



CAMBRIDGE AND THE REF

David Reynolds
Chair of the Faculty

Although the acronym REF is not widely known outside academia, it is on our lips a great deal of the time. The Research Excellence Framework (latest brand-name for this six-yearly exercise in accountability) has become a focal point of strategic planning for our research, both as individuals and as a Faculty. Yet it remains controversial. On the one hand, it's surely right that we should account for public money. On the other, there are legitimate criticisms that this exercise discourages big, long-term scholarly projects and skews research towards eye-catching 'impact'. Anyway, we do what we are told, but the REF takes up an ever increasing amount of time, energy and money for us and for all universities.

I am glad to report that in REF 2014 the Faculty did extremely well. Each historian we submitted had to identify her or his four best 'outputs' (aka writings) from the previous six years. These were pre-judged by an internal panel of colleagues and then peer-reviewed by the REF History panel. We submitted the work of 115 historians. 44% of their publications were judged 4* ('world leading') and 37% as 3* ('internationally excellent'). A few history departments in the UK did better in terms of 4* outputs but usually by failing to submit a significant proportion of their staff – an approach that we (and the University) eschewed on grounds of both accurate reporting and colleagues' morale. We were pleased to see our strategy validated by *Times Higher Education* (1 January 2015), which ranked Cambridge first out of 83 history departments in the UK on its Research Intensity index – a measure of both quality of research and depth of researchers.

There is, of course, no reason for complacency. We shall be working hard, for instance, to boost our income from big research grants, on which we don't fully punch our weight. And, despite the general scepticism about 'impact', we shall be encouraging more colleagues, particularly at the younger end of the spectrum, to develop projects that demonstrate the wider reach of our research. In general, however, we were very pleased to have done so well in REF 2014. Our eyes are already turning to REF 2020!



THE PAST ON DISPLAY

Three Cambridge historians co-curate critically acclaimed Fitzwilliam Museum exhibition

This summer, the lampposts in Cambridge are sporting the most elegant banners. Pause outside Ryder and Amies on King's Parade, and you may catch the eye of a pale little girl, dressed in luscious gold silks with an expensive Turkish carpet cascading before her. A few feet down the road, you can scarcely fail to miss that extraordinary yellow satin shoe, with a red rose landed like a lipstick kiss on the back heel. Directly opposite King's College a third banner displays a delicate fan, bedecked with an array of other seemingly random objects – books, paintings, a watch and a lute. Keep walking and the banners will lead you to the Fitzwilliam Museum, where you can see all these fascinating things and many more on show at the 'Treasured Possessions' exhibition.

'Treasured Possessions' is an unprecedented collaboration between the History Faculty and the Fitzwilliam Museum, and it started *not* as a project proposal or a research grant but as an undergraduate class. For the last decade, a number of early modern historians in the Faculty have been teaching a Part II paper on 'Material Culture in the Early Modern World.' It's a course that stretches from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment, ranges throughout Europe and beyond, and encourages

Continued overleaf...



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students to think across many different categories of material, large and small, cheap and expensive. As you'd expect from Cambridge History, our teaching includes the usual mix of lectures, supervisions and reading lists as long as your arm. But, from the outset, we were determined that this course should also give students the opportunity for hands-on analysis of the objects that we were studying. With thousands of early modern objects just down the road at the Fitzwilliam, it was obvious where we needed to go. But it was only thanks to the generosity and trust of Julia Poole and Vicky Avery, successive Keepers of the Applied Arts Department at the museum, that we were able to bring our students into direct contact with the materials that they were studying.

Imagine a cold dark afternoon in November. Twelve of us have gathered around the table in the handling room. Purple latex gloves are donned. The rules are simple. When handling wood or metalwork, always wear those gloves. When a ceramic piece comes round, carefully remove the gloves, because your sweat won't harm the object and you have better control of your fingers when you can feel what is passing through your hands. Above all, always keep the object you are handling over the table, which has a soft padded surface. But while we historians are a little nervous about letting our students loose on artefacts which have survived for hundreds of years, Julia and Vicky encourage a confident approach. They want the students to

feel the rough back of that pharmacy jar, designed not to be seen; to hold up a piece of translucent porcelain to the light; to piece together a travelling manicure set, as if it were a three-dimensional puzzle.

After a couple of years of holding these classes, we historians are getting to know the Applied Arts collection rather well. We are struck by what a tiny proportion of the 20,000 objects belonging to the museum is on public display. And, as is the way with historians, we take a particular and perverse interest in the less famous objects that are hidden away in the store cupboards. Of course, there are good reasons for keeping some items out of view. In particular, the small but very high-quality textiles collection held by the Museum requires low light and optimal climate control if it is to be preserved for future generations. But the overwhelming reason for keeping Museum objects in storage is lack of space or facilities for display. And so we begin to ask the curators to show us what they've got. Pandora's box is opened: trays upon trays of watches, rings, cutlery, pendants, and decorative boxes are brought before us. Cabinets are opened up containing the most colourful ceramics, often depicting scenes from the Bible. And from out of tissue paper are uncovered gorgeous textiles we never knew existed.

The colour, the variety, the craft expertise, the ornamentation of the pre-modern world is brought to life with an entirely new force. And we realise that this is some-

thing we want to share with a broader public. Once again, we send an email to the Keeper of Applied Arts, and once again we receive the most gracious and encouraging reply. Yes, the Museum would be very interested in co-curating an exhibition on the material culture of the early modern world. There follow five years of planning and the need to whittle our choices down to a mere three hundred objects. There are many challenges along the way: fund-raising, producing a catalogue, writing labels 'comprehensible to the twelve-year old,' and coming up with a title that satisfies everyone. Our reward? The reviewer at the *Telegraph* said that the curators deserved medals.

'Treasured Possessions from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment' was co-curated by Melissa Calaresu, Mary Laven, and Ulinka Rublack and will be running until 6 September 2015 at the Fitzwilliam Museum:

www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/gallery/treasuredpossessions

Image, front page: Metalware handling session with undergraduates and a 16th-century bronze Venetian door-knocker © Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge

Image, above: Pair of shoes, English, c.1700–30 (T.1-1957). © Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge

AN ARCHIVAL ODYSSEY, OR: BAEDEKER'S GUIDE TO GERMAN ARCHIVES

When I first realised that I would have to visit over fifty archives in Germany and Austria in order to complete my current research project, a comprehensive history of the Third Reich's most prominent elite schools (Napolas or *Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalten*), I did fall prey to certain misgivings. Intimate acquaintance with the intricacies of regional public transport networks all over Germany would surely prove the least of my worries – what of the archives themselves, each with its very particular set of rules and regulations, unwitting violation of which might easily cast a foreign researcher into outer darkness?

Take the Austrian State Archives, for instance, with their implacable and inalienable rule that each researcher may only order a maximum of three boxes per day. Admittedly, the boxes are fairly large, but if one knows what one is looking for, they can still be polished off fairly expeditiously. In desperation, towards the end of my month-long sojourn in Vienna, I therefore inveigled my husband into accompanying me, buying a weekly ticket and sitting there working on his latest opera libretto, whilst I worked through “his” three boxes at a frantic pace (needless to say, only the person who has ordered a box can collect or return it...!). Only then could I release him, and embark upon my own daily quota.

Then there are the long-term inhabitants of the archives, whose habits repay careful (and sometimes wary) attention – the archivists themselves. These can range from the “characters” on the desk at the German Federal Archives in Berlin – the grumpy, bespectacled East-Berliner who bawls out any scholar who dares to put their microfilms away improperly, and the acerbic, tragically unpromoted Fräulein who refuses even to talk to a researcher who has forgotten to place their handbag (however small it may be) in the locker-room – to the enchantingly friendly denizens of the recently-founded Zentralarchiv des Bezirksverbands Pfalz in Kaiserslautern, where one is permitted to take bags inside (shock horror!), make free photocopies on the scanner-printer in the Director's office, or even have tea and sandwiches with his assistant in the reading-room itself.

Every archive certainly has its foibles: the Political Archive of the German Foreign Office, for instance, subjects all its visitors to a full airport-style security check before they enter – yet, once inside, the researcher

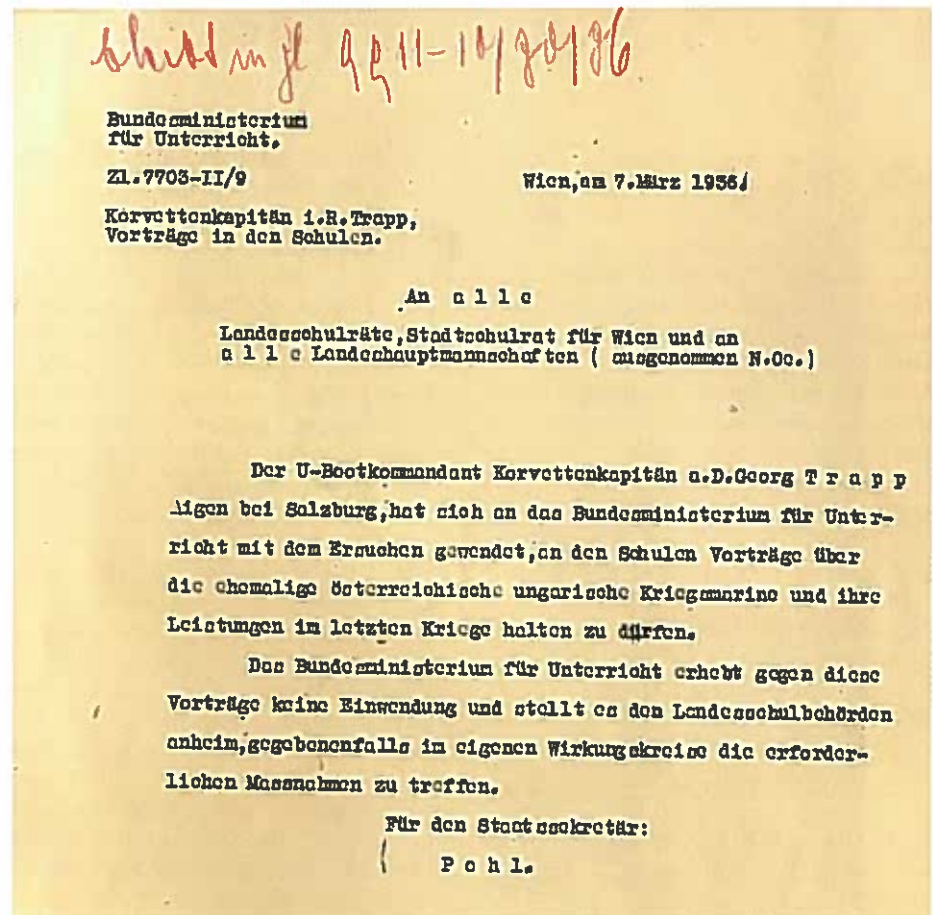
is given a rare privilege indeed: permission to photograph documents indiscriminately at no extra cost (as opposed to the average, exorbitant charge of 50 cents per photocopy). Meanwhile, if you are filling out registration forms at the Bavarian State Archives, beware the little box marked *vol-ljährig* – if you forget to tick it, you will have inadvertently declared yourself to be “under-age”, and risk the ignominy of being mistaken for a precocious teenager, at least in jest.

Even the names of the archival search-engines often betray a certain classicizing charm: *INVENIO*, *ARGUS*, or *VERA*, to name but a few. But that's nothing compared to the occasional random gems about whose existence these very databases would never think to inform you: propaganda pamphlets from the 1920s railing against the rise of Sunday shopping in rhyming verses of surpassing kitsch; advertisements for a purveyor of smoked meats sporting a (strangely appealing) little piglet made of sausages and salami, or even the

fulminations of General Jodl of the Wehrmacht High Command in June 1941, decrying the flagrant and unnecessary use of ‘primitive’ or even ‘barbarian’ acronyms – including *Stalag* and *Stuka*. Perhaps the crowning jewel of this collection, however, has to be a request in 1936 from U-boat Commander Georg Trapp – yes, the Captain von Trapp, of *Sound of Music* fame – begging the Austrian Education Ministry to let him give lectures to schools about the vanished glories of the Habsburg navy. You couldn't make it up...

So, in the end, the idea of spending eight months travelling to those fifty or so archives turned out to be rather more daunting than the reality, which was always leavened both by these moments of incidental humour, by the kindness and helpfulness of most of the archivists whom I encountered – and, ultimately, by the thrill of the chase.

Helen Roche is Alice Tong Sze Research Fellow, Lucy Cavendish College.



Source: Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, AVA-Unterricht – Bundeserziehungsanstalten, BEA 6.



ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY AT CAMBRIDGE

Not so many years ago, in the University of Cambridge, an academic was heard to enquire what environmental history could be: 'How can you have a history of something that doesn't change?' It would be difficult to level such a charge today, when we are all too well aware of environmental change, much of it driven by human action and with consequences for people around the globe. Of course, the environment has always changed, but now the study of history is changing too. In July 2014 the Faculty made its first appointment to a lectureship in environmental history, with Paul Warde moving from a chair at the University of East Anglia; and in the past academic year the Faculty has offered its first course devoted to World Environmental History, under the leadership of Alison Bashford, Vere Harmsworth Professor of Imperial and Naval History.

Environmental History has its origins as a sub-discipline of history in the early 1970s in the United States, as part of the burgeoning environmental movement. Its research questions were very much related to the politics of the time: the role

of 'wilderness' and the frontier in American and Pacific history, the emergence of conservationism and ecology, the history of pollution, of forests and deforestation. The American Society for Environmental History (ASEH) was founded in 1977, and from a network of a few dozen scholars its conference has burgeoned into a major event. The European Society for Environmental History (ESEH) followed suit with its first conference in 2001 at St Andrew's, and a first World Congress took place in Copenhagen and Malmö in 2009.

As research expanded, so did the topics under consideration, as widely ranged as 'the environment' itself: the metabolism of inputs and waste in cities; reconstructions of past climate change and its impacts; the pursuit of resources from the ocean depths to rare earth extraction; the history of Antarctica; the richly intertwined cultural history of nature and nationalism. It brought radically new insights and stories, such as how the qualities of the humble banana interlinked with steam-powered and chemical technology to shape snacking habits, infrastructures and political regimes. Some of these themes touch upon areas with a

long and strong tradition of scholarship, not least in Cambridge: historical geography, demography, disease, and energy, for example. We can recall the first lines of *A geographical introduction to history* (1925) by Lucien Febvre, the founder of the *Annales* school: one of the two great problems confronting anyone interested in understanding history was 'environment' (the other was 'race', which has now more usefully and accurately been recast as the histories of identity)

Febvre feared 'determinism', explaining societies by their environment, but this spectre has long retreated. Now studies seek to understand how all aspects of social, political and intellectual life are infused with ecological relationships and debates and beliefs about nature, as well as how human life transforms the world around it. This has been a guiding question in Paul Warde's research, from the importance of wood as a basic resource in early modern society, to the history of energy use recently published in *Power to the People. Energy in Europe over the last five centuries* (Princeton University Press, 2013). Recent work focuses on the emergence of the



concept 'environment' and ideas about sustainability, how they shaped politics and a desire to predict the future. One collaborative outcome is the volume *The Future of Nature: Documents of Global Change* (Yale University Press, 2013), including a contribution from Alison Bashford.

Alison Bashford's work in environmental history has developed from her recent studies on population. In *Global Population: history, geopolitics, and life on earth* (Columbia University Press, 2014), Bashford explores the emergence of global political ecology over the twentieth century. In chapters on soil fertility and food security, she shows how entwined were human population studies, ecology and international relations. The 'population bomb' of the late 1960s has an intricate backstory. Bashford has previously worked on the history of geography and of environmental ideas, especially in the 'determinist' early to mid twentieth century. Their intersection with nationalism and anti-colonialism is explored in idiosyncratic locations and intellectual milieux, through the work of interwar economist Radhakamal Mukerjee, for example.

World Environmental History is currently taught as a Themes & Sources course, introducing first year students to the challenges and delights of the field. How does history look if examined from the perspective of frontiers, the poles, forests, deserts, and changing climate? Research collaborations are underway, often extending into adjacent fields of economic history and history of science. In June 2016, Alison Bashford convenes, and Paul Warde contributes, to a conference on Malthus: Food, Land, People. This follows Alison Bashford's re-interpretation of Malthus's *Essay* in *The New Worlds of Thomas Robert Malthus* (Princeton University Press, forthcoming, co-authored with Joyce E. Chaplin).

The Cambridge Faculty of History has a healthy future in teaching and research on environmental history, joining one of the profession's liveliest fields of scholarship.

Alison Bashford and Paul Warde.

SIMPLES

Commerce and consumption of exotic materia medica in Paris, 1670–1730

Frontispiece, Moyse Charas, *Pharmacopée royale galénique et chymique* (Paris: Moyse Charas, 1676)



Exotic consumption was expanding in France around 1700 as the first colonial empire developed. Merchants, scientific practitioners and consumers all discussed the implications of globalisation, changing patterns of national consumption, and the commercialisation of medicine, health and diet. A team of three scholars is currently researching the intersection of these three processes during the years around 1700 for the cases of Paris and Versailles, centres of elite culture in France and of fashion in Europe as a whole. The aim is to uncover some of the relationships between growing urban demand, the com-

merce which made plant substances from distant places available to European consumers, and changing knowledge about these substances, mediated by scientific and medical experts. The team is headed by Dr Emma Spary, a Reader in the Faculty of History, and includes a postdoctoral Research Associate, Dr Samir Boumediène, who comes to Cambridge from the Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte, Berlin, and a PhD student, Laia Porter Codina, who trained at Barcelona. The project will draw upon cultural history, history of science and medicine, urban history, business history, court history and commodity history to explore the processing, sale and consumption of exotic plants, following their circulation through domains of learned, elite and commercial culture.

Exotic plants had been consumed for centuries in France, in the form of spices, sugar and rare drugs. But by around 1700, the consumption of exotica was moving from being the preserve of princes and rulers to becoming more widespread. At just the same moment, the term 'exotic' was itself coming into use to refer to the imagined otherness of both East and West—the fabled Orient and the Ottoman Empire as well as the new American island colonies. Urban merchants—apothecaries, grocers, distillers, perfumers—played a key role in trading, processing and interpreting exotic plant materials for an elite clientele. The team's goal is to produce a comparative picture of the ways in which exotic plant materials were processed in city workshops and laboratories, and bought and consumed in the French metropolis and at court. For example, the consumption

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E. Fessard after Edme Bouchardon, mid-18th century

of coffee, almost unknown to French consumers in 1660, had become an everyday affair by 1730, while the drink itself had become a profitable colonial good. In the project, we are hoping to link these two processes to the knowledge and practice of urban consumers, traders and scientific practitioners.

Nicolas Blegny, royal physician, exemplified the new directions that the relationship between science and commerce might take in Paris around 1700. Excluded from the medical faculty, Blegny struggled to win clients in the metropolis. So he tried his hand in the wider medical marketplace, founding an academy where elite visitors could sip exotic drinks, tea, coffee or chocolate, while watching scientific experiments. Blegny was also the first person to publish a trade directory for Paris, in 1692.

The combination of science, consumption and profit in his innovative enterprise offers a rare insight into the commercial world of the French metropolis, at a time when domestic and overseas trade patterns were changing rapidly. The project seeks to investigate why city and courtly elites bought—and more significantly ingested—exotic plant materials. How did they understand their properties and significance? Fashions for exotic plant remedies were often sustained by high-profile cures and the support of leading doctors. The King granted a trade monopoly to the Dutch physician Jean-Adrien Helvétius to trade in ipecacuanha in the 1680s after several such cures and hospital trials. How important were celebrated cases like this, or well-placed elite patrons, in increasing the consumption of new botanical commodities? Which experts could credibly

pronounce upon their effects on the European body? Conversely, what role did new practices like advertising and shopping play at this turning point in food and drugs commerce? While much attention has been paid in recent years to the global trade in materia medica, we still lack an understanding of how and why people consumed exotic plant materials within cities. This is the picture that the project aims to complete through a detailed study of shop records, academic debate, medical treatises, pharmacopoeias and private accounts or memoirs.

Emma Spary is a Fellow of Corpus Christi and Reader in the History of Modern European Knowledge. Her research covers the history of natural history, medicine, chemistry and agriculture in eighteenth-century Europe and its colonies.

OPINION: NATIONALISM VERSUS TRANSNATIONALISM IN THE SCHOOL HISTORY CURRICULUM



Like many a foreign student in Cambridge, I often indulge in comparing my country of origin and my country of residence. One domain of comparison between Britain and France recently caught my attention because of similar debates on both sides of the Channel, and revived questions I had been asking myself ever since I became a history student in 2003: how should we teach history at school?

Heated debates were sparked by the French government's recent project to revamp, albeit modestly, the history curriculum of middle schools (11-15 years of age) by introducing or reaffirming emphases, in particular, on the history of slavery and the history of Islam. This echoes a comparable uproar that forced the British Education Secretary Michael Gove in 2013 to rewrite his draft of a new national curriculum for history, chiefly centred, initially, on dates, political facts and insular history.

Those passionate conversations, beyond their differences of content, are striking, in my view, by one common feature of the curricula that remains relatively undiscussed: the fact that national history massively outweighs transnational approaches to history.

Certainly, fully fledged jingoism is no longer in fashion in our countries, unlike in Hungary or Russia. Yet the nation is still at the core of history teaching. The first thing I remember learning in primary school was a list of so-called 'French' kings and rulers, from Clovis to François Mitterrand. To this day, while the children living in England are to be told about 'changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age', the very first historical module taught to children in France is very ambiguously entitled 'France before France'.

Whether a modern national territory is the appropriate template for all periods and all topics is almost never considered. At the time of the separation between the French State and the Catholic Church in the early 1900s, the debate was fierce over whether French schoolchildren should spend more time on Clovis, the quintessential Christian king, or on Vercingetorix, the supposedly proto-Republican Gaul. Nowadays, the French argue over the respective merits, in history classes, of Joan of Arc, the pious white maid from Domrémy, or Aimé Césaire, the radical black poet from the Caribbean.

Yet few ask whether another corner of the world would be better suited to illustrate our common shared history: why not teach French pupils about British India if it better illustrates a particular aspect of colonialism? Why not pick, in English classrooms, the policies of Charles V instead of those of Elizabeth I when one tries to explain the religious divides of the 16th-century? Because the general framework is and remains the nation in its present frontiers.

Surely, taking examples in the history of the area surrounding one's place of residence remains partially valid, if only to understand the nearby landscape, constructions, ideas or customs. But the geometries of history should be as multiple as the phenomena that shaped the past. Imposing the national framework upon pre-national times, or neglecting the many historical dynamics that are not primarily found at the national level, amounts to introducing long-lasting biases in our children's minds. My own experience in the judicial and executive branches of power in France provided me with first-hand examples in which such biases could easily translate into a regrettable narrow-mindedness, and a dangerous belief in the natural and exceptional characteristics of one's own nation. Unfortunately, in France as in Britain, academics have very little institutional say over these matters. But professional historians and graduate students in history can speak up: they should do it more, in my view, in favour of a more diverse, multilevel and open-border type of history in the classroom.

Fabrice Langrognet is a PhD student at St John's, and also a Judge at the Paris Administrative Court specialising in asylum and immigration cases. He is President of the Cambridge Migration Society.

HISTORY AND THE SILVER SCREEN

It was Tuesday 24 June 1969, the day that results were to be announced for Part I of the Historical Tripos. For those who bothered to remain in Cambridge for the eventual announcement it could be a harrowing experience. A fellow undergraduate who had just taken Part I of the Architecture and Anthropology Tripos and who was to switch to reading History for Part II had done quite well considering he had spent most of his revision time rehearsing to be invested as the Prince of Wales. I on the other hand, without that particular excuse, had done less well than I expected and was suffering a considerable degree of emotional turmoil as a consequence.

I turned away from the Senate House where the results were posted and stumbled blindly through the streets of Cambridge. I have no idea where I went but at some point around lunchtime I wandered into a darkened Arts Cinema which sadly no longer exists. It was showing Frank Capra's 1936 film *Mr Deeds Goes To Town*. The story revolves around Longfellow Deeds (played by Gary Cooper), a plain country man from the idyllic small town of Mandrake Falls, Vermont, who inherits \$20 million from his uncle. He moves to New York and is mercilessly exploited by the sharks of that noble town, particularly the newspaper reporter played by Jean Arthur who pretends to fall in love with him but traduces him each day in her scandal sheet of a newspaper.

They visit Grant's Tomb together. Jean Arthur wonders what Cooper sees in it. Cooper reverently removes his hat and speaks in that unique drawl.

I see a small Ohio farm boy becoming a great soldier. I see thousands of marching men surrendering. I see the beginning of a new nation - like Abraham Lincoln said. And I see that little Ohio boy being inaugurated as President. Things like that can only happen in a country like America.

Bear in mind that it was June 1969. Young American men of our age were dying pointlessly in the jungles of Vietnam. Harold Wilson was under extreme pressure from President Johnson to send their British equivalents to fight and die alongside them. Anti-American feelings were palpable.

When Cooper articulated his patriotic fervour, the post-exam Cambridge audience dissolved into hoots of derisive laughter. Nobody talks like that, nobody even thinks like that. I did - at least, in the sense that I

ALL CHANGE? FUTURELIB

understood exactly how in 1936 audiences would have responded very differently to those same sentiments. In that one moment I found my vocation. I wanted to make films and I wanted to make them like Frank Capra, full of warmth and comedy. In the course of over twenty years of writing films like *Buster* and producing television drama series like *Lovejoy* and *Wish Me Luck*, I didn't always succeed but I never lost the desire.

It began with a Ph.D. thesis on *Hollywood & the Great Depression*. The more I looked at those Depression era feature films the more convinced I became that they were a huge untapped source for the historian. Film, particularly fiction film, provides information which conventional historical documents do not. Novels are clearly useful but the popular feature films of the 1930s and 1940s drew vast audiences across the world, and as such tell us much about the hopes and fears of ordinary people. Frank Capra's Depression era films were so successful because they chimed so perfectly with the *zeitgeist*. Mainstream movies are designed to appeal to the largest audience possible so their commercial fate tells us how successfully they have captured the mood of the moment. Capra's *Mr Deeds Goes to Town* tells us things about America in 1936 that we can't get simply from a study of New Deal legislation. Similarly, if anyone wants to know what America was really thinking during the fateful months between Hitler's invasion of Poland and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor they should watch Errol Flynn in *The Sea Hawk* or Charlie Chaplin in *The Great Dictator* or Hitchcock's *Foreign Correspondent*. Certainly, they are "only" movies but it is a wise historian who opens his or her eyes and mind to the possibilities offered by the study of the fiction film.

Throughout my time as a television writer/producer I carried with me the sound of that 1969 audience cackling at Mr Deeds and his simple patriotic sentiments. Out of that one incident grew a lecture series I now give to second year American History undergraduates called *Hollywood & American Society* and above all, a Themes & Sources option called *Film & History 1929-1945*. I often wondered whether the Faculty Board thought I spent my time in darkened rooms eating Maltesers. Perhaps that mistaken impression has finally been corrected.

Colin Shindler is a member of the History Faculty as well as being a screenwriter, television drama producer and radio playwright. Among his many publications are Hollywood Goes to War: Films & American Society 1939-52.



With the rapidly-increasing availability of academic e-books and e-journals it has become common to predict the decline of libraries as physical entities and, indeed, a good proportion of essential reading-list material across all disciplines can now be accessed over the Cambridge network and remotely by password. Recently, Cambridge University Library, its affiliates (including the Seeley Library), in collaboration with other departmental and college libraries have engaged in some 'blue-skies' thinking about how services might adapt to add value and enhance the user study and research experience. A Library Innovation Project was initiated and immediately commissioned a series of 'diary studies' in which students recorded their widely-differing study methods, and also organised the 'shadowing' of selected academics across humanities and science disciplines, to illuminate the often arduous schedules imposed by research targets.

After this promising start, the independent consultancy *Modern Human* was commissioned to continue the project, now rechristened *FutureLib*, and its staff conducted numerous interviews with Cambridge academics, librarians and international leaders in the field of research libraries. After analysing the accumulated data and opinion, the consultants produced a vision document which outlined about a dozen concepts on which the library service can build; these range from practical access to printed material, the predicted need to offer a variety of study spaces (collaborative, flexible and 'digital-detox'),

through peer-reviewed technologies (web apps, software, mobile device apps), to digital scholarship labs offering support from data analysts, statisticians and data visualisers.

Two of the most straightforward (and relatively low-cost) proposals are now being trialled by several libraries. The first of these is nicknamed 'Who-Has' and offers a way to widen access to limited print copies (not everything has an electronic version) by enabling borrowers to 'sub-lend' items to others; users participate via Facebook groups so that much-needed texts can be passed on by mutual agreement, even in the middle of the night, with the transfer recorded so that libraries can keep track of items. 'SpaceFinder' is also being trialled, offering an app in which all types of study spaces throughout the University will be listed and searchable, with Trip Advisor-style ratings and comments, enabling the user to identify convenient and congenial locations in which to work. Librarians are breaking out of institutional confines to publicise this app direct to potential users in a series of summer 'Roadshows'. These *FutureLib* experiments will continue and, according to response, the Cambridge library landscape of 2020 will have evolved to look very different to the familiar model of fixed desks and PC workstations. Despite these potential future changes, we are happy to report that the Seeley Historical Library is thriving and is one of the busiest faculty libraries in terms of loans and visitor numbers.

Linda Washington, Seeley Librarian.

OBITUARIES

Professor Sir Christopher Bayly (1945–2015)



Christopher Alan Bayly, Vere Harmsworth Professor of Imperial and Naval History until 2013, knighted in 2007 'for services to history outside Europe', carried his honours so

lightly that it is with the utmost respect and affection that this tribute refers to him as Chris. In April this year Chris simply stepped out without notice, sending his former students the world over into miserable huddles. It wasn't just that Indian and world history had lost a scholar of immense talent. It was also that Chris's kindness and his remarkable openness to a wide variety of ways of doing history made the whole experience of thesis-writing with him such a benign one.

It was always with anticipation that his students walked up the stairs to C3, St Catharine's, for Chris would alert us to the new and the unpredictable in the material we brought to his door. Confused passages and disjointed chapter plans would be reviewed with courtesy: 'this is all very interesting, but...' And in the course of the evening, papers would be pushed aside to brew a pot of tea, to pour out a glass of sherry or take us out for a meal, for Chris was enormously generous to his students.

If, as Confucius thought, saving someone's life made one responsible for that person forever, Chris must have felt something like that about his many students from India. Year after year with weary good humour, he would testify to grant-making and study-leave awarding bodies that yes indeed, progress was being made. A former student remembered that Chris had to write some fifty reference letters when, due to family reasons, she had to move thrice across tenure track positions.

From Chris's vast corpus of publications, I've chosen to start with *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1780-1870* (1983) because it came as a breath of fresh air to my generation. Its young author - not yet forty - was turning over every pebble in sight, sitting in merchant households, going through ledgers, genealogies and caste histories, absorbing family lore about norms of piety, credit and consumption. Chris explored the subtle economic changes taking place even in the most violent decades of the eighteenth century, which consolidated the position of

these managers of bazaars and custodians of revenue papers and compelled the East India Company to tap their services.

In *Empire and Information: Intelligence gathering and social communication in India 1780-1870* (1996) and *The Origins of Nationality in South Asia* (1997) Chris explained that it was the paradox of a vibrant public sphere in a society of low literacy that intrigued him. It was not just modern forms of education and print culture that empowered Indians to challenge European dominance, but also long established forms of intellectual life, public debate, and realms of knowledge.

In *The Birth of the Modern World 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (2004) Chris engaged with the 'how to' of global or trans-national history, without losing a sense of regional and national frames and their mutual co-constitution. European domination over this period, with the violence and ecological depredation it inflicted, is not brushed aside, but its contingent and time-bound nature is highlighted. As the world became more connected, uniformities emerged in state, religion, political life and bodily practices across a variety of societies but these connections could also heighten the sense of difference. The emphasis in this book is on the affinities that correct Eurocentric approaches to 'industrious revolutions', the development of 'publics', nationalism, liberal ideology and new-style religion. These affinities are always inflected and made hybrid because they emerge from an interaction with long local histories.

This theme is developed in *Recovering Liberties: Indian thought in the age of liberalism and empire* (2011) which examines Indian intellectuals and public figures who 'subscribed to the international liberal consensus of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.' The project of writing a truly global intellectual history was one which brought Chris into creative engagement with a band of young historians - a dialogue which was cut short so tragically in April. The second volume of *Birth of the Modern World* is shortly to appear in print, but older and younger friends and colleagues will no longer be able to dash off their comments and congratulations to its author. We were privileged to have felt the presence of this generous spirit in our lives.

Radhika Singha, Professor of History at Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, and formerly a PhD student at Darwin, was supervised by Chris Bayly.

Professor Michael O'Brien (1948–2015)



Mike joined the Faculty of History in 2001, but his association with Cambridge stretched back to his days as an undergraduate at Trinity Hall in the 1960s. It was his director of studies, Jonathan Stein-

berg, who introduced Mike to the American South when he arranged for him to spend the summer of 1968 working on a carpentry gang in Alabama. The rest, as they say, is history.

Fascinated by the South and its culture, Mike went on to take a PhD degree at this University under the supervision of John A. Thompson. Thereafter Mike spent most of the following twenty years in the United States, where he held research and teaching posts at the universities of Michigan, Arkansas, and Miami of Ohio. During his time in America, Mike played a critical role in establishing the study of Southern intellectual history as a flourishing area of scholarship. He played this role not only by publishing a string of influential books and articles, including *The Idea of the American South, 1920-1941* (1979) and *Rethinking the South: Essays in Intellectual History* (1988); Mike was also - despite seeming at times rather reserved - an organiser of considerable skill and energy. He was a founder of reading groups and editorial projects, of which the Southern Intellectual History Circle, in particular, stands out.

Mike's return to Cambridge was the beginning of a period of remarkable productivity, and of much deserved professional recognition. His two-volume masterwork, *Conjectures of Order: Intellectual Life and the American South, 1810-1860* (2004) was the culmination of more than two decades of research into the intellectual history of the pre-Civil War South. Synoptic in scope, *Conjectures* is also a strikingly intimate and resolutely non-Procrustean portrait of those antebellum Southerners devoted to the life of the mind in its many forms. The South Mike presents is the object of hope, concern, delusion and anxiety - an endlessly revised construction of the imagination that was dragged down into the abyss by a national civil war. Few before Mike had displayed the culture of the Old South in the sheer complexity of its human aspiration and often brutal social realities.

FACULTY NEWS

Awards flowed. *Conjectures* was awarded the Bancroft Prize and the Merle Curti Award of the Organization of American Historians, among other accolades, and was also a nominated finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. Other important books appeared over the following years: the gem-like *Henry Adams and the Southern Question* (2005), *Placing the South* (2007), and the exquisite portrait *Mrs. Adams in Winter: A Journey in the Last Days of Napoleon* (2010), which was also a nominated finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. Mike was at work on a general history of American intellectual life at the time of his death.

Mike could seem formidable as a teacher, and no doubt many of his supervisees for Paper 22 in Part I quailed at the thought of what he might say about their weekly essays. But for all of his very palpable authority, Mike will be remembered by his students – undergraduate and graduate – as a gentle and kind person, who went far beyond the call of duty in encouraging and supporting his charges. Mike's graduate students (of whom I am one) were devoted to him, and to his loving (and equally formidable) wife Tricia. He will be deeply missed.

Joel Isaac

Former members of the Faculty:

Rosalind Brooke, who died on 17 November 2014, was a distinguished and innovative scholar whose major contribution to medieval history lay with her studies of the early Franciscans and of popular religion.

William Ranulf Brock, who died on 12 November 2014 at the age of 98, was a major figure among the first generation of British scholars to engage with the history of the United States in a thoroughly professional way.

Rev. Owen Chadwick, who died on 17 July 2015 at the age of 99, was a distinguished historian of Christianity, and particularly of the Church of England. An undergraduate at St John's and a rugby blue, he was later Dean of Trinity Hall, Master of Selwyn for 27 years, Vice-Chancellor (1969-71), and President of the British Academy (1981-85). He was knighted in 1982, and awarded the Order of Merit in 1983.

Arthur Hibbert, who has died aged 94, was for many years a Lecturer in Medieval History at Cambridge, and was a Fellow of King's from 1948 to 2014. He was particularly fascinated by the history of heresy and religious dissent.

In the Guardian's University League Tables 2016 for History, Cambridge is ranked top of 94 institutions in the UK, with an overall excellence score of 100/100. This is the third year running that the Faculty has been placed first. Second was St Andrews (92.9), followed by Durham, Exeter, the LSE, and Oxford (85.8). The QS World University Rankings placed Cambridge History second, after Harvard.

As usual, the Faculty has been active in bringing history to a wider public. The Cambridge Series at the Hay Festival in May featured Joya Chatterji on India and Pakistan, Rosamond McKitterick on Charlemagne, Simon Szreter on welfare policy and Robert Tombs on England. The Alumni Festival will have David Smith talking about Oliver Cromwell (26 September) and Marcella Sutcliffe (27th) on the Risorgimento. The Cambridge Festival of Ideas (19 Oct.-1 Nov.) will include Christopher Andrew on war, censorship and propaganda; Dominic Lieven on the end of tsarist Russia; and Robert Tombs on Europe.

Faculty Appointments

To a Chair

Andrew Preston, a Fellow of Clare, is a specialist in the history of American foreign relations. Among his recent works is *Faithful Republic: Religion and Politics in the 20th Century United States* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), which he co-edited.

To Readerships

Nora Berend, a Fellow of St Catharine's, is a specialist in medieval history and the use of medieval themes in modern nationalism. Her publications include *At the Gate of Christendom: Jews, Muslims and 'Pagans' in Medieval Hungary c. 1000- c. 1300* (Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Teresa Webber, a Fellow of Trinity, is a specialist in the production, ownership and use of books in the Middle Ages, and on scribes and script in England, 11th-13th centuries. Key works include *The Libraries of the Augustinian Canons* (London, 1998).

To Senior Lectureships:

Natalia Mora-Sitja, a Fellow of Downing, originally trained as an economist, and is now a Modern European economic historian, specialising in the various interactions between economic growth and labour markets in the past. Among her recent publications is 'Labour market integration in a pre-industrial economy: Catalonia, 1772-1816', *Oxford Economic Papers*, 59 (2007).

William O'Reilly, a Fellow of Trinity Hall, is a specialist in early modern European and Atlantic history, with particular interest in the history of European migration, colonialism and imperialism. His most recent book is *The Atlantic World, 1450-1800* (Routledge, 2014).

Sarah Pearsall, a Fellow of Robinson, specialises in the history of North America in the early modern era, especially the colonial and revolutionary periods of what is now the United States. Her most recent book is *Atlantic Families: Lives and Letters in the Later Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 2008).



FACULTY NEWS, CONTINUED

Honours and Awards

Anna Abulafia has been appointed to the Humanities Professorship of the Study of the Abrahamic Religions in the Faculty of Theology and Religion at Oxford.

Julie Barrau has been awarded the 2015 Prix Saintour for her book: *Bible, Lettres et Politique: L'Écriture au service des hommes à l'époque de Thomas Becket* (Paris, 2013).

Alison Bashford is one of three new trustees appointed by the Prime Minister to the board of the Royal Museums in Greenwich.

Melissa Calaresu has been awarded a Mellon Teaching Fellowship at the Centre for Disciplinary Innovation at CRASSH.

Chris Clark, Regius Professor, was awarded a knighthood in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours for services to British-German relations.

Joel Isaac has been awarded a three-year Pro Futura Scientia Fellowship (2016-19).

Sachiko Kusukawa was awarded the 2014 Pfizer Prize by the History of Science Society for her book *Picturing the Book of Nature* (University of Chicago Press, 2012).

Peter Mandler has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and to the British Academy.

Renaud Morieux has been awarded a Philip Leverhulme Prize.

Duncan Needham has been awarded the Thirk-Feinstein Prize for the best doctoral dissertation in Economic and/or Social History.

Jon Parry has been awarded a Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship to pursue a project on 'Britain and the Near East, 1825-1882'.

Sarah Pearsall has received two awards from the Western History Association for her article "'Having Many Wives" in Two American Rebellions: The Politics of Households and the Radically Conservative'.

Andrew Preston has been appointed a Distinguished Lecturer of the Organization of American Historians.

Megan Vaughan has received a Wellcome Trust Senior Investigator Award of £854,000 for a five-year project entitled *Chronic Disease in Sub-Saharan Africa: a critical history of an 'epidemiological transition'*.

Alexandra Walsham has been awarded AHRC funding for a project on 'Remembering the Reformation'. This will be undertaken in collaboration with Professor Brian Cummings of the University of York. The award of £831,000 is shared between the Universities of Cambridge and York.

Students

Daniel Armstrong, an undergraduate of Downing, is a joint winner of the J. C. Holt Essay Prize, a national competition for the best undergraduate essay on Magna Carta. Kate Stevens, a PhD student, received a high commendation from the Pacific History Association for her essay, 'The Law of the New Hebrides is the Protector of their Lawlessness': Criminal Justice and Imperial Rivalry in the Early Condominium.'

Catherine Porter, a PhD student, won a prize for the best graduate student paper presented at the ASA Annual Meeting.

We are delighted that 31 applicants from the History Faculty have secured prestigious University awards: in the competition for the Vice-Chancellor's Awards, 21 of the 96 award-winners came from History; of the 80 students receiving awards under the Cambridge International Scholarships Scheme, 10 are from the Faculty.

Retirement

Martin Daunton, Professor of Economic History, and a leading scholar of the economic and social policy in Britain, its empire and the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He served as chairman of the Faculty of History and of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, as Master of Trinity Hall, as President of the Royal Historical Society and as a Trustee of the National Maritime Museum.

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