British Academy Review

Issue 19

January 2012

THE BRITISH ACADEMY

10–11 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH

Telephone: 020 7969 5200

Fax: 020 7969 5300

Web site: www.britac.ac.uk

The *British Academy Review* contains articles illustrating the wide range of scholarship which the British Academy promotes in its role as the UKs national academy for the humanities and social sciences.

Views of named writers are the views exclusively of those writers; publication does not constitute endorsement by the British Academy.

Suggestions for articles by current and former British Academy grant- and post-holders, as well as by Fellows of the British Academy, are very welcome. Suggestions may be sent to the Editor, James Rivington, at pubs@britac.ac.uk

Page make-up by Don Friston

Printed in Great Britain
on recycled paper by
Henry Ling Limited
at the Dorset Press
Dorchester, Dorset

Cover image: No. 11 Carlton House Terrace

Contents

The British Academy

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

The Academy is an independent, self-governing body of more than 800 Fellows, elected in recognition of their distinction in one or more branches of the humanities and social sciences. It aims to inspire, recognise and support excellence and high achievement in the humanities and social sciences, throughout the UK and internationally, and to champion their role and value.

The Academy has identified four strategic priorities central to achieving these aims:

- Advancing the humanities and social sciences by supporting research and scholarship at all levels
- Promoting these disciplines on international platforms, building collaboration and creating opportunities for UK researchers overseas
- Increasing the scope and impact of communications and policy activity, and creating events and publications that communicate new research and encourage public debate
- Strengthening opportunities for Fellows to contribute their expertise to the intellectual life of the Academy and the country.

Further information about the work of the Academy can be found on its website at www.britac.ac.uk, or by contacting the Academy at 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH, telephone 020 7969 5200, email chiefexec@britac.ac.uk

Officers and Senior Staff of the British Academy

President
Professor Sir Adam Roberts

Vice-Presidents
Professor Michael Fulford, Treasurer
Professor Jonathan Bate, Vice-President (Humanities)
Professor Vicki Bruce, Vice-President (Communications and External Relations)
Professor Susan Mendus, Vice-President (Social Sciences)
Professor Martin Millett, Vice-President (British Academy Sponsored Institutes and Societies)
Professor Nigel Vincent, Vice-President (Research and HE Policy)
Dame Helen Wallace, Foreign Secretary
Professor Albert Weale, Vice-President (Public Policy)
Professor Chris Wickham, Publications Secretary

Chief Executive and Secretary
Dr Robin Jackson

Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Robert Hopwood

Director of Programmes
Vivienne Hurley

Director of Communications and External Relations
Tim Brassell

What should the word of God sound like?

In November 2011, the British Academy hosted an event to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible. The Archbishop of Canterbury, ***Dr Rowan Williams FBA****, considered the role that the King James Bible still plays in providing us with a sense of sacred English.*

ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT THINGS that you will have noticed in this anniversary year of the King James Bible is that it has not come across simply as the possession of religious believers. There has been a widespread sense that it has belonged to everybody. It has been treated as something that is not the preserve of the Church. It has been discussed and, to a surprisingly large extent, affirmed as part of a wider cultural legacy.

One of the themes that we are bound to think about is the curious way in which religious language – and religious symbolism in general – escape from their owners. They are, you might say, very disobedient pets: they jump over fences, they get into places where you do not expect them to get, and they produce occasionally very surprising progeny as a result.

Is this good or bad news for religious believers? It is easy to assume that the idea of the Bible as cultural legacy means that the Bible is no longer seen as having its distinctive function. It has lost its sense and location as a sacred text. It has become part of our heritage. But I am not sure that it is quite as simple as that, and I hope to show and suggest some of the ways in which it is not so simple.

Registers in language

The odd thing is that our culture has, in some ways, retained a sense of what a sacred text looks or sounds like, even when the Church has been uncertain about it. That is to say that a vague recollection of the King James Bible is heard – more than read, perhaps – as striking a particular register in British discourse. People know roughly what you are doing when you parody the King James Version, even if they have never opened it and neither has the parodist. If you wanted illustrations of this, of course, you could turn to the pseudo-Biblical episodes that occasionally decorate the pages of *Private Eye*. People know what 'sacred' English sounds like.

Whether or not that is positive news for religious believers is not such a simple question to answer as we might sometimes suppose. It does at least mean that people are aware of registers in our language, registers that are appropriate to this or that context. At a time when, in many ways, our capacity to distinguish or to be subtle about registers in language seems to be diminishing, it is at least quite interesting that we seem to be capable of picking out one register that may be appropriate or significant as signalling something completely different.

What you then do with that register is another question. There is nothing very new about these issues. Back in 1991, A.N. Wilson, in his novel *Daughters of Albion*, has his central figure reflecting on his upbringing in a parsonage:

> It did not worry me that I could not, in the conventional sense, believe. Indeed, I did not see how an intelligent person could adhere to the orthodoxies. But it had begun to sadden me that I could put all this religious inheritance to no good or imaginative use. It lay around like lumber in my mind but it did not quicken the heart.

That image of a legacy lying around 'like lumber in the mind' is one to ponder, I think, as we reflect on this subject matter.

The register that I am talking about – the register of sacred English – still has some place and some recognisability – even if not authority – even if it is more 'like lumber in the mind' than anything we know how to use. Yet the very fact of its presence, as an unfamiliar and potentially serious domain of discourse, leaves a good many doors open.

That is my starting point: simply observing that, in the collective imagination, for quite a lot of people in this country – and I say 'quite a lot' with deliberate vagueness – the sense of what sacred English sounds like has not wholly disappeared, even if its main vehicle is parody. Behind that lies, as I suggested, the more fundamental

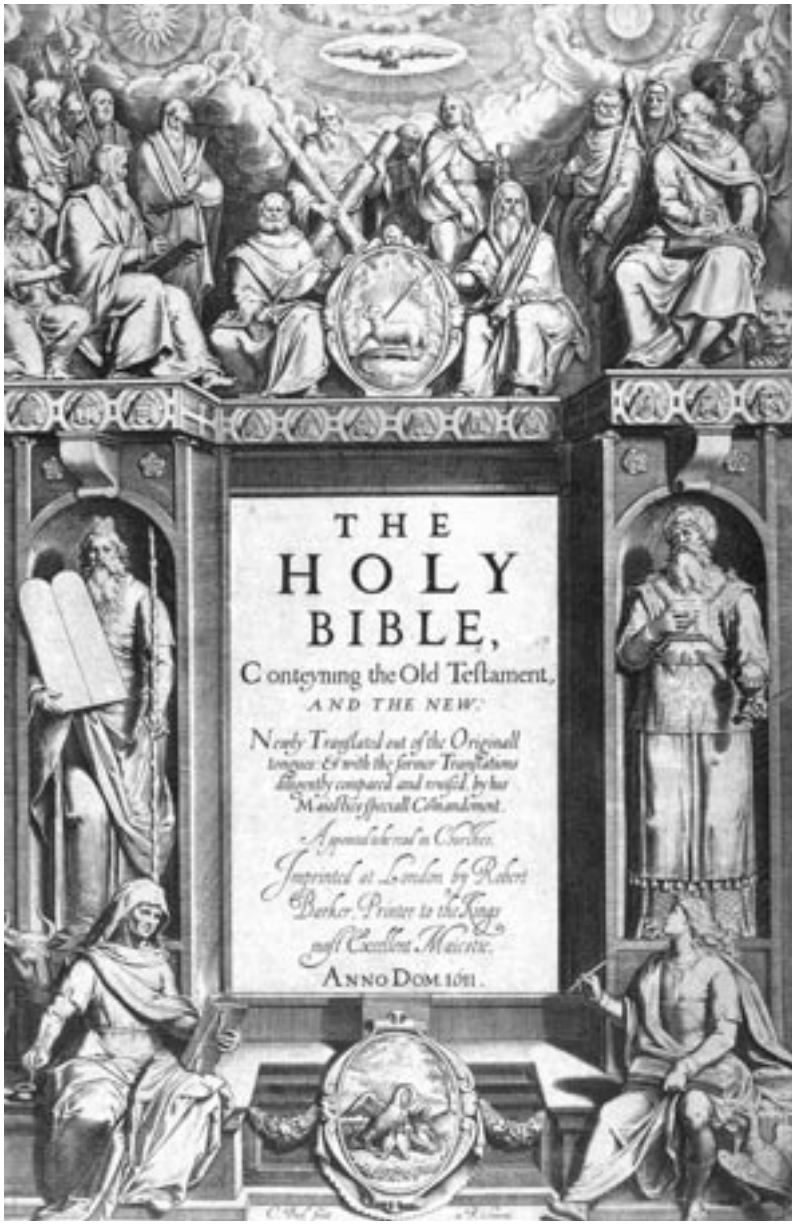
questions about ownership, and about both the risks and the necessity for the Church sometimes to examine its territorial boundaries in ideology, not just in material things.

Translating the Bible

I cannot move on in this argument, I think, without saying a word or two about what happens in modern translations of scripture. Modern translations in the Church context inevitably begin with the attempt to remove obstacles. The presenting feeling is that the text that we culturally started with 100 years ago or more is inaccessible. It is an obstacle to understanding what is going on. Therefore, a good translation removes the obstacles. That, of course, is exactly what the translators of the King James Version thought they were doing.

If you turn to the wonderful Preface by Miles Smith to the King James Version, you will see there a set of very potent metaphors about what translation is. It is rolling away the stone from the well so that the bucket can go down into the darkness and bring something up. It is tearing the veil of the temple so that the sacred mysteries can be exposed to public view. As I have argued in another context, it is important to see those metaphors as, in the theological context, deeply Christological. Translating the Bible is a Christological exercise. It is an exercise in expressing what you mean by devotion and loyalty to Jesus Christ.

The King James Version, in other words – and this is a familiar enough point – did not set out to create an unfamiliar register of discourse. It is easy to move from that rather rapidly to the conclusion that the point of translation is therefore not simply to make accessible, but to make easy. That is where I think there is a break in the argument. While the King James translators wanted to roll the stone away from the mouth of the well and make something accessible, interestingly (if Miles Smith's Preface is to be believed) they were not doing that in order to make it easy. You would almost say they were doing it in order to make it properly difficult. Smith goes on in the Preface to say a little bit about why the marginal notes are there in the King James Version. Of course, one of the disasters that overtook the King James Bible in its history was not only the omission of the preface but the omission of the marginal variants as time went on.



Smith makes great play of those variants. Obviously, the main outlines of scriptural truth are clear enough, but there is a great deal around the edge that is unsettled and unsettling. Why is this? Smith suggests that there may be several reasons. One of them, interestingly, is that, quite simply, some people will despise the Bible if it is too easy; 17th-century equivalents of Fellows of the British Academy needed to know that the Bible could be read seriously by serious people. But Smith goes on to say something much more interesting, which is that, when we are confronted with a puzzle or with what appears to be a brick wall in our understanding – when we are confronted with a number of alternative translations, all of them defensible – what we then have to do is turn to one another and work it out together. The translation is not only a way of making something accessible; it is a way of making it difficult. It is not only a way making it difficult; it is a way of making it corporate.

A good translation, then, does not seek to seal off every conceivable channel of meaning so that you are directed carefully, consistently and unfailingly through one channel. A good translation allows you to see precisely the margins of meaning and to know that you can only resolve the unfinished business of the text with one

another. Again, in another context, I suggested linking that up a little bit with what Richard Hooker, around the same time, called the recognition of our 'common imbecility' in the Church; that is, our need of question, challenge and interpretation from one another's hands.

It is, then, quite important to recognise that the 1611 translators did not simply believe that their exercise in translation was the removal of obstacles. That was important, but they believed also that it was the removal of obstacles in order that you were able to engage with the labour which the text demanded of you – a labour which was very importantly shared in certain respects. I would like to connect that personally with another wonderful remark in the history of English biblical hermeneutics, which is Bishop Westcott's comment in the 19th century that the point of scripture, being the way it is, is that it is an invitation to labour.

The language of excess

Back to the Church and how the Church responds in all this. Should the Church be asking – and, if so, how should it be asking – the question about the dimension, the register of scripture? What does sacred English sound like? What does the word of God sound like? That means acknowledging the awkward fact that modern English largely lacks certain kinds of voice in its repertoire.

In earlier centuries, English was capable of working with different registers without too much self-consciousness. But we have largely lost that unselfconscious capacity to slip between registers, or between voices or keys, in the way we talk publicly, never mind privately. We have largely lost what has been called the 'language of excess' in religious utterance: the language of redundancy. The *Book of Common Prayer* would not be what it was, and is, without redundancy. The characteristic contemporary impatience which says that the *Book of Common Prayer* always says things three times over is not a joke. It is meant to do just that. It is a language of redundancy, which again tells you that the first thing you thought of is not the whole truth – always quite a good point in hermeneutics.

The point has been made, again, from an earlier generation in a classic bit of polemic about religious English by Ian Robinson, sometime of the University of Swansea, in a book published first in 1973. It has a chapter on 'Religious English', which is full of choice invective about the New English Bible, about early revisions of the liturgy, and so forth – a great deal of which is both entertaining and facile. But there are some very significant points raised in the background which relate to this question of register.

> And what is there to be done now by anyone who sees the need for a religious English? One thing we can't do is set about manufacturing it – not, at any rate, as a matter of deliberate policy, with definable ends.[1]

He quotes from Marjorie Grene writing on Hobbes:

> But if we are to find ourselves at home again in a significant universe, we must somehow find dialectically a synthesis of what Cudworth asserted and Hobbes denied ... It is some analogue of the traditional deity we have to seek and find, if the fundamental meaninglessness of the Hobbesian world, our Hobbesian world, is to be overcome.[2]

Disentangled, I think that means that the English that we are more and more inclined to take for granted in our public and private usage is Hobbesian. Its vocabulary is nasty and brutish. If not always short, it is a vocabulary which significantly shrinks the range of available meanings that there are for humans, which functionalises and trivialises a great deal of what it talks about.

The question of register in our language cannot be sidestepped. Outside the culturally very new and still often rather marginal register of charismatic prayer and praise, where the language of excess and redundancy has made a dramatic comeback – a real return of the repressed – it seems that religious believers and religious speakers are uncomfortably tempted by the Hobbesian shortcut. They are pulled back and properly disturbed by the abiding presence in Church and culture of this uncomfortable, indigestible register of what sacred English might sound like and what the word of God might sound like.

From within the Church, it seems to me very important for us to recognise the danger of functionalising our speech in a way that corresponds to the functionalising of identities and professions in our wider social world. The hard question for the translator of scripture these days, I think, is how to find an idiom that still does justice to this register of the strange and the disturbing – both the culturally strange and the transcendentally strange.

Strangeness

What does the word of God sound like in a context where language itself is so often stripped down and narrowed? Can we point to, evoke or even articulate the word of God in that environment where our linguistic options are so shrunken? The answer to that does mean attention to both elements of strangeness that I have mentioned: the cultural and the transcendental. The culturally strange, because, of course, the Bible is not a book or a collection of books that was written yesterday, and its 'not-being-written-yesterday'-ness is an abidingly significant thing about it. It is from another era – several other eras. It is something that speaks to us from a place of human difference. For those who believe that it also speaks from a place of more than human difference, there is that second strangeness – the transcendental strangeness – to be dealt with and somehow thought through. Translations of the Bible that ignore both of those kinds of strangeness are not going to do their work. That is why translating the Bible is difficult.

There are interesting examples in recent years of those who really have addressed the awkwardness and the resilience of the texts, and come up with something that

[1] Ian Robertson, *The Survival of English* (1973), pp. 63-4.
[2] Marjorie Grene, 'Hobbes and the Modern Mind', *The Anatomy of Knowledge* (1970), p. 4.

Speakers at the session on 'The King James Bible at 400: Celebration or Valediction?': Professor David Martin FBA, the novelist Salley Vickers, Bettany Hughes (chair), Dr Rowan Williams FBA. Photos: Warren Johnson.

very creditably sounds neither like the King James Bible nor like the New English Bible. I think, for example, of the work of someone like Mary Phil Korsak and her translation of Genesis, and also her (I think still unpublished) translation of St Mark, which, by insisting on the variation of tenses in the original, by playing around with presents and pasts, and by insisting on the imperative quality of the text – when it says 'behold', it really does mean 'look!' – has restored some of that strangeness, both cultural and transcendental, to the text. Her translations remind us that the translated text ought to be something capable of dramatic verbal performance, rather than just that private reading which, since the 17th century, we have more and more tended to assume is the paradigm for how we come to the Bible.

Behind that, of course, is the perennial problem which many particularly religious believers would want to underline. It is so easy to confuse cultural strangeness with the transcendent. It is so easy to think that, because a text is quaint, it is holy – sacredness is a form of linguistic weirdness. It is so easy to think that the pseudo-Biblical English of *Private Eye* parodies is what religious language is like, because it is quaint. The confusion is one that, I think, applies in a number of religious contexts, where the attempt to affirm the transcendent – the strange, the properly, irreducibly, inexhaustibly strange – is muddled up with the sheer strangeness – the exotic quality – of something that comes from another human setting. So a Tridentine high mass is, because it is exotic, evocative of the transcendent in a way that a mass said in contemporary English is not. There is a muddle in that, and a muddle that we have to be careful to identify honestly.

Conclusion

Back to the paradox and the puzzle with which I started. In our present setting, with limited historical knowledge in our society, it is nonetheless the case that quite a lot of hearers or readers of the King James Version still experience something more than just cultural quaintness when they turn the pages of the King James Bible or hear it read – even if it is simply a recognition that there is something inadequate or something not said in other styles or registers. The elusive area that is more than just the culturally quaint is where the King James Bible still gives us to think, I believe, whether we are conventional believers or not.

It is because of all that that I believe it is premature to talk of a valediction for the King James Bible. These remarks have been rather more in the nature of a celebration of a continuing problematic set of absorbingly difficult challenges, which take us into some very important places in our thinking about language and society, and about culture and belief. This anniversary year has suggested very strongly that the resonances are not exhausted, and they focus the question for Church and culture of how our language escapes from certain sorts of captivity so as to evoke something utterly unexpected, something hitherto unimagined, and something still unimaginable in its fullness.

I am inclined to say to myself and some of my colleagues: by all means be realistic about what can and cannot be made accessible through the King James Version. Anyone who is inclined to be over-romantic about the King James Version should be condemned to read the Epistles of Paul in the King James Version for a few weeks on end and see what it feels like. Yet do not imagine that the question 'What does the word of God sound like?' can be answered without some acknowledgment of the problem of how we speak for transcendent strangeness in the middle of a world of often radically impoverished idioms. How does our language invite into itself the possibility of otherness – both the possibility of actual human change and the possibility of sheer, inexhaustible presence? The strange persistence of the King James Version in our collective imagination suggests that that question is as live today as it has ever been.

Dr Rowan Williams became Archbishop of Canterbury in 2002. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1990.

The conference on 'The King James Bible at 400: Celebration or Valediction?' was held at the British Academy on 4 November 2011. Audio recordings of all the presentations can be found via www.britac.ac.uk/events/2011/

How to train a mulla: Seminaries in Shi'ite Islam

PROFESSOR ROBERT GLEAVE

THE CLERICAL ELITE of the Shi'ite branch of Islam gain their authority primarily through their learning. Religious knowledge is the quality that distinguishes clerics (the *ulama*) from the rest of the faithful Shi'ite community, giving them this special status. Very rarely, a particular cleric may be a charismatic preacher, or considered to have mystical knowledge through esoteric communication, or deserve particular respect because of his genealogy. But for most of Shi'ite history, a cleric's authority is based on his acquisition of knowledge, and he acquires this knowledge through studying in one of the Shi'ite seminaries, collectively referred to as the *Hawza*. In 2008, the British Academy funded a project, through its sponsored societies programme (BASIS), examining the history, development and future direction of the *Hawza* system. The project, titled 'Clerical Authority in Shi'ite Islam: Culture and Learning in the Seminaries of Iraq and Iran', was supported by the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) and the British Institute of Persian Studies (BIPS). Over a three and a half year period, the project has set up networks of contacts between scholars working in Western university contexts (particularly within the UK) and those working within the *Hawza* system. The intersection of scholars from the *Hawza* and Western academics and researchers has been perhaps the most exciting element of the project; a sharing of educational techniques and knowledge has created lasting research exchanges which have resulted in important academic studies of the structure and history of clerical training in Shi'ite Islam. The project comes to an end in March 2012, with a major international conference to be held in Oxford.

The main centres of *Hawza* education today are in Iraq and Iran: both are majority Shi'ite countries, and Iran has a political system that is based around the clerical class having special and privileged access to political power. Understanding how the clerical class is formed, and how its authority is acquired and maintained in Shi'ite communities is crucial then to understanding the political dynamics of these two strategically important Middle Eastern countries. But the study of the Hawza is not limited to these two countries. The *Hawzas* in Najaf and Karbala (in Iraq) and Qum and Mashhad (in Iran) may form the centres of learning, but the Shi'ite clerics who lead the communities of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Lebanon, Pakistan and India have invariably been trained in Iraq and Iran, and so the influence of these centres diffuses through the international community. The same is true in the disapora Shi'ite community in the West. London, for example, is a major centre for international Shi'ite activity, and has many clerics trained in Najaf and Qum, some even rising to the highest rank within the *Hawza*, that of Ayatallah. This diffusion of influence has led to the establishment of satellite *Hawzas*, the largest being in Damascus and the Persian Gulf – in the UK, *Hawza*-style education is offered in London and Birmingham. The Hawza Project, as the British Academy project has become known, has funded research on all these manifestations of Shi'ite clerical learning, emphasising how the *Hawza* system forms a setting where a transnational network of scholarly contacts is established, and how the contacts between scholars formed in the *Hawza* last well beyond their time in education.

Structure

The *Hawza* system has a number of distinctive features. It is extremely informal and flexible. Traditionally, there is no set curriculum, no tuition fees, no specific examinations and no particular qualification that the student attains. Instead, each prospective student is taken on by a particular school or college (each individually also called *hawzas*, or alternatively *madrasas*), and receives a monthly stipend. This stipend is usually not enough to live on, particularly for a student with a family, and so as students acquire skills in their early years of education, they are able earn supplementary funds through teaching beginner students, or even school children. Not a few students take on part-time jobs outside of the *Hawza* religious industry, in computing or translation. The monthly stipend comes with an expectation that the student will be studying within the recruiting college, and within each college there are individual classes, given by students at different stages of the hierarchy, all working under an individual or small group of clerics of advanced learning. The college then has a triangular structure, and as students reach the limit of their intellectual abilities, they leave, as clerics, to take on roles within the community. Only a few stay on to reach the apex, and teach at the higher levels of the *madrasa*.

Within this structure, the student has considerable autonomy to study what he (or she, for there are a few female *madrasas*) wishes. There are certain elements that are viewed as essential for progression (at the early stages, Arabic grammar and some jurisprudence, for example), but there are many optional subjects. The student designs his

Figure 1. *Teaching and learning, Hawza-style in small study circles.*

own programme of study, and the process is seen not simply as acquiring a qualification, but as a period of spiritual discovery and growth. Students are given freedom to experiment with subjects and themes, to develop areas of specialism and interest. With little in the way of a centralised organising body, the *Hawza* is, to an extent, a 'do-it-yourself' educational system. How students have constructed their curriculum, and the centrifugal and centripetal forces within the intellectual world of the *Hawza* have been central to a number of studies within the Hawza Project. These have changed over time, and continue to do so as the *Hawza* modernises.

Qum and Najaf

There are also differences of emphasis in curriculum between the main centres, particularly between the Iranian centre of Qum and Najaf in sourthern Iraq. These two *Hawza* cities, both of which have grown up around revered shrines of past Shi'ite figures, are in fierce competition for students and for reputation. Each thinks itself superior to the other, though naturally there is traffic of students and scholars between them. Generally speaking Qum sees itself as philosophically advanced and more open to new ideas, whilst Najaf views itself as teaching the traditional religious sciences by the 'tried and tested' methods. Before 2003, Najaf was seriously weakened by the Ba'th Regime of Saddam Hussein. His suppression of the Shi'ites restricted Najaf's development; at the same time, the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran was a huge boost to Qum as former Hawza professors, such as Ayatallah Khomeini, gained political control of the country and cemented the clerical class as a political entity. Today, Qum outstrips Najaf in terms of student numbers by 2 or 3 to 1. Najaf, though claims it has the history, the intellectual rigour and the political independence to offer a higher level of learning. Despite the expansion of Qum in the 20th century, the principal Ayatallahs (each known as a 'Source of Emulation' or *Marja' al-Taqlid*) are all based in Najaf and not in Qum.

Amongst the changes occurring within the *Hawza* is the gradual move towards a centralised bureaucracy, and a formalisation of educational qualifications. This has happened more rapidly in Qum, where educational reform has been linked with state intervention within the *Hawza*. There are moves to register teachers, check qualifications, offer western-style 'degrees' such as BA, MA and PhD alongside the traditional Hawza learning. The *Hawza,* both in Iraq and Iran, is now in competition, not only with each other but also with the expanding secular higher-education system on the Western model. In Iraq, Iran and elsewhere, the *Hawza* has to recruit students who might be tempted by more formal and internationally recognised qualifications. Recognising this new competitive context is at least part of the reason for the reforms the *Hawza* has witnessed in the last half century.

Philosophy and politics

Of all the debates within the *Hawza*, two interlinked topics appear to dominate: philosophy and politics. Qum, with its greater philosophical emphasis, was the intellectual breeding ground for the ideas of the Iranian Islamic revolution. It was here that thinkers such as Khomeini, his one-time successor Ayatallah Montazeri, and the current leader of Iran Ayatallah Khamene'i, cut their teeth. In time, they constructed a religious political theory which was eventually enshrined in the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Philosophy, usually based around the Islamicised version of the Greek tradition, was used as a vehicle for political theory, implicitly using paradigms such as the Platonic Philosopher-King notion. Even when Khomeini was based in Najaf (after having been expelled from Iran by the Shah), his intellectual style remained 'Qummi' and not Najafi. Many Najaf-based scholars reacted against this politicisation, and advocated a classical, jurisprudential approach to learning, where knowledge of the ancient legal texts was the primary criterion for religious excellence and community authority. For these Najafis, politicisation was a form of popularisation, and philosophy was a Trojan horse by which it was smuggled into the *Hawza*. The most eminent scholars in Najaf today, Ayatallahs Sistani, Fayyad and al-Hakim are not necessarily against all forms of philosophy being taught in the *Hawza*. Nevertheless, they certainly see the subject as potentially dangerous and misleading for young students, and have focused their own efforts on developing complex and, to most, arcane systems of jurisprudence.

These tensions and debates are all part of *Hawza* life: the *Hawza* has always been a place where ideas have been challenged and orthodoxies tested by innovatory ideas. The Hawza Project aims to produce the first detailed set of studies on the *Hawza* in a Western language. The main outputs will be three themed collections of papers from the individual research programmes sponsored by the project. These will focus on the intersection within the Hawza of 'Knowledge and Authority', the cataloguing of its 'History and Development' and an examination of its 'Future and Challenges' respectively. A need to synthesise these studies into a comprehensive history of the institution remains, but through the Project's individual studies, a framework for '*Hawza* Studies' has been established, and will hopefully provide a context for future studies.

Robert Gleave is Professor of Arabic Studies at the University of Exeter. He is the Director of the Clerical Authority in Shi'i Islam project. More information on the project can be found at www.thehawzaproject.net

Figure 2. *Seminary graduates often leave to become popular preachers. Photos: Massimilano Fusari, www.massimedia.com*

Al-Qaeda since 9/11

DR ALIA BRAHIMI

SECONDS AFTER smiling at her local MP and shaking his hand, Roshonara Choudhry plunged a knife into his stomach. The attack on Stephen Timms in May 2010 was not the most high profile assault inspired by al-Qaeda, nor was it fatal. It did, however, offer a commentary on the changing nature of the terrorist threat since 9/11, al-Qaeda's major impact on international relations as well as its major failure, and the intimate, perhaps inevitable, connection between the two.

Success

Let me begin with al-Qaeda's major impact, which is the spectacular democratisation of Islamic authority.

According to her police interview, Choudhry realised she had an obligation to join in the jihad after viewing a lecture by Abdullah Azzam on YouTube. Roshonara was especially drawn in by his explanation of how jihad becomes obligatory for every Muslim when Muslim lands are attacked. The argument is that if natives are unable to expel their attackers, the obligation spreads in the shape of a circle from the nearest to the next nearest Muslims, until jihad becomes a duty for individual Muslims anywhere and everywhere.

Al-Qaeda's leaders are eager to portray the concept of jihad as a popular uprising by individual Muslims. However, historically, the idea was for Muslim rulers in neighbouring provinces to come to the aid of their co-religionists in other parts of the empire. The assumption was always that all jihads, including defensive ones, would be led by established Muslim leaders within pre-modern states or clearly defined communities.

The architects of global jihad, however, reached out to Muslims as individuals, rather than as members of politically organised communities. In the 1990s, al-Qaeda's leaders called for Muslim individuals to come aboard and, quite literally, join them in the caravan of jihad. Going over the heads of the region's rulers and clerics, who had 'sold out the *umma* for a handful of coins', bin Laden democratised Islamic authority. A layman with no religious training, he formally declared a jihad of self-defence, and called upon his fellow Muslims to come forward individually for training and combat.

This erosion of the state monopoly on violence is an outgrowth of a larger crisis of authority in the Muslim world, which is the product of three main developments.

Firstly, the abolition of the caliphate left the Muslim world without a vestige of centralised leadership, and its absence was especially keenly felt during the era of colonialism, with its perceived onslaught on indigenous cultures and religions.

Secondly, the conservative Islamic religious establishment, the *ulama*, has either been co-opted or marginalised by regimes presiding over Muslim-majority countries. This was possible largely because their sources of independent income were usurped by regimes from Abdurahman's Afghanistan to Qadhafi's Libya.

Thirdly, and as a consequence of the weakening of the ulema, laymen have increasingly taken it upon themselves to interpret the Islamic sources. Indeed, the most influential 'Islamic' texts of the last century were penned by intellectuals, autodidacts. This process was helped along in the 20th century by mass education and broader access to the printed word, and in the 21st century by the Internet.

Bin Laden's abiding claim was that the duty of jihad had been defaulted – indeed, neglected – in a sequence of evasion. While the rulers pandered to the Crusaders, the *ulama* were beholden to the rulers. Proper Islamic authority has vanished. Bin Laden spoke repeatedly of the need 'to fill the vacuum caused by these religiously invalid regimes and their mental deficiency', and presented himself and his circle as the vanguard group willing to bear that burden and protect the Muslims' interests in accordance with a true understanding of Islam. Hence, Sayf al-Adil, an al-Qaeda military leader, identified one of the three objectives of the 9/11 attack as signalling the emergence of a new virtuous leadership dedicated to opposing the Zionist–Anglo-Saxon–Protestant coalition.

Failure

Yet as bin Laden's jihad globalised and authority dispersed, al-Qaeda fell prey to the tyranny of unintended consequences. From Baghdad to Baghlan, Amman to Algiers, al-Qaeda's victims were predominantly Muslim and civilian.

Bin Laden was unwilling, but more likely unable, to control the cycles of misdirected violence perpetrated by self-defined franchises. He spoke out publicly against senseless bloodshed and irrational fanaticism. Intercepted communications showed that he very much disapproved of the sectarian slaughter and beheadings of hostages that took place under the banner of Al-Qaeda in Iraq when it was led by Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi. Atiyeh Abdulrahman's entreaty for Zarqawi to stop anathematising the Iraqi population at large and to defer to Osama bin Laden's leadership fell on deaf ears – and some months later Zarqawi fell prey to a US air strike. I should also note that Atiyeh himself reportedly met his end in August 2011, in a Waziristan drone strike.

Bin Laden's own authority was far-reaching, no doubt, but it was simultaneously fragmented. He eroded the authority of the religious establishment and opened up the arena of Islamic interpretation, but he was unable to claim a monopoly over it himself.

The resulting failure was doctrinal.

None of bin Laden's arguments overturning the Islamic principle of civilian immunity retained its force when Muslims were the victims of al-Qaeda's attacks. In particular, the argument used for specifically Muslim casualties has it that civilians are only killed unintentionally in lawful operation conducted against legitimate targets, it's 'accidental manslaughter'. But the Muslim civilian is the direct object of attack because he is the only object of attack.

These deaths were left with no ideological cover – even from within the radical jihadi's moral universe.

The resulting failure was existential, metaphysical even.

By muddying the concept of the enemy, bin Laden's more reckless progeny confused his movement's *raison d'être*. The foundational narrative had been a poetic one of victimhood which conferred the legal duty of a defensive jihad. Al-Qaeda's mandate was clear and cogent: to defend Muslims from a Crusader onslaught. Protecting the *umma* was not only its *casus belli*, but also its existential commitment. The validity of this claim exploded alongside the scores of suicide bombers dispatched to civilian centres with the direct intention of massacring swathes of Muslim civilians.

Most importantly, however, the resulting failure was strategic.

For al-Qaeda's ideologists had always recognised the fundamental strategic importance of 'the people'. In the words of Abu Ubeid al-Qurashi, popular support is 'at the same time, the primary aim and the decisive means'. Abu Mus'ab al-Suri, a strategist of a decidedly Marxist bent, reflected at length on the mainstream aspirations of al-Qaeda's project, arguing that it was 'not possible for tens or hundreds of *mujahidun* here and there, to deter this fierce international attack… *It is absolutely necessary that the resistance transforms into a strategic phenomenon*… after the pattern of the Palestinian *intifada* … but on a broader scale, eventually comprising the entire Islamic world'. Without popular support, according to Ayman al-Zawahiri, the *mujahidin* would be 'crushed in the shadows'. Indeed, for al-Qurashi, this would render them 'no more than a criminal gang'.

Qurashi also cautioned against 'excess terrorism', recognising that 'if terrorism exceeds the bearable limit, it will result in negative outcomes' and will lead to the uncovering of revolutionary fighters. In Iraq, al-Qaeda's fighters were indeed uncovered by their excess terrorism, by the killing for killing's sake, as tens of thousands of Sunnis formed an 'Awakening' movement which led to the expulsion of hundreds of militants from the west and the north. The crisis this precipitated in al-Qaeda's ranks was described as 'extraordinary' by its leader in Anbar province, who stated that the mass defection of ordinary Sunnis led to 'the total collapse in the security structure of the organisation'. But the breakdown of al-Qaeda's project in Iraq was not only borne of excessive terrorism, but also of its failures as a self-defined government, offering a miserable, brutal quality of life where they took territory. In referencing a text on guerrilla warfare by Peter Paret and John Shy, Qurashi also noted that 'to make terrorism proper, it must be considered by the people as an effort to establish a long-awaited justice and a means to ease the government's iron fist'. In Iraq, al-Qaeda itself had become that iron fist.

This state of affairs was a far cry from the momentum and broad-based sympathy that al-Qaeda had enjoyed at the height of the US occupation of Iraq. Between 2003 and 2006 in particular, bin Laden's lyrical narrative of resistance resonated even beyond the Muslim world. A German student in my halls at Oxford once returned from a trip home sporting a bin Laden t-shirt. But, as Rik Coolsaet observes in his new volume, 'by the time of his death, al-Qaeda's mastermind no longer represented the Robin Hood icon that once stirred global fascination'.

A backlash had occurred:

- from within the ranks – for example, by al-Qaeda's commander in Northern Iraq, Abu Turab al-Jazairi, who expressed outrage at the Algiers bombing of December 2007 and insisted on the expulsion from the network of those fighters who harmed al-Qaeda's name;
- from other radicals, including bin Laden's mentor who asked him publically, whether his means had become his ends;
- from affiliated groups – as recently as June, a commander of the TTP in Pakistan split from the group declaring that he was opposed to the persistent targeting of Pakistani civilians in mosques and markets;
- from reformed souls, such as Sayyed Imam al-Sharif and Noman Benotman, with the latter noting in an open letter that 'where there was harmony, you brought discord' – a statement tantamount to the charge of sowing '*fitna*'.

It's not inconsequential, indeed it's no coincidence, that much of this criticism simultaneously cast doubt on bin Laden's personal authority to lead a jihad. While al-Odah dismissed bin Laden as a simple man without scholarly credentials, Benotman strongly advised bin Laden to seek the guidance of authentic scholars. He also confirmed that there had been a dispute between Mullah Omar and bin Laden about the decision to attack America, and asked: 'How can you claim to fight for an Islamic state and then so flagrantly disobey the ruler you helped put into place… The question asked by many, even among the closed group was, by what right did al-Qaeda bypass and ignore Mullah Omar?'

And, I might add, based on the central concern recurring in all the criticisms of al-Qaeda, moderate and radical, which invoked the pragmatic/consequentialist strain of the Islamic jihad tradition: for what?

New moon

But what of the way forward for al-Qaeda, ten years on from 9/11?

If the link between democratised authority and promiscuous targeting presented the gravest problem for al-Qaeda, then the further dispersion of authority is also seen as the solution.

Over the last year or so, the call for jihad has altered subtly, but significantly. The democratisation of authority has entered a second stage. A new ideological and strategic current is championing lone-wolf attacks by Muslim individuals living in the west, without prior contact with al-Qaeda networks or consultation with any of its radical jurists.

Lately, al-Qaeda's strategists view the Muslim population in the west as their ace in the hole. As Adam Gadahn argued in a recent video appearance, Muslims in the west are perfectly placed to play an important and decisive role, particularly as America is awash with easily obtainable firearms.

Further, individual operations are much harder to detect and intercept because, as al-Qaeda's *Inspire* magazine points out, nobody else in the world needs to know what these lone operatives are thinking and planning. The global jihad becomes at once universal and highly particularised.

Most importantly, from a strategic perspective, such operations shift al-Qaeda's violence out of the Islamic world and into the western heartland. The aim is to get back to basics. A few successful examples are routinely put forward as models for this re-invented *jihad al-fard* (individual jihad):

- Taimour al-Abdeli, who detonated a car bomb and his own suicide bomb in Stockholm;
- Major Nidal Hassan, the US military psychiatrist who went on a shooting rampage at the Fort Hood army base in Texas;
- and Roshonara Choudhry, who had no contact with any radical recruiters or cells, and plotted her attack on Timms entirely alone.

The emergence of the strain of thought privileging terrorism by individuals coincides with the rise of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), whose English-language publications are vigorously re-imagining the landscapes of jihad.

The glossy pages of *Inspire* magazine increasingly advocate 'individual terrorism'. In a recent letters section, an anonymous Muslim living in the west asks about the best way to reach the jihad frontiers. Stay where you are, he is advised, and focus on planning an operation in the west instead, like attacking an army recruitment centre or a nightclub. A few pages later, the military commander Abu Hureirah calls for an 'operation in their midst' in response to every attack in a Muslim land. The recurring 'Open Source Jihad' section advises on how to outfit a pickup truck with blades so that it can be used to mow down enemies (Issue II) and on how to make a bomb in your mum's kitchen – it's worth noting that this article was in the possession of Naser Jason Abdo, the US solider arrested last month in Texas for allegedly planning to replicate the Fort Hood shootings.

Also associated with AQAP is the charismatic preacher Anwar al-Awlaki, whose fluent English, soft intonation and sharp wit were directed conscientiously at Muslims living in the west. A trained cleric, his religious addresses were suffused cleverly with a very articulate brand of anti-imperial politics. Awlaki was in email contact with Nidal Hassan and his sermons were found on Choudhry's computer. Awlaki captured well the extremes of this second stage of democratisation when he stated on 8 November last year that no *fatwa* or prior consultation with Islamic experts was necessary to 'fight and kill Americans'.

Awlaki's father defended him against terrorism charges by observing that, unlike Osama bin Laden, his son was not a fighter but merely a preacher. However, therein lay Awlaki's potency as al-Qaeda's non-conventional combat doctrine enters a new phase. In the era of individual terrorism, the power to inspire is the most significant force multiplier.

The 'western lone wolf' strategy began to take root, in the US in particular, and it was al-Awlaki's face that appeared in al-Qaeda's new moon. Carlos Bledsoe, a Memphis native, shot two people outside an army recruiting office in Arkansas, from a car containing Awlaki literature. Zachary Adam Chesser, who was convicted of encouraging attacks on the creators of South Park, had posted Awlaki's messages on websites. Michael C. Finton, who attempted to bomb the offices of an Congressman, quoted Awlaki on his MySpace page. Others believed to have lionised Awlaki include Abu Khadir Abdul Latif, Faisal Shahzad, Sharif Mobley, Colleen LaRose ('Jihad Jane'), the 2006 Ontario bomb suspects and the Fort Dix attack plotters. As a result, the US's latest counterterrorism strategy is 'the first that focuses on the ability of al-Qaeda and its networks to inspire people in the US to attack us from within', according to Obama's counter-terrorism chief.

Needless to say, Awlaki's death in a drone strike on 30 September 2011 constituted an important setback in al-Qaeda's attempt to radicalise an English-speaking constituency. Samir Khan, a Saudi national who grew up in North Carolina and New York, might have adopted Awlaki's mantle and continued his work in this regard, but he was killed in the same strike. An al-Qaeda statement which confirmed their deaths described them foremost as 'two brothers... who have done an enormous amount of work to spread glad tidings to English-speaking Muslims across the globe'. Awlaki's propaganda is still readily available online and, although he cannot now respond to unfolding events in his characteristically incisive way or build up personal online relationships with would-be bombers, in important respects his message lives on.

At the same time, some potential heirs have presented themselves. On 8 October 2011, for example, the Syrian-American Al-Shabaab spokesman Omar Hammami released an audiotape which clearly aimed to immediately pick up where Awlaki left off. Speaking in his distinctive Alabama drawl and referencing Slim Fast commercials,

Hammami urged westerners leading self-centred, spiritually empty lives to find meaning in jihad, without waiting for the approval of clerics (an affliction he dubs 'the scholar fixation'). Another candidate for the role of western propagandist is the Austrian national, Mohamed Mahmoud. Freshly released from prison, having completed a four-year sentence for running al-Qaeda's German media arm and for making terrorist threats, Mahmoud publically declared his intention to return to spreading al-Qaeda's worldview. We can expect that effort, from Mahmoud, Hammami and others, to carry a marked preoccupation with a western audience.

The intention here is not alarmism about terrorism, but in fact, optimism. Its changing nature aims to play to our weaknesses by regenerating the jihadi threat with a native grasp of language, culture and environment – but in the end it will play to our strengths. In many ways, as conflict shapes opponents, so the law-enforcement paradigm has been thrust upon us by the enemy. And we're good at it. Even the successful operation which killed 9/11's mastermind erred significantly from the inter-state war paradigm – unfolding, as it did, as a covert, surgical, intelligence-led mission carefully conducted by a specialised unit within a US-allied country. Crucially, however, this shift frees us from our own counter-productivity. Most of the 'individual terrorists' I mentioned cited the long wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as integral to mission and motivation.

Conclusion

Before he died, the *umma* had stolen bin Laden's thunder. The global jihad is still twisting in the breeze of the Arab spring. Moreover, in contrast to the AQAP strategy, communications uncovered at the Abottabad compound suggest that Zawahiri has been in favour of more localised attacks, in Iraq and in East Africa.

And so, the re-invention by Osama bin Laden of one of the most important Islamic legal ideas, on right authority, has bequeathed more than doctrinal disarray. It has also guaranteed fragmentation, and perhaps fracture, within al-Qaeda's own authority structures – which may well define its future.

Dr Alia Brahimi is a Research Fellow in the Civil Society and Human Security Research Unit at the London School of Economics. She is also a Senior Research Associate in the Changing Character of War Programme at the University of Oxford.

This article is an updated version of Dr Brahimi's remarks for a symposium on '9/11: Ten Years On', hosted by the British Academy on 2 September 2011.

AT AN EVENT held at the British Academy on 11 October 2011, Dr Omar Ashour (University of Exeter) and Professor Charles Tripp (School of Oriental and African Studies) discussed **'The Egyptian Revolution of 2011'**.

Dr Ashour said: 'On 11 February 2011, Mubarak was removed; on 12 February, I tweeted, "First day on Mother Earth without Mubarak controlling Egypt. I'm breathing much better". Most of the revolutionary and political forces in Egypt saw this as a success, especially as the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) had promised from the outset to put an end to authoritarianism and to dictatorship, and to move towards a democratic transition in Egypt. Expectations were high and there was a timeframe of six months for the transition. That was in March 2011. Based on those promises, Egypt should now have an elected government, but it does not, and it is still in the transitional phase, with the SCAF as the ultimate authority.

Dr Ashour explained: 'The lack of leadership during the resistance campaign in January and February 2011 was a source of strength. No leadership could have been eliminated, because there was none: it was a headless revolution. Now, however, it is increasingly a source of weakness, because the revolution cannot move forward without leadership. It seems evident to the military that they are the more coherent and sophisticated actors. Every time other political forces negotiate with them, it usually comes out with the SCAF being on top.'

Dr Ashour also drew attention to 'the increasing crackdowns in response to protests by different components of Egyptian society', creating 'a situation that is quite volatile'.

An audio recording of the full discussion can be found via www.britac.ac.uk/events/2011/

Free will and modern science

The British Academy has just published a volume of papers, 'Free Will and Modern Science', illustrating the present state of the debate about whether humans have free will. The volume's editor, ***Professor Richard Swinburne FBA****, discusses some of the issues.*

THE OUTBURST OF looting, vandalism and arson in various British cities in August 2011 produced a spectrum of attitudes towards the rioters. There were commentators who claimed that the rioters were wicked; what they did was entirely 'their fault'. They were 'morally responsible' for their conduct and 'deserved' to be punished severely. Then there were commentators who claimed that, although to some extent the rioters were 'responsible' and 'deserved' punishment, nonetheless what happened was not entirely their fault. The rioters were the children of absent fathers, had never had paid employment, lived in areas with no social or cultural facilities, and were subject to the influence of gangs. So they only 'deserved' a small punishment. And finally there were those commentators who thought that the rioters were entirely the product of their environment, and 'you can't blame them for what they did'.

Implicitly (but hardly ever explicitly) each of these groups were committing themselves to a certain theory of free will. 'Free will' is a philosophers' term, and can be defined in various ways; but I think that the most useful understanding of 'free will' for this kind of context is that someone has free will if (and only if) they are morally responsible for their intentional actions. Being 'morally responsible' for our actions means being 'morally guilty' for doing what is wrong (or perhaps only what we believe to be wrong); and 'morally meritorious' for doing what is good (or perhaps only what we believe to be good), especially if we have no obligation to do it. So the first two groups of commentators were both committed to the view that the rioters had some degree of free will – though for the second group the free will was of a limited kind – while the third group would have denied the rioters had any free will at all. And that leads us straight into the two big issues about free will over which philosophers, scientists, and theologians have agonised over the past two and a half thousand years. The first issue is what we would need to be like in body and mind in order to have the requisite sort of freedom – for example, is it necessary that our actions should not be totally predetermined by our brain states? And the second issue is what we are actually like in body and mind – what kind of freedom do we have? Two of the three main philosophical positions available today on the first issue were implicit in writings 2,500 years ago; but recent philosophical discussions have made them much clearer and sharper and so sometimes more persuasive. But many scientists (and popular expositors of their work) think that recent scientific discoveries have put us in a far better position than any earlier generation to reach a definitive view on the second issue.

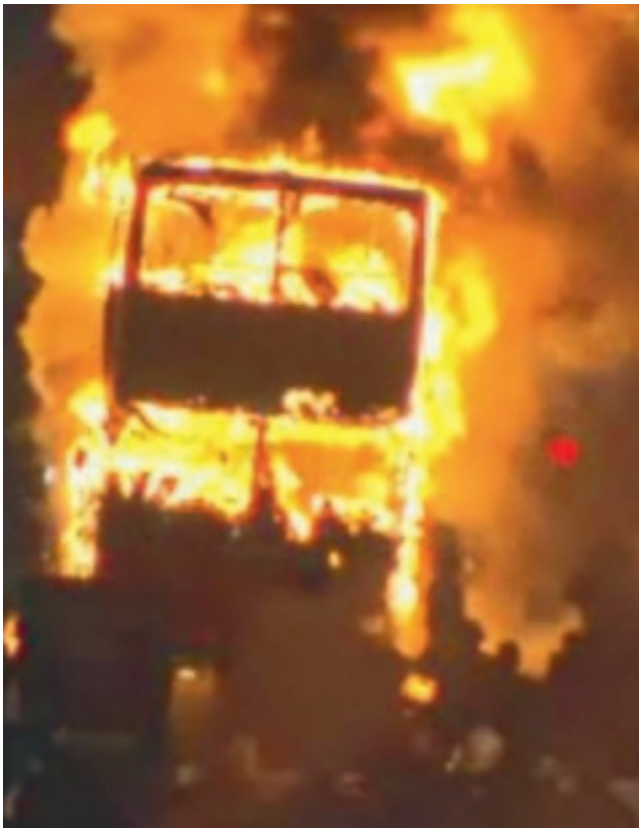


Figure 1. *A double-decker bus is set ablaze, 8 August 2011. Image: VOA TV (Wikipedia Commons).*

Three philosophical views

The most natural view on the first issue is to say that, in order to have the requisite kind of free will, it is necessary and sufficient that our intentional actions are not fully caused by preceding events which we do not ourselves cause. This was the view – in my opinion – of almost all Christian theologians before Augustine,[1] of Duns Scotus,

[1] See for example Irenaeus: 'God made man a free [agent] from the beginning, possessing his own power … to obey the behests of God voluntarily, and not by compulsion of God… But if some had been made bad, and others good, these latter would not be deserving of praise for being good, for such they were created; nor would the former be reprehensible, for thus they were made [originally]'. *Against Heresies*, 4.37, trans. A. Roberts, *The Writings of Irenaeus* vol. 2 (Edinburgh: J&T Clark, 1869), pp. 36-37.

of the Council of Trent and so of all subsequent Catholic theologians, and of all Eastern Orthodox theologians; and of course also of many atheists, agnostics and advocates of other religions. The view that the absence of full causation is a necessary condition for free will is called 'incompatibilism'; free will is incompatible with determinism. And many incompatibilists hold that the absence of such causation is sufficient to make our intentional actions free. This view nevertheless allows the possibility that our possession of free will is a matter of degree; our free will is less insofar as our actions are influenced, though not fully determined, by nature and nurture – our genes predisposing us to behave in a certain kind of way, or our environment making it difficult for us to resist peer pressure.

Then secondly there is the view, of which there are many subtle variants, that we are free if (and only if) our actions are the result of a choice which is in some way rational and not the result of 'compulsion'. So long as we are doing what we want to do and we have some reason for doing, and no one is coercing us to do the action, any action of ours is free. This is usually thought to rule out from being 'free', not merely actions that we do in response to threats (e.g., threats to kill or torture us), but also actions that we are 'psychologically compelled' to do (e.g., as a result of a drug addiction which the agent wishes that he did not have). But on this view we still have 'free will' when we do actions that we want to do and have a reason for doing, even if the effect on us of our wants and reasons is totally determined by our brain events (or by anything else such as God). This has been the view of a minority among Christians, who have thought that while God predetermines all our actions, we are nevertheless morally responsible for the bad ones. I include among this minority Augustine (in his later writings), Aquinas (in some of his writing) and some classical Protestants. But its best known philosophical exponents were Hobbes and Hume.[2] The view is called 'compatibilism' , because it claims that free will is 'compatible' with scientific determinism.

A third view has however become prominent in recent years: the view that free will is an illusion. On this view if our actions are fully caused by previous events, we are not responsible for them; and if they are not so caused, then it is a matter of chance which actions we perform, and so again we are not responsible for them. There could not – on this view – be such a thing as moral responsi-bility in the stated sense, and so no one could 'deserve' to be punished. We may call this view the 'illusion view'. It could still be the case on this view that it would be good for the state to punish wrongdoers, if such punishment served a useful utilitarian function – e.g. deterring others from committing similar crimes, or reforming the criminals; but the punishment would not be 'deserved'. Each of these views on the first issue are represented in the *Free Will and Modern Science* volume.

Scientific discoveries

But what sort of free will do we have? Until recently the views which thinkers held on this issue were derived from their overall world-views. Those theologians who thought that God sent to Hell some people who knowingly did wicked actions, and that he would not do so if their actions were caused by factors outside their control, held the view that our actions were not always so caused. Those philosophers and scientists who thought that every event has a cause, drew the conclusion that all human actions are caused by a chain of events going back to events quite outside the agent's control. But in recent years, and especially in the last 25 years, two or three scientific discoveries have had a great influence on the discussions of the extent to which and the way in which our intentional actions are predetermined.

The first of these discoveries is Quantum Theory, which in its most common interpretation has the consequence that the fundamental laws of physics are not fully deterministic. Normally of course indeterminism on a small scale will average out so as to produce virtual determinism on a large scale. For example, if it were a totally indeterministic matter whether a coin landed heads or tails – if there was a physical probability (an inbuilt bias) of a half that the coin would land heads each time it was tossed, and a probability of a half that it would land tails – then in a million tosses, it would be very probable indeed that the proportion of tosses of heads would be very close to a half. But it is possible to have large-scale processes whose outcome is determined by very small-scale processes; for example scientists could construct a hydrogen bomb such that whether or not it exploded was determined by whether some atom which had a physical probability of one half of decaying within an hour, decayed within that time. Then it would be a totally chance matter (with a physical probability of a half) whether the bomb would explode. Now there is some plausibility in supposing that the brain is a system in which small-scale events not fully determined by previous brain events (and so perhaps themselves caused by uncaused decisions) cause our intentional actions. But the common interpretation of Quantum Theory remains open to dispute; and neuroscientists simply do not know nearly enough about the brain to know if the brain is a system in which small-scale brain events not caused by previous brain events cause our intentional actions. One paper in *Free Will and Modern Science* justifies this latter agnostic conclusion.

But the greatest influence on recent discussions of the second issue has come from another area of recent neuroscience. Almost everyone agrees that if we are to hold people morally responsible for their actions, it must be the case that their conscious intentions (via their brain events) cause those actions. If a rioter is to have the kind of free will which makes him morally responsible for looting a shop, it must be that he consciously intended to loot the shop; and that his conscious intention caused the brain events that caused the movements of his legs and arms that constituted

[2] Hobbes wrote that a person's freedom consists in his finding that he has 'no stop in doing what he has the will, desire, or inclination to do' (Thomas Hobbes *Leviathan* 2.21.) And Hume wrote that, 'when applied to voluntary actions', 'by liberty ... we can only mean a power of acting or not acting according to the determinations of the will; that is, if we choose to remain at rest, we may; if we choose to move, we also may.' David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Section 8, Part I.

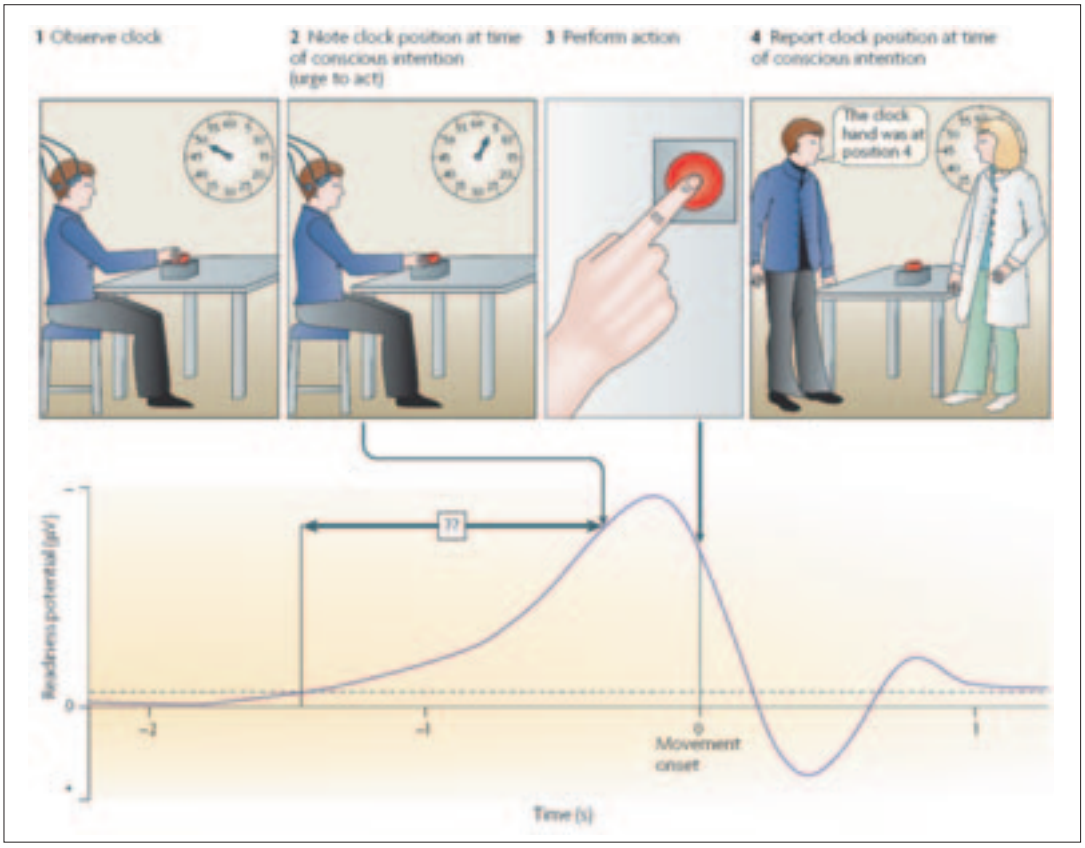


Figure 1. *Schematic representation of the Libet experiment. Source: P. Haggard, 'Conscious intention and motor cognition',* Trends in Cognitive Sciences, *9:6 (2005), 290-5.*

looting. But a now famous series of experiments performed by Benjamin Libet in the 1980s and frequently repeated by others has been interpreted by many neuroscientists as showing that our conscious intentions make no difference to which bodily movements we make. A typical Libet-type experiment has the following form (Figure 1). Subjects sitting at desks are told to move a hand at some moment of their choice within a period of 20 seconds; during the 20 seconds they watch a very fast clock, and are told to note and subsequently report the instant at which they formed the 'intention' to move the hand. Wires attached to their skulls record changes of electric potential on the skull. Libet discovered that there was almost always a build-up of electric potential on a subject's skull half a second before the time (as reported by the subject) at which the subject formed their intention to move their hand. The very strong correlation between this readiness potential and subsequent hand movements was interpreted as showing that the brain events which caused the build-up of potential also caused the hand movements. Many neuroscientists have claimed that this result obtained from the study of quick actions in a morally unimportant situation shows that all our intentions in all situations are mere 'epiphenomenona', in no way influencing our behaviour. Various new technologies for discovering which parts of the brain are active when has led to detailed experimental work in many neuroscience laboratories revealing further correlations of this kind, between prior brain events and subsequent bodily movements.

Some neuroscientists and many philosophers have, however, cast doubt on whether these experimental results show what has been claimed. We do not know whether or not even in a Libet-type experiment prior brain events producing the characteristic readiness potential sometimes occur without being followed by the bodily movements, and so whether the brain events merely indicate that the subject is considering making the movement rather than actually initiating it. And anyway even if there is a deterministic process operative, why not suppose that the brain event indicated by the readiness potential causes the intention, and the intention causes the bodily movements?

Conscious events

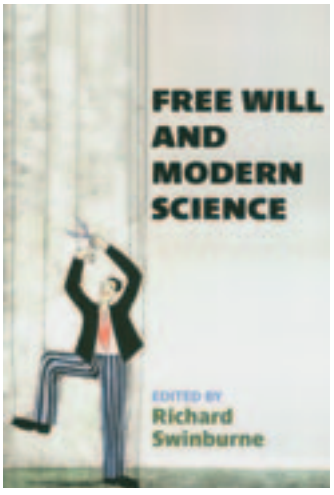
My own view is that a great deal depends, both for how these experiments are to be interpreted and more generally for whether our intentional actions are fully caused by brain events, on the solution to another great philosophical issue, lurking in the background. This is the issue central to the mind/body problem, of what is the nature of conscious events (sensations, thoughts, decisions etc.). If conscious events just are brain events, then everything we do – insofar as it determined – is determined merely by brain events in accord with physical laws; and that to my mind would rule out free will. But surely a visitor from another planet with a very different kind of body from ours could find out just as well as we can what is

happening in our brains, but would still want to know whether we felt anything if he stuck a pin in us. What he would not know merely from the study of our brains and behaviour is what (if any) sensations, thoughts and intentions we are having; and that strongly suggests that these must be thought of as conscious events distinct from the brain events which clearly often cause them.

Given that point (constituting 'mind/brain event dualism'), it seems to me that we can only believe what the subjects in Libet-type experiments tell us about the time at which they formed their intentions (which provides the evidence for the radical interpretation of those experiments), if we believe that the subjects tell us what they do (e.g., 'I formed my intention when the clock read 4.05 secs') because they are conscious of their intentions and have the intention to tell us the truth about them. In other words, we can only justifiably come to believe that a subject's intention to move a hand doesn't cause the hand movement if we also believe that their intention to tell the truth does cause the words reporting it ('I formed my intention when the clock read 4.05 secs') to come out of their mouth. And so more generally, we can only have evidence that sometimes our intentions do not cause (via our brain events) our bodily movements, if we presuppose that sometimes our intentions do cause (via our brain events) our bodily movements. So we could never have any justification for not believing what seems to us as we act to be manifestly the case, that at least sometimes our intentions cause our brain events and thereby our bodily intentions. If these points about the separate existence of conscious events and their causal influence on the brain were accepted, it would move the discussion into the issue of how and when our brain events cause quite separate conscious events, and how and when conscious events cause the brain events which cause bodily movements. This would require a scientific theory of a totally different kind from the kind of theory normally studied by physicists, an enormous scientific revolution of a magnitude compared to which a discovery by physicists that there can be signals faster than light would be very insignificant. Hence of course the strong inclination to deny mind/brain event dualism! Just look where that takes you!

But even if our intentions cause our brain events, and some of those intentions are not themselves fully caused by brain events (which would require the brain to be an indeterministic system), would that be enough to make us morally responsible? The mere absence of a causal chain doesn't seem to me enough to make us morally responsible. In my view it would have to be the case when our intentions are said to cause our bodily movements, the more accurate description is that we intentionally cause those movements. It would have to be the case that an agent, not a mere conscious event connected to the agent's body, does the causing, if the agent is to be morally responsible for their actions. And when we reflect on what is involved in 'trying', when we try to do a difficult bodily action – for example, to pronounce a difficult word or to lift a heavy weight – it does seem that the 'trying' just is us intentionally exercising causal influence. My view is that if and only if agents consciously cause their intentional actions and are not fully caused to do so by other events, do they have free will; and I share the view of the second group of commentators mentioned earlier that free will is a matter of degree, and that the free will of many of the rioters was of a fairly limited degree.

Richard Swinburne is Emeritus Nolloth Professor of the Philosophy of the Christian Religion at the University of Oxford, and a Fellow of the British Academy.



Free Will and Modern Science, edited by Richard Swinburne, is a British Academy Original Paperback. More information can be found via www.britac.ac.uk/pubs/

Re-imagining policing post-austerity

PROFESSOR ANDREW MILLIE AND DR KAREN BULLOCK

THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS continues to send shock waves through the banking, business and public sectors. The associated financial constraints on the public sector in the UK, as in many other countries, need no introduction. Criminal justice agencies have not been immune to significant budget cuts and the Coalition government's 2010 spending review called for police budgets to be reduced by 20 per cent. As a result, the police service is being asked to deliver the same level of service with considerably less resources. This has led to widespread public and political debate regarding what the police can realistically deliver, the implications for the numbers of police (and other) officers 'on the beat' and ultimately for order maintenance and crime control. However, as the state contracts the clear hope of the Coalition is that, through the mechanisms of the so-called 'Big Society' project, the private sector, volunteers and community groups will step in to fill any void. The emphasis is on 'bottom-up' governance of policing problems rather than 'top-down' central government control, a philosophy exemplified by the introduction of directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners, with the first elections scheduled for November 2012.

It is no exaggeration to say that these are particularly challenging times for the police service. Given this context we felt this is the perfect time to reconsider what policing is about and to re-imagine policing post-austerity. We received British Academy funding for a seminar held at the Academy on 27 September 2011 with the title: 'Policing in a time of contraction and constraint: Re-imagining the role and function of contemporary policing'. The seminar was not primarily concerned with considering whether the police can deliver the same level of service with less. Instead, given the scale of the challenges ahead, it considered: is it time to re-imagine the role and function of the police service, the mechanisms through which policing is delivered, and how police priorities are determined?

The seminar was attended by some of the top policing scholars in the country, as well as representatives from the police, the Home Office, the National Policing Improvement Agency and other interested parties.[1] In this article some initial reflections are presented on the main themes of the seminar. The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of other seminar participants.

Re-imagining the nature of the policing task

In the first instance the seminar considered the nature of the contemporary policing task. The policing task is multi-faceted and the police service is expected to deal with a multitude of crime and other problems. From tackling anti-social behaviour, crime prevention and detection, public order, reassurance, traffic, serious crime, through to responding to terrorist threats, the police service is at the heart of society's response to wide-ranging social problems. Furthermore, the rioting and looting of August 2011 remind us that the police are called on to mobilise resources quickly to deal with unexpected incidents and problems. In recent history Chief Constables have had considerable success in asking government for greater police numbers to meet these challenges. It remains to be seen if they are able to use the scenes of widespread disorder in the summer to argue that they need at least to retain current levels of investment in front-line officers. The populist politics that call for 'more bobbies on the beat' had dictated that a reduction in police numbers was a no-go area for government (perhaps until now). From 1977 to 2009 the Police Service Strength in England and Wales grew by over 30 per cent. This was at a time when the population of England and Wales grew by 10 per cent. This expansion is remarkable as it came at a time of increased competition for security services. As other providers have increased, it would be logical to expect the state police to have decreased in size; yet the opposite occurred. Furthermore, the expansion continued despite all measures of crime falling from the mid-1990s onwards. In effect there was less core business, yet the number of officers continued to rise.

Whilst demand for policing may have fallen in general terms, it may well be argued that crime problems have become increasingly more complex, requiring the development and application of specialist teams. For example, contemporary terrorist threats have required that the police develop new and, potentially, specialist skills. As well as becoming more specialist, the police service has

[1] Papers were presented by Ben Bowling (King's College London), Simon Holdaway (University of Sheffield), Robert Reiner (London School of Economics), Mike Hough (Birkbeck, University of London), Nick Tilley (University College London), as well as ourselves, Andrew Millie (Edge Hill University) and Karen Bullock (University of Surrey). Discussion was led by Betsy Stanko (Metropolitan Police), John Graham (the Police Foundation), and P.A.J. Waddington (University of Wolverhampton). Some of the papers presented at the seminar will be collected in a special issue of the British Society of Criminology's journal, *Criminology and Criminal Justice*. Further presentation at the Home Office is also planned.

increasingly moved into diverse spheres of public service. Under successive New Labour administrations, the last decade has witnessed an expansion in Neighbourhood Policing with the purpose to provide greater visible reassurance to communities. Consequently we have witnessed the explosion of 'quasi' police officers who have different levels of powers and responsibilities – Police Community Support Officers being a case in point. But policing has diffused into other non-traditional roles and responsibilities – symptomatic of the wider criminalisation of social policy, or more specifically the 'policification'[2] of social policy. For instance, the police have been increasingly involved in offender supervision/probation work; school discipline and truancy patrols; youth work; contracted security work; disaster management and family liaison; plus other neighbourhood and partnership responsibilities. In the context of enforced contraction, what the police service takes responsibility for needs to be reappraised. Put simply, the police cannot do everything, but nor do they need to be doing everything. One answer may be a return to what constitutes core policing tasks. There is disagreement over what core policing entails, and it is clear that society calls on the police to deal with wide-ranging problems. However the core remit of the police is generally agreed to involve, to varying degrees, the maintenance of public order and the control of crime. How widely or narrowly order maintenance and crime control are defined will dictate the roles and responsibilities adopted by the police service. If a narrow definition is adopted then others will, of course, need to take up the slack. And while voluntary organisations and the wider public sector have similarly to cope with austerity, it may be too much to expect them to fill the gap. The Coalition government is promoting its 'Big Society' project, but without support it is difficult to imagine who will have the capacity to take on such a mantle. These are points we return to later in this article.

Re-imagining mechanisms through which policing is delivered

If there is a case for reimagining the roles and functions of the police service, then the question becomes who should decide what they are? Through what mechanisms should priorities for policing be determined? The Coalition is introducing elected Police and Crime Commissioners who will determine local priorities for policing. The hope is that these will improve local accountability, transparency and render the service more responsive to local concerns. The role that democracy could play in determining the functions of the police service was considered in the seminar, but also the limitations. For many, public input in public services is problematic, as those with greatest political capital are inevitably more engaged, and minority and marginalised populations often most excluded. Furthermore, young people (disproportionately the targets of police attention) are, by definition, excluded from democratic election processes. There is also danger in introducing a political process that populist agendas will dominate election campaigns. As highlighted recently by Rick Muir and Ian Loader,[3] having directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners creates 'risks of politicizing policing and of subjecting minority groups to populist crackdowns on crime'. The political and media debates that followed the summer 2011 rioting and looting clearly demonstrate that there is little agreement regarding how best to respond to crime and disorder, especially in respect to that committed by young people. Yet the populist call is inevitably for more punitive measures.

While there are risks in adopting such a democratic model for policing, there are also possible gains in respect to improved legitimacy. However, this too cannot be assumed. In his paper Mike Hough suggested that successful policing – at least in respect to securing the legitimacy of the police task – probably has more to do with procedural justice and ensuring that all citizens are treated fairly and respectfully. Whatever the arguments for or against elected Commissioners, the first are due to be elected by the end of 2012. In considering the role Commissioners play in securing the legitimacy of policing, important issues will be: the extent to which 'populist' policies come to dominate;

[2] Cf. H. Kemshall and M. Maguire, 'Public protection, partnership and risk penalty: The multi-agency risk management of sexual and violent offenders', *Punishment and Society*, 3:2 (2001), 237-264.

[3] R. Muir and I. Loader, *Progressive Police and Crime Commissioners: An Opportunity for the Centre-Left* (London: Institute for Public Policy Research, 2011). Available at: www.ippr.org/articles/56/7957/progressive-police-and-crime-commissioners-an-opportunity-for-the-centre-left

the extent to which minority and marginalised groups (including young people) participate in democratic processes so that they can be considered *truly* reflective of a 'Big Society'; and the extent to which the resultant policing is characterised by fairness and respect for all.

Re-imagining the way policing priorities are determined

The introduction of elected Commissioners will inevitably have an impact on the way policing priorities are determined. However, those newly elected will have a tough job marrying election promises with diminished policing budgets. If the police service retreats from delivering certain roles and functions, given the aforementioned points, then what or whom fills the void?

The Coalition's 'Big Society' project has made much of the potential for the private sector and volunteers to provide functions as the state contracts. In particular, the 'third sector' and communities themselves are increasingly encouraged to be involved in policing. The model of Neighbourhood Policing – introduced by New Labour and currently adopted across England and Wales – has at its core the involvement of residents in policing decisions through various public meetings and consultations. Such 'bottom-up' involvement fits neatly with 'Big Society' agendas; and regular beat meetings are proposed under Coalition plans.[4] However, concerns have been raised about the extent to which citizens get involved in such forms of direct democratic processes. There is by now a relatively long history of police-public consultation, and it is clear that it is difficult to persuade a cross-section of the community to engage with the police service both in terms of setting the agenda for policing and providing services. Whilst *some* citizens have certainly taken to *some* policing initiatives – such as Neighbourhood Watch – involvement in other forms of provision may well be much harder to achieve. Indeed, in her paper Karen Bullock provided empirical evidence to demonstrate that public participation in neighbourhood policing is low and, even where there is active participation, police officers do not always take the public's concerns on board. It is also difficult, she argued, to persuade citizens to get involved in actively providing policing services within the community. On top of this, the police themselves may be sceptical about what communities can achieve. The notions of both accountability and responsibilisation embedded in the Neighbourhood Policing model thereby have to be questioned. More generally, Simon Holdaway's paper provided a warning that attempts to re-orient the activities of police officers, and so the police service, may be mediated by the occupational culture of the service. Classic studies on policing from the 1960s onwards have found that police occupational cultures are resistant to change.[5] Whilst some question the characterisation of policing as 'monolithic' and unchanging, recent ethnographic research by Bethan Loftus[6] has found that police cultures are *still* often resistant to change. If the way policing priorities are determined is to be re-imagined, then so too must the culture of the police.

Conclusions

Like other public and private sector organisations, the police in the UK have to make cuts in budgetary expenditure. Where these cuts come is a difficult decision and will be a major concern inherited by the new Police and Crime Commissioners. However, rather than seeing the cuts solely as a problem, they also provide the opportunity to reconsider what policing should be about. Post-austerity policing may need to be leaner and fitter, but it might also be better focused on core order maintenance and crime control responsibilities. Furthermore, it might be better able to respond to public demands (so long as it is not tempted by populism).

Over recent years a process of 'policification' has been witnessed, where the police's roles and responsibilities have expanded to cover other non-traditional duties. These are areas where contraction could (and perhaps should?) occur. Others will need to take up the slack, and the Coalition's 'Big Society' project might provide the vehicle for this to occur. Yet, in the current state of austerity, tough political decisions will be needed to provide support for those who get involved.

Mechanisms for citizen involvement in policing decisions already exist through the Neighbourhood Policing project. The danger with Neighbourhood Policing – and other public consultation or involvement – is that it can attract the 'usual suspects', those with sufficient political capital rather than marginalised or minority groups. Young people in particular are often excluded. If the police are to respond to public demands, this needs to be inclusive of all publics whose views and experiences need to be taken seriously. For various cultural, pragmatic or other reasons, the police may not always take recommendations on board.

An important consideration for post-austerity policing will be fairness and respect for all. An emphasis on 'procedural justice' may be the way forward – that those who encounter the police feel their concerns are treated seriously and that all are treated equally. Whether this will be a priority for the new Police and Crime Commissioners, we shall wait and see.

Andrew Millie is Professor of Criminology, Edge Hill University, and Dr Karen Bullock is a Lecturer in Criminology, University of Surrey.

[4] Home Office, *Policing in the 21st Century: Reconnecting Police and the People*, Cm 7925 (London: The Stationery Office, 2010).

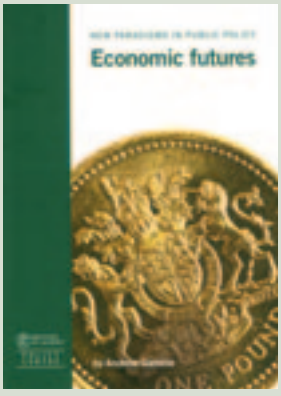
[5] See e.g. R. Reiner, *The Politics of the Police, Fourth Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[6] B. Loftus, *Police Culture in a Changing World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

NEW PARADIGMS IN PUBLIC POLICY

A series of reports published by the British Academy Policy Centre, examines some of the most important issues currently facing policymakers and suggests that to tackle the political, economic and societal challenges in 21st-century Britain, policymakers will need to adapt and reconsider their approach. The most recent reports to be published in this series investigate the highly topical issues of how to respond to the financial crisis and balancing the pressures on public spending.

The financial crash of 2007 and 2008 brought to an end a long period of growth and stability in the British economy and has sparked widespread scepticism of economic forecasting for its failure to predict the crisis.



In his report, ***Economic Futures***, Professor Andrew Gamble FBA argues that the social sciences, specifically political economy, can offer value to policymakers by alerting them to a range of potential policies that are available, and by encouraging a deeper debate.

It is still uncertain how the British economic recovery will play out, but Andrew Gamble concludes that the scale of the political and economic challenges ahead suggests the need for an enhanced, rather than a diminished role, for government. Many of the problems we face are political not economic, and government action is needed to find the rules and frameworks that can enhance political co-operation at national and international levels, and maintain popular consent.

In ***Squaring the public policy circle: Managing a mismatch between demand and resources***, Professor Peter Taylor-Gooby FBA examines the continuing problem of balancing pressures on public spending and the real challenges this presents for our democracy. The dilemma between growing public demands for services that meet a diverse range of needs and the pressures to contain spending has been a feature of public policy debate for at least 30 years and it seems likely it will play a continuing role in shaping the context of policymaking.

Although new ways of addressing this problem have been developed – such as shifting responsibility from government to the individual or to the private and voluntary sectors for various areas of provision, and attempts to change people's behaviour to reduce demands – none have been wholly successful.

Peter Taylor-Gooby argues that the failure to balance these pressures, and the evident mismatch between the promises contained in policy platforms and the outcomes experienced in ordinary people's lives, have led to a further decline in trust in politicians. While our political traditions are not well adapted to considered discussion of unattractive policy choices, politicians must encourage a more informed and genuinely democratic public debate that faces up to the difficulties inherent in managing these pressures. Without such a debate, it is hard to see how the political leadership can recapture public trust.

The two reports are available to download via: www.britac.ac.uk/policy/

The future of social sciences and humanities in Horizon 2020

Horizon 2020 will be the EU's new programme for research and innovation running from 2014 to 2020, bringing together all EU research and innovation funding under a common strategic framework, with a proposed budget of 80 million Euro. The British Academy has been a prominent voice in the consultation period, to ensure that the social sciences and humanities are reflected fully in the framework. At an event held at the British Academy on 10 November 2011, and organised in collaboration with ALLEA (All European Academies), ***Máire Geoghegan-Quinn****, European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science, addressed an audience of key figures representing the international social science and humanities research community from over 20 countries.*

IT'S A PLEASURE to be here today at the British Academy, one of Europe's leading research institutions, and a well-known champion of the social sciences and humanities.

The European economy, and indeed the world economy, are facing threats that have not been seen for several generations. Energy and resources are becoming scarcer and more expensive as we consume more. The internet and social networking are changing the way we work, interact and communicate.

These are just some of the challenges that we face. We need the social sciences and humanities to examine, interpret and understand these challenges and point us to answers.

This has never been more true than today – for example, we look to these disciplines to explain why and how the current economic crisis happened, to identify its social impacts and to discern future trends.

We cannot rise to the challenges facing Europe without deepening and updating our knowledge of the very economy, society and culture we live in, and without understanding Europe and its relationship with the rest of the world.

We have heard the concerns expressed by this Academy and others about the place of the social sciences and humanities in future European funding for research and innovation.

Let me assure you that the European Commission shares the goals of the British Academy to inspire, recognise and support excellence in the social sciences and humanities and to champion their role and value.

Let me also assure you that future funding at the European level will provide significant space for social sciences and humanities research.

When the EU's heads of state and government discussed the Innovation Union initiative at their meeting on 4 February, they called upon the Commission to bring together all EU research and innovation funding under a common strategic framework to make it both more effective and impactful and easier to access for participants. This common framework has been named Horizon 2020, and it will begin in 2014.

In preparation, earlier this year the European Commission produced a Green Paper to launch a wide-ranging public consultation on the future of European financing for research and innovation. We were delighted to receive more than 1,300 responses to the online questionnaire, and around 750 consolidated position papers from stakeholders.

I was very impressed by the active involvement of the social sciences and humanities research community. We received many comments, opinions and suggestions that not only demonstrated this community's interest in the future programme but also showed increasing cooperation and alignment among stakeholders.

The contribution from ALLEA, on behalf of the British Academy and many other European academies, was one of the most important that we received.

In fact, around 14 per cent of all the responses to the Green Paper concerned the social sciences and humanities. Respondents expressed general support for this area of research, with many of them being in favour of a more pronounced and integrated role for social sciences and humanities research in all societal challenges, as well as giving them a distinct role in addressing challenges that cannot be tackled simply through technological development.

The fruitful consultation meetings that we organised before the summer with the social sciences and humanities stakeholder community and with representatives of Member States confirmed these results.

Before the end of this year, the European Commission will publish its proposals for Horizon 2020, which will then be discussed by the Member States and the European Parliament.

While we are still working on some of the details, I can already give you an idea of some of the likely features of the proposed programme. Horizon 2020 will be structured around three distinct, but mutually reinforcing pillars, in line with Europe 2020 priorities.

Excellent research is the foundation on which Innovation Union, and our push for growth and jobs, is based. So, the first pillar, 'Excellence in the science base', will strengthen the EU's excellence in science, through actions supporting frontier research (through the very successful European Research Council); future and emerging technologies; the Marie Curie actions and priority research infrastructures.

The second pillar, 'Creating industrial leadership and competitive frameworks', will support business research and innovation. Actions will cover: increasing investment in enabling and industrial technologies; facilitating access to finance; and providing EU-wide support for innovation in SMEs (small and medium enterprises).

The third pillar, 'Tackling societal challenges', will respond directly to the challenges identified in Europe 2020. Its focus will be on the challenges of: health, demographic change and well-being; food security and the bio-based economy; secure, clean and efficient energy; smart, green and integrated transport; resource efficiency and climate action, including raw materials; and inclusive, innovative and secure societies.

This last challenge was not included in the public consultation Green Paper that I mentioned earlier, and is now being considered on the basis of the proposals received during the consultation. While 'Understanding Europe' is not part of the title – as suggested in the Open Letter addressed to me – I think the substance is reflected in the content.

As ALLEA argued in its contribution on behalf of this and other academies to the Horizon 2020 consultation process, understanding Europe is a vital task – a point that is also stressed in the Open Letter. Indeed, I think that this is a task that underlies all our efforts to have a more prosperous, inclusive and sustainable Europe by 2020 and beyond; a Europe that can face a changing global context where new powers are emerging and interdependence is increasing.

I think that we agree on substance and that the difference between the approach suggested in the Open Letter and the approach currently proposed for Horizon 2020 is whether 'Understanding Europe' should be a stand-alone challenge, or have a prominent role in the challenge on 'Inclusive, innovative and secure societies' and, at the same time, be part of the contribution that the social sciences and humanities will make to all the other societal challenges tackled in Horizon 2020.

The challenge on 'Inclusive, innovative and secure societies' will be firmly aimed at boosting our knowledge of the factors that foster an inclusive Europe, help overcome the current economic crisis and the very real concerns that people have; that identify the links between the European and global context; and that encourage social innovation.

This challenge will also bring security and socio-economic research together with the aim of understanding the many forms of 'insecurity' – whether crime, violence, terrorism, cyber attacks, privacy abuses, or other forms of social and economic insecurity – that increasingly affect people in Europe.

We need a strong evidence base for policy making on these issues and the social sciences and humanities have the appropriate tools and methods to address the intricacy of these challenges, including enhancing the societal dimension of security policy and research.

Of course, the social sciences and humanities will, at the same time, play an important part in addressing all of the societal challenges to be targeted by Horizon 2020.

Overall, the social sciences and humanities will be embedded throughout the three pillars of Horizon 2020. We need to understand how new technologies and innovation arise and how they are used in the economy and in our wider society. Indeed, the social sciences and humanities can shed light on the process of research itself and how innovation works.

There will be a strong accent on inter-disciplinarity in Horizon 2020. To solve the complex challenges we face today, we have to work beyond the 'silos' of different disciplines, stimulating the exchanges of different perspectives to develop innovative solutions.

The newer generation of scientists, engineers and social scientists are increasingly willing and able to perform highly interdisciplinary work.

They know that they need each other's skills and knowledge to solve challenges such as promoting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth; building resilient and inclusive societies; strengthening Europe's role as a global actor, supporting new forms of innovation as well as studying the social dimension of security.

We are building our future plans on a very solid foundation. The EU is a world player in the field of social sciences and humanities, and I am determined to help us maintain that leading role.

The internationalisation of research and innovation, the globalisation of our economies and the interconnectedness of our societies make it imperative to pool resources and 'brain power' in the research and innovation sector.

The EU's collaborative research programme in the Social Sciences and Humanities is the world's largest in this field.

Under the 6th Framework Programme, which ended in 2006, around 2,000 universities and research organisations – as well as many SMEs and civil society organisations – took part in 146 collaborative projects, receiving European Union financing of 247 million Euro.

So far, under the 7th Framework Programme more than 1,500 institutions are participating in 142 projects with an EU contribution of 285 million Euro.

And we estimate that this investment in SSH will have increased to 623 million Euro by the end of the 7th Framework Programme in 2013. This means that many more researchers and projects will be supported through collaborative research on a wide range of policy-relevant issues.

In addition to this huge investment in collaborative research, 15 per cent of the budget of the European Research Council – which supports individual researchers wishing to carry out cutting-edge and blue sky research – is being spent on social sciences and humanities' 'curiosity driven' research.

The share of social sciences and humanities has been steadily increasing for the Marie Curie actions and we hope that this trend will continue.

In addition, a number of Social Sciences and Humanities research infrastructures are being supported under FP7, such as the European Social Survey and the Survey on Healthy Ageing and Retirement in Europe.

Given the importance of developing and providing better access to social sciences data to increase knowledge, innovation and evidence-based policy making, we are planning to launch by 2015 a number of European Research Infrastructure Consortia – commonly called 'ERICs' – in the social sciences and humanities. They will play a significant role in reinforcing co-operation between national and EU-level research and innovation policies.

ERICs work to establish and operate research infrastructures to promote innovation, research and technology transfer in areas that are often beyond the reach of a single research group, nation or region.

While one normally thinks of such infrastructures in terms of particle accelerators or large-scale laser systems, social sciences and humanities infrastructures are also very important, and these range from the digitalisation of data archives in the fields of history or arts, to open-access datasets in areas ranging from ageing to voting behaviours.

Infrastructures are one of the important elements of the European Research Area – better known as ERA. As you know, in addition to Horizon 2020, the Commission's intention is to come forward with proposals for an ERA Framework in 2012, as announced in the Innovation Union.

We need a European Research Area that is interconnected, structured, mobile and efficient; a research area that brings together people and ideas in a way that catalyses excellent science and world-leading innovation. The Commission has launched a consultation on the ERA Framework, and I am very pleased to hear that the academies are discussing their contribution.

One of the success stories that I would like to highlight as regards collaborative research – and that also links to ERA – is HERA, which stands for Humanities in the European Research Area. This project has received 4 million Euro of European Union funding.

As you may know, this is a partnership between 21 humanities Research Councils across Europe, linking national programmes and launching joint research initiatives to tackle social, cultural, political and ethical developments.

HERA's focus on co-ordinating research activities has borne fruit, particularly through the creation of two Joint Research Programmes.

The first of these explores cultural dynamics, focusing on the processes involved in the development of culture, rather than simply its end products. The second joint research programme examines the value of the humanities as a source of creativity and innovation at a cultural, social and economic level.

HERA is, in my view, a success both as an instrument for research co-ordination and co-operation, and as a catalyst of innovative research.

HERA and other ongoing research endeavours also help us to be innovative about innovation itself!

This fits very neatly with the approach taken by the Innovation Union initiative launched by me in October 2010. Innovation Union takes the broadest possible definition of innovation, going beyond technological innovation to promote innovation in the public sector, in education, in marketing and design, and especially social innovation.

Innovation Union makes two specific commitments on social innovation. First, we will launch substantial research activities on social innovation, and second, we have established a European Social Innovation Pilot that networks social innovation actors at all levels in Europe.

The EU has already funded a range of collaborative research projects on social innovation, mainly through the social sciences and humanities theme of FP7.

In the coming months, further research will be undertaken that is expected to advance our understanding of the key issues of social innovation itself: the way it is measured; the regulatory and recognition barriers; the monitoring and design of appropriate financial instruments; the role of private-public partnerships and of creativity and learning.

The European Commission also wants to support the capacity-building and networking of social innovators and social entrepreneurs, as well as social innovation demonstration projects and experimentation.

That's why we launched the 'Social Innovation Europe' initiative last March. It has the ambitious aim to spur action across Europe, provide expertise and promote the networking of social innovation actors, policies and programmes at all levels, be it European, national or regional.

In times of major budgetary constraints, social innovation can be an effective way of responding to societal challenges by mobilising people's creativity to develop solutions and make better use of scarce resources.

We need to remove obstacles and barriers to social innovation and accelerate the take-up and the scaling-up of the best ideas in social innovation.

The 'Vienna Declaration' is a major contribution to a future research agenda on social innovation, so I would like

Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science, in conversation with Sir Adam Roberts, President of the British Academy, 10 November 2011. Photos: Warren Johnson.

to congratulate the organisers of the Vienna Conference that took place in September for their work. I look forward to further discussions on scaling up social innovation – from research funding to practical support of social innovators.

The Commission is fully committed to further promoting social innovation. Social innovation involves people, it empowers people, and it contributes to the common good.

This is terribly important in times of uncertainty.

In the current context of the deep economic crisis and of constant transformation in our economy and society, the social sciences and humanities help us to address the most fundamental economic, social, political and cultural issues.

The challenges we face are fundamentally social and human in nature – they are the result of individual and collective human behaviour. They are intrinsically linked to how we behave.

The social sciences and humanities must, therefore, play a central role in understanding and tackling the problems we face. They help us deal with change and since change is constant, the social sciences and humanities will always be an important part of the research landscape.

Research at the EU level is indispensible as EU policies require comparative knowledge on the dynamics of our society, on the people and institutions involved in these dynamics, and on the global contexts that influence developments in Europe.

In this respect I would like to highlight another element of convergence between the work of this Academy and the social sciences and humanities research currently being supported by the 7th Framework Programme. I refer to our relationship with other societies and cultures – for example, as in the IDEAS project on 'Integrating and Developing Asian Studies' in which the British Academy is a partner. The project receives over 1.2 million Euro of EU funding.

Indeed, while of course we need to understand Europe, we also need to understand other cultures and societies as well so that we can improve our relationships and interactions with them. This can only be achieved with proper knowledge of their languages, history, values and cultural heritage – all these aspects are at the core of 'area studies' and they are ripe for further research.

Evidence-based policy-making is indispensible to finding sustainable solutions to pressing societal challenges.

The social sciences and humanities are essential in providing the evidence and analysis needed to put our policymaking on a sound footing.

They are also essential because they challenge us to consider whether our assumptions, and accepted knowledge are actually true!

And to take a broader, less technocratic view, the social sciences and humanities are essential because they help us understand ourselves and why we do what we do.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Professor Paul Boyle, the Chief Executive of the UK Economic and Social Research Council, on his appointment as the first President of Science Europe, the new association of European research performing and funding organisations. I was delighted to be present at the official launch of Science Europe in Berlin last month.

Professor Boyle will do an outstanding job in this newly formed organisation working at EU level. And I feel sure that the British Academy and its colleagues in the social sciences and humanities throughout Europe, will continue to play a key role in ensuring that European research meets the needs and the expectations of European society.

I want your research and your contribution to be ambitious and focused. I am ambitious for your sector. I am confident that you will provide the excellent research and help foster the various forms of social innovation that we need.

We are depending on you to give us the knowledge and understanding needed to keep the diverse threads of our society together in times of fundamental change. We are depending on you to help our society prepare for the profound changes that we will continue to face in the coming decades.

British Academy President's Medal

The British Academy held its annual awards ceremony on 6 October 2011. Recipients honoured on the night included the three winners of the British Academy President's Medal in 2011. Awarded 'for signal service to the cause of the humanities and social sciences', the medal is intended to complement the medals and prizes given by the Academy for academic achievement, by identifying and rewarding outstanding leadership or contributions other than purely academic.

Sir Nicholas Kenyon has been one of the most active and positive forces in classical music culture in Britain for the past two decades. In 1996 he began a 10 year stint as Director of The Proms, in which time he transformed the series and enlarged its scope, cementing its position as the largest and most wide ranging musical festival in the world, and overseeing the BBC's programming for the millennium celebrations. Since 2007 he has been the managing director of the Barbican Centre, bringing his ever innovative approach to the City of London's world class arts centre.

Accepting the award, Sir Nicholas said: 'The world of the performing arts and the academic world are not as separate as they are often perceived to be. I think it is often forgotten that everything we did at the Proms and everything we now do at the Barbican Centre is totally underpinned by academic research and understanding, which is then put into practice by brilliant performers. As we look forward, what we need to find is a way of bringing scholarship and performance ever closer together. As you, the scholarly community, search for impact, and we, the performing arts community, look for more involvement, participation and learning through all the artistic activities that we put on, I think there is an inspiring potential for those two things to be perceived as one by the public. Moving forward together, we can inspire a new generation to aspire to the exciting achievements of the arts and scholarship in recent times.'

Following her doctorate in social anthropology, **Dr Gillian Tett** moved to a career in journalism and joined the *Financial Times* in 1993. She covered the financial crisis of 2007-9 in an authoritative manner, making a major contribution to public understanding of events through the explanation of financial instruments. She is an assistant editor overseeing the *Financial Times*'s global financial markets coverage, and since March 2007 she has been the US managing editor.

Gillian Tett said: 'When I told my colleagues in the Cambridge Social Anthropology Department many years ago that I planned to go into journalism after doing a PhD, I think that many of them thought I had truly gone to the dark side. For an academic to go into the world of journalism, to become a hack, was seen as rather an odd option. When I arrived at the *FT* and told my colleagues I had a PhD not in economics but social anthropology, I think many of them thought that was pretty odd, if not rather hippy. Many of the bankers and the economists I have dealt with over the years as a journalist certainly thought my PhD in social anthropology was very strange.

'But it has been a great privilege and a great opportunity in recent years to try to bring those two worlds together, and to use my background in social analysis to try to inform the way I write about economics and finance on the *FT*. I also try to use the privilege of the platform at the *FT* to bring attention to the world of anthropology and try to introduce more people to it. There is a lot more to be done in that respect: I have only taken tiny baby steps.'

Sharon Witherspoon has been in charge of the Nuffield Foundation's research in social science and social policy since 1996, and she became Deputy Director of the Foundation in 2000. She has contributed to the development of significant programmes of research on children and families, and on empirical research in law,

The British Academy President's Medal.

as well as a wide range of projects on social welfare, including work on the finances of old age, and poverty and inequality.

Sharon Witherspoon said: 'I am a passionate advocate of social science, not just as a thing of beauty or as a generator of insights and even of further research questions. Both by temperament and by role I am an advocate of using strong, rigorous research to illuminate social policy, to change and challenge practice and generally create feedback loops that are part of being a democratic and reflective society; and yes, that is not quite the same as Research Exercise Framework impact. It is not that I believe that policy is only ever evidence-based, or that politics and values ever disappear from social science. Social sciences are certainly caught in the crossfire of politics and values more than some other sciences, as the Academy knows too, and as its economists certainly do. But some social science evidence and reasoning is just stronger and more robust than others, and some of it needs to be thrust into places where it might do most good.

'I am glad that many of us have been able to work so closely together to address these questions and the issue of social science infrastructure; to challenge the fact that we still cannot get routine access to government anonymised data for secondary analysis; to ensure that peer review is used for more government-funded research; and to ensure funding and long-term planning for our valuable and vulnerable research intrastructure. Recently both the last Government and this one – largely in the form of David Willetts – have done us proud on longitudinal studies. More recently we have been working with the British Academy, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Royal Statistical Society and others to support a generational shift in the capacity to use quantitative skills across a range of disciplines – not that it is only quantitative skills that matter, but we want some people other than economists to talk to about these things.

'In the end, though, I confess I will take the most enormous pleasure in interpreting the President's Medal as a challenge to do more. For surely now with the recession, and the shifts in the social order brought about by and in a laboratory of a changing Government with new social policy, and with all the challenges of behavioural change to consider, we need tough social science more than ever. That is the lofty aim. My more modest one is simply to disprove Ernest Rutherford's maxim that "the only possible conclusion social sciences can draw is: some do, some don't".'

More information on the British Academy's medals and prizes, including a full list of the 2011 winners, can be found via www.britac.ac.uk/prizes/

Mark Blackburn (1953–2011) and the Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles

The British Academy's annual awards ceremony in October 2011 marked the fact that the Derek Allen Prize for Numismatics had been awarded to Dr Mark Blackburn – who had sadly died just the month before. ***Professor Simon Keynes FBA*** *describes the singular contribution Mark had made to one of the Academy's most fruitful long-term projects.*

MARK BLACKBURN first attended a meeting of the committee that oversees the *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles* (SCBI) in 1977 – with Professor Dorothy Whitelock FBA in the chair, and Christopher Blunt FBA an authoritative and formidable presence. He was then approaching his mid-twenties; and he continued to serve on the SCBI committee for the next 35 years, as co-editor from 1980, and as general editor and secretary from 1987, until his death on 1 September 2011. An impressive tally of 24 volumes had been published by the time of Mark's first appearance on the committee; a further 35 volumes were published during his years of close association with the project (with two more appearing at the beginning of 2012), representing just one important aspect of his singular contribution to the study of the coinage of the British Isles from the earliest times to the Norman Conquest and beyond.

Figure 1. *Mark Blackburn (1953-2011) in the Grierson Room, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. When Mark was first formally appointed to the British Academy's Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles committee, he wrote prophetically: 'It is a project which, even though it is now over twenty years old, is still an exciting one and has much still to achieve. I hope that I will be able to contribute to its future.' Photo: Dan White (Kansas City USA).*

Cataloguing British coins

The importance of numismatic evidence for all manner of different and complementary purposes has long been recognised; and a historian looking in from outside the fold of distinguished numismatists who have driven the project for well over 50 years could not fail but to be impressed by the sense of collective commitment and common purpose which takes the project forward. The origins of the SCBI can be traced back to the early 1950s. The project was inspired by the British Academy's catalogue of ancient Greek coins, *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum* (1936-), and it was seen from its inception as a way of facilitating access to important public and private collections of early British, Anglo-Saxon and later medieval coins, located in many different places in Britain, Ireland, Scandinavia, eastern Europe, and the USA. After introductory remarks on aspects of a given collection, the format allowed each coin to be classified in due order, with details of type, weight, inscriptions, die-axis, and provenance, keyed to illustrations of obverse and reverse on the facing page. As the volumes of the series spread across the shelf, the significance of numismatic evidence for the early history of Britain and Ireland could be appreciated as never before. Each volume would have some particular focus of its own, but as the number of published volumes increased, a corpus of one type or another began to take shape, and, true to the adage, the whole became far greater than the sum of its component parts.

Early interest

As an undergraduate at Oxford in the early 1970s, Mark was at first a scientist, and thereafter a lawyer – though the fact

A fantastic creature on a Series K early penny. Fitzwilliam Museum.

Coins are not shown actual size.

A coin of King Offa of Mercia (757-796). Fitzwilliam Museum.

that he served during those years as president of the university's Archaeological Society, and of its Numismatic Society, suggests that he did not neglect his other interests. He published a study of the mint of Watchet in 1974, and soon afterwards visited Poland, in search of Anglo-Saxon coins, leading to another of his earliest publications. On leaving Oxford, Mark embarked upon a career as a barrister, switching direction in 1978 to become a merchant banker. He set to work soon afterwards (in 1979) on a part-time PhD on the regional organisation of the Anglo-Saxon coinage, *c*. 973–1035, under the supervision of Professor Henry Loyn FBA. But the thesis was transferred from one of his front burners to a slow cooking oven when he decided in 1982 to take up a post that had been created for him in the University of Cambridge, working as an assistant to Professor Philip Grierson FBA. Mark's new task was to assist in the preparation of what would become the inaugural volume of a multi-volume survey of medieval European coinage, based on the coin collection formed by Grierson over many years. The volume (published by the Cambridge University Press in 1986) covered the various Germanic peoples of Europe from the 5th to the 10th century. Grierson himself took primary responsibility for the coinages of the Vandals, the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, the Lombards, the Burgundians, the *Suevi*, the Frisians, and the Franks; Mark prepared the sections on Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Scandinavian coinages over the same period, and produced the catalogue of 1,500 coins.

Eastern Europe

As a member of the Sylloge committee from the late 1970s onwards, Mark was active in developing contacts in many countries. The project had already extended its reach from the UK, and Scandinavia, into Finland; and for good reason attention turned thereafter to what were then the less readily accessible parts of eastern Europe. Mark's own explorations in Poland, as a student in the mid-1970s, would lead one way and another to the preparation by his friend Dr Andrzej Mikołajczyk of a volume covering Anglo-Saxon and later medieval British coins in Polish museums, published in 1987. In 1979, soon after joining the committee, Mark accompanied Michael Dolley, a key mover in the project, on an exploratory visit to the coin cabinet of the State Museum, Berlin, and in the same year he accompanied Tuukka Talvio, of the National Museum, Helsinki, on a visit to Tallinn in Estonia. Following the visit to the DDR, Dolley reported back to the committee that they had 'such a profitable and enjoyable time' that they didn't mind being 'marginally out of pocket' with regard to expenses; and their initial listing of the coins formed the basis of the catalogue edited by Bernd Kluge, published in 1987. Contact was next established with the Hermitage Museum, in St Petersburg, where there was well known to be a spectacular assemblage of Anglo-Saxon and later medieval coins. Mark went to Leningrad in 1989, with Stewart Lyon, leading to the publication of the first two of a projected series of four volumes, one prepared by Vladimir Potin (1999) and another by Marina Mucha (2005), with a third being published early in 2012. A contact established by Mark in 1990 led to the publication of a volume prepared by Tatjana Berga, of the Institute of Latvian History, in Riga, covering Latvian collections (1996), and the initial contact with Estonia, established in 1979, led to a volume prepared by Ivar Leimus and Arkadi Molvõgin, covering Estonian collections (2001). The significance of Mark's role in bringing all of these volumes into existence shines out from their respective prefaces.

Scandinavia

As general editor of the series, from the late 1980s, Mark was tireless in doing everything in his power to facilitate work on a variety of other volumes, ranging from regional or private collections to the major 'national' collections of Britain, Ireland, and Scandinavia. A good example had

A pre-reform penny of King Edgar (959-75). Fitzwilliam Museum.
Coin not shown actual size.

been set in the 1960s and 1970s, with the Royal Collection of Coins and Medals in Copenhagen – to the extent that the seven volumes covering this collection provide as compelling an insight into Anglo-Danish relations before, during and after the reign of King Æthelred the Unready as the annals in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* or the surviving corpus of charters and law-codes. The preparation of the two volumes required to cover coins in Norwegian collections, prepared by Dr Elina Screen, is well advanced. Yet much of the silver (and gold) that was taken from England during the reigns of Æthelred and his successors soon found its way to the Baltic; and the material that has accumulated since the 18th century in the Royal Coin Cabinet, in Stockholm, is thus central to our understanding of England and Scandinavia in the 11th century. Mark was close behind all but one of the four 'Swedish' volumes already in the bag (the first was before his time); but a challenge remains in the form of the several volumes that will be required to cover the coinage up to and including the reign of Cnut. Mark would have liked nothing more than to see this mountain climbed, and to have been able to enjoy the view from the top.

Custodian

In 1991 Mark was appointed Keeper of Coins and Medals at the Fitzwilliam Museum, in Cambridge. At a recent gathering there, in his memory, we were told how the syndics of the museum used to groan audibly when Mark would appear before them time and again to make his case for the acquisition of yet more coins (regarded by an erstwhile director as 'bent bottle-tops'), and how they were invariably won over by his persuasive powers. It was from this base, over the next 20 years, that he was able not only to 'grow' the collection of which he had charge, but also to nurture the work of the SCBI and of what became its sister project, *Medieval European Coinage* (MEC). As the opportunities arose, from the late 1990s onwards, Mark was determined to harness the power of the microchip in widening access to the corpus of numismatic evidence, and in bringing together all the data collected under the auspices of the SCBI so that it could be deployed and interpreted to its full advantage. He led the way, moreover, in the development of an online database for recording single finds of coins, in Britain and Ireland, reaching out at the same time to the ever increasing community of metal detectorists, not to mention the network of dealers and collectors, uniting all interests in the cause of good scholarship.

Mark Blackburn would have been the first to acknowledge the role of the British Academy, over many years, in lending its support to the Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles, and to acknowledge all that he gained from his close association with the Fitzwilliam Museum and with Gonville and Caius College in the University of Cambridge. There are very many more of us, in academe and elsewhere, who have cause to acknowledge him, for all that he was able to accomplish for his subject, and for all that his subject can bring to our understanding of the past.

Simon Keynes is Elrington & Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon at the University of Cambridge, and a Fellow of the British Academy. He chairs the British Academy's committee overseeing the *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles* and the *Medieval European Coinage* series.

The latest two volumes in the British Academy's Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles series – featuring collections of Anglo-Saxon coins in the Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, and the Grosvenor Museum, Chester – are published early in 2012. More information can be found via www.britac.ac.uk/pubs/

Records of Social and Economic History

The British Academy's 'Records of Social and Economic History' series exists to publish primary sources that aid the study of social and economic history. ***Professor Richard M. Smith FBA****, who chairs the editorial committee, discusses the most recent volumes published in the series*

THE SERIES of editions that form the *Records of Social and Economic History* series will in the course of 2013 reach 50 volumes. The current series, which began in 1972, will have been in existence for 40 years. Its contents, relating to British records extending from the 11th to the 20th century, serve as a reminder that British historians are in possession of a remarkable series of documentary sources including cartularies, revenue rolls, account books, personal diaries, letter books and censuses of varying types that concern a host of details relating to agricultural, urban, industrial, commercial, domestic and demographic matters. The sources that are edited in this series embrace subjects or bodies of evidence that concern areas usually larger than one county and therefore less appropriately published within the series maintained by local county record societies.

The two editions most recently published exemplify the aims of the series. One – *The Chronicles of John Cannon, Excise Officer and Writing Master* – concerns a remarkably detailed chronicle reporting his life by John Cannon. Cannon, a man of relatively humble rank, lived across a particularly important 60-year period of change in English society and economy from the late 17th century until the 1740s. The other – *The Early English Censuses* – is much more concerned with society and economy in the aggregate and on a national scale, providing a guide to and correction of the earliest English censuses. The volume fundamentally improves the ways in which these mammoth compendia of key data relating to England's rapidly expanding population between 1801 and 1851 can be exploited.

Figure 1. *The frontispiece from John Cannon's Chronicles. Source: Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society/Somerset Archives and Records Service.*

The Chronicles of John Cannon

Cannon's chronicles or memoirs have long been known, although used relatively little, by historians, notwithstanding the relative rarity in this genre. Their under-exploitation is largely explained by their length, since they contain 600,000 words of detailed accounts and are often composed of disconnected

Extracts from the Chronicles which display John Cannon's love of books

…… Amongst all the employments (at the ushering in of the year which I always held beginning with my birthday, March 28th, I now being now about 17 and my brother somewhat above 15) was our alternative keeping the markets with corn. I used to let my brother go to Shepton Mallet Fridays. And I myself chose Bruton Saturdays; my reason was because there lived one Oliver, a book seller, with which I conversed and bought books & maps, etc., and oftentimes broke my market money to compass my ends, which I would some way or other excuse to my father at night when I were to render an account of my market, & if it were very small deficiencies, then he would say very little. Nay, I was so taken with my books that the money my father allow'd me to spend at markets I have saved & laid out in my darling books, and so many market days have neither eaten nor drank from the time I set out till my return home again in the evening such was my assiduity to my books. (1701)

…… So following my school & these employments with chearfulness, I got a pretty livelihood for myself & family whom I frequently visited, & yet my friends at Mere carried up three loads of Turfs as before whom I made welcome. Besides my quarterly & weekly scholars, I raised two charity schools which shall be shown in the beginning of the next year, when it was thoroughly settled & confirmed. Among those employments I delighted as before in vacant hours to peruse the best of authors in Divinity, History & other subjects: English Chronicles, Annals & the lives of the Eminent Fathers of the Church in all ages, being as to myself honest, sound & just in the censure of these authors. Only this great impediment often retarded my wishes: only the want of money to buy or furnish myself with such valuable pieces as I [had] often seen in the shops or studies of great & wealthy men. Still refusing all manner of pastimes or other vain delights or conversation, which to avoid I would frequently retire & solitarily sit by myself either in my school or bedchamber, and sometimes conversed with men of letters & learning, who also were fond of & coveted my company. (1731)

materials. In their original form they do not offer the reader a linear account of Cannon's life. However their editor, Professor John Money, has devoted years of careful research to bring order to this material, which for the first time makes it possible to gain a complete sense of Cannon's project. In this edition we can chart the life of an auto-didact: he was largely self-educated because his earlier academic promise did not lead on to grammar school or university following a severe decline in his parent's economic fortunes. That loss of parental well-being, and the resolve of his mother's close-knit family to preserve its control over what was left of the family land, indirectly resulted in his subsequently living a far from financially secure life – principally in the West Country, although frequently involving quite long periods in London. In fact the memoirs provide ample evidence of the ways in which London attracted Cannon, like so many others in the national population, as the city grew to be, by some considerable margin, the largest urban centre in Europe by the early 18th century. We see Cannon sent into agricultural service in his early teens and in that respect following a life course similar to that of so many of his adolescent contemporaries. Cannon however, while a young agricultural worker, developed as the archetypal self-taught man the tendencies of a compulsive bibliophile to such an extent that at times his book-buying placed considerable strains on his personal finances – a tendency that remained with him throughout his life.

Notwithstanding the absence of a grammar school education, his self-taught literacy and numeracy equipped him for a career that lasted from 1707 to 1721 in the excise service, moving in succession between Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Somerset. Having joined that service in the midst of Marlborough's Wars he involved himself operationally in Britain's most important revenue-raising agency, which was at the heart of the country's provision of public credit. Cannon's memoir casts light on practices and politics that are otherwise poorly documented, since so few of the excise's own records survive for this early period. In the midst of his period in the excise, he married a bride in London who was entirely unknown to his Somerset family. Cannon's account of his sexual experience before marriage, which is noteworthy for his candour, has already attracted the attention of cultural historians who are interested in post-puritan attitudes to adolescence and sexuality. However, his account has so far been exploited somewhat selectively, so the full edition may serve as a corrective to some of this work.

In 1721 Cannon's promising career in the excise was brought sharply to an end as he was dismissed, apparently for malpractice. He entered on a difficult phase as bad debts thwarted his efforts to set up as a maltster, and he experienced variants of what appeared to be physical and emotional breakdown, before a short-lived spell back in the excise in 1729-30. This seemed to jolt him into a re-ordering of his life, which now saw him more active in the affairs of his local society rather than in those of the central state. His self-taught skills made it possible for him to work as scrivener and accountant, and eventually as town schoolmaster and clerk to Glastonbury's newly created workhouse and two of the town's parishes. Indeed he became a pivotal figure in that community,

In 1737 when Cannon was 53 he can be observed catching up with his life hitherto. That earlier period accounts for half the text, and the remaining six years of his life the other half. So there is undoubtedly greater detail for this last period in which there are far greater specifics of his dealings with others, his dreams which are described quite vividly, the weather, sermons and above all the conflicts and tensions of small-town life.

John Money provides a lengthy introduction to the memoir that is invaluable in enabling the reader to gain so many insights into Cannon's world. These insights extend from the character and importance of kin relations, neighbourliness, the culture of small debts and credit, parish politics, and attitudes to religion at the parish level which also reveal his attitudes to the beginning of the Methodist revival and Catholicism. In his later years we see his attitudes to Patriot politics from a provincial perspective. And while more controversial, Money draws out what he sees as Cannon's sense of self, identifiable perhaps since the finished manuscript was a reworked third rewrite.

The Early English Censuses

The printed volumes of the six censuses from 1801 to 1851 have proved to be a vital source of information for economic and social historians, particularly those interested in population change during a vital stage in the transition of the English economy. Use of these volumes is far from straightforward, since they display many defects related to arithmetical mistakes made by the census clerks, printing errors, omissions of certain categories of persons and variability in the units for which information was reported. A particular difficulty arises from the fact that the composition of the census unit was not constant from census to census.

Professor Sir Tony Wrigley FBA, in this the 46th volume in the series, has undertaken a major exercise in the correction of errors in the census volumes, and produced a series of tables reporting population data in a way that makes it possible for the first time to report demographic change over time in a consistent and hence accurate manner. As a result of Professor Wrigley's labours we are now in possession of a new version of the original data relating to each of the census volumes which corrects arithmetical and printing errors and introduces omitted information. The census units are also standardised.

The first five censuses from 1801 to 1841 employed the traditional units of the parish, the hundred and county, but while the census of 1851 continued to use the parish, units of higher order became the registration sub-district, the registration district and the registration county. As a result it is not possible using the printed censuses to measure change for a particular locality in a consistent fashion through time. Professor Wrigley has now presented these data in a way that makes it possible to track back information in a manner compatible with the new reporting units of 1851 to 1801, and forwards using the traditional units from 1801 to 1851. All of these data are presented in tables that, if of a modest size, can be found in the printed pages of this volume or, if of a size too unwieldy to print in a conventional fashion, are made available in the accompanying CD.

This volume also contains two 'bonuses'. In Chapter 4 Professor Wrigley makes use of the information derived from Anglican parish registers that were collected by John Rickman. The registers were published in the early census volumes to create new estimates of population totals for English counties over the 17th and 18th centuries, as well as more finely tuned population counts for English hundreds over the late 18th century. The fruits of this recalibration can be seen in Figure 2 which shows the rates of population growth between 1801 and 1851 in English registration districts. While the English population grew by 96 per cent, three quarters of this took place in groups 7 and 8 which contained only 10 per cent the national population in 1801. In contrast groups 1 and 2, accounting for 37 per cent of the national population in 1801, generated only 12 per cent of the national growth in the following half century. Such information shows how dramatically industrialisation and urbanisation was concentrating demographic growth in this critical period of England's industrial revolution.

In Chapter 5 Professor Wrigley in collaboration with Dr Max Satchell, and exploiting the tools of Geographical Information Systems, generates accurate areal measure-

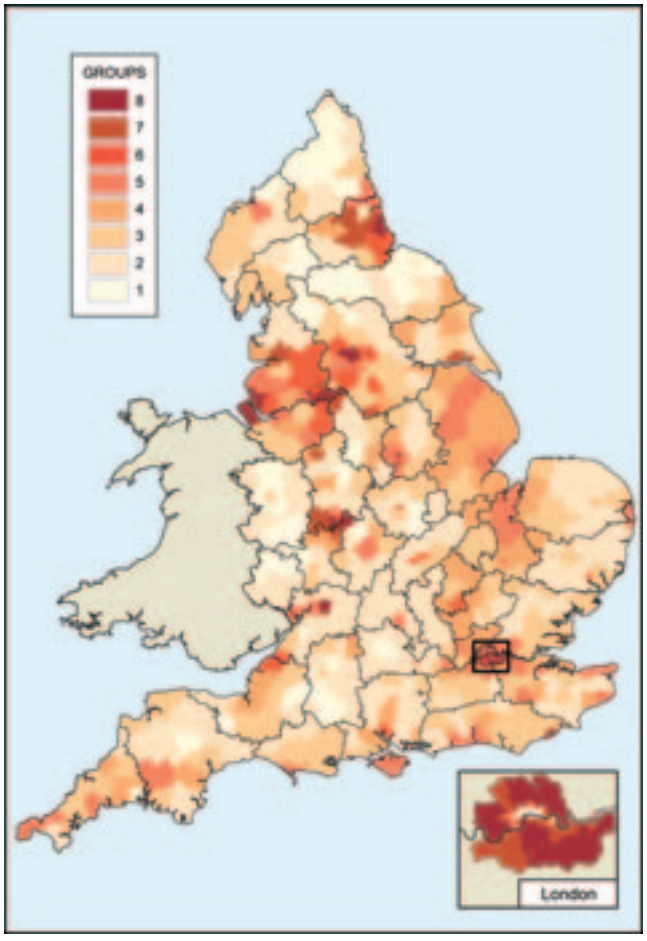


Figure 2. *Rates of growth of population in registration districts 1801-51.*

ments for all of the census units. These make it possible to create accurate measures of population density and a number of other social and economic variables that can be more effectively extracted from the census returns for mapping purposes. This volume differs from others in this series in not being in a strict sense an edition of a historical source, but it will make it possible to utilise one of the most important primary sources central to the work of economic and social historians in a manner that has never previously been possible.

Forthcoming editions in the series cover such diverse subjects as the business and household accounts of Joyce Jeffreys, a 17th-century spinster; Samuel Brittan's diary kept while a civil servant in the shorted-lived Department of Economic Affairs between 1964 and 1966; Nehemiah Grew's Treatise on England's economic development presented to Queen Anne; and London's custom accounts of the mid-15th century. Such variety reflects the quality of the primary evidence that enriches the study of British economic and social history to which the series will continue to be a major contributor through the hard work of a team of tireless editors.

Richard M. Smith is Emeritus Professor of Historical Geography and Demography and Fellow of Downing College, Cambridge, and a Fellow of the British Academy. Since 2010 he has chaired the British Academy's Records of Social and Economic History Committee.

The Chronicles of John Cannon, Excise Officer and Writing Master is edited by John Money, and was published in two parts in 2010. Part 1 covers the period 1684-1733; Part 2 covers the period 1734-1743.

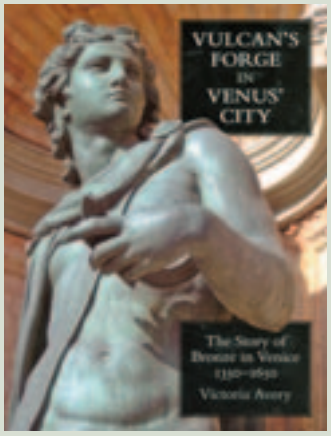
The Early English Censuses is edited by E.A. Wrigley, and was published in 2011.

A listing of volumes in the *Records of Social and Economic History* series can be found via www.britac.ac.uk/pubs

Vulcan's Forge in Venus' City:
The Story of Bronze in Venice, 1350-1650

Between 1350 and 1650, a vast number of bronze objects – large and small, decorative and functional – were produced in Venice for domestic consumption and for the export market. From unique works of art specifically commissioned from renowned sculptors by wealthy patrons, to low-status artefacts mass-produced by founders for speculative sale in their shops, Venetian bronzes are distinguishable from those made at the same time in other centres by the great beauty and variety of their form, their rich ornamentation, and their high quality.

Based on a wealth of unpublished documents and newly available scientific data obtained during recent conservation projects, a new British Academy book (published December 2011) by **Dr Victoria Avery** tells the story of bronze in Venice through the objects themselves and the people who commissioned, made and owned them. It reveals the location and purpose of key independent foundries in the city centre, as well as the state-owned foundries at the Arsenal. It sheds light on the identities of the founders, their daily lives and workshop organisation, and tracks the rise and fall of the most important dynasties, their successful collaborations and fierce rivalries. The genesis and creation process of certain significant bronze masterpieces is discussed, together with a number of long-forgotten casting disasters and abortive commissions.



The text and documentary appendix are enhanced by lavish illustrations, which include newly commissioned photographs of recently restored works of art, and unpublished historical photographs.

The book arises from Dr Avery's British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship. She is now the Keeper of Applied Arts at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

Further information on this latest volume in the *British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship Monographs* series can be found via www.britac.ac.uk/pubs/

The heritages of the modern Greeks

PROFESSOR PETER MACKRIDGE

Introduction

What makes the heritages of the modern Greeks unique? They stand between East and West in the sense that they belong neither to the Catholic and Protestant West nor to the Muslim East; their Roman heritage is more eastern than western; yet they have been dominated by Catholic as well as Ottoman occupiers. Although I am against the concept of Greek (or any other) exceptionalism, I believe that when foreigners deal with modern Greece they need to be sensitive to cultural differences, which are the result of specific historical experiences. Especially in times of crisis such as the one the Greeks are going through today, the world – and especially Europe – needs to show sympathy and solidarity with their plight. Nevertheless, this shouldn't inhibit us from looking critically at what Greeks – and I mean chiefly Greek intellectual and political elites – have made of their collective heritages. Indeed, to do so is especially topical, since the present economic crisis in Greece is bringing about a profound crisis of national identity.

In formulating the title of my lecture, I was inspired by the title of Arnold Toynbee's last book, *The Greeks and their Heritages*, which was published post-humously exactly 30 years ago, in 1981 (Figure 1). The photograph on the cover of Toynbee's book shows part of Monastiraki Square in Athens seen from the north – from the bottom upwards: the Pantanassa church (probably built in the 17th century on the site of a Byzantine church; formerly part of a monastery after which the square is named), the 18th-century Tzistaraki mosque, and part of the Acropolis. Hidden from view, but visible from another angle, are the columns of Hadrian's library, and the 1890s underground station.

In his book, among other things, Toynbee supports the controversial view that the smaller amount of cultural memory later Greeks have inherited from earlier Greeks, the better it has been for them. Toynbee argues that the Classical Greeks were fortunate to have inherited little except oral poetry from the Mycenaeans, because they could make a fresh start with a clean slate. He presents the heritages of the modern Greeks as a burden – and in some cases even an incubus – since their legacies from ancient Greece and Byzantium continually threaten to dominate and overshadow them.

The nationalisation of the past

The Greeks of the last 200 years have possessed ample historical material with which to form their national identity. Compare the Germans, who for their ancient past have only Tacitus' *Germania*, a brief and impressionistic ethnography written by an outsider who warned that his aim was to comment on the Romans of his time as much as on the Germans. Tacitus left the modern Germans a great deal of leeway to invent and imagine their own antiquity. By contrast, the sheer volume of ancient Greek history and culture can be a rich source of pride and of inspiring models of moral conduct, intellectual rigour and artistic endeavour, but it can also be confining and even crippling.

Since the Greek Enlightenment began in the late 18th century, Greek intellectuals have been asking the following questions about their relationship with Hellenic antiquity and Byzantium:

Figure 1. *The front cover of* The Greeks and their Heritages*, by Arnold Toynbee. Toynbee (1889-1975) was a Fellow of the British Academy.*

- Of the various legacies that the modern Greeks have inherited, are there some that could profitably be highlighted to the detriment of others, and if so which?
- Are there any genuine cultural continuities that can be traced from ancient to modern Greece, or can the connections be made only by means of an artificial revival?
- In the first case, what kind of continuities might these be, and in which areas of life might they be manifested – language, geography and landscape, history, ways of life, popular beliefs, customs and attitudes?
- Is it possible to fit all periods of Greek cultural history into a single schema? Is there a level at which the apparent discontinuities reveal themselves actually to be continuities?
- If so, how might this level be discovered and this schema devised? How to achieve a synthesis that would overcome the apparent antitheses? How to develop a unified field theory of diachronic Greek culture?

The cultural heritages of a nation are partly a matter of choice on the part of intellectual and political elites. The decision to adopt or to emphasise a particular heritage is a gamble with high stakes: will the adoption of this heritage appeal to a significant portion of the population, and will it be recognised and accepted by the world at large?

Faced with a rich variety of heritages, Greek intellectual leaders first chose to promote the one that enjoyed the greatest international prestige. For this reason, most Greek intellectuals in the lead-up to the War of Independence tended to place the emphasis on Classical antiquity as the heritage that their modern compatriots should make their own. Indeed, some Greek intellectuals felt that, as a nation, the Greeks possessed nothing but their ancient past. When Byzantium began to be discovered and rehabilitated by Western scholars, some Greek intellectuals added the Byzantine heritage to the Hellenic one as a component of Greek national identity. These intellectuals felt that the Byzantine legacy was closer to the modern Greeks than the Hellenic one, partly because of the shorter chronological distance, but chiefly because of the unifying factor of Christianity. On the other hand, Greek elites did not want to abandon their Hellenic legacy, and they were probably sensible to divide their stakes between two heritages: Hellenic antiquity and Byzantium, and indeed not to confine Hellenic antiquity to the Classical period alone. This decision appealed to the Greeks' sense of uniqueness as the heirs of both the pagan culture of ancient Hellas and the Christian culture of late antiquity and Byzantium: after all, they are the only people to speak a version of the language in which Classical Greek literature and the founding texts of Christianity were written.

Nationalism sees the nation as eternal and essentially unchanging; it fosters an undifferentiated approach to the past that is tantamount to the denial of history. Discontinuities and contradictions are transcended to produce a seamless linear national narrative. In the mid-19th century, Greek elites led by the historians Spyridon Zambelios and Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos set about finding ways of fusing the two apparently antithetical legacies of pagan Hellas and Christian Byzantium into a new synthesis which Zambelios called the 'Helleno-Christian idea'.[1] Zambelios and Paparrigopoulos went so far as to claim that Divine Providence had fashioned Classical antiquity in such a way that Greek language and culture would be capable of receiving and disseminating the Divine Word once the Incarnation had taken place.

According to the Classicist and anthropologist Effie Athanassopoulos, this 'fusion between Orthodoxy and Hellenism' that 19th-century Greek intellectuals were seeking to formulate was 'an indigenous rather than a European version of [Greek] national history'.[2] Paparrigopoulos went on to develop a unified history of the Greek nation since pre-Classical times (from Agamemnon to George I, as the linguist G.N. Hatzidakis aptly put it[3]), while a little later in the 19th century the folklorist Nikolaos Politis creatively demonstrated that the legacies of ancient Greek myth and Byzantine history were encapsulated in modern Greek folksongs, folk tales, customs and beliefs. Both of these scholars were countering the shocking allegation made by the Austrian historian Jacob Philipp Fallmerayer in 1830 that not a single drop of ancient Hellenic blood flowed through the veins of the modern Greeks.[4] Paparrigopoulos and Politis argued that the connections between ancient and modern Greece were not the result of an artificial revival, but of a natural survival.

Classical Athens has been nationalised in modern Greece. Dora Markatou has recently pointed out how in 1930, during the events celebrating the centenary of the founding of the modern Greek state, a procession to the Acropolis was staged in imitation of the Classical Panathenian procession, except that the peplos of Athena was replaced by the Greek national flag:[5] in this way the emblem of the patron goddess of a city was replaced by the emblem of a nation, and Athens was treated as a synecdoche for the whole of Greece.

Byzantium has been similarly nationalised: according to the tripartite schema of Greek cultural history proposed by Paparrigopoulos (ancient, medieval and modern), the Byzantine period represented what he called 'medieval Hellenism'. The nationalisation of the Byzantine past in the 19th and early 20th centuries was connected with the so-called 'Great Idea' of recapturing Constantinople:[6] according to this ideology, the 'virtual' nationalisation of Byzantium would eventually lead to its actual incorporation into the modern Greek state.

Vangelis Karamanolakis has recently noted that the decision by the mid-20th-century Byzantinist Faidon

[1] S. Zambelios, *Άσματα δημοτικά της Ελλάδος εκδιδόμενα μετά μελέτης ιστορικής περί μεσαιωνικού ελληνισμού* (Corfu: Hermes, 1852), p. 464.

[2] Quoted from her Abstract for the conference 'Re-imagining the Past: Antiquity and Modern Greek Culture', Birmingham, June 2011.

[3] *Το πρόβλημα της νεωτέρας γραφομένης ελληνικής υπό K. Krumbacher και Απάντησις εις αυτόν υπό Γεωργίου N. Χατζιδάκι* (Athens: P.D. Sakellariou, 1905), p. 609.

[4] J.P. Fallmerayer, *Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters*, vol. 1 (Stuttgart 1830), p. iv.

[5] In D. Plantzos and D. Damaskos (ed.), *A singular antiquity: archaeology and Hellenic identity in twentieth-century Greece* (Athens: Benakis Museum, 2008), p. 311.

[6] Dionysis Mourelatos, in Plantzos & Damaskos, p. 198.

Koukoules to focus his monumental study of 'the culture and life of the Byzantines'[7] on their private rather than their public life 'was justified on grounds of national expediency: public life in Byzantium was deemed to be associated with the institutions of the Roman Empire, whereas private life was seen as a continuation of the ancient Greek world.' In this way Koukoules believed that his work provided scientific proof of the continuity of the Greek nation since antiquity.[8]

The Byzantine art historian Manolis Chatzidakis wrote in 1964 that 'Byzantine art is European, and the only art between East and West which kept alive that spirit of Greek humanism now recognised as pre-eminently the basis of European values.'[9] Here Chatzidakis presents Byzantium not only as the link between ancient Hellas and modern Greece, but between ancient Hellas and modern Europe.[10]

Just as one can talk about the Hellenisation of the Byzantine past, Vasilis Makridis has pointed out the way that the ancient Hellenic heritage has been appropriated by Greek Orthodox Christianity.[11] The fusion of the ancient Greek and the Byzantine traditions has recently been critiqued by the political scientist Periklis Vallianos, who points out that the early Christian Fathers stated quite categorically that ancient Greek thought is incompatible with Christian theology.[12] This fusion postdates the Greek revolution: in 1819 the Patriarch of Constantinople, Gregory V, defended the study of the Ancient Greek language against those who wished to use Modern Greek as the medium of education; but he wanted the ancient language to be studied without its pagan content.[13]

Some advantages of the ancient heritage

The adoption of such rich heritages by the Greeks as a nation and their resulting sense of being uniquely privileged has been a two-edged sword. On the one hand, their ancient and medieval cultural heritages undoubtedly give Greeks an individual and national self-respect, and many Greeks have taken the responsibilities of their inheritance very seriously and have been inspired to excellence in various fields by their glorious past.[14] Others, however, have been content to rest on their ancestors' laurels, in the belief that the Greeks have already done so much for humanity that the rest of the world now owes them a living.[15] Greeks have been haunted by the spectre of ancient Greece, which has provided them with prestige but has sometimes threatened to suck their lifeblood.

Be that as it may, the fact that the Greeks possess these inheritances makes them different from those neighbouring nations that have other pasts. Without Greece's Classical heritage there would have been no Philhellenic movement in Europe and America in the 1820s; Winston Churchill would not have been so determined that Greece should not go communist in the 1940s; and the European Economic Community would not have welcomed Greece as a member so readily in 1981. Greece's antiquities have been a rich source of symbolic capital.[16] In particular, Greece's tourist industry has always been boosted by the country's antiquities, both in the form of ancient sites and objects displayed in museums.

It is possible in parts of Athens and Piraeus to feel one is standing on the same spot where particular ancient Greeks have stood – not to mention St Paul – and where historical events of world importance have taken place. There is no doubt that modern Greece would be the poorer – both culturally and economically – without its ancient heritage. This heritage provides everyday Greek life with a rich frame of reference: on the most banal level, Greek antiquity supplies a rich repertoire of given names for individuals (despite occasional opposition from the Orthodox Church, which prefers its flock to be baptised with the names of Christian saints), as well as names for ships, streets, hotels, restaurants, cafes, bars, night clubs and all kinds of manufactured goods, as well as a wealth of visual motifs – columns and pediments, the key pattern, and sculpted or painted human figures – that are used on products or for purely decorative purposes. In short, the modern Greeks are casually familiar with the antiquity that surrounds them.

Contested heritages

One of the chief reasons why the poets Cavafy and Seferis have appealed to European and American readers is that they used ancient Greek myth and history as a major component of their subject matter. Cavafy overcame the problem of dealing with a Classical past that had already been appropriated by the West[17] by focusing on a period of Greek history that had generally been considered to be inferior, even decadent, namely the Hellenistic and Roman eras. Indeed, he often explicitly decentres Classical antiquity by viewing it through the consciousness of some historical or fictional character who lived several centuries after the Classical period. Angelos Sikelianos, a poet who has not reached such a wide international audience, coped with the western appropriation of Classical Hellas by moving in the opposite direction from Cavafy and drawing his inspiration from cults such as the Eleusinian mysteries whose obscure

[7] Ph. Koukoules, *Βυζαντινών βίος και πολιτισμός*, 6 vols (Athens: Institut Français d'Athènes, 1948-57).

[8] In Plantzos & Damaskos, p. 189.

[9] Quoted by Mourelatos in Plantzos & Damaskos, p. 200, from E. Matthiopoulos, 'Η ιστορία της τέχνης στα όρια του έθνους', in E. Matthiopoulos and N. Hadjinicolaou (eds), *Η ιστορία της τέχνης στην Ελλάδα* (Herakleio: Panepistimiakes Ekdoseis Kritis, 2003), pp. 468-9.

[10] This view is somewhat similar to the one expressed by Robert Byron, as quoted by Dame Averil Cameron in her lecture.

[11] At conference 'Re-imagining the Past', Birmingham, 27 June 2011.

[12] *The Athens Review of Books*, July-August 2011, pp. 35-7.

[13] For more on the encyclical issued by Patriarch Gregory V and the Holy Synod in March 1819 see P. Mackridge, *Language and national identity in Greece, 1766-1976* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 140.

[14] Cf. Mackridge, op.cit., p. 51: 'the change of name provided the modern Greeks with a new history and new models for behaviour (the great intellectual, military, and political figures of Classical Greece) – in short, a new identity of which they could feel proud and of which they could aspire to be worthy.'

[15] Compare the words of a London Greek called Saki, quoted by Zoe Williams in *The Guardian*, 24 June 2011: 'When we built the Parthenon and the Acropolis, the rest of Europe was still living in the trees.'

[16] Y. Hamilakis and E. Yalouri, 'Antiquities as symbolic capital in modern Greek society', *Antiquity* 70 (1996), 125-6.

[17] This is the question posed by Antonis Liakos as 'Who owns Hellenism'. 'Hellenism and the making of modern Greece', in Katerina Zacharia (ed.), *Hellenisms: culture, identity and ethnicity from antiquity to modernity* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p. 217; mentioned by Averil Cameron in her lecture.

origins date from pre-Classical times. Seferis converted the psychological burden of the Classical past into a poetic asset, since his network of references to the well-known myths of Odysseus and the house of Atreus enabled him to explore the problems of dealing with the Greek past and the Greek present in a way that has universal resonance. These are all instances of Greek attempts to discover and develop what Seferis called 'Greek Hellenism' as distinct from Europeanised Hellenism.

The fact that Greece's Classical past has already been appropriated and repackaged by Western Europe is probably the chief reason why, for the last 200 years, Greek intellectuals, with the exception of linguists, have insisted that the pronunciation of Greek has not changed since the time of the Classical Athenians, that they alone have preserved the genuine pronunciation, and that the so-called Erasmian pronunciation used by western Europeans since the Renaissance is a perversion of the Greek language. For some Greeks, the reform of the pronunciation of Ancient Greek by Erasmus has implied that western Europeans believe they have a greater right to see themselves as the genuine cultural heirs of Classical antiquity than do the modern Greeks, from whom Italians and other Europeans had begun to learn to read and pronounce Ancient Greek around 1400. Having been content to pronounce and write Ancient Greek as their early Greek teachers did, the Europeans proceeded to change their way of pronouncing and writing Greek to what they considered to be earlier and more authentic ways of doing so. In this way they cut themselves loose from the contemporary Greeks and sailed off in a different direction, confident that they no longer needed their help.

Another contested heritage is that of ancient Macedonia, which allows its possessor to dream not only of a greater Macedonia in the Balkans but also of an imagined geography that encompasses all the territories conquered by Alexander the Great, including Egypt and a vast region stretching as far east as India.[18] It is ironic that, more than 2000 years after the Athenian orator Demosthenes warned the Greeks that Alexander's father, Philip II, was threatening to destroy their liberty, many modern Greeks see Philip as one of the great heroes of their history for having unified the Greek nation, even though this initiated a process that would soon lead to the suppression of Athenian democracy. This positive view of Philip II was implicit in the recent Greek-sponsored exhibition at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, 'Heracles to Alexander the Great'.[19] Official and unofficial Greeks accuse the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia of hijacking their heritage, whereas what the archaeologist Dimitris Plantzos calls 'Greece's insistence that its hereditary rights be the sole basis for resolving the "Macedonia issue"' has perhaps hindered Greece's efforts to convince the international community that its behaviour towards its northern neighbour is justified.[20] Detaching the modern geographical area of Macedonia from its distant past might perhaps enable one to see the modern Macedonian question in a more realistic light.

Ancient versus modern Greece

As I have already suggested, there tends to be a hierarchy of Greek heritages, in which the playing up of one heritage tends to entail the playing down of the rest. An indication of the international privileging of ancient Hellas over modern Greece is the fact that Microsoft Word underlines the adjectives 'new' and 'modern' (unless they are capitalised) when they are placed immediately before the word 'Greek', as though the collocation of 'new' or 'modern' with 'Greek' is such a contradiction in terms that it is ungrammatical.

A notable example of the sacrificing of the modern in favour of the ancient is the Vrysaki quarter of Athens, which was demolished in the 1930s to make way for the excavation of the ancient Agora by the American School of Classical Studies. The American archaeologist Craig Mauzy recently stated that 'as Vrysaki was demolished, evidence of five thousand years of human habitation was uncovered.'[21] These 5000 years apparently didn't include the 20th century. However, Mauzy is a member of a team currently carrying out a virtual reconstruction of Vrysaki based on available plans, photographs and eyewitness memories: the very neighbourhood that was demolished for archaeological purposes has now become the object of archaeological research.

Most scholarly work on ancient Greece has been carried out by non-Greeks. But until recent decades modern Greece too used to be presented to the West by people armed with a Classical education who viewed modern Greece through the distorting lens of ancient Hellas.

I would like to refer to two instances quoted by Vassiliki Kolocotroni at a recent conference.[22] First, the 24-year-old Virginia Stephen (later to become better known as Virginia Woolf) wrote in her diary during her visit to Greece in 1906: 'The modern Greece is so flimsy and fragile, that it goes to pieces entirely [sic] when it is confronted with the roughest fragments of the old.'[23] Woolf's journal presents a conventional view held at the time that no relation existed between the modern and the ancient Greeks. And she adds: 'They do not understand Greek of the age of Pericles – when I speak it.'[24]

Secondly, the 73-year-old German philosopher Martin Heidegger set off on his only visit to Greece in 1962 after

[18] For a recent British newspaper article mentioning contemporary connections between Greece and the Kalash tribe in north-west Pakistan see Declan Walsh, 'Taliban threat closes in on isolated Kalash tribe', *The Guardian*, 17 October 2011.

[19] See James Romm, 'Who was in Tomb II?', *London Review of Books*, 6 October 2011.

[20] Plantzos, in Plantzos & Damaskos, p. 25.

[21] Craig Mauzy (American School of Classical Studies at Athens) at conference 'Greek (Hi)stories through the Lens', King's College London, June 2011.

[22] At conference 'Re-imagining the Past', Birmingham, 28 June 2011.

[23] This is illogical: if ancient Greece is in fragments, it must have been fragile.

[24] There may well be some intended humour in this sentence, especially in view of Woolf's use of the dash; yet the other passages concerning the modern Greeks in the journal are totally negative. For instance: 'Like a shifting layer of sand these loosely composed tribes of many different people lie across Greece; calling themselves Greek indeed, but bearing the same kind of relation to the old Greek that their tongue does to his. […] you must look upon the modern Greeks as a nation of mongrel element and a rustic beside the classic speech of pure bred races.' Jan Morris (ed.), *Travels with Virginia Woolf* (London: Pimlico, 1997), pp. 210-13, 220-1 [1st edn 1993].

what he called 'a long hesitation due to the fear of disappointment: the Greece of today could [= might] prevent the Greece of antiquity […] from coming to light.'[25] This process may also work in reverse: ancient Greece can, in some people's minds, prevent modern Greece from coming to light: Kolocotroni commented that Heidegger doesn't mention having met a single living Greek on his journey.

There seems to be an international obsession with connecting the modern Greeks with the ancients. Each of the daily features on the Greek crisis published in the *Guardian* during the first week of August this year included a short piece entitled 'What can the Ancient Greeks do for us?' There would have been no equivalent if the series were about Ireland or Spain or Portugal.

But Greeks too tend to focus on their distant past rather than their present or their recent past; the heritage of the distant past looms so large that most Greeks are uninterested in and uninformed about their own more recent (Ottoman and Balkan) past, which, to a large extent, made them what they are: it's telling that when Greek Americans parade along 5th Avenue in New York on Greek independence day (25 March), some of them dress as ancient soldiers rather than as the warriors of 1821 who fought for independence (Figure 2).

Figure 2. *Greek warriors in the 2009 Greek Independence Day parade in New York City. Source: www.thegreekwarriors.com*

While it is very common for nations to strive to construct their collective identity through a unique perception of their historical past,[26] Greeks are unusual in radically playing down their present and many aspects of their recent past. With the exception of acts of rebellion against foreign rulers, the period from 1453 till today tends to be marginalised. What is alive – together with the historical and cultural developments that led up to it (what David Brewer calls 'the hidden centuries'[27]) – is shunned in favour of what is dead.

An excellent historical documentary series on the War of Independence entitled '1821', broadcast on the Greek Sky television channel earlier this year, was greeted with outrage by a large section of the audience for attempting to dispel nationalist myths. Commenting on these negative audience reactions, the historian and political scientist Thanos Veremis wrote 'that the modern Greeks conceive of their identity as the result of reference to their collective past and that this makes their relationship with the present problematic'.[28]

What Stathis Gauntlett has called 'the Neohellenic strategy of validating the modern by reference to the ancient'[29] became internationalised with the Greeks' demand for independence in the 1820s: Greece's very existence as a modern nation was premised on its ancient past. As Roderick Beaton has pointed out, this was the first time a nation had put forward a claim to independence not as an innovation but as a restitution. It is difficult for the modern Greeks to 'receive' ancient Greek and Byzantine culture objectively and critically, and without feeling an unearned pride in being Greek. There is all too often an uncritical reverence for an idealised, sanitised version of Hellenic antiquity. Nevertheless, it's obvious from my frequent references to contemporary Greek scholars in this lecture that a large number of Greek academics are nowadays engaged in a clear-eyed critical scrutiny of Greece's heritages.

The Greek language question

The Greek strategy of validating the present by reference to the past probably originated in an influential idea among educated Greeks dating back to Roman times, that a word or form in their own contemporary spoken language is only valid as long as it is attested in some ancient text. This led in modern times to the 'language controversy', which Toynbee attributed to what he called the 'debilitating fantasy' that failure to emulate the language of Classical authors means intellectual and moral failure.[30] According to Toynbee, the language question is 'the supreme example of the bewildering and inhibiting effect of the Greeks' heritages from the past on Greek life since as long ago as the latter part of the Hellenistic Age'.[31] The language question is the subject of the last section of the main text of Toynbee's book, where he sums up his thoughts on the subject by saying that 'The *katharévousa* is a product of the Modern Greeks' mistrust of themselves in the face of Hellenic predecessors for whom they have felt themselves to be no match.' By contrast, he continues, 'the development of the *dhêmotikê* in the works of eminent Modern Greek poets is the fruit of a confident belief that the Modern Greeks can confront the Hellenic Greeks as their equals.'[32]

Together with the Greek landscape, the Greek language is the central feature that has been common to all phases of Greek history and culture. The Greek language has often been viewed by Greek intellectuals as a monument that

[25] M. Heidegger, *Sojourns: the Journey to Greece*, tr. J.P. Manoussakis (Albany, 2005), p. 4 [original title: *Aufenthalte* (Frankfurt, 1989)].

[26] Here I am paraphrasing Plantzos, in Plantzos & Damaskos, p. 13.

[27] D. Brewer, *Greece, the hidden centuries: Turkish rule from the fall of Constantinople to Greek independence* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010).

[28] Veremis (*Kathimerini*, 27 February 2011) attributes this view to Stelios Ramfos. Cf.: 'our relationship with the past becomes barren. We don't possess it; it possesses us. When you only have a past, you can't have any perspective' (S. Ramfos, interview in *Anichnefseis*, 25 May 2010).

[29] Conference 'Re-imagining the Past', Birmingham, 28 June 2011.

[30] Arnold Toynbee, *The Greeks and their Heritages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 52.

[31] Ibid., p. 245.

[32] Ibid., p. 266.

requires constant maintenance and occasionally restoration. *Katharevousa* (the now defunct official form of Greek that resulted from the 'correction' of modern Greek words and forms according to Ancient Greek usage) was the outcome of such a restoration project. It was a prime example of Greek attempts to fuse disparate heritages into a single whole. *Katharevousa* was an alloy made up of features of the Modern Greek spoken language and features taken from the written record of Ancient Greek. This alloy was intended to be more robust, expressive and prestigious than the Modern Greek element alone. Yet far from being an organic synthesis of Modern Greek and Ancient Greek, *katharevousa* was an arbitrary mixture. The unsystematic nature of *katharevousa* made it difficult to master. By contrast, what eventually became today's Standard Modern Greek is a form of the language based largely on the vocabulary and grammar of the spoken language, but enriched with features from the so-called 'learnèd tradition' where there were gaps to be filled in the expressive capabilities of the spoken language. In *katharevousa*, ancient features replaced perfectly functioning features of the spoken language. By contrast, in Standard Modern Greek today, ancient features are used to supplement the spoken language in areas of vocabulary and grammar where it was insufficient for the expressive needs of the modern Greeks.

In the second half of the 19th century Greek poets began writing about themes from ancient Greek history and culture in demotic Greek and translating central Ancient Greek texts such as the Homeric poems into the spoken language. In so doing, they were able to integrate Hellenic antiquity into their own culture instead of feeling dominated and dwarfed by it.

National literature and nationalist dogma

While politicians, publicists and others often make exaggerated statements about the continuity of Greek cultural history and react with indignation to any criticism of Greek behaviour during any historical period, a creative and vivifying critical engagement with antiquity was until recently restricted to the realms of art, and especially literature.

In his story 'Στην Αναστασά' ('At Saint Anastasa's'), published in 1892,[33] the deeply Christian fiction writer Alexandros Papadiamandis narrates a nocturnal visit by a group of villagers to a numinous ruin in the middle of a forest in order to perform the Resurrection service at midnight on Easter Saturday. The narrator has already informed us that archaeologists disagree whether these are the remains of an ancient temple or a church or a Venetian mansion, but the local people are convinced it was a church. He concludes that it is most likely that a temple of Persephone or Hecate had once stood on this spot, which had subsequently been taken over by 'the Christians, natural heirs of defunct paganism'. One imagines, says the narrator, that the 'fine-limbed Dryads and slender Orestiads' that still haunt the ruins, having temporarily 'taken heart at the Christian God's desertion of his fine marble sanctuary', now lurk in the shadows, observing in amazement the candles and burning incense carried by the Christian worshippers. In this passage Papadiamandis presents the Christians as the heirs of the idolaters, not in the sense of being their continuators but in terms of inheriting the land and the sacred places from them. At the same time, the spirits that the idolaters had worshipped are still in the vicinity, reclaiming their sacred precincts when the Christians' backs are turned. This relationship between pagan Hellas and Christian Greece works better in the context of fiction than on the level of ideological dogma.

Dimitris Tziovas has noted that the writers of the Generation of 1930 brought an aesthetic approach to the relationship between the past and the present. For Seferis, the ancient past is not 'a closed and given whole' but 'an open fragment, giving the opportunity to complete and restructure it through memory'.[34] Seferis, like other modern Greek poets inspired by antiquity, gives free range to his imagination, so that he participates and communicates with the past in the present. This is a subjective, personal relationship with the past as opposed to a 'national' one, and it inspires creativity rather than admiration or imitation.

Byzantium, Orthodox Christianity and modern Greece

Unlike the links between modern Greece and ancient Hellas, the Byzantine Christian tradition has remained unbroken in the form of the Orthodox Christian liturgy and many of its associated rituals and customs. It is probable that a majority of Greeks consider Orthodox Christianity rather than their Classical heritage to be the most important and emotionally affecting aspect of their national identity. In rural Greece, particularly, the way of life is imbued with the traditions of Orthodox Christianity: the religious calendar moves round from year to year together with the agricultural calendar. Christian festivals provide respite from work, excursions to country chapels, and occasions for merry-making that involve eating, drinking, singing and dancing. The lives of rural Greeks accord with the eternal seasonal patterns of nature and with a millennial tradition of religious practice, and their physical existence is constantly enriched by their spiritual life.

We therefore need to make a distinction between two quite distinct legacies from Byzantium that are often conflated: Byzantium as the nurturer of the Christian Orthodox tradition, and Byzantium as empire.

From the 1840s until 1922, many Greeks believed that the Greek nation had a historic mission to take over a large part of the Ottoman Empire and re-establish a Christian state with its capital in Constantinople. This belief was known as the Great Idea. Toynbee sees the Great Idea – whose successful progress he observed during his first stay in Greece on the eve the Balkan Wars in 1911-12 and whose destructive consequences he witnessed in Asia Minor in 1921 – as being a result of the Greeks' focus on their Byzantine heritage in terms not of Orthodox Christianity

[33] An English translation by Garth Fowden is published in A. Papadiamandis, *The boundless garden: selected short stories*, ed. L. Kamberidis and D. Harvey, vol. 1 (Limni: Denise Harvey, 2007), pp. 179-99.

[34] Plantzos & Damaskos, pp. 287-8, 291.

but of empire. Those Greeks who believed that Constantinople, rather than Athens, would be the most appropriate political and cultural centre for the modern Greek nation saw Byzantium, rather than Classical Hellas, as their genuine inheritance.[35]

The ideologisation of the Byzantine empire as the missing link between the ancient and the modern in the nationalist ideology of the continuity of Hellenism has given rise to conflicts. There is sometimes a tension between viewing something as a sacred building or icon on the one hand, and as an archaeological monument or museum exhibit on the other. Nobody complains when an ancient temple is presented as an archaeological exhibit, and few people object when statues are removed from the precincts of pagan temples and placed in museums. But some buildings are bones of contention. The most notorious example is the Rotunda in Thessaloniki, a pagan building that was erected on the orders of the Roman tetrarch Galerius in 306 AD but became a church dedicated to St George only a few decades after it was built; indeed, it is one of the oldest surviving buildings in the world to have been used as a church. It became a mosque after the Ottoman conquest, and it was officially classified as a monument after the incorporation of Thessaloniki into the Greek state. The Rotunda has been a site of contestation between Church and State for a number of years: many Orthodox Christians consider the building to be a church, and that therefore religious services should be performed there; by contrast, the State considers it to be an archaeological monument that should be preserved as a museum and used as a venue for artistic performances.[36]

What about icons? Some Greeks have viewed their removal from their liturgical context in churches to be preserved as exhibits in museums as not only the confiscation and secularisation of ecclesiastical property, but as tantamount to the desecration of sacred objects.[37] For instance, in his short story 'Λαμπριάτικος ψάλτης' ('The Easter chanter'), published in 1893, Papadiamandis protested when the collection of icons assembled by the recently founded Christian Archaeological Society[38] was placed on display in the National Archaeological Museum: 'Almighty God! a Museum, as if Christian worship had ceased to be practised in this country, as if its vessels [skevi] belonged to a buried past, objects of curiosity!'[39] The very concept of 'Christian archaeology' seemed to Papadiamantis to be an oxymoron.

In cases of conflict, the ancient has tended to take precedence over the Byzantine. Effie Athanassopoulos has talked about the disdain for medieval buildings (which included Byzantine churches) in 19th-century Athens. More than half of the churches that existed in the greater Athens area in 1830 were demolished, either in order to facilitate road-building or because they impeded the view of existing ancient remains or the discovery of additional ones.[40] Ironically, for all the official nationalist emphasis on the continuity of Greek culture from antiquity to the present, Greek archaeology has succeeded in physically isolating the ancient Greek past from other centuries.[41]

Continuity or discontinuity?

Toynbee writes that 'Few […] of the peoples that possess distinctive identities today have had as long a history as the Greeks, if we interpret history as meaning, not simply chronological duration, but a continuity of identity which has never ceased to be recognised and to be remembered'.[42] He also takes it for granted that the 'Byzantine Greeks' were the heirs of the ancient Hellenes.[43] Many historians today would contest the concept of 'a continuity of identity' with reference to the Greeks. The more realistic among the Greeks – including postmodern writers and artists – recognise the discontinuities of their cultural history and revel in the rich variety of their heritages, with all its tensions and contradictions, rather than subjecting them to a Procrustean homogeneity.

Even Toynbee, in another passage, writes that 'In harking back to their Hellenic past, the Modern Greeks have not been preserving a heritage; they have been raising a ghost'.[44] He also argues that 'Political liberation has entailed, for the Modern Greeks, a violent break with all their cultural heritages';[45] that is, the cultural heritages that the Greeks possessed up to the period immediately prior to the War of Independence. There is no precedent in Greek history for a homogeneous Greek state, and it has no roots in Greek life, writes Toynbee,[46] and the autocephaly of the Greek Church in 1833 was a radical break in Greek tradition.

The denial of foreign influence

Just as Greek nationalism conceives of Greek history and tradition as a seamless unity, it also sees Greek culture as

[35] Just as the Ottomans saw themselves as inheriting the empire from the Byzantines, so Greeks could envisage themselves as inheriting it in their turn from the Ottomans.

[36] See M. Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews 1430-1950* (London: HarperCollins, 2004), pp. 470-1, and C. Stewart, 'Immanent or eminent domain? The contest over Thessaloniki's Rotonda', in R. Layton *et al*. (ed.), *Destruction and conservation of cultural property* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 182-98. Another instance of the competing claims of Church and State to represent the Greek nation was the crisis in 2000, when the Greek Church organised a massive petition against the government's decision to remove the item 'Religion' from Greek national identity cards. See P. Mackridge, 'Cultural difference as national identity in modern Greece', in Zacharia (ed.), *Hellenisms*, pp. 316-17.

[37] D.D. Triantafyllopoulos, in N. D. Triantafyllopoulos (ed.), *Φώτα ολόφωτα: ένα αφιέρωμα στον Παπαδιαμάντη και τον κόσμο του* (Athens: ELIA, 1981), pp. 177-96.

[38] Founded by the Greek academic theologian Georgios Lambakis.

[39] Papadiamandis, *Άπαντα*, vol. 2, p. 524. This story has been published in English translation by Liadain Sherrard in Papadiamandis, *The boundless garden*, pp. 263-91 (the passage quoted is on p. 275). Eleana Yalouri mentioned this passage at the conference 'Re-imagining the Past', Birmingham, 27 June 2011; I am grateful to her for bringing it (together with Triantafyllopoulos' article) to my attention. Triantafyllopoulos comments that Papadiamandis sees the Greek Church as being too close to the State and not close enough to the Nation, while Triantafyllopoulos himself attacks the hypocrisy of Greeks who demand the return of the Elgin marbles but are not bothered by the state's confiscation of Orthodox icons (Triantafyllopoulos, ibid., pp. 179-80).

[40] Conference 'Re-imagining the Past', Birmingham, 27 June 2011. According to Yalouri, a number of these were demolished on the orders of Kyriakos Pittakis, the chief archaeologist employed by the Greek state in Athens from 1833 to 1863.

[41] As Dimitris Damaskos has pointed out (in Plantzos & Damaskos, p. 405).

[42] Toynbee, *The Greeks and their Heritages*, 268.

[43] Ibid., p. 72.

[44] Ibid., p. 155.

[45] Ibid., p. 200.

[46] Ibid., p. 234.

having remained unaffected by foreign influences. For those who hold such a view, it is unthinkable to talk about, for instance, the Venetian or Ottoman heritages of the Greeks, despite the fact that features of these heritages are constantly encountered in the built environment, in the language, and in everyday activities such as the preparation and consumption of food and drink.

The Greeks' heritages from non-Greeks, that is, from Franks and Ottomans, have been constantly marginalised. In 1859 the poet Aristotelis Valaoritis presented modern Greek history in Manichaean terms: 'the foundation of modern Greek poetry must be the faithful narration of the sufferings and martyrdoms of the Nation, the constant struggle of Hellenism against foreignism (ξενισμός)'.[47] In several parts of Greece, Venetian and Ottoman buildings are used as Orthodox churches, museums, venues for artistic events, military installations, or administrative offices. Yet, as the architectural historian Olga Gratziou has pointed out, until the middle of the 20th century the surviving Roman, Frankish, Venetian and Ottoman buildings in Greece were not considered to be monuments; instead they were generally regarded with indifference or hostility.[48] Little Greek interest was shown in the Venetian monuments of Crete until 1953, when the Historical Museum of Crete was founded in Heraclion. It was about this time that the term 'Cretan Renaissance' began to be used by historians of literature and art[49] to refer to the rich high culture of Venetian Crete in the 16th and 17th centuries, which displayed a remarkable fusion of Greek and Venetian features in literature, architecture and other aspects of culture. Because of the low priority accorded to supposedly non-Greek monuments in the hierarchy of heritages, a number of buildings constructed by the Venetians in Crete had already been demolished when Greece began to try to assert its European orientation after the end of the Colonels' dictatorship.[50] About the city of Heraclion Gratziou notes, in a remarkable understatement: 'The almost complete disappearance of the centre of a European town of the early modern period is an interesting historical phenomenon in itself.'[51] It is characteristic that Cretan churches and icons of the Venetian and Ottoman periods are commonly referred to (and officially signed) as 'Byzantine' and 'post-Byzantine'. According to Dionysis Mourelatos, the category 'post-Byzantine' is presented as the missing link in the chain between Byzantium and modern Greece.[52]

The co-existence of continuity and discontinuity

In a sense there is little direct continuity between modern Greece and Hellenic antiquity, but rather a process of reaching back from the present into the distant past and hauling features of ancient culture into the present for consumption by modern Greeks. Take the example of performances of Ancient Greek drama in modern Greece. Since the 1930s directors such as Karolos Koun have been mounting innovative productions of Ancient Greek drama. Yet it took a long time for this to happen. While performances in the original Ancient Greek had been put on by university students in the 19th century, the first Greek professional productions of Ancient Greek dramas that attracted public attention dated from about 1900, and, despite being performed in Modern Greek translation, these were often condemned by Greek critics for attempting to revive a dead genre that had no relevance to contemporary Greek culture. Only modern adaptations, with significant cuts to the text, met with public and critical approval at that time. The novelist, dramatist and critic Grigorios Xenopoulos suggested in 1903 that, since the modern Greeks were Christians, they were unable to relate to what was essentially a pagan religious ritual; besides, they didn't need to, since the Easter liturgy in the Orthodox Church already provided them with the equivalent religious, emotional and aesthetic experience. It was not until the 1930s that Ancient Greek drama began to be performed in a textually faithful but otherwise innovative way, and not until the 1950s that it became a fully accepted part of the contemporary Greek repertoire and began to appeal to a wide audience that recognised its timeless – and therefore contemporary – relevance.

Thus it is not 'natural' that Greeks, more than anyone else, should perform and attend performances of ancient drama; but whereas it is not natural, it is nevertheless appropriate. Even today, a performance of an ancient drama in front of a Greek audience is different from a performance of the same drama anywhere else, because it is always in part a ritual confirmation of national and ethnic identity and tradition on the part of performers and audience alike; but it is also a way of making the ancient texts topical.[53]

In the realm of literature (and especially poetry), the continuity of Greek tradition since antiquity has been argued in histories of Greek literature from Homer to Seferis or Ritsos written by Greek scholars, as well as in a recent American anthology of Greek poetry from ancient to modern times.[54] So perhaps the truth is that continuities and discontinuities co-exist; it depends on what we are looking at, and the angle we are looking from.

Still, I firmly believe that the only authentic Greece that we can approach and experience is the Greece of today (which in my case, at least, includes the Greece of recent times). I'm not saying that the study of modern Greece is more important than – or even as important as – the study of Greek antiquity; but I am saying that it is valid in its own right and on its own terms. In my teaching and writing I have been determined to see and present the modern Greeks in themselves without constantly referring to ancient Greece and Byzantium. I find it more helpful to conceive of the modern Greeks as embodying certain aspects of ancient and Byzantine culture than to view them within the context of

[47] Prolegomena to *I kyra Frosyni* (1859).

[48] Gratziou, in Plantzos & Damaskos, p. 209.

[49] Ibid., p. 219.

[50] Ibid., p. 211.

[51] Ibid., p. 215.

[52] Mourelatos, in Plantzos & Damaskos, p. 197.

[53] Much of what I say in this paragraph about the period from the 1900s to the 1930s is based on the paper given by Eleni Papazoglou at the conference 'Re-imagining the Past', Birmingham , 28 June 2011.

[54] C. A. Trypanis, *Greek poetry: from Homer to Seferis* (London: Faber and Faber, 1981); St. Alexiou, *Ελληνική λογοτεχνία από τον Όμηρο στον 20ο αιώνα* (Athens: Stigmi, 2010); Peter Bien, Peter Constantine, Edmund Keeley, Karen Van Dyck , *A century of Greek poetry*: 1900-2000 (River Vale, NJ: Cosmos Publishing, 2004).

ancient Hellas and Byzantium. In my work I have placed modern Greece at the centre of my interest, and the earlier periods on the periphery, rather than vice versa.

The modern Greeks' legacy to the world

I could have given a whole lecture on the legacies that the modern Greeks have bequeathed to the world, pointing to the large number of individual Greeks who have made international contributions to the arts and sciences, and the Greek individuals and foundations that have made generous benefactions to museums and educational institutions, especially in the United Kingdom. I could also have mentioned the many British writers and artists who have been inspired by modern Greece, and the British academics (including Arnold Toynbee) who have felt impelled to study the modern Greeks and learn from them, especially in the fields of literature, language, history, anthropology and theology.[55] Many of these scholars (again including Toynbee) have been members of the British School at Athens, which has provided them with an indispensible physical, academic and social base in which and from which to carry out their research. But the most important and enduring example that the modern Greeks as a nation have set to the world is their determination to be free and their lesson that true liberty requires continuous struggle. The Greeks were the first European nation in the modern era to establish a state organisation by applying the principle of national self-determination.[56] And between October 1940 and April 1941, the Greeks alone managed against all the odds to repel an invasion by Axis forces. Such achievements have demanded a high degree of recklessness.

In the 20th century the Greeks suffered a number of disasters, some of which were partly of their own making. Yet they have been remarkably successful at bouncing back. First, the Asia Minor Catastrophe of 1922 necessitated the establishment of more than a million Greek refugees from Turkey; in this way one of the greatest disasters in Greece's history was immediately followed by one of its greatest successes. Secondly, having been devastated by foreign occupation and civil war in the 1940s, the Greeks achieved an economic miracle after 1950, bringing a huge rise in their standard of living. Thirdly, the Colonels' regime of 1967 to 1974 was the only dictatorship to be newly established in Europe since the 1940s; yet the end of the Colonels' dictatorship resulted in the healing of the rift between left and right and the establishment of the first truly democratic regime in Greece's history.

In 2008 Greece was classified as one of the 25 most developed countries in the world,[57] and until the present crisis Greece was often seen as a source of regional political and financial stability.

In order to weather this latest storm, the Greeks will need to use all of their considerable resourcefulness, but they will also need all the help and encouragement they can get from their fellow Europeans.

Peter Mackridge is Professor Emeritus of Modern Greek at the University of Oxford and a visiting professor at King's College London.

This was one of three lectures given at the British Academy on 18-20 October 2011 to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the British School at Athens. The other two lectures were: 'Philosophy with a Public Voice: A Forgotten Legacy of Ancient Greece', by Professor Alexander Nehamas; and 'Byzantium Today', by Professor Dame Averil Cameron FBA. Audio recordings of all three lectures can be found via www.britac.ac.uk/events/2011/

The British School at Athens is sponsored by the British Academy. More on the British School at Athens can be found at www.bsa.ac.uk

[55] For what Toynbee claimed to have learned from the modern Greeks, see his monumental work *A study of history*, vol. 12 (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 582-3.

[56] Harald Haarmann, 'Language and ethnicity in a European context', to be published in a forthcoming volume.

[57] Loukas Tsoukalis, at conference 'Whose crisis? Greece's politics, economics and society in an era of uncertainty', St Antony's College, Oxford, 28 May 2011.

When Homer met Phantasia: Fiction, epic poetry and entertainment literature in Byzantium

DR AGLAE PIZZONE

BYZANTINE READERS were keen on novels. They avidly read, copied and commented on ancient fiction, despite the chronological and ideological distance that separated them from the ancient novels. They valued both 'erotic' and 'science fiction' novels, and did not despise pseudo-historical narratives either. Heliodorus, author of the *Ethiopian Story*, an adventurous love story revolving around a white girl born to black parents, was incessantly read (and even allegorised) from the 5th to the 14th century.[1] In the 9th century the patriarch Photios, presenting and discussing a number of texts from his library, summarised a (now lost) novel by Antonius Diogenes entitled *The Wonders beyond Thule* and dating to the 1st century CE. The story, a sort of Graeco-Roman version of *Gulliver's Travels*, recounted the protagonists' incredible wanderings, which extended as far as the mythical northern island of Thule.[2] The *Alexander Romance*, moreover, narrating a mythologised and often extravagant version of the life of Alexander the Great, was immensely popular all across the Empire (Figure 1). Beside securing the survival of the genre, such an appreciative attitude nourished an awareness of the distinctive qualities defining fictional narration. In the 12th century, admiration for ancient models eventually developed into a more creative approach to reading and writing: this led to the production of a new set of novels addressing a learned audience. Authors such as Theodore Prodromos (*Rodanthe and Dosikles*), Niketas Eugenianos (*Drosilla and Charikles*), Eumathius Makrembolites (*Hysmine and Hysminias*), Constantine Manasses (*Aristander and Callithea*) re-staged old-fashioned 'boy-meets-girl' plots and pan-Mediterranean settings, depicting a long-lost classical past, complete with pagan gods and ancient mythology.

I shall not go so far as to argue that the Byzantines developed a general theory of fiction. Even today, there is no such a thing. Nonetheless, many aspects of our contemporary debate were already there. The active production of fictional love narratives in the 12th century is just the final outcome of a long-term process which began around the 9th century and reshaped the idea of cultural enjoyment, literary creation and authorial authority. After all, as has been said, 'there can hardly be a more important question about a piece of writing or speech than this: Is it fiction or nonfiction?'[3]

In what follows, I first trace a general portrait of the Byzantine fiction-reader. I then single out the definitional criteria of fiction in Byzantium, starting from the very language of our narratives. Next, I shall clarify how the Byzantines related themselves to non-actual realities, looking at how they conceptualised the fantasy world of the novels. Finally, I explore how the increasing awareness of fiction affected the construction of a literary past.

'Tell me a story and I will believe it': discovering the greedy Byzantine reader

Like any communicative act, fiction-making is designed to fulfil specific intentions. The nature of such 'fictive intentions' has been widely discussed, so I limit myself to making a few points. Fictional communication engages reader and writer in a shared game. In order to enter the game, the reader must adopt an attitude of make-believe, as if he were subscribing to a sort of preliminary contract with the writer. In ancient fiction, such a 'contract' often takes the form of a frame enclosing the main plot and suggesting, in various ways, what attitude the reader should take. Whatever the form, such frames rest on the assumption that the reader is desperately curious to know the story, no matter how incredible it may be: desire for pleasure and entertainment establish a form of complicity between reader and writer. The attitudes of Byzantine readers were subject to historical change, and yet these three key concepts remained crucial, both in a negative and in a positive way. In addressing the myths and fictions of the historian Herodotus, for instance, Photios described how their sweetness 'flowed' into the soul of the reader.[4] The same sweetness he ascribed to the unexpected twists in Heliodorus' plot. *Elpis*, 'hope', was Photios' word for what we would call 'readers' expectations'.[5] Photios, however, disapproved of literary pleasure devoid of more serious intent, and he stressed that 'sweet mythological fictions' disrupted the correct consumption of Herodotus' history.

[1] Heliodorus' actual dates are uncertain: it has been suggested either the 3rd or the 4th century CE.

[2] Cod. 166, 109a-112a Henry.

[3] Gregory Currie, *The nature of fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 1.

[4] Cod. 60, 19b, 20 Henry.

[5] Cod. 73, 50a, 9-11 Henry. Photios' judgment relies on the rhetorical theory of Hermogenes (*On Style* II 4, pp. 330-331 Rabe).

Figure 1. *Illumination from the manuscript that contains the only fully illustrated copy of the Greek Alexander Romance (Venice Hellenic Institute Gr. 5, folio 16v). The Greek caption at the top reads: 'Philip [of Macedon] leaves for Delphi to receive an oracle concerning who will rule after him.' Delphi's sacred (pagan) space is epitomised by the architectural structure on the right, complete with naked and demon-like figures (representing statues of the gods). The production of the manuscript has been connected to Alexios III Comnenos (1349-1390). The Turkish notes on the left testify to the life of the manuscript after the fall of Constantinople.*

A clearer statement is to be found, at a later time, in Psellos' essay on Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius, dating to the 11th century. Psellos resorts to a peculiar expression to describe the romance reader, namely *lichnos*, 'greedy for food', a word poised between eagerness, desire and curiosity.[6] We may well affirm that one word says more than a thousand. Leafing through our sources, we understand that a 'greedy listener' was a person willing to be enthralled by the magic of words and enchanted by the twists of the plot.

Photios seemed to distinguish the striving for knowledge from mere greedy curiosity.[7] Psellos, by contrast, is not particularly hostile to this kind of 'greed', nor was Tzetzes, a learned intellectual and commentator living during the 12th century. Tzetzes compiled a pagan *Theogony* and dedicated it to Irene, daughter-in-law of the emperor John II (1087-1143): to be sure, hardly anything could be more fictional. In the opening lines, Tzetzes addressed his dedicatee as 'someone who cannot get enough of speeches', thus revealing the attitude he expected from Irene. Twelfth-century Byzantine romances also valorise 'greed': eagerness characterised both the heroes and the readers.[8] Take for example the novel by Makrembolites, a passionate and occasionally humorous love story featuring shipwrecks, pirates and human sacrifices: interestingly, some manuscripts come with introductory poems, and in one of them the readers are explicitly invited to 'watch' the story and share the main characters' bitter-sweet agony.[9] Empathy was indeed the main goal of Makrembolites' story-telling.[10]

Feeling the story: a matter of style

Reading a novel was thus equated to watching its story-line, as if it were developing in front of the very eyes of the reader, and vividness was achieved through a characteristic stylistic texture. In modern debates about fiction, the crucial question concerning language and fiction is formulated in very simple terms: does the verbal structure of a work determine its fictional status? For a Byzantine reader the answer would have been a very clear-cut 'Yes'.

Byzantine culture was shaped by rhetoric: as in late antique culture, 'the closest ancient category to our notion of fiction that is to be found in the surviving sources is the rhetoricians' *plasmata*'.[11] *Plasma* was the label for a particular

[6] *Essay on Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius*, p. 93, 33 Dick.

[7] Photios, *Amphilochia* 36, 18-20 Laourdas-Westerink.

[8] *Lichnos* describes the lover's desiring gaze in Theodore Prodromos II 182; Niketas Eugenianos I 243.

[9] See vv. 20-25, p. XXIV Marcovich. The earliest manuscripts bequeathing these poems are Par. Gr. 2915 (dated to 1364) and Par. Gr. 2914 (15th century).

[10] XI 23.

[11] *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice* (Burlington-Furnham: Ashgate, 2009), p. 167.

kind of narrative part in a speech. Unlike myths or fables, *plasmata* were seen as plausible, if factually untrue, speech acts, insofar as their single components were based upon reality. However, what made a narrative 'likely' was a special stylistic quality resulting in vividness and eliciting emotional involvement from the reader. Involvement was often secured through a subjective perspective (i.e. a first person narrative), while vividness was deemed to help the reader visualise the action. Needless to say, such a style was also quintessentially 'dramatic' in nature, and *dramata* was the most common definition for fictional narrative.[12] The pathetic overtones were also enhanced by the new verse form adopted by Byzantine novelists – with the exception of Eumathius Makrembolites who remained faithful to prose. Such novels were also, most likely, orally performed during literary gatherings: a fact that fully accounts for Psellos' mention of a 'greedy audience'.

Reviewing the novel of Heliodorus and the pseudo-historical works of Ctesias (5th-4th century BCE), Photios repeatedly points to *diaskeue*, a term that could be translated as 'elaboration'.[13] The word refers both to structure (our 'plot') and style (what we would call a vibrant and pathetic elocution); in rhetorical treatises, *diaskeue* was explicitly connected to *plasmata*.[14]

Even more importantly, *diaskeue* is at the basis of Photios' distinction between fictional and non-fictional narratives. Non-fictional narrations (be they historical-chronographic or hagiographic) were seen as a snapshot of reality, whereby the written text was supposed to adhere to the underlying reality. To use modern terminology, historical texts were deemed to be descriptive rather than representative. In contrast fiction-readers were supposed to *feel* the story, to *envisage* it, thanks to an elaborated and pathetic *diaskeue*.

'Imagine there's a girl': how to visualise Byzantine fiction

The notion of representation brings in another crucial feature of Byzantine fiction, namely *phantasia*, or imagination. Here some caution is needed. Byzantine *phantasia* had very little in common with 'creative' imagination as we intend it. *Phantasia* was mainly deemed to organise visual stimuli, by storing them into memory. Accordingly, *phantasia* was understood as an evocative power, bringing emotions to life, triggering recollections and retrieving the stories associated with the represented subjects. The keyword was 'to recall', not 'to create'. Nonetheless, the relevance to fictional discourse emerges quite clearly. *Phantasia* was construed as a bridging power, operating between unrelated realities. It required difference: in order effectively to work, it called for gaps to be filled and for extremes to be balanced. *Diaskeue* was expected to create precisely this kind of gap, both in terms of arrangement (the writer disengaged the story line from the linearity of the historical events, or even created an entirely fictional plot) and emotional content (vibrant descriptions call for a strong psychological response).

The alliance between reader and writer was built on such a psychological substratum. *Phantasia* also played a relevant role in the semantic field of desire. From Graeco-Roman times, longing and visualising were viewed as inter-connected notions. John of Damascus, in the first half of the 8th century, had provided a systematic account of the link between desire/passions and visual imagination, thus creating an anthropological model that proved very influential in Byzantium.[15]

Byzantine readers desired to be amazed. In the erotic novels, both ancient and Byzantine, the heroine was always endowed with heavenly, shining beauty. Whoever came across her was left awestruck. She – literally – embodied the visual power of novelistic writing. The reactions of the onlookers epitomised the readers' desiring gaze. Heliodorus' story circulated in Byzantium under the title of *Charikleia*, i.e. the name of the heroine. The wonder elicited by 'Charikleia' – both as a character and as a book – or by 'Hysmine' was exactly the emotion Byzantine readers sought in Heliodorus' twisted plot or Makrembolites' barely credible story. *Phantasia* enabled them to desire, visualise, and eventually feel the novel.

Hybrids and imaginary worlds

The construction of unreal worlds is slippery ground. Fictional realities are both fascinating and confusing. In modern times, Goethe resorted to the mythical image of a composite beast, the tragelaph (half goat and half stag), to describe the mixed feelings aroused by non-actual worlds. Such a metaphor expressed 'the kind of vertigo that usually overcomes someone actually confronted with something totally incongruous and naturally impossible'.[16] Intriguingly, the Byzantines were after the very same image.

In order to illustrate the problem of non-referential objects, John of Damascus resorted to hybrids such as the hippocentaur or, more typically, the tragelaph. Such monsters represented a logical challenge, insofar as their components were real. As was the case with *plasmata*, it took no effort to visualise them, although they were of course quintessentially fictional. According to the ancient (Aristotelian) tradition, such imaginary creatures were seen as a product of *phantasia*. John of Damascus, on the contrary, left the imaginative power on the background, pointing instead to discursive reason.[17] Such a choice was ideologically motivated. During the years of the iconoclastic struggle (730-787; 814-842), when the images of Christ and the saints were systematically destroyed, non-referential thoughts were a risky topic. Hippocentaurs, sirens, goat-stags could be labelled as idols, devoid of any substance. *Phantasia*

[12] See for instance Photios, *Library* 87, 66a, 27 Henry; Eumathius Makrembolites labels his own story as a *drama* and the same term features in the title povided by ms. Par. Gr. 2915 (p. 152, 12-13).

[13] Cod. 72, 45a, 12-14 (Ctesias); 87, 66a, 25 (Achilles Tatius, 2nd century CE); 166, 109a, 12 Henry (Antonius Diogenes).

[14] Ps. Hermogenes, *Invention* III 15, pp. 166-170 Rabe.

[15] *Images* I 11, 10–21 (III 85 Kotter); II 5, 5–14 (III 72 Kotter); *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* II 22; 36, 9-38 (II 88–89 Kotter).

[16] Review of Anton Ritter von Klein, 'Athenor, ein Gedicht in sechzehn Gesängen', *Jenaische Allgemeine Literaturzeitung*, 38 (14 February 1805), col. 304 (translation in Annette Richards, *C.P.E. Bach Studies* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006], p. 27).

[17] *Philosophical Chapters* 65, 84-97 (I 135 Kotter).

would have been undermined by an explicit connection to unsubstantial thoughts. Idol worship was the most common allegation against the supporters of holy images. The latter, however, believed that icons were a sort of window to holiness, which is why they felt the need to preserve *phantasia* as a space in-between corporeality and mental abstraction. That also explains why non-referential imagination is hardly mentioned before the 10th century. However, such theoretical concerns seemed to fade away after the end of the iconoclastic struggle. *Phantasia* loomed large in the works of philosophers discussing fictional thoughts as well as their logical and psychological nature.[18] In the same period, the Byzantines developed an increasing awareness with regard to literary fiction as well as a new kind of 'profane aesthetic' in the visual arts. Sphinxes, hippocentaurs, two-bodied lions, sirens, birds with human heads and so forth suddenly materialised on capitals, manuscripts, caskets, tapestries, vessels. They became common sights in the everyday life of Byzantine elites.

Re-imagining the past

It is time now to tackle our last question: how did the 'new fictional wave' affect the construction of the literary past? A vivid answer is provided in the 12th century – i.e. during the Byzantine 'revival' of the novel – by Eustathius, the author of an important commentary on the *Odyssey*. In the prologue, Eustathius praises Homer by stressing, among other things, his ability to describe events and arrange the plot (*diaskeuasai*).[19] Under the pretext of defending him from allegations of plagiarism, Eustathius indulges in a peculiar anecdote. According to a certain Naukrates, Eustathius reports, the true author of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* was a certain Phantasia, a girl from Memphis, Egypt. Homer, later on, reshaped the plot, drawing on scrolls deposited by Phantasia in the temple of Hephaestus. This short story epitomises all the elements inherent to fictionality:[20] pleasure (arising from the *diaskeue*, Homer's rearrangement of the plot), vividness and imagination (embodied by the supposed author of the 'holy book-rolls'), preliminary alliance between reader and writer (pseudo-documentarism).

By reporting this anecdote, Eustathius *seems* to point to a first-hand account, but in fact he cunningly underscores the imaginative character of the poems, since lady Phantasia could not possibly be an actual eyewitness. As readers, we are supposed to delve into a long commentary on the *Odyssey*, a poem that, for large portions, presents the hero himself – the archetype of the manipulative narrator – as its only witness. Eustathius tries to by-pass the problem by labelling Homer's Egyptian Muse as a 'seer of wisdom'; yet, in so doing, he ends up undermining her reliability. Eustathius wisely stresses the twisted subtlety of the poem: ostensibly a plain text, the *Odyssey* proves unexpectedly profound and complex,[21] deploying the kind of fictional strategy that came to be associated with delight and amazement. In the age of the novelistic revival even the Homeric poems could be read as fictional, entertaining literature, and not only as educational, exemplary texts.

Commentators are of course authors in their own right. By launching his commentary, Eustathius tries to create his own bond with his audience. Right at the beginning of his commentary on the *Iliad* he describes his own audience as made up of young people, eager to gain knowledge and ready to start a sort of 'textual journey'. At the same time he depicts the audience of the poems as 'greedy listeners' (*lichnos akoen*), striving both for knowledge and amazement.[22] Eustathius envisages a readership impatient to decode the narrative tricks of the poems, seeking the pleasure of both surprise and recognition.

To sum up, fiction in Byzantium was consumed by a culturally-aware readership, one that aimed at being entertained and valued the artifices of fantasy-worlds and trickster-narrators. Such an attitude partially affected the way canonical works – such as the Homeric poems – were approached and enjoyed. It also reshaped the way commentators engaged with their texts, providing a new perspective from which to look at many old lines. In the end, interpreting a poem proved to be as challenging as chasing a lovely girl, either literary or real.

Dr Aglae Pizzone is one of the British Academy's Newton International Fellows. She holds her Fellowship in the Department of Classics and Ancient History at Durham University.

More information on the scheme of Newton International Fellowships can be found via www.newtonfellowships.org

[18] See e.g. Psellos, *Opuscula* 13, p. 66, 8-16 O'Meara.

[19] *Commentary on the Odyssey* I 2, 23 Stallbaum.

[20] *Commentary on the Odyssey* I 2, 24-29 Stallbaum. The anecdote probably derives by the lost pseudo-historical work compiled by Ptolemaeus Chennos and summarised by Photios (the tale about Homer and Phantasia in his *Library* cod. 190,151a, 38-b, 5 Henry).

[21] I 1, 38-41 Stallbaum.

[22] *Commentary on the Iliad*, I 3, 5-8; I 11, 27-31 Van der Valk.

End of empire and the English novel

On 2 November 2011 contributors to the volume 'End of Empire and the English Novel since 1945' explored the history of post-war England through their readings of a range of writers and genres. ***Professor Susheila Nasta****, a respondent in the discussion, raised the question of why there still remains an inability in much post-war English fiction to imaginatively engage directly with the realities of migration, decolonisation, immigration, and cultural co-existence.*

ONE CAN PROBABLY still count on one hand the number of 'mainstream' (though I don't like that word) English novelists who have explicitly addressed, embraced, and imaginatively attempted to represent, the major social, political and cultural changes that the after-effects of black and Asian migration brought to Britain. A contemporary writer such as Maggie Gee, following in the footsteps of Colin MacInnes, Shelagh Delaney, or Alan Sillitoe in the 1950s, has recently attempted to engage with this in her fiction, by exploring the diversity of class and family in both black and white urban lives. Yet, as Caryl Phillips once put it, when describing English fiction from the 1950s, it is as if the primary concerns of the novel still remain entrapped in a 'kingdom of the blind', almost in defiance of the fact that we are clearly now living in a postcolonial and international era. I am not referring here to those works of post-war English fiction by home-grown 'postcolonial' or 'migrant' writers – as they are so often separated and designated – such as Hanif Kureishi, Bernardine Evaristo, Zadie Smith and others.

The question as to why the terrain of the English novel post-empire has largely remained parochial, inward rather than outward-looking, is a fascinating one. It is also one that has inevitably engaged me for many years as founding Editor of *Wasafiri*, a literary magazine which has featured the diversity of contemporary writing in Britain. *Wasafiri* has long attempted to counteract insularity, both in terms of content and also by seeking to open up what I would describe as a consensual and still prevalent 'parochiality' in terms of reading habits. It is a tendency that appears time and time again in the review pages of national newspapers, which attribute literary value and authority. This myopic, and essentially narrow, interpretative approach regularly manifests itself as either a refusal to seriously engage with the preoccupations of so-called 'other' writers in Britain, or simply reflects an embarrassed containment often combined with a startling absence of knowledge. Unfortunately such limitations in vision and perception reverberate and often go on, sadly, to inform editorial decisions made by literary agents and publishing houses.

Writing as a form of 'cultural travelling'

Wasafiri has long promoted the idea of writing as a form of 'cultural travelling', stressing the fact that all cultures constantly cross-fertilise, traversing borders and boundaries to reinvent themselves.[1] It is through such encounters – through the meeting head-on of different versions of history and the voicing of parallel stories – that imaginative literature, the stories we tell ourselves, about our futures, about our place in the contemporary modern world, can grow. In that sense we have been, and are at, a most important moment in British literary history. And the history of empire and its aftermath remains very much a part of that. In its heyday, empire not only opened up important trade links with obvious financial benefit to Britain, but also resulted in many cultural affiliations and networks. This long history of transverse connections, which in many cases came to birth during the period of empire, continue to permeate and enrich the world of contemporary English fiction.

It is heartening to see that many of the post-war English writers explored in this exciting new volume of essays – whether George Orwell, Anthony Burgess or William Golding – have not only engaged, however obliquely, with empire but also, as one might expect, have long-standing, organic connections with it. As we all know, empires are not as solid as they might appear. Often shaped by shifting sands, they have to reinvent themselves constantly in order to accommodate the collision of competing histories, cultures, religions and ideologies. They almost all result in major migrations – whether of peoples, ideas, books or artifacts. Importantly too, when empires decline and fall, they need to make room for something else.[2] And, frequently, it is often those very things that seem to threaten or undermine their apparent solidity which cause them to exaggerate themselves, sometimes very dangerously, as they become the 'bastions' of distinctive national traditions.[3] At the same time, in order to withstand a fear of their own myths disintegrating, they shift their goal posts, recasting and reinventing their identities.

[1] The name *Wasafiri* derives from the Kiswahili word for 'travellers', itself a hybrid of the Arabic 'safari'.

[2] I am grateful here to Robert Fraser's argument in his insightful essay, '"Is There a Gibbon in the House": Migration, Postcoloniality and the Rise and Fall of Europe', *Moving Worlds*, 2.2 (2002), pp, 102-114.

[3] See Liz Maslen's engaging discussion of the 'English' literary canon and national identity in, 'The Miasma of Englishness' in David Rogers, John McLeod, eds., *The Revision of Englishness* (Manchester: MUP, 2004), pp. 41-52.

'How the Critic came to be King'

One might question why the admirable opening up of post-war English fiction in this volume, an approach that clearly sets out to counteract a 'parochiality of interpretation' has not been much in evidence before.[4] What is it about this moment now, as Britain faces even greater economic and social decline, that has led to the important questions and disclosures presented by such a collection of essays? This collection puts forward many convincing reasons as to why the remnants of empire in the so-called 'English' novel post-1945 seem most often to be liminal, symbolic, interred, an after-effect, symptom and displacement.

One nevertheless has to ask why, so many years after empire and the major process of decolonisation and migration that followed, some English writers, now deemed 'postcolonial', still remain bracketed into a location that conveniently separates them from the so-called 'mainstream' English novel in terms of ethnicity, colonial heritage and race? This is even though it is blatantly clear that their long and shared relationship with empire shrouds a much more complex reality. One wonders whether the 'imagining' into existence of the 'postcolonial' has only served to further insulate what some felt most needed 'protection', so the after-effects of empire can be acknowledged but still kept firmly at bay?[5]

The paradoxical effects of this kind of distancing and denial – and I would say erasure in some cases – is no better illustrated than in the surprising reproduction in the *Times Literary Supplement* in 2000 of a photograph taken in 1942 when George Orwell was working for the BBC Eastern Service during the war (see Figure 1). In the photograph, taken at Orwell's specific request, Orwell appears alongside several key artists and writers who contributed to a scripted poetry magazine programme entitled 'Voice'. In the original BBC version of the photograph, all the participants, whose appearance together at this moment in time is in itself interesting, are named.

The image suggests several other stories of exchange, friendship and cross-cultural fertilisation which exist beyond its immediate frame. We see, for example here, the Indian writer Mulk Raj Anand talking on the same platform as T.S. Eliot. Prior to 1945, Anand was a familiar public intellectual in British literary circles, a contributor to many mainstream periodicals, and he was well known to several members of the Bloomsbury Group in London at the time. Interestingly too, Anand, wrote the scripts for this series of six programmes together with Orwell. Notably after the war ended, as V.S. Pritchett was to remark, Anand disappeared from English literary history – though he does later gain recognition as one of the founding-fathers of the 'Indian' novel in English.

The point about this image is that there seems to be a more open, reciprocal atmosphere surrounding this group of artists, writers and intellectuals, a sense of engagement which exists in excess of their – in some cases – colonial

Figure 1. The original photograph (1942) from 'Voice' – the BBC Eastern Service's monthly magazine programme. Huddled around the microphone are: (left to right, sitting) Venu Chitale (Assistant Producer), M.J. Tambimuttu (Ceylonese poet and editor for many years of 'Poetry London'), T.S. Eliot, Una Marson (Caribbean poet and producer of 'Caribbean Voices'), Mulk Raj Anand (Indian novelist and critic), C. Pemberton (BBC staff), Narayana Menon (Indian writer and critic); and (standing) George Orwell, Nancy Parratt (secretary to Orwell), William Empson.

The caption on this cropped version of the photograph reproduced in the TLS (2000) reads 'gathered together among others, from left to right, T.S. Eliot, George Orwell and William Empson'.

[4] See Fraser, p.3.

[5] Abdulrazak Gurnah provides an illuminating discussion of this question and its relation to the creative writer in 'Imagining the Postcolonial Writer', in Susheila Nasta ed., *Reading the 'New' Literatures in a Postcolonial Era* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2000), pp.73-80.

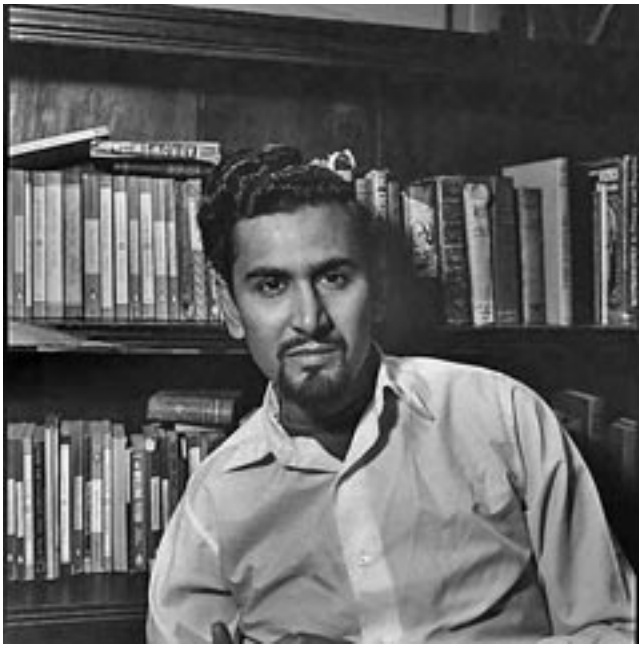


Figure 2. Sam Selvon (1923-1994) in his study, by Ida Kar in 1956. This photograph was recently shown at the National Portrait Gallery as part of a retrospective of Kar's work. In the context of this exhibition Selvon was set alongside many key intellectuals formative to the period including Jean-Paul Sartre, Jean Cocteau, T.S. Eliot, W.H. Auden and Colin MacInnes. The books on the shelves behind Selvon reflect his reading, ranging from William Faulkner to J.D. Salinger to George Orwell, Joyce Carey and Ernest Hemingway to popular classics and contemporary films. Photo: © National Portrait Gallery, London.

affiliations. Importantly, they are gathered together here at a moment just before the end of the Second World War and five years before Indian Independence when Albion itself was about to face its own decline and fall. In an article on Euro-American modernism entitled 'How the Critic came to be King', published in a millennium issue of the *TLS* in September 2000 (almost 60 years later), a very different kind of story seems to be represented. The same 1942 BBC image is reproduced, but instead of a clear list of all the participants, you have a literal cutting off of some heads. The caption beneath identifies only the names of the canonical moderns: T.S. Eliot, George Orwell and William Empson. I wrote to the *TLS* to query why they had used such an image to accompany an article on the forces influencing Euro-American modernism if they were only going to feature such a one-eyed view of the wider transnational and global forces impacting on the development of modernity in Britain.[6] Notably this image appeared in the *TLS* almost 20 years after the publication of Salman Rushdie's ground-breaking 1981 novel *Midnights Children*, and the popularity of many international writers such as V.S. Naipaul, Derek Walcott and Vikram Seth.

The era of the postcolonial novel

As an Editor, involved daily with issues of selection and representation, I remain painfully aware of a process at work in the wider literary industry that still continues to insist – despite all the theoretical battles of the 1980s and 1990s around identity, race and culture – on what I have been calling a myopia in processes of reading and interpretation. The first issue of *Wasafiri* was published in 1984, three years after the publication of Rushdie's *Midnights Children*, a novel frequently said to have heralded a major sea change in opening up the terrain of English fiction. If in a sense, as Virginia Woolf once put it, human character changed around 1910, it would seem that the era of the postcolonial novel was certainly well established by the 1980s.

There had of course been many books published before this which depicted a wider vision of the mulatto nature of British culture, some prior to the end of empire and many more later. A writer such as Sam Selvon for instance had already revisioned London as a black city of words in his groundbreaking 1956 novel *The Lonely Londoners*, anticipating things to come (Figure 2). Seen as an innovative Caribbean vision by a talented new voice, Selvon's manuscript was snapped up by a mainstream publisher and reviewed in all the national newspapers. Yet by the mid 1980s, as comforting memories of Britain's once great empire receded and the white English novel became even more paranoid about protecting its terrain from Black Britain, his significance had to be reinstated. His last London novel, *Moses Migrating*, takes up the story of his main character Moses, thirty years later. It was published in 1983 but only with a small paperback imprint, designed for the overseas market, called the Longman Drumbeat Series. Not surprisingly, it received few reviews and none were in the national press.

At around this time, we were supposedly in the heyday of the postcolonial. The empire was certainly seen to be writing back. The international novel had arrived and the works of home-grown black and Asian writers like Hanif Kureishi, Caryl Phillips, Andrea Levy, and later Monica Ali or Zadie Smith, were soon to populate high profile prize lists. Yet Kureishi's plea that it was the 'white British who had to change their way of thinking' – and I would add of 'reading' – continued to reverberate.

In 1994, in a televised late night Booker programme, Abdulrazak Gurnah's runner up novel *Paradise* was one of the topics for discussion. Tom Paulin and Germaine Greer, as well as the chair Sarah Dunant, insisted on mistakenly locating the book in the 1940s, arguing it was simply another exotic 'African *Heart of Darkness* tale' about a black boy in the bush and the onset of European colonialism. It was not therefore a novel worth taking up because Chinua Achebe had already covered similar ground in *Things Fall*

[6] The letter was published as 'Critics on the Air', *TLS*, 6 October, 2000, p.19. A full discussion can be found in Susheila Nasta, *Home Truths: Fictions of the South Asian Diaspora in Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002).

Apart. Whilst such arguments were in any case dubious in terms of attempting to flatten out the very different histories of colonialism in Nigeria and Zanzibar, they were also inaccurate. *Paradise* does not in fact focus primarily on European colonialism, but deals with the complex hybrid after-effects of a much earlier period in East African history. Set largely in the period prior to 1914, it details the impact of Arab imperialism on the East African coast. Resident in Britain since the late 1960s, Gurnah had also previously written several novels set in Britain.

What intrigues me most in terms of this brief (and somewhat simplified) potted history is the fact that prior to the end of empire, and despite the inequalities and hierarchies created by colonialism, it would seem paradoxically that it was almost easier at times to accept admixture, cross-cultural diversity and the productive coming together of alternative visions of the modern. It would appear that terms commonly used today to separate the 'English' novel from a shared history of empire – terms such as 'Commonwealth Literature' coined in the 1960s or, the 'postcolonial' (despite its more potent political purchase) – often sadly become convenient scapegoats to separate off a whole body of writing from its constitutive role in the formation of the post-war novel in Britain. Such labels not only suppress the wider influence of such works, but also reduce understanding of their individual and particular histories, keeping them outside the dominant frames of interpretation where they belong.

Susheila Nasta is a critic and literary activist, editor and broadcaster. Chair in Modern Literature at the Open University and a judge of several international literary prizes, she was awarded an MBE in 2011 for services to Black and Asian literatures. She is well known internationally for her editorship of *Wasafiri: the Magazine of International Contemporary Writing* (www.wasafiri.org) which she founded in 1984 and still edits.

End of Empire and the English Novel since 1945 is edited by Rachael Gilmour and Bill Schwarz and was published by Manchester University Press in November 2011.

The British Academy's panel discussion on 2 November 2011 was organised in collaboration with Queen Mary, University of London. Audio recordings of the main presentations can be found via www.britac.ac.uk/events/2011/

Mr GLADSTONE

Carlton House Terrace, and the mind of a statesman

PROFESSOR SIR DAVID CANNADINE FBA

WHEN I WAS ORIGINALLY invited to deliver this lecture, my first thought was that it might be entitled 'Gladstone and the British Academy: An Unexplored Connection'. But since Gladstone died in 1898, whereas the Academy was not founded until four years later, there was, in a formal sense, no such connection to explore, and it is only now, as the Academy extends into this building, 11 Carlton House Terrace, that a direct link has finally been established between that individual and this institution. Accordingly, part of my remit today is to say something about this house, for it was Gladstone's London residence long before it became the Academy's home. Yet this is not the only claim that Gladstone has on our attention, for a significant component of his exceptional political standing, and a major theme throughout his long life, was his remarkable power of mind; and it is with what I venture to term the Academy-like aspects of his commanding intellect that I shall also be concerned this afternoon: in particular his many and varied connections with higher education, his abundant writings and publications, and his passion for books and libraries. Gladstone may not have lived long enough to see the establishment of the British Academy, but throughout his life he embodied many of its values and espoused many of its causes, he would surely have been sympathetic to its foundation, its aims and its purposes; and he would have been especially pleased that, with the generous support of the Wolfson Foundation, his home had eventually become the Academy's home.

Some Gladstonian counterfactuals

In support of those propositions, I'd like to begin by inviting you to join me in some fanciful but suggestive counterfactual historical speculation. Let us suppose that Mr Gladstone had not died in 1898 at the age of 89, but instead had lived on for another five years, expiring in 1903 at 94. What would have been the consequences of this extra, late-life addition and extension – both in general terms and more specifically as regards the Academy? The first consequence is that had he survived these few extra years, Gladstone would still be the longest lived British Prime Minister there has yet been, surpassing all three of those who have subsequently overtaken him: Churchill, who made 90; Harold Macmillan, who reached the same age; and James Callaghan, whose 93 years constitute the current record. Moreover, since Gladstone was born in the early 19th century, when life expectancy in Britain was much lower than it is today, it could be argued that in real terms, he was older when he died than Churchill, Macmillan and Callaghan would later be. And the length of his life, far beyond the allotted span of three score years and ten, serves to remind us that if you wanted to make a major impact on and in the 19th century then, like Carlyle or Tennyson or Queen Victoria herself, it helped if you survived to a great age, which gave you more opportunity to accomplish more things than most people were able to do – and of that extended opportunity, Gladstone availed himself to the full.

A second consequence of Gladstone's extra, hypothetical longevity is that he would have outlived Queen Victoria, of whose age and reign, as Roy Jenkins once noted, he was almost as much the symbol and the epitome as she was herself. It is, of course, an understatement to say that for most of the time when their lives overlapped in the conduct of public business, their relations were not cordial; and during the 1890s, Victoria treated the man who by then had an unassailable claim to be regarded as her greatest subject with scant regard or consideration. 'The Queen', she wrote, on his final resignation as her Prime Minister in 1894, 'would gladly have given Mr Gladstone a peerage, but she knows he would not accept it': a remark of stupendous ungraciousness, made all the worse by the clanging, ironic repetition of 'glad'. And when, four years later, the Prince of Wales attended Gladstone's state funeral in Westminster Abbey, the Queen, unfailingly hostile to the very last, telegraphed her son to inquire what precedent he had followed, and whose advice he had sought. To his great credit, the prince replied rather splendidly that he knew of no precedent and that he had taken no advice. But suppose instead that Gladstone had outlived his sovereign? What would *his* reaction have been to the passing of the gas-lit Gloriana? What entry might he have confided in his diary? How would he have reconciled reverence and religion – and the sense of relief he would surely, but guiltily, have felt at her passing? It sounds like the sort of competition that the *New Statesman* used to run, and here is my entry on Gladstone's behalf: 'The Queen is dead. All praise be to God.'

The attendance of the Prince of Wales at Gladstone's funeral is a vivid reminder that relations between the two of *them* were much more close and cordial than those between Gladstone and his sovereign. In some ways, this was in defiance of what might have been expected: the Queen and Gladstone ought to have got on, since they were dutiful and high minded, they were devotees of both Prince Albert and Sir Robert Peel, and each in their own

Figure 1.
An 1859 portrait of William Gladstone by G.F. Watts OM. On loan from the National Portrait Gallery, it now hangs on the main staircase in No. 11 Carlton House Terrace.

way were quintessential Victorians; whereas the Prince of Wales was idle, ill-educated, a gambler and a philanderer, and dogged by public scandal – hardly recommendations in Gladstone's eyes. But in practice, relations between the two men were warm and cordial: perhaps because Gladstone empathised with the prince as another man who had felt the powerful allure of sexual temptation, and also because, like the prince again, he had over many years incurred and endured the Queen's unrelenting displeasure. All of which suggests – and here is my third counterfactual consequence – that had Gladstone lived long enough to witness the early years of the reign of King Edward VII, he would surely have been one of the founding members of the Order of Merit, which the new monarch instituted in 1902. Unlike the peerage that the Queen believed he would refuse, the OM carried no title, and this might have tempted Gladstone, who would thereby have set the original precedent for those subsequent Prime Ministerial OMs: Arthur Balfour, Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, Clement Attlee, Harold Macmillan, and Margaret Thatcher. And imagine the pleasure the cartoonists would have taken in Gladstone's appointment. They would have depicted him with an exaggeratedly high wing collar, and with the Order of Merit around his neck; and the caption in honour of the figure who had long been known as the Grand Old Man would have written itself: the GOM – OM.

This brings me to the final, and more local, counterfactual consequence that there might have been if Gladstone had lived an additional five years. For 1902 not only witnessed the establishment of the Order of

Merit, but also the founding of the British Academy. Among the original Fellows there was one former Prime Minister (Lord Rosebery), and one future Prime Minister (Arthur Balfour), both of whom combined public affairs with the life of the mind in a way that Gladstone himself did (and both of whom had been pallbearers at his funeral). From the outset, the Academy has always sought to recognise outstanding exemplars of what used to be termed 'liberal and literary culture', and two more of the original Fellows of the Academy could be exactly so described: John Morley, who was also a founding member of the Order of Merit and Gladstone's biographer; and James Bryce, who was one of Gladstone's later Cabinet ministers, and who became an OM in 1907. They were later followed, both as OMs and as FBAs, by Sir George Otto Trevelyan, by H.A.L. Fisher and by Roy Jenkins. All of them were in their way Gladstonians, in the sense that they were liberal statesmen, that they contributed to literary culture, and that they believed it important that politicians should be active and influential in both fields of endeavour. All this suggests that if Gladstone himself had lived to 1902, he would not only have been one of the first of the OMs, but also a founding Fellow of the Academy. Nor is this just fanciful, retrospective speculation. 'Had Mr Gladstone been alive', George Prothero wrote to James Bryce when the establishment of the Academy was being actively discussed, 'it can hardly be doubted that he would have been on our first list.'

11 Carlton House Terrace

But while it was too late for such recognition to have been anything other than hypothetical, there is now a real and substantial connection between the Academy and Gladstone, for No. 11 Carlton House Terrace, into which the Academy has recently extended from No. 10 next door, was Gladstone's London residence between 1856 and 1875. He was not its first occupant, for the Terrace is at the southern extremity of the great scheme of metropolitan improvement, sponsored by the Prince Regent, later King George IV, and designed by John Nash, which extends all the way from Regent's Park, via Regent Street, to the very edge of the Mall. The first phase of the work concerned the northern end of the plan, and it was only during the late 1820s and early 1830s, when Gladstone was a young man attending Eton and Oxford, that Carlton House Terrace was constructed as part of the second phase, on land previously occupied by Carlton House, which had earlier been the London residence of the Prince Regent. But when he became King in 1820, George IV moved along the Mall to Buckingham Palace, Carlton House fell into disrepair, and it was demolished to make way for the range of buildings that stand to this day.

Carlton House Terrace extends from Admiralty Arch towards St James's Palace, and it is divided into the East and West Terraces, with the Duke of York's Column and Steps separating the two. It was conceived by Nash to provide extensive views of St James's Park for its residents, and to furnish a no less extensive backdrop to the park

Figure 2. *No. 11 Carlton House Terrace.*

itself. The buildings are in Neo-classical style, with an extended series of both Corinthian columns and Doric columns that adorn and support the frontage facing St James's Park. As soon as it was finished, the Terrace became one of the most fashionable addresses in London, redolent of money and glamour, aristocracy and plutocracy, and the 18 separate dwellings that comprise the whole of it remained largely in private hands, with the houses leased from the Crown Estate, until the 1930s. Among them was No. 11 Carlton House Terrace, which was built for the fourth Baron Monson, who lived here until his death in 1841. Thereafter, the house was occupied by William Crockford, the founder and proprietor of the fashionable gaming house that bore his name; and subsequently by the fourteenth Duke of Norfolk. They were, respectively, a nonentity, a gambler and a Catholic; but in 1856, the lease on No. 11 Carlton House Terrace was taken by Mr. Gladstone: he could scarcely be described in any of those terms, and here he and his family would remain for the best part of 20 years.

It was by no means his first residential encounter with this high-end part of London: in February 1840, not long after his marriage to Catherine Glynne of Hawarden, Gladstone set up his first London home just down the way, at 13 Carlton House Terrace. The previous occupant had been the recently deceased and grandly-titled dowager Marchioness of Cholmondeley, and the young Gladstone took over not only the house but also, by arrangement with her son, the furniture as well. It was, as Roy Jenkins noted, ever sensitive to the minute gradations of the British social hierarchy, 'a very grand house for a young MP of bourgeois origins, even one who had married into the upper squirearchy'. But although Gladstone was a commoner not an aristocrat, and thus a very atypical resident, he remained in this part of London, and much attracted to it, for the next 35 years. In 1847, he transferred to 6 Carlton Gardens, which his father made over to him, and nine years later he moved back to Carlton House Terrace, to No. 11, which was a bigger house than the No. 13 he had previously occupied. Here he stayed, until 1875, when he left this house, and this part of London, for good.

As it happens, the years from 1856 to 1875 saw Gladstone at the peak of both his financial security and his political power. During the early 1850s, he had been much concerned with freeing from debt the Hawarden estate in Flintshire for which he had become responsible on his marriage, and this he successfully accomplished. Moreover, he was almost continually in office, and this brought him an additional £5,000 a year. As a result, he lived well, adorning and embellishing this house by collecting paintings and porcelain, and purchasing books – of which more later. This private comfort was accompanied by public success. From 1859 to 1866, Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer during the last governments of both Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, crafting a succession of budgets that consolidated his reputation as the foremost finance minister of the 19th century, putting the Treasury at the heart of British government. And from 1868 to 1874, he was prime minister for the first of four terms, implementing a succession of reforming measures, including the disestablishment of the Irish Church, the Forster Education Act, the reform of the civil service, the abolition of purchase in the British army, and of religious tests in British universities. During these years, Gladstone had the use of 10 Downing Street, but he did not spend much time there, preferring (at considerable expense) to keep 11 Carlton House Terrace as his principal residence.

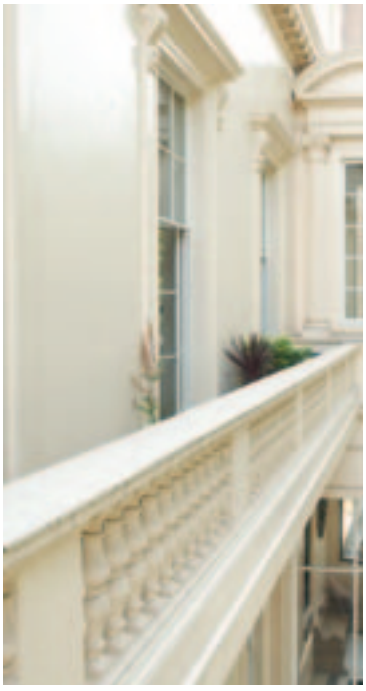


Figure 3.
After the defeat of the Government on the Reform Bill, in June 1866 a crowd of 10,000 assembled in Trafalgar Square, and marched in procession to Carlton House Terrace, shouting for 'Gladstone and Liberty'. Gladstone himself was not at home, and the crowd only dispersed after Mrs Gladstone had made an appearance on this balcony.

But Gladstone lost the general election of 1874, and his circumstances significantly changed. In the first place, he retired from politics and from the leadership of the Liberal Party, convinced that his public life was over, and determined to devote himself in what he believed would be his last few remaining years, to his academic and theological labours – of which (again) more later. In the second place, he concluded that without his ministerial salary of £5,000 a year, he could no longer afford to live in this grand house. Accordingly, during the next two years, he disposed of the lease to Sir Arthur Guinness, who was the head of the hugely rich Irish brewing family, and Conservative MP for Dublin, for £35,000; and he sold off the pictures, the porcelain and some of the books that he had collected during his London years. All this brought Gladstone nearly £50,000, or more than £2.5 million in today's values. The Guinness family retained the lease on No. 11 until the close of the Second World War, when it was taken over by the Foreign Press Association, who remained in occupation until the Academy moved in earlier this year.

There is no doubt that quitting this house in 1875 caused Gladstone great dismay and distress, not least because the move was physically exhausting, as the former Prime Minister did much of the donkey work of sorting and packing and carrying and loading himself. But it was not just the labour of leaving that pained and upset him.

Giving up No. 11 Carlton House Terrace was, Gladstone recorded, 'like a little death… I had grown to the house, having lived more time in it than any other since I was born; and mainly by reason of all that was done in it.' And much indeed had been 'done in it', including the taking and making of important and portentous decisions: 'Sir Arthur Guinness', Gladstone went on, 'has the chairs and sofa on which we sat when we resolved on the disestablishment of the Irish Church in 1868.' As always, Gladstone extracted a powerful moral lesson from such unhappiness and discomfort, and from what he saw as the compelling need to part with a much loved house and many of its familiar artifacts: 'I am amazed', he wrote, 'at the accumulation of objects which have now, as by way of retribution, to be handled, and dispersed, and finally dismissed.'

Eventually, Gladstone would relocate in London to 73 Harley Street, on which he took a 30-year lease in February 1876. Both geographically and sociologically, it was a considerable distance from Carlton House Terrace, and Gladstone never showed much affection for it, giving up No. 73 when he became Prime Minister again in 1880, when he took up full time residence at 10 Downing Street. From 1886 until 1892 he was once again in opposition, but he now repaired to the sylvan but suburban remoteness of Dollis Hill, between Willesden and Hampstead. Yet Gladstone retained an abiding affection for that part of London he termed 'the Carltons', and however necessary he had deemed it to be, he always regretted his 'departure from a neighbourhood where I have lived for forty years and where I am the oldest inhabitant.' Beyond any doubt, Gladstone was the most distinguished occupant of this house, and it provided him with his longest and happiest period of residence in London. Let us hope that the Academy's sojourn here will be at least as long, and no less happy.

Learning and intellect

Even among well-educated 19th-century British statesmen, Gladstone's association with British higher education was remarkably close. At Oxford University, he was president of the Union, and took a first both in lit hum and in mathematics and physics. He was a Student of Christ Church, an Honorary Fellow of All Souls, and he held an honorary doctorate of the university. From 1847 until 1865, Gladstone was one of the MPs for the Oxford University constituency, and for a time he worked closely with Benjamin Jowett, then a tutor at Balliol, steering through parliament the Oxford and Cambridge Act of 1854. In October 1892, he delivered the first Romanes Lecture at Oxford on the subject of medieval universities, and virtually his last public utterance was the reply he dictated, on his death bed, to a message of good will from what he described as the 'God fearing and God-sustaining University of Oxford'. 'I served her', he went on, 'perhaps mistakenly, but to the best of my ability. My most earnest prayers are hers to the uttermost – and to the last.' His name is commemorated in the Gladstone Professorship of Government, whose incumbent is supposed to be concerned with 'empirical politics' (whatever they may be); and also in the Gladstone Memorial Prize, which in 1936 was awarded for an essay on the appropriately Gladstonian subject of 'The State and the Railways in Britain, 1826-63', written by another precocious undergraduate who would one day become prime minister, and who was then known by his full name of James Harold Wilson

Oxford University provided both the foundation and much of the superstructure of Gladstone's extensive intellectual life, but by no means all of it, for his connections with the broader world of education and culture were exceptionally wide: indeed, unrivalled by any British statesman before or since. As befitted someone of Scottish ancestry, he was Lord Rector of both Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities. He was Professor of Ancient History at the Royal Academy, and he helped to found the *English Historical Review*. He was a Trustee of the British Museum for almost 30 years, one of the first Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery for a similar span of time, and a Trustee of the London Library. He was a member of the Political Economy Club, which he addressed as part of the celebrations marking the centenary of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* in May 1876. He bestowed peerages on the historian Lord Acton, and on the poet Lord Tennyson. He received an honorary degree from the University of Bologna during the year of its 800th anniversary; and in 1881 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. All this reinforces my earlier speculation (and George Prothero's conviction) that, had Gladstone lived until 1903, he would surely have been one of the founding Fellows of the British Academy.

Gladstone's sense of learning and education, culture and civilisation, was always European-wide; and it was underpinned by a prodigious linguistic ability, unrivalled in any politician since. By the time he left Eton for Oxford, he was already proficient in Ancient Greek and Latin, he was competent in French, and later became fluent, though Roy Jenkins thought it odd he never fully mastered the Gallic subjunctive, a construction to which he was much given in English. Later in life he also acquired German and Italian, he could get by in Spanish, and he even knew enough Norwegian to say a few words during a visit. Thus was Gladstone able to participate in the high culture of continental Europe: he corresponded with the German theologian, Ignaz von Dollinger, in his native tongue; he communicated with Guizot in French; and when he was given an audience by the pope, they conversed in Italian. This remarkable linguistic facility also gave rise to some richly comic Gladstonian occasions. In 1858, when briefly (and bizarrely) British Commissioner to the Ionian Islands, he delivered an oration to the local assembly in Classical Greek, which was word-perfect – but utterly baffling to his audience, who could only speak Italian. And in 1889, he attended the centenary celebrations of the French Revolution, making a speech in French from the top of the recently completed Eiffel Tower, which his audience, straining their ears a thousand feet below, cannot possibly have heard. Gladstone may have been one of the greatest orators of his age; but he also delivered an unusual

number of speeches which were either incomprehensible, or inaudible – or both.

Did this remarkable array of academic talents, interests and connections make Gladstone an intellectual in politics, by which I mean someone who brought formidable powers of mind to bear upon the great public issues of the day? There can be no doubt that it did, for much of his published work took the form of interventions in contemporary political debate: including his early writings on the relations between the church and the state of 1838 and 1841; his *Remarks Upon Recent Commercial Legislation* of 1845, soon after he had resigned as President of the Board of Trade; his denunciation of the Kingdom of Naples as 'the negation of God erected into a system of government' in 1851; his unfinished article, from the middle of that decade, on 'the declining efficiency of parliament'; his *Chapter of Autobiography*, published soon after the 1868 election, which defended his recent change of position on Irish Church disestablishment; his pamphlet against the Vatican decrees of papal infallibility of 1874; his polemic against the Bulgarian atrocities of two years later; and his books defending his policy of Irish Home Rule which he published in the late 1880s and early 1890s. All of these works were written to justify positions and policies that Gladstone had often only recently taken up; but although to his opponents they seemed self-serving and opportunistic, they were also buttressed with a formidable array of learning in history, theology, economics and political economy, that no other politician in his day could rival.

This prodigious output attests to the remarkable power of mind that Gladstone brought to bear on the conduct and business of politics. But while the length, scale and variety of these interventions were relatively unusual, intellectuals in British politics are far from rare. During the last half century alone, any such list would certainly encompass Quintin Hogg, Ian Gilmour and Norman St John Stevas on the right, and Harold Laski, Richard Crossman, Tony Crosland and Roy Jenkins on the left. Much less common is the politician as public intellectual: someone with such a varied and expert range of interests, and such a broad hinterland, that he (or she) can speak and write on a wide range of issues with an authority which owes more to intrinsic mental powers than to political stature. Indeed, such figures are so rare that no politician gets extended treatment in *Absent Minds*, Stefan Collini's brilliant study of public intellectuals in modern Britain. But Gladstone was not only an intellectual in politics, but also an intellectual in public. For the best part of 60 years, he engaged in extended discussion and debate with scholars across Europe, about theology, Classical studies, history, economics and literature; he reviewed iconic works by Tennyson, Lecky and George Otto Trevelyan; he wrote extensively for such journals as *The Nineteenth Century*, and the *Contemporary*, *Quarterly* and *Fortnightly Reviews*; and he also contributed several articles to the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

But these were merely diversions from the main tasks of Gladstone's intellectual life. One of his abiding scholarly interests was Joseph Butler, the 18th-century theologian and Bishop of Durham: Gladstone began serious work on him in 1845, and half a century later, he published his two volume edition of Butler's writings, along with an extra subsidiary study. Another intellectual passion was Homer, on whom Gladstone published his three-volume *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age* in 1857, in which he struggled to reconcile the works of the Greek poet with the teachings of Christianity; and across the next 30 years there would be another four bulky tomes on the same subject. A third interest was Dante, whom Gladstone began to read in Italian during the 1830s, and to whom he turned again from 1874 onwards. His published work consisted mainly of translations, but there was also, in 1845, a stinging review dismissing what he regarded as the feeble attempt made by Lord John Russell to render Dante in English — surely the only example ever of one future prime minister rebuking another for his bad translation from Italian into English. Together, Gladstone's work on Butler, Homer and Dante constituted a unique contribution to the public culture of Victorian England and 19th-century Europe, and it was fittingly recognised by *The Times* in a leading article in January 1883:

> There is no reason why our premiers should continue to be students of Dante and Homer; and we do not predict any very disastrous results if they cease to do so; but all the same, a little sweetness and light will have gone out of public life and a precious element will have been lost when our chief statesmen scorn poetry and stick to Blue Books

Books and libraries and Wolfson

Gladstone's remarkably varied intellectual endeavours were based on correspondingly wide reading. From an early age, books were an essential part of his life, and from 1825, while at Eton, he began to keep a diary, which he continued systematically until 1894 and spasmodically for another two years. It was primarily what he described as 'an account book of the all-precious gift of time', in which he set out and justified every waking hour of every day; but as a result, it contains details of everything that Gladstone read: indeed, the first entry begins 'Read Ovid…'. Thereafter, Gladstone read widely across a broad spectrum of subjects: in European literature, for example, he ranged from Shakespeare to Molière among dramatists, and from Sir Walter Scott (his favourite) to Emile Zola (the most deplored, but read, nevertheless) among novelists. Across 70 years, Gladstone devoured more than 21,000 works by over 4,500 authors, which means that by a substantial margin, he must have been the best read British prime minister there has ever been; and not even Harold Macmillan, who as a publisher read for work as well as for pleasure, could seriously compete.

Not surprisingly, Gladstone was an avid collector of books, as well as an avid reader of them, much of his private spending was devoted to this end, and across his long lifetime, he amassed a personal library in excess of 30,000 volumes. In 1853, he began to build an extension at Hawarden that became known as the 'Temple of Peace',

and which was, essentially, his library and study. There were two desks, one for Homeric work, the other for everything else; and for the next 44 years, this would be Gladstone's inner sanctum, where in splendid isolation – though not necessarily in peace – he would pursue his vast and eclectic range of reading, write his letters and pamphlets, articles and books, and carry on, as recorded in his diary, his endless battle for the victory of activity over time, of endeavour over mortality. The Hawarden library was at the very centre of Gladstone's life; and although he was in many ways a richly comic figure, this means he could never have been the butt of the sort of jokes told against Richard Nixon's unfortunate and unlettered Vice President, Spiro T. Agnew, of whom it was once observed that when *his* library was burned down, *both* of his books were destroyed – and he hadn't finished colouring the second one in.

But what was to happen to all these books after Gladstone, who recognised that endeavour would not in the end prevail over mortality, was gone? In 1894, the same year in which he retired from the premiership and the Commons, and also gave up systematically keeping his diary, Gladstone's thoughts turned once again, in what we might describe as his main retirement project, to what he should do with his books, which were too many to be easily or perpetually accommodated, even in a house as large as Hawarden. He had first turned his attention to this matter when he attended the funeral of the Anglican divine, Edward Pusey, in Oxford in 1882, when the idea of a library based around Pusey's books was suggested and, indeed, later realised. After the funeral, Gladstone returned to Hawarden, convinced that his books, too, could form the basis of a library: partly because he had more of them, on a greater range of subjects, than Pusey had collected; and partly because he had always been a supporter of libraries (hence his friendship with Andrew Carnegie) which he once described as 'a vital spark, to inspire with ideas altogether new'.

From that moment, Gladstone toyed with the idea of a library based on his private collection, and he sought advice from friends and colleagues. Some suggested giving the books to the Bodleian in Oxford, as a testimony to his lifelong devotion to the university; others urged donating them to the London Library, of which he had been a leading and active trustee. But Gladstone took the view that his library should go to a location that was not already well provided with books, and he eventually settled on his home village of Hawarden: partly because it was within easy reach by rail of Manchester and Liverpool; and partly because it was situated in North Wales, an area more renowned for its mountains and its castles than as a centre of learning. Initially, the library was housed in what was known as the Tin Tabernacle, built of corrugated iron three quarters of a mile from Hawarden, to which Gladstone – by now in his mid eighties – moved many of his books in a wheelbarrow. It was named, somewhat obscurely, after St. Deniol, a local saint, and following Gladstone's death in 1898, the present Library was constructed as the national memorial to him.

It was wholly appropriate that a prime minister, who attached such importance to the life of the mind should be commemorated in perpetuity by a library, which he had conceived and created, and to which he had not only given his books but also a handsome and substantial endowment. But what exactly was the library for? There were some who believed it was no more than an implausibly self-deprecating display of self-aggrandisement – and as such the precursor of those American presidential libraries where the cult of personality is so unbridled that, as one observer once remarked, if the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston, Massachusetts, is just this side of idolatory, then the Lyndon Johnson Library in Austin, Texas, is emphatically the other side. But Gladstone had no such self-indulgent or self-regarding intention, for his aim was to create a library and residential facilities for scholars and visitors, so that people 'not only of Christian denominations but of all religions, not only for all religions but for people of any ideology' could read and learn and ponder and discuss 'solidly and seriously for the benefit of mankind'. That remains the library's mission to this day: informed by Gladstone's powerful belief that knowledge, thought and reflection are essential to the proper and responsible conduct of public business; and

Figure 4. *The Wolfson Auditorium in No. 11 Carlton House Terrace – possibly the room in which Gladstone held meetings of the Cabinet*

appropriately (if belatedly), the St Deniol's Library has recently been re-named the Gladstone Library.

By agreeable coincidence, one of the recent gifts to that library has been from the Wolfson Foundation, towards the creation of a seminar room that forms part of the Gladstone Library's recent redevelopment programme; and this is far from being the only connection between Wolfson and Gladstone. In 1960, one of the Foundation's first grants was towards the start-up costs of editing the Gladstone diaries; in 1995 the late lamented Colin Matthew was awarded the Wolfson History Prize for his biography of Gladstone which he had derived and developed from his introductions to the diaries; and in 2001 Roy Jenkins received a Wolfson History Prize for an oeuvre which included his own life of the Grand Old Man. And, to join up the other two corners of this triangle, the connections between the Wolfson Foundation and the British Academy are even closer: partly because both Colin Matthew and Roy Jenkins were Fellows of the Academy; partly through the partnership programmes which the Foundation has funded in Academy fellowships, readerships and professorships; partly through the support the Foundation gave to the refurbishment of No. 10 Carlton House Terrace when the Academy moved in; and now with a munificent gift for this new auditorium, commemorating the late Lord Wolfson, who was himself a Fellow of the Academy.

Epitaph

While preparing this lecture, I have often tried to imagine a meeting between Mr Gladstone and Lord Wolfson – an encounter in which, I feel certain, Lord Wolfson would have had no difficulty in holding his own. I am also confident that Lord Wolfson, although not wholly sympathetic to some of Mr Gladstone's more radical enthusiasms, would have conceded that in terms of sheer erudition, brain power and intellectual weight, he has had no equal among British prime ministers, before or since. Lord Wolfson might additionally have noticed that in his time, Gladstone's range of interests encompassed most of those for which the Academy stands today as the pre-eminent body representing the humanities and the social sciences: ancient and modern history, ancient and modern languages and literature, theology and economics, politics and government. To be sure, that leaves out law (but Gladstone could properly have said that he had made many laws in parliament), philosophy (but to Gladstone that was a subordinate branch of theology), and sociology and anthropology (but they were hardly established as major academic disciplines in his lifetime). Indeed, Lord Wolfson might have been so impressed by Gladstone's belief in the need to combine scholarship with statecraft that he might have urged the Academy to establish an annual Gladstone Lecture, held alternately at Carlton House Terrace and at the Gladstone Library, which should be devoted to exploring just these issues.

When Gladstone died, not in 1903 but in 1898, he was paid parliamentary tributes the like of which would not be lavished on any British prime minister again until the death of Winston Churchill 67 years later. Among the warmest and most perceptive was that of Lord Salisbury (himself no mean intellectual in politics), who for many years had been as determined an opponent of Gladstone as the Queen herself, but who on this occasion took a much broader view of the man and his achievements than did his sovereign. For Salisbury recognised that Gladstone possessed certain 'qualities that distinguished him from all other men', and when speaking in the Lords he drew particular attention to three of them: first, his 'transcendent intellect'; second, 'the great influence he was able to exert upon the thought and convictions of his contemporaries'; and third, his 'astonishing power of attaching people to him' in great causes and for noble purposes. That was a fitting epitaph to the most intellectual of all our great statesmen; and as the British Academy now takes up residence in the London house where Gladstone lived the longest, and which he loved the most, we might even conclude that his 'astonishing power of attaching people to him' is neither extinguished nor spent.

Professor Sir David Cannadine is Dodge Professor of History at Princeton University, Chairman of the Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery, and a Fellow of the British Academy.

This special lecture was delivered at the British Academy on 15 March 2011, in the new Wolfson Auditorium, to mark the Academy's extension into 11 Carlton House Terrace.

Individual electoral registration and the future of representative democracy

In December 2011, a British Academy Forum discussed the government's plans to introduce Individual Electoral Registration in the UK, and to feed in comments and concerns ahead of the publication of a Bill in early 2012. The British Academy Forum was attended by the Minister for Political and Constitutional Reform, Mark Harper MP, and experts from academia, the media, the civil service, local government and other public sector organisations. In this article, ***Professor Ron Johnston FBA*** *and* ***Professor Iain McLean FBA*** *examine what this change in the way we register to vote would mean and, in particular, how it would impact on constituency boundaries and the nature of British representative democracy.*

HOW WE REGISTER to vote in Great Britain has been debated extensively over the past few months. In June 2011, the government published draft plans to switch from the current system of household registration, where one person is asked to name all those eligible to vote in a property, to one where individuals are responsible for registering themselves and will have to provide proof of identity to register. The three main political parties and organisations such as the Electoral Commission are all supportive of the principle of individual electoral registration (IER), but some have raised concerns about how it will be implemented and, in particular, whether it should be compulsory to register.

Household registration – an archaic system

The system of household registration that we currently have in Great Britain, introduced in the 19th century, is seen by many proponents of IER as archaic. It doesn't reflect people's different living situations today, such as flat and house shares, bedsits and student accommodation; the concept of a 'head of household' is obsolete. Very few countries, certainly among established democracies, still use this system. Canada and Australia both moved from house-to-house enumeration to some form of continuous registration in the 1990s, and Northern Ireland introduced individual registration in 2002.

Why electoral registration matters

Electoral registration not only establishes people's right to vote, but it is also used to define the areas in which people vote for their representatives – wards and county divisions for local government, constituencies for the House of Commons – and to identify those eligible for jury service. The British electoral system means that where you are registered to vote and which ward and constituency you vote in matters, and the United Kingdom is one of a small number of countries which defines these areas using the registered electorate rather than the enumerated population. Having a complete and accurate electoral register is therefore crucial to ensure a fair electoral system. The introduction of IER is likely to have a considerable impact on how representative constituencies are, and therefore on the fairness of the British electoral system.

Redrawing the electoral map

The potential impact of IER is greater than it might otherwise have been because of new rules for the definition of constituency boundaries laid down in the *Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011*, which require each constituency to contain a similar number of registered electors. The four Parliamentary Boundary Commissions in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland review all Parliamentary constituency boundaries every five years. Under the new rules the Boundary Commissions are required to propose constituencies (with four exceptions) with a number of registered electors that is not more than 5 per cent higher or lower than the national electoral quota. Previously, constituency electorates had to be as close to the quota (national average) as practicable, but this was only a secondary criterion – aligning constituency boundaries with communities and not making disruptive changes unless they were necessary were given greater weight under the rules that were in place from 1958 until 2011.

The Boundary Commissions have recently published draft proposals for public consultation, in their first review under the new rules. These involve a substantial redrawing of the UK's electoral map, much more so than at previous

reviews – a condition exacerbated by the reduction in the number of MPs from 650 to 600. Many communities have been split and many of the proposed new constituencies – which must be submitted to Parliament by October 2013 in order to be in place for the 2015 general election – bear little resemblance to those currently represented in the Commons, a situation that is unlikely to change much after the statutory public consultation process.

The 'missing millions'

Introduction of these new rules was the subject of considerable Parliamentary debate, partly because of concerns about the electoral register's accuracy and completeness. Recent research published by the Electoral Commission[1] has shown that the country's electoral registers now capture only some 85 per cent of the eligible electorate, which means that at least 6 million people in Great Britain are not registered to vote. Those 'missing millions' are concentrated among particular population groups (such as the young, students, members of some ethnic minorities, those who rent their homes, and recent movers), which could lead to an under-representation of urban areas in the new electoral map.

The Commission's research shows that whereas some 94 per cent of those aged 65 and over are on the current register, this percentage falls to 72 per cent among those aged 25-34, and 55 per cent among those aged 18-24. In respect of housing tenure, 92 per cent of those who either own their own homes or have a mortgaged home are on the register, compared to 86 per cent of those in social housing and 65 per cent of those in privately-rented properties. And in respect of dwelling type, whereas 89 per cent of those living in detached and semi-detached homes are on the register, only 55 per cent of those living in converted properties are. Opinion research reported at the Forum showed that older people were much more likely to agree that it is a civic duty to vote at elections than members of the youngest adult generations.[2]

The impact on urban Britain

Some proponents of IER have argued that its implementation would produce a more complete and accurate register, so implementation of the new rules should await its introduction. That did not happen, however, and urban areas are subsequently experiencing the largest drop in their number of MPs in the current round of proposals. Furthermore, the Boundary Commissions are now required to undertake a full review of constituencies every five years, and the next set of proposals must be delivered to Parliament by October 2018, ready for the 2020 general election. That review will start in 2015-16, when the electoral register may well be the first produced using IER in England, Scotland and Wales.

The 2015 register

If, as many at the British Academy Forum suggested, the 2015 register differs significantly in its completeness and accuracy from the current one, it could have a major impact on the next new map of constituencies. If, as a first approximation, we assume that the percentages outlined above from the Electoral Commission's research apply across the whole of the United Kingdom, then we can estimate the number of seats that would be allocated to each country and region should the introduction of IER produce a complete register for the 2015-16 review of constituencies. The first column in Table 1 shows the number of seats allocated to each country and region in 2011, and the next three columns indicate the likely numbers if they were allocated according to each area's age, housing tenure or dwelling type structure. There are small but, in the local context, relatively important changes in the number of seats allocated to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and – apart from the simulation when dwelling type is used to allocate seats – little change in England's allocation. However, within England there is one major change whatever population characteristic is used to allocate seats – an increase in the number of seats allocated to Greater London. The UK's capital has the greatest concentration of young people and of households living in privately rented, high-density, converted dwellings. They are the least likely to be on the electoral register (in part because they are the most mobile groups within society: the Electoral Commission's data shows recent migrants as the least likely

Table 1. Seat allocations

Country/region	2011 allocation	Simulated allocations age	tenure	type	2010 voters only
Scotland *	50	50	52	44	49
Wales	30	29	29	30	30
Northern Ireland	16	17	15	16	14
England†	500	500	499	506	503
Northeast	26	25	26	27	24
Northwest	68	66	69	70	66
Yorkshire	50	51	50	51	48
East Midlands	44	43	42	43	45
West Midlands	54	52	52	53	53
East of England	56	56	55	55	58
London	68	76	74	74	69
Southeast †	81	80	80	81	84
Southwest	53	51	51	52	56

* This excludes the two protected constituencies.
† This excludes the two constituencies for the Isle of Wight.

[1] The Electoral Commission, *Great Britain's Electoral Registers 2015* (London: The Electoral Commission, December 2011).

[2] That research is available online at http://y-g.co/vls5Mw

to be registered to vote), hence London's current apparent considerable under-representation.

Of course, these are only rough estimates, which can be improved when the 2011 census data become available. However, if IER succeeds, the UK's map of constituencies currently being prepared for the 2015 general election could be succeeded by a considerably different one five years later.

Some of those attending the British Academy Forum, including electoral registration officers, feared that if registration is not mandatory then many of those not interested in politics who don't vote at general elections may decline the invitation to be on the electoral register. To assess the potential implication of this, we have run a further simulation – shown in the final column of Table 1 – which allocates seats according to the number of people in each country and region who voted in 2010. Again there are small but not insignificant differences from both the 2011 allocation and that which might occur if IER resulted in a complete electoral register. Northern Ireland, for example, could lose two of its current 16 seats; each of the three regions of northern England (Northeast, Northwest, Yorkshire and the Humber) would lose two each whereas three southern regions (East, Southeast, Southwest) would gain a total of eight seats.

The future of representative democracy

These changes arising from the interaction of the new rules for defining constituencies with the introduction of IER will contribute to a considerable alteration in the nature of British representative democracy. For many centuries, one of its core features has been that, as far as possible, MPs represent distinct communities. Despite relatively frequent redistributions in the last 50 years, a majority of constituencies remain substantially unchanged, giving continuity of representation. That underpinning feature of British democracy is now rapidly waning, replaced by a system that will be characterised by more frequent change than heretofore. In the future, there will be much less of a sense of place with which a constituency's MP can identify, which will be disadvantageous to MPs, parties, electoral administrators and the electorate.

Ron Johnston is Professor of Geography at the University of Bristol, and a Fellow of the British Academy. He has studied political and electoral geography for over 30 years and has published widely on the topic, including two major books, *The Boundary Commissions* (1999) and *From Votes to Seats* (2001) with Charles Pattie and David Rossiter. In 2011 he was awarded an OBE for services to scholarship.

Iain McLean is Professor of Politics at the University of Oxford, and a Fellow of the British Academy. He has published widely on elections and electoral reform.

In 2010, Professors Johnston and McLean co-authored two British Academy policy reports, *Choosing an Electoral System*, and *Drawing a New Constituency Map for the United Kingdom* (www.britac.ac.uk/policy/policy-centre-reports.cfm).

British Academy Forums offer a neutral setting for argument based on research and evidence, to help frame the terms of public debates and clarify policy options. They provide opportunities for frank, informed debate. It should not be assumed that any summary record of a Forum discussion reflects the views of every participant. Further information about British Academy Forums can be found via www.britac.ac.uk/policy/BA-Forums.cfm