Johnson – what the Academy has to offer in terms of informing policy-making.

9. *UK Housing: Setting out the Challenge. Output of a joint ESRC/British Academy Conference, 29 October 2014* can be downloaded via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/uk-housing



The British Academy's multimedia publication *Prospering Wisely* combines a carefully argued text and video interviews with leading academics, such as Professor Mary Beard FBA, to explain how the humanities and social sciences enrich our lives.

We have to show that we are open to working in partnership with others. It is the British Academy saying, 'In relevant policy areas, where there is a challenge, we will go in and work with whoever wants to talk to us, so that we can bring something to the party.' We recently had a discussion with the Chief Medical Officer about what the Academy can do to help look at the problems of obesity. We do believe we bring something in terms of behavioural economics and issues like that.

So we need to be creative in saying, 'How can we apply our skills and knowledge, learnt in perhaps a fairly academic environment, to the practical problems faced by the nation as a whole?' Things will come along which we cannot predict, and we will need to see what we can do to bring our expertise to bear. We have to be available, pragmatic and flexible, willing to work in partnership and willing to turn the expertise of the Fellowship to the issues that face us in the modern world.

In February 2014, the British Academy launched *Prospering Wisely: How the humanities and social sciences enrich our lives*,¹⁰ which talked about the need for a new national conversation in which the strengths of the humanities and social sciences could be brought to bear on the major challenges of our times. And following that up, we have started the series of British Academy Debates. Are these good ways in which to tell our story?

Absolutely. I thought *Prospering Wisely* was a brilliant piece of work. It illustrated the quality of the Fellowship in such a wide range of areas. But in terms of communication – coming back to what we were talking about earlier – it brought the subject alive, because of the attractive, interactive way in which it was presented, rather than just being a dull document.

The British Academy Debates again are a good example of what the convening power of the Academy can do.¹¹ Looking ahead, we are bringing together the best people to tackle issues around 'Energy and the environment' (autumn 2015), 'Faith' (spring 2016), and

10. www.britishacademy.ac.uk/prosperingwisely; also *British Academy Review*, issue 23 (February 2014), which contained 'Eleven perspectives on how the humanities and social sciences enrich our lives'.

11. More information about the British Academy Debates can be found at www.britishacademy.ac.uk/debates

'Inequalities' (autumn 2016). But you do it in such a way that you don't just get 200 people in a room and have a good discussion. You then use the wider forms of communication to get that debate rolling further. In that way, other people come up with new solutions. The process is one of developing ideas, developing policy, and raising the overall profile of the subject everywhere.

Does the case also rely on the role of research and innovation in generating growth?

One of the striking problems – a conundrum, if you like – is that Britain, for all its expertise and skills and the quality of its academic disciplines, is still not as effective as it should be in innovation and driving new ideas. It cannot be right to reduce investment in research and innovation. We have to make the argument for maintaining that investment, and hopefully the case for raising it, by showing that, in terms of the spin-off effects, investment in this area is one of the most cost-effective ways of generating ideas and generating growth.¹²

Do we have to make the case to the private sector as well as just Government?

The private sector has a lot to answer for. If you look at where growth comes from, it comes in large part from the private sector investing. That is a challenge to all aspects of the private sector, not just the big areas like pharmaceuticals where one knows that investment in innovation can drive long-term gains. One of the problems – which may be a slightly peculiar British problem – is that people are not often willing to invest in things with long-term pay-offs. There is too much looking at where money will come in the short term. In terms of some of the things Government and, particularly, the private sector need to invest in, some of these big gains will only come five, 10 or 20 years down the track. That needs some quite thoughtful investing and a willingness to invest for the long term.

Prospering Wisely argued that not all the benefits to be derived from the humanities and social sciences should be measured in terms of material wealth and growth.

In his Presidential Address to the British Academy's Annual General Meeting on 16 July 2015, Lord Stern stressed that 'prosperity has many dimensions, not all of them easily measurable ... This is not just about economic growth, important as that is – it's about quality of life and community and the full range of human flourishing – the things that the humanities and social sciences care about.' I would very much echo those sentiments.

And a civilised society is one that does study things for their own sake. A society that recognises the value of investigation and enquiry for their own sake is a good society. Not everything has to have some monetary value attached to it.

12. In February 2015, the British Academy, together with the other national academies – the Royal Society, the Royal Academy of Engineering, and the Academy of Medical Sciences – issued a joint statement, 'Building a stronger future: Research, innovation and growth'. The statement may be found at www.raeng.org.uk/resandinnov

You talked about the particular strength that the British Academy has in the form of its own Fellowship. How do you think the Fellowship can be better engaged and mobilised by the Academy?

One of the things I want to do is ask the Fellows themselves how they can help and contribute to the work of the British Academy. From my very unscientific analysis of discussions I have had with a number of Fellows, it seems to me that there are people who wish they could do more and would like to be more involved but, for whatever reasons, haven't yet become engaged with the work of the Academy. I think there is also an issue about how we engage those Fellows who have less time to give because they are active in their universities. I think we need to come up with some creative ideas. And it will be important to attract some of the new Fellows who have been elected this year to become involved and to look at the way in which we do things.¹³

Do we operate too much from London and assume people can come down to London? Are there more interactive things that we could do around the country to engage people? We have seen a bit of that with the British Academy Debates held in different parts of the country. I think we need to do more of that to make it not so London-centric. And we need to be creative and flexible in the way in which we learn and the way in which we share our expertise. I don't have all the answers. I will be looking for views from the Fellowship on what they can do and what they would like to do to help.

The British Academy also acts a funding body, supporting individuals and research across the humanities and social sciences.

I do want to stress one point in respect of that. If we look at where we disburse our funds – particularly through the Small Research Grants and Postdoctoral Fellowships – do we do enough to tap into the excellence and the goodwill which are associated with that? At a dinner I attended at Queen Mary University of London soon after I had been appointed, I was struck by the fact that around the table over half of the people there – 20 or 30 of them – had at some stage in their career got a grant from the British Academy. It might have been a small one, but it made a difference to them. That is a big source of both expertise and goodwill in universities and other institutions up and down the country which we should make use of. We can be more creative in using that source of support for the British Academy, both in terms of what those people can contribute, and in terms of how they can get out more widely the message about the value we bring through the funds we award.

The Research Councils tend to give out very large grants for bigger, long-term projects. The British Academy is distinctive in that it supports individual researchers on a very specific area of work, for example to help them go and look at an archive. The outcome of that can be fantastically efficient and disproportionately valuable for the amount of money we have put in. And the recognition

13. A list of the Fellows elected to the British Academy in July 2015 can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/fellowship

that comes with receiving a grant from the Academy can further unlock doors for the individual researcher. Once you start bringing together and explaining those little stories, you have a very effective and powerful form of communication on our behalf. And it is one that I think Government listens to, because they see the value of the investment and the disproportionate leverage for a relatively small amount of money.

What is your most immediate task as the new Chief Executive?

We face what will be one of the toughest Spending Reviews. I have seen lots of Spending Reviews and I am always told that they are going to be tough. The next one is going to be even tougher. The Government needs to find savings. Previously there has been a commitment to maintain the level of expenditure on science and research. I hope that the Government continues that. I think it is a very efficient form of funding. I think that the Chancellor gets it and sees the importance of it.

It is incumbent on all of us – the President of the British Academy, the Fellowship, myself, all the staff – to argue the case for the level of funding we get, because of the wider benefits that that investment across all of the disciplines brings to society. I think we have a fantastic story to tell. Perhaps we have not told it quite as loudly and vigorously as we could have done in the past. That is one of the things I want to do.

If you don't have money, you can't do anything. So we must, in the first instance, put a comprehensive, cogent and compelling case for our funding to Government and others over the forthcoming months and years.



On 12 May 2015, the British Academy held a reception at which researchers who had been supported through the Academy's various funding schemes were able to explain their work. Professor Tim Whitmarsh, pictured here at that reception, has written about his British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship in an article in this issue (see page 54).

What will the British Academy be like in five years' time?

All being well, it will be an even more powerful voice than it is at the moment. It will go, I hope, from strength to strength. And it will be an organisation that people turn to more because they have heard of it, and because they realise the value that it can bring in terms of promoting the humanities and social sciences, and all that those disciplines can deliver.

Thank you very much.

The British Academy Debates

Over the past 18 months the British Academy Debates have travelled across the country, engaging with some of the key issues affecting society today and raising awareness of the nature of the challenges we face as societies, as economies and as individuals. From ageing and well-being to immigration, the Debates have shown humanities and social sciences 'at work'. They have demonstrated how new insights from research can challenge and question existing assumptions, illuminate dilemmas, help us make the complex intelligible, explore possible new directions, choices and possibilities – and so push forward political and public debate.

Over the next year the Debates will continue their journey as they take on energy and the environment, and faith. With each series the British Academy's role in the conversations around these big challenges has developed, and will continue to do so – with events, publications, policy reports and other online content – ensuring that the work of the Academy is able to provide a lasting and significant contribution to public debate.

Well-being

Most recently, in spring 2015, the British Academy Debates explored 'Well-being', an issue which has been gaining significant political traction over the past few years. In 2010, Prime Minister David Cameron announced the National Well-being Programme: 'I do think it's high time we admitted that, taken on its own, GDP is an incomplete way of measuring a country's progress. Of course, it shows you that the economy is growing, but it doesn't show you how that growth is created. ... All of



Professor Anthony Heath FBA, together with Nicola Heywood Thomas of BBC Radio Wales, who chaired the British Academy Debate on 'Social and Economic Change and Well-being' held in Cardiff on 4 February 2015.

life can't be measured on a balance sheet. If your goal in politics is to help make a better life for people ... then you've got to take practical steps to make sure government is properly focused on our quality of life.'¹ Over the course of three public events in Salford, Cardiff and London, the British Academy Debates considered reasons behind the rise of well-being on the political agenda, the struggles of measuring it, and the challenges of building public policy to promote it. You can find out more about the series, and watch video recordings of the public debates www.britishacademy.ac.uk/well-being

Energy and the environment

In autumn 2015, the British Academy Debates will explore the theme of 'Energy and the Environment'. Work from across the Academy will explore both the challenges we face and the possible new approaches that disciplines such as behavioural science, sociology and philosophy can offer policy-makers – to help ensure that societies can continue to 'prosper wisely', and that growth today is not

1. Speech given by the Prime Minister on well-being on 25 November 2010, www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-speech-on-wellbeing

at the expense of growth tomorrow. Public debates will be held in London, Swansea and Edinburgh in the three months leading up to the 2015 Paris Climate Conference – where, for the first time in over 20 years of UN negotiations, the international community will aim to achieve a legally binding and universal agreement on climate. In addition to these public debates, the Academy will undertake its own policy research, analysing the behaviour of communities in response to the opportunities for, and barriers to, local shared energy generation in the UK, and how this can subsequently be used to inform policy approaches to increasing local energy generation. For more information about the British Academy Debates on 'Energy and the Environment', please visit www.britishacademy.ac.uk/energy

Faith

In spring 2016 the British Academy Debates will turn their attention to 'Faith'. According to the theme convenor, Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch FBA, 'Forty years ago, well-educated Westerners were assuming that "faith" was an issue disappearing into history, and that a secularised society was the reality and the future. After four decades, we realise our mistake. These Debates are designed to explore the challenges, the dangers and the opportunities that an informed engagement with religious faith offers our contemporary world.'

The theme will launch in January 2016 with the annual 'British Academy Lecture', delivered by Professor Linda Woodhead from the University of Lancaster. There will then be a series of three debates, held in London and Belfast.

Understanding society

MICHAELA BENZEVAL and NICK BUCK



In 2014, *Understanding Society* was adopted as a British Academy Research Project.

Michaela Benzeval is Professor of Longitudinal Research at the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Essex, and Director of the *Understanding Society* project. Professor Nick Buck is Director of ISER.

Social science research aims to understand how society works – how people are affected by social and economic changes around them, the way in which families change over time, who does well in education and why, what makes people healthy and happy, how changes in the labour market and pensions influence when people retire and their subsequent living standards, and so on. Such research is vital for governments and policy-makers to understand the nature of economic and social problems and the impact of the policies they introduce on different sections of society. To answer such questions researchers need data that track individuals and households over time, to observe changes in people's lives and investigate their causes and consequences.

Understanding Society, the UK Household Longitudinal Study, collects such data and deposits them in the UK Data Service¹ for researchers and policy-makers to investigate changes in a wide range of social issues. It involves collecting data annually from all the adults, as well as children aged 10-15, who live in sample households, and following them as they move between different households. It is based on a large sample, representing all ages and all countries and regions of the UK, which allows researchers to explore issues for subgroups and geographic areas for which other longitudinal surveys are too small to support effective research. There are immigrant and ethnic minority boost samples which provide the only source of longitudinal information

on ethnic minorities of all ages in the UK. The fact that all adults within sample households are interviewed means that interactions between household members can be studied. Since the study is a long-running one, it captures outcomes and behaviours as they vary over periods of secular change.

Why longitudinal studies?

There are distinct advantages of longitudinal surveys such as *Understanding Society* as compared with ordinary ('cross-sectional') surveys. Cross-sectional surveys tell us what people are thinking or doing at any one time. If the same questions are asked in another, later, survey, we can learn how these results change for the population as a whole. But we do not know how individuals have changed their views or their behaviour, or why. The only way we can do this is if we ask questions of the same people at different times. We can then start to understand change and stability at the level of the individual, rather than for the population as a whole. Longitudinal studies thus have a major role in understanding the social and economic changes facing western societies since they collect data about different time points within an individual's life, or indeed look across generations, by collecting and linking data from different points in the lives of parents and children. For example, longitudinal data can shed light on:

- The incidence of states such as poverty or unemployment over time. It is known that there are major variations in the degree to which people experience short or long spells of such conditions. The experience of long-term unemployment or persistent poverty has different implications for other outcomes such as health, compared to short-term or transitory occurrences. Longitudinal studies are uniquely placed to collect the information necessary to analyse these effects.
- The conditions associated with individuals entering or leaving different circumstances such as ill health or partnerships, and the frequency with which they do such things.

1. <http://ukdataservice.ac.uk>

- The association between changes in the different domains (e.g., health and the labour market), to understand how they may affect each other. Panel surveys encourage more reliable analytical techniques to assess causal sequences than can be supported by cross-sectional data, based on only a single observation of each individual.
- As annual waves of data accumulate, these can be used to analyse the long-term accumulation of personal and financial resources and their implications for other behaviours and outcomes.

And what is special about household panels?

The household panel design of *Understanding Society* contrasts with that of the cohort design of many longitudinal studies. In cohort studies, a sample of individuals from a particular age group is selected and followed to investigate their development at key life stages and how this affects outcomes later in life. In the household panel design a sample of the whole population is selected in their household context, and data are collected much more frequently so that researchers can examine short- and long-run social and economic changes across the whole of society, and – to the extent that families and households overlap – explore the evolution of families through time.

There are several specific advantages of the household panel design. Firstly, it provides a very important resource for the study of how households are changing and the demographic processes which lead to such change. Secondly, economic welfare, income and material conditions are normally assessed at the household level, because of the degree of sharing of resources. Households also provide a context for understanding the social and cultural resources available to both children and adults. Thirdly, the household focus allows the inter-relationships between individuals within households and families to be explored. For example, household panel surveys have contributed to understandings of how siblings influence each other's educational outcomes and how children 'inherit' their parents' behaviours. They also permit examination of changing patterns in partnerships, such as dissolution and cohabitation, timings of marriages and births, and repartnering in relation to childbearing and employment outcomes. Observing multiple generations and all siblings allows examination of long-term transmission processes, and isolates the effects of commonly shared family background characteristics.

Understanding Society forms part of an international network of household panel studies. The household panel design was established in the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) in the USA in the late 1960s, and now also includes the German Socio-Economic Panel Study, the Household, Income, and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey, the Swiss Household Panel and other active household panels in South Africa, Israel, Canada, Korea, China. This design has proved extremely powerful in understanding changes in populations and the determinants of behaviour and outcomes at household and individual level. International comparisons across



Further information about *Understanding Society*, the UK Household Longitudinal Study, can be found via www.understandingsociety.ac.uk

these studies enable researchers to explore how social change and behaviours are influenced by different national contexts.

Understanding Society design

Data collection on *Understanding Society* began in 2009 and mainly relies on repeated surveys with sample members at one year intervals. The content includes many areas of people's lives, including family circumstances, work and education, income and material well-being, health and health-related behaviours, social lives, neighbourhoods, environmental behaviours, attitudes to risk and engagement in civic society.

The study includes four samples: (i) a 1,500-household Innovation Panel (IP) used for methodological and other experiments, based on an annual competition for research ideas; (ii) a probability sample – the General Population Sample – of approximately 26,000 households; (iii) a boost sample of 4,000 ethnic minorities households covering the five major ethnic minority populations in the UK, and an additional immigrant and ethnicity minority boost begun in wave 6 to resample those populations as well as cover new immigrant groups; and (iv) the former British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) sample, which was established in 1991. A complex pattern of overlapping fieldwork cycles means that seven waves of the IP and four waves of the main dataset –

plus physical measures and biomarkers from a nurse visit – have been deposited at the UK Data Service, and genetics data are available by special application. Linked data from children's education records (with consent) are also available, as well as a wide range of geographic identifiers to enable researchers to combine survey information with different environmental, social and economic contextual information. Overall, more than 2,000 users have now obtained the data; there is further information on the *Understanding Society* website about the data available and findings from the study.²

There are a number of key features of *Understanding Society* that provide unique insights into UK Society.

A multi-topic whole population survey

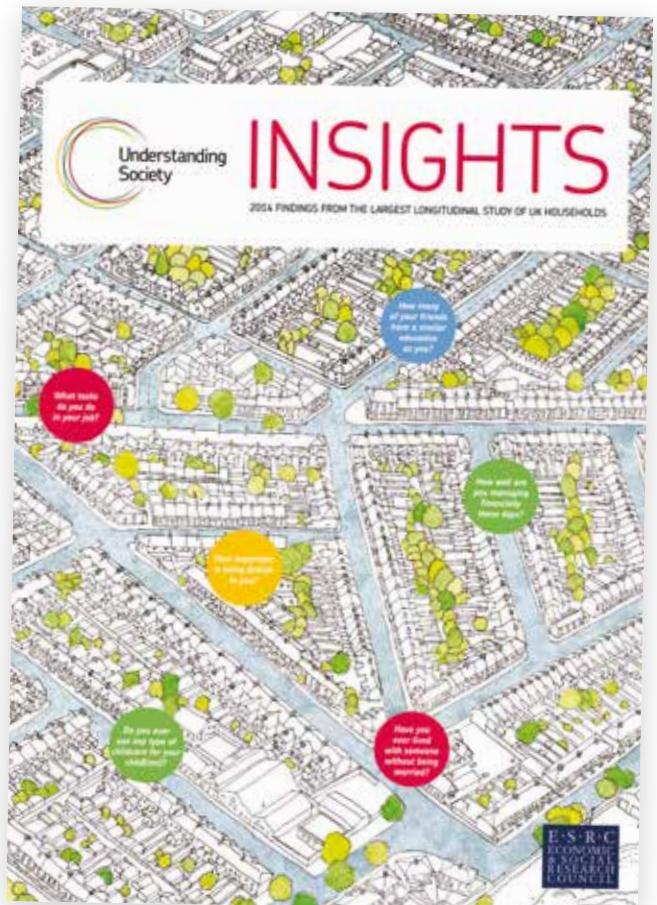
Understanding Society supports research across the range of social sciences as well as biomedical sciences and other physical sciences, such as environmental sciences. As noted above, its large sample size permits the analysis of small subgroups of the populations or regions of the country. For example, recent research has examined: the consequences of family breakdown for a wide range of adult and child outcomes; mixed religion partnerships in Northern Ireland; active commuting and health; the raising of school leaving age; ethnic penalties in occupation; the effect of the green electricity tariff; and the experience of bullying among adolescents.³ *Understanding Society* data are also used to inform policy. For example the Office of National Statistics use the data to monitor trends in national well-being, the Department of Work and Pensions use them to track low income dynamics, and Public Health England have recently employed the data to model teenage smoking at the local level. Meanwhile researchers are using *Understanding Society* data to simulate the consequences of different aspects of devolution for tax and benefits in Scotland.

An emphasis on ethnicity research

Understanding Society contributes to the understanding the lives of ethnic minorities living in the UK, which are relatively poorly covered by other longitudinal studies. As well as including boost samples to enable the exploration of the experiences of different ethnic groups in detail, *Understanding Society* collects additional measures relevant to their lives from members of the boost samples, other ethnic minority groups in the general sample, and a comparison group of around 1,000 adults. Examples of the additional ethnicity-relevant measures include ethnic identity, discrimination and harassment, questions about ethnicity and social networks, and questions about remittances. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has recently published a series of reports using these data on ethnic minorities' experience of poverty through the recession, occupational and

2. www.understandingsociety.ac.uk

3. More about the research that has used *Understanding Society* data can be found via www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/research/search



Understanding Society established a Policy Unit in 2014. The unit leads on the production of *Insights*, an annual summary of policy-relevant research findings from the Study. The edition to be published in autumn 2015 will focus on: young people's well-being; housing; and health behaviours.

residential segregation and social networks.⁴ The ethnicity strand of *Understanding Society* also informs questions for the whole sample. The objective is that the whole study should contribute to the understanding of the UK as a multi-ethnic society.

Collection of biomeasures

Understanding the interaction between people's social and economic circumstances and their health across the life span is essential to develop policies not only to improve the nation's health but also its social and economic capacities. The addition of a nurse visit to collect biomeasures – objective markers of health and disease – combined with the richness of the social and economic data in *Understanding Society* across all ages makes it a unique resource to investigate these issues. These data, released at the end of 2014, are beginning to shed light on issues around undiagnosed illness, the biological processes linking social factors to disease and vice versa, and to identify when inequalities in different dimensions of health emerge, which helps policy-makers to understand potential causes and intervention points.

4. www.jrf.org.uk/topic/poverty-and-ethnicity

Innovation in measures and methods of data collection

Understanding Society involves innovation in both data collection methods and in the type of data collected. The IP is a testbed for research related to longitudinal survey methods; in its first eight waves, 55 unique experiments in survey methods have been conducted, with more in the pipeline. Many of these experiments have been designed and analysed by external researchers. However, the study team have used the IP to evaluate how best to transform *Understanding Society* from a traditional face-to-face survey to one which in the future will be conducted in multiple modes, so that respondents can complete the questionnaire when and how suits them, while ensuring that the high response rates and robust high quality data essential to effective social science research are maintained. Methodological research planned for the future will examine how to use opportunities that new technologies bring to expand the kinds of data that can be collected or the quality of information we already collect. For example, experiments are planned to investigate better ways of collecting household finance information and new ways of measuring health.

There are a growing set of associated studies attached to *Understanding Society* that allow researchers to design and conduct in-depth studies on sub populations within the study or on new specialised topics. For example, behavioural economists are currently conducting web surveys on respondents' attitudes to risk, while sociologists have conducted qualitative research on how households respond to one member losing their job, and a study is about to go into the field examining older adults' experiences of social support and caring. Anonymised versions of qualitative datasets are also deposited in the UK Data Service for secondary analysis.

Generating impact

The *Understanding Society* team are keen to support researchers in their efforts to generate scientific and policy impact from the Study, as well as to build capacity for interdisciplinary longitudinal research based on the data. To achieve these goals, the team provide a wide range of training courses and resources for data users, and hold events and conferences to share findings from the Study and discuss their policy impact.

One example of this is the biennial scientific conference, the most recent of which took place in July 2015. Over 230 researchers and policy-makers attended the event to present or listen to research findings based on the Study. Topics ranged widely, including sleep, Scottish devolution, family change and poverty, education, work identity, intergenerational well-being, sibling and peer bullying among adolescents, active commuting and cardiovascular risk, genetics, social mobility, and survey methods – to mention a few.

Conclusion

A key feature of the longitudinal studies is that they become more valuable with age, as more waves of data are collected and longer sequences in the lives of individuals and families can be observed. *Understanding Society* is now established, and researchers have demonstrated valuable new insights into social change in the UK and on the consequences of different social policies. However, it is still in its early stages, and the best is still to come. Support from the British Academy is helping to ensure this future promise can be realised, by raising awareness of the data for research and findings from it, as well as bringing together researchers to help shape its future content.

Acknowledgements

Understanding Society, the UK Household Longitudinal Study, is an initiative funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, with scientific leadership by the Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex, and survey delivery by the National Centre for Social Research and TNS BMRB. The study has also been supported by the Department for Work and Pensions, the Department for Education, the Department for Transport, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Food Standards Agency, the Office for National Statistics, and the Department of Health.

We are grateful to all of the respondents who give up their time to take part in the study and as a result create an invaluable resource for social research and policy.

The British Academy grants the title of British Academy Research Project to about 55 long-term research enterprises – major infrastructural projects or research facilities, intended to produce fundamental works of scholarship – as a mark of their academic excellence. A full list of the projects can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/arp

Count us in!

Quantitative skills for a new generation

On 25 June 2015, the British Academy launched its report *Count Us In: Quantitative skills for a new generation* at the House of Lords. The report can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/countusin

Since the formation of its Quantitative Skills Programme in 2011, the British Academy has sought to address the growing decline in quantitative skills amongst the social sciences and humanities. This decline in such vital skills, for both undergraduate and postgraduate learning and research, has the capacity to diminish the UK's long-held standing as a global leader in research excellence, and the potential to affect economic growth too.

Count Us In offers a vision for where the UK should be in a generation's time, and how it can rise to the transformational challenge of becoming a data-literate nation. The report calls for a cultural change across all phases of education and employment, together with a concerted, continuous national effort led by government.

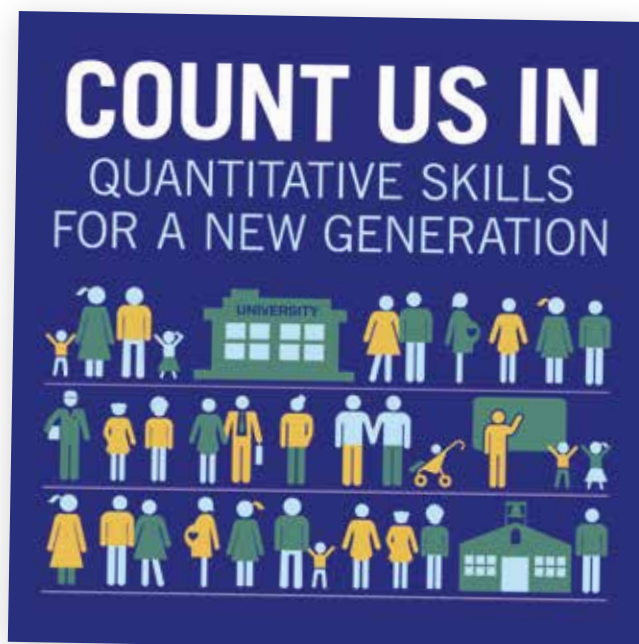
The British Academy believes that the ability to engage and understand data is an essential feature of life in the 21st century, and because of this it is vital that citizens, scientists and policy-makers are fluent in quantitative skills to make best use of data's opportunities.

Recommendations

To meet these ends, we make a series of recommendations that span the life cycle of schools and colleges, universities, and the work place.

In schools and colleges, we ask government to ensure that children and young adults are given a strong and confident grasp of data from an early age, so we can move away from a middle-ranking mathematics performance, to become a world leader.

Universities need to signal with more clarity the level of quantitative skills required for each course, and they should review and redesign the content of existing



courses, so that our degree programmes no longer continue to be de-quantified.

Finally, in the workplace it is important for employers to support the personal growth of their employees in terms of quantitative skills through Continuing Professional Development. Seven out of 10 employees say that some form of quantitative skills are essential or important in their jobs, signalling a greater need for these skills to make full use of opportunities such as the big data revolution.

If support for these recommendations is given over the next generation, then the UK stands to win a huge economic prize. Through public sector data alone, the UK could benefit from £1.8bn per annum, which in turn could also help create 57,000 new jobs a year to 2017. Most importantly for the social sciences and humanities, further engagement with quantitative skills will ensure that we stay at the cutting edge of research by using the full spectrum of methods available to us.

Launching *Count Us In*

Count Us In was launched on 25 June 2015 at an event held at the House of Lords, hosted by Gus O'Donnell, Honorary FBA – the former Cabinet Secretary. The keynote address was given by **Professor Sir Ian Diamond FBA**, Chair of the British Academy's High Level Strategy Group for Quantitative Skills.

“ One of the major sticking points in discussions regarding the UK's capacity for quantitative skills was the need for an authoritative evidence base on the demand for, and supply of, these skills across education and employment. This led to the development of an important *State of the Nation* project, challenging us to question what was required.¹ The aim was to bring about a change in culture so deep that it would lead to 'a generation of citizens, consumers, students and workers as comfortable with numbers as they are with words'.

The British Academy's report, *Count Us In*, sets out a bold vision: that it should be perfectly normal for everyone to be able to understand and interpret data. We argue that there is a huge opportunity that exists for those who can take advantage of how data is revolutionising the way in which we see and interact with the world.

There are many benefits to building quantitative skills in our population:

- helping citizens to participate more fully in the democratic process;
- enhancing research and innovation in universities and in the workplace;
- supporting the economy, taking advantage of the 'big data' revolution, and enhancing workforce capabilities more generally.

The scope of this challenge, and indeed our vision, extends well beyond our education system.

Our findings show that unfortunately there has not been significant change since Sir Adrian Smith gave his seminal address to the Royal Statistical Society in 1996, where he recognised the many features of life that would benefit from a greater ability to reason using numbers. Nearly 20 years later, we are still lacking people capable in quantitative skills, and although some work has been done since to bridge the gap, too much of it has been uncoordinated.

The continued widening of the gap in quantitative skills has led to a number of shortfalls in education. The number of post-16 young people opting for maths courses or courses featuring maths has declined. Today,

1 . Geoff Mason, Max Nathan and Anna Rosso, *State of the Nation: A review of evidence on the supply and demand of quantitative skills* (June 2015). The report may be downloaded via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/countusin



only one in six maths teachers at school level has a maths qualification. And at university level, the skills shortage has led to the de-quantifying of programmes in the social sciences and humanities, and to a certain extent in some natural sciences.

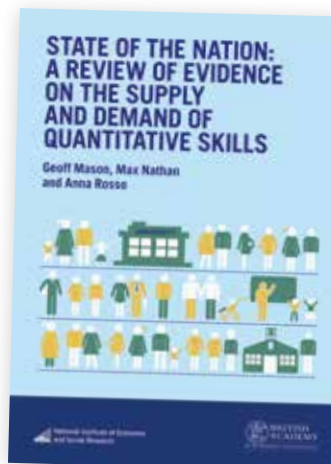
So the need to raise our game here is urgent. Change in our education system is part of the solution, but so too is cultural change. We must create a society where it is no longer 'cool' to admit 'I can't do sums', and instead we have a situation where the reverse is in fashion amongst young people and the wider population alike. To meet these ends, we have to call on those best placed to help make these critical changes, and monitor their impact and development across the sectors.

Together with my colleagues on the High Level Strategy Group for Quantitative Skills, and on the *Count Us In* Steering Group, we have developed a series of recommendations that we believe will aid the reforms needed if the UK is to be a more data-literate nation in a generation's time.

Our recommendations include:

- A major national campaign to raise aspirations around quantitative skills
- Policies co-ordinated between schools, colleges and universities to expand the proportion of the post-16 population taking maths qualifications
- An improvement of the quality of quantitative skills teaching at schools, colleges, and universities
- The transforming of curricula to be more engaging and relevant
- To build on the success of Q-Step programmes across university departments in a more systemic way, so that embedding quantitative skills in social science and humanities programmes becomes the norm
- To encourage quantitative skills-focused professional development in the workplace

The ability to understand and interpret data is an essential feature of life in the 21st century. Whichever way we look at it – the sheer potential for our economy and society on the one hand, and the nascent risks of not acting on the other – this is an agenda that demands the interests of decision makers at the highest level.”



Reaction to *Count Us In* at the launch

The stand-out finding for me from the *Count Us In* report was that 75 per cent of 16- to 65- year-olds have problems doing a household budget, or working out the best buy at the super-market.



Lord (Gus) O'Donnell

There is a real need to make the most of the available technology, and we have to make maths a more exciting and engaging subject.

Heather Savory, Director General (Data Capability), Office for National Statistics

There is a real need for more programmes like Core Maths to teach mathematics in a way that is more translatable for life after leaving education.

David Pollard, Federation for Small Businesses

Until we change the acceptability for people to say 'I don't do numbers', the challenge is going to be very difficult.

Siobhan Carey, Chief Statistician, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

The wider use of statistics in news, policy formulation and other decision making processes means that increased fluency with numbers will benefit not just academia but will help people from all walks of life to engage better with our data-driven world.

Professor Sir John Tooke, President of the Academy of Medical Sciences

The Royal Statistical Society has been calling for greater statistical literacy for many years, and we fully support the Academy's call for action in today's report. There is a clear need for a concerted, sustained and structural effort to make the step change required for the nation to benefit from the data revolution across all areas of life, study and work.

Neil Sheldon, Vice President for Education, Royal Statistical Society



We need to get teaching methods right, and ensure teachers are comfortable with mathematics.

Kelvin Hopkins MP, Vice Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Statistics



The Race Relations Act @ 50 conference Where were you?

IYIOLA SOLANKE

A British Academy Conference on 'The Race Relations Act @ 50' was held on 9-10 July 2015. The conference was convened by Dr Iyiola Solanke of the University of Leeds and Mr Patrick Maddams of the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple.

The conference could easily have gone so very wrong. On Monday 6 July 2015, one of the speakers sent me a message about the planned London Underground strike: she wondered whether she could make it. On Tuesday 8th the strike was confirmed: a session chair withdrew. On Wednesday evening, after a superb pre-conference dinner at Inner Temple, buses were too full at 11pm to take any more passengers, and I started to wonder how many delegates, let alone speakers, would make it. At 7.15am on Thursday morning, when I boarded a packed bus that crawled through traffic-jammed roads, I was prepared to speak to an empty room. By 10am my fears had dissipated. Amazingly, most speakers and delegates arrived punctually; some had left home earlier than me to arrive on time. Their determination to be there indicates the importance of the conference.

Beginnings

I first started to think about the 50th anniversary of the Race Relations Act 1965 (RRA 65) in 2005. That year, I was awarded a doctorate from the London School of Economics for my socio-legal historical study on the evolution of anti-racial discrimination law in Britain, Germany and the European Union.¹ The study had taken me to the National Archives in Kew, the National Library and German Archives in Berlin, the European Parliament in Brussels, and the United Nations Library in New York. As well as poring over historical documents from the

1940s, 1950s and 1960s, I had interviewed academics, politicians, lawyers and activists. I discovered that the legal regulation of racial discrimination was envisaged as a key bridge from the colonial to the post-colonial and war to post-war periods. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) was the first international law of its type, and played a key role in nudging resistant national legislators towards domestic anti-racial discrimination law. I also discovered that, in the case of Britain, the influence of other jurisdictions was as important as internal right wing violence – racist politics in Smethwick (Peter Griffiths was elected using the campaign slogan of 'If you want a N***** for a neighbour vote Liberal or Labour') illustrated the urgency, while the Civil Rights Act in 1964 in the USA provided crucial guidance on the design of the RRA 65. Finally, I concluded that the RRA 65 would have been impossible without the existence of committed activists and 'cause lawyers' – lawyers who look beyond doctrinal texts to think about the impact of law on society. I wanted to bring all these facets together in an event that reflected upon the origins, the successes and the failures of British anti-racial discrimination law.

In practical terms, organisation began in February 2014, when together with the Inner Temple I drew up an application to the British Academy Conference programme. The British Academy chose the proposal as one of six conferences to be hosted in 2015. We envisaged an interdisciplinary and international rostrum of speakers, for which my previous activities stood me in good stead: interdisciplinary scholarship, research and academic events have brought me into contact with a huge range of talented people in many fields and countries. The conference line-up was amazing: we had two full days of conversation on race between the fields of legal practice, criminology, history, sociology, psychology, media and politics in the UK, USA, Hawaii, Sweden, Finland and Germany.² Delegates were as diverse, coming from additional places such as Switzerland and Australia. To be there was therefore to savour an international intellectual feast!

1. Iyiola Solanke, *Making Anti-racial Discrimination Law: A Comparative History of Social Action and Anti-racial Discrimination Law* (London, Routledge, 2009).

Recognition

As a Black British woman I have come to think of the Race Relations Act almost as a soundtrack to my life. Without the norms that it (to some extent successfully) introduced into British society, my life would not have been the same. That is not to say that everyday racism has been eradicated (Ama Biney, Shirley Tate and Rita Chadha illustrated eloquently that this was not the case in general, in higher education institutions or in government), but to say that at least here in Britain there is official recognition that racism is a problem. This recognition is not to be taken for granted, especially when compared to Germany where, as Cengiz Barskanmaz explained, the problem with race is denied to the extent that there is a movement to remove the word from the German constitution. It is as if politicians have publicly given up on the campaign for racial equality and decided that, as it is too hard a nut to crack, there is no need to acknowledge it. If for no other reason, this is why Black Britons should celebrate the RRA 1965.

It was therefore a huge privilege to hear from the woman who was a leading figure in lobbying for the RRA 1965. Dame Jocelyn Barrow's life is littered with 'firsts'. She was the first black woman in teacher training in Britain, and it was she who founded the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD) in 1965 to persuade the government to prohibit racial discrimination legally: she described it as her mission. I was very moved when Joseph Harker, Assistant Comments Editor at the *Guardian*, gave a personal and heartfelt thanks to her for making his life and his work possible. He spoke for every black person in the room. It is clear that without her work, we would have no Act to celebrate, and Britain would be a very different place for its black citizens. Yet much literature does not mention her – like many a female pioneer, she has been overlooked in the archives of history. Her presence at the conference was thanks to Sir Geoffrey Bindman, who worked with Dame Jocelyn in CARD and subsequently became the first legal advisor for the Race Relations Board – he encouraged me to find her. It was well worth the effort.

Friends

It was also a very special moment when – as they say in the USA – I 'met my bibliography'. Critical race theory pervades my work, and it was a joy to meet Professors Charles Lawrence, Mari Matsuda and Kumea Shorter Gooden, each incisive, poetic and elegant in their work and writing. I cite them regularly and was thrilled to bring their ideas to a wider audience. I sensed that the audience lapped up their words. However, I suspect that it was also an eye-opening experience for them: while we Europeans know a lot about race and racism in America, the converse is not true – they may have been surprised (and dismayed) to learn about the similarities between the UK, Europe and USA.

Thus as I looked around the conference room, I was

Figure 1
This silkscreen print, *Anger* (2008), by Michael Craig-Martin, has been on display in the British Academy's auditorium in recent years.



pleased to see the faces of new friends from near and afar, as well as old friends and colleagues, such as Judge Stephen Keevash, Professors Diamond Ashiagbor, Aileen McColgan and Colm O'Cinneide, Councillors Paul Abbey and Momodou Jallow (each recently elected in Finland and Sweden respectively), Claude Moraes, Louise Whitfield and Michael Bates. *Anger* may have been written (literally) in bold letters on the wall (Figure 1), but contrary to popular stereotypes about black women and men, there was nothing but friendship and curiosity in the room.

More to say

Aside from the fact that I was busy ensuring that all ran to plan, it is difficult to reflect objectively upon the two days. Comments from participants affirm that it was a huge success, that the speakers were all fantastic, and that all present learnt something about race, law and society from a different perspective. Some also commented that it was refreshing to see such heterogeneity at the British Academy and at the pre-conference dinner generously sponsored by the Inner Temple. A common regret was that we had only two days – our conversations seemed to be just beginning when we had to stop! The more we talked, the more there was to say. I therefore laughed when a few days later a colleague asked if there was anything left to discuss. There remains not only much to say, but much to do – the Race Relations Act is also a call for race-related action. As racial lines harden in battles across the globe for public space and resources – whether in relation to policing, immigration, employment, housing or education – there is an urgent need for development of international and interdisciplinary alliances that can lobby effectively for racial justice.

Given the continued difficulties in securing funding for race projects, both the British Academy and Inner Temple are to be highly commended for supporting this landmark event. It commemorated a key moment in British legal history, a moment worthy of the question 'Where were you on 8 December 1965?' Perhaps, however, the more relevant question is: where will you be on 8 December 2015? Why not join us at Leeds University School of Law for a legal panel reflecting upon this groundbreaking piece of British legal history and its consequences? For example, without the Race Relations Act 1965 there would possibly not be an Equality Act today securing rights for women, religious minorities, the differently abled, LGBTQU individuals, and workers of different ages. Wherever you may be, spare a moment to think about/talk about the brave and determined people both here and abroad who made the Act a reality. Or perhaps just sit quietly and say 'Happy 50th Birthday, RRA!'

2. The full list of speakers can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/RRA65

How terrorist groups ‘learn’

Innovation and adaptation in political violence

ANDREW MUMFORD

Dr Andrew Mumford is Associate Professor in Politics and International Relations, at the University of Nottingham. He was the convenor of a British Academy Conference held in June 2015, which considered how new approaches to the study of terrorism reveal the processes and outcomes of terrorist ‘learning’.

Earlier in 2015, Assistant Chief Constable Bill Kerr, the counter-terrorism chief of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), warned that dissident republican terrorists in the province had been studying Taliban and Islamic State bomb-making methods as a way of learning how they could enhance their technical skills for the purposes of undertaking a resurgent bombing campaign. Kerr pointed towards the internet as the primary mechanism by which New IRA and Continuity IRA members had learned about Taliban EFPs (explosively formed projectiles) – horizontally fired homemade rockets. This one instance reveals just how two seemingly disparate terrorist groups with different motives and endgames were able to provide platforms of ‘learning’ for the other. Probing the processes and outcomes of such learning was the purpose of a two-day conference held at the British Academy in June.

The conference explored how terrorist groups have learned from each other and/or from history by mimicking tactics or actively pursuing inter-organisational co-operation. Academic discussion of the phenomena of ‘learning’ in the realm of political violence has focused almost exclusively on how institutions of the state have responded to terrorism, either in the light of previous experience or as a result of lessons from other military or police forces. This conference aimed to create a distinct new discussion by turning attention towards learning by terrorist groups themselves. By bringing together 12 leading scholars in the field of international relations, security studies and history, as well as four counter-terrorism practitioners, this conference pulled apart the notion of ‘learning’ in a non-state capacity, and addressed a number of the most substantial case studies that showcase the under-analysed process of learning and lesson transferral between and within terrorist groups.

The need to understand terrorist learning is urgent and important. Al-Qaeda’s central hierarchy has fragmented into a conglomeration of regional hubs, each one seeking ways to ‘learn’ how best to adapt to specific regional demands, at the same time as pursuing knowledge exchanges with networked affiliates. At the same time, dissident republican groups continue in their attempts to destabilise the peace in Northern Ireland in ways that reveal a learned understanding of past IRA tactics. Those who carry out so-called ‘lone wolf’ attacks, like the Tsarnaev brothers who bombed the 2013 Boston Marathon, teach themselves bomb-making techniques over the internet. In short, adaptation and innovation amongst violent non-state actors is prevalent, but significantly under-analysed (and perhaps under-appreciated) by academics and counter-terrorism practitioners alike.

The effective learning of lessons has an impact upon any organisation’s ability to adapt and innovate. Government departments and national security forces often undertake lesson-learning exercises after policy launches or military operations, as a means of avoiding past mistakes and maximising the efficiency of action in the future. Terrorist groups are no different. The papers presented at this conference provided a timely insight into the tactical and strategic effect that terrorists have leveraged from learning.¹

Identifying the processes and outcomes of terrorist learning

We can differentiate the different ‘spheres’ from which terrorists draw lessons: from individual members (particularly leaders); from within their own and/or other organisations; from the social groups they are located within; and from previous generations of terrorists linked to their cause. A terrorist’s own ‘learning curve’ is both a process and a causal mechanism, but crucially does not have to be synonymous with change. Learning the ‘wrong’ lessons (such as the quantity or

1. For each conference contribution discussed in this article, the authorship is given in the footnotes.

mixture of explosives put in a bomb that prematurely detonates) is itself still learning. Terrorist learning can therefore be defined as the acquisition of knowledge to inform terrorist-related activities in the future.²

Tactical innovation (such as targeting or weapon choice) often does not lead to organisational innovation (such as structure or leadership changes). A key issue we overlook is the role played by luck and chance in terrorist learning. Take, for example, ETA's assassination of the Spanish Prime Minister Luis Carrero Blanco in 1973. The terrorists learned that Blanco went each day to the same church at the same time via the same route. His morning visit to Mass found him at his most vulnerable, and that is why ETA rented a flat on the same street as Blanco's church, burrowed a tunnel underneath the road, and detonated a huge bomb as his car was passing. As the old adage goes, terrorists only need to get lucky once to succeed.³

But luck is contingent upon the skill of those who terrorists recruit to join their organisations. We need to dispel the notion that terrorist recruits are all either idiots or ripe for radicalisation. Many modern terrorists are high-achieving young people with good levels of education. This is being reflected by the recruitment patterns of groups like ISIS who have made distinct efforts to win doctors and engineers over to their cause in order to fulfil specific highly skilled roles within the self-proclaimed caliphate.⁴

In many ways such recruitment patterns can be seen as a form of social capital accumulation, in which learning to do something well within a terrorist group enhances the social standing of the individual. Learning to *perform* violence is a key group dynamic in terrorist organisations. So an alternative set of dynamics needs to replace violence in societies riddled with violent political conflict.⁵

The evolution of IRA 'learning', from 1916 to the present

The year 2016 marks the centenary of the fateful Easter Rising in Dublin and denotes one hundred years of 'learning' within the Irish republican movement. This was the theme of the second of our panel sessions. In an era today when jihadist propaganda newsletters like *Dabiq* and *Inspire* serve as important outlets for disseminating tactical lessons and political messages, we should remember how the internal IRA newspaper *An t'Óglách* ('The Volunteer') acted as a primitive 'distance learning course' for recruits during the Irish War of Independence, by providing articles on military education to those that had none.⁶

Contrary to the impression given by inward-looking republican narratives, the Provisional IRA (PIRA) after 1969 started to learn from other armed conflicts globally. The IRA used numerous analogies to frame their struggle

2. Dr Andrew Mumford and Louise Kettle, University of Nottingham.

3. Dr Maria Rasmussen, US Naval Postgraduate School.

4. Professor Mia Bloom, Georgia State University.

5. Dr Jeffrey Murer, University of St Andrews.

6. Dr William Sheehan, Open University.

ILLUSIONS OF TERRORISM AND COUNTER- TERRORISM



EDITED BY
RICHARD ENGLISH

In autumn 2015, the British Academy will publish a volume of essays entitled *Illusions of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism*, edited by Richard English. The relationship between non-state terrorism and state counter-terrorism continues to shape world politics. These essays by leading scholars in the field analyse this relationship, examining post-9/11 counter-terrorism, the evolution of al-Qaida, challenges to western counter-terrorism, and why terrorist campaigns sometimes endure and sometimes end. This volume (*Proceedings of the British Academy*, 203) will be available from Oxford University Press: <http://ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780197265901.do>

Each year the British Academy holds up to six 'British Academy Conferences' – pivotal events of lasting significance, at which leading-edge research of the highest calibre can be presented and discussed. Typically held over two days, these conferences provide particular opportunities for multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary perspectives.

More information can be found via
www.britishacademy.ac.uk/conferences

in order to adapt, including Vietnam, Aden, Palestine and the Congo. Furthermore, the IRA have been not just passive learners but active teachers to terrorist groups worldwide, offering training to organisations like ETA in Spain, FARC in Columbia, and MK in South Africa.⁷

But there was always a link between innovation by the PIRA and adaptations to counter-terrorism procedures by the British security agencies. Despite attempts at tactical creativity, such as using new bomb-making techniques, issues of user safety stifled innovation. In short, creativity was costing the IRA the lives of its own members. Lesson learning came at a high price.⁸ This is one of the reasons why the IRA moved away from making bombs requiring chemicals held in thin rubber balloons in the 1970s. The terrorists found that the chemicals were burning through the balloons too quickly, leaving them little time to escape. Soon they switched to using condoms, due to the thicker rubber. But, in an ironic twist, IRA men refused to store large numbers of condoms in their homes, citing good Catholic morals and the wraths of their wives and mothers. Bomb-making innovation was thus halted by piety.

But the costs borne by the PIRA have benefited the post-Good Friday Agreement dissident groups like the Real IRA. We can observe how the dissident violent republicans are 'copying to be different' from their Provisional forebears. For example, the Real IRA has returned to the tactical use of the letter bomb years after it had fallen out of fashion.⁹

Contemporary political violence and jihadist group learning

The conference also provided an in-depth look at how modern jihadist groups like ISIS and various Al-Qaeda off-shoots have learned from each other and their own past.

The process of Al-Qaeda's gradual devolution from a tightly controlled hierarchical organisation into a myriad of semi-autonomous regional affiliates has meant the group is changing the way it is learning. It is also imperative to note how the rise of the internet has allowed modern jihadists to teach themselves online, meaning that modern violent jihad has become 'virtually mediated'.¹⁰

7. Professor Adrian Guelke, Queen's University Belfast.

8. Dr Paul Gill, University College London.

9. Dr John Morrison, University of East London.

10. Dr Akil Awan, Royal Holloway, University of London.

On 3 June 2015, Richard Holton, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Cambridge, delivered the British Academy's Philosophical Lecture, entitled "'We don't torture": Moral resolve and the doctrine of double effect'. His lecture discussed the philosophical issues behind the use of torture to extract information. An audio recording can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/moralresolve



An ISIS-run training school, believed to be in Syria, for 'Caliphate Cubs'.

Raffaello Pantucci shared with us the results of a large study he had undertaken of 22 terror plots in the UK, which traced learning amongst British jihadists. He focused on how and why they had learned to change their choice of target and weapon, their recruitment and training patterns, and their communication and funding techniques. Incremental changes have been forced on British jihadists as Al-Qaeda itself has evolved. Increased surveillance by intelligence agencies has made communication between Al-Qaeda leaders and local cell members increasingly difficult, reducing the possibility of large co-ordinated attacks. Jihadist cells have learned to become more autonomous. The most obvious shift has been in weapon choice, with the fixation on explosives giving way to a more noticeable fascination with close-up weapons, such as the knives and machetes used to kill Fusilier Lee Rigby in Woolwich in 2013.¹¹

One thing that modern jihadist groups have picked up on is that technological expertise is easier to exchange and learn than the politico-religious rhetoric that underpins the struggle, because the latter is far more diffuse. But it is noticeable that groups like Hezbollah in Lebanon have learned that social welfare provision can buy them goodwill in target communities, leading to wider public acceptance of their overall goals.¹²

But perhaps the most noticeable and shocking change to recruitment patterns that ISIS has learned to enact in recent years is the deliberate recruitment of children to its ranks. Research into the so-called 'Cubs of the Caliphate' has uncovered how children have been kept in ISIS training camps for up to 45 days, isolated from their families, and socialised into the practices of terrorism through daily rituals and exposure to acts of violence. How and why children learn to adopt ISIS's tactics of terror is a phenomenon that presents us with a darkly pressing need to understand the root causes of learning within and amongst such groups – and presents an urgent challenge to counter-terrorism practitioners.¹³

11. Raffaello Pantucci, Royal United Services Institute (RUSI).

12. Dr Rashmi Singh, University of St Andrews.

13. Professor John Horgan, Georgia State University.



Tackling today's terrorists: the challenge for national security

At an event held at the British Academy on 18 June 2015, Sir David Omand, former Director of GCHQ and the first national Security and Intelligence Co-ordinator (above, left), talked to Richard Aldrich, Professor of International Security and Director of Research in Politics and International Studies, University of Warwick (above, right) about how security services had to react to evolving terrorist threats. Sir David stressed the importance of working out what the terrorists were trying to achieve, so that those intentions could be frustrated. 'We are talking about groups that have an agenda: they want to achieve something. The first glimmering of wisdom on the part of the authorities is: can we deny the terrorists what they are most seeking?

'After 9/11, Al-Qaeda had their own agenda – the caliphate. But in order to achieve that, they had to achieve significant disruption of our society. They had to put the public in fear. They had to gather recruits by showing their own prowess in committing atrocities. If they fail in that objective and we are not intimidated – and this was at the heart of our own approach to counter-terrorism – then they are not actually progressing their objective, so we are prevailing, and they are losing. That still means that they are dangerous – they are still around, they are still occasionally capable of mounting an attack – but in strategic terms, we are prevailing.

'If you take that approach with a group like the jihadist terrorists, the key concept is normality. If there is normality, if foreign visitors still come, if we all use the London Underground without fear, if there is inward investment in the country, and the country is stable, then they have manifestly failed in their objective of destabilising.

'One of the key things that terrorist groups do is to try and provoke the authorities into overreaction. It is a tactic that is as old as history. If the terrorist rhetoric is that we are an oppressive, authoritarian regime, and they then commit an atrocity and we overreact, then they can point and say, "Look, we told you they were oppressive and authoritarian". That then helps them in their recruitment of more people to fuel the cause. Again, if the authorities really understand that dynamic, then it is much more likely that the sort of policies being followed will eventually lead to the end of the terrorist campaign.'

A video recording of the whole conversation is at www.britishacademy.ac.uk/tacklingterrorists

Staying ahead of the terrorist learning curve: the challenge for counter-terrorism

The interaction between terrorist groups and state counter-terrorism bodies is of heightened importance given the interactive lesson-learning going on between terrorist groups themselves. This is the task facing our police, intelligence agencies and military today. This challenge was discussed under 'Chatham House rules' by three high profile counter-terrorism practitioners in the final session of our conference, including: Lord Carlile, the former independent reviewer of government counter-terrorism legislation; Tim Wilsey, the former Director of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office; and Alan Judd, a former member of the government's Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC).

It is clear from a look at Britain's recent history of counter-terrorism policy that security agencies make most of their mistakes about terrorist groups very early on. Emergent threats thus pose the greatest danger to national security, even if much time and energy are exhausted tracking new threats that burn out very quickly. Although terrorists might be learning to adopt new tactics (as we can see from the latest fad for marauding urban attacks as seen in recent years in Mumbai, Nairobi and Paris), we must ask ourselves whether terrorists are learning the biggest lesson of all: terrorism rarely works.

The public event on the evening of the first day of our conference allowed us to get an acute sense of how those charged with preventing terrorist attacks on our soil were trying to stay ahead of the terrorist learning curve. In conversation with Richard Aldrich from Warwick University was Sir David Omand, the former head of the Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ) and the first UK Security and Intelligence Coordinator, responsible to the Prime Minister for, amongst other things, national counter-terrorism strategy. Reflecting on his own career, Sir David recalled how it became clear in the aftermath of the bombing of the British consulate in Istanbul in 2003 that jihadist use of vehicle-borne suicide bombs had shifted from the use of a single vehicle to the use of multiple vehicles, as terrorists learned that one bomb usually affected perimeter areas, whilst following vehicles could then penetrate deeper into secure zones. He acknowledged that there was an implicit awareness within the security services that terrorist groups are learning, but that the onus must be on understanding what terrorist lesson-learning is ultimately used for. Realising the end-game of such learning will ultimately help frustrate their intentions.

The shocking attacks on the tourist beach in Tunisia occurred two weeks after our conference. It served as another cruel reminder of the need for states to understand the learning process that grants terrorists like Seifeddine Rezgui and his accomplices the knowledge to carry out such brutal acts of political violence.



Ian Kershaw

in conversation with
DIARMAID MacCULLOCH

On 2 July 2015, Sir Ian Kershaw FBA, Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Sheffield, delivered his Raleigh Lecture on History, 'Out of the ashes: Europe's rebirth after the Second World War, 1945-49'.

A video recording of the lecture can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/kershaw

A few weeks earlier, Sir Ian was interviewed for the *British Academy Review* by the Reverend Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch Kt FBA, Professor of the History of the Church at the University of Oxford, and chair of the British Academy's Events and Prizes Committee.

Ian, I'm fascinated by the fact you started as a medieval historian. I bet there are still people in Yorkshire who think of you as that nice young Dr Kershaw who knows about Bolton Priory.¹ What happened to take you from that fascinating medieval stuff to something very different, but equally fascinating?

There are people who remember me as a medievalist in Yorkshire, it's true. A year or two ago I was made a Trustee of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society. At my first meeting I was greeted by a former colleague from Sheffield University, who said, 'See how standards are slipping. Now we've got a Lancastrian on the Board!'

The transition from medieval history to modern German history didn't take place in a Damascus Road conversion; it took some years to develop fully. And it was driven not by my exposure in any professional fashion to German history, but by my increasing prowess in the German language. I had wanted to do languages at school: I did Latin, but the only modern language I could do was French. As a makeshift subject for A-levels, I chose history. Later I started learning German as a hobby. And while in Germany for two months in summer 1972, I went to intensive German language courses and my German language improved fairly rapidly.

I also became intrigued by what sort of country Germany had been. It didn't match up at all with what I was seeing. I found myself asking questions about the place I was living in, a little town just outside Munich, and what had happened there in the Third Reich. That really was the trigger to my becoming increasingly interested in making the move from medieval to modern.

Chance occurrences seem to have happened so often in my life. As a total fluke a new position in modern European history was advertised in my department at Manchester University. One of my friends said, 'Why not have a go at it?' and at the very last minute I decided nothing would be lost in doing so. Unbeknown to me, my colleagues had said that, should I apply for this position, they would at least grant me an interview. I was treated as a complete outsider: I was even sent a map of the University of Manchester and how to get there! To my astonishment, but also intense delight, I was offered this position. I suppose they took what I would see as a sort of reverse gamble. Normally you appoint somebody on research prowess and hope they might be a decent colleague. With me, they'd had six years of me as a colleague, and they just took a gamble that I would do something in modern history.

That was how I came to change from medieval to modern history. After one completely schizophrenic year when I never knew whether the students were coming to do 'The Origins of the Open-Field System' or 'The Rise of Hitler', I settled down as a modernist.

I'm intrigued by that. You're talking absolute ground zero. You had no basis to go in apart from a fascination with the subject. What was your entry point? What did you start by researching?

I did what I could to take soundings, as well as reading as widely as I could. I got great help from a number of people, who opened the door for my first research trip to Germany in 1975 – with the help of a British Academy grant of £500.²

1. Ian Kershaw, *Bolton Priory: The Economy of a Northern Monastery, 1268-1325* (Oxford University Press, 1973).

2. Dr I. Kershaw was awarded a 'European Exchange Grant' of £500 in April 1975.

My first port of call was Munich, at the famous Institute of Contemporary History (Institut für Zeitgeschichte Munich). Alan Milward, a Fellow of this Academy,³ engineered a meeting with Martin Broszat, the Director of that Institute. And amazingly I had hit upon a topic that Broszat thought was a super one – the nature of public opinion, or as I later preferred to call it ‘popular opinion’, in Germany during the Third Reich. Again, completely unknown to me, he was the director of a massive project that was just beginning in Munich and he invited me to work with them.

So, to answer your question, my starting point of research was on popular attitudes towards the Nazi regime, in particular in the period before the war. I then got a research fellowship from the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung to go to Munich for a year, in 1976-77. And I was faced with this wonderful material that was teeming out of local government administrative offices, justice offices, police stations etc. – things that hadn’t been seen for 30 years. Little did I know it at the time, I was absolutely in on the ground floor of the beginnings of the social history of the Third Reich. Nobody in Germany had done this in 30 years. Yet here I was, a novice coming from England. It was fabulous.

It’s an inspiring story, but a peculiar one. A native set of professional historians welcomed you, as someone from a completely different academic system, into their midst. Do you think it was an exception to the rule of how these things work in historiography?

I think it speaks well for the German historical profession at that time. I don’t think I would have been as welcomed, dare I say, in the British or the French historical profession if I had come as a novice from Germany.

In Germany in the first post-war years, there had been a lot of continuity of conservative historiography. By the 1960s, that was starting to change. A number of people on the liberal left were taking up positions in universities and research institutes, and they were looking across the Channel and across the Atlantic for inspiration. There was an enormous welcome in Germany at that time, not just for me but for others from Britain and America who were working on German history. They positively welcomed an intervention from outside, seeing it as not coloured by the type of rancorous internal debates that were happening there, where people were divided into irreconcilable schools. They thought that somebody coming from the outside was somehow a dispassionate neutral observer who would tell them the objective reality.

You were actually performing a role for them in a sense, in that you enabled them to talk to each other by your presence and by the things you were doing.

They were very welcoming towards my subsequent work, particularly the Hitler biography – and then the most recent book I did on *The End*.⁴ People were asking, ‘Why has no German historian done this?’ It is interesting that

3. Alan Milward was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1987.

4. Ian Kershaw, *The End: Hitler’s Germany, 1944-45* (Penguin, 2011).

FROM THE BRITISH ACADEMY ARCHIVE

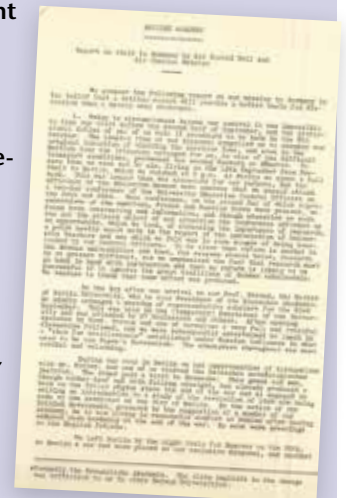
In September 1947, the President of the British Academy, Sir Harold I. Bell, and Sir Charles K. Webster (who would succeed him as President), visited Germany in order to enquire into the state of scholarship there in the aftermath of the Second World War. On their return they produced a 6-page typed report of their findings.

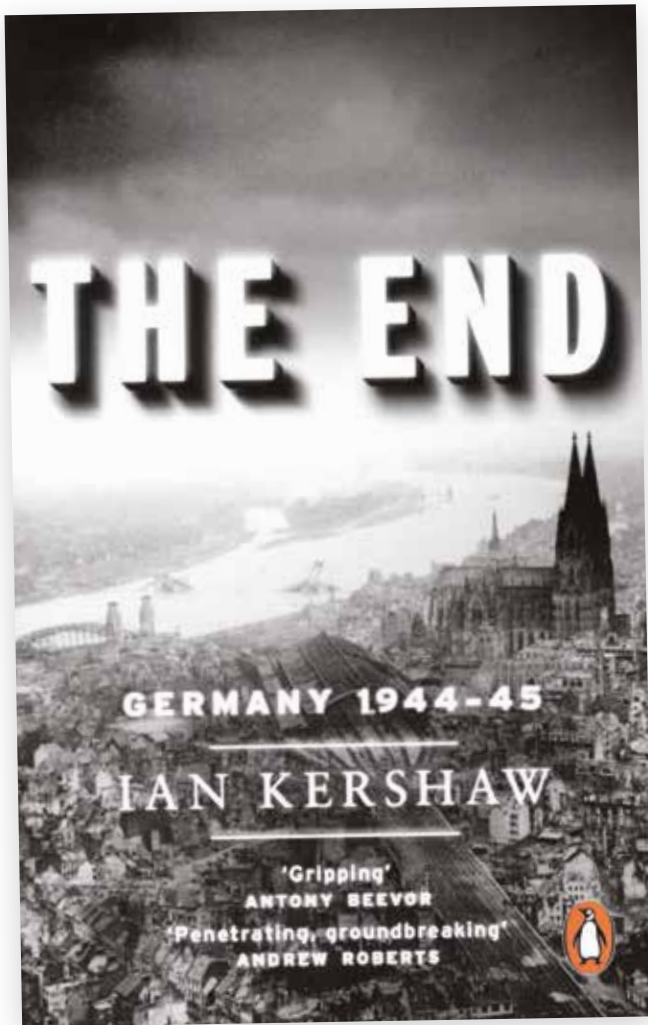
They discovered that a particular problem was the lack of books. ‘Of all the University libraries in Germany only five, Erlangen, Greifswald, Halle, Heidelberg, and Tübingen, are undamaged; at Cologne and Marburg the damage is slight. Some, like Bonn, Giessen, Hamburg, Munich, and Würzburg, are totally destroyed. Seminar libraries, municipal and state libraries, have suffered equally. Even where no serious damage has occurred the isolation of Germany from the rest of the world has entailed the almost total lack of recent publications; indeed more than one person stressed the difficulty of even discovering what works of importance had appeared during the war.’

But they revealed less material difficulties too. ‘So far as our observation extended it would seem that it has been easier to resume research in classical and humane studies than in mediaeval and modern history. A greater proportion of teachers in the last subject, which was already in a somewhat precarious position, were removed by the Nazis and of those who remained a greater proportion identified themselves with the Nazi régime and cannot therefore be now allowed to continue in their posts. It is very difficult to find younger men to take their place and there seems a certain reluctance for teachers to specialize in the 19th and 20th centuries and thus be compelled to put forward views which may be considered by one or more of the parties of the present day as hostile to their purposes. Nevertheless in our discussions we pointed out the necessity for the objective study of recent modern history and in particular the period 1919-1939. When this point was made, there was generally full agreement, but it is perhaps natural that there seemed to be little sign of preparation for such study.’

BA570. Thanks to the British Academy’s archivist, Karen Syrett, for finding this document.

The original may be read via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/germanyreport1947





these sorts of books – such as Richard Evans has written as well⁵ – are not conventionally written by German historians. I think this is because of the nature of their academic training, which provides a hindrance to this sort of wide-ranging work.

You could turn to Fascist Spain and say the same thing, couldn't you? It was necessary for an outsider to say the things they couldn't.

That's right, that has been the case with Paul Preston, whose work on Spain I admire enormously.⁷ Before him, Raymond Carr worked on Spain too.⁸ And of course, Norman Davies is feted as an enormous influence in Polish history.⁹ It is a trend of British historical training,

5. For example, Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich* (Penguin, 2003), *The Third Reich in Power* (Penguin, 2005), *The Third Reich at War* (Penguin, 2008). Richard Evans was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1993.

7. For example, Paul Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth-Century Spain* (HarperCollins, 2012). Paul Preston was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1994.

8. Works include Raymond Carr, *Spain: A History* (Oxford University Press, 2000). Raymond Carr was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1978.

9. Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland* (2 volumes, Oxford University Press, 1981). Norman Davies was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1997.

that people have been brought up to be experts on the histories of other countries.

Why do you think it is characteristic of British history? I've got a reductionist explanation: we hate our cooking, so we go abroad to places which have nicer cuisine.

That may well explain an interest in Italy and France. I'm not quite sure it goes for Poland or Germany.

So you start with this interesting subject: popular opinion on the Third Reich. How do you get from that to one of the great biographies of Hitler?

Again, it was a lengthy transition. When I was doing that work on popular attitudes towards the Nazis, part of that work concentrated on attitudes towards Hitler. Political attitudes towards Hitler then got me fascinated in the person who was creating these attitudes and in the propaganda structures that had helped to build up this picture of Hitler. Two books emerged from that research in Munich. One was called *The 'Hitler Myth'*, which was on acclamatory attitudes in the Third Reich.¹⁰ Another was called *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent*, which dealt with oppositional attitudes.¹¹

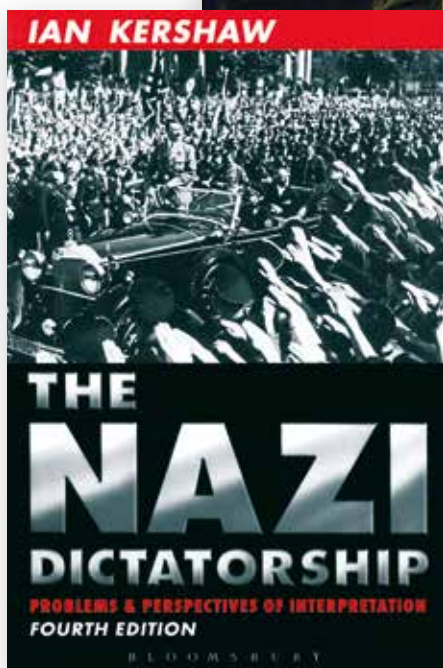
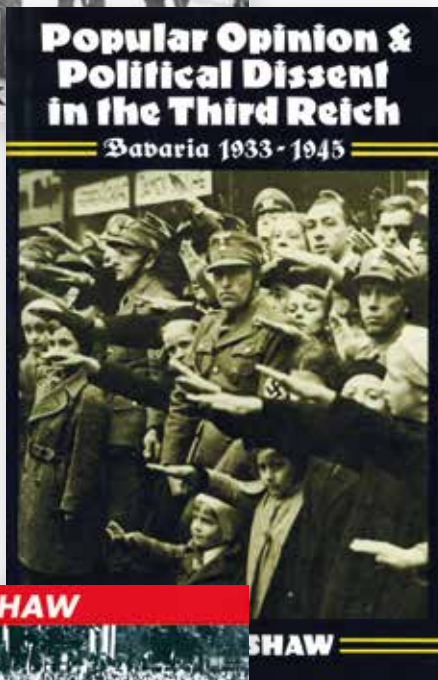
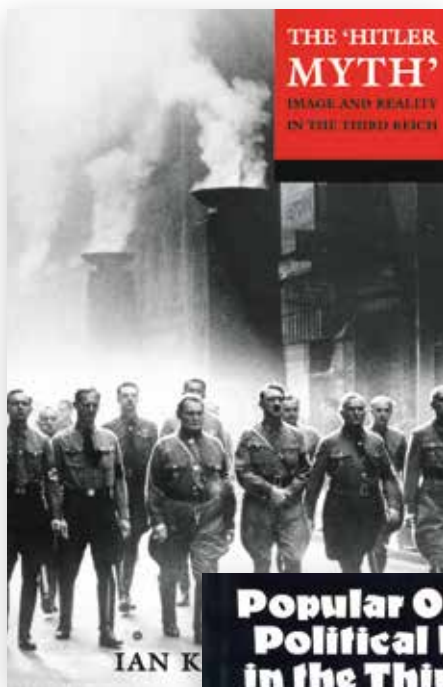
In the meanwhile, I had been invited to a conference at Cumberland Lodge in Windsor Great Park in 1979, which turned out to be a really decisive historiographical influence. You don't often say that about conferences, but this was a really important one. All the leading historians from Germany and Britain were there. As a novice, I watched this kind of tennis match – somebody would smash the ball over the net, and back it would come – between different sides of the ideological debate about the role of Hitler and his significance in the Third Reich. The 'intentionalists' wanted to see the entire history of the Third Reich as being determined by Hitler's personality, Hitler's dominance and Hitler's ideology: 'Nazism is Hitlerism', as one person said at the conference. On the opposite side were people who felt Hitler was a weak dictator and couldn't control all of the structures around him: they moved to a 'structural' or 'functional' approach, where you analyse the chaotic nature of government in the Third Reich.

In retrospect, it was like a division of labour between those people who concentrated on foreign policy, where Hitler's role was more obvious, and those who concentrated on domestic policy, where often he took no part whatsoever in what was going on.

The conference left me completely intrigued with this division in Germany and why Germans were so polarised around this. It struck me instinctively and intuitively as obvious that Hitler had played an important role in what was going on, without necessarily being in control of all the minutiae. I became much more interested from then on in the political structures of the Third Reich and the way in which that system worked, and in the reasons why this rancorous debate had emerged. Out of that came *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of*

10. Ian Kershaw, *The 'Hitler Myth': Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (Oxford University Press, 1987).

11. Ian Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich: Bavaria 1933-1945* (Oxford University Press, 1983).



Interpretation, published in 1985. Only three chapters in the book focused distinctly on the role of Hitler, but that in itself took me further in the direction of Hitler.

Eventually, in yet another of the chance developments that seem to follow my career, I was asked by Penguin to write a biography of Hitler. Initially I said, 'No, I don't think I want to write a biography of Hitler. There are two good ones there already, by Bullock and by Fest.' They said, 'Okay, fair enough. If you change your mind, let us know.' I was sufficiently intrigued by this to reread Alan Bullock's wonderful biography, initially written in 1952,¹² and then Joachim Fest's very stylish biography, written in 1973.¹³ I thought, 'They are both very good, but I think I could improve on them.' It was a bit of a tall order, but I agreed to take it on, little knowing what was coming down the track. The next years of my life were completely taken up with writing this Hitler biography.¹⁴

The starting point was transcending this debate about intentionalism versus structuralism, which I thought had run into a cul-de-sac. My biography used two concepts: Max Weber's charismatic domination, and the notion of 'working towards the Führer', a slogan I found in a Nazi speech. I thought that linking these two things together offered me a vehicle to overcome this division, and to see how Hitler could play such a vital role without having to run everything, or take every decision himself. He could often take no decisions until the last minute but things would move inexorably in the direction that he wanted.

It's an absorbing biography, which I hugely enjoyed. I have turned my hand to biography myself, and one thing that strikes me is that normally you gain a certain sympathy for your subject. You tend to excuse, or at least understand, the discreditable things. I think most biographers feel that. (I do about Thomas Cromwell.) But you can't, can you?

No. Some people have said that that must be peculiar about writing a biography of Hitler. But it's no different from writing a biography of Stalin, is it? Paul Preston faced the same problem with Franco.¹⁵ Maybe Mussolini too: in his brilliant book, I think Denis Mack Smith had a different problem – if you treat Mussolini as a buffoon, then you miss much of the evil that Mussolini was perpetrating as well.¹⁶

In an odd fashion, I think it must be easier to find a distance if you don't like the person than if you do. Also, is there not a distinction between empathy and sympathy? You can use the intuitive method to try to understand why people are doing things, even if you don't sympathise with them. I think that's possible in the case of Hitler, even whilst detesting everything that he stood for.

The other question that struck me when reading the biography was whether you felt soiled or

12. Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny* (1952). Alan Bullock was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1967.

13. Joachim C. Fest, *Hitler: Eine Biographie* (1973).

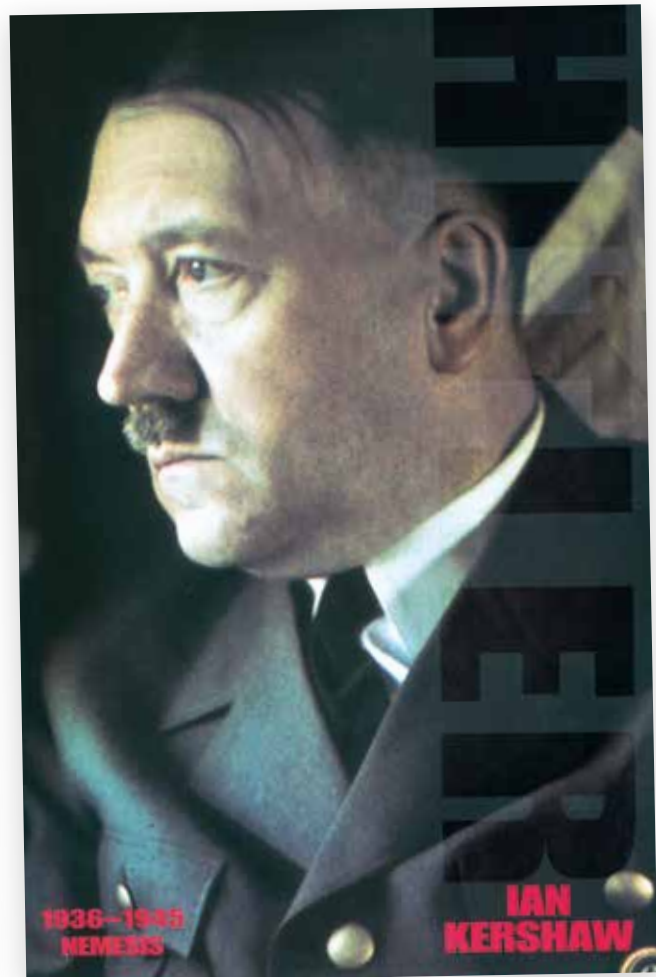
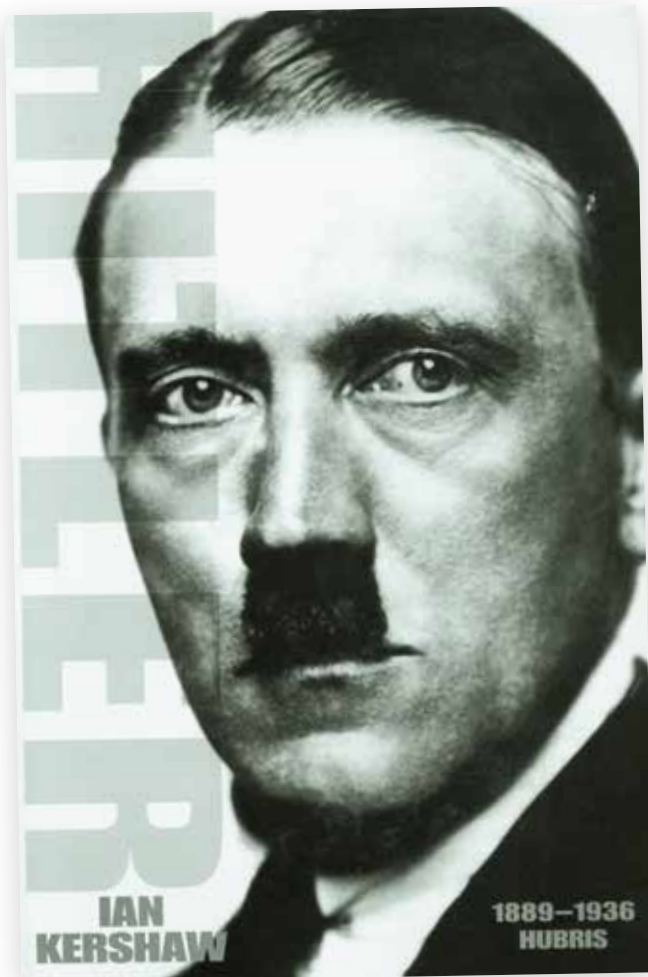
14. Ian Kershaw, *Hitler 1889-1936: Hubris* (Allen Lane, 1998).

Ian Kershaw, *Hitler 1936-45: Nemesis* (Allen Lane, 2000).

15. Paul Preston, *Franco: A biography* (Fontana Press, 1995).

16. Denis Mack Smith, *Mussolini: A biography* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1982).

Denis Mack Smith was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1976.



crushed by the story. As I read it, I could end up feeling really very depressed by this revelation of someone so monstrous and yet so successful in the short term. Did you feel the psychological strains of writing about this monster?

I felt all sorts of psychological strains, but they were mainly as a result of the work involved, up against a timetable.

No, I don't think I did feel that depression. Maybe that's just a matter of different authors' personality traits. But I had been working on this for a long time – not specifically the Hitler biography, but on Nazism – so the general depressive nature of the topic was well-known to me, and in a sense I was inured to it. I suppose when I got to the part where he finally put the bullet through his head, I felt a sense of rejoicing rather than depression. Rejoicing the work was over, but also rejoicing for humanity that this was finally finished.

Of course, it's a story which, if you're writing it as a German, may have a more profoundly depressing effect, because indirectly you'd be a part of the story. I'm not lurching into the notion that I have special privileges as an outsider, but perhaps particularly as a Brit you think, 'Well, this did come to an end, and it came to an end partly through our agency.'

Speaking as an early modern historian, I've got

problems with too many sources. You must have felt overwhelmed by the sources. What sort of choices do you make when you're faced with a vast amount of material?

It is overwhelming. But when you come down to the person of Hitler himself, there's a strange way in which Hitler is cocooned in the silences of the sources. The sources have really severe problems, in that anybody saying anything about Hitler was either an enemy or a devotee. There are next to no neutral comments, or even the sort of comments you would get about Churchill – that he was a hero, 'warts and all'. Next to nobody who was a devotee said anything critical, and next to nobody who was an enemy said anything positive. And Hitler himself wrote so little: and much of what he did write was wilfully destroyed at the end of the war. Unlike Stalin, he wasn't a bureaucrat: he had no bureaucratic tendencies. So decisions were sometimes non-decisions, with some casual comment of his being picked up by other people. The point is that it is very difficult to get at Hitler through the sources.

I was very fortunate in that one crucial source had become available just before I started the biography. That was the complete set of the Goebbels diaries, running from 1924 through to April 1945, with hardly any breaks in them at all. Before then, bits and pieces of these diaries were known, but the majority of them were

thought to have been lost. Then they were discovered in Moscow on glass plates, which were like an early form of photocopying, by Elke Fröhlich from the Institut für Zeitgeschichte Munich, who is a very good friend of mine and was the widow of Martin Broszat. They were used by David Irving to publish a set of diaries for 1938, which was a crucial year. By the time I had finished, the whole lot of these diaries had been edited by Elke Fröhlich and published.

Goebbels was obviously writing for later publication as a heroic story. But he was an absolutely conscientious diary writer: every night, however tired he was, he would write in his diary. After the war started, he dictated it: he had special secretaries who did his diaries. Much of the time he would say, 'Yesterday I met the Führer and he said ...', and he would often go for several pages about what Hitler was saying, what they were planning to do, and so on. You have the nearest thing to a running commentary – not only on Hitler's actions, but also what Hitler was thinking about with regard to those actions. With numerous caveats attached to them, Goebbels' diaries are an indispensable source and I was very fortunate that they became available. The biography would have been much weaker without them.

Do you think there is much more to come out, things that we don't know about?

Not specifically on Hitler, no. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, vast amounts of material started to become available in Moscow. I went to Moscow in the mid-1990s hoping to get more material on Hitler, and came away very disappointed: there were bits and pieces, but not very much. Of course, other things about the Third Reich itself will doubtless still emerge in doctoral theses and so on, particularly regarding Nazi rule in Eastern Europe. But I don't think we're likely to come up with any more material of really major significance with regard to Hitler.

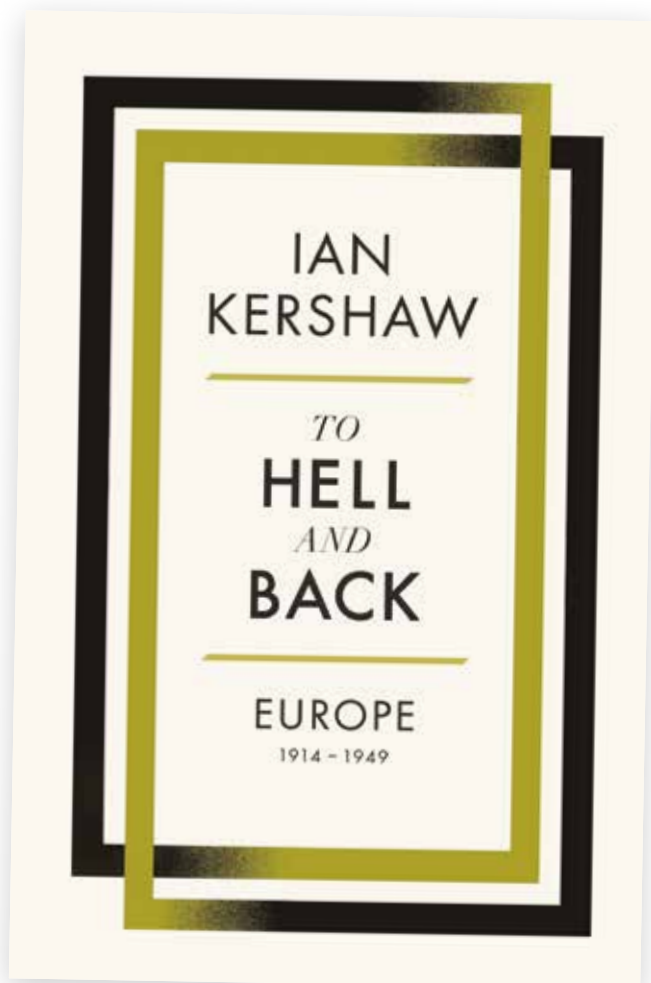
Let's move on to the book you are publishing this autumn, *To Hell and Back: Europe 1914-1949*, the first of two volumes covering the 20th century in *The Penguin History of Europe* series. What scale of book is this?

It is about 550 pages of text. It is rather a small book compared to some I've written!

So crudely speaking, it covers two world wars. What new areas did you find you needed to go into?

Practically everything. Apart from my specialism on Germany, I had to read an immense amount on practically every other country – even countries I thought I knew reasonable amounts about, such as the Soviet Union and Italy, let alone Britain and France. I learned an awful lot about a lot. Although you say it covers two world wars – the wars do define the story I'm telling – but nonetheless I had to do a lot about the interwar period and about peacetime developments.

The structure of the book is deliberately broken into narrative sections of relatively small timescales. But I have one thematic chapter, as there are certain things that completely override the chronological divisions. In that



chapter I had to deal with socio-economic development – social change, and economic lessons to be drawn from the war. I also had a section on the churches: I had to learn a lot about the role of the churches, and I went back to your *History of Christianity*.¹⁷ I also had a section on the intellectuals in the crisis, which meant reading a lot, including novels, and trying to get to grips with Bolshevik and fascist intellectuals. The final section of that chapter dealt with popular entertainment, including the great developments of cinema and literature. So I had to deal with a wide compass of things.

My initial thoughts were that my history of Europe in the 20th century would be one volume, but then Penguin suggested it should be two volumes. At that point, I had to rethink the enterprise. I was faced with the question of whether to end the first volume in 1945, or take it on to 1949. You can play it either way. But instead of seeing the absolute break in 1945, I wanted to see how the Second World War led inexorably into the Cold War, and to end the book where the Cold War had congealed into its separate halves. I end it with the Soviet atom bomb in 1949. I don't think it's a bad way of ending it, to see the immediate post-war period as the aftermath rather than the prologue.

17. Diarmaid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity* (2009).

It's such a fascinating period. (My secret is that I wanted to do a doctorate on the Weimar Republic interwar period, but at that stage I couldn't be bothered learning German.) What fascinates me is how inevitable that second war was, after 'a war to end war'. Presumably, you're grappling with that question through your text.

I do grapple with that, and I think you're right that it was near inevitable. I try to explain it through a matrix of four intersecting points that make a second cataclysmic war more or less inevitable. The four points are four legacies of the First World War.

The first is that we are left with very acute nationalist tensions; and nationalism was now largely defined through ethnicity. The second is that there were irreconcilable territorial disputes, which often went hand-in-hand with the ethnic divisions. The third is heightened class conflict, now focused on Bolshevik Russia. Of course, there had been big class conflict from industrialisation onwards; but now it had a real, sharp ideological focus on the Soviet Union. The fourth interlocking point is the presence of the deepest crisis of capitalism there had ever been. This had two parts: an inflationary crisis in the immediate post-war years, and then a deflationary crisis in the 1930s.

The four points taken together are overlapping and interlocking. But there was one country where all of these four points came together in their most extreme form: Germany. In Germany, you have the context within which Hitler is able to achieve such demagogic prowess and take control of the state. As soon as that happens, the peace of Europe is in great jeopardy. Unlike other countries where tensions exist – including fascist Italy – Germany is a threat to the rest of the continent and the rest of the world. That's the context within which I think this second war becomes increasingly inevitable. It is highly probable from the aftermath of the First World War, increasingly probable after 1933, and then in the later 1930s impossible to avoid.

I'm fascinated that, in the narrative you've just set out for me, Hitler hardly comes into it. On that reading, Hitler was a puppet of forces greater than himself.

No, certainly not a puppet of forces greater than himself. But he was able, more than anybody else, to exploit forces which were greater than himself. Those forces existed before Hitler. After all, until 1930 Hitler was a politically marginal figure: the Nazis got 2.6% of the vote in 1928. What you've got is a set of contexts within which this figure can play such an explosive and disastrous role. My analysis is a structural analysis of contexts within which an individual comes to play a disproportionate role.

Your career will now include a biography of a single individual and a structural narrative. I can see why they both work, but the biography would suggest that you're sympathetic to the idea that a single person can completely change a situation.

Yes, an individual can change a situation dramatically. In the biography, I was very much at pains all the way through – especially in the initial two-volume version –

to hold the two sides together: Hitler was possible because of things that made him possible. The two questions I posed at the beginning of that biography were: what made Hitler possible, and how was his exercise of rule possible? You can't explain those by the person; you have to explain them otherwise.

Putting it very crudely, and I said as much in the book at one point, without the First World War, Hitler in the Chancellor's seat in Germany would have been totally unthinkable. After the Second World War, ditto. It's the context that enables a person like that to come along. Where the structures provide the possibility, then the individual comes along and is able to manipulate the circumstances and mould them through his own actions. I think that's the case with Hitler, and it is why this one individual is able to play such a baleful role, given the structural conditions for his rule in the first place.

I'm very sympathetic to the Great Man theory of history. I think of Hitler and Stalin, obviously, but also Slobodan Milosevic and, in a happier way, Nelson Mandela – one can hardly imagine the outcome in South Africa without Nelson Mandela. They're all making their luck, aren't they?

Yes, they are. And you could argue the case of Margaret Thatcher. It goes without saying, she left an indelible mark, which was a specific mark of her personality, on history. But certain preconditions existed to allow this Prime Minister to play that role and make that mark. It's another example that shows the need to marry personality and the structural conditions for a particular individual's role.

Let's move on to your Raleigh Lecture: 'Out of the ashes: Europe's rebirth after the Second World War, 1945-1949'. You have been talking about the inevitability of the Second World War after the First. I guess the next lesson is the fact that there wasn't a Third World War. There was a Cold War, but not a Third World War.

If you'd been around in 1945-46, I don't think you would have bet too much money on Europe, within a decade or so, being a very stable place, east and west. You wouldn't have bet too much on a prosperous outcome. And you wouldn't have bet that much money on avoiding another war.

My starting point for this lecture is how unlikely it was that Europe would emerge from the ashes after 1945 in such a fashion. The Second World War, which left about four times as many people dead as the First and the continent in ruins, actually produced enormous prosperity and stability within a decade or so. It's an astonishing story. It strikes me that one of the most important questions of the 20th century is why that could happen: why the First World War produces the roots of the Second, and why the Second World War produces this highly positive outcome which brings peace to Europe for the next 70 and more years.

Again, I would look for structural explanations of this and probably point to five things. The first, of course, is the destruction of the power of Germany itself. Germany



ceases to be a politically powerful entity that threatens the rest of the continent.

The second is what I describe in the book as a catharsis of a sort. In the immediate post-war period, Europe is still a chaotic and violent continent. In that period, you have a lot of attempts to deal with the Nazis and fascists who have caused the problem. The vengeful actions in bringing these people to account for their crimes are only a partial success, but attempts are made in every Western European country and much more stringent attempts made in the east. Nazism and fascism ceased to be political entities.

There is also the expulsion of vast numbers of people – not just Germans from Czechoslovakia and Poland, but also Poles and Ukrainians. There are tens of thousands of people moving around. It is horrendous ethnic cleansing on a major scale, but it actually brings a new face to Eastern Europe, which had been the most troubled part of the continent beforehand.

The third point is around the role of the superpowers. Europe is now shaped in the image of each of the superpowers in different ways, east and west, so there can't be anything other than their image. In Eastern Europe, power eventually comes out of the barrel of a Soviet tank. In Western Europe, the strong American influence means that liberal democracy is established under different guises. The role of the superpowers is crucial in this.

Fourthly, even with all that, what couldn't be foreseen was the massive economic growth which took place across the continent, not just in the west. This growth brought the possibility of economic stability in the west, where there hadn't been any before. In the east, there

was economic growth, but the political system there meant that it was pushed into a relatively stable system – even if with internal upheavals from time to time.

The final point is around nuclear weapons. In 1945, you get the American atom bomb. In 1949, you get the Soviet atom bomb, which the Americans hadn't been expecting. Four years after that, each of them had hydrogen bombs.

When you put these five elements together, you have an explanation of how Europe could come out of the ashes to such a level of stability and prosperity. We focus on the Cold War, which we see as this negative factor that emerged from the Second World War – 40 years of inexorable division, which it would be impossible to overcome until 1990. And yet it's possible to argue that the Cold War itself was actually the basis of the post-war stability.

Another book comes to mind – Tony Judt's wonderful *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*.¹⁸ I found it to be a very cheering book: it tells the story you've just told, but he was able to take it on because the book goes further. I noticed you didn't mention the Marshall Plan. Tony emphasised that quite a bit.

Yes, I should refer to that in terms of the conditions whereby Europe – Western Europe, anyway – acquired such prosperity. Of course, the Marshall Plan was also critical in bringing about the divide between east and west. In 1945, things were still fluid. The Marshall Plan is probably the moment whereby the division became an absolutely irreconcilable one.

As Alan Milward has demonstrated in his work, the Marshall Plan was not sufficient in itself to have brought about the economic growth, nor was it actually the element without which Europe would have descended into still greater economic chaos. Nonetheless, the Marshall Plan was symbolically important, and provided the impetus for the defeated countries – Germany above all, but also Italy and Austria – to think they were now being reintegrated.

Without Germany there could be no prosperity. So after the war the Allies were faced with this dilemma: do we take our revenge on Germany, but in so doing prevent Western Europe from recovering? By 1947 it was clear they were not going to do that. They were going to pare back on denazification and so on. What they were interested in was rebuilding Germany – that was the bulwark against the Communist system.

The Marshall Plan is critical in this: it was a vital symbolic element in the recovery of Western Europe, but the money that came in did also help to stimulate further the economic recovery which was already well under way.

It sounds as if your lecture is going to be a cheering story.

It *is* a cheering story. I suppose this is the cheering end to a dismal book, in a sense. Europe has come very close to destroying itself by 1945. By 1949 we're on the way

18. Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (Heinemann, 2005).



Sir Ian Kershaw FBA giving the Raleigh Lecture on History, at the British Academy on 2 July 2015. A video recording of the lecture can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/kershaw

to a Europe which is, albeit divided, a success story for the next decades. Prosperity comes to Western Europe on an unprecedented scale – less so to the east, but there is economic growth there too. Compared with the 1920s and 1930s, there is also a good deal of economic stability which had not existed beforehand. We can obviously see optimism in it now, not least because we have avoided war all this time. With the Ukraine situation, you may say that is too optimistic. But we *have* avoided war. It is a surprising success story.

It does suggest that human beings can learn from their mistakes.

Undoubtedly they can. Undoubtedly we did. The Bretton Woods conference in 1944 set out precisely to do that, to learn from the economic mistakes that had created the problems that had beset practically the whole of Europe in the inter-war period. Bretton Woods contributed to a large extent to overcoming those problems. The American influence on Western Europe was detested by many, particularly on the left, and disliked on cultural grounds by many other people too; but that American influence was a very significant factor in the success story.

One other point is that, in the inter-war period, you had economic nationalism everywhere: countries were putting up protective boundaries, as nationalism in all its colours was so rampant. After the Second World War, the pressures are for co-operation and collaboration. This paid dividends in things like NATO on the military side, but also from 1950 onwards in Western Germany and France coming together in the Schuman Plan, which later developed into the European Economic Community. For the first time, people are looking really seriously for economic co-operation. Not that you would necessarily learn it from the *Daily Mail*, but it has been a

major success story in Europe.

Looking back over this extraordinarily distinguished and productive career, you've managed to encompass a story which has a happy ending. It's a story of misery, wretchedness and one of the most monstrous human beings in history, and yet at the end of it humanity comes out well. Are you an optimist by nature?

I *am* an optimist by nature. But the story doesn't necessarily end on a completely happy note.

My second volume of this history of Europe in the 20th century will start in 1950 and go up to the present. I will take it beyond 1990: I don't think the notion of a 'short' 20th century can really be sustained now, when we're so far beyond the end of Communism. In any case, I don't think you can reduce the 20th century to Capitalism versus Communism, important though that is.

But in taking it on, I think I will end on a more equivocal note. Since 1990, we've had a euphoric moment following the end of the Soviet Bloc, which then rapidly ended with the ex-Yugoslavia wars in the middle of the 1990s; and then we had what seemed to be a period of economic growth – until the crash of 2008. When I was thinking of where to end this history of Europe, I thought: 'Europe will never be the same again after the crash of 2008.' That may turn out to be prescient. At any rate, it will end up with what I see as the victory of global corporate capitalism, where the trend towards neoliberal economic policies that were set at the end of the 1970s has not been halted or broken.

It's possibly an equivocal note on which to end, because we can't see what's coming down the track. Europe is not in a good place now, but it is in a far better place than it was in 1945. There will be some hesitation when I come to the final chapter. It won't be a happy end as such, but I think that's appropriate. At the end of this first volume, there is ground for great optimism because we see the beginnings of the better Europe to follow from the 1950s onwards.

We'll end on that moderately happy note. Ian Kershaw, thank you very much.

It's been a great pleasure, thank you.

On 3 December 2015, Diarmaid MacCulloch is joined by the author Hilary Mantel to discuss 'Thomas Cromwell re-imagined'. More information can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/events/2015

British Academy events

The British Academy organises a range of events open to all, which offer the chance to explore new research that sheds light on a wide range of human and social issues. Further information about these past and future events may be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/events/2015

UK General Election 2015

On 1 June 2015, the British Academy hosted a panel discussion that reflected on the 'UK General Election 2015: 3 Weeks On', chaired by Sue Cameron of the *Daily Telegraph*. Panellists included Professor John Curtice FBA, who explained the mechanics behind his exit poll which so startled everyone on Election night by accurately predicting a Conservative majority. A video recording of the event can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/postelection



Natural mysticism: Reggae and Caribbean poetics

With its complex engagement with issues of faith, politics, identity, social consciousness, sexual politics, fashion, everyday cultural practices, geopolitical dynamics, language innovation and invention, and its enduring persistence in the popular and literary consciousness of Caribbean society, reggae music continues to be one of the singular, most consistently illuminating and necessary perspectives through which to understand the poetics of Caribbean writing today.

In his Warton Lecture on Poetry, on 23 April 2015 Professor Kwame Dawes (pictured, left) rehearsed the aesthetic principles of reggae music and revealed the ways in which the music, in its many incarnations, continues to shape the work of several generations of Caribbean poets.

'At the heart of the theory of Natural Mysticism is the notion that reggae music offers us a means to engage and to think about Jamaican art and culture in illuminating ways.' Professor Dawes explained that 'the Natural Mystic is one who is at once someone who is fully aware of their humanity, is rooted in the landscape and in the world of the living, understands and thinks of him or herself as grounded in the unpretentious, sincere and healthy affinity to the natural world, and at the same time, a person deeply connected to the spiritual world, the mystical world.'

A video recording of the lecture can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/reggae

Motivated forgetting

People usually consider 'forgetting' to be a problem – a human frailty to be avoided and overcome. Neuroscience has increasingly recognised that a healthy memory benefits from forgetting, and that the brain has active mechanisms fostering it. On 17 September 2015, Professor Michael Anderson will lecture on 'Keeping a spotless mind: The neuroscience of "motivated forgetting"'. He will discuss research revealing how the brain's mechanisms shape what we remember of life and protect our mental health.

Sigmund Freud

On 25 November 2015, the British Academy will hold the first in a new series of events on 'Thinkers for our time'. The work of Freud has shaped ideas, discussion and social discourse since the start of the 20th century. This event will revisit his key ideas and the influence they have had on society over the past hundred years.

In the form of a public discussion, each event in this series will explore and re-think the life and works of an influential historical figure whose work reverberates in our culture. The subject of the second event in the series will be Mary Wollstonecraft.



© Freud Museum London

Classics?

On 4 November 2015, in her Isaiah Berlin Lecture, Professor Mary Beard FBA will offer some reflections on the study of classics today. Looking at the perception of classics as a subject nationally and internationally, both now and in the future, she will explore classics from philology to interdisciplinarity, from nostalgia to impact.

Other forthcoming events this autumn are mentioned on pages 8, 12, 34 and 45 of this issue.

Fairy tales at the British Academy

The biennial British Academy Literature Week ran from 11 to 16 May 2015, bringing together academics, writers, artists, journalists and performers to explore the literary 'Other Worlds' of fairy tales and folk tales. **Dr Claire Pascolini-Campbell**, who works in the British Academy's International Department, ties together some of the threads.

What role do fairy tales and folk tales play in the modern world? How have texts migrated across languages and cultures? And why do we keep coming back to these stories? These questions – and many more – fuelled this year's British Academy Literature Week, as a host of diverse and interesting speakers delved into the twilight world of fairy tales and folk tales. Over the course of a week of talks and panel discussions, workshops and performances, exhibits, literary walks, and movie screenings, this innovative and interactive exploration cast new light on old stories.

For instance, panellists **Nicholas Tucker**, **Peter Brooks**, **Sally Gardner** and **Jack Zipes** engaged their audience in a lively debate, querying whether fairy tales and folk tales still have a place in the developed world.¹ Tucker, a specialist in educational psychology and cultural studies, and former Senior Lecturer at the University of Sussex, opened with the provocative statement that 'traditional fairy tales have had their day'. He linked this decline to industrialisation, and argued that:

Fairy tales are about a rural world: a world of taking your pig to market, getting your water from the well, and all the remnants of an agricultural culture. We are not living like that anymore.

While Tucker acknowledged the presence of 'the same basic patterns' within children's stories today and those of yesteryear, he saw the form of the fairy tale itself as becoming increasingly outdated:

1. An audio recording of this session can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/literatureweek2015

I just think that, to modern children with their video games, the fairy tale is beginning to sound a bit archaic, like madrigals. I love them, but I think their day is going.

Peter Brooks, Sterling Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature at Yale University and Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy, offered a more optimistic viewpoint, arguing instead that contemporary adaptations – such as those by the Disney Studios, for example – have helped these stories to endure.

Like Tucker, Brooks identified a static element at the centre of the constantly evolving world of the fairy tale, referring to 'underlying plots' that can be transformed many times while nonetheless remaining recognisable. The intrinsic simplicity of the basic fairy tale plot was also remarked upon by Sally Gardner, a children's writer and illustrator, who maintained that 'fairy stories are in one sense, very, very simple'.

And yet, these simple stories may exert lasting and powerful influences on the psyche, and both Brooks and Gardner remarked on the potential for fairy tales to shape our understanding of the world. In reference to the case history of the Wolf Man, the Russian aristocrat best known for having been a patient of Sigmund Freud, Brooks explained that the man's crippling fear of wolves may have been directly linked to the fairy tales he read as a child:

Freud got interested in this – in the case history of the Wolf Man. He spends hours with the patient trying to find the fairy tale that has the right illustration of a wolf standing on its hind legs; and it turns out to be the tale of the tailor and the six little goats. When he finds it, this is part of what the patient is. Is the patient's terror caused by that particular illustration of that book of fairy tales? I think we are made up, in part, of the fictions that we experience as children.

Having begun by questioning the relevance of fairy tales to contemporary audiences, the panel ultimately found that these stories retain their value and their ability to colour our experience of the world. Therefore, in view of



Throughout Literature Week 2015, the British Academy hosted an exhibition entitled 'Telling tales: the art of the illustrator', featuring illustrations that have appeared in volumes of fairy and folk tales published by the Folio Society.

the formative potential of these tales, Jack Zipes, Professor Emeritus of German and Comparative Literature at the University of Minnesota, argued for the importance of adapting certain elements of traditional stories for new generations:

I think we have a responsibility when we work with these tales with children. In the 19th century, tales were used to civilise the manners and the 'mores' that children were supposed to have. There was a type of folk and fairy tale that had a lot to do with sexism and patriarchy, and there are still some remnants of very negative things in a lot of these tales, particularly in the depiction of women.

The manner in which fairy tales are adapted to disparate cultural and temporal contexts formed the topic of a conversation between the author **Marcus Sedgwick** and **Marina Warner**, Professor of English and Creative Writing at Birkbeck and Fellow of the British Academy.² Sedgwick remarked on the astonishing longevity of some old stories, such as that of Theseus in the Minotaur's labyrinth, which was recently adapted for the cinema by Guillermo del Toro in his 2006 film *Pan's Labyrinth*:

This story is 4,000-5,000 years old, and about a year ago it struck me how extraordinary that a story has lasted that length of time. And it struck me that there

must be a process of Darwinian selection with stories: the good ones mean something to us, they attach to us, and we retell them again and again. We adjust them for our own age and we see them through the cultural lens of whatever time we are living in.

Warner, on the other hand, was unwilling to leave this process of retelling to random accident and argued instead for a more curated and responsible approach:

I prefer to use natural selection in a slightly different way, which is to think about it as biodiversity, so that the culture of stories needs to be cared for. We cannot just leave it, because there are lots of forces out there attempting to tell Cinderella's story simply as a girl getting a rich guy. They need to be withstood. For example, in the Cinderella case, there is a story of the ghost of her dead mother returning, sometimes in the form of an animal. There is a beautiful version in Scotland in which she comes back in the form of a cow, and she feeds the Cinderella figure, called Rashin Coatie. ... I think you could think of that as a wild flower that is being stamped out by rapeseed fields.

The conversation shed a fascinating light on the manner in which tales filter down through generations to become canonical. Moreover, the speakers also called on audiences to engage in their own share of 'canon-making' in order to ensure that local variants – such as the Rashin Coatie story, for example – do not become extinct.

2. A video recording of this session can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/literatureweek2015



Dame Marina Warner FBA casts a spell over her audience during the British Academy Literature Week exploration of 'Other Worlds'. More information about all the events held during the week can be found at www.britishacademy.ac.uk/literatureweek2015

The language of evolutionary theory adopted by Sedgwick and Warner was likewise applied to fairy tales and folk tales by **Jamie Tehrani**, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Anthropology at Durham University, who contested that:

Fairy tales are to cultural evolution what fruit flies are to biological evolution – a perfect model system for investigating how processes of mutation and adaptation can give rise to what Darwin poetically described as 'endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful'.

In a paper on the evolution of fairy tales Tehrani expanded on what Tucker referred to as the 'basic patterns' at the heart of familiar stories, explaining how the same storylines and motifs are constantly embroidered and updated:

As they get passed on from individual to individual, from

generation to generation, and from society to society, they gradually mutate into new forms, some of which catch on and flourish, while others quickly vanish into extinction.

For instance, Tehrani offered the intriguing example of the Cinderella story, the earliest written versions of which contain no reference to a slipper made of glass. According to Tehrani, this feature originated in a famous literary version of the tale by Charles Perrault in the 17th century, who may not have intended it at all:

In French, the word for glass, 'verre', is a homophone for the word for fur, 'vair'. One theory holds that Perrault simply misspelt the word, or that it was mistranslated. What is beyond doubt is that, perhaps with a little help from Walt Disney, the glass slipper proved to be an extremely potent motif in retellings of Cinderella over the last couple of hundred years.

These accidents of translation attest to the dynamic nature of folk tales and the manner in which similar stories and motifs are carried across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Using the Chinese tale known as The Tiger Grandmother as a means of illustrating the reach of the Little Red Riding Hood type, Tehrani's paper provided further insight into the influence of disparate cultural contexts on familiar story patterns:

The Tiger Grandmother tells the story of a group of sisters who are left home alone when their mother goes to visit their grandmother. On the way, the poor mother gets attacked and killed by a tiger, who then makes her way to the children's house. The tiger tricks the children into letting it into the house by posing as their granny, and spends the night with them in bed. During the night, the two older children are awoken by the terrifying sound of the tiger crunching the bones of their youngest sibling.

As well as being transplanted across different languages and cultural contexts, Tehrani also alluded to manner in which familiar tales are retold across different mediums – the story of Little Red Riding Hood having been reworked both into a Hitchcockian fairy tale movie, *Hard Candy*, and the recent Hollywood flop, *Red Riding Hood*.

Ian Christie, Professor of Film and Media History at



On 14 May 2015, the British Academy was transformed into a wonderland for 'Other Worlds ... after dark' – a late night of talks, performances and creative activities.

Birkbeck and Fellow of the British Academy, likewise commented on film adaptations of fairy tales in his piece on the British Academy blog.³ Christie's post focuses in particular on *Pan's Labyrinth*, which was shown at a special screening as part of Literature Week.

Like Brooks' allusion to the role of Disney adaptations in renewing interest in fairy tales, Christie explains that old tales often circulate on screen. His blog piece explores how del Toro's fantasy film both draws on and subverts Lewis Carroll's famous story:

Del Toro's tale does have links with one of the most famous of modern fantasy tales. His heroine Ofelia, like Alice before her, does go 'underground'. But the starting point is not an idyllic Victorian Oxford picnic: it is the Spain of 1944, where Ofelia's mother has married a new husband, a brusque captain in the Falangist Spanish army. So Ofelia wants to escape from her present in what turns out to be a bizarre fantasy world that is every bit as grotesque as Lewis Carroll's Wonderland.

The horror and violence implicit in many of the fairy tales discussed over the course of Literature Week is brought to the fore in *Pan's Labyrinth*, as Christie suggests:

Del Toro draws on 'pulp' and horror imagery to create his deeply disturbing nightmare world where fauns, fairies, and creatures from his fertile imagination co-exist with brutal Fascists.

Frightening and disturbing they may be, but this year's Literature Week revealed the extent to which these other worlds of literature, in their various shapes and forms, remain irresistibly appealing to modern audiences. What it is about fairy tales and folk tales that continues to whet our appetites is less certain. Could it be the familiarity of their plots? The recurring magical motifs? Or the lessons that they teach us about the world we live in?

For some commentators like Sedgwick, the answer lies in the macabre itself and in the thrill of reading stories 'that tell you that, perhaps, life is not as nice as your parents are promising you it was going to be'.



The British Academy's Literature Week 2015 concluded on Saturday 16 May with a walking tour in pursuit of 'Tales of London' – taking in the sites of giants, ghosts, lost rivers, lost goddesses, profane shrines and unruly urban legends.

3. Ian Christie's blog piece, posted on 11 May 2015, can be found at <http://blog.britac.ac.uk/fauns-fairies-and-fascists/>

Under the microscope

New discoveries in British Renaissance art

TARNYA COOPER and CHARLOTTE BOLLAND

Tarnya Cooper is Chief Curator at the National Portrait Gallery, and Curator of the 16th-century collection. Charlotte Bolland was Project Curator for 'Making Art in Tudor Britain'; she was co-curator of the recent exhibition 'Les Tudors' at the Musée du Luxembourg in Paris.



The new British Academy publication, *Painting in Britain 1500-1630: Production, Influences and Patronage*, edited by T. Cooper, A. Burnstock, M. Howard & E. Town, is available from Oxford University Press. Further information about the volume can be found at <http://ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780197265840.do>

In 2007, the National Portrait Gallery began working on a project called 'Making Art in Tudor Britain' in order to address some major gaps in our understanding of artistic production in Britain.¹ The project was interdisciplinary, and aimed to provide a new approach to research into the visual culture of the British Renaissance through technical analysis of works of art. The National Portrait Gallery holds the largest public collection of Tudor and Jacobean paintings in the world. During the course of the project, over 120 of these were examined, utilising technical analysis alongside substantial new art historical and archival research. The scientific techniques used included X-radiography, infrared reflectography, dendrochronology, paint analysis and photomicroscopy, and together these provided insights

1. The 'Making Art in Tudor Britain' project was supported by the British Academy, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, The Leverhulme Trust, The Mercers' Company and an anonymous donor. The project team would also like to express their thanks to the individuals and organisations that provided key support: Bank of America Merrill Lynch, John S. Cohen Foundation, Idlewild Trust, Leche Trust, PF Charitable Trust, Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Märit and Hans Rausing Charitable Foundation, and the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

into the dating and attribution of works. The uncovering of new information on some of the most iconic works to survive from the period made it possible to address broader questions of artistic practice and patronage, and has served to reinvigorate research in the field.

Presenting new discoveries

It is this renewed interest in the subject, which offers a vital comparative to the study of the British literary renaissance and cross-cultural exchange, that is reflected in the new British Academy publication, *Painting in Britain 1500-1630: Production, Influences and Patronage*. Edited by Tarnya Cooper, Aviva Burnstock, Maurice Howard and Edward Town,² the volume brings together 31 scholars from art history, history, conservation and material science, and aims to provide a lively and incisive survey of current work in this field. The editors were particularly keen to present many of the new discoveries unearthed using technical analysis and new archival study about both individual paintings and artists, as well as the broader nature of artists' workshop practices, authorship, patron intentions, taste and an understanding of the complex category of 'art' in the 16th century.

The volume is divided into three sections: Material Practice; Tudor and Jacobean Painters and their Workshops; and Patronage, Markets and Audiences. These are prefaced by an introductory essay, and by a technical catalogue that presents some of the research results from 20 key paintings in remarkable detail. The selected paintings span the period and demonstrate the type of visual information and unique viewpoint that can be gained from the material analysis of paintings. The images in the technical catalogue are referenced throughout the volume, by authors discussing subjects as diverse as the association between artistic treatises and contemporary artistic practice, analysis of binding

2. Dr Tarnya Cooper is Chief Curator at the National Portrait Gallery; Professor Aviva Burnstock is Head of the Department of Conservation and Technology at the Courtauld Institute of Art; Professor Maurice Howard is Professor of Art History at the University of Sussex; Dr Edward Town is Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Yale Center for British Art.



Figure 1
Katherine Parr, c. 1545. Oil on panel.
Attributed to Master John. NPG 4451.

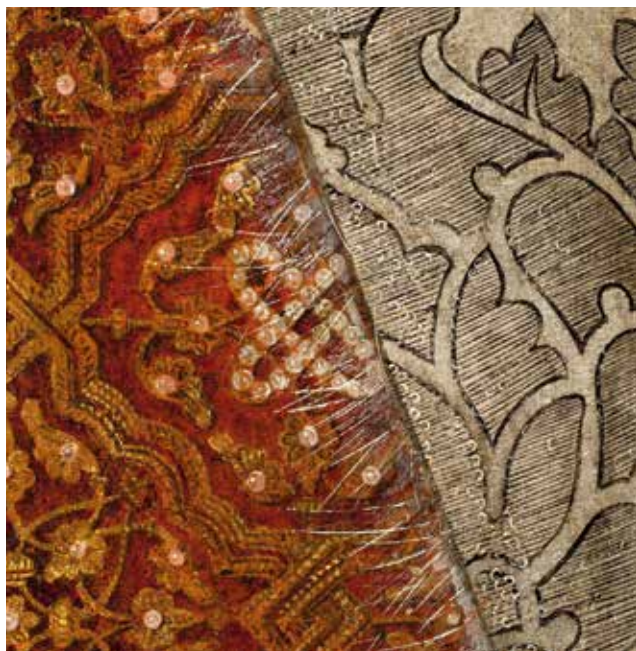


Figure 2
Detail of Katherine Parr's gown showing the detailed depiction of the fabrics and the fur lining.

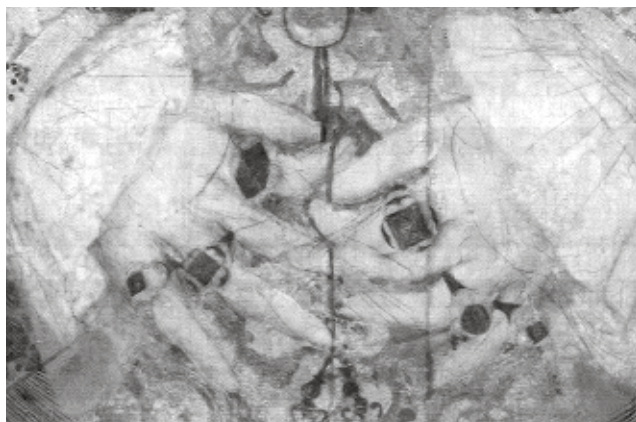


Figure 3
Digital infrared reflectogram of Katherine Parr's hands, showing the free and sketchy underdrawing used to delineate the form of the sleeves and the hands.



Figure 4
Detail of an X-ray mosaic of Katherin Parr's portrait that shows the construction of the panel and the supporting cradle on the reverse. The image reveals slight changes in the position of the upper neckline.



Figure 5
Photomicrograph detail of a cameo jewel worn by Katherine Parr, showing the high level of detail.

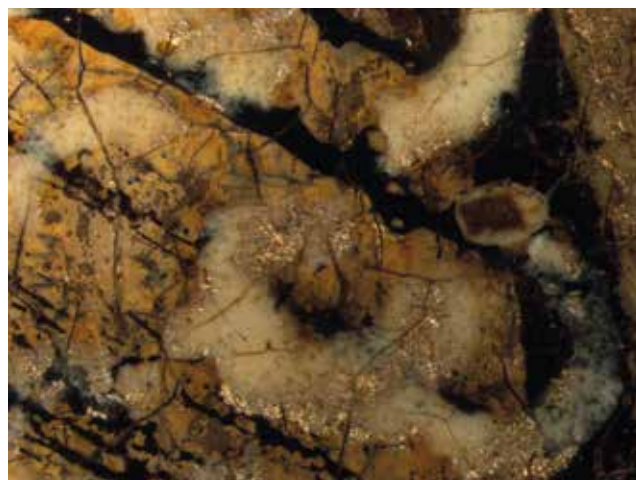


Figure 6
Photomicrograph detail of Katherine Parr's gown, showing the silver leaf applied over the raised loop threads above a layer of glazed silver leaf in order to depict tissued cloth of silver.

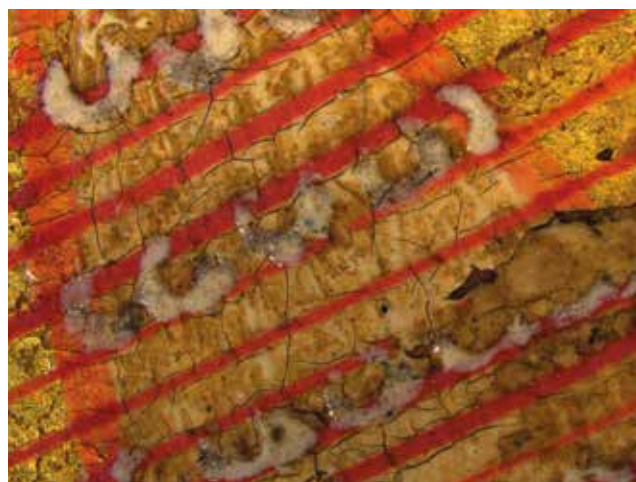


Figure 7
Photomicrograph detail of Mary I's gown, showing silver leaf applied to the raised threads in the bodice over layered gold leaf and red lake.

media, and the careers of heraldic painters. Together they demonstrate how the close examination of art objects is fundamental to research into material culture, and they also testify to the cumulative benefit of drawing on expertise from a variety of fields.

What can we learn from closer examination of the paintings?

Several authors touch on the full-length portrait of Katherine Parr (Figure 1), where technical research has provided us with much new information. Painted in around 1545, this portrait presents a striking moment in the development of a particularly English aesthetic in portraiture. Henry VIII's sixth wife is shown standing silhouetted against a strong blue background, the luxurious textiles of her dress rendered in careful detail (Figure 2). The eye is drawn from the queen's fine features and pale complexion towards the precise, almost literal, depiction of every surface detail, in which the artist skilfully captures the textural variation between fur sleeves, brocaded cloth of gold and silver, and woven carpet. It is perhaps one of the earliest embodiments of the characteristics that Sir Roy Strong would succinctly encapsulate in the title 'The English Icon'.

The work is attributed to an artist known only as 'Master John', who appears to have taken on the role of royal portraitist following the death of the German artist Hans Holbein the Younger in 1543. Master John's work clearly owes a debt to Holbein, with Katherine Parr's pose echoing that of Christina of Denmark, Duchess of Milan (National Gallery, London), but it nonetheless stands apart in its approach, and from that of the subsequent generations of émigré artists that came to England and painted the monarch – from Hans Eworth to artists such as Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger and John de Critz the Elder.

Frustratingly little is known about Master John's career, training and patrons, beyond a payment to 'John' for a portrait of Princess Mary in 1544, which is presumed to be the portrait inscribed with that date which survives in the National Portrait Gallery (Figure 8). The lack of contextual information surrounding surviving artworks is an issue that confronts researchers again and again when studying the artistic production of England, and Britain as a whole, during the 16th and early 17th century. This lack of supporting documentary evidence has meant that the study of individual works has often become disassociated from an understanding of specific questions of artistic practice, workshop technique and organisation, artistic status, patronage and English taste and therefore from a more nuanced understanding of the broader cultural context.

Specific aspects of the technical evidence have been particularly interesting, for example, infrared reflectography reveals the searching freehand lines that place Katherine Parr's hands (Figure 3), while X-radiography shows the slight changes that occurred during the painting process, such as the position of the neckline (Figure 4). The images captured down the microscope can be used for close comparative analysis of works



Figure 8
The Lady Mary (later Queen Mary I), c. 1544. Oil on panel. Master John. NPG 428.

whilst also allowing for a new understanding of the delicacy of the artist's technique, such as that seen in the detail of one of the cameo jewels (Figure 5). In the case of Katherine Parr, the meticulous approach to the rendering of tissue cloth-of-silver echoed that seen in the portrait of Mary I, with silver leaf applied over raised painted loops above a layer of glazed silver leaf (Figures 6, 7). This strengthened the association between the works, and thus the attribution of the portrait of Katherine Parr to 'Master John'. More unexpected was the discovery of the blue pigment azurite in the preparatory priming layer beneath the portrait. This accounted for the sitter's pale, almost ethereal complexion, and also provided a link to a full-length portrait of Edward VI that shared this idiosyncratic use of a blue priming (Figure 9).

The English tradition in painting

The portrait of Katherine Parr can perhaps best be read as a precursor to the linear aesthetic in English taste that was to reach its peak in the work of the most renowned English artist from the period, Nicholas Hilliard. But this style or English aesthetic can also be seen in the work of many anonymous English artists of the period. Why English art remains so distinct from continental practice at this period is a complex question, and one addressed in various ways in the essay volume. Part of the answer lies in the type of artistic training on offer in England and the limited interest patrons showed in



Figure 9
King Edward VI, c. 1547. Oil on panel. Workshop associated with Master John. NPG 5511.

championing the value of skill, or a commitment to paying reasonable prices for high quality work. And yet, the aesthetic style of English painting may have also developed in response to Protestant ideals (and concerns over religious ideology) that undermined confidence in the value of realistic secular visual art.

How representative are the paintings examined?

Survival patterns of this period are addressed in the essays. Of the vast body of painted material produced in the 16th and early 17th centuries (including wall paintings, painted cloths, inn and shop signs, ephemeral decorative works for theatrical sets and celebrations such as the revels, and other architectural features) many, or most types of works have been lost. The powerful personal association of portraiture with their subsequent owners (as emblems of family lineage, heritage and status) has meant that a far greater proportion of portraits have survived to the present day. It is therefore unsurprising that research into the visual culture of the 16th and early 17th century has focused on this form. The volume



Figure 10
Narrative portrait of Sir Henry Unton, c. 1596. Oil on panel. Unknown artist. NPG 710.

focuses principally upon portraits, but it also touches on surviving paintings in churches.

Glimpses of the broader visual culture of the period, which would have informed and enhanced many aspects of everyday life, can still be found. For example, one of the more unusual works examined during the course of the project was the narrative portrait of Sir Henry Unton, in which Unton (Figure 10) is depicted surrounded by scenes from his life and death. After travelling in Italy, Unton served with Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester on campaign in the Netherlands, and as resident ambassador in France. In 1596, during his second term as ambassador, Unton fell ill and died, and in the portrait his body is shown being transported across the Channel in a black ship, with a hearse returning to his home in Faringdon, Oxfordshire. The close examination of the painting revealed new information about the composition – such as the fact that the cameo worn by Unton depicts not Elizabeth, as had long been supposed, but rather Henri IV of France. Most intriguingly, the analysis revealed that the structure of the painting had been substantially altered at an early point, through the addition of a narrow board along the base. This board



was prepared with a darker grey priming than the upper two boards and the paint was handled in a much simpler manner. The top two boards, which unusually appear to be made from walnut rather than oak, also had dowels inserted at regular intervals along the edge. Taken together, this new information suggested that the painting may originally have formed part of another structure, possibly a temporary memorial within Faringdon church, prior to the creation and installation of a stone monument. This would likely have meant that this highly unusual painting started life as a church memorial and at a slightly later date was displayed in a domestic context.

A foundation for further research

This field has previously been considered an under-researched area, and students studying British 16th- and

early 17th-century art have needed to develop excellent research and detective skills in sourcing even secondary information about the practice and contexts of early British artists. We hope that our volume will address some significant gaps in knowledge – and inspire a whole new generation of students – through the sharing of this new research by expert scholars, and the presentation of a remarkable body of new visual primary source information for this area.

On 10 September 2015, the editors of this new British Academy book will discuss 'Painting in Britain, 1500-1630' at the National Portrait Gallery. And on 24 September, again at the National Portrait Gallery, Charlotte Bolland will talk about the findings of new research into the fascinating portrait of Sir Henry Unton. Further information can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/events/2015

History books from the British Academy

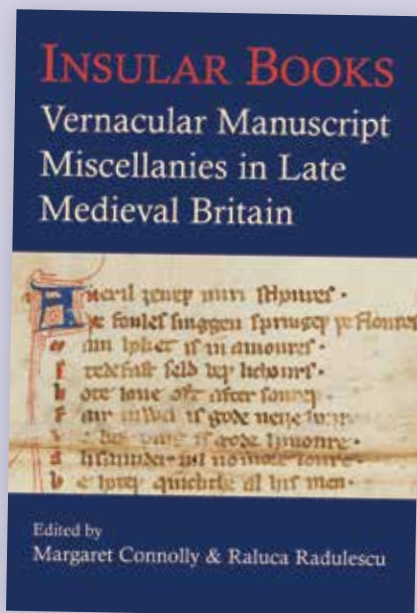
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Making history

'History is past politics, politics is present history.' Thus observed Edward August Freeman, 19th-century historian and public intellectual. He was an idiosyncratic and imaginative thinker, who saw past and present as interwoven and had a way of collapsing barriers of time – a gift for making the reader feel part of history, rather than merely its student. A new British Academy book fills a gap in the intellectual history of Victorian Britain by providing the first comprehensive, scholarly account of one of its most articulate and outspoken intellectuals. *Making History: Edward Augustus Freeman*, edited by G.A. Bremner and Jeremy Conlin, is published in autumn 2015 and will be available from Oxford University Press via <http://ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780197265871.do>

Other recent and forthcoming British Academy books are mentioned on pages 23, 40 and 68 of this issue.



Manuscript miscellanies

Medieval miscellanies are manuscripts made up of varied contents, often in a mixture of languages. They might be the work of one compiler or several, and might have been put together over a short period of time or over many years (even over several generations). Such mixed manuscripts are much more common than we might imagine and indeed are a typical environment for the survival of medieval texts. In June 2015, the British Academy published a volume of essays that investigate these miscellanies and reveal their cultural significance. *Insular Books: Vernacular Manuscript Miscellanies in Late Medieval Britain*, edited by Margaret Connolly and Raluca Radulescu, is available from Oxford University Press via <http://ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780197265833.do>



Levantine history in the Achaemenid period

Inscriptions discovered since 1980 and fresh epigraph research have revealed much about the Levant during the period of the Achaemenid Persian Empire (533-332 BC). In a new British Academy book, André Lemaire concentrates on three areas where new data has shed light on the societies living in the largest empire that the world had known to that date. These are Phoenicia, whose navy was vital to wars waged by Persian kings; the Judaeans diaspora in Babylonia, Egypt and Cyprus; and the Persian provinces of Samaria, Judaea and Idumaea. With over 90 inscriptions illustrated and fully transcribed, this book provides new insight into a fascinating period of history. *Levantine Epigraphy and History in the Achaemenid Period*, by André Lemaire, is published in autumn 2015 and will be available from Oxford University Press via <http://ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780197265895.do>

The book is based on the Schweich Lectures on Biblical Archaeology which Professor Lemaire gave at the British Academy in 2013. The Schweich Lectures are the oldest in the Academy's portfolio of lecture series (first given in 1908), and they continue to explore vital discoveries that enhance our understanding of ancient civilisation and the Bible. More information about the Schweich Lectures can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/schweich

An Eastern Mediterranean region like never before

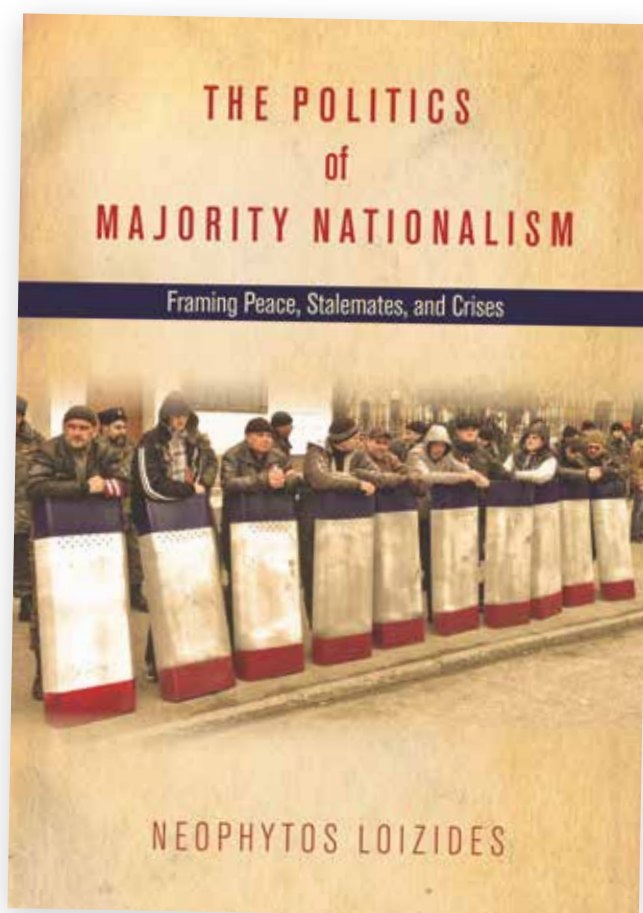
NEOPHYTOS LOIZIDES

Dr Neophytos Loizides is Reader in International Conflict Analysis at the University of Kent. He was awarded a British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship in 2014.

My research, supported by a British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship in 2014-2015, focused on the Eastern Mediterranean region, or more specifically the contemporary politics of what I have referred to as the 'post-Ottoman neighbourhood'. My main aim has been to understand the interplay between destructive nationalism, majority radicalisation, and ethnic cleansing. With the support of the British Academy, I concentrated on the following two questions. What drives the politics of contemporary nationalism during crises and peace mediations? Can conflict-mitigating institutions be effective in bringing peace and reversing ethnic cleansing, despite the region's divisive history and seemingly prohibitive conditions?

Historically, the post-Ottoman region has faced a rich, explosive, and diverse pool of ethnopolitical contention and demographic engineering. The past 12 months have coincided with even more critical developments for peace. The refugee flows and spectacular rise of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq (ISIS) have caused many to fear new crises across the entire Mediterranean region – split between those countries in the south facing civil war, and those Eurozone members to the north, particularly Greece, confronted with the most severe financial crisis since the Second World War.

Turkey has been an interesting paradox of stability amidst those crises. According to some accounts, Turkish GDP tripled during the decade in which the Justice and Development Party (AKP) was in power, while the country now appears on the list of the 20 largest economies of the planet. At the same time, according to the UNCHR, the number of refugees and asylum-seekers in Turkey in 2015 was expected to rise to nearly 1.9 million, including 1.7 million Syrian refugees. The refugee flows and other domestic issues, including Turkey's own Kurdish problem, have caused many to fear the destabilisation of the country and the concomitant reversal of its achievements since 2002.



Meanwhile in Cyprus, negotiations between the two communities were interrupted in October 2014 following the incursion of the Turkish seismic vessel *Barbaros* into the Cypriot exclusive economic zone (EEZ). The emerging financial and geopolitical challenges have added another source of apprehension in the volatile Eastern Mediterranean region. In 2011 a consortium of American and Israeli companies began explorations for oil and natural gas in the southern part of the island within the EEZ of the republic, contested by Turkey as well as Hezbollah in Lebanon. In September 2014, the Greek Cypriot side withdrew from the negotiations after



Figure 1
Dr Neophytos Loizides and George Papandreou (former Prime Minister of Greece) at the groundbreaking 'Turkey and Cyprus: Regional Peace & Stability Conference', held in Ankara on 28 February 2015.

the *Barbaros*' incursion, while in spring 2015 tensions between Greece and Turkey in the Aegean have reached a new peak.

February 2015 conference

Yet, as I have argued in my book being published in October 2015,¹ crises can offer opportunities to take gradual steps and test innovative ideas. Civil society and academic practitioners can take risks governments cannot afford politically during such difficult times. As part of my British Academy Fellowship, and with the support of various think-tanks, civil society organisations, and governments, I co-organised the first bi-communal conference to take place in Ankara in the 50-year conflict in Cyprus. A bi-communal conference in the Turkish capital was not an easy undertaking. A year's long preparation between Nicosia and Ankara – mediated by the Australian High Commission in Nicosia, the British Institute at Ankara (BIAA)² and the University of Kent – could have led to nowhere, if any of the sides withdrew. Last minute problems are not unusual after decades of conflict escalating tensions in the region.

But taking risks also pays. The 'Turkey and Cyprus: Regional Peace & Stability Conference' was held on 28 February 2015 at USAK House – one of Turkey's leading think tanks – and was warmly welcomed. It attracted 17 academics and NGO leaders from both communities in Cyprus. Even more impressively, on the Ankara end it included 10 ambassadors, 33 officers from 24 different embassies (representing the US Embassy and 15 EU member states as well as the EU Delegation in Ankara), six officers from Turkish state institutions (including three from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), 11 researchers from nine think-tanks, 29 academics from nine different universities, and 10 reporters from five different media

1. Neophytos Loizides, *The Politics of Majority Nationalism: Framing Peace, Stalemates, and Crises* (Stanford University Press, October 2015). www.sup.org/books/title/?id=21483

2. The British Institute at Ankara is one of six institutes with premises overseas that is supported by the British Academy. More information on the British Academy-sponsored institutes can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/basis

agents (including Reuters, France 24, Anadolu News Agency). It also included participants from the Turkish industrialist association and the country's largest conglomerate, Koç Holding, and was cited in the national and international media including the *Guardian*.

Moreover, the event brought together two high-profile speakers: former Prime Minister of Greece and President of Socialist International, George Papandreou (Figure 1); and former Turkish minister of Foreign Affairs and spokesman of the Turkish Parliament, Hikmet Çetin. Papandreou's prestige and leverage in Turkey has been impressive, turning the tide in Greek-Turkish relations. In 1999, through a series of careful steps and calculated risks, Papandreou and his counterpart, the late Ismail Cem, transformed the perpetual cycles of crises between the two countries into opportunities for peace. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the two ministers at the time stabilised for the first time in recent history one of the most conflictual and war-prone pairings in international politics.³

Elections in Greece and Cyprus

The Ankara event has been only just one example of how peacemakers can transform the language of ethnic nationalism and war in their communities. A week earlier, Alexis Tsipras became the first Greek PM to meet with bi-communal NGOs in his inaugural visit to Cyprus. The completion of my own book in the first half of 2015 coincided with unprecedented developments for Greece. Most notably, on 25 January 2015, Syriza capitalised on the financial crisis to secure a landslide victory, winning 149 out of the 300 seats in the Greek parliament.

The phenomenon of the anti-establishment Greek radical Left and its revolutionary 40-year-old leader Alexis Tsipras quickly captured the hearts and minds of intellectuals and policy-makers in Europe and globally. But the charismatic Greek PM soon had to compromise his agenda, forging an unholy alliance with a small nationalist party, the Independent Greeks, and signing a third bailout agreement on 13 July 2015, despite a mandate referendum a week earlier to reject older proposals and to renegotiate better terms with international creditors. The meltdown of the Greek economy and society since 2008 has come to threaten not only the country's position in the EU, but also the continuity of Greek democratic institutions. A potential Grexit and collapse of the Greek economy could produce another humanitarian emergency in the region.

The post-2008 financial crisis highlights the importance of durable peace and stability in the region. Surprisingly, new opportunities have emerged to resolve Greek-Turkish disputes, especially the decades-long Cyprus problem. On 26 April 2015, Mustafa Akıncı, a veteran peacemaker with an earlier contribution to bi-communal co-operation in Nicosia, won a landslide victory with 60.3 per cent in the second round of the Turkish Cypriot elections. For the first time in its long

3. A video recording of the keynote presentations at the conference can be found via www.kent.ac.uk/politics/carc/events/

history of stalemates, the Cyprus problem has quietly moved towards resolution, a potentially inspiring example for the entire region at troubled times.

Akinci is widely known for serving as the mayor of the Turkish Cypriot sector of divided Nicosia. In the early 1980s, he and Lellos Demetriades resorted to an *ad hoc* set of arrangements to address the city's impending environmental disaster in the absence of a sewer system. Leaving formalities aside (even refraining from signing any contract), the two mayors agreed to call themselves representatives rather than mayors of the city and managed to upgrade the city's sewer system, making the first step to Nicosia's reunification. A couple of years back, few would expect that a retired politician associated with a small leftist party would make a resounding comeback to politics. But the Cypriot public has questioned partition again and again by electing prominent pro-unification figures. What is most fascinating about Akinci is how he has been elected having campaigned openly in favour of returning the deserted suburb of Varosha to its Greek Cypriot inhabitants.

April 2015 conference

But will Greek Cypriots return home to their pre-1974 homes after four decades of displacement? A major aim of my British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship has been the study of durable solutions to forced displacement, focusing in particular on intentions and outcomes of voluntary return. My earlier and current studies with collaborators focused on four countries in the region – Iraq, Bosnia, Cyprus, and Turkey (Kurds). In particular, our survey with Dr Djordje Stefanovic, conducted with 1,000 participants two decades after the imposition of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia, suggests that the introduction of innovative electoral mechanisms such as distant community voting could empower refugee communities in the process of return. To broaden the understanding of this issue, during my Fellowship I also co-organised another three-day conference on peace processes and durable solutions to forced displacement, hosted by the BIAA on 17-19 April 2015.⁴ The event, which coincided with major refugee boat tragedies in the Mediterranean, aimed at raising awareness of the challenges facing refugees across the world and the region in particular. It included presentations from participants representing key international organisations in the area, including the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Displacement Monitoring Centre, and the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, as well as academics from around the world including the Balkans and the Middle East.

Election in Turkey

Two months later, Turkey faced an unprecedented electoral outcome on 7 June 2015 when the People's Democratic Party (HDP) entered parliament. While predominantly supported by ethnic Kurds, HDP won significant support (and acclaim) across Turkish society

after a decade of attempted yet unfulfilled reforms by the ruling AKP. Following public fatigue with the dominance of PM Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, AKP lost its majority of seats in parliament for the first time since 2002. The post-June electoral situation has created alternative possibilities – for either new elections, or a coalition government including the right-wing Nationalist Action Party (MHP) opposing Kurdish rights and the presence of Syrian refugees in the country. Since the 1990s, about a million ethnic Kurds have been forcibly displaced from their villages in the Kurdish regions of Southeast Turkey as part of Turkey's war against the PKK. They now live mostly in the major urban centres of western Turkey and often their mobilisations for political and human rights lead to confrontations with MHP supporters.

HDP's breakthrough last June could be attributed not only to the shifting political opportunity structures of the 'democratic opening in Turkey' in the past decade, but also the capacity of the party itself to align its peace frame with the broader human rights agenda – introducing a 10 per cent quota for the LGBT community and another 50 per cent quota for women candidates. Equally, the party capitalised on the public outcry against Turkish leader Erdoğan's crackdown of the 2013 Gezi park demonstrations and his attempt to transform Turkey's parliamentary system into a presidential one. Ironically, HDP will have to compete with the nationalist MHP as the kingmakers in future government coalitions. If it neutralises the latter's influence, a predominantly Kurdish party could become the catalyst for human rights and a consensus style democracy in Turkey and the broader region.

*

The contemporary post-Ottoman neighbourhood has been at a crossroads despite painful bailouts, elections and referendums. Clearly new challenges and actors are emerging with competing nationalist and peace agendas. Depending on the outcome of current financial and political developments, the region could face renewed tensions with catastrophic effects for the global economy, forced migration and security. On 20 July 2015, in a bloody warning by ISIS, at least 31 university students died during a terrorist attack in the border town of Suruç in Southern Turkey. Most of the dead were university students with the Federation of Socialist Youths, assisting the rebuilding of Syrian Kobane for its Kurdish inhabitants after last year's war against ISIS. But as the mobilisation of students itself suggests, there is hope for the region as people with vision and courage risks their lives for a better future. New norms for co-operation could emerge in the neighbourhood, initiating an ambitious process of conflict transformation. With unresolved challenges emerging from concurrent crises and peace mediations, the contemporary post-Ottoman neighbourhood will continue to be crucially important for world politics in the next decades.

4. The programme for the conference on 'Peace Processes and Durable Solutions to Displacement' can be found at http://biaa.ac.uk/ckeditor/filemanager/userfiles/Workshop_Program_-_April_17-19.pdf

Digital communication technologies and the Occupy movement

ANASTASIA KAVADA

Dr Anastasia Kavada is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Media, Arts & Design, at the University of Westminster. She was awarded a British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship in 2013.

Obtaining a British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship was a startling piece of good fortune. Upon learning the outcome of my application, I spent the next few weeks in a daze, thinking feverishly about the research I was going to conduct, the books I was going to read, and the people I was going to meet. My application outlined an ambitious project that would take me to different locations across the USA, to carry out fieldwork and visit universities with an expertise in my topic, including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Washington and New York University.

The title of my project was 'Digital Communications Technologies and Protest Movements: the Case of Occupy', and its aim was to explore the relationship between the internet and new forms of protest. My focus was on the Occupy movement in the UK and the USA, itself a part of the 2011 protest wave that started with the Arab spring in January of that year, then spread to Spain and Greece in May with the Indignados movement, and arrived in the USA in September 2011. Occupy activists protested against global inequality and the exploitation of the 99 per cent by the 1 per cent, a slogan that became one of the most enduring outcomes of the movement. The main tactic employed by Occupy was the setting up of camps in central urban locations. The camps operated as laboratories of democracy, as spaces where people could vent their indignation, hold political discussions and take decisions in an inclusive manner through consensus. Occupiers had a strong belief in non-hierarchical methods of organising and were averse to central leadership, viewing the movement as 'leaderful' rather than 'leaderless'.

Application

In my application, I proposed to investigate the role of digital media technologies – such as social media platforms, wiki and mobile applications, and discussion lists – in processes of organising, mobilising and decision-making. I was also going to examine the activists' relationship with the media, and their attempts to build solidarity and construct a cohesive collective identity. Although at the time of my application, in September 2012, the physical occupations had been evicted, activist networks associated with or emerging from Occupy were involved in various campaigns around the impact of the economic crisis, or even in humanitarian relief like 'Occupy Sandy' – the network put together by Occupy activists to help the relief effort when hurricane Sandy hit New York in the autumn of 2012.

Having the time to concentrate on research for a whole year, without any distractions from teaching or other tasks, was a gift that few of us are bestowed with in academia. When I applied for a Mid-Career Fellowship in September 2012 – a bit more than five years after I obtained my PhD – the thought that I was already in the middle of my career felt strange. Yet, looking back, it's clear to me that I was plagued by some common difficulties faced by scholars entering the 'middle period' of their career. This is a time when articles emerging from the PhD thesis have been submitted and published, when new research may have started but is not yet consolidated, and when teaching and administrative duties leave little time for research and study. This is compounded by the worsening conditions within UK universities where budgets are cut, research in the humanities and social sciences is underfunded and where a culture of overwork seems to reign. During the darkest moments, questions begin to arise about whether academia is still the right career path. Against this backdrop, the British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship provided me with much needed time for reading and reflection.

Frameworks

First of all, this allowed me to develop the theoretical framework underpinning my research. The key thread that underlies my work relates to the ways in which people create collectives through communication, and the role of digital media practices in this process. This became a popular topic of academic research around the 2000s – particularly after the emergence of the Global Justice Movement during the Seattle protests in late 1999, when activists managed to stop the meeting of the World Trade Organization. The Seattle mobilisation was followed by demonstrations during the major summits of international organisations and meetings of the G8 or the World Economic Forum. Activists also set up their own spaces of encounter, such as the World Social Forum which took place for the first time in Porto Allegre in 2001. Academic and journalistic writings at the time noted that the Global Justice Movement was organised as a ‘network of networks’, a structure that was similar to the ‘network of networks’ architecture of the web. This gave rise to debates around the potential of the internet to shape the characteristics of social movements, such as their scale, organising structure and collective narratives – debates that continue to rage nowadays as evidenced, for instance, in the fierce discussion around Facebook or Twitter ‘revolutions’.

However, the field is still missing concrete theoretical frameworks that can help us understand how the media can influence the character of collectives. Academic research focuses instead on the opposite question – on how the strategies and characteristics of collectives shape their use of the media. Once we reverse this arrow of influence and attempt to analyse how social movements and the media mutually constitute each other, then we run into difficulties. There is also little historical research that can aid us in this inquiry. For example, the ways in which the use of telephone trees may have influenced the organisation of the civil rights movement are never addressed in writings on the topic. I would argue that it is with the rise of the internet that the crucial role of the media in the internal communication of social movements was brought more clearly to the fore and became a research issue.

Responding to the need for more theoretical work in this area, this last decade has seen a wealth of creativity in the development of theory around the media and collective action. This is an interdisciplinary field of enquiry, spanning predominantly the disciplines



‘O25 Occupy Oakland, Oscar Grant Plaza.’ Photo taken by Steve Rhodes on 25 October 2012. (CC-BY-NC-ND licence.)

of sociology, politics, and media or communication studies.¹ The framework that I’m currently developing is situated within this new wave of theorising. I combine insights from social movement theory, organisational communication and media theory, to investigate collective action as a phenomenon emerging in communication, in the conversations among activists, both mediated and unmediated, and in the ways these are codified in ‘texts’ of various kinds. However, I consider texts and conversations in broader terms, with ‘conversation’ connoting ‘social interaction’, while ‘texts’ can include any stable patterning of ideas that arises from but also underlies social interaction – such as rules, laws and codes of conduct, or even computer software and architectural design. Although it is still work in progress, this conceptualisation has allowed me to place

1. New frameworks emerging in the field include, for instance, the logic of ‘connective action’ by W. Lance Bennett and Alexandra Segerberg, who argue that the use of digital media is facilitating a new ‘ideal type’ of mobilisation, which is based more on organising by individuals and the circulation of personal frames and stories; they contrast this form of organising to more conventional forms of collective action, which are co-ordinated from the top down by established organisations that utilise collective frames and ideologies: W.L. Bennett and A. Segerberg, *The Logic of Connective action: Digital media and the Personalization of Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). Other academic theories attempt to understand digital media as part of the broader communication repertoire that movements have at their disposal. For example, Emiliano Treré and Alice Mattoni employ theories of mediation and mediatisation to capture the long term effects of ‘media logic’ and media practices on social movements: A. Mattoni and E. Treré, ‘Media Practices, Mediation Processes, and Mediatization in the Study of Social Movements’, *Communication Theory*, 24:3 (2014), 252–271 (doi:10.1111/comt.12038). Sasha Costanza-Chock has introduced the term ‘transmedia organizing’ to signify the ways in which movement activists co-create narratives and opportunities for participation across multiple media platforms: S. Costanza-Chock, *Out of the Shadows, Into the Streets! Transmedia Organizing and the Immigrant Rights Movement* (Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 2014).

communication at the centre of social movement activity and to understand how the activists' communication practices contribute to building the collective.

Interviews

Methodologically, my project is based on in-depth interviews with Occupy activists. This helped me to examine the role of digital media within the broader communication ecology of the movement, and to capture media practices that span different communication spaces. For instance, when asked about their use of social media, interviewees often compare it with their experience of face-to-face meetings, thus offering useful insights in how these types of communication complement each other. At the same time, interviews can provide a glimpse into people's attitudes towards technology, and the ways in which these shape and are shaped by their political strategies and ideologies. The methods currently dominating the new wave of research on social media and activism, namely large scale social network or content analysis of tweets, are unable to offer these insights. While they successfully provide an overview of the content produced by activists and of how information circulates, they fail to show what lies behind the production of information – the practices, values and challenges faced by the people generating this social media material. Yet some analysis of this content is necessary in order to gain a sense of the stories and narratives that are shared on these platforms. In this respect, my interviews provided useful pointers for selecting the most important material out of the millions of tweets and hundreds of Facebook pages, blogs and websites created by the movement. Otherwise, the volume of online content generated by Occupy proves too dizzying and overwhelming for a single researcher to analyse.

I interviewed 75 activists in total. More than half were involved in Occupy Wall Street, but my sample also included activists from London, Seattle, Boston and Sacramento. I selected my interviewees using a snowball method, starting with a few contacts in each city who then introduced me to others in their network. I focused on activists who were part of the media, press and tech working groups, as well as participants involved in the facilitation of meetings and in live-streaming. Most of the interviews were conducted face-to-face and lasted between 45 minutes and three hours. I had initially planned for fewer interviews. By the time I officially started my fieldwork in September 2013, the Occupy movement was active mainly on social media, employing the various accounts established in its heyday to raise awareness and mobilise participation for a variety of causes – from home foreclosures and student debt, to fracking and the minimum wage. Managing to find such a high number of Occupy activists who were willing to be interviewed was a result of relentless networking and good fortune. I caught many activists at a time when they were ready to reflect on their experiences and eager to have these reflections recorded as part of the history of the movement.

The interviewing process was both enjoyable and profoundly moving. It unearthed many personal stories about people's involvement in Occupy, their hopes and disappointments, their enduring commitment to a common cause, the friends and knowledge that they gained, the time and patience that they lost. For many of my interviewees, Occupy was a turning point of some sort, regardless of whether they were already experienced activists. For the novices in politics, participating in an open assembly was an eye-opener, one of the first instances when they felt part of something larger. For some of the more experienced ones, Occupy re-engaged them in politics, raising their hopes that the struggles they've been fighting for may enjoy more popular support than they originally thought.

Academic contacts

My interviews in Seattle, New York, and Boston took place during my research visits in universities located in these cities: the University of Washington, New York University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This provided me with an 'academic home' during my stay in the USA, and allowed me to gain an insight into the research conducted in these institutions. Getting to know other academic contexts was particularly useful for someone like me who's been affiliated with the same university since the start of my PhD research at the University of Westminster in 2002. It was also very helpful for exchanging ideas and establishing relationships with experts in my field, such as W. Lance Bennett and Amoshaun Toft at the University of Washington and Sasha Costanza-Chock at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. These visits may also lead to closer collaborations in the future. For instance, together with colleagues at the University of Washington, we are currently trying to obtain funding for a joint project on the outcomes of Occupy in the USA and the UK.

But this exchange of ideas was also facilitated through the talks that I gave on my research, where I presented both the theoretical framework and preliminary results of the study. Since September 2013, I have been invited to talk at Lund University in Sweden, as well as at the University of Washington, Columbia University, the University of Michigan, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston University, the University of East Anglia, the University of Westminster, and the University of Brighton. I have also presented this work at the conferences of the European Consortium for Political Research and the International Communication Association, as well as at activist meetings.

Findings

I am currently in the process of finishing the analysis of my fieldwork and of writing up the remaining articles and a monograph on the topic. My tentative findings show that digital media increased the movement's outreach, and contributed to dynamics of



On 12 May 2015, Dr Anastasia Kavada participated in an event at the British Academy that showcased the work of academics who had been supported through Academy funding.

dispersion and decentralisation. At the same time, the physical occupations provided activists with a focal point where they could take decisions as a group and develop stronger bonds. I argue that it was the balance between these opposing dynamics of centralisation and decentralisation that shaped both the emergence of the movement and its decline, particularly after the physical occupations were forcefully evicted. Other findings refer to the relationships of power within the movement and the role of communication practices in the formation of hidden hierarchies. The study has also identified the tensions and debates around the use of proprietary social media platforms such as Facebook, the efforts to build a collective voice, as well as the problems of digital surveillance.

It is worth noting that this balance between online and offline participation and the effort to build a collective across different media is a point of interest not only within the activist community, but also in parliamentary politics. For instance, using insights from this project I was able to advise the 'Speaker's Commission on Digital Democracy' in a workshop organised at the Houses of Parliament in May 2014.

The findings arising from this study have also informed my teaching, particularly in the newly launched MA course in Media, Campaigning and Social Change, which I am leading together with my colleague Michaela O'Brien. Teaching on the new MA has left little time for writing since September 2014, but the first

article emerging from this research will be published in August 2015.²

*

So in the end, I didn't manage to interview all of the people I wanted to interview, to read all of the books I wanted to read, or to visit all of the places I wanted to visit. But the benefits of this award have surpassed my expectations. The Fellowship has allowed me to concentrate on research, to generate a wealth of qualitative material, and to reflect on the broader theoretical issues informing my field. It has also renewed my commitment to social change, one of the prime motivations that underlines my academic research and sustains my passion and strength in difficult times. The British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship has finally given me the confidence and placed me in the right frame of mind to advance my academic career. It was a time when suddenly, and joyfully, different aspects of my professional life started to click together – my teaching, my research, my theoretical outlook, as well as my approach to politics, work and life in general. Taking a break and focusing on a project that engages you can have these astounding results. And of course I owe it all to the British Academy for presenting me with this life-changing opportunity.

2. A. Kavada, 'Creating the collective: social media, the Occupy Movement and its constitution as a collective actor', *Information, Communication & Society* (forthcoming, August 2015).

Battling the gods

TIM WHITMARSH

Tim Whitmarsh became A. G. Leventis Professor of Greek Culture at the University of Cambridge in October 2014. He held a British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship in 2012.

Conflicts between atheism and religion are often assumed to be a feature of the post-Enlightenment West alone. That assumption suits the religious, who would like to see western modernity as a blip in an otherwise uniformly devotional pattern across time and



Figure 1
Socrates and Alcibiades, by Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg, c.1813-16.
Image: Wikimedia Commons.

space. It also suits many of the so-called New Atheists, who like to see the rejection of the supernatural as the result of modern science's hard-won domination over outmoded religious beliefs.

Yet even a moment's intuitive reflection should tell us that this is not the case. Atheists are not confined to the West, as public executions in many states (among them Afghanistan, Iran, Mauritania, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan) clearly show. Nor are they limited to modernity. One does not need western science to question the power of prayer, to deny the divinity of the sun, to reject belief in the afterlife, to believe that one's priests are charlatans: this kind of scepticism has been widely documented by 20th- and 21st-century anthropologists: Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard's account of the Azande in the Congo region provides but one example of a 'tribal' people who treat their religious authorities with great scepticism.

How far back can we push the history of atheism? By far our best documented ancient societies are those of ancient Greece and Rome, and it is here that any search for the deep roots of atheism should begin. In 2012, the British Academy awarded me a year-long Mid-Career Fellowship to research atheism in ancient Greece and Rome. I unearthed an enormous amount of evidence for ancient atheism: some of it well known, much of it new. What emerged was, I hope, an unprecedentedly detailed picture of just how far atheism percolated into mainstream Greco-Roman society. This research resulted in a book, *Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World*, which will be published in November 2015 in the USA by Knopf, and in February 2016 in the UK by Faber and Faber.

Classical arguments

All of the arguments used today against the existence of gods were first raised by the philosophers of ancient Greece: from the problem of evil (how can a just god permit suffering?), through the omnipotence paradox (could an all-powerful god create an unliftable stone?), to the idea of religion as a human social construct designed to repress dissent.



The Greeks had some more idiosyncratic arguments too. One of my favourites is a version of the *sorites* paradox, which in its original form was designed to prove that our linguistic categories are inexact by focusing on the idea of a ‘heap’ (which is what the Greek *sorites* means). One grain does not constitute a ‘heap’ of grains. Nor do two grains, nor three; and in fact there is no point at which adding one more grain to a pile turns it into a ‘heap’. Therefore the concept is an insecure one. A philosopher called Carneades applied this paradox to gods. The Greeks had, of course, many different types of deity, including river gods and nymphs of springs. How much liquid, Carneades wondered, do you need for a god? A trickle or a splash will not do. Nor will a pond or a rivulet ... so when do you reach the cut-off point that distinguishes regular water from divine? The conclusion we must draw is that the concept of divinity is insecure.

Another line of argument attacked the kinds of assertions usually made about deities. For example, it seems to stand to reason that gods are by definition perfectly virtuous: insurpassably just, brave, wise and so forth. But virtue necessarily involves decision-making. Bravery, for instance, can be displayed only when you choose the courageous decision ahead of the cowardly one. If, however, gods are perfect in every respect, then cowardly decisions will simply not present themselves as possibilities. A perfect god has no opportunity to take wrong decisions. Therefore the gods cannot be virtuous. It is an ingenious argument, and in fact quite hard to refute!

Socrates

Our modern word ‘atheist’ comes from the Greek *atheos*, meaning ‘without god’; and with the word comes our entire sense of what it is to be independently-minded, critical, questioning of religious dogma. Take the most famous Greek philosopher of all, Socrates, who was executed in 399 BCE for ‘not believing in the gods of the city’ and ‘corrupting the young’ (Figure 1). Socrates, however, wrote nothing himself; to reconstruct his own beliefs we are dependent on his contemporary, the comic poet Aristophanes, and his immediate successors, the philosophers Plato and Xenophon. Aristophanes has him as an atheist mocking belief in the traditional gods. Plato and Xenophon, by contrast, writing after his trial and execution and desperate to defend their teacher, protest (perhaps too forcefully) that he was pious and devout, in part on the fragile grounds that he claimed to hear voices from the god in his head. Which picture do we believe? In a sense it does not matter: what was more important was the example he set for those who followed, his commitment to the principle – which is a fundamentally humanist one – that all beliefs must be rationally justifiable. His motto was that ‘the unexamined life is not worth living’, and he insisted that all society’s values, ideologies and beliefs needed to be scrutinised; if they couldn’t be, then they were not worth following.

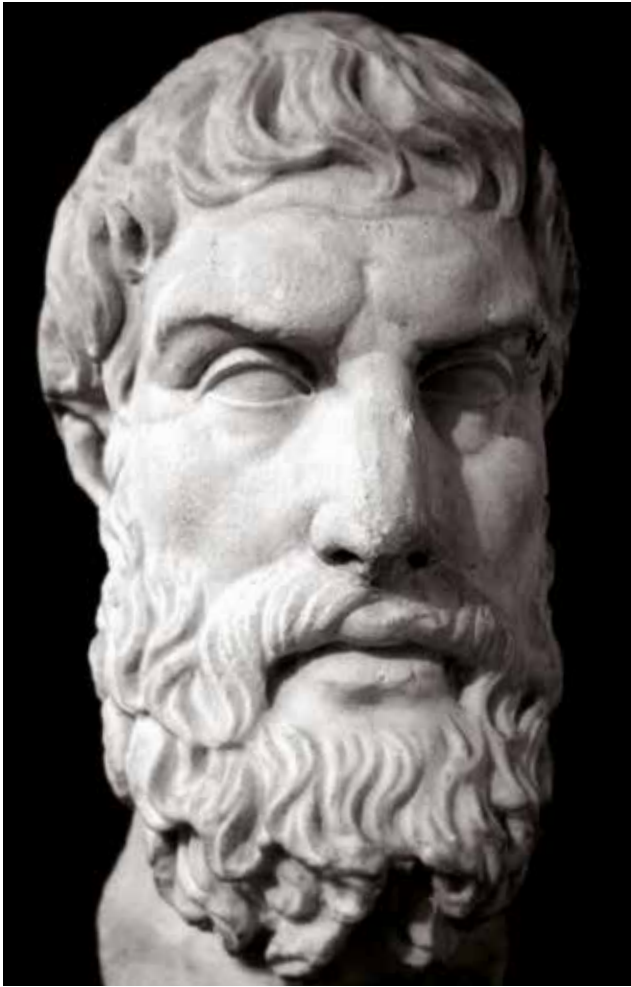


Figure 2
Epicurus. Image: Wikimedia Commons.

Epicurus

The Greeks also came up with the idea of the material, atomic basis for human life. The word ‘atom’ is Greek in origin (it means ‘indivisible’), and was apparently coined during the scientific revolutions of the 5th century BCE by Leucippus and Democritus (Nietzsche’s favourite ancient philosopher). It was Epicurus, however, who popularised the idea of the atomic basis of all existence. Epicureans did believe in gods, but they thought of these figures as powerless, insubstantial beings who lived in the gaps between worlds; and they too were made of atoms and voids. For this reason the Epicureans were considered *de facto* atheists by most; the modern Hebrew word for ‘atheist’, *apikoros*, testifies to the longevity of this association. The Roman poet Lucretius adapted Epicurus’ doctrines into Latin verse; and according to Stephen Greenblatt’s Pulitzer Prize-winning book *The Swerve*, the rediscovery of Lucretius in the Renaissance was a foundational event in the making of modernity.

It is, I think, no exaggeration to say that we owe our modern sense of atheism to the Greeks and the Romans: it was the rediscovery of the ancient secular-humanist tradition in the renaissance and the enlightenment that

was instrumental in the making of modern humanism. When Voltaire wanted to criticise Frederick the Great’s religious policy, he sent him a single line of Lucretius’ poem about Epicurean thought: *tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*, ‘that’s how much damage religion can do’. Greco-Roman philosophy is modernity’s humanist heritage, as much as the Bible is for Jews and Christians and the Qur’an is for Muslims.

Uncontroversial

Certainly, atheism was not always uncontroversial in antiquity. The execution of Socrates for not believing in the city’s gods is proof enough of that, although that might be said to be an isolated case in extreme circumstances (Athens had just got rid of a brutal military dictatorship, and Socrates had been closely associated with some of its leading lights). Even so, for most of the time in Greco-Roman antiquity up until the time when the Roman Empire converted Christianity, atheism simply was not problematic. To be sceptical about the existence of gods was, for many, part and parcel of being an enquiring human being.

Pliny the Elder, for example, was the Roman military and naval commander best known for dying in Naples bay in the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79 (his nephew, Pliny the Younger, recorded the event). Pliny was no left-field radical; in fact you couldn’t get much more ‘establishment’ than him. In his *Natural History*, however, he promoted a materialist view of the world as united by a single, all-pervasive cosmic nature. This, he argued, might be called god, but it didn’t in fact matter what you called it since it was not a sentient being. ‘I think of it as a sign of human imbecility to try to find out the shape and form of a god ... Whoever “god” is – if in fact he exists at all – he consists in pure sense, sight, sound, soul, mind: he is purely himself’. The idea of an anthropomorphic deity (that’s to say, a god that thinks or acts like a human), Pliny goes on to say, is pure absurdity. We don’t need gods to have human morality, he says (this is one of my favourite quotations from antiquity): ‘God is one mortal helping another’. We make our own divinity through our behaviour towards others.

By the 2nd century AD, there were – or at least so I argue in the book – numbers of atheists across the Roman Empire, aware of a shared history that stretched back to the 5th century BC. This was an era of high classicism, which saw Greeks writing in the archaic dialect of democratic Athens and Roman Emperors completing ancient temples and fashioning themselves after philosophers. That atheists could likewise point to a history stretching back 700 years to the time of Classical Athens gave them a legitimacy and an identity.

Arrival of Christianity

The arrival, in the 4th century AD, of Christianity as a state religion, however, fundamentally changed the outlook for ancient atheists. Christianity, with its one god, brought about a radical simplification of the belief system: either you believed in the Christian god or you

did not. More specifically, either you believed in the Christian god *in the right way* or you did not. Under the emperor Theodosius, in the late 4th century, laws were passed against non-Christians and Christian heretics alike. One word regularly used by Catholic Christianity to describe all these theological foes was *atheos*. This was a powerful act of linguistic manipulation: an ‘atheist’ now was no longer one who adopted a philosophical position of disbelief in the supernatural, but anyone who opposed the Catholic Church’s teaching, regardless of her or his own religious beliefs.

When Imperial Rome embraced Christianity, that marked an end to serious thought about atheism in the West for over a millennium. It is this historical fact that we tend to misread, when we think of atheism as an exclusively modern, western phenomenon. If we compare the post-enlightenment West to what preceded it, we can very quickly come to the false assumption that societies fall neatly into two groups: the secular-atheist-modernist on the one side and the entirely religious on the other. What pre-Christian antiquity shows, however, is that it is perfectly possible to have a largely religious society that also incorporates and acknowledges numerous atheists with minimal conflict. When we consider the long duration of history, the oddity is not the public visibility of atheism in the last two hundred years of the West, but the Christian-imperialist society that legislated against certain kinds of metaphysical belief.

Fellowship

The British Academy’s award of a Mid-Career Fellowship had a substantial impact upon my career, as well as my research. The year of research leave allowed me to write a book in a field to which I, as a scholar primarily of literature and cultural identity, was new. It also gave me the opportunity to write a book for the trade market, which was again a first for me. It gave me a confidence with research grants that led to the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) project that I am currently running, on the Greek epic poetry of the Roman imperial period (still shamefully neglected by mainstream classicists). I have spoken about ancient atheism across the world, from British Columbia to New Jersey to Copenhagen to Pretoria. As I write this, I have just addressed the British Humanist Association’s annual conference, and I am preparing for the Edinburgh Literary Festival. Finally, while I was not party to the decision-making processes behind the appointment of Cambridge’s A. G. Leventis Chair of Greek Culture, it seems highly unlikely that the Mid-Career Fellowship was not noted by the panel. I am immensely grateful to the British Academy for its support; I only hope that the book proves to be a suitable return on their investment.

BRITISH ACADEMY MID-CAREER FELLOWSHIPS

At a showcase event held at the British Academy on 18 March 2015, three recent British Academy Mid-Career Fellows gave presentations on their work, and spoke personally of the value of holding one of these awards.

Dr Paul O’Connell (School of Oriental and African Studies, London) said ‘I was in my sixth or seventh year of working in academia, and I had never had a concentrated period to sit down and do research. Even my PhD was done in snatches between teaching new courses and doing all the administrative tasks that we all love so much. The Mid-Career Fellowship enabled me to have a full academic year to go out to Harvard and dedicate myself to nothing but research. It has had a very positive impact on my career.’

This view was shared by **Dr Robert Perrett** (University of Bradford). ‘Many university staff face the daily conflict between teaching, administration and research, and it is only getting worse at the moment. Teaching and administrative loads are going up, and it is research that takes the hit. The Fellowship gave me the opportunity to focus solely on research – to get some empirical research done.’

Dr Perrett also emphasised another feature of the scheme – the opportunity to have a wider impact beyond a purely academic audience. ‘When you do

get to do some research, you usually focus on getting out those four-star publications, so that you satisfy the Research Excellence Framework (REF). Is that why we do research? I want to have an impact upon society, and for it to be read a little more widely than my academic colleagues. So the Fellowship gave me the opportunity to focus on some non-academic outputs.’

Dr Deborah Sugg Ryan (Falmouth University) made similar points. ‘The Fellowship allowed me time away to think, to speculate, to experiment, to connect, to travel – and to say yes. So often I have to say no, because I work in Cornwall.’ After sharing information about her research through social media, she took part in a BBC Two series called *Business Boomers*, about businesses that have survived during recession.

Dr Sugg Ryan also highlighted another spin-off benefit of the Fellowship. ‘That enthusiasm and passion for my research has really invigorated my teaching as well. It has been a win-win situation for my students. I think students love being taught by active teachers. So it’s not just about keeping your research going, it’s about keeping your teaching going too.’

Further information about the British Academy Mid-Career Fellowships scheme can be found at www.britishacademy.ac.uk/midcareer

A newly identified Scottish Boethius manuscript

Rethinking Scotland's intellectual and literary culture in the Middle Ages

KYLIE MURRAY



Dr Kylie Murray, shown here at Kelso Abbey, is a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Oxford. Her research project is on 'Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* in Scotland, c.1120-c.1570'.

The *Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius (c.480-524 AD) was pivotal in the formation of Western intellectual and literary culture, and second in influence only to the Bible. A repository of information on classical history, myth, the natural world, and the human psyche, this work's legacy endured across medieval and early-modern Europe in myriad forms and languages. Its interrogation of free-will, fate, and mankind's place in the world, most acutely focused by its allegorical imagery of the wheel of fortune, was staple reading material for kings, academics, clerics, and poets, and came to underpin medieval university curricula. Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, authors of the French love-vision, the *Roman de la Rose* (c.1225-75), were acquainted with the *Consolation*, and Dante read and reflected upon the *Consolation* in 14th-century Italy. Chaucer translated the *Consolation* into English in the late-14th century, as did John Walton, a near contemporary in the early 15th. Scotland, however, has been almost entirely omitted from considerations of Boethius's European reception. The few existing studies assume that it was primarily from the 15th century onwards that Boethius's work reached Scotland, and predominantly through an English Chaucerian filter.

A 12th-century manuscript

Yet the manuscript evidence of Boethian works with Scottish connections reveals a radically different narra-

tive. The 16 Latin manuscript and printed copies of Boethius' work that I have identified as Scottish, either through their place of production or through their readers, tell us that it is not Chaucer, or even English copies of the text which are most influential in Scotland, but Latin ones – which reveal Scotland's lively engagement with European intellectual culture. They span the entire period c.1120-c.1570, and strongly suggest that Boethius's writing had a Scottish presence from the time when Scotland's literary culture as we now know it first began to emerge and develop. Indeed, rather than the 15th century, it is to the 12th century that we must turn in considering Scotland's earliest surviving response to Boethius. This article discusses the earliest Scottish Boethius manuscript yet identified, from the first half of the 12th century.¹

The Glasgow Boethius Manuscript (Glasgow University Library, MS Hunter 279) is an almost complete copy of Boethius's *Consolation*, dating to c.1120-40 on the grounds of stylistic features of its script. It was donated to Glasgow University in 1807 by the distinguished obstetrician William Hunter (1718-83), who purchased it at auction in London in 1771. Its origins and place of production, however, have remained unresolved for centuries. Its only apparent indication of provenance is a Latin annotation on f.20r, 'David dei gracia rex Scotorum' ('David, by the grace of God, king of the Scots'; Figure 1). Despite this reference to a Scottish monarch – presumably David I (1124-53), rather than David II (1329-71) – scholars have almost unanimously ascribed a Durham provenance to this volume. This ascription has arisen principally because of a dearth of surviving Scottish literary manuscripts: there are only around a dozen 12th-century Scottish manuscripts currently in existence. Durham, by contrast, was prolific in its book production, and has hundreds of manuscript survivals.

1. Fuller discussion of this manuscript can be found in my forthcoming (autumn 2015) peer-reviewed article, 'Books Beyond the Borders: Fresh Findings on Boethius' Transmission in Earlier Medieval Scotland', *Medievalia et Humanistica*. This article discusses the three 12th-century Boethius manuscripts I have newly identified with Scottish provenance.

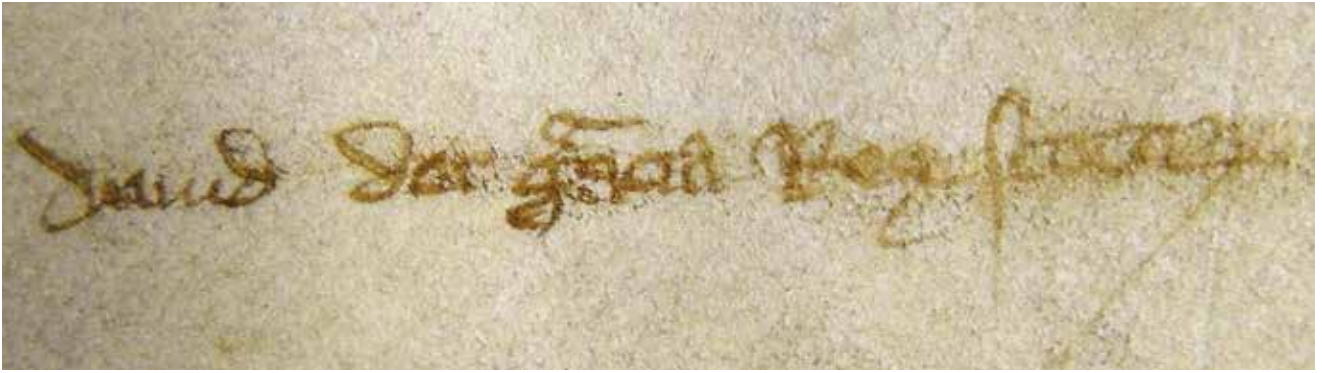


Figure 1
Glasgow University Library, MS Hunter 279, f.20r detail. Reproduced with permission of Glasgow University Library.

Durham and the Anglo-Scottish border

Durham has been a plausible supposition, given the numerous cultural and historical connections between Durham and Scotland during the earlier Middle Ages, when the Anglo-Scottish border was more of a link than a division. These could explain how a northern English book might contain annotations relating to Scotland. For example, David I of Scotland had sought to gain Durham as part of his 'Scoto-Northumbrian' realm during the 1130s, and his mother Queen Margaret's confessor, Turgot, was a former Prior of Durham. Durham's patron saint, Cuthbert, was said by Bede in his *Historia Ecclesiastica* to be a Scot, who entered the monastic life at Old Melrose. The opening sentence of the *Melrose Chronicle*, a product of Scotland's earliest Cistercian community, founded by David I in 1136, describes Bede as 'decus et Gloria nostre gentis' ('the honour and glory of our people'), thus identifying as English, not Scottish. In a similar gesture, Adam of Dryburgh, writing just a few miles away, describes himself as being 'in terra Anglorum, et in regno Scotorum' ('in the land of England and in the kingdom of the Scots'). English territory and Scottish kingdom coalesced relatively peacefully in this period: Scottishness was less absolute and more inclusive as a result of more porous borders, not only for the Canmore dynasty or writers mentioned above, but the wider monastic and magnate communities.

Yet, interrogating afresh the question of a Scottish identity for this manuscript presents an exciting possibility. The lack of comparable Scottish literary manuscripts need not mean that this manuscript cannot be a product of the Scottish kingdom. In fact, there is rather more evidence *against* a Durham provenance than *for* it. Its script cannot be matched with the work of any known Durham scribe,² and it is more likely that an annotation about David I was made by a reader within the Scottish kingdom. Indeed, further interrogation into the origins of this manuscript, and the milieu surrounding its production, suggests that this Boethius manuscript is the earliest extant illuminated non-biblical manuscript from Scotland.

2. I am very grateful to Professor Richard Gameson for drawing this point to my attention.

King David of Scotland

Aside from implying a Scottish reader, the annotation on f.20r – 'David dei gracia rex Scotorum' – is also indicative of a particularly intelligent Scottish response to the main text, since it praises Scotland's king, and acknowledges Scotland's place in the world, alongside a juncture in the *Consolation* where Philosophy discusses world geography and the distinctions between nations:

*Consider also that in this little habitable enclosure there live many nations, different in language and customs and in their whole ways of life; because of the difficulties of travel, and differences of language, and the rarity of trading contacts, the fame not merely of individual men but even of cities cannot reach them all.*³

The penmanship and the letter formations of the annotation could suggest a later 13th- or 14th-century script. If so, it is not impossible that it could be a reference to David II (1329-71). Yet, whether it refers to David I or David II, the annotation is still almost certainly a response from a Scottish reader of Boethius who pre-dated the 15th century, thus dispelling the standard scholarly narrative that Boethius's transmission in Scotland began as a result of Chaucer's English translation.

David I remains the most likely subject of the annotation, especially given the contexts informing 12th-century manuscript culture. Books of this period were usually monastic productions, and David's reign has persistently been defined by his religious devotion, apparent particularly in his numerous and generous monastic foundations, which ranged from the Tironensian community at Selkirk in 1113, to the Cluniacs on the Isle of May in 1153. Indeed, I would argue that the most plausible and likely origin for the manuscript and its annotation are a monastic house founded by David. These monastic houses provided scribes for David's

3. 'Adde quod hoc ipsum brevis habitaculi septum plures incolunt nationes lingua, moribus, totius vitae ratione distantes. Ad quas tum difficultate itinerum tum loquendi diversitate tum commercii insolentia non modo fama hominum singulorum sed ne urbium quidem pervenire queat.' Quotation and translation taken from Hugh Stewart, Edward Rand and S. Jim Tester (eds), *Boethius: The Theological Tractates, De Consolatione Philosophiae* (London and Cambridge, MA, 1973).



Figure 2
Glasgow University Library, MS Hunter 279, f.54v detail: inhabited initial 'D', opening Book V. Reproduced with permission of Glasgow University Library.



Figure 3
Glasgow University Library, MS Hunter 279, f.45v detail. Reproduced with permission of Glasgow University Library.

charters: with over 200 surviving, these are the most prolific textual productions of the period. But those same scribes would also have copied literary works for David. Moreover, the legend ‘David dei gracia rex Scotorum’, is one of two principal forms of royal style used to open David I’s charters throughout his reign. The form ‘dei gratia’, identical to the Boethius annotation, occurs in 26 of David I’s charters dating from 1124 to 1151, with seven instances of the phrase appearing in the virtually unabbreviated form seen in the Boethius manuscript.

Decoration and visual clues

The manuscript’s decoration further supports a Scottish provenance, by distinguishing it from Boethius texts produced in England – as two key examples demonstrate. The only remaining illustrated initial from the entire manuscript is the inhabited letter ‘D’ opening book five (f.54v; Figure 2), which departs significantly from the letter decoration we see in northern English, particularly Durham manuscripts, where a distinctive ‘clove curl’ form is thought to have originated during the early to mid-12th century.⁴ There is a gesture towards the tendril and clove curl design in the bottom of the decorated initial,

beside the lion’s feet, but the prominence of animal forms is a clear contrast with the Durham style. Although our manuscript does not match either Durham’s script or decoration, Durham could still remain an influence, or a point of departure, rather than a provenance. A visual portrayal of animals also rules out a provenance for the manuscript in a Cistercian monastic house, since these were instructed by the order’s headquarters, the General Chapter at Cîteaux, to exclude figures of humans or animals in their book decoration.

A more compelling case for origins in the Scottish kingdom is the codex’s most elaborate and sophisticated miniature, immediately following Book IV, metrum 3, on f.45v (Figure 3). Thought to be unique among all existing Boethius manuscripts, it portrays Odysseus’ men metamorphosing into beasts, watched by Odysseus and his winged guide, Hermes. This pictorial and textual interpolation is a scientific commentary, discussing the physical properties of bodies. For this commentator, the metamorphosis portrayed in the image, and the story of Circe is not a literary or imaginative phenomenon, but

4. I am once more indebted to Professor Gameson for discussion about the ‘clove curl’ and Durham manuscripts. For a detailed study, see Anne Lawrence-Mathers, *Manuscripts in Northumbria in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Woodbridge, 2003).



Figure 4
Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Dep.255, Kelso Charter (1159), detail.
Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland and Duke of Roxburghe.

a physiological one, exemplified by the consumption of food by animals, and by the digestion of plants which they discuss at length. Such a scientific focus suggests that the book's origins lie with a Scottish community involving both monastic and scholastic traditions.

Textual and visual culture at Kelso

The most likely place of production, I would argue, is the Tironensian Abbey of Kelso, in the Scottish borders, the Scottish monastic house most famed for its library, scribes, educational influence, and royal connections. According to the 13th-century book survey, the *Registrum Anglie*, only Melrose Abbey contained more books, with 102 volumes, compared to Kelso's 96. Although no Boethius manuscript is listed, nor is the only surviving manuscript with a Kelso note of provenance, the copy of Augustine, *Sermones de uerbis Domini et apostoli* (now Trinity College Dublin, MS 226).

Rather, it is to the charter culture associated with Kelso that we must turn for particularly arresting evidence. Some of the best charters of David I and his grandsons were produced here, and the most celebrated, a charter from 1159, features an illumination which constitutes the earliest conclusively Scottish non-biblical figure drawing to survive (Figure 4). David I and his grandson, Malcolm IV (1154-65) are the subjects of this miniature, which pre-dates any English or French

charter illumination by at least a century. The royal figures and Romanesque beasts which form the letter 'M' of 'Malcolonus' bear a far stronger resemblance to Glasgow's Odysseus miniature than any Durham work I have seen. I would argue for a resemblance between the figure of David I in the Kelso Charter, and Odysseus in the Glasgow Boethius miniature, with stylistic affinities between their long narrow faces, particularly the execution of their eyes, hair, and hands. There are also parallels in the detail of the carefully executed drapery of both figures. The figures are not identical, and it is unlikely that they are by the same artist, as the Boethius manuscript predates the Kelso charter by up to 40 years. Yet it remains distinctly possible that they are products of the same monastic scriptorium or community. If the Glasgow Boethius does originate with Kelso, then the Odysseus miniature can be understood afresh as the earliest extant non-biblical illumination from Scotland to portray human figures.

Kelso's broader artistic milieu aligns well with the Glasgow Boethius MS. In marked contrast to the Cistercians, the Tironensians were an order particularly famed for their interest in art, illustration and decoration, as can also be seen in the Romanesque animal figures portrayed in Kelso's architecture. Even Kelso's daughter-house at Lesmahagow, founded in 1144, which had no recorded scriptorium, produced a Missal (now NLS MS 16495, c.1200-30), decorated extensively and colourfully, although in a much more rudimentary fashion than the

Kelso charter or Glasgow Boethius MS. Nonetheless, if such a minor foundation maintained an abiding interest in manuscript production and decoration, what sort of literary manuscript could be produced by Kelso, ‘the richest and in many ways the most influential of medieval Scots religious houses’?⁵

Kelso’s historical and cultural significance further bolsters its credibility as a compelling provenance. The Tironensian foundation at Selkirk (1113) – which David moved to Kelso in 1128 – was not only David’s first monastic foundation, but also had wider national and even European significance as ‘the earliest settlement anywhere in Britain of any of the communities of “reformed” Benedictines [...] This first crossing of the Channel by any of the “new orders” is in itself a memorable fact of British monastic history.’⁶ Very unusually, and in sharp contrast to the Cistercian filiation network, no Scottish Tironensian house was affiliated with an English one. Instead, the Selkirk/Kelso monks had come directly from Tiron in France. This has significant implications for the Glasgow Boethius MS, which has only been considered in relation to English, specifically Durham, contexts.

Roxburgh and education

Kelso’s nexus of influence between Durham, the diocese of Glasgow, and David I, is equally applicable to the Glasgow Boethius MS. The transition from Selkirk to Kelso placed the Tironensian monks much nearer David’s main royal residence at Roxburgh, and they were his preferred monastic community. David’s interest in the Tironensians had been long standing: his tutor and chaplain, John, was probably Tironensian, and initially persuaded David to introduce the order to Scotland. David’s interest persisted throughout his reign: a year before he himself died, David buried his son Henry at Kelso, rather than Dunfermline. Tweeddale and Teviotdale, where Kelso and Roxburgh are located, had been under Durham’s jurisdiction, but David I later made them part of the bishopric of Glasgow.

The documentary evidence of Roxburgh as a centre of learning, in addition to its status as royal capital and location of David’s court, also resonates closely with the Glasgow Boethius. David I’s confirmation charter to Kelso Abbey (1147×52) makes references to ‘omnes ecclesias et scholas eiusdem burgi’,⁷ and Kelso is known to have patronised schools at Roxburgh, as well as having its own almonry school. Schools were not, of course, unusual, although evidence of them in this early period remains shadowy. Kelso and Roxburgh’s learning community, however, reveals how the emergence of literary and intellectual culture here made a contribution of national and European significance.

5. G.W.S. Barrow, *Kingship and Unity: Scotland 1000-1306* (Edinburgh, 1988), p. 91.

6. G.W.S. Barrow, *The Kingdom of the Scots: Government, Church, and Society from the Eleventh to Fourteenth Century* (Edinburgh, 2003), p. 177.

7. Aelred Squire, ‘Aelred and David I’, *Collectanea Cisterciensia*, 22 (1960), 356-377 at 357. For a transcription, G.W.S. Barrow (ed.), *Charters of David I* (Woodbridge, 1999), no. 183 (p. 143).

Aelred of Rievaulx (1110-67), the leading European intellectual, is thought to have been educated at Roxburgh in the earlier 12th century, before becoming abbot of Rievaulx. Indeed, it is thought that Roxburgh, where he was tutored alongside David I, is where he developed an interest in Cicero’s *De Amicitia*, a text which influenced him profoundly in developing his celebrated cult of friendship. By a curious and fascinating coincidence, the Glasgow Boethius was originally bound with a copy of Cicero’s *De Amicitia* (now Glasgow, University Library, MS Hunter MS 278), copied in the same hand as the main *Consolation*. It appears to have preceded Boethius in the original manuscript arrangement, and, as an early inscription tells us,⁸ the codex contained a third text (now Hunter MS 280), a commentary on Martianus Capella’s *Satyricon* (also known as *The Marriage of Mercury and Philology*), called by its most recent editors ‘perhaps the most widely used schoolbook of the Middle Ages.’⁹ The form and manuscript arrangement of these three Hunter texts in one volume, or codex, points clearly to a monastic and educational setting.¹⁰ These manuscripts could, for the first time, provide contemporaneous material evidence of the sorts of ways in which Aelred encountered Cicero as part of his early studies. Aelred of Rievaulx’s eulogy to David I, the *Vita Davidis Scotorum Regis*, has been described as a ‘speculum of kingship’ by Joanna Huntington.¹¹ This work, produced by a figure connected with Scotland’s earliest Boethian text, can be read as the earliest example of the *speculum principis* (‘mirror for princes’) advisory mode which became the defining feature of late-medieval Scottish literature.

*

Boethius’ earliest Scottish reception encourages us to rethink Scotland’s literary and intellectual cultures. The Glasgow MS overturns prevailing scholarly views by showing that Boethius was read in Scotland around 300 years earlier than previously thought. As the product of a vibrant, sophisticated, and colourful cultural moment, the manuscript shows that exciting discoveries about earlier Medieval Scotland continue to be made.

Dr Kylie Murray and Dr Daniel Lee (a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow 2012-15) are among 10 academics to have been selected as ‘New Generation Thinkers 2015’ by BBC Radio 3 and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). The New Generation Thinkers scheme identifies academics at an early stage of their career who are passionate about communicating modern scholarship to a wider audience.

8. ‘In hoc volumine continentur Tullius de Amicitia . cum glosis . Boethius de consolacione philosophie / Martianus...’ (‘In this volume is contained Cicero’s On Friendship, with gloss. Boethius’s Consolation of Philosophy. And Martianus...’)

9. Evan L. Burge, Richard Johnson, and William H. Stahl (eds), *Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts* (New York, 1971-7), p. 22.

10. Intriguingly, the earliest named provenance for the original codex of three texts is a sixteenth-century Scottish reader from Fife, who inscribes the first leaf ‘P Junio / D.D. hunc librum nobilis cum primis / et humanus vir D. à Rossyth / 1570’.

11. Joanna Huntington, ‘David of Scotland: Vir Tam Necessarius Mundo’, in Stephen Boardman, John Davies, and Eila Williamson (eds), *Saints’ Cults in the Celtic World* (Woodbridge, 2009), pp. 130-145 at 145.

A history of early modern Catholicism in a single object

John Hay's manuscript *Apologia* (c.1598)

JAN MACHIELSEN

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Throughout most of his life the Jesuit John Hay (1546–1607) strenuously opposed ‘the actions of the ministers of Calvin, the sole cause of every disaster and misfortune of our poor country’ – Scotland.¹ He fought heresy not only at home but also abroad. Like many other northern Catholic scholars, confronted with heresy in or near their homeland, Hay would have identified with the character in Figure 1. His itinerant existence had taken him on dangerous journeys back to Scotland as well as to Belgium, Italy, and France. Looking for a fight, Hay had translated his attack on the Scottish Kirk from low Scots (‘Escossois’) into French. This little work was, in effect, a self-help book. The Jesuit confidently predicted to the French Catholic reader that, with it, ‘you could defend yourself against the impudence of the heretics, whose mouth you will very frequently shut up using a few of [the] questions and demands’ listed in this book.² This forecast proved to be wrong where Hay himself was concerned. The French Protestant Jean des Serres (1540–1598) entered into the fray against him.³ In response, the Scotsman composed an *Apologia*, an apology in the classical sense of the

word: that is, a defence against criticism. Hay was not sorry about anything at all. Getting the *Apologia* printed, however, showed that Calvinist ministers were not in the end Hay’s greatest opponents. His fellow Jesuits were.

Hay’s *Apologia* rests, still unpublished, in the central Jesuit archives in Rome. Folded inside the manuscript is a personal plea by the author, dated 26 March 1600, to the head of Hay’s religious order, the Jesuit general Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615): ‘I send to Your Reverence my *Apologia* against the minister Des Serres, which I have with great effort transcribed in large letters so that it may be more easily read by the printers. I pray and beseech Your Reverence that my errors are diligently corrected by the censors.’⁴ Hay reported that in Belgium, where he was then based, he met with nothing but resistance. He pleaded with Acquaviva to have the work printed, and he was certain that the General ‘will do what equity demands’.⁵ ‘There is no doubt’, he continued, ‘that the King of Scotland [James VI] and the Lords of that kingdom know that I have composed a reply. If it is not printed, I will be forced to ask Your Reverence to allow me to go away to unknown lands, where I may hide as if completely knocked over by a heretic.’⁶

Even before he saw Hay’s 1,086 page manuscript, Acquaviva had heard the project described in very different terms. Two years earlier a report filed by two Belgian Jesuits had been forwarded to Rome. One argued that the whole effort was fundamentally flawed:

Whether you consider the material or the method, it would appear that no utility can flow out of reading [Hay’s] book. The material is unplanned, and the things he discusses in it on the subject of Scripture, the pope, the

1. John Hay, *Demandes faites aux ministres d’Escosse* (Lyon, 1583), sig. A2r: ‘les deportemens des Ministres de Calvin, cause seule de tout le desastre, et malheur de nostre pauvre pays’. On Hay, see the entry in Willem Audenaert, *Prosopographia Iesuitica Belgica Antiqua: A Biographical Dictionary of the Jesuits in the Low Countries* 4 vols (Leuven, 2000), vol. 1, pp. 430–1.

2. Hay, *Demande*, sig. A5r-v: ‘tu te puisses defendre contre l’impudence des Heretiques, ausquels tu fermeras bien-souvent la bouche, avec une couple de ces Interrogations ou Demandes’.

3. Jean de Serres, *Pro vera ecclesiae catholicae autoritate defensio* (Geneva, 1594).

4. Rome, Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu [ARSI], Opp. NN. 300. The letter in question is enclosed in an envelope attached to the inside of the cover of the manuscript: ‘Mitto ... ad R.P.V. meam contra Ministrum Des-Serres Apologiam, quam magno labore descripsi magno caractere quo facilius a typographis legeretur: Oro et obsecro R.P.V. ut errata mea a censoribus diligenter corrigantur.’

5. Ibid.: ‘faciet quod aequitas postulat.’

6. Ibid.: ‘Non dubium est quin Rex Scotiae et magnates illius Regni sciant me responsionem composuisse, quae si non edatur, cogar a R.P.Va. petere ut mihi liceat ad incognitas abire terras, ubi, tanquam ab haeretico plane prostratus, delitescam.’



Figure 1

From the title page of Carolus Scribani, *Amphitheatrum honoris* (Antwerp, 1606). The image shows the Catholic polemicist dressed as a gladiator, illuminated by 'veritas' (truth). An angel crowns him with the laurel wreath of victory. The background shows, as the title suggests, an amphitheatre. Left of the gladiator are a number of demonic figures in classical guise, including a winged sphinx, King Midas (complete with ears), and Medusa. They look subdued, but unlike the scholars (carrying books) to the right, they are still alive. One scholar lost a head, another an arm. All were struck down by the gladiator's sword. Reproduced by permission of the Master and Fellows of Balliol College, Oxford.

Church, and the other dogmas of the Catholic religion have been so copiously, so solidly, so clearly and gravely written about by others in books already published that it appears redundant, indeed almost reckless to touch on them again, especially in the sort of style and way of writing that Father Hay uses, which to me seems similar to the actions of the two harlots in front of [King] Solomon.⁷

As far as his colleagues was concerned, Hay's intemperate language risked splitting the baby.

The Counter-Reformation

Even if John Hay would never leave Europe for one of the many Jesuit missions in the New World or the Far East, the history of his manuscript which, unread, has

7. ARSI, Germ. 178, fols 203r–v. Johannes Goudanus and Johannes Oranus to Olivier Manare, 18 August 1598: 'nulla utilitas ex eius libri lectione permanere posse videatur, sive rem consideres, sive modum. Res tumultuaria est, & quae de scriptura, de pontifice, de ecclesia, aliisque Catholicae religionis dogmatibus ibi tractant, ab aliis tam copiose, tam solide, tam perspicue graviterque scriptis libris iam sunt evulgata, ut supervacaneum, imo fere temerarium videatur ea iterum attingere, praesertim tali modo scribendi et stylo, quali P. Haiius utitur; qui mihi similis esse videtur modo agendi illarum duarum meretricum, coram Salomone.'

gathered dust in the archives for more than 400 years offers a prism through which to view the history and historiography of early modern Catholicism, a period traditionally known as the Counter-Reformation. There existed for centuries a surprising consensus among early modern Protestants and Catholics *and* the historians who studied them that the Catholic Church was above all an institutional church, identified with its episcopal hierarchy and headed by the papacy. That this shared understanding was interpreted differently by Protestants and Catholics will come as no surprise. For Protestants from Martin Luther onwards the papacy was the Whore of Babylon (Revelation 17), a sign that the end of days was near.⁸ For Catholics the popes were the uninterrupted successors to the Apostle Peter, on whose rock Christ had built his Church (Matthew 16:18). In both these views, the Jesuits, of which Hay was one, were the proverbial stormtroopers of the Counter-Reformation Church. The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, as the Jesuit order is officially called, likened the individual Jesuit to 'a lifeless body'.⁹ Its founder, Ignatius of Loyola, advised his followers to judge what appeared white to be black, if the Church so stipulated.¹⁰ No wonder, then, that Jesuits were seemingly everywhere, 'especially', as one historian observed, 'under the beds of zealous Calvinists and skeptical philosophers'.¹¹ Protestants credited the Jesuits with a wide range of sinister plots and Machiavellian conspiracies, the 1605 Gunpowder Plot being only the most famous.¹²

There is perhaps no greater compliment than an enemy implicitly acknowledging one's superhuman efficiency – yet, it does not make it true. The Society of Jesus, we now know, was from the late 16th century onwards riven by internal conflict.¹³ John Hay, as we have seen, was a living human being, not part of the living dead. Historians of early modern Catholicism have moved well past the traditional understanding of the Counter-Reformation church as a 'heavily authoritarian' institution.¹⁴ Simon Ditchfield has taught us to focus not on what early modern Catholicism 'was' (what label it deserved) but on what it 'did'.¹⁵ And what early modern Catholics did, among many other things besides, was to

argue and fight with each other. This, as Mary Laven recently argued regarding the laity, was not necessarily a bad thing: 'resistance and opposition ... were the source of creativity that contributed to the reshaping of Catholicism during the period of our study.'¹⁶ The study of the role and agency of the laity and the recovery of a plurality of Catholic views and perspectives have enriched our understanding of the early modern Catholic world. Yet it has also hollowed out our conceptual toolkit. The changes Catholicism underwent – and their origins – have become too diverse and manifold to be described.

The Counter-Reformation, in short, has become an empty shell. I would like to suggest that we have discarded it too quickly – not because its framework still possesses any validity, but because its origins are worth reflecting on. It is true that the label 'Counter-Reformation' was of Protestant coinage. It was first used in the preface to a 1776 edition of the Lutheran Confession of Augsburg.¹⁷ It is also true that Protestants from the outset valued the image of a reactionary, hierarchical Church led by the Antichrist. The word 'papist' entered the English language in 1533, the year before the Act of Supremacy made Henry VIII the supreme head of the Church of England.¹⁸ It very usefully defined Catholics by their allegiance to the papacy, a foreign monarch. At the same time, many Catholics, if anything, embraced this image of an institutional Church. One of the leading Catholic scholars of the period, the cardinal and papal confessor Cesare Baronio (1538–1607; Figure 2), devoted 12 volumes and, by his own counting, some 50 years of his life to a history of the Catholic Church which proved that its

*visible monarchy [had been] instituted by Christ our Lord, founded upon Peter, and preserved inviolately, guarded religiously, never broken or interrupted but perpetually continued through his true and legitimate successors, indisputably the Roman popes, always known and observed to be the one visible head of this mystical body of Christ, the Church, to which other members give obedience.*¹⁹

Yet, as Ruth Noyes has shown, even Baronio, a man so close to pope Clement VIII he heard his confessions, had repeated run-ins with the papal curia.²⁰

8. Irena Backus, *Reformation Readings of the Apocalypse: Geneva, Zurich, and Wittenberg* (Oxford, 2000).

9. George E. Ganss, ed., *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus* (St Louis MO, 1970), para. 547 (p. 249).

10. Ignatius of Loyola, 'The Spiritual Exercises', in Joseph A. Munitiz and Philip Endean, trans., *Personal Writings: Reminiscences, Spiritual Diary, Select Letters Including the Text of the Spiritual Exercises* (London, 2004), pp. 279–358, at 358.

11. Anthony Grafton, cited by Mordechai Feingold, 'Jesuits: Savants', in Mordechai Feingold, ed., *Jesuit Science and the Republic of Letters* (Cambridge MA, 2003), pp. 1–46, at 1.

12. Peter Burke, 'The Black Legend of the Jesuits: An Essay in the History of Social Stereotypes', in Simon Ditchfield, ed., *Christianity and Community in the West: Essays for John Bossy* (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 165–82.

13. Jean-Pascal Gay, *Jesuit Civil Wars: Theology, Politics, and Government under Tirso González (1687–1705)* (Farnham, 2012); Silvia Mostaccio, *Early Modern Jesuits between Obedience and Conscience during the Generalate of Claudio Acquaviva (1581–1615)* (Farnham, 2014).

14. For this label, see Michael Mullett, *The Catholic Reformation* (London, 1999), p. x.

15. Simon Ditchfield, 'Of Dancing Cardinals and Mestizo Madonnas: Reconfiguring the History of Roman Catholicism in the Early Modern Period', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 8:3–4 (2004), 386–408 at 408.

16. Mary Laven, introduction to Alexandra Bamji *et al.*, eds, *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation* (Farnham, 2013), pp. 1–11 at 7.

17. John O'Malley, *Trent and All That: Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge MA, 2002), p. 20.

18. Peter Marshall, 'Is the Pope Catholic? Henry VIII and the Semantics of Schism', in Ethan Shagan, ed., *Catholics and the 'Protestant Nation': Religious Politics and Identity in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 22–48 at 34.

19. Cesare Baronio, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, 12 vols (Rome, 1588–1607), vol. 1, p. 5: 'catholicae Ecclesiae visibilem Monarchiam a Christo Domino institutam, super Petrum fundatam, ac per eius legitimos, verosque successores, Romanos nimirum Pontifices, inviolate conservatam, religiose custoditam, neque umquam interruptam, vel intermissam, sed perpetuo continuatam, semperque huius mystici corporis Christi, quod est Ecclesia, unum caput visibile, cui parent membra cetera, esse cognitum et observatum.' Cited in Jan Machielsen, 'Counter-Reformation' in Philip Ford *et al.*, eds, *Brill's Encyclopaedia of the Neo-Latin World* (Leiden, 2014), pp. 759–774 at 766–67.

20. Ruth Noyes, 'On the Fringes of Center: Disputed Hagiographic Imagery and the Crisis over the Beati moderni in Rome ca. 1600', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 64:3 (2011), 800–46 esp. 817.

Reform as a personal enterprise?

Hay's manuscript, therefore, reveals some of the fundamental contradictions inherent in early modern Catholicism, in particular the profound contrast between its outward claims and inward reality. Hay's manuscript was at once a personal enterprise – one of his Belgian colleagues wrote that he had been warned off before he started²¹ – and a defence of the institutional Church in general, and the papacy in particular. His aim was to show that the Church was unchanging since its foundation by Christ, and that Calvinism was no more than a combination of heresies which the Church had long since defeated. In his letter of dedication to James VI of Scotland he promised that 'if it were not a nuisance for you, Most Serene King, to read my response to the Calvinist minister, I do not doubt that through your singular acumen and the erudition in which you excel you would easily perceive that the doctrine of the Calvinists is the most hideous monster formed for a large part out of the most pernicious heresies of the ancient heretics.'²² The manuscript's excessive length and its careful copying into 'large letters' for the benefit of the printer, Hay's private pleading with Acquaviva and his hopeful public appeal to James all show the Catholic exile's personal investment in this image of the Counter-Reformation Church as at once institutional and unchanging. Yet, they also belie it. Censorship, as the fate of Hay's manuscript shows, may be a collaborative process; authorship generally is not.

Hay and his fellow early modern Catholic intellectuals offer the historian something unusual: a chance to study the ambitions, feelings, and desires of individuals who for their expression are utterly reliant on the idea of an institutional hierarchy that negates all of these as expressions of the self. By arrogating for themselves the position of spokesperson of unchanging tradition, they elide their personal motivations. One effect, as I have demonstrated elsewhere, has been for Catholic scholars to locate the origins of their work outside of themselves; by identifying the beginnings with the command of a superior they transformed a personal project into an act of obedience.²³ Yet personal ambitions and frustrations that were so carefully effaced frequently surfaced when projects crashed into the real world. The English Catholic exile Thomas Stapleton threatened his reluctant printer with 'great chaos' after he had been informed that anti-Protestant polemics of the sort he had composed 'in some way hardly sell'.²⁴ Hay's problem was with his colleagues



Figure 2 Cesare Baronio, *Annales ecclesiastici*, 12 vols (Antwerp, 1604), vol. 10, fol. *6verso. An engraving showing Cesare Baronio at the age of 64, hard at work on the next instalment of his project. Note the religious icon and crucifix on his desk. The open window shows Baronio's titular church of Santi Nereo ed Achilleo, near the Baths of Caracalla, then on the outskirts of Rome. Reproduced by permission of the Warden and Scholars of New College, Oxford.

and censors, but he took care to inform Acquaviva that 'my book could have been printed here [in Belgium] without any cost to the Society.'²⁵

The traditional image of the Counter-Reformation, therefore, might be an empty shell, but it was on the part of Hay and his colleagues also a utopian fantasy which they wished into reality. Their individual projects – cast, of course as their precise opposite – pushed the Counter-Reformation into directions which others might not want to follow. When the Spanish Dominican friar Thomas Malvenda claimed that Martin Delrio's *Disquisitiones magicæ* (1599-1600), a voluminous encyclopaedia on witchcraft and magic, might give readers ideas, he insinuated, in effect, that the Flemish-Spanish Jesuit encouraged his readers to try witchcraft at home. The Jesuit retaliated by denouncing the Dominican friar

21. ARSI, Ep. Germ. 178, fol. 204r. Olivier Manare to Claudio Acquaviva, 22 August 1598, enclosing the report by Goudanus and Oranus, cited in n. 7.

22. ARSI, Opp. NN. 300, unnumbered folio page: 'si Rex Serenissime tibi molestum non fuerit, ea legere quae Calvinii ministro respondi, non dubito quin pro singulari tuo acumine, et eruditione qua polles, Calvinistarum doctrinam esse foedissimum monstrum ex antiquorum haereticorum perniciosissimis erroribus magna ex parte conflatum, sis facile percepturus.' Hay's letter of dedication is dated 1 January 1598.

23. Jan Machielsen, 'Heretical Saints and Textual Discernment: The Polemical Origins of the Acta Sanctorum', in Clare Copeland and Jan Machielsen, eds, *Angels of Light? Sanctity and the Discernment of Spirits in the Early Modern Period* (Leiden, 2013), pp. 103–41.

24. Jan Machielsen, 'How (not) to Get Published: The Plantin Press in the Early 1590s', *Dutch Crossing* 34:2 (2010), 99–114 at 103.

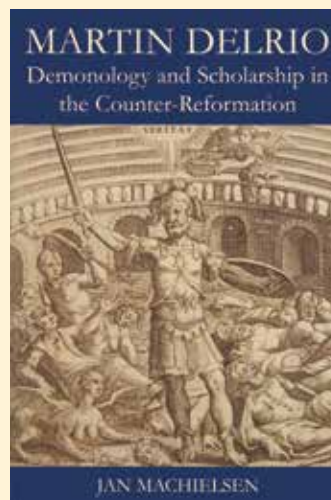
25. Letter inserted in ARSI, Opp. NN. 300: 'Liber meus fuisset hic excusus sine omni sumptu Societatis'.

in a public letter to the Inquisition.²⁶ Clashes such as these were central to Counter-Reformation intellectual culture, and as Laven suggested in a very different context, conflicts were by no means always detrimental. Yet, equally important is the fact that these conflicts have been whitewashed and can only be recovered in the archives – as Hay’s manuscript has been. Focusing on the role played by intellectuals in fostering and forging an intellectual culture brings both the individual and the whole they wish to be part of firmly into view. The result is a richer understanding of a church that was rapidly changing, even though its guiding principle was that it did not.

*

There is a bigger lesson to be learnt from this story of the Catholic ‘self’ as well. Even if early modern Catholic intellectuals with their grand aims and petty fights are of interest in and of themselves, they also show how reliant we human beings are on religious or philosophical beliefs much larger than ourselves to give our lives meaning and the difficulties this inevitably brings. Their struggles set into relief the tension between the need to negate the individual ambitions, feelings, and desires that make up the self *and* the impossibility of that feat. Many of us find religious belief increasingly incomprehensible, yet we live in an age of renewed religious violence. At a time when some seem again willing to commit that ultimate and most dreaded act of self negation – killing and dying for their faith – these early modern Catholic intellectuals could help us understand a religious problem, the connection of the individual to their community, that belongs to all ages. Hay wished and risked his life to be part of a larger whole and to represent, even fight for, that whole, but he also wished that whole to be like himself, if only it would let him.

26. Jan Machielsen, *Martin Delrio: Demonology and Scholarship in the Counter-Reformation* (British Academy/Oxford University Press, 2015), chap. 11.



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