

British Academy Review

UNDERSTANDING PEOPLES, CULTURES, SOCIETIES — PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE



Tackling slavery in modern business

Dominic Abrams on understanding what holds societies together

When Dawn Adès met Salvador Dalí ¶ Tim Ingold on a new

vision for anthropology ¶ The Sergei Skripal affair in context

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The British Academy





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British Academy Review Contents

Editorial 2

THE INTERVIEWS

Portraits of leading humanities and social sciences academics at work

Dominic Abrams 3
Dawn Adès 11

VIEWPOINTS

Informed contributions on issues of contemporary concern

Margaret Snowling · Language learning and diversity in society 17
Jeffrey Howard · Should we ban dangerous speech? 19
Gerasimos Tsourapas · The peculiar practices of 'authoritarian emigration states' 22
John Kay · Ten years after the nationalisation of Northern Rock 25

GLOBAL INSIGHTS

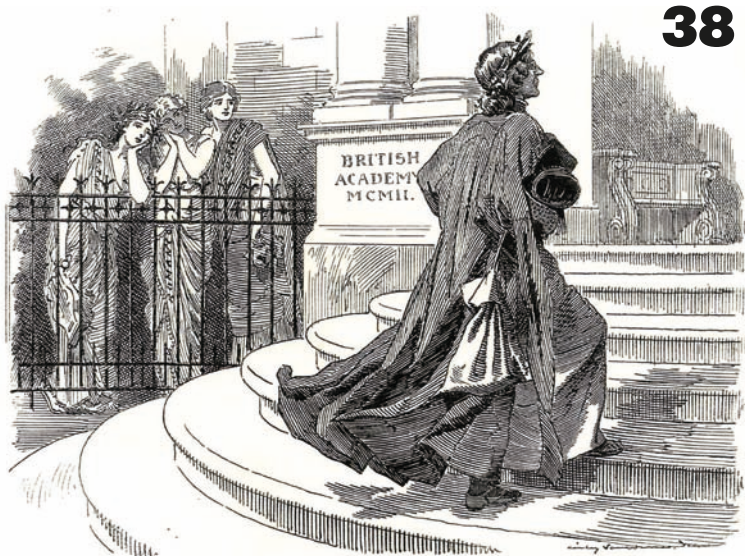
Understanding the world we live in

Brad Blitz · Tackling modern slavery in modern business 27

ON TOPIC

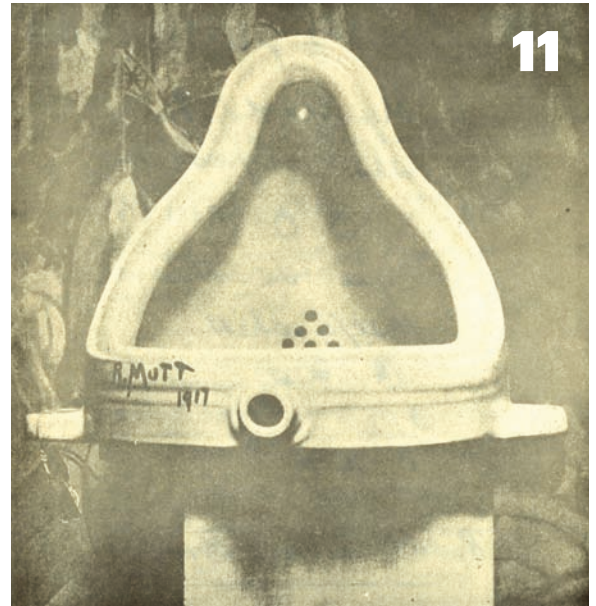
Academics discussing their subject areas

Tim Ingold · Why anthropology matters 30



38

No. 32 Spring 2018



11

FROM THE LECTURE HALL

Highlights from the British Academy's public lectures

John Burnside · Graham Swift's *Waterland* as soliloquy of suffering 33

EMERGING PERSPECTIVES

Writing by British Academy-supported early career scholars

Chris Millington · Scuffles and skirmishes in interwar French politics 35

FROM THE ARCHIVE

Curiosities from the basement

The British Academy's seal 38
The move to a new home at Carlton House Terrace, 1998 42

COMING UP

British Academy events open to all

The British Academy Summer Showcase 2018 44

Editorial

We regularly hear about the perceived fault lines in British society. But what holds societies together? The social psychologist Dominic Abrams reports on some specific work on social integration, as well as introducing us to the British Academy's broader framework for research into 'Cohesive Societies' (page 3).

Other articles in this issue consider particular forces that may jeopardise social cohesion. Maggie Snowling argues that we have to do more to prevent those with language-learning difficulties from being cut adrift (page 17). Jeffrey Howard asks whether freedom of speech should sometimes be limited when it threatens social harmony (page 19). John Kay reminds us of the disruptive jolt of the financial crisis which unfolded 10 years ago (page 25). John Burnside explores the risk of how a communal sense of tradition can be too readily swept away (page 33). And Chris Millington considers whether a society can sometimes survive political violence, when the unofficial rules of engagement are tacitly agreed (page 35).

The Modern Slavery Act became law in March 2015. In this issue's cover story, Brad Blitz explains how a new British Academy research programme will examine the global production processes, supply chains and networks which cause so many people to be trapped in modern slavery (page 27).

Another story currently in the news is the Sergei Skripal affair. Gerasimos Tsourapas alerts us to the varied ways in which authoritarian regimes behave towards their own citizens living abroad (page 22).

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DOMINIC ABRAMS

... on understanding group dynamics, and what holds societies together



Dominic Abrams is Professor of Social Psychology, and Director of the Centre for the Study of Group Processes, at the University of Kent. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2013, and is the Academy's Vice-President (Social Sciences).

Was there anything about your home background that made it inevitable that you would study psychology?

Far from it! My parents were social scientists but primarily working in history, sociology and education. They were quite critical of psycho-dynamic theory and behaviourism, both of which were influential at the time when I was a teenager. I became interested in psychology because *New Society*, which landed on the doorstep once a week, had a psychology column which I found intriguing.

You did a psychology degree at Manchester University. Then, for your masters and doctorate, you moved into social psychology.

I became fascinated with what makes people into social creatures. What are the defining attributes that make us human? I recognised

that relationships between people are fundamental to everything.

When I graduated I was also interested in becoming either a school teacher, or a musician, and it was rather accidental that I pursued the path I did. I was set to take up teacher training in Manchester, but Tony Manstead,¹ my supervisor at Manchester, had encouraged me to apply to the London School of Economics' Masters degree in social psychology. In the summer of 1979 I was building stages and fences at the Cambridge Folk Festival, and was summoned to the director's caravan to receive a phone call. It was from Bram Oppenheim, who said LSE had an ESRC studentship but had to know whether I'd take it immediately as it was just two hours before ESRC's notification deadline. So during that 10-minute call I changed my entire career plan. At LSE, Professor Hilde Himmelweit introduced me to a much wider vision of social psychology than most students would experience these days, exploring its relationship to social science as a whole, and the larger questions of what society is and how it works.

1. Professor Antony Manstead, now of Cardiff University, was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2011.



At the height of the Civil Rights movement, while his father Philip was on sabbatical at the University of Chicago in 1966, Dominic Abrams (top right) attended the Kozminsky Elementary School, an inspiring experience which may have stimulated his subsequent interest in intergroup relations, diversity and social inclusion.

I worked initially with Paul Harris at LSE on children's perspective taking and group membership, which led me to wonder how children develop a social identity – how they begin to understand that they are members of social groups and not just individuals. Subsequently I joined the newly established Social Psychology Research Unit, led by Geoffrey Stephenson at the University of Kent, and was supervised by Kevin Durkin and then Rupert Brown on intergroup relations and prejudice, an area in which the UK was at the forefront of research in social psychology. That's where my enthusiasm for linking social and developmental psychology to societal level issues was consolidated.

How has psychology evolved since you started working in it in the early 1980s?

It has certainly transformed in terms of the available methods, its scale and scope. It has become ever more detailed, scientific and rigorous.

Psychology has also begun to look much more outside of the laboratory, and to take the real social world, and what people do in it, as

its reference for the interesting questions and problems. There is something a bit peculiar about studying human behaviour in the laboratory, because it's not a place where most people spend most of their time. I think increasingly the question is: can we understand some basic processes and mechanisms that are involved in human behaviour which, outside the laboratory, can help us to explain how and why people do things, and where their emotions, preferences and relationships lead them? Trying to make that cross-connection between theories and real-world problems is intriguing, and sometimes the strength of that connection is very gratifying.

I think psychology as a whole is still rather on an island, so I'm always keen to encourage interest in connecting it to other social sciences and the humanities.

Your areas of interest have been social identity, intergroup relations, social inclusion and exclusion. And you have researched across a wide range of areas, including age, gender and health. Across all your projects, what has been the starting point? Is it

the methodology, and then looking for ways to apply that? Or is it a social problem, and then looking for the right methodology?

It's mostly the social problem. I would always say: use the methodology that will give you the most insight that your own expertise can offer. Methodologically I'm quite eclectic and enjoy ranging from large-scale social surveys, to laboratory experiments, to interviews, to looking at archival data. As long as it's rigorous and helps you answer the question, the method is almost immaterial. Ideally, a combination of types of methods would be used. That may be a slightly unusual for a social psychologist. In the United States, social psychologists tend to stick to one set of methods, but in Europe and the UK it's more common to find people working in a more multi-level and multi-faceted way, so that there's greater engagement with the social context in pursuing the research questions.

For example, in my first ever piece of research, Tony Manstead and I explored why musicians performing to an audience sometimes excel, and at other times (or other equally competent musicians) collapse in a heap and make terrible mistakes.² It was nearing Christmas, so we asked students to learn to play *Jingle Bells* on the xylophone with only a little or plenty of practice. Then we asked them to perform it in front of a two-person audience, or a microphone purportedly being relayed to a lecture theatre full of students, or a large mirror. It was terrific fun and it connected my interest in performing music with my interest in social psychology. Under-rehearsed people did particularly badly in the microphone condition, but well-rehearsed people did particularly well in the audience condition.

Related questions still interest me. How do audiences affect people's behaviour? And conversely how do people influence their audiences? What is the nature of social influence, and how does that work within groups? Having a connection between your basic research questions and the real world gives the research energy as well as breadth.

What's the hook that attracts you to a particular problem?

One hook is people jumping to conclusions about why things happen. The other one is investigating my own scepticism.

I think the most satisfying thing is to find yourself in conversation with someone who has a completely different perspective on the same problem, and to reach agreement about how best to figure out which of you might be right, and then

test that. It's the enjoyment of working with other people to answer a difficult question in a more complex and challenging way.

For example, the first book that I wrote with Michael Hogg, *Social Identifications*,³ was written to create a bridge between European social psychology and its work on intergroup processes and social identity (shared group identity), and North American research on the way that people influence one another's decisions in groups (group dynamics and decision making). There was a lot of resistance at first. However, working with some of the top researchers in America and across Europe, we helped to create a space where the best insights from both traditions of research could be brought together.

Nowadays, research on social influence doesn't just look at, for example, whether Person A can persuade Person B, or whether a majority inside a group will affect a minority inside the group; it also takes into account the wider *intergroup* context. We might ask if it is easier for me to persuade you to do something when you and I both know that we're in competition with some other group who believe something else? I think that the social identity approach to understanding group processes is now widely accepted. And I get satisfaction from the sense that we've done something useful for everybody in the field.

One area that I have been interested in for a while is why people become included in or excluded from social groups. Part of the analysis is that, when someone's included or excluded, it's not just because of what they do, or how they fit with other members of that particular group, it's also the implications of that person's behaviour or attitudes in terms of how other groups might see them. For example, testing a developmental model of 'subjective group dynamics' in our work with children, Adam Rutland and I showed that by the age of 8 children's social perspective taking ability and their growing awareness of loyalty pressures meant they were more likely than younger children to regard it as unacceptable for an England football team supporter to praise German footballers in the World Cup, even if they were performing brilliantly. At best, peers should be grudging in their recognition of a competitor's strengths. It is the intergroup framing of these situations that plays an important role in exclusion.

This type of insight is very important for children at school, because their ability to understand these processes equips them to deal with different social pressures, and to understand

2. Bibliographical references for the research examples cited in this article can be found in the online version of this article, via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/publications/british-academy-review-no-32-spring-2018

3. Michael A. Hogg and Dominic Abrams, *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes* (1988).

how it is that they can be accepted as part of a variety of social groups, and how to navigate that complexity as they go through adolescence.

Do insights from this and your other work have practical applications?

It is useful for teachers to understand that, if a child is being left out, neglected, excluded or bullied, it's not necessarily to do with a particular bully or perpetrator, and not necessarily to do with the individual child and any weakness they have. It might be more because of the structure of the social situation, and the relationship between sub-groups in that context; the same child in a different context might be perfectly fine. It's about changing the way people think about problems when they see them.

Pieces of research like that become part of the knowledge stock. Sometimes you come up with a new technique which somebody might apply in a particular situation. But I think more generally the value of research is improving the general understanding of behaviour in particular contexts, be it education, health, or as consumers.

A completely different type of work we did recently, for example, was looking at whether drivers switched off their engines when level-crossing barriers were down for several minutes. There is a fair amount of theory about why people behave in certain ways. But surprisingly it turned out that one of the things that works perfectly well is appealing to people just to think about themselves. We found that with a simple sign instructing 'When the barriers are down switch off your engine', only led about 25 per cent of people to bother doing so. When the sign instead says 'Think of yourself: When barriers are down switch off your engine', that jumps to 50 per cent. Three words make a big difference. Why is that? It's not something you would expect. It's because they use the mechanism of people monitoring what they think are the appropriate rules in a situation. If you're just sitting in your car, you may not even think about those rules. However, just being encouraged to think about them prompts people to change their behaviour.

I think that an important role for social research is to improve our understanding of general principles about how people use socially mediated information, how they relate to one another, and how the meanings that they share affect what they do. If a researcher wanted to do damage, it would be very possible to do so. We know a lot about causes of conflict – about how to make people more extreme, more hostile, angrier. But because we know those things, we also know a lot about how to make people more pro-social, more co-operative, more helpful, more constructive, to think in more imaginative

ways. Pursuing these positive outcomes is what motivates most researchers.

Of course, all humans think that they are innately expert at social psychology – we all think we know what makes people tick.

A lot of the assumptions that people make as being intuitively obvious turn out not to be, and part of the joy of doing research is understanding what's going on and why, and offering that alternative scenario to people when they're thinking about policies and strategies for dealing with social problems. It's an awareness that sometimes the strategy that seems obvious may not be any use at all, or may actually backfire.

For example, we did some research on the effect that drinking alcohol in a group has on people's ability to make judgements and decisions. Common understanding would be that when people in a group get drunk they become chaotic, wild and reckless. In fact, we found that people who have been drinking in a group tend to watch each other's backs: so if one person in the group starts making a mistake, somebody else in the group is likely to detect that and correct it. Somebody who's drunk on their own is unable to do that monitoring, and so they carry on making mistakes, or making more extreme and risky choices. So up to a certain level, drinking in groups is probably safer than drinking alone.

Is there any one piece of research of yours which you think has been particularly influential?

I hope there are quite a number, but I wouldn't presume to think of any particular piece of work that I've personally done in those terms. Rather, I think it is important to be part of a research trajectory, contributing to findings that allow people to look at things differently. I've had the privilege of working with inspiring mentors, colleagues and students. Many of our projects have had long legacies – helping to focus policy on behavioural norms at the start of the AIDS epidemic, establishing a benchmark of prejudice for the launch of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, cross national measurement of ageism working with AgeUK and the European Social Survey.

One example is work by my research group on something called age-based stereotype threat. This is a phenomenon where, if a stereotype about your group suggests that it is less competent in particular areas than other groups are, when a situation implies comparison between those groups you're likely to start underperforming. We have investigated this amongst older people in our own research and meta-analytically, and found that when they believe they are being compared with younger people, older people do perform



These three British Academy reports were launched at the House of Lords on 13 December 2017.

more poorly on cognitive tests. Stereotype threat can cause quite a significant deterioration. For example, it even affected older people's physical strength: when we gave them a hand dynamometer task, their strength was reduced by about 50 per cent. That sense of 'I might be old and frail' is itself enough for people to give up on things.

However, we've also found that older people who have closer inter-generational relationships don't seem to be so vulnerable to stereotype threat. Because they still feel a psychological connection across the generations, they don't necessarily categorise themselves as being older, and so aren't vulnerable to the stereotypes in the same way. And if you engage older people in tasks where they think they might have an advantage, for example in doing crossword puzzles, then the same stereotype can actually boost their performance.

These findings reveal subtle but important ways in which it is possible to start enabling people. We can set up situations so that people don't pitch themselves into social categories that have negative stereotypes, or we can use the positive attributes of those categories to help embolden people.

You have been on the working group of a British Academy public policy project ☒ "If you could do one thing...": Local actions to promote social integration.⁴ Can you tell us about that?

One of the challenges that confronts social researchers is the level at which we should be applying our theories, our methods and our insights. There's always a temptation to try and answer everything on a very grand scale –

such as health policy. In fact, a lot of things that matter to people operate at a local level. It is important to ask what you can do at a local level to make use of the insights we have about how people live well together.

Looking at local actions that could promote social integration seemed to me to be a fantastic opportunity. Being on the working group was fascinating, because we saw a huge array of really impressive evidence from all types of different approaches about how to go about this.

I was involved in a specific project, funded by the Arts Council England, to evaluate the work done by People United in a town called Newington, an area near Ramsgate in the south-east of England.⁵ It has a 1950s housing estate, a fairly well-established population – mostly white – but it is a deprived community: people are generally employed in low-skilled jobs, and there are quite high levels of unemployment. It was a place that was rather disengaged, disconnected and had no real purpose. From our other work we had established that, when people engage in the arts, they are likely to start giving to others (volunteering or donating to charity). People United thought that they would use the arts as a vehicle to promote connection between people, to see if they could draw the whole community together and build a sense of direction. In a project called 'Best of Us', they attracted an array of local artists to engage different parts of the community. For example, there was a Best of Us festival, where members of the community celebrated what was best about Newington, and an 'Arts and Kindness' project,

4. The British Academy working group was chaired by Professor Anthony Heath FBA.

5. Julie Van de Vyver and Dominic Abrams, 'Community Connectedness Through the Arts', in *"If you could do one thing...": 10 local actions to promote social integration* (British Academy, 2017), pp. 58–67.

in which schoolchildren sought out stories of heroism, boldness, creativity, things that people have done for one another, and shared those through artistic outputs like composing songs.

Our role was to evaluate the impact of all this. We compared a school in Newington with a school in a control town. We also compared what was going on amongst adults in Newington with adults from a demographically matched town with no comparable arts activity. Our quantitative measures clearly showed that these arts activities did indeed promote better community engagement, more commitment to the community, improving things like empathy and sense of connection.

The most important thing about the project was that it created a set of groups in the community that became self-sustaining. It cemented relationships across generations, brought together sets of people who would never otherwise talk to one another, and made them aware of shared experiences. Once you are aware of shared meaning with another person, that's a psychological relationship which provides the basis for caring about the other person, even if that commitment is not terribly explicit. So then when something affects your community, you're more likely to want to do things that will help others within that community.

It builds on the idea that the way that people categorise themselves has a massive effect on how they behave and what they will commit to. For many people, the local level can be much more powerfully self-relevant than their profession or the country as a whole. Tailoring things to make sense in the local context can therefore be critical.

The British Academy reports were launched at the House of Lords in December 2017.⁶ Were they received well?

They were received extremely well.

There are case studies dealing with ethnic, racial and linguistic integration. And the British Academy project has broadened out the question to say that all sorts of communities have all sorts of divides: sometimes they are just fragmented and do not have enough glue binding them together. Strategies for how we can hold ourselves together are illuminated incredibly well in these reports, pointing the way for communities, charities and local authorities to do things on the ground. The great thing is that it's not saying there is

only one way to tackle this problem. There are multiple approaches, some of which will better suit particular localities or contexts – and here we show a whole set of them that we know are likely to work well, for people to draw upon.

I think it's a very valuable piece of work. And, since publication of the reports in December, there has been more consultation and follow-up with government ahead of its forthcoming Integrated Communities Strategy. On 7 March 2018 the Academy held a workshop with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, and the Government Social Research network, about this strategy and about practical data collection to inform the local picture of social integration.

We are trying to take forward what we've learned from all this research, and engage with policy-makers, heads of professions, and government departments, to bring it to their attention. It is part of a wider mission for the Academy – to do things that are both academically rigorous *and* of practical relevance and use to policy-makers. It's an exciting and ambitious project.

To develop good strategies for sustaining a viable society, we have to understand how societies hold together.

This is just one strand of what the British Academy is developing into a broader framework of activities on 'Cohesive Societies'. What's the ambition here?

The British Academy's Vice-Presidents started a conversation within the Academy about the critical issues that face society. We decided to focus on the problem of societal cohesion, one that is affecting not just the UK but the whole world.

From across the humanities and social sciences, people are addressing different issues, whether about globalisation, demographic change, climate change, embracing technological change, the nature of people's identities, or indeed contesting what identity is. All of these issues are bound up with how people connect with one another. In order to develop good strategies for sustaining a viable society, we have to understand how societies hold together.

After consulting and considerable discussion we've started by focusing on five themes under the heading Cohesive Societies.

The first focuses on the nature of *cultural memory and tradition*. What is the role of our understanding of our history, our cultural context, and the way that we talk about it?

6. Three British Academy reports were launched on 13 December 2017. Key lessons: "If you could do one thing...": *Local actions to promote social integration*. Essay collection: "If you could do one thing...": *10 local actions to promote social integration*. Case studies: "If you could do one thing...": *The integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers*. These reports can be found via www.britisacademy.ac.uk/if-you-could-do-one-thing-local

The second concerns the nature of the *social economy*? That's not just the financial economy in the way that people make their choices and invest their energy. The social economy is all about exchanges of all sorts involving skills, space, knowledge, access to networks and the social mediation of technologies and physical resources.

The next theme is about the meaning and mechanisms of the *social responsibilities* that people have to one another – understanding what we might need in terms of future legislation, versus what we might gain from more informal co-operative commitments and obligations that people have toward one another.

Identity and belonging is about how people define and defend their identities, and their shared identities with others. It is also how people contest one another's identities. A good example is the way that people who voted for Leave and for Remain in the EU referendum have arrived at some quite extreme stereotypes about one another.

The final theme is *care for the future*. This question is about the sustainability of society. How do we understand relationships between generations, and the nature of obligations across generations? How do we prepare for a society where there may be less work around, or there may be very different demographics, or climate change may affect us in ways we don't expect.

Cohesive Societies is intended to provide a framework – for capturing and enhancing work that is already being done across these five themes, and for enabling new work to be undertaken. It is an opportunity to connect up work across the Academy as a whole, to offer a more overarching structure to support a body of work that Fellows of the British Academy and Academy-supported researchers are already pursuing, and to continue to develop its potential.

Why is societal cohesion such a problem now?

One reason is the rapidity and fluidity of the transfer of knowledge between people – whether it be real news, fake news, evidence, superstition. This global exchange is so rapid now that we can't expect societies to remain static – indeed, they're going to change at a faster rate than they have done in the past. We see the EU referendum, political changes across Europe and in the United States, growing levels of inequality between the super-rich and everybody else, the flow and interchange between and across cultures, within and between countries – all these shifts seem to be happening faster, more intensively and less predictably. It means

the problem of maintaining society, whether at the local, national or international level, is becoming more complex.

Social science now recognises that systems operate at different levels. That's the modern-day landscape that we face. Understanding each problem individually is only going to give us limited progress. We have to understand the connections, how they work, and how we can sustain productive, co-operative, effective relationships that support everybody. That's why I think this is a critical issue, and will continue to be so, for years to come.

What are the intended fruits of the Cohesive Societies endeavour?

Over the last year, the steering group has first of all been identifying what is already being done around these five themes. It has been very gratifying to find out how many Academy grant-holders are doing work that relates to them.

And we have just set up a section of the Academy's website to embrace what the Academy itself has been doing that fits under the overarching heading of Cohesive Societies.⁷ This includes work on: identity and belonging; social integration; the future of business in society; revolutions; governing England; the future of Europe; inequalities; faith; and immigration.

A number of events are already under way, including a workshop with NatCen on what survey research tells us about societal cohesion. With the help of Fellows and other experts we're also working out an array of other activities, such as a literature review to identify research gaps, scoping seminars with key organisations and individuals across the five themes, and informative breakfast briefing events.

In the longer-term, the steering group sees opportunities for publications, research projects and grants, and setting agendas for other research funders to pursue.

And we want it to help organise our thinking around policy advice and consultation, so that we are in a position to bring together a body of work from across the humanities and social sciences, to inform the work that we do with government and other agencies in thinking about future policies.

Adopting a broad framework such as Cohesive Societies is a new approach for the Academy, and we intend it to be intellectually and practically responsive and relevant as it develops.

You have mentioned the EU referendum a couple of times. You have recently published some work on why

7. www.britishacademy.ac.uk/cohesive-societies

people might have voted the way they did, and you have posted a British Academy blog piece about it.⁸

People who were more anxious about immigration were more inclined to vote Leave than Remain. But why? Supported by a Small Research Grant from the British Academy, just before the referendum we surveyed 1,000 people in the south-east of England, where most people voted Leave, and 1,000 in Scotland, where more people voted Remain.

Commentators have pointed to factors such as age or education as predicting why people voted Leave. Demographics tell us part of the story, but social psychology tells a large part too. In both regions, we found that the same combination of factors was involved in voting to leave the EU: being concerned about immigration, but also not trusting UK politicians. People who felt that immigration was a problem (as Theresa May, then Home Secretary, kept reminding them it was), and who *also* felt that the government really couldn't be trusted, were most fearful about immigration. It was seen as a direct threat to themselves – to their jobs, their livelihood and maybe their way of life. They also felt disengaged from Europe, unable to identify themselves as feeling European. So a combination of uncertainty about immigration and lack of trust in politicians fed into the feeling of threat from immigration and disengagement from being European, and these predicted the decision to vote Leave rather than Remain.

Other research we have done has shown that terror attacks such as 7/7 didn't so much make extremists more extreme in their attitudes towards Muslims, but it made liberals less liberal. So it hardened up the centre rather than making extremists more extreme, and that's another way in which social change can happen, by dissolving the centre ground on opinion issues.

Very often people's sense of connection with a social group and where they belong is critical in moving them from one position to another on a particular issue. Whether it's a sense of being European, or whether it's a sense of there being a threat that has to be addressed, these things can be quite dynamic and can change quickly over time.

This links back to your points about the speed of social change we are witnessing, with fluid perceptions of 'us' and 'them'.

Historically the sense of who 'we' are and who 'they' are would for many people have been quite predictable and stable, their understanding developed through their community over a period of time.

However, psychologically, people are equipped to shift that definition of who 'we' are very quickly,

and from situation to situation. The world is now moving at a rate at which there are opportunities to become a new 'us' all the time. People can begin to redefine themselves, connect up with other sets of individuals and communities very quickly, and in ways that can be very valuable to them, but which also draw them to new behaviours, attitudes and views. We have to be equipped to deal with people's flexibility to recreate themselves as social entities – whether because they discover they're in a new set of relationships that hadn't existed before, or because they face new sources of competition, or they discover new social fault lines and different perspectives from their own – division around Brexit being a good example. The Cohesive Societies framework will help us to develop new insights into these dynamics.

You are the British Academy's Vice-President for Social Sciences. In that capacity, what are your hopes for the future for the social science disciplines?

It's a fascinating role, and I am enjoying it very much. Working with my fellow vice-presidents (most closely with Alan Bowman, Vice-President for Humanities) and the senior management team is a pleasure. In the last year or two, what has been particularly exciting has been the way that social sciences and the humanities in the Academy have begun to link more closely with each other, and we have been able to foster cross-disciplinary connections. I hope that we will continue to make progress in trying to soften and transcend disciplinary boundaries. Our collective role as brokers for the humanities and social sciences is absolutely critical.

And I'm keen that, as well as embracing differences of approach, method, principles and interests, we also identify some of the big common research questions and problems that we're all trying to address, and to pursue them together. Of course, we will still need to be responsive to specific research challenges as they arise within and across disciplines. But I see my role as facilitating the collective setting out of an agenda focusing on the long-term major research challenges and articulating why they require investment. I hope this will support the Academy to pursue its own research initiatives and also to facilitate other organisations to pursue the best research.

It has been very gratifying to involve Fellows of the British Academy in discussion and debate and encounter enthusiasm for these aims across subject areas in the humanities and social sciences. ■

Dominic Abrams was interviewed by James Rivington.

I'm keen that we identify major long-term research challenges.

8. Dominic Abrams, Giovanni A. Travaglino and Anne Templeton, 'Could we have predicted Brexit?' (British Academy blog, 10 January 2018) www.britishecademy.ac.uk/blog/could-we-have-predicted-brexit

DAWN ADÈS

... on meeting Salvador Dalí, and
the art of putting on an exhibition

Were you always destined to be an art historian?

No, not at all. I wasn't aware of such a possibility when I was a teenager. At one point, I was torn between going to university and going to art school, because I did have ambitions as an artist.

But I got a place at Oxford to read English. I carried on painting and drawing while I was there, but only a little.

I had always been interested in painting – had always been visiting galleries and looking at exhibitions. But it was at Oxford that I realised that there was such a thing as history of art. I went to a series of lectures by the great art historian Edgar Wind, one of the scholars who came to this country from Germany in the 1930s. I shall never forget a lecture he gave on Michelangelo and Savonarola. I found totally entralling the idea that there was a crucial relationship between the ideas and writings of the time, and the images that were produced.

I decided to go to the Courtauld and do an MA in history of art. My topic would be satire in the 18th century, which I thought would allow me to look at that relationship between writing and images, the verbal and the visual.



Dawn Adès is Professor Emerita of Art History and Theory at the University of Essex. She was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1996.

When did your interest move to more modern art?

Nowadays people are much more aware of contemporary art; it is much more part of their experiences. In the early 1960s, what was happening in the contemporary art world was quite a mysterious thing. The Courtauld was basically historical, but we had two very wonderful tutors in the 20th-century period: John Golding, who was also a painter,¹ and Alan Bowness, who subsequently became director of the Tate. I started a course on 20th-century art because I wanted to understand what was going on: I found cubism very puzzling.

My first idea for a PhD was one on Jackson Pollock, who had died in 1956. But the view of the Courtauld was that that was too recent; it was not nearly removed enough. So I decided to work on the dada and surrealist reviews, looking at the relationship between word and image.

You have met several people who had been involved in surrealism.

From when I was starting out in the late 1960s, into the '70s, many of those people were still alive, so I wanted to go and talk to them. It was really important to me to hear authentic voices talking about their work and their life, and how that related to surrealism.

However, the way artists regard their own work is very often unexpected. For example, Man Ray was wonderful, but he was not at all interested

1. John Golding (1929–2012) was both a Fellow of the British Academy (elected 1994) and a Royal Academician.

in talking about photography or film. He was only interested in the recent paintings that he had done. This was around 1968-69. He only wanted to show me his recent paintings, in which he was using a curious technique called decalcomania – which actually is very surrealist. He thought that was the most important thing he had done. I would not say that, but the fact that he thought so is important.

Obviously you have to feel your way carefully in your study. You must not be uncritical, and you have to see the wider context. But I think that eliminating the individual artist altogether is a mistake. I am positioned somewhere between those who completely condemn biography and say it all has to be about the work or the theme, and those who really pursue a biographical approach.

I believe you also met Francis Bacon.

That was great, because we really got on very well. I was writing an essay for the catalogue of his Tate retrospective exhibition in 1985. I happened to have been working on a magazine called *Documents*, a dissident surrealist review which came out in the late 1920s and early 1930s, largely edited by Georges Bataille. Some of the ideas in it, which were very materialist and very anti-idealist, struck me as having a resonance with Francis's paintings. I mentioned this to him, and he agreed. That was interesting, and it helped me to write about his paintings very directly. One side of me is quite theoretical and interested in conceptual art, but I do like writing about painting and getting up to the elbows in oil paint.

Is that the artist in you sneaking out?

It probably is something about valuing the way the eye works in relation to the brain. What really surprised me when I started teaching was the extent to which people saw things differently: it never occurred to me that they would not read a painting the same way I saw it. I showed work to my students and they all noticed completely different things in it, so that was a very good lesson. You realise that you have to trust your own eye, but also realise that it is not the only way of reading a picture.

Can you talk a bit about your interest in Latin American art?

At the University of Essex, one of the important Area Studies degrees was in Latin America. Each department within the School of Comparative Studies had to offer courses on that from within their discipline. As I spoke Spanish, and happened

to have been to Mexico (where I had quite fallen in love with the Mexican muralists), I was the one who developed courses in Latin American art. This was in the early days of art history departments springing up in the new universities in the 1960s – UEA, Kent, Warwick, ourselves at Essex – and art history was regarded as a discipline that needed to be brought more into the core curriculum, so that was very interesting.

It was very exciting for somebody still doing their PhD to be told they could teach almost what they liked as long as it was to do with Latin America. In my first course, around 1970 or 1971, I taught pre-Columbian, colonial and modern art all in one year, which of course was impossible really. However, the students were amazing.

Later, more specifically, you studied surrealism in Latin America, which you thought of as under-researched. In your British Academy Lecture in 2009,² you said that surrealism in Latin America is a subject 'peppered with lacunae, misunderstandings and bad faith'.

One problem with surrealism in Latin America was that there were very few contacts between people in different places. There were surrealists in Chile, there were surrealists in Argentina, there were surrealist exiles in Mexico.

There was also the question of the relationship between surrealism and magical realism, which cropped up in the 1970s. Alejo Carpentier, who wrote what could be called magical realist novels, was very against surrealism. He said that surrealism encouraged people to substitute dream for the reality, whereas Latin American reality was so fantastic that nothing else was needed.

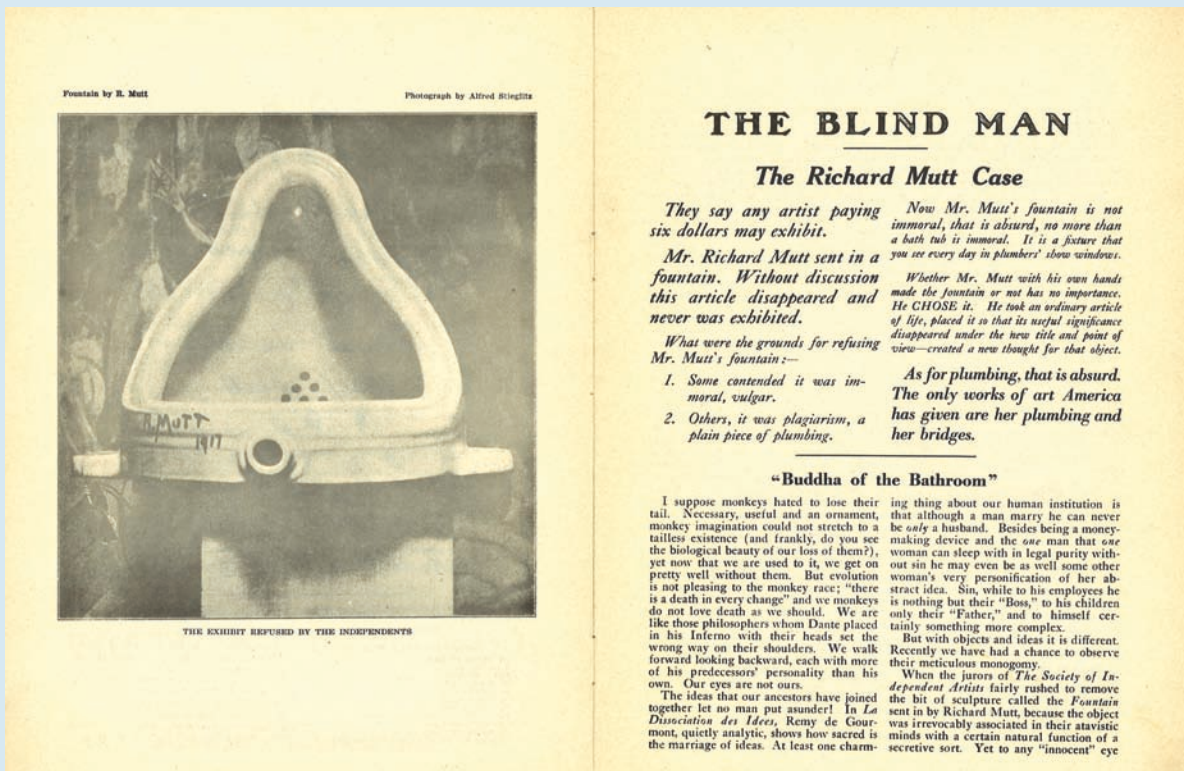
This split between surrealism and magic realism turned people against surrealism. For example, there has been controversy over Frida Kahlo, who at one point was definitely a surrealist and included among the surrealists, but who later said that she had never been one. So people latched onto that and said, 'You see, she was appropriated by the surrealists. She was really Mexican'. It is a game with names, which is a bit crazy.

You have had a particular interest in Salvador Dalí and Marcel Duchamp. And you brought them together in the recent Dalí/Duchamp exhibition at the Royal Academy.³

I had written quite a lot about both artists previously – Dalí in particular. That goes back to going to see him in Spain. Being a student and not knowing any better, I went and knocked on his

2. Dawn Adès, 'Surrealism and its Legacies in Latin America' (British Academy Lecture 2009), *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 167, 393-422.

3. The *Dalí/Duchamp* exhibition was held at the Royal Academy, 7 October 2017-3 January 2018.



Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* is perhaps the most iconic of his 'readymades'. He arranged for a porcelain urinal with the pseudonym R. Mutt to be submitted to the first Independents Exhibition in New York in 1917. When the object was refused by the committee, he retrieved it and took it to be photographed by Alfred Steiglitz for the second (and final) issue of *The Blind Man*, the magazine Duchamp produced with his friends Henri-Pierre Roché and Beatrice Wood. At this stage Duchamp's identity as perpetrator was still not publicly known; the article expressing outrage at Fountain's rejection, 'The Richard Mutt Case', unsigned, was the only published justification of the readymade: 'Whether Mr. Mutt with his own hands made the fountain or not has no importance. He CHOSE it.'

door. I had a couple of days of really interesting conversations with him in his studio. He was amused by the fact that I was this young English girl writing a thesis about surrealism, who had never heard of Georges Bataille. So he lectured me about surrealism and Bataille: 'You've got to read Bataille. Bataille is an absolutely key person here.' He was very serious. He was completely different in the studio from his persona as a showman. He was very friendly, helpful, hugely intelligent and very knowledgeable – a wonderful guide to what I was beginning to study.

At some point after that, I found myself defending Dalí in a conversation with one of the editors at Thames & Hudson. Dalí did not have any defenders at the time in either the academic world or the art world. He was absolutely persona non grata. This was partly because he stayed in Spain during the Franco period. But it was also because he was not a modern artist – rather, he was revising

Renaissance techniques. He was regarded as a traitor both politically and aesthetically. I was arguing that one needed to have a more balanced view of him, so they said, 'OK, write a book about him' – so I did.⁴

I was also totally fascinated by Duchamp. I became interested in him when I taught about him for a term at Camberwell School of Arts in 1968. He died that autumn, in October 1968. The fact that he had actually still been working as an artist, not having told anyone for the last 30 years, was a bit of a shock to those who had assumed he had given up art altogether and turned to chess.

In your 1995 Aspects of Art Lecture,⁵ you said, 'Duchamp's influence is now so endemic that much 20th century art seems like a footnote to him.'

I still think that – even more now. He has been hugely influential. Duchamp's 'readymades' showed that you can take something out of the ordinary

4. Dawn Adès, *Salvador Dalí* (1982; revised edition 1990).

5. Dawn Adès, 'Marcel Duchamp and the Paradox of Modernity' (Aspects of Art Lecture 1995), *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 90, 129–145.

world, and turn it into something else, give it a different thought and create a new life for it. Look at much of the art that is around at the moment. It is using ready-made things, chosen things, found things from the street. This is a shift into a conceptual mode, where the idea is more important than the object, or the idea is materialised so that the conceptual becomes material. There are other sources for this as well, but Duchamp is the key one – as I tried to illustrate in the recent Royal Academy exhibition.

In that Royal Academy exhibition, you assembled an extraordinarily impressive range of materials – posters, magazines, found objects, film and photography, as well as paintings and installations.

I wanted to have all the possible mediums in which they worked. In many cases, Duchamp actually invented new mediums. And I wanted all the different kinds of materials to be treated with the same degree of attention. The Royal Academy was very responsive to that, and did a great job.

Talk a bit about how an exhibition like that comes about. First of all, what is the interplay between scholarship and exhibition? An exhibition is obviously an opportunity to communicate scholarship, but presumably it is also an occasion to conduct scholarship.

Ideally, an exhibition is not just applying something you have been researching elsewhere; it should also provide the opportunity to do new research which will inform the exhibition. So the exhibition itself will make a new contribution.

There is a perceived divide between the museum art historian and the academic art historian working in a university. This may be slightly exaggerated, but it does exist. On the whole, the museum art historian has more to do with the material object itself, whereas the academic art historian has increasingly been turning towards theory of art, aesthetics and rather away from the object. I have been keen to retain my interest in the objects themselves. I have been extraordinarily fortunate in my career to be involved in several major exhibitions, quite often working as the outside curator for an institution like the Hayward Gallery or the Tate, where there would be an internal curator too. As an academic, I have had more opportunity to do research than the museum staff, who tend to have less time to follow up their own ideas. The whole curating world has changed since I started in art history. To my mind, being a curator is attendant upon having a scholarly interest in a particular area of art; it is not an activity independent of that – but that is a controversial view.

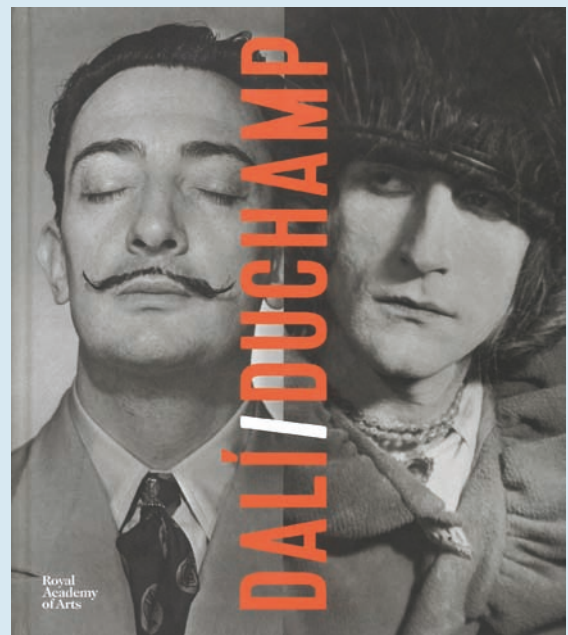
The first exhibition I was involved in was *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed* in 1978, as a very junior member of the team. I have been involved in many others since. Sometimes I have had the good luck to propose an exhibition that has been accepted; sometimes I have been invited to work on an exhibition.

The *Dalí/Duchamp* exhibition was definitely one that I wanted to do, and I have been developing it for 10 or 15 years, with the Salvador Dalí Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida. I genuinely believe it is an important exhibition in terms of what is going on now in contemporary art. Dalí and Duchamp both have a particular reputation, and people have prejudices for and against them, within and outside the art world. That is important, so we need to understand it.

In the shaping of an exhibition, you obviously have your concept, but you also have to assemble the materials to make it a reality.

Exhibitions are complicated things, and a lot depends on the host institution. Ideally, the host institution has a collection that you can use to bargain with. The Royal Academy does, though not in this area of art.

For a long time, this exhibition did not have a home. Tim Marlow, artistic director of the Royal Academy, happened to ask me what I was working on. I said that I was working on a Dalí/Duchamp exhibition, and that, while there was a home for it in the United States, it didn't yet have one in Europe. He said, 'We'll do it.'



The *Dalí/Duchamp* exhibition was held at the Royal Academy, in late 2017. The photograph of Salvador Dalí is by Horst P. Horst (1943). The photograph of Marcel Duchamp (as Rose Sélavy) is by Man Ray (1921).

That gave us nearly three years lead-in for the exhibition. That is when the loan request lists have to be drawn up. That is when you start visiting all the places that have works that you want to borrow. It is a lengthy process. You write the loan letter, explaining why you need exactly that precise work because, without it, the whole argument of the exhibition will collapse. In the *Dalí/Duchamp* exhibition, there was no fat: everything had a role to play. Then you start the negotiations. You have a rough idea of how successful you are going to be. For some exhibitions, you assume you will only get 60 per cent of the works that you have asked for. Sometimes you get nearer 100 per cent. We were incredibly lucky with *Dalí/Duchamp*, we got pretty much everything – it was wonderful.

We got the 1936 *Bottle Rack*, which is as near to an original Duchamp readymade as you can get. It belongs to someone within the surrealists' milieu. He said, 'I will only lend it to you if you (a) have it outside a case, and (b) hang it from the ceiling.' That was an unusual and wonderful thing for an owner of a major work to say.

Were you pleased with the way the *Dalí/Duchamp* exhibition came out?

I was extremely pleased.

It was arranged thematically rather than chronologically. One room set the scene, establishing when, where and how they met, and their early experiences in relation to the current major movements in modern art, with which they both fell out for one reason or another.

Then there was a room on eroticism and the object. I hope that brought the readymade into a slightly different relationship with its successors and the notion of the body.

In the third room, which was the most difficult, I wanted to address their mutual and slightly different interest in science and religion. Duchamp was less interested in religion, but was always aware of the possible uses of Christian iconography; Dalí of course wanted to be a believer and was not. But they were also both extremely interested in science. In different ways, Darwin, Einstein, Freud and Marx were all fascinated by invisible powers, things that you cannot see on the surface, and I was interested in how the question of representing invisible things impacted on these two artists in the 20th century. I also looked at very practical aspects like the way they both used perspective, the way they were interested in systems of measurement and optical illusions. I tried to bring all these things together in one room.

What the Royal Academy exhibition revealed was the great friendship between Salvador Dalí and Marcel Duchamp.

It is fascinating, and it is something that Duchamp's followers in the late 1950s and '60s found extremely difficult to understand – they thought it was really weird. John Cage would turn up in Cadaques and Duchamp would say, 'Come and have dinner with Dalí'; and Cage would say, 'No, I don't want to meet him.' There was this great prejudice against Dalí.

But it was a real friendship between them. They were both extremely individualist and very sceptical of the world, and neither was prepared to commit to any group or movement. Both had a great sense of humour, and both were very interested in the erotic. So they had things that brought them together, and Duchamp defended Dalí against various attacks by the surrealists.

Also, Duchamp wasn't bothered about Franco. Other people would not go to Spain in the 1950s – Picasso refused to set foot in Spain until Franco had gone. But Duchamp blithely went there for his summers, from 1958 to 1968. He was just not prepared to allow anything that he regarded as external to his concerns to influence what he did.

Dalí and Duchamp both have a particular reputation, and people have prejudices for and against them. That is important, so we need to understand it.

The British Academy has its own collection of artworks adorning its premises in Carlton House Terrace. You have been

on the Academy's Pictures Committee since 2003, and have chaired it since 2012. How do you select pieces to fit a working building with 19th- and early 20th-century interiors?

Thanks to one member of our Pictures Committee, Peter Funnell of the National Portrait Gallery, we have borrowed some major portraits like Jeremy Bentham and Nelson, for the Council Room. This involved a degree of expense, because we had to pay to have some conservation work and glazing done before they could be loaned to us for hanging in a busy function room.

Our overall approach is to show work by British artists. Many of the pieces that you see on the walls are generous loans from artists. Some, like Liz Rideal, Alison Wilding and Phil Allen, are artists who have previously benefited from the scholarships at the British School at Rome – which is one of the Academy-supported British International Research Institutes.

We have also benefited from bequests, in particular the wonderful collection of post-war abstract British art assembled by Ray Pahl, a former Fellow of the British Academy. That

bequest gave a great boost to the whole notion of the Academy having its own art collection.

We have only a small acquisition budget, which does not really allow us to acquire anything more than prints. My predecessor in this role, Professor Michael Kauffman FBA, a former Director of the Courtauld, had also been head of prints at the V&A, so was able to bring his knowledge of print-making by British artists such as Joe Tilson, Bernard Cohen, Albert Irvin and Michael Craig-Martin.

We want to keep the collection varied. And we also want to include different mediums, in particular pottery and textiles. Thanks to Sir Nicholas Goodison, a member of the committee, we now have a dazzling collection of ceramics. And for the alcoves over the staircase in No. 11 Carlton House Terrace, we recently commissioned from Michelle House two marvellous new wall hangings, which cleverly reference the architectural details. ■

Dawn Adès was interviewed by James Rivington.



Michelle House's design for the two wall hangings was informed by their location in the Gallery of No. 11 Carlton House Terrace. Shapes were inspired by the curve of the staircase and the wooden flooring below. Imagery was drawn from the library and architectural details such as the skylight. Michelle also referenced the surrounding artwork in her choice of colours and motifs, in particular you can see the influence of Terry Frost's *Black Sun*, Newlyn. Also pictured on the ledge is Adam Buick's ceramic *Moon Jar*. Buick is profoundly inspired by the pure form of Korean moon jars to which he adds glaze, texture and material informed by the landscape in Pembrokeshire.

Language learning and diversity in society

Margaret Snowling draws on her study of language-learning difficulties to offer some suggestions for promoting diversity in society.



Margaret (Maggie) Snowling is President, St John's College, Oxford. She was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2009.

Diversity is something I think about frequently. It is a word that we hear a lot in the media. And it is a topic that brings together my research interests and my current role in higher education and as head of a college.

I have often heard it said that 'diversity means quality'. When I reflect on this statement and what it means to me, I think that diversity implies taking into account different perspectives, and sometimes moving outside of your comfort zone; understanding the perspective of a different culture, or possibly even a different part of society, and working across different disciplines. Being open to diver-

sity is greatly enriching: it enhances our knowledge and leads to personal growth. In fact, embracing diversity requires 'openness to experience', and this is a personality trait that is predictive of personal success; perhaps it also can determine the success of an institution?

Dyslexia

It seems, when I reflect, that I have been working on diversity all my career, although I have never actually thought of it in those terms. My research has mainly been on dyslexia, a specific learning difficulty characterised by a problem in learning to read fluently and to spell. In the last 50 years, we have learnt a lot about the causes

of dyslexia. We now know that it is a heritable disorder; it is associated with the influence of many genes; and the genetic effects are realised in brain differences, in how responsive the brain is to formal or even informal reading instruction. At the cognitive level, which is where my work has focused, we know that dyslexia is associated with a specific difficulty in dealing with the speech sounds of spoken words. But why should such a difficulty affect learning to read? The reason lies in our writing systems, which require us to make connections between spoken words and written words. In English and all alphabetic languages, those connections, or mappings, are at the level of the very small speech sound or phoneme.

We also know about interventions that ameliorate dyslexia. These tend to build on our theoretical models which lead us to intervene at the level of phonological or speech sound awareness. These interventions help children to understand how speech is segmented into sounds and how those sounds tie up to letters. This, in turn, helps them to crack the 'alphabetic code'. If a child cannot do that at the right time, problems with decoding ensue.

Given how specific dyslexia is, you would think that education would be able to embrace it readily and make accommodation for it. Unfortunately, for too many children, this is still not the case – they are missed by the educational system and done a great disservice. If dyslexia is not identified and supported, this leads children to be frustrated, demotivated, demoralised, and ultimately

disengaged. Then there is a downward spiral of poor educational attainment, limited career opportunities and, in the worst-case scenario, poor adult well-being.

There is really no excuse within a diverse society not to allow for differences in learning, such as those that are apparent in dyslexia. These days, in contrast to 50 years ago, there is a whole raft of technologies that can help people with dyslexia, ranging from the longstanding spellcheckers, through to text recognition systems that read to you, and voice recognition software to enable dictation. I think it falls to our education system to invest in academic support and compensatory devices such as these. In addition, there is a need to encourage individuals with dyslexia to thrive in other domains where they have potential, be that music, sport, art, or scholarly endeavours that do not rely so heavily upon literacy, such as maths, physics and computer science, where abstract thinking is much more important than reading.

Language

More recently, I have become very interested in language as a foundation for education and learning. Promoting language is really important, not just nationally but globally, and in developing education systems. Children who come to school with language difficulties, like children with dyslexia, do very poorly in the education stakes. It is well known that there is a social gradient for language from the very early years. By the age of 3, children in under-privileged circumstances are hearing many fewer words per hour than children from middle-class homes. This quickly translates into an achievement gap when children go to school, precisely because literacy builds on language. Language is particularly important for reading comprehension – that is, if we are to read with understanding and read to learn. Of course, these difficulties are compounded in a diverse society where many children are learning to read in a language that is not their home language.

There is far too much of what might be called a blame culture. I have heard it said: ‘... these mums, they are on their mobile phones and they are not talking to their kids.’ Frankly, this is a nonsensical explanation for children’s language difficulties. Language difficulties, like dyslexia, are heritable. What these commentators fail to grasp is that the parents who are not talking to their children may themselves have poor language. They almost certainly have poor education. It is really important that we do not let processes of intergenerational disadvantage move from them to their children.

Right now, most children in England are receiving a good diet of phonics in schools. Policy-makers like phonics: it is an easy-to-implement and effective approach, and it is easy to measure progress. However, if children are to read to learn, they need language. Language brings knowledge of the world to the task of reading. This kind of cultural capital is important for

social mobility. We need policy-makers, to grasp that language is a right but not always a given. Parents who have children with language difficulties do not need criticism; they need support and they need advocacy for their children. They can improve their own language and they can help their children improve theirs.

For the past 12 years, we have been working on language interventions and looking at the efficacy of implementing these in mainstream schools. Beginning with a theory of what is needed for reading comprehension, we train teaching assistants and support them to deliver work on vocabulary, listening comprehension and narrative skills. After running robust evaluations, we know that this kind of intervention works. It works in the early years, and we also know that versions of it can be delivered by parents who are carefully supported through community centres and other organisations.

Language is important for reading comprehension – if we are to read with understanding and read to learn.

Diversity and identity in society

Finally, I am concerned with diversity and identity in society. In public life, we still hear that there is a lack of diversity, be it in the boardroom, the legal profession, academia or elsewhere. Clearly, for there to be diversity at these levels, education is vital, and tranches of society are locked out because of lack of opportunity: the differences between the ‘haves’, if you like, and the ‘have nots’ – terminology for those who are socially mobile or not.

Highly selective universities, which tend to produce the leaders in public life, continue to be criticised for a lack of diversity. I know, because I work in one. However, I am absolutely confident that so-called ‘elite’ universities are doing all they can to encourage applications from children from backgrounds where progression to such institutions is not typical. What this requires, however, is not only a massive effort but also massive resource. There is a lot further to go, but we are going in the right direction. What we cannot put right are the social inequalities that lead society to have far fewer 17-year-olds from under-privileged backgrounds who have the knowledge, qualifications and cultural capital to access higher education, and hence to be upwardly mobile. I think it falls to us all to encourage aspiration, to offer support, to provide the right learning opportunities to give children confidence to make ambitious plans. It is only then that we will be able to close the gap between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots’. This is not just a national priority, it is a global issue, and it needs to be addressed if we are fully to embrace equality and diversity. ■

This article is taken from Maggie Snowling’s contribution to the December 2017 edition of ‘From Our Fellows’, a regular podcast in which Fellows of the British Academy offer brief reflections on what is currently interesting them (www.britishacademy.ac.uk/from-our-fellows).

Should we ban dangerous speech?

Jeffrey Howard thinks through the arguments.

The problem

On 17 June 2015, a twenty-one-year-old named Dylann Roof walked into the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, one of the oldest black churches in the American south. After sitting in on the evening bible study for an hour, he unsheathed his .45 calibre Glock handgun and opened fire on the parishioners, killing nine of them.

According to a manifesto discovered by police that Roof wrote prior to the attack, his motivation was to ignite a race war between whites and blacks. It is difficult to say with confidence who or what first inspired him to become a white supremacist, but the manifesto points to one important influence: a website run by an organisation called the Council of Conservative Citizens. The website documented crimes committed by black Americans against white Americans, reinforcing stereotypes that black people are inherently dangerous. It defended segregation, urging readers to 'oppose all efforts to mix the races of mankind'. And its imagery glorified the days of the short-lived Confederate States of America, where slavery was legal.¹

For all we know, had Roof not encountered that website and others like it,

he would not have come to acquire his hateful views. For all we know, had he never been exposed to incendiary messages of hate online, those nine parishioners from Charleston would still be alive. So why was the Council of Conservative Citizens legally allowed to publish such vitriolic, dangerous material? Why was Roof legally allowed to access it?

A stand-off

Consider the fact that websites that spread hate are broadly prohibited in most of the western world. *Hate speech* refers to expression that maligns members of marginalised and vulnerable groups, and it is a criminal offence in many democratic societies. Predictably, different jurisdictions define it in different ways. Canada bans expression that incites 'hatred against any identifiable group where such incitement is likely to lead to a breach of the peace'.² Germany bans speech that impugns 'the human dignity of others by insulting, maliciously maligning or defaming segments of the population'.³ And the United Kingdom bans 'threatening, abusive or insulting words' that 'stir up racial hatred'.⁴ Regardless of these important definitional differences, in any of these jurisdictions, those who publish online content advocating white supremacy can face criminal prosecution.

The United States of America, in contrast, refuses to ban hate speech. The explanation lies in a 1969 case



Dr Jeffrey Howard is a Lecturer in Political Theory at University College London.

1. Roof's manifesto is cited in David A. Graham, 'The White-Supremacist Group that Inspired a Racist Manifesto', *The Atlantic*, 22 June 2015.
2. Canadian Criminal Code (R.S.C., 1985, c. C-46).
3. German Criminal Code, Special Part, Ch. 7, Section 130.
4. Public Order Act 1986, revised by Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 to incorporate incitement to religious hatred.

before the US Supreme Court called *Brandenburg v. Ohio*.⁵ That case concerned the leader of a local chapter of the Ku Klux Klan, Clarence Brandenburg, who organised a televised rally in which speakers advocated violence against black Americans and Jews. He was arrested by police for violating an Ohio law that banned advocacy of violent crime, but he protested that this law violated his rights under the First Amendment to US Constitution. The US Supreme Court agreed with Brandenburg. By stopping him and his associates from preaching racist violence, the police violated their constitutional rights to *freedom of speech*. The Court reasoned that so long as incendiary speech is not likely to trigger an *imminent* violation of the law – so long, in other words, as there is time for people to reflect on the speech, or even argue against it – it must be allowed, no matter how repugnant it is.

That, in a nutshell, is why the Council of Conservative Citizens was allowed to incite racial hatred online, and why Roof was able to access such hateful content. And that raises a basic question: who is right? Do the Americans have it right in thinking that hate speech should be allowed? Or do the Europeans have it right in thinking that it should be banned?

Note that this stand-off is not restricted to the matter of hate speech. Speech that advocates terrorism also receives much more protection in the US than in other countries. For example, under the Terrorism Act of 2006, it is a crime in the UK to engage in speech that encourages terrorism – including speech that does so only implicitly, by ‘glorifying’ terrorist attacks.⁶ Such legislation would clearly be struck down as unconstitutional in the US, where speakers must be broadly free to advocate terrorism, and listeners free to listen to such advocacy. The stakes couldn’t be higher.

Free speech: the philosophical debate

We can use the term ‘dangerous speech’ to mark out speech that risks inspiring listeners to engage in criminal violence – be it the sort of speech we tend to call hate speech, which operates by fomenting hatred toward some particular group, or direct advocacy of violence, such as terrorism.⁷ So our question can be put like this: should dangerous speech be banned, or is protected by the right to free speech?

This is, at root, a question of political philosophy, which requires that we reflect on the moral princi-

ples that should guide the decisions of citizens and policy-makers. And unsurprisingly, political philosophers disagree about this question. But the vast majority of political philosophers writing on this question believe that dangerous speech *is* (with perhaps some exceptions) protected by the right to free speech. Here are just a few reasons that show up, in some form or another, in the contemporary debate:

1. A democracy is a society in which the citizens debate and decide the laws for themselves. To truly be a democracy, then, citizens must be free to discuss any idea, no matter how repugnant it may seem.⁸
2. Part of respecting people’s autonomy is letting them express who they are and what they think, even if we vehemently disapprove.⁹
3. Treating people as adults means letting them hear bad ideas, so that they can make up their minds for themselves.¹⁰
4. Laws restricting speech are counter-productive, antagonising citizens and forcing them underground, making them more dangerous.¹¹
5. It is dangerous to give the state the power to restrict dangerous speech, since it is likely to misuse that power (either by making mistakes about what is genuinely dangerous, or by abusing the power for political purposes).¹²
6. By permitting the expression of dangerous ideas, we are better able to defuse their danger by arguing against them.¹³

There are, to be sure, other reasons that scholars have offered to explain why freedom of speech should include dangerous expression (such as hate speech), but these are some of the most important arguments.

Three lessons

I don’t buy it. That is, I am not persuaded that dangerous speech is properly protected by the right to freedom of expression. In forthcoming work, I take these six arguments (and others) to task – explaining why some are mistaken, and putting others in their proper place. Rather than review the intricacies of my counter-arguments here, I want to sketch three broader lessons for how we should go about *thinking* about this debate. Even

5. *Brandenburg v. Ohio*, 395 U.S. 444 (1969).

6. UK Terrorism Act 2006, Section 1, Subsection (3).

7. For the terminology of ‘dangerous speech’, see Susan Benesch, ‘Dangerous Speech: A Proposal to Prevent Group Violence’ (World Policy Institute, 12 January 2012).

8. Eric Heinze, *Hate Speech and Democratic Citizenship* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

9. C. Edwin Baker, ‘Autonomy and Free Speech’, *Constitutional Commentary*, 27 (2011), 251–282.

10. T.M. Scanlon, ‘A Theory of Freedom of Expression’, *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 1 (1972), 204–226.

11. Nancy Rosenblum, *Membership and Morals: The Personal Uses of Pluralism in America* (Princeton University Press, 1998).

12. Geoffrey Stone, *Perilous Times: Free Speech in Wartime* (W.W. Norton, & Company, 2014).

13. For the origin of this idea, see the concurring opinion of Judge Louis Brandeis in *Whitney v. California*, 274 U.S. 357 (1927).



Photographs of the nine victims killed at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, are held up during a prayer vigil in Washington DC on 19 June 2015. PHOTO: WIN MCNAMEE/GETTY IMAGES.

those who disagree with my substantive conclusions, I hope, should find these lessons congenial.

First: *focus on duties, not just on rights*. So much ink is spilled on why those who preach hatred or violence might have a moral right to do so, that very little attention has been given to the matter of whether they have a moral duty *not* to do so. To my mind, it is obvious that people have moral duties not to preach hatred and violence. In the absence of a compelling reason, we owe it to innocent people not to engage in speech that risks inspiring others to harm them. So those who think we have a moral right to engage in dangerous speech need to explain how this squares with the conviction that there is a moral duty *not* to do so. One way to do that is to argue that the moral duty in question should not be enforced by law (for whatever reason). Refocusing the debate around that much more specific question would itself be welcome progress.

Second: *distinguish between moral and legal rights*. To say that someone has a *moral* right to do something implies that we would seriously wrong him by preventing him from doing it. To say that someone has a *legal* right to do something, in contrast, simply means that the law of the land protects his choice to do it or not. This distinction matters. For example, some people think that dangerous speech shouldn't be banned because it gives the state too much power. It follows from this view that the legal right to free speech ought to include dangerous expression, to guard against government abuse. But this is totally consistent with the distinct thought that citizens have no *moral* right to preach hatred and violence; *they* would not be wronged if a trustworthy government preventing them from doing so. Failing to distinguish

between moral and legal rights leads to philosophers talking past each other.

Third: *distinguish considerations of principle from considerations of strategy*. One of the central features of the American position on dangerous speech is its insistence that we should respond to dangerous speech by arguing against it, not by banning it. It may well be that counter-speech, rather than criminalisation, is a more effective strategy. But it is important to see that one can endorse this claim while still insisting that the moral right to free speech does not include dangerous speech. Crucially, one can insist that dangerous speech is not morally protected while simultaneously *condemning* efforts to criminalise dangerous speech. The deep questions of moral principle leave open the issue of what the appropriate strategy is.

That last insight points the way forward. Even if we disagree about whether dangerous speech is or is not protected by the moral right to free speech, we can nevertheless agree that criminalisation is an ineffective strategy. This insight is lost on most scholars engaged in the contemporary debate, but it opens up the possibility of an engaging research agenda on counter-speech. What are the most effective ways of combatting dangerous ideas – in the streets and online? Who, in particular, should be expected to do what? And how can the state create the conditions for effective counter-speech? It is these questions, I hope, on which scholars of free speech will concentrate in the decade ahead. ■

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The peculiar practices of 'authoritarian emigration states'

Gerasimos Tsourapas alerts us to how non-democratic states behave towards their own citizens living abroad.



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A phenomenon on the rise

The attempted murder of Russian former military intelligence officer Sergei Skripal and his daughter in Salisbury on 4 March 2018 brings to light an under-explored dimension of world politics, namely non-democracies' outreach to citizens beyond their territorial borders. The workings of *authoritarian emigration states* are not unknown to Western liberal democracies – Russia under Vladimir Putin appears implicated not only in the case of the Skripal family, but also in the 2013 death of political exile Boris Berezovsky, and the 2006 poisoning of former secret service agent Alexander Litvinenko by radioactive polonium-210. In France and Belgium, Tunisian and Moroccan embassies have carefully monitored the activities of their expatriate communities and report any suspicious activity to their governments back home since the 1960s. Other states' engagement with emigration seems to fly under the radar but remains undoubtedly political: aiming to project a 'Turkish Islam abroad', Ankara now dispatches religious scholars via the Directorate of Religious Affairs, or the *Dinayet*, to some 2,000 mosques abroad each year. Since the 1959 Cuban Revolution, Havana has offered paid opportunities for its medical professionals – physicians, dentists, nurses – to work across Latin America, the Middle East,

and sub-Saharan Africa. As authoritarian states devise new modes of projecting power abroad via emigration, two questions emerge: why do such practices appear to be part and parcel of everyday politics around the world, and how can we make sense of them?

Part of the answer to the rise of authoritarian emigration states lies in the changes brought about by globalisation. A range of forces contribute to the rise of cross-border mobility, from decreasing transportation costs to global economic interdependence or, merely, the pursuit of a better future beyond one's own country. As the economies of democracies and non-democracies alike become more outward-facing, networks of people create connections across sending, transit, and host states. In this sense, authoritarian states attempt to reach out beyond their territorial borders just as democracies themselves do: many countries now offer state-sponsored celebrations or language lessons for expatriates' families, while others have extended voting rights to citizens living abroad. Given the growing number of French citizens living abroad, for instance, the French government has allowed expatriates to elect their own representatives to the National Assembly since 2010. In fact, partly as a result of global interconnectedness, a growing number of states develop institutions that specifically target their 'diasporas' – a complex term that may refer to a state's citizens abroad and their descendants, but also to broader groups of people that maintain a sense of connection to a homeland, be it real or imagined.

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Contending with the 'illiberal paradox'

Yet, globalisation only partly explains the rise of authoritarian emigration states. What has changed over time, is non-democracies' attitude towards cross-border mobility, and the decision to embrace their citizens' emigration as an asset rather than a liability. Historically, restricting emigration was the norm rather than the exception for the vast majority of authoritarian states that were eager to maintain full control over their citizens. The apprehension with which non-democracies approached emigration is best exemplified in the German Democratic Republic's 1961 decision to construct the Berlin Wall, thereby putting an end to massive emigration and defection into West Germany. Similar restrictions to cross-border mobility existed across the Middle East, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Asia, as well as in Latin America. For much of the 20th century, Soviet citizens seeking to emigrate had to go through cumbersome processes to secure an exit visa. The majority of applicants were refused such permission and were labelled as 'refuseniks', subject to constant harassment and varied forms of discrimination. In Cuba, simply talking about unauthorised travel abroad carried a six-month prison sentence until 2013. To grant freedom of movement to all citizens was a political risk that authoritarian states were not willing to take.

Even today, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea considers unauthorised emigration a form of defection and pursues a 'shoot to kill' policy for citizens attempting to cross its borders. Surviving would-be migrants face torture and forced labour in 're-education camps'.

Gradually, however, most authoritarian states came to realise that the political benefits of maintaining tight control over their citizens comes at a high price. Strict border controls constituted an increasingly costly process that prevented access to the material benefits of emigration, including education and training opportunities abroad, the easing of unemployment pressures and, most immediately, access to migrants' remittances in the form of money and care packages dispatched to family members left behind. Therein lies the *illiberal paradox* of authoritarian emigration states: on the one hand, non-democracies seek to restrict emigration for political and security reasons in order to suppress dissent and ensure control over their citizens' lives as thoroughly as possible; on the other hand, they wish to encourage emigration for economic reasons in order to attract remittances and other material benefits associated with cross-border mobility.

As many authoritarian states eased emigration controls over the latter half of the 20th century, it seemed



A 'hazardous materials' team prepares to investigate the home of assassination target Sergei Skripal. This incident in March 2018 represents an extreme example of how authoritarian emigration states deal with their citizens who live abroad. PHOTO: PETER NICHOLLS/REUTERS.

that economic needs had marginalised any political concerns: from the 1970s onwards, oil-rich countries in the Middle East – such as Libya and Saudi Arabia – started encouraging student emigration to Western Europe and North America. There was a distinct material rationale behind this, as governments were hoping that such forms of mobility would lead to the development of a local, educated elite. Poorer Arab states, such as Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco lifted all restrictions to emigration in the hope of increasing the influx of capital inflows via remittances, as millions of workers flocked to Europe and the Gulf states. In the People's Republic of China, Deng Xiaoping's espousal of economic liberalisation in the 1970s led to the embrace of labour emigration as part and parcel of the state's developmental strategy. In Europe, Turkish workers profited from labour agreements between Ankara and various European states to resettle in West Germany, the Netherlands, and elsewhere as guest workers, or 'Gastarbeiter', until the early 1970s.

Projecting authoritarianism abroad: hard and soft power dynamics

Did the liberalisation of emigration contribute to the weakening of non-democratic rule? Not quite. Authoritarian emigration states resolved the illiberal paradox not by abandoning their goal of political control, but by developing complex forms of transnational authoritarianism. One type of transnational authoritarianism is the use of aggression, or hard power, towards a state's migrant and diaspora communities: targeted assassinations of Russian political defectors abroad, for instance, is one such example. In September 2017, the murder of Syrian opposition activist Orouba Barakat and her journalist daughter in Istanbul was attributed to the long arm of the Assad regime. Under the rule of Colonel Gaddafi in Libya, a political envoy in London named Musa Kusa was tasked with identifying and eliminating Libyan opposition figures in the United Kingdom – Kusa's zeal earned him the nickname *mab'ūth al-marwt* ('the envoy of death'). Such forms of projecting hard power abroad, or what academic Dana Moss terms 'transnational repression', also include the surveillance of migrants' activity abroad, forced extradition requests or, in more extreme cases, migrants' de-nationalisation: Tunisia has, at multiple times over the years, stripped political dissenters – particularly members of the Islamist Ennahda Movement – of their citizenship while abroad, barring them from returning to the country. Often, therefore, an authoritarian state does not relinquish control over their citizens' lives once they have emigrated; it merely revises the ways it exerts power over them.

But transnational authoritarianism does not necessarily involve acts of aggression or violence, for it may also attempt to use migrant communities as an instrument of co-optation or, according to Joseph Nye's term, 'soft power'. The rise of China as a global power cannot be disassociated from '*wenhua ruan shili*', or the cultural soft power it pursues in a number of ways, including

the dispatch of Chinese teachers to over 500 Confucius Institutes across the world. Under Fidel Castro, Cuba's 'medical internationalism' project tasked medical professionals with carrying the torch of the revolution in other parts of the Global South. In the Middle East, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser developed an extensive programme of dispatching thousands of Egyptian teachers across the Arab world, aiming to spread ideas of anti-colonialism, anti-Zionism, and Arab unity. More recently, the Iranian-Saudi competition over regional hegemony also includes a transnational dimension of efforts at exerting religious influence beyond the two states' borders, in a manner reminiscent of Turkey's ongoing *Dinayet* practices. These practices suggest a less harsh type of transnational authoritarianism: in addition to extending control over potential political dissenters beyond their territorial borders, authoritarian emigration states employ loyal subjects abroad for soft power purposes.

Authoritarian power beyond state borders

What will the impact of authoritarian emigration states be in the future? The attempted assassination of Sergei Skripal in March 2018 has highlighted the extent to which the rise of international migration has affected the workings of authoritarianism in world politics. But beyond a novel set of practices aimed at the projection of hard and soft power abroad, we can see how authoritarian emigration states are learning from each other's practices as they continue to develop novel forms of projecting power beyond their borders. In fact, a degree of policy diffusion is evident. Russian strategies aimed at deterring dissent in the diaspora appear to expand upon mechanisms that have already been employed by the Libyan state in the past. And, beyond the use of coercion, Chinese soft power strategies abroad build on lessons learned from similar practices by Egyptian and Cuban elites.

At the same time, a rising question remains unanswered, namely how should liberal democratic states and their citizens respond to the peculiar practices of authoritarian emigration states? Do liberal democracies choose tight border controls and embrace illiberal policies – as when the Netherlands barred Turkish ministers from speaking at political rallies in Rotterdam in March 2017? Others have suggested that liberal democracies need to re-evaluate their foreign policy – in Britain, some demand an examination of our relationship with Moscow, as they had also done with regard to London's ties with the Gaddafi regime in the past. Regardless of immediate policy responses, the emergence and empowerment of authoritarian emigration states contributes to new forms of everyday politics around the world that we are only now beginning to comprehend. ■

Dr Gerasimos Tsourapas holds a British Academy/Leverhulme Small Research Grant in order to conduct research on the politics of forced migration in the Mediterranean.

Ten years after the nationalisation of Northern Rock

John Kay reminds us of how the financial crisis unfolded 10 years ago.



Professor John Kay is one of Britain's leading economists. He has been a Fellow of St John's College, Oxford since 1970, and he was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1997.

On 22 February 2008, the British government nationalised Northern Rock, a mortgage lender which a few years earlier had taken advantage of deregulation to transform its status from building society to bank. Northern Rock was an early victim of the global financial crisis which began in August 2007 with the failure of some hedge funds sponsored by the French bank Société Générale. A run on Northern Rock took place the following month – the queues formed outside branches as savers hoped to recover their money while there was still some left, a run which was only stopped when the government stepped in to guarantee deposits.

Northern Rock's principal problem

Northern Rock's principal problem, oddly enough, was not the poor quality of its lending, although the bank had been aggressive in promoting mortgages to people with little or no money of their own to contribute to the purchase. The issue was that the bank's funding strategy involved packaging mortgages to sell on to other banks – a process known as securitisation. When buyers be-

latedly became sceptical about the value of such securities, especially those based on subprime mortgages in the United States, the securitisation market simply dried up, and Northern Rock was unable to refinance its operations.

The financial crisis deepens

The crisis deepened throughout 2008, culminating in September with the bankruptcy of Lehman Bros, and the failure of other US financial institutions. In October, the British government rescued HBOS and the Royal Bank of Scotland, two of Britain's five major banks.

The fundamental problem was that banks have become wide-ranging financial conglomerates, using their retail deposit base, effectively guaranteed by governments, as collateral for a wide range of trading activities. When, as at Northern Rock, these trading activities were unsuccessful, the day-to-day operation of the payment system on which economic and social life depends was jeopardised.

Policy responses to the financial crisis

The policy response to the events of 2008 has three main components. The most obvious, though hotly contested, remedy is to separate retail banking from other financial activities. In 1933 Congress passed the Glass Steagall



Customers queue to remove their savings from a branch of the Northern Rock bank in Birmingham, 15 September 2007. PHOTO: LEE JORDAN, WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

Act, which imposed such separation, but that legislation was gradually eroded by industry lobbying and finally repealed in 1999. The Volcker rule, introduced by the Obama administration attempted to restore that separation, but has been reduced to near insignificance by that same industry lobbying. Britain has gone furthest towards introducing a 'new Glass Steagall', and from 2019 UK banks are required to 'ring fence' their retail operations. How effective the separation will prove remains to be seen.

Increased capital requirements

The second element of response is increased capital requirements – the amount banks must hold in reserve against a rainy day. The Basel committee, which co-ordinates international bank regulation, has laboured long to develop new and somewhat more demanding rules. The trouble is that the amount of capital which an institution such as Deutsche Bank would need to support the scale of its activities is far greater than investors are willing to provide.

More effective liability on executives

The third possible response is to impose more effective liability on the very well-paid executives responsible for these disasters. The last major failure of a Scottish bank before the twin collapses of the Bank and Royal Bank of Scotland was the 1879 bankruptcy of the City of Glasgow bank, and within months of that event all of the directors were in jail. Outside Iceland, where some of the individuals involved in the collapse of that country's entire banking system went to prison, and Ireland where

prosecutions were brought but fizzled, only very junior employees have suffered criminal penalties following the events of 2008. Following a parliamentary report, financial services in Britain are now subject to a senior managers regime designed to assign personal responsibility. But, as with so much regulation, the outcome of this appears to be a great deal of paperwork and very little substance.

Will we repeat our mistakes?

So, are we safe? It is unlikely that there will be a straightforward repeat of the events of 2008. The regulatory changes will have some effect, and people rarely repeat the same mistakes immediately. But the underlying causes of financial crisis remain. Participants are gripped by some narrative – the expectation in the 1980s that Japan would rule the economic world, the claim in 1999 that there was 'a new economy', and the entirely false belief in the run up to 2008 that securitisation and better risk management enabled the risks of a far more complex management system to be effectively controlled. These exaggerated narratives give rise to bubbles which then burst, imposing, as at Northern Rock, burdens on people who are in no way involved.

And what is the equivalent narrative today? Look no further than the breathless articles on blockchain and cryptocurrencies which are landing on everyone's desks. ■

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Tackling modern slavery in modern business

Brad Blitz introduces a British Academy research programme that is investigating ways to combat exploitation in globalised production processes.

Three years ago the UK enacted the Modern Slavery Act. The legislation was greeted with much acclaim, not least because it covered a range of issues, including human trafficking and exploitation, and reaffirmed commitments and definitions as set out in the European

Convention on Human Rights. Specifically the Act prohibited the practices of slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour; sexual exploitation; organ removal; securing services by force, threats or deception; and securing services from children and vulnerable persons. Most important, the Act sought to have reach beyond the UK and requires companies with a turnover of at least £36 million to report annually on the steps they are taking to prevent slavery in their supply chains or any part of their business operations wherever they may be.

In many respects, the Act gave meaning to an evolving discourse that linked human rights, and children's rights, with social and economic rights. Until that point, the above abuses were covered by previously disparate areas of law and

policy regarding international and national prohibitions against trafficking, child labour and the regulation of labour practices in general. It also gave greater meaning to the longstanding idea of corporate social responsibility and affirmed that unethical production processes were a source of great social and potentially reputational harm. The Act further served to popularise the term 'modern slavery' which had more commonly been described in terms of 'contemporary slavery', with abuses reported as 'slavery-like' – in contrast to or in comparison

to the transatlantic slave trade. Rather, the term 'modern slavery' sought to identify a set of practices as a product of late 20th- and 21st-century globalisation.

Since the Modern Slavery Act was enacted, there has been a surge of activity among NGOs, including both campaigning groups and service providers. Of course, much activity pre-dated the Act and in fact the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking was originally founded as an anti-trafficking group in 2006 by former Conservative MP Anthony Steen. Yet, since 2015 there has been greater interest in a co-ordinated response. The APPG's National Advisory Forum now includes more than 70 organisations operating on a range of issues from assisting victims of trafficking, to delivering children's services, and campaigning for legal reform.

There has also been a noticeable shift at the international level. We recall that modern slavery has recently been defined in both the Global Compact on Migration and the UN's Sustainable Development Agenda, where again it sits alongside human trafficking, child labour, and forced labour, as set out in Sustainable Development Goal 8.7. While covering a vast range of policy areas, this SDG is both controversial and ground-breaking. We note that SDG 8.7 does not define child slavery directly, though it sets out an ambition to eliminate the 'worst forms of child labour' including the recruitment of child soldiers. This qualification reflects the challenge of committing states to the UN's modern slavery agenda, especially in the developing world, since many states claim the lines between child slavery and child labour are blurred and the employment of children is justified as an essential livelihoods strategy for poor families, with both boys and girls kept in a situation of bonded labour. Across South Asia, for example, children are engaged



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A group of Rohingya men push their fishing boat back onto shore. Most Rohingya men in the Shamlapur area of Bangladesh work as bonded laborers and are trapped into debt to local Bangladeshi boat owners. PHOTO ©GREG CONSTANTINE.

in key industries including working in textile production, brick kilns, carpet making, agriculture, fisheries, stone crushing, shoe-making, and refuse sorting, among other activities.¹

Yet one critical feature in the evolving discourse on modern slavery is the central role played by academics. While organisations like Anti-Slavery International trace their origins to the 19th century, and specifically campaigns against the transatlantic slave trade, academic research has influenced the ways in which we understand contemporary practices, which are remarkably distinct. Above all, Nottingham professor Kevin Bales' 1999 book *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy*² broke new ground when it exposed the ways in which globalised production processes across multiple sectors and a range of countries gave rise to situations of bonded labour. More recently, scholars like political scientist Genevieve LeBaron have further documented how such exploitative conditions have proliferated as a result of a global system that has failed to deliver, and instead has left the global workforce to endure a precarious existence based on informal and temporary contracts.

The mechanics and structures of the contemporary global economy create both a 'supply' of vulnerable workers and a business 'demand' for their labour.

On the supply side, the key dynamics include poverty, social discrimination, limited labour protection, and restrictive mobility regimes. These, both on their own and in interaction with each other, create a global workforce vulnerable to exploitation. On the demand side, what matters most is the concentration of wealth and ownership, the business models structuring supply chains, major firms' power to dictate the rules of global production, and the manifold governance gaps which make the business of exploitation not only viable but profitable.³

It is precisely academics' analysis of global process that has informed the ways in which we have come to understand how extreme forms of exploitation are enabled and encouraged; and equally how forced migration may give way to forced labour. Further criticism of systems of domination and their role in the construction of exploitation can be found in Julia O'Connell Davidson's 2015 book *Modern Slavery: The Margins of Freedom*,⁴ which provides a provocative insight into the nature of moral discourses on slavery and the relationship between poverty, coercion, and victimisation.

1. Eric V. Edmonds, *Child Labour in South Asia* (OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers No. 5, 20 May 2003). Priya Deshingkar and Shaheen Akter, *Migration and Human Development in India* (UNDP Human Development Research Paper 2009/13, April 2009).

2. Kevin Bales, *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy* (University of California Press, 1999).

3. Genevieve LeBaron, Neil Howard, Cameron Thibos and Penelope Kyrtisis, 'Confronting the root causes of forced labour: where do we go from here?' *OpenDemocracy*, 10 January 2018.

4. Julia O'Connell Davidson, *Modern Slavery: The Margins of Freedom* (Palgrave, 2015).

Although the above scholars are sometimes at odds with self-described abolitionists who they charge may simplify the nature of exploitative relationships, and hence the dynamics of modern slavery including the role of companies based in the Global North, there are some notable points of agreement. For example, the criticisms raised by Bales and LeBaron have been echoed by a parallel body of research on the nature of governance in developing country contexts by one of the foremost modern-day abolitionists, Gary Haugen. An experienced human rights lawyer and founder of the International Justice Mission, Haugen has put forward a simple thesis, based on his extensive first-hand experience across Africa, Asia and Latin America. Poverty is the root cause that draws people into systems of abuse and exploitation and it flourishes in situations of violence and lawlessness; hence the urgent need to reform justice systems.⁵

In a recent ESRC research project on the Mediterranean migrant and refugee 'crisis', I came to appreciate Haugen's argument and witnessed how migrants fleeing poverty and conflict could quickly fall prey to forced labour as my team recorded multiple interviews with sub-Saharan migrants who had transited via Libya. Although these men had initiated their journeys voluntarily, upon crossing into Libya more than half of them had found themselves enslaved and bound to particular employers for extended periods of time. The interaction between smugglers and organised criminal gangs that trafficked migrants for the purposes of forced labour was all too common and, as Haugen argues, this was enabled by the absence of law enforcement in a state gripped by multiple conflicts.

The value of contextual knowledge that informs our understanding of the ways in which people are recruited into situations of forced labour is further affirmed when one considers the design and limitations of the UK 2015 Modern Slavery Act. In spite of its ambitions and reporting requirements, a minority of companies have submitted modern slavery audits that detail how they are monitoring recruitment and production processes across their supply chains. What is more, in the absence of sanctions, there appears to be little disincentive against non-compliance. For this reason, the UK's Anti-Slavery Commissioner Kevin Hyland noted that, while it is possible to use existing legislation to prosecute those who engage in abusive practices in effect, the UK needs a 'change in culture' if it is to end modern slavery.⁶ Although some large companies, including the Co-operative,⁷ Unilever and the Thompson Reuters Foundation have made a concerted and public effort to root out slavery across their supply chains and networks,

they are the exceptions. Thus, not only do we need to investigate why firms are not following the reporting requirements of the Modern Slavery Act, it is equally advisable to identify alternative approaches to encourage businesses to root out extreme exploitation across their supply chains.

In this effort, the British Academy has recognised that it too has an important role to play as a major funding body that promotes cutting-edge social scientific research. In order to build capacity for further research and policy on viable approaches to end modern slavery, in November 2017 the Academy funded eight research projects as part of a new programme, 'Tackling Slavery, Human Trafficking and Child Labour in Modern Business'. While documenting the nature of production processes at close hand, the teams are investigating the relationship between UK companies and their suppliers in states that receive UK Official Development Assistance where the research is concentrated. It should be noted that this is a global programme funded by the Department for International Development with researchers operating across multiple sites in Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mexico, Myanmar, Nepal, Peru and Vietnam. One of the central questions the research teams are exploring is how to address the problem of sub-contracting, a feature of globalised production which complicates the task of tracing the production of goods, especially across complex supply networks, for example in the textiles industry.

Yet not all industries are the same, and collectively the research teams will produce a body of comparative research which informs our understanding of the ways in which modern slavery is constructed, and how different goods and commodities may lend themselves to more ethical production practices. Thus the research will focus on a range of sectors including cocoa and chocolate, beef, timber, seafood and textiles, and will investigate the nature of smart phone technology as well as the recruitment of workers in construction and domestic service. It will also consider the impact of domestic legislation on other abusive practices including sex trafficking.

As the UK's Modern Slavery Act reaches its third anniversary, and as the discourse on modern slavery enters the media mainstream, such research will be of even greater relevance to the British government which has committed itself to ending the human rights abuses associated with modern slavery. Such findings will no doubt also be welcome to the many millions of consumers demanding higher ethical standards in the production of goods and services, including the food they consume and the clothes they wear on their backs. ■

More information about this British Academy research programme can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/tackling-slavery-modern-business

5. Gary Haugen and Victor Boutros, *The Locust Effect: Why the End of Poverty Requires the End of Violence* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

6. Kieran Guilbert, 'Britain needs "change in culture" to stamp out modern slavery' (Thomson Reuters Foundation, 20 December 2017).

7. 'Co-op Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2016'.

Why anthropology matters

Tim Ingold talks to the British Academy Review about his new book, with its manifesto for a future anthropology.

***Anthropology: Why It Matters* is one of a new series of short books explaining the importance of different academic disciplines. Who is the book written for?**

It is a book for the coming generation. The future of human life will be in their hands, and anthropology, I argue, is a speculative and comparative inquiry into life's conditions and possibilities. The idea behind the book series as a whole is actually twofold. On the one hand, it is to demonstrate – for each and every field of the humanities – why it is not just a luxury but an indispensable companion in forging a world fit for future generations. On the other hand, it is to address young students, those to whom we will pass the torch of learning, to help them in their choice of vocation and encourage them in their endeavours. Combining both objectives within the space of a short text

was a challenge. Anthropology is not a discipline for the faint-hearted, and I was determined not to hide or to smooth over its complexities. But at the same time the text had to be accessible to readers

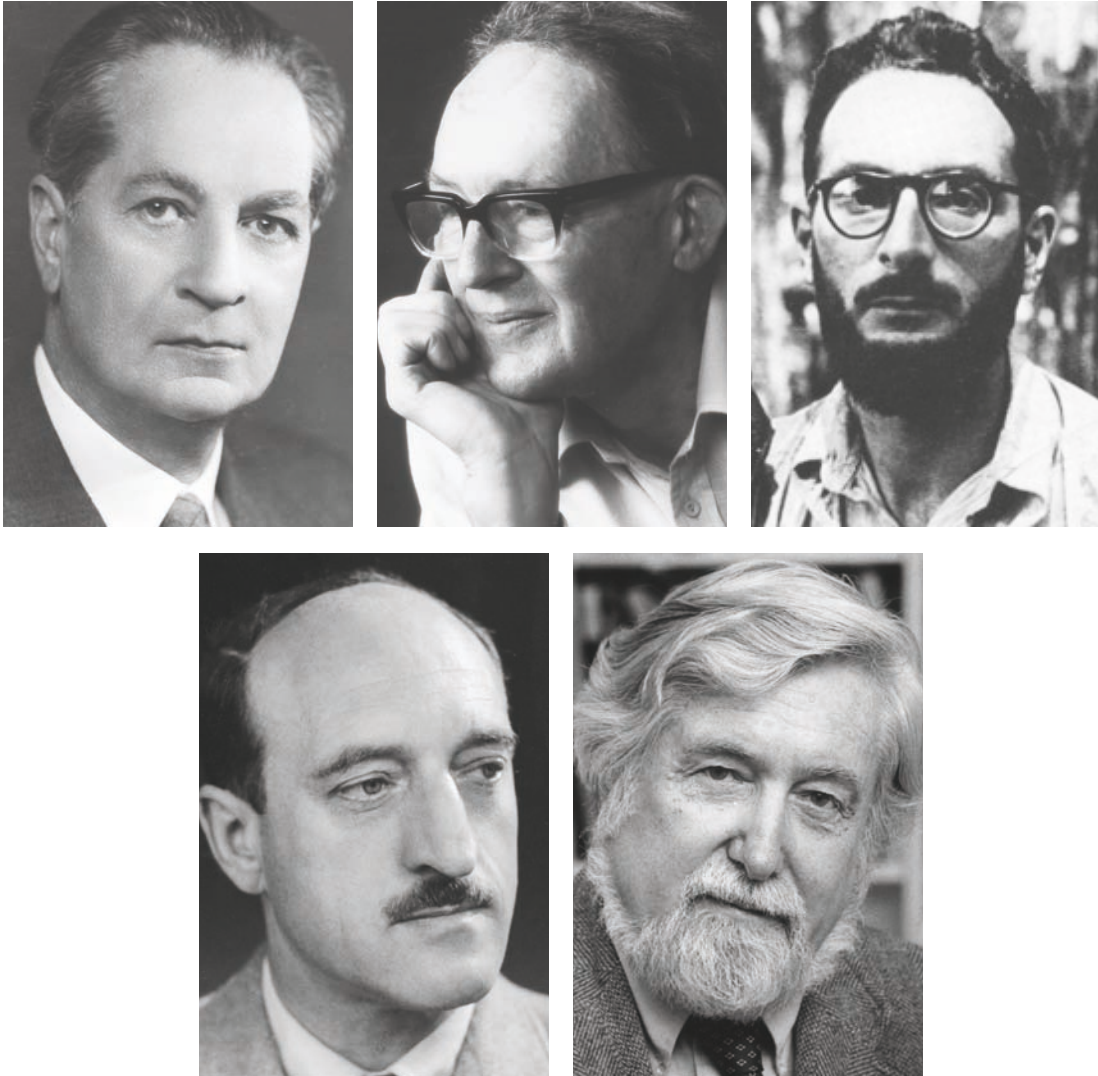
unfamiliar with its concepts and preoccupations. The book is not an introduction to the subject, in the sense of an overture to all its different fields and subfields. It is more in the nature of a manifesto, a call to arms, and an invitation to readers to join with us in the spirit of ongoing inquiry.

The book provides a clear account of how anthropology has developed as a discipline, and you bring this alive by revealing how you yourself, from an undergraduate onwards, reacted to the succession of theories and approaches that have competed with each other. How important was it to give the reader an idea of your own journey?

Anthropology, as I present it, is not a continent of knowledge, with defined borders, to be mapped out and explored. It is rather a conversation, a gathering of many voices – both of scholars and of the people among whom they study – each of which has different experiences to share and different things to say. Of these, my own voice is but one. I can only tell my own story; it is for others to tell theirs. That's why I acknowledge at the outset that what I present is a personal account, and that others, with their ears to the ground in other times and



Tim Ingold is Professor of Social Anthropology, University of Aberdeen. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1997.



Five Fellows of the British Academy who feature in the story of how anthropology has evolved as a discipline: top row, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown (1881–1955), Edmund Leach (1910–1989), Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908–2009); bottom row, Meyer Fortes (1906–1983), Clifford Geertz (1926–2006).

places, would undoubtedly tell it differently. That multiplicity is part of the richness of the discipline, and key to its vitality.

You argue that, to overcome one of the rifts of anthropology, we need to confront ‘the twin spectres of culture and race’, and that this will require ‘a revolution in the human sciences’. Can you elaborate?

My concern is that while racial science or ‘raciology’ has been comprehensively discredited, the principles that underpinned it have not, and that they are still at work, behind the scenes, in much ostensibly counter-racist thinking about human biological

and cultural variation. I refer to two principles in particular: inheritance and essentialism. The first holds that traits or characteristics that define the potentials of a life are passed on at the point of conception, independently in advance of that life, thus effectively short-circuiting the processes of ontogenetic development within which human capacities and dispositions actually take shape. The second remains embedded in appeals to universal human nature, to the idea that underlying all human variation is a baseline of attributes common to all. The fallacy of essentialism is to suppose that elements of a character specification, which can only

be arrived at through a process of abstraction and generalisation, are concretely preinstalled in human bodies and minds.

Race, then, is what you get if you compound inheritance with essentialism. It is still there when scientists speak of so-called modern humans as a subspecies of humankind, *Homo sapiens sapiens*. Nor will the substitution of 'culture' for 'race' solve the problem, when it is founded on precisely the same principles. If we think there are distinct cultures, whose essential elements are inherited by non-genetic means, we will continue to reproduce the idea of a distinct nature whose elements are genetically inherited. The only way to truly exorcise the twin spectres of race and culture, I argue, is to think of a world not of multiple and diverse essences but of manifold difference – difference that is not given in advance of every life but continually emergent in the life-course, as it unfolds within the field of its relations with others. Thus cultural differences *are* biological, in the sense that they arise within processes of development of human organisms within their ever-variable environments. And this, I contend, calls for a way of thinking about history and evolution that completely upends mainstream thinking.

As you spell out your vision for the future of anthropology, a recurring word in your book is 'conversation'. What different approach does this signify?

Indeed, I have already mentioned the conversation in answer to a previous question. Crucially, it requires us to think of anthropology as a way of studying *with* people, rather than of making studies *of* them. This is the key difference of approach. We go to study with people around the world just as we might go to study with great scholars in the university. For anthropology, the world is our university. We listen to what people are telling us: we engage with them, argue with them; perhaps we even disagree with them. But whether we agree with them or not, we have to take them seriously. You cannot have a proper conversation unless you take seriously what the other is saying. But this means listening to what they have to say, not for what it has to say about them. That's the way we learn. We learn *from* them, not just *about* them. This is what it means to undergo an anthropological education.

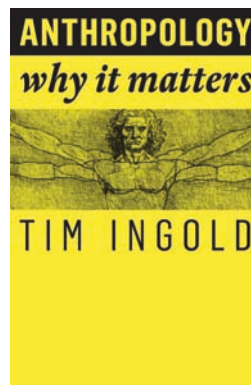
You say that 'At no previous time in history ... has so much knowledge been married to so little wisdom. It is the task of anthropology ... to restore the balance'. What do you mean by that?

First we need to distinguish between wisdom and knowledge. I do rather

object to the idea, put about by many of my colleagues, of 'anthropological knowledge production'. They worry a lot about what this knowledge is, how it is produced, and how anyone might recognise it when they see it. But I don't think anthropology should be about producing knowledge at all. We don't go to the world to collect our data, in order that it can be processed into knowledge products like books and articles. We go to learn, to undergo an education. And what we gain thereby is not so much knowledge as wisdom. These are different things. Knowledge aims to fix things within the concepts and categories of thought, to hold them to account. We often speak of arming ourselves with knowledge, using it to shore up our defences so that we can better cope with adversity. It confers power, control and immunity to attack. But the more we take refuge in the citadels of knowledge, the less attention we pay to what is going on around us. To be wise, to the contrary, is to venture out into the world and take the risk of exposure to what is going on there. It is to let others into our presence, to pay attention and to care. That's what we do in anthropology. I don't mean that we can do without knowledge. But we need wisdom as well. People around the world, tutored by life, are wise in so many ways. And in our current global predicament, theirs is a wisdom we cannot afford to ignore. We need to learn from them, not to turn them into objects of analysis.

You warn that 'the world is at a tipping point', but you are positive in your belief that anthropology can transform lives. What is the vision here?

We have to believe it. What other option do we have? Of course, anthropology alone cannot transform the world, resolve the environmental crisis or eradicate global poverty. Thankfully, it does not offer final solutions to fix the planet, once and for all. Anthropology is not an optimistic discipline, secure in the belief that it is heralding a better future. We no longer think of it, as our predecessors did, as part of that great movement of thought and manners that would raise humanity from the darkness of ignorance and superstition into the bright light of civilisation. What we do offer, however, is *hope*. It is the hope that seeks to turn every closure into an opening, every apparent end-point into a new beginning. Hope is the guarantor that life can carry on, of its continuity and sustainability, not just for some at the expense of others, but for everyone. And anthropology is, above all, else, a hopeful discipline. ■



Anthropology: Why It Matters was published by Polity Press in March 2018.

Graham Swift's *Waterland* as soliloquy of suffering

John Burnside discusses an elegy for the erasure of history in the pursuit of progress.

In his 2017 lecture to the British Academy, John Burnside discussed an important strand of British fiction over the last thirty years – exemplified by work by Graham Swift, Adam Thorpe and Michael Bracewell – in which the growth of ‘cultural totalitarianism’ has engendered a profound grief for the consequent loss of communal and ritual life, as well as for the land itself which has been ‘savagely degraded’ over the same period. In this extract, he talks about the 1983 novel *Waterland* by Graham Swift.

For those unfamiliar with the book, *Waterland* concerns the history of two East Anglian families, the Cricks and the Atkinsons, separated by social class and wealth, but linked by a tragic secret. The narrator, a history teacher named Tom Crick, is about to be forced into retirement and, though he has personal grief of his own to contend with, we feel that, more than anything else, it is the age in which he lives, an age that denies history any place in the education system, that Crick grieves for most. For some reason, this novel’s place as an English masterpiece didn’t come overnight, perhaps because some readers were discombobulated by the suspicion that it was mainly about eel migration or, possibly, the nicer points of land drainage. In fact, it treated so many of art’s ‘major themes’ that it is hard to look back and think of it as just one book. The tragic nature of childish curiosity, kinship, the play of water and land in East Anglia, the extremes – and the banal facts – of grief, all these and more are treated with astonishing skill in the pages of *Waterland*. However, I want to focus on Crick, and his view of history because, while the other losses this book deals with are familial or personal, the loss of history – the deliberate erasure of the

subject from school syllabuses and from the communal consciousness – that became a hot topic in the Thatcher/Reagan era was, and continues to be, a matter for collective grief. The technocrats of the 1980s demanded that we sacrifice history so that progress could work more freely: history is bunk, they said, in a modern industrial society. Not only that, it might serve to temper our enthusiasm for the randomly new. As Crick points out:



John Burnside is Professor of English at the University of St Andrews.

There’s this thing called progress. But it doesn’t progress, it doesn’t go anywhere. Because as progress progresses the world can slip away. It’s progress if you can stop the world slipping away. My humble model for progress is the reclamation of land. Which is repeatedly, never-endingly retrieving what is lost. A dogged, vigilant business. A dull yet valuable business. A hard, inglorious business. But you shouldn’t go mistaking the reclamation of land for the building of empires.

Of course, *Waterland* is all about history – and specifically, the history of land reclamation, its temporary victories, and its return to the water. Reclamation, like maintenance, is work that is obliged to take the long view, and yields little or no quick profit, though it may pave the way for prosperity, as it does here for the great brewing family, the Atkinsons, who rise and fall, just as the water levels rise and fall, in what seems like a natural rhythm. (Their rise depends on the work of anonymous ditchers, meadmen and drainage workers, though, naturally, these workers will not share in the consequent wealth.) History, of course, teaches us how to understand, and even sometimes to predict Nature’s rhythms, but Crick’s boss, Lewis, and the one pupil the

history teacher dangerously befriends, are both at pains to express their fashionable rejection of history's wise counsel and complexities. 'I want a future', the boy, Price, says. 'And you – you can stuff your past!' To have a future, in this boy's view, means to confine oneself to the here and now, not in the sense of Be (fully) Here (really) Now, but simply in that progressive sense of being prepared for whatever may come on the glorious journey into an ever-more prosperous and happy time ahead. Which never comes, of course, because as Crick says:

[O]nly animals live entirely in the Here and Now. Only nature knows neither memory nor history. Man, man – let me offer you a definition – is the story-telling animal. Wherever he goes he wants to leave behind not a chaotic wake, not an empty space, but the comforting marker-buoys and trail-signs of stories. He has to go on telling stories. He has to keep on making them up. As long as there's a story, it's all right.

What head-teacher Lewis and his ilk would do is to bulldoze those stories into the ground (for our own good, naturally) in the relentless and reckless onward pursuit of – what? It is difficult



to tell what the antagonists *value*. Lewis, for his part, is an acolyte of an emergent school of thought for which looking back, taking stock or doubting are cardinal sins and the only permissible mental state is a prescribed optimism. He is, of course, right in thinking

that any serious study of history precludes such silly optimism, and he is happy that it – and Crick – are to be scrubbed from the curriculum. What he forgets, however, is that humans need stories to live well, with others and with nature, and that, when the progressives bulldoze their way through what they think of as the redundant past, what they are really doing is stealing from others a set of narratives, and a way of life, that is, for them, the vivid present, that is: *tradition*. This is why progressives always get tradition so wrong: they think it pertains to the past; but in reality, tradition always operates in the present. How would it not? At the same time, what Lewis is concealing, or may not even be aware of in himself, is the proto-fascist tendency that guides mediocre people to take upon themselves extraordinary authority (a common sight in British society). For now, but not for much longer, Crick is there to question his intentions:

Children, beware the paternal instinct whenever it appears in your officially approved and professionally trained mentors. In what direction is it working, whose welfare is it serving? This desire to protect and provide, this desire to point the way; this desire to hold sway amongst children.

He sounds, of course, like Cassandra. Soon, however, he – and his history – will be gone. ■

The full text of John Burnside's lecture "'Soliloquies of suffering and consolation': Fiction as elegy and refusal', published in the *Journal of British Academy* in December 2017, can be read freely via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/journal-british-academy-volume-5-2017

More from the Lecture Hall

The British Academy's programme of public lectures provides distinguished academics with a forum for serious extended discussion of important issues. These lectures can subsequently be read or listened to via the Academy's website.

In her lecture 'When Wall Street manages Main Street', **Professor Rosemary Batt** provides a chilling account of how the running of businesses can be distorted when the demands of the stock market are given undue influence. And in her lecture 'Women, crime and character in the 20th century', **Professor Nicola Lacey FBA** investigates the fate of women in the 20th-century English criminal legal system, including a fascinating overview of how female criminality has been depicted in literature. The texts of both of these 2017 lectures can now be read freely in the *Journal of the British Academy*.

In her analysis of whether gender equality can be regarded as a core principle of 'modern' society, in this year when we mark the centenary of women being given the

vote, **Professor Anne Phillips FBA** warns that 'we should not assume too readily that modernity is on our side or that, if we just wait long enough, things will sort themselves out. The suffrage campaigners knew that there was no inevitability in the achievement of women's suffrage, and we need to emulate them in our own campaigns.' And in her reflections 'On Struggle, imagination and the quest for justice', **Professor Mona Siddiqui** observes that justice is often a process, not a decision, 'and it's often the process that we see unfolding before us. The Hillsborough Disaster, in which 96 Liverpool FC fans died in a crush watching an FA Cup semi-final, is the most serious tragedy in UK sporting history, but it took 26 years for the survivors and families of the dead to get justice for their loved ones.' Audio recordings of both of these 2018 lectures can now be listened to.

Links to all these lectures can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/lecture-hall-spring-2018

Scuffles and skirmishes in interwar French politics

Chris Millington explores a violent French subculture in the 1920s and 1930s.



Dr Chris Millington is Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Swansea. He was a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow, 2010–2012.

Violence has no place in a democracy. Or does it? In my book, *Fighting for France: Violence in Interwar French Politics*, I pose a number of questions about the role of political violence in a democratic society. Taking the period of the late Third Republic as a case study, I examine violent confrontations between members of the extremes of right and left – as well as fighting with police – in settings

ranging from the street to the factory floor. How did political groups understand and represent their own violence and that of their opponents? Why did some French believe that violence was an acceptable form of action,

when more democratic means of political campaigning were available? Though democracy may channel political confrontation into the ballot box, violent subcultures can be difficult to dislodge.

Political conflict split the French nation during the interwar years. On the right, paramilitary groups known as ‘leagues’ sought to mobilise their members in a violent campaign against the democratic Third Republic. The largest of these leagues was Colonel François de La Rocque’s Croix de Feu. By 1936, the Croix de Feu had close to 500,000 members. Its huge paramilitary displays impressed right-wing opinion and terrified the left. On the left, the communist party enlisted the working classes in the cause of proletarian revolution. Taking its orders from Moscow, the party was at the heart of the 1930s antifascist campaign against the leagues. It organised large counter-demonstrations to league meetings, a tactic known as ‘mass self-defence’.

Historians of interwar violence tend to focus on two incidents of mass confrontation. On 6 February 1934,



Cover image from Chris Millington's book *Fighting for France: Violence in Interwar French Politics*, which is published as a 'British Academy Monograph'. Depicted is the fascist attack on the Parisian offices of the periodical *L'Action Française* (from *Le Petit Journal Illustré*, November 1926).

the leagues mobilised their members in Paris against the left-wing government which was mired in a corruption scandal. Leaguers made repeated attempts to break into the French parliament. Police killed over a dozen demonstrators as they tried to quell the unrest. Police were once again responsible for the deaths on 16 March 1937 in the Parisian suburb of Clichy. On this occasion, an antifascist counter-demonstration to a league meeting descended into fighting between antifascists and constables. Police lines came under pressure as left-wingers attempted to invade the meeting. Panicked officers opened fire on the mob, killing five, while demonstrators beat to death a police constable.

Beyond these two significant incidents, in the interwar period France appears relatively peaceful in comparison with Germany and Italy, where bloody

street-fighting between communist and fascist groups led to hundreds of deaths. But compared with another stable parliamentary democracy, Great Britain, where no one is recorded to have died in political violence, France does appear more violent. Scuffles and skirmishes between political opponents were doggedly persistent, and there were around 70 fatalities during the 1920s and '30s.

Each day, political groups vied with each other for the control of public space. They wore uniforms, gave salutes, and marched through towns and cities in an effort to mark out sections of territory as their own. Teams of propagandists laid claim to an area with posters, while tearing down those of their opponents. Newspaper sellers, accompanied by large groups of their comrades, plied their trade, often in locations deemed to be in the hands

of the enemy. Territorial disputes led to numerous violent altercations. Political groups on the left and right shared a keen sense of ownership. Left-wingers staked a claim to localities with large working-class populations and left-wing town councils. Right-wingers considered middle-class districts their own. But it was common for activists to enter their opponents' territory deliberately in order to lay down a challenge to the enemy. The aim was not to take the area for themselves, but rather to make a heroic appearance before withdrawing. Such invasions were rarely tolerated, and a violent response was deemed necessary to re-establish a group's honour.

There was, however, no single recipe for violence. Violent incidents were impossible to predict. Certainly, political groups could increase the likelihood of violence. If a group's newspaper sellers traversed the streets with armed bodyguards, fighting with the enemy often occurred. Some French mayors even banned the sale of newspapers in the street because this type of violence was so frequent. However, on other occasions, rival activists could work alongside each other peacefully. In the meeting hall, speakers were vulnerable to attack from the audience; yet even the stormiest of meetings could end without violence. Police were often unable to determine the causes of violent incidents, especially when uncooperative witnesses hampered investigations. The authorities themselves could spark clashes, in particular if they had not taken steps to put in place adequate policing of a demonstration. Even the weather could exacerbate a volatile situation: at Limoges in November 1935, driving rain and pitch darkness meant that a group of right-wingers were unable to see the constables protecting them from a left-wing mob. Fearing that they were undefended against their bloodthirsty opponents, the frightened men drew their revolvers and fired into the crowd.

When violence did erupt, the authorities were prepared to tolerate low-level fighting as long as something more serious did not break out. In September 1934, for example, the deputy-prefect in Aubusson (Creuse) reported on a communist meeting held at the town's labour exchange. He wrote in his report: 'The session began at 9pm, and came to an end at 11pm without any notable incident: some quite violent altercations, some punches were exchanged between listeners of different opinion and that was all'. Permissive attitudes to violence informed police culture. Both constables on the beat and the specialised riot police units enjoyed a reputation for gratuitous brutality. Third Republican authorities had attempted to pacify the police force of the Second Empire (Republicans had had first-hand experience of police violence) through an education programme that underscored the newly-acquired democratic rights of citizens. Still, the daily encounters between officers and political activists were difficult to control. Constables

were instructed to 'jostle people with a smile', but they frequently resorted to their fists, hob-nailed boots and batons to disperse recalcitrant militants. Political activists gave as good as they got: to knock down a constable was a marker of one's courage; all the better if his hat was stolen as a trophy.

In the wake of violence, political groups on the left and the right drew on a number of well-established narratives to explain their action and that of their opponent. When attacked, groups always claimed that they had faced overwhelming odds (usually to the order of twenty-to-one). It was said that communists attacked in the dark, ambushing their right-wing enemies. Meanwhile, right-wingers were reported to load their leather gloves to inflict maximum damage on the adversary. These devices allowed political groups to expose the apparent cowardice of an enemy who did not fight fairly face-to-face. To attack itself was considered a sign of weakness, because rage, anger and loss of self-control were understood as feminine qualities. 'Real men' maintained their sang-froid at all times, even in the face of intolerable provocation.

However, once attacked, defensive violence was legitimate. It was framed as a necessary – and manly – corrective to the enemy's unacceptable and unmanly behaviour. Even disproportionate violence was permitted in the name of self-defence; an oft-used slogan of all groups was: 'For one eye, both eyes. For one tooth, the whole filthy mouth.' For this reason, all sides invariably claimed that their violence was defensive. This was not just a face-saving tactic. Contemporary understandings of self-defence permitted pre-emptive attack if threatened. Popular self-defence manuals thus advised that, if one felt threatened in the street, 'it's better to kill the Devil than be killed by him.' Consequently, political activists considered their action defensive, even when they went on the attack. Such action was deemed perfectly acceptable according to the standards of the time. Indeed, when men went on trial for killing a political opponent, they were often acquitted by the jury if they could prove that they had perpetrated their violence according to such standards.

Fighting for France reveals that democracy cannot entirely eliminate the recourse to violence. Rather, violent cultures can exist alongside democratic politics. Even democratic societies understand that there are certain rules to violence that act to restrain and enable confrontation. In the case of interwar France, deeply entrenched understandings of acceptable manly conduct informed these rules. Such understandings ran as deep as the French commitment to democracy and were therefore difficult to eradicate. Violent incidents, if interpreted and represented in a certain way, were thus deemed justifiable in the minds of an audience far greater than the memberships of violent political associations. ■

Even disproportionate violence was permitted in the name of self-defence.



Edward Linley Sambourne, 'The Uninvited Graces', *Punch*, 3 September 1902. The caption reads: 'The new British Academy, which has lately received a Royal Charter, is restricted to the representatives of Scientific Literature, and takes no cognizance of Poetry, Drama, and Romance.' The cartoon should perhaps have more accurately been entitled 'The Uninvited Muses'.

The British Academy's seal

In March 1906, just a few years after the British Academy's foundation, the Academy's Council decided that it was desirable to have a seal, so that the investment of Academy capital could be authorised 'under Common Seal'. Accordingly, it was agreed that two Fellows of the British Academy should form a Sub-Committee 'to report upon the design for a seal' (Council Minutes, 14 March 1906). The two Fellows were: Sir Edward Maunde Thompson, Director and Principal Librarian of the British Museum; and Sir William Anson MP, who had until recently been the first Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education.

How to capture in visual form the character of the 'British Academy for the Promotion of Historical, Philosophical and Philological Studies'? Someone else had already done this – at the Academy's expense – within a month of the new body receiving its Royal Charter in August 1902. On 3 September 1902, *Punch* magazine published a cartoon in which 'Scientific Literature' –

with gown and mortar board – mounts the steps into the British Academy, while 'Poetry, Drama, and Romance' are sadly excluded behind iron railings.

The design Sub-Committee may well not have remembered this unfortunate prior use of a female form in a pseudo-classical setting; but in any case it was not deterred from opting to base the Academy's seal around an image of Clio, the Muse of History. The particular image of Clio that was selected was a distinctive one, taken from a set of frescos of Apollo and the Muses discovered in the villa of Julia Felix at Pompeii in 1755, now in the Louvre. In her left hand, Clio holds a scroll bearing the words

ΚΛΕΙΩ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΝ

which perhaps can be translated broadly as 'Clio [invented] inquiry'.¹

By 1898, that fresco had already been published as a black and white illustration, which was probably

1. We are grateful to Alan Griffiths, Senior Honorary Research Fellow, University College London, for his suggestions about the Clio fresco.



used as the starting point for the rather more stylised version of Clio that was created for the Academy's use. To the naive viewer, the image has a slightly Britannia-like character which perhaps was not entirely accidental.

Around Clio were added the words 'Sigillum Academiae Britannicae' (Seal of the British Academy).

And a date was added: 'MDCCCCI' (1901). The 'proposed Fellows of the British Academy' had indeed met for the first time as such on 17 December 1901. But, as has

The image of Clio, the Muse of History, from a fresco in a Pompeii villa (now in the Louvre), was used as the basis for the British Academy's seal, designed in 1906-7.



already been mentioned, the Academy did not receive its Royal Charter until August 1902,² and 1902 would later be regarded as the more important date in the Academy's foundation history (key anniversary celebrations were held in 1927, 1952 and 2002). So the presence of the 1901 date on the seal would be rather confusing for later generations.

Once the design was agreed, E. M. Thompson was authorised to engage 'Mr Pinches' to make the seal. John Pinches Medallists was a family business founded in 1840; John Harvey Pinches had inherited the company from his father, John Pinches, in 1905. The Council minutes state that 'Sir E. Maunde Thompson was authorised to expend not more than £30 in respect of the seal' (Council Minutes, 27 February 1907).

When a seal is used to authenticate a document, this traditionally involves the image being impressed in melted wax. But presses can also be used to emboss the image on the document paper itself, squeezed between the upper and lower dies, and that is the method used for the British Academy's seal.

The Academy's press appears to be similar to that currently used by the Government of the United States for impressing wafers attached to government documents. That press, called 'The Great Seal', was made around the same time, in 1903–5, and is kept in the Department of State. (Apparently it was used some two to three thousand times during 2009.)³

The first occasion for the use of the British Academy's new seal was in connection with the drawing up of a Trust document in respect of the extraordinarily

From left to right: An example of the impression that the British Academy's seal press makes on paper. A special 'Centenary' version of the British Academy logo which was used throughout the year 2002. A commemorative bronze Centenary Medal, with an interestingly modern depiction of Clio. A simplified version of the seal image produced in 2008 for use in the British Academy's visual brand.



The British Academy's seal press, made in 1907.

2. See 'A Documentary Account of the Foundation of the British Academy', in *The British Academy 1902–2002: Some Historical Documents and Notes* (2002).

3. We are grateful to John Cherry for this information. Along with other members of the Board of Sigillvm, he inspected the British Academy's seal press in December 2017. The Board also visited the Society of Antiquaries of London which has a similar type of screw press, although that is thought to date from the 18th century.



generous gift of £10,000 from Miss Constance Schweich to establish a Fund in the name of her father, Leopold Schweich.⁴ In October 1907, a ‘Committee on the Drafting of the Schweich Trust’ made specific recommendations on the prudent use of the seal in such circumstances,⁵ and at the meeting of Council in November, ‘the affixing of the Seal of the Academy to the Declaration of Trust of the Schweich Fund was authorised’ (Council Minutes, 6 November 1907).

In a modest extension of its use, the seal was reproduced as a printed image to adorn a number of ceremonial scrolls produced by the British Academy to mark significant occasions. For example, scrolls were sent to King George V both to salute his accession in 1910 and to congratulate him on his 25th anniversary in 1935.

Logo

But it was not until the Academy marked its own 50th anniversary in 1952 that the seal image became more generally adopted as the Academy’s logo. In spite of the confusing ‘1901’ date, the seal was embossed in gold on the menu card for the anniversary dinner, and printed on the cover of Sir Frederic Kenyon’s commemorative booklet on *The British Academy: The First Fifty Years*. And from that moment on, perhaps as the Academy had an enhanced sense of its own history and identity, the seal began to appear on an increasing range of official literature issued by it – and became established as the Academy’s emblem.

During the year of the Academy’s centenary in 2002, the problem of the awkward 1901 date was avoided by the creation of an amended version of the image, bearing more specifically appropriate lettering. More daringly, a bronze medal was minted – to be presented to dignitaries at the Centenary Conference in July 2002 – bearing a modern and surprisingly casual depiction of Clio.

After the centenary year, the logo immediately reverted to the original version of the seal, but there was perhaps now a sense that change was permissible – in particular to meet the demands of its use in digital contexts. In 2008, as part of a wider rebranding exercise, Clio was redrawn more simply, and this was accompanied by the deliberate loss of any lettering running around her – and the accidental loss of the final ‘N’ from the lettering on her scroll.

The seal press of the British Academy has not been used for the formal authentication of a document for several years.

And as the Academy conducts another review of its ‘brand’, what place may Clio still have as part of the Academy’s future visual identity? ■

‘From the Archive’ research by Karen Syrett,
British Academy Archivist and Librarian.

Text by James Rivington.

4. For the history of this, see Graham Davies, ‘Leopold Schweich and his Family’, *British Academy Review*, 12 (January 2009), 53–57.

5. The recommended requirement that three authorised people should participate in the use of the British Academy’s seal continues to be reflected in the Academy’s Bye-Laws. These stipulate that ‘every deed or writing to which the Common Seal of the Academy is to be affixed shall be passed and sealed in Council’ – except in case of urgency, when the sealing can be done in the presence of the President or a Vice-President or the Treasurer, and another member of the Council, and the Chief Executive. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this requirement that three authorised people should actually be present to witness the sealing has sometimes been awkward to meet in the past, and there have been occasions when there was an acceptance that one or other of them was present ‘in spirit’.

The move to a new home at Carlton House Terrace, 1998

The British Academy has been in its present home for 20 years. On Monday 2 March 1998, the Academy started its new life at 10–11 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1.

One year earlier, in March 1997, the Academy's Secretary, Mr Peter Brown, had produced a briefing document for the Fellows of the Academy, to explain the thinking behind the proposed move, and – more importantly – to lay out the fundraising challenge to make it possible.

The following extracts from the document give a flavour of the vision.

The move to new Headquarters in 10–11 Carlton House Terrace: project summary

The aim is to establish the British Academy in new headquarters, alongside the Royal Society, thus bringing together the national academies for the natural sciences and for the humanities and social sciences.

This involves refurbishment and adaptation of a Grade I listed building, which has been badly neglected internally in recent years, so as to restore it for public access and use, and to meet the Academy's needs, at a total cost of approximately £3 million, of which it is for the Academy to raise two-thirds.

Establishing the British Academy in its new premises will

- give it, and the subjects it promotes, higher public visibility;
- help to safeguard its independence as a standard-bearer for scholarly excellence;
- enable it further to develop and expand its research programmes;
- make it a centre for the scholarly community, learned societies, and the general educated public;
- ensure that the Academy's work in promoting and supporting research and scholarship is carried on and enhanced into the next century; and

- through co-operation with the Royal Society, lead to interdisciplinary joint activities bringing together the natural sciences and the humanities and the social sciences.

The move will place at the Academy's disposal, for the first time in its history, a suitable number of public rooms, which will enable it to organise properly its own academic meetings, workshops, lectures and symposia, and offer facilities to the Fellowship and as a service to the learned community and the public at large. It will thus be possible to give real substance to the claim to be the national Academy for the humanities and the social sciences, promoting those disciplines not merely through facilitating grants but by means of its own initiatives and activities.

The reasons for wishing to move to new premises

Over recent years there has been a growth in the British Academy's size, responsibilities and activities, to the point that the headquarters in Regent's Park, which it has occupied since 1982, have come to be regarded as unsatisfactory. The public rooms are inadequate, too few and too small for the needs of the Fellowship, for the increasing number and range of academic committees that meet under the Academy's auspices, and for the conferences and symposia that the Academy sponsors. There is no office accommodation for the President and Officers, and the office space is insufficient for the present administrative staff of 35, some of whom are located in Stanmore. The Academy is keen to develop its activities further, but has been prevented from doing so by lack of space and facilities.

The Crown Estate Commissioners, the Academy's landlords, have now offered a 50-year lease of 10–11 Carlton House Terrace, a building which has approximately three times as much space as the present premises. The building is ideally situated, next to the Royal Society, which will have the effect of bringing together the two principal national academies cov-



A 1997 photograph of what would become the British Academy's Council Room. The room had recently been used as a set for the 1997 film *The Wings of a Dove*, and the styling of the walls for that purpose was still clearly visible. Photo: RCHME.

ering all branches of knowledge. There is already co-operation with the Royal Society at various levels, notably in organising joint meetings. Their new proximity, both parties intend, will lead to much closer and more regular co-operation, and discussions are in progress with the aim of sharing certain facilities and services.

As the President said in announcing the move to Fellows:

This development presents us with a splendid opportunity and challenge. It will provide for all our present needs, and I believe that it has the potential to transform the Academy and its activities beyond recognition.

That the move was able to take place in March 1998 (if three months behind the original schedule) was due to the success of the fundraising work. Generous funding to make the move possible at all was made available by the Department for Education and Employment (as it then was). But there were then important donations from private sources towards the costs of the refurbishment: the Wellcome Trust; Mr Lee Seng Tee; the Rhodes Trust; the Wolfson Foundation; the Nuffield Foundation; the Michael Marks Charitable Trust; the Rayne Founda-

tion; the Aurelius Trust; four Oxford colleges (All Souls, Balliol, Christ Church, Nuffield); and five Cambridge colleges (Christ's, Gonville and Caius, Jesus, St John's, Trinity). And there were also donations from many Fellows of the British Academy and other individuals.

According to current President of the British Academy, Professor Sir David Cannadine,

We remain ever in debt to those who devised the move to Carlton House Terrace and those whose generosity made it possible in practice. The challenge articulated 20 years ago – that the move should enable the British Academy and its activities to be transformed 'beyond recognition' – is one that I think we are well on the way to meeting. In a building with such splendid spaces, and one so magnificently situated, the Academy has grown in stature, and it now confidently assumes the national role envisioned for it two decades ago. But the task of transforming the Academy 'beyond recognition' perforce remains unfinished, and it is now our task, our responsibility and our opportunity to drive the Academy further forward and onward in our own time. Inspired and encouraged by these earlier achievements, it is a challenge which we relish and welcome. ■



Image: Jazz musician Bra Tete Mbambisa, © HUGH MDLALOSE.

The British Academy Summer Showcase 2018

A free festival of ideas for curious minds

Friday 22 – Saturday 23 June, 11am–5pm

Join us at the British Academy's first Summer Showcase. With exhibits exploring a range of topics – from *South African Jazz Cultures* to *Tackling the UK's Housing Crisis* – you can find out about the best new research in the humanities and social sciences. Meet our researchers, listen to engaging talks, and take part in hands-on activities.

Late

Friday 22 June, 6.30–9pm

Come along to a special late-night view of the Summer Showcase. Drop in to see exhibits, enjoy talks and performances, or simply relax with a drink at the bar. ■

More information about the Summer Showcase can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/summershowcase (full programme available from May). Or sign up for further information at www.britishacademy.ac.uk/signup

Front cover image: © Greg Constantine



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