CAMDEN

ALEXANDRE GUILLOTEAU discusses Rights and Democracy

JOHAN ORLY considers the importance of J-L David's Neoclassicism

TITUS PARKER on the history of the Silk Road

The Librarian, by Giuseppe Arcimboldo (c1570), hanging at the Skokloster in Håbo, Sweden

Brave New World

The past seventy-five years have been marked by the remarkable absence of armed conflict in Western Europe. Montesquieu, amongst others, was convinced that nations had everything to gain from trade ('le doux commerce') and that expansion of trade would naturally diminish the prospect of war. Even at its time, this outlook was overly optimistic and failed to take account of the harm that trade could do, for example in colonisation and economic crises. Nevertheless, increased trade through globalisation has continued to bring with it more a desire to do business than wage war.

The Cold War produced a bipolar world, where the competing ideologies of communism and liberal democracy were pitted against each other. It was a time of idealism, strong identification with political parties, but also a period of geopolitical stability. What was striking, too, about this time was the intellectual pluralism in universities and schools, wide-ranging debate about political systems and an appreciation of the finer points of debate and argument. The freedom to express opinions – however divergent from the orthodox – was considered part and parcel of liberal society and an integral element of academic life.

If the end of the Cold War saw the demise of the Soviet Union and the Marxist influence which inspired its creation, it is not without a certain irony that the growth of Marxist thinking has been evident in western Europe from the 1960s. Foucault and 'French Theory' introduced some interesting cross-curricular thinking about the nature of power, freedom and the individual. Later, post colonialism developed a critical approach to Western thinking, and in particular pointed to the relationship of knowledge to power and stressed the inequality of dialogue with the ex-colonized. Subsequently, post-modernism promoted relativism, a distrust of reason, and viewed historical facts as unimportant and irrelevant; moreover, ideas could only be true if they benefit the oppressed. The challenge to the Enlightenment values has been profound and destructive. The latest iteration of the relationship between oppressor and oppressed finds its form in critical race theory. It underpins identity politics, which portrays a country as a nation riven by groups, each with specific claims on victimization. Societal norms have come be challenged through relentless criticism.

Whilst this gallop through intellectual fashions may seem arcane, there is no doubting their effect which is keenly felt in schools, universities and society as a whole. If everything is questionable, if there are no certainties, but only relative values, how are young learners to chart their intellectual path and emotional development with confidence through competing philosophies, fashions and world views? If history and culture are being dismantled along with monuments, where are the roots of our identity? There are fundamental conflicts of values and discourse has become polarised. Social media have had an asymmetric influence on opinion. They amplify tendencies to produce a dominant, acceptable standpoint through their echo chamber and through the 'viralisation' of emotions. This privileges a lack of complexity in the presentation of opinion, favouring the emotional response over the rational.

What we have witnessed is a decline of intellectual pluralism; the climate within liberal institutions has become stifling. The free speech of the 20th century has been seriously eroded by deconstruction, political correctness and cancel culture.

At the same time, there have been some remarkable developments since the collapse of the Berlin Wall. A whole generation has grown up with a pronounced lack of geopolitical antagonism, enjoying an increasing standard of living, benefiting from an era of globalization which has fuelled consumption, travel and self-centredness. It has lived through a period of technological advance which has revolutionized society: the development of mobile phone functionality, instantaneous and obsessive communication and the domination of social media.

All these factors have contributed to one of the greatest dangers facing society, that of living in an eternal present. The development of service providers (films, meal deliveries, gym fitness etc) which has encouraged consumers to stay at home rather than engage with the outside world, the cashless society imposed by Covid, the repetitiveness of 24 hour rolling news programmes, the addictive focus on the mobile phone as the sole lens on the world - all these factors have altered our relationship with the normal markers of existence. The continuum of time appeared endless. Until this year.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has moved the tectonic plates of geopolitics, has forced the West to rethink a whole raft of policies ranging from defence, through economics to energy and has reawakened a consciousness that the imperatives of realpolitik have changed. Modern day autocracy conjures up parallels with the 1930s; the ensuing catastrophe of war, which many thought was confined to distant memory and history textbooks, now appears all too possible in the European arena now. Safetyism and trigger warnings, which have protected the less resilient from the reality of the outside world, cannot but look absurd in the face of the chaos and violence of war. What trumps micro-aggression is military aggression and state-sponsored bullying
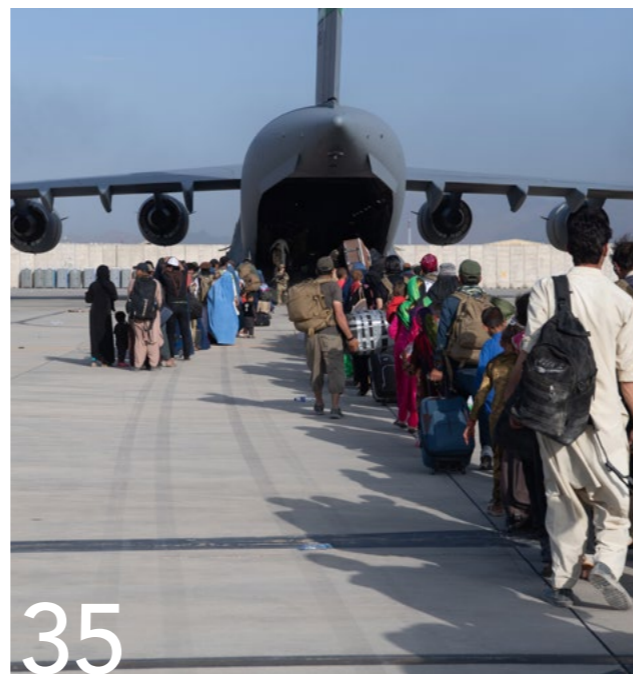
Schools should consider how their pupils might develop internal strength rather than relying on an external shield. Resilience emerges from high expectations, from endeavour, and not shying away from 'difficult' literature or the unfamiliar. The school experience should impart skills and attitudes that help pupils to navigate their world and creative and critical thinking to foster adaptability to the world beyond.

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Troublesome monuments

Raaghav Das considers the complex reasons and symbolism of monuments, and points out that modern currents of thought are at odds with previous interpretations of historical importance.

Wikipedia defines a monument as 'a type of structure that was explicitly created to commemorate a person or event, or which has become relevant to a social group as a part of their remembrance of historic times or cultural heritage'. They are important for artistic, historical, political, or architectural reasons, but also because their presence in our public realms has a lasting impact on our societies.

Over the last two years, many institutions across the world have had to rethink their monuments and public displays, particularly those with direct links to some of the most egregious aspects of imperialism, slave trading or racial discrimination. Examples of such troublesome monuments in the UK include the Bristol statue of Edward Colston, a 17th-century English merchant and slave trader and the bust of notorious imperialist Cecil Rhodes at Oriel College Oxford. There are countless such examples across the American South with an abundance of Confederate-era statues, most notably that of General Robert E. Lee in Virginia. Calls to remove such monuments have been around for some time but have become louder following the killing of George Floyd in the US in May 2020 which has inspired a powerful Black Lives Matter movement across the world. Such calls and acts are being labelled by some as 'historical vandalism' or attempts to 'erase history' by others. There clearly exists a range of views about what, if anything, should be done with our troublesome historical monuments.

History is complex storytelling that seeks not just to create an image of the past but also helps us develop an understanding of what we see. Our historical monuments remind us, advise us, and warn us about the past and in doing so also provide a visual glimpse of what the future may hold. It is for this reason, if nothing else, that we need to debate, or at least discuss, the continued status of some of the monuments that adorn our town squares and plinths. But first, we need to understand the narrative around the context of their creation in the past and what they represent in the current times. In fact, that narrative itself is a key part of history too. After all, who can forget the vivid imagery of Stalin and Lenin's statues being toppled across capitals on the other side of the iron curtain in 1990, or indeed Saddam Hussein's statues being torn down across Iraq in 2003? Just as erecting monuments is an attempt to create a story about history, the pulling down of monuments is also an attempt to create a story about history. The issue then is whether as a society we have a broad consensus on the values being projected in the act of erecting or pulling down some monuments. In the case of the Lenin and Saddam Hussein statues, the acts represented a proclamation of freedom from tyranny and hope in a new beginning and were supported both locally and across the globe- they have now become an integral part of our late twentieth and early twenty-first century history.

Of course, we must not only consider the statues, but we must also think of other contributions, such as buildings linked to troublesome events or benefactors. After all, if we topple a statue of Edward Colston, do we also demolish all of the buildings that he built, mainly using the money that he gained from the sale of slaves? Some may even say that renaming institutions and destroying buildings may erase local identities, but is this suggesting that local identities celebrate past injustices, such as slavery and colonialism? It would be unnecessary to tear down all remnants of the past, regressing just because of a connection (be it direct or obscure) to a slave-trader three centuries ago. Again, this would 'sanitise' history, so to speak, yet sometimes it may be morally required to remove monuments and rename schools as an expression of respect for the memories of those who had to endure past atrocities or injustices. In addition, should we judge characters of the past with today's morals in the first place? It is important to place these monuments in contexts of their time when such practices such as slavery or racial segregation may have been acceptable but are not consistent with today's values.

Unfortunately, whether we like it or not, several western cities often have a deep colonialist and/or slave-trading past. There is no all-encompassing solution that we can apply to troublesome historical monuments, and we must look at each one individually. One of the many ways to deal with this dilemma is to remove these statues. This does not have to be done violently, as the Colston statue in Bristol was dealt with. When it comes to the toppling of the Colston statue, 33% of British adults

The Statue of Christopher Columbus, erected in 1931 in Minnesota, was pulled down on 10th June 2020. The protesters said they considered Columbus to be a symbol of genocide against Native Americans.

We need our monuments to reflect the values of our modern, more egalitarian society

entirely 'disapprove of the statue being removed', while 40% believe that the statue should have been removed, but in a different way. Instead, we may remove them from the public eye discreetly, melting the statues down for re-use. It would be stupid to preserve these statues unthinkingly. We can also contextualise historical monuments more effectively, teaching people about the past, not celebrating their actions but rather learning about them.

The divergent views on the subject often use history as a focal argument. Should we be 'erasing history' by removing such troublesome monuments or should we be 'learning from history' by putting these monuments in a different perspective? In my opinion, a purely history-centric debate can easily miss the equally important societal point of view. After all, we need our monuments to reflect the values of our modern, more egalitarian society too. In fact, activists for social justice have been the most vocal for the removal and/or re-contextualisation of objects that are seen as symbols of white supremacy, colonialism or other forms of problematic social hierarchy. By targeting these specific social practices and using troublesome monuments as the focal point, the activists are seeking to bring about wider cultural change. From their perspective, the rationale for removing such monuments has several dimensions. Statues of troublesome figures often confer on them honour and esteem. Such statues also express identity and say something about who we are as a society. In that sense, it is then wholly inappropriate to continue to glorify historical characters responsible for such grave injustices. Advocating for the re-contextualisation of some historical monuments is also an attempt to untangle the illusions of the past and display history in a different light. Taking down symbols of white supremacy, slavery and imperialism can accomplish several important aims, including uncovering the full truth of this problematic history and the denunciation of the past injustice and a rejection of its underlying motive.

Finally, we must also consider the removal of monuments, violently or otherwise, from a legal perspective. In that context, the trial of the Colston Four offers interesting insight. In January 2022 a court acquitted four protesters who helped tear down a statue in Bristol of Edward Colston in May 2020. The arguments presented by the defence were unusual – instead of contesting the facts of the case, the defendants attempted to justify their actions. The first key argument made was that the continued presence of the statue in 2020 was a crime of 'public indecency, as the failure of the local authorities to remove the statue after 30 years of campaigning led to 'misconduct in public office'. In addition to that, the existence of the statue was argued as 'offensive, abusive and distressing'. While the former allegation was denied due to insufficient evidence, the latter was allowed, and the protesters were found not guilty of criminal damage for toppling the statue.

Having considered the various historical, societal and legal aspects, the question is what we should do moving forward, if anything, given the UK's imperial past the abundance of such troublesome historical monuments in our cities. First of all, it is important to determine that any action taken on troublesome monuments should proceed deliberately, legally, and through the most legitimate procedures available. However, it is difficult to find an 'all-encompassing' and 'neat' solution. Placing monuments in 'statue gardens', museums or parks would still not address the concerns of those who would resent this sort of preservation at a public expense and would instead want clear condemnation of these monuments. On the other hand, some would rather see these statues destroyed than displayed like historical artefacts in a museum, stripped of their original commemorative and celebratory purpose. Additionally, museums or museum wings solely devoted to troublesome monuments would cause even more controversy, as it would be a difficult task to frame, ab initio, a time of European colonialism or the Confederacy. In contrast, historical monuments in situ will have accumulated multiple meanings, allowing people to interpret and understand them differently.

I believe there are valuable lessons to be learnt from South Africa in this regard. When it became a democracy under Nelson Mandela in 1994, instead of purging all monuments of white, racist and imperialist figures, Mandela removed the most offensive of monuments of lesser importance. But for the most part, he added new monuments and reframed old ones. This presented South Africa in a good light to the global community, and the successes that this technique brought at home were incredible too. At the Union Buildings in Pretoria, just a stone's throw away from an ignored equestrian statue of South Africa's first Prime Minister Louis Botha, stands a very tall statue of Mandela himself, welcoming tourists to take photos with the 'smiling Madiba'. In another example of contextualising monuments, the Voortrekker monument, once a shrine to Boer colonization, is now a "museum of Afrikaner culture and history" displaying an acceptance of the mistakes of the past and a willingness to learn from them.

In conclusion, regardless of which approach is used to tackle the problem posed by our troublesome monuments, one thing is clear - we cannot and should not be seeking to 'erase' or 'ignore' history. Instead, we should seek to learn from it. It is necessary now, more than ever, to do so with sincerity and understand how society has evolved over the last three hundred years. With genuine willingness, we can use this knowledge to address the social and racial injustices in the contemporary world.

Many statues of Lenin, symbolising the imposition of Communist government and once ubiquitous in Russia and Eastern Europe, were summarily removed following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rejection of Marxist ideology.

In Glasgow There Lies the Scene…

'Words that sound great, but so far have led to no action'

Eleonora Gallenzi Minervini considers Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* to be an apt prefiguration of our ailing world and its inert leaders.

When it comes to discussing the lasting influence of the great English bard William Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida* is not often mentioned as an example. The play, appearing between *Twelfth Night* and *Othello* in the timeline of Shakespeare's oeuvre, has been overshadowed by the playwright's other works, its unfocused narrative, switching between a love story and a tale of war, being the main cause of its dismissal by many critics. While it could be argued that these comments are in part accurate, it is also important to consider the overall themes of the play. Like *Hamlet*, which reveals the 'rotten[ness] in the state of Denmark', *Troilus and Cressida* examines the corruption and incompetence of leaders. The play's presentation of figures of authority sitting around a table, making false promises and prattling on instead of acting is all too familiar now, as it was back then.

Comparisons can certainly be drawn to the recent COP26 summit. Representatives from all over the world gathered together in Glasgow to address the pressing issue of climate change and put forward effective national pledges to help slow down and reduce its deleterious effects. That is what many people were hoping for, but it soon became clear that most of it was just, as the Swedish activist Greta Thunberg eloquently put it, 'blah, blah, blah'. Much like the meeting between Agamemnon, Nestor, Ulysses, Diomedes and Menelaus, much of COP26 brimmed with empty words and allegories. Agamemnon compared the lack of progress in the war to the stinted growth of a tree, describing the 'diver[sion of its] grain', 'tortive and errant from [its] course', perhaps a slightly more apt and imaginative turn of phrase than Boris Johnson's comparison of the current climate crisis to a football match: 'I would say that humanity as a whole is about 5-1 down at half-time. […] Team World is up against a very formidable opponent in climate change.' There was much talk of taking action, but few countries actually stepped forward to do so or acknowledged their responsibility in bringing about the crisis in the first place.

The focus at COP26 was not only on those present, but also, and perhaps even more so, on those that were not. Joe Biden scolded Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin for 'not showing up' at the conference, and sending delegations there instead. China and Russia are the largest and the fifth-largest emitters of carbon dioxide respectively, and their involvement in the pledges would have had a great impact on the battle against climate change. Similarly, in *Troilus and Cressida* the Greeks are in desperate need of the help of their strongest fighter Achilles, who prefers to stay in his tent. In both situations, a 'war-like footing', as Prince Charles described it, is needed, but the lack of involvement of key figures means that the battle may not be won.

But COP26 was not just about climate change: there were other tensions between the attendees, most notably between the UK and France. The post-Brexit fishing-rights dispute was having a major impact on the relation between the two countries around the time of COP26, but the hostility seemed to disappear during the talks, as Emmanuel Macron and Boris Johnson were full of pleasantries for each other. This interest in keeping up appearances in front of the wider public and masking any infighting can be observed in *Troilus and Cressida* too. The Greek leaders use excessive flattery when referring to each other. For example, Ulysses calls Agamemnon a 'great commander, nerve and bone of Greece' and declares that 'every hand of Greece / Should hold up [his speech] high in brass'. Everyone in the meeting is highly aware of how he is being perceived by others. Ulysses is also concerned with appearances on a greater scale, and knows of the 'comparisons with dirt' being made about the leaders and the attempts to 'weaken and discredit' them. In the same way, the representatives at COP26 have been repeating phrases and buzz words that the public wants to hear such as 'net zero' and 'carbon neutral' in an attempt to gain people's support – but these are just, as Greta Thunberg described them, 'words that sound great, but so far have led to no action'.

Shakespeare's presentation of a paralysed society, ruined by stagnation and corruption, and led by incompetent leaders, is still relevant to this day. *Troilus and Cressida* depicts situations and characters that repeatedly appear throughout history. This is perhaps why Shakespeare's work continues to be studied and appreciated even now, and this play, often wrongfully neglected, should be no exception. As the playwright and poet Ben Jonson wrote, Shakespeare and his work are 'not of an age, but for all time'.

First day Behind the Scenes at the COP26 Climate Change Conference 2021, Glasgow. Photo Credit: Dean Calma / IAEA

Clubbing with Cressida

Katie Wynne-Jones is struck by how Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* can offer insight into the recent increase in drink spiking. Would Diomedes spike Cressida's drink?

I cannot deny that after reading *Troilus and Cressida* I almost felt, well, disappointed. Unlike Shakespeare's other plays, such as *Romeo and Juliet*, where star crossed lovers would rather die than not be together, *Troilus and Cressida* offers very little sense of love or affection. Rather a world of lust, transaction and infatuation is presented in Troy, where Troilus and Cressida first meet. The fairy-tale love between Romeo and Juliet, though admirable is simply not very achievable, for Cressida or the modern-day woman. Instead, a much more cynical view is put across by Shakespeare about women in society and their relationships with men.

Within the play Cressida comments 'upon my back to defend my belly, upon my wit to defend my wiles'. Whilst she uses wit and humour as a defence towards men's advances, many modern women feel themselves having to consider and take precautionary measures to protect themselves. Such as wearing denim jackets to nightclubs to avoid spiking by injection or covering drinks in clubs. And whilst the comparison of Cressida's wit to preventive measures in clubs may not appear clear, both reflect how women feel unsafe, both on nights out and in wider society. I believe that these acts taken by women are part of a wider societal issue: one that Shakespeare alludes to.

Are women in a perpetual state of violence and conflict within society? Cressida's life is certainly tumultuous, living in a time when such human values as 'love, friendship, charity are subjects all to envious and calumniating time'. The Trojan war rages on as she tries to navigate her position within society and her relationship to Troilus. The radical feminist legal scholar Alice MacKinnon would argue that modern day women do also find themselves in a perpetual state of war within society much as Cressida finds herself in. In Women's September 11th, Mackinnon's famous argument is that the same number of people who died in 9/11 as are killed by their husbands in America every year. Comparing and contrasting the responses to these events, MacKinnon uses this comparison to argue that women do find themselves in danger within society and that the way we define peace is simply when men are not fighting other men.

This is a theory not without its criticisms, but it does raise the idea of men's and wider societies response to certain events. Within *Troilus and Cressida*, the Trojan War is stagnant as both sides, for the most part remain inactive, as the commander's squabble and fail to take decisive action. When the men are not fighting all appears relatively peaceful. However, the reality for Cressida and

other female characters, such as Helen, is very different. When taken to the Grecian camp in exchange for another prisoner, Cressida is essentially handed over, as if an object in a transaction. The sexually charged scene finds Diomedes, one of the leaders of the Greek camp pleading her 'fair usage' and remarking 'I'll answer to my lust'. The second line implies a total lack of consent, with Cressida placed in an extremely vulnerable position. To survive, she becomes Diomedes' 'mistress' much to the dismay of Troilus who believes her to be unfaithful.

Watching the Royal Shakespeare's 2018 production of the play, this scene in the Greek camp becomes further threatening as all the male commanders line up to forcibly kiss Cressida. In the onstage production by surrounding her, the feeling of entrapment is undeniable. Surrounding her and planting kisses on her face, when she refuses, Ulysses angrily reduces Cressida down to her sex 'set them down for sluttish spoils of opportunity and daughters of the game'. This same unpleasant atmosphere is what many women have reported feeling on nights out at clubs and bars across Britain. With the recent increase in spiking, the issue is receiving more press and people are starting to ask more questions, sparking a public outrage from many women, who confess their fears of having to remain constantly vigil in nightclubs. A recent survey in 2017 found that over 60% of women aged 18-24 had been sexually harassed, stating it happened in a club, pub or bar.

> Cressida's wit [and] preventive measures in clubs ... both reflect how women feel unsafe, both on nights out and in wider society

This has prompted the start of a public discourse surrounding women's safety and pushing for safety measures to be implemented to protect club goers. Nevertheless, this has also prompted a negative backlash, with some people suggesting women should stay home if they feel uncomfortable. To say this, is completely the wrong approach, as it puts the onus on women as opposed to targeting the attackers. Correctly approaching this issue would see an emphasis on directly addressing the perpetrator and the reason for them committing these offences.

The unhelpful, and misjudged response by some in the political sphere reflects a misunderstanding of the situation, predominantly by men. Just as Troilus blamed Cressida's own actions rather than questioning the circumstances under which she was forced to make those decisions. Cressida was forced to become Diomedes's mistress to put herself in a relatively safe position within the Greek camp. This echoes the idea that it is a woman's duty to protect herself rather than questioning the perpetrators and asking why this is occurring. Thankfully

venues are now taking some responsibility, with some regions putting in measures including swab-testing drinks for contamination and searching people. After Cressida's ordeal in the Greek camp, she disappears from the play, overshadowed by the end of the Trojan war. Yet women in modern society appear to be refuse being pushed to one side and are challenging these attitudes and actions afflicted upon women.

Whilst the women in Troilus and Cressida do not

show much solidarity (Cressida in modern day terms slut shames Helen for her promiscuity) modern day women are defending one another. Cressida considers if 'we women had men's privilege of speaking first' and whilst in the play she seemingly is not allowed such 'privileges' women today have banded together to speak up. Boycotting clubs and hosting the nation-wide campaign 'Big Girls Night In' shows solidarity and a united voice demanding change.

Hakkasan Night Club, Las Vegas. Photo by David Jones

Ai Weiwei and the art of controversy

Konstantinos Haidas is drawn to the techniques of Ai Weiwei's art and his relentless criticism of government.

Ai Weiwei says that an artist must be an activist. In a country where free speech is not recognised as a right, he has been beaten up by police, kept under house arrest and been subjected to constant surveillance due to his work: he is viewed as a threat to a "harmonious society". His dramatic actions highlight the widening gap between the idealistic view of life in Chinese society and the reality for many. The drastic efforts made by the government to try limit his communication and influence on wider audiences has actually motivated him towards numerous projects that confront politically sensitive issues in China. Ai has used social media to build a large online presence, deeming it the duty of an artist to "let people know what is on your mind and why you are doing this".

Following the death of thousands of schoolchildren in the Sichuan earthquake of May 2008, largely due to shoddy infrastructure, which was evidence of government corruption, Ai started an independent investigation. Government officials failed to inform the public that there were 5,000 casualties and so he produced his own list of all the names of the schoolchildren that died and published this on his blog. His investigation was interrupted when police broke into his hotel room and beat him into hospitalisation. In 2010 he was put under house arrest for several weeks. In 2011 he was banned from using twitter and security cameras were installed all around his home. He was also later arrested without formal charges and was released after 81 days with 12 million yuan to pay in fines.

"Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn", produced in 1995, is one of Ai's first famous works. In a series of 3 photos, we witness him destroying a 2000-year-old ceremonial Han Dynasty Urn. In fact, this was his second attempt at creating this work as his photographer had not managed to capture the first. This artifact had significant economic value - Ai had to pay several thousands of US dollars to obtain it - but is primarily a symbol of rich Chinese culture and society. The Han Dynasty, lasting from 202 B.C to 220 A.D, is considered a defining moment in Chinese history and so to purposefully break an iconic form of this period is equivalent to ignoring an entire age of cultural meaning. He countered outrage from critics by reminding them that "General Mao used to tell us that we can only build a new world if we destroy the old one". The iconoclastic work references the widespread destruction of antiquities during China's Cultural Revolution of 1966-76 and Mao's instruction to destroy the Four Olds - old customs, habits, culture and ideas - in order to build a better society. In the revolution many ancient artifacts of Chinese culture were destroyed to further the aims of Mao's Communist agenda, to preserve Chinese communism by purging relics of capitalist and traditional elements from Chinese society. Cultural objects were destroyed, historic sites were ransacked, and many artists were exiled or killed for representing the old culture.

In these photos Ai looks directly at the camera as the urn falls which expresses his direct opposition to the government through immediate confrontation. His expression and posture remain perfectly still except his hands that open up as if to offer a sarcastic "whoops". The provocative act of cultural destruction is an explicit response to the erasure of cultural memory in Communist China. He imparts new values by letting go of the social and culture structures that enforce tradition. Ai often states that the power of his artwork comes from the viewers' attention and how he is able to challenge their values and not the act itself. In an interview Ai explained that "it is powerful only because someone thinks it is powerful and invests value in the object." He forces the audience to confront the value of antiquity in our modern world and if it is worth preserving. There is a debate, however, whether his act of destruction can also be seen as an act of preservation. Some says that Ai revitalises the urn and manages to bring it into the modern day, arguing that it is preservation through transformation.

Another of Ai's best works is "Ton of Tea" which

His act of destruction can also be seen as an act of preservation

Portrait of Ai Weiwei, Charcoal pressed on canson. Photo by Arturo Espinosa

The installation was both sensory and immersive

was first displayed in 2008. He was inspired by western minimalist artists like Morris and Judd by using simplicity to ensure all the attention is drawn on the compressed ton of tea. It involves the compression of Pu'er tea: the traditional tea that has been drunk all over China for hundreds of years as an everyday, domesticated drink. The cube shape makes reference to the fact that maybe all the tea in China will actually not be enough to provide for its growing population.

It refers to our value system which determines the status and desirability of items like antiques and tea. Tea was always a sought-after item that was a crucial component of economic history before the Industrial Revolution – main commodity traded by East India Company and directly triggered Boston Tea Party. Ai comments on the effects of globalisation and the industrial empire behind modern day China's "cultural exports" calling attention to the division between the past and the present. However, it could also be seen as a symbol of the complex relationship between the British Empire and China.

"Sunflower Seeds" is another one of Ai's most well-known works. In 2010 he filled Turbine Hall of Tate Modern with exactly 100,000,000 hand-crafted porcelain sunflower seeds. The installation was both sensory and immersive, encouraging visitors to touch the seeds and immerse themselves within them. The precious nature of the material, the effort of production and the personal relationship make this work such a powerful narration on the human condition in a time of mass-production and consumerism. Porcelain has historically been one of China's most valued exports. Each seed was uniquely moulded, fired at 1,300°C and precisely hand painted. This process took place in Jingdezhen which is a city primarily famous for producing Imperial porcelain, crafted by 1,600 people over the span of two years. The fragility of porcelain under Westerners' feet portrays the subjugation of Chinese workers to rampant western consumerism. By combining mass production and traditional craftsmanship he forces us to look at the "Made in China" phenomenon and the geopolitical landscape of cultural and economic exchanges. It represents the thousands of low-paid labourers, the tedious processes and the long working hours.

Sunflower seeds also carry links to Mao's brutal Cultural Revolution where individuals were stripped of personal freedom. Propaganda depicted Mao as the sun and the population as sunflowers that turned towards him. However, Ai associated sunflower seeds with human compassion as they are a common street snack shared amongst friends. He comments on the relationship between the individual and the masses as from a distance, all the seeds seem the same but upon inspection each is unique. He comments on the erosion of individuality, posing the question "are we powerless unless we act together?". Ai always believed that an individual must set an example for society to follow. The seeds cast on the ground evoke a sense of oppression and a downtrodden society which is far from the ideal that Mao described.

Ai Weiwei is such a controversial artist as he makes daring work unlike anything the world has ever witnessed. His conceptual art calls attention to human rights violations on a large scale. The social engagement aspect of his work forces the viewer to ask themselves questions and his art stays with them for a lifetime. Art is a part of our basic human right which means that it is a powerful symbol in a country like China. Through being an artist who uses many genres, he epitomises the state's infringement on artistic freedom and remains on the frontier of social change.

Sunflower Seeds, Ai Weiwei (Tate Gallery) (opposite)
The Unilever Series commission was the first time Ai Weiwei presented this multitude of sunflower seeds as a continuous rectangular field to create a 'unique surface', and the first time he proposed an interactive element, in which the public was invited to walk on the seeds.

Super Mario

Nathaniel Read traces the career and remarkable successes of Mario Draghi, from academic, financier to consummate politician.

The most famous thing that Draghi ever said was that he would do 'whatever it takes' to save the euro. Yet this phrase means more for Draghi than just one of the many problems he has dealt with in his time as a public figure. I would argue that it sums up his very personality. It is unquestionable that he has faced many challenges; from preventing the collapse of the eurozone to helping Italy recover from Covid. But not even his worst enemy could accuse him of ever holding back from radical measures in response to crises. The Italian government, under Draghi, was the first to create mandatory vaccination certificate. He has also abolished a whole level of appeal for criminals in the justice system. It would be wrong to imply that Draghi is some sort of genius; when he called Erdo an 'dictator' after years of careful diplomacy many considered him rash and too outspoken. Yet what is interesting is how one man, often known as 'Super Mario', can manage to have run the Italian bank, the European Bank, Italy and potentially, now Merkel is gone, Europe too. The answer I propose, if there can be one, is that it is because he is prepared to do 'whatever it takes'.

The simplest and most reliable way to work out why someone is driven is to look back at their younger years. Draghi was fortunate to be born into a very wealthy upper-class family in Italy and in many ways was destined to be a banker. His father was a successful banker himself and hence could afford to send Mario to the grandest of schools in Italy, the 'Massimiliano Massimo institute', where classmates included the future chairman of Ferrari, Luca Cordero di Montezemelo, and the famous television presenter Giancarlo Magalli. These sort of schools and those sorts of parents are generally good at instilling drive in their children and, having come from a banking background, it was no surprise that Draghi became a banker himself.

Yet it was the death of his parents, in my opinion - when he was only 15 for his father, and 19 for his mother - which really set his life on course. His father, who had provided most of the money in his comfortable background died first and hence from a young age he was required to fend for himself. At the same time, he could do so with all the skills he had learned from the distinguished schools he was privileged to go to. He was not a typical Italian, he spoke English for example and went to MIT; his drive, knowledge and eagerness to learn are in my opinion why Draghi has always found it so easy to build confidence and relationships based on trust.

It is vital to understand how much of an academic Draghi is at heart. Like so many other key financial politicians such as Angela Merkel or Gordon Brown, he had earned a PhD first (in economics) and what he had learnt from his tutors - the Keynesian economist Federico Caffe, Noble prize-winning Franco Modigliani and Robert Solow, who had a whole financial model named after him - would come to be very important in his later decisions.

No one, however, at least in the Western world rises immediately to the top, and for a long time Draghi pursued academia. Here he joined a long list of distinguished radicals who were inspired by teaching academic disciplines - from Alexander Graham Bell to Pol Pot and ten American presidents. He gradually rose in the teaching profession until, in 1981, he became professor of Economic and Monetary policy at the University of Florence. While doing this, he also became a consultant at the World Bank in Washington. It was around this time that Guido Carli, a senior Italian politician, discovered that there was a clever banker around who was genuinely fascinated by economics. When he promoted Draghi to Director General of the Italian Treasury in 1991, this was both his big break and the time when becoming political was a potential option. His political leanings had been apparent from a young age: His dissertation at university focused on the mistakes made by Pierre Werner, a prime minister of Luxembourg. In this essay he emphasised Werner's lack of engagement in the European Monetary Union. This view, clearly shaped to a certain extent by his economist tutors and his very international father, would influence many of his future decisions. Yet despite political influence of almost all his actions, it was only after this promotion in 1991 that becoming an actual politician became possible.

For the time being, however, he remained utterly focused on helping to run the Italian Treasury. Major decisions he contributed to include the privatisation of many state companies in the 1990s and reforming SACE (an Italian export credit agency). He also played a key part in managing the turmoil from the huge corruption scandal called Mani Pulite in the 1990s. Under Draghi, the budget deficit fell from 12.5% to 2%. He had ultimate responsibility for selling Telecom Italia and the oil company Eni which significantly helped the Italian economic situation. Having served in this role for 10 years he decided to become a fellow of the Institute of Politics at the John F Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. It was his love of economics as a discipline, rather than his craving for power, that had fuelled him to temporarily enter the political world; and it was the academic world that drew him away from politics once more.

Yet at the same time Draghi engaged actively in the world of finance too. While he was a fellow, he also accepted a job at Goldman Sachs and rose to become head of European Strategy. The money he earned from this would make it a lot easier for him to forego his salary as prime minister in the future, which was at first seen by many as an incredible thing to do. While he worked at Goldman Sachs there were murky agreements with the Greek Government which Draghi would later claim to know nothing about. At the same time, however it significantly increased his knowledge of the European economy which would help him later. Having been so successful at the Italian Treasury and perhaps most crucially having helped sort out the issue of pensions which had been political dynamite for decades, it was no surprise when in December 2005 he was persuaded into becoming Governor of the Bank of Italy by his predecessor. This was less of a political appointment, however, and more of one made by fellow bankers.

The faith that other bankers had in him was shown to be even stronger when he became chairman of the Financial Stability Forum. He very much kept the show on the road particularly after the 2008 financial crisis in his many roles at this stage. The most important development in his career here was when he took the radical step of writing a direct letter to Berlusconi saying he was not doing enough to help Italy out of the financial crisis. This was an unprecedented but much praised decision. Not only Berlusconi, but also Sarkozy and Macron listened carefully to the steps advised. It is difficult to ascertain how much of an effect his opinions had on the future of the European economy because the letter was kept secret. But what it did show once more was that he was prepared to do 'whatever it takes' to get his opinions across.

There is only so wrong his advice could have been, because very soon after this event he was nominated as the next head of the European Central Bank. His support from the financial world was astonishing. Both the Financial Times and the Economist supported his nomination in Britain, across Europe he was immensely popular; and even Berlusconi, the prime minister of Italy, whom he had criticised so brutally after the 2008 crisis, wanted him to get the post. The only thing that held him back was his previous career at Goldman Sachs, but he got the role with relative ease. Almost immediately he had to deal with the eurozone debt crisis. He brokered a staggering 489 billion euro loan from the ECB to EU banks. Over time Draghi would spend a significant amount of money to help Europe out of this crisis and his decisions, like most economic decisions were not universally popular. Some thought he was being too generous to the banks; others thought his actions were making oil too expensive. Yet at the same time, the accepted turning point of the euro's fortunes was in July 2012 when Draghi said he was 'ready to do whatever it takes to preserve the euro. And believe me it will be enough'. The faith that the European financial world had in Draghi was why, almost immediately after this moment, the faith in the euro returned and why it is still a usable currency today. It would be wrong to claim that all his decisions as head of the European Central Bank were wise - in my opinion, he was too generous to the banks - but they were all undoubtedly brave and showed deep down he had an incredible drive to do 'whatever it takes'.

For most politicians, this moment would have been

> He joined a long list of distinguished radicals

> Draghi has stated that he does not want to be prime minister for long

Italian President Matterella and Prime Minister Mario Draghi welcome Mrs Georgieva (Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund) at the G20 summit (Quirinale.it)

It is because of Draghi's 'whatever it takes approach' that Italy managed to finally escape its lockdowns

the pinnacle of their career. Whether right decisions had been made or not, it is nearly impossible not to make enemies nor to somehow transfer your allegiances from a European organisation to an Italian one. In order to understand why Draghi has risen so rapidly, it is vital to realise that even his most avowed political opponents respect him. This is why he managed to get Berlusconi's nomination as head of the European Central Bank. This is also why in his younger years he did not ruffle that many feathers when he managed the transition from the Mani Pulite scandal and essentially ended the corruption in the Italian political system. This is the backdrop to President Mattarella choosing Draghi as the prime minister of a national unity government after Giuseppe Conte and Matteo Renzi had a political fallout over Covid. Before we assess his time as prime minister so far, it is important to note that Draghi has stated that he does not want to be prime minister for long - once more a radical thing to say, and once more showing both that he does not crave power in the same way as many other politicians; and that he is prepared to do 'whatever it takes' to not find himself doing something that he does not want to do.

Ironically, however, it is both the stability he brings, the success of his policies and his lack of desire for personal

> There is simply no politician currently in parliament who possesses the same gravitas as Draghi

gain that has made Draghi the pinnacle of new found political instability in early 2022. Sergio Mattarella's term as president came to an end and Italy have become so reliant on Draghi, they can find no other candidate for the presidency. His popularity, be it due to the Covid recovery or fortuitous and unprecedented Italian success in the football, tennis Olympics and Eurovision, is unrivalled and whether he wishes to be president, there is no doubt in my mind that he would be successful. Yet in the same way many British MPs knew they would lose their seats after the Brexit deadlock; there are many Italians MPs who know the same and hence do not wish to risk losing their seats in a snap election. Berlusconi, the only well-known avowed candidate for the job, pulled out in my opinion due to his controversial and certainly divisive legacy. In order to break the political deadlock that Italy was in, Draghi had to play a very presidential role in ensuring that the different parties were united. In Italy, the president's main role is to appoint prime ministers and break political deadlock; they have little influence over policy. So, Draghi on the one hand could become president and try to help keep the country stable for 7 years or on the other continue his radical policy plans for the rest of this year until the next general election. It is common knowledge that Italy needs both radicalism, which a prime

minister should provide and stability, which a president should provide to recover from Covid. Draghi has been so brilliant but so necessary in providing both that Italy have been forced to choose between the two. This is all despite him being brought in only because the parties gave in to Draghi's wish for him only to be a temporary appointment. There is simply no politician currently in parliament who possesses the same gravitas as Draghi. The confidence that even rival politicians have in him is so great that parties like the *Movimento 5 Stelle* have made little complaint while he reversed so many of their policies. Italy, therefore, unless Draghi appoints a puppet is destined to lose radicalism, stability or both. Even this course of action would certainly be a cause of complaint for many Italians. The last time both positions were held by the same man was under Benito Mussolini. Draghi had not intended to be prime minister for long. However, his desire to accede to the presidency has been thwarted by his vital role and ability to hold the government together. Hence, he is destined to stay on as Prime Minister until there is some form of political resolution.

The quickest and arguably most reliable way to assess Draghi's legacy as prime minister is to simply look at Italy before he took office. At the start of the pandemic, before he was in charge, Italy was the first European country to be overwhelmed and for a while was the laughing stock of Europe. One can choose almost any covid related graph and it will be clear that from February onwards, when he became pm, Italy has done a remarkable turn around. His most impressive decision, at least from an Italian perspective, is probably when he seized vaccines heading for other continents and said Italy needs to come first. It was only after this moment that other European leaders like Merkel started ensuring that enough vaccines were coming. It is because of Draghi's 'whatever it takes' approach that not only have Italians actually started to be vaccinated but he has succeeded in convincing 45 million people to get their vaccine. Before he was president, only a few million cumulative doses had been administered by the end of the year it was nearly 120 million. It is because of Draghi's 'whatever it takes approach' that Italy managed

to finally escape its lockdowns. It is because of Draghi's 'whatever it takes' approach that Fitch have finally given Italy a BBB rating and Standard and Poor have changed their prediction for the economy from stable to positive. No wonder he is generally known as 'Super Mario'. One may not agree with all Draghi's decisions - the freedoms of people who don't want to get a vaccine are incredibly limited, and he is arguably making it too difficult for the Italian tourist economy to survive. His plans to spend 295 billion euros on the economy by far the most in the EU while undoubtedly brave; he is leading the abandonment of EU fiscal conservatism could turn out to be rash and would affect the many other countries which have to a certain extent copied his plans. If he resigns as prime minister now, his legacy will certainly be tarnished because his most radical tax, labour market and pension reforms have not happened. Yet no one could say that he has not been a brave and effective prime minister.

The easiest way to explain Draghi's significance is through an historical parallel. One Roman emperor guided what is now Italy through an intense plague; one Roman emperor saved the economy from multiple fiscal crises; one Roman emperor came from wealthy background but lost his father at an early age; one Roman emperor became the unifying leader despite at heart being an academic. This was Marcus Aurelius, whose column stands outside the Italian parliament. When Aurelius died, the 'Pax Romana' which Italy had enjoyed for so long abruptly came to an end because he was succeeded by his divisive and incompetent son. It is commonly agreed that Aurelius should, like so many other Roman emperors, have adopted a suitable heir; this is only one lesson Draghi can hopefully learn from this greatly respected emperor. Aurelius was also a distinguished stoic philosopher along with Seneca the younger, Both Stoics have wise words for Draghi. In his letters Seneca wrote that you should 'do nothing because of public opinion but everything because of conscience' while Marcus Aurelius said, 'everything we do echoes in eternity'. No matter which Stoic Draghi listens to, let's hope he continues to do 'whatever it takes'.

Silk Road

Titus Parker surveys the development of the trading routes and examines whether the Silk Road is more a network of commodity exchange or one of religious dialectics.

How does one cook a wolf? According to 14th century Mongol cookbook 'Yinshan Zhengyao', wolf can be cooked with pepper, cardamom, turmeric and saffron. Pepper, and cardamom are native to India and turmeric is native to south-east Asia. It is harder, however, to find the origin of saffron – whether native to Greece, Persia or India, it is certainly not native to Mongol climates. Western cultural imagination deems the Mongols violent and uncivilised savages, no doubt as a result of the brutal conquests of Gengis Khan, yet the varied sourcing of ingredients from across the Eurasian continent shows a complex and interconnected trade network connecting cities like Constantinople in the West to Jaisalmer in India which Mongolian elites could tap into to embellish their cuisine. Demonstrated therefore in this recipe is a synthesis of Turkic steppic, subcontinental and possibly even Mediterranean cultures as it was evidently possible to procure exotic spices, all the while making use of the wolf, a culinary resource found across the Eurasian steppes. The silk road, however, was more than just a route used to transport spices. Ever since the formation of the Greco-Bactrian kingdoms in the third century BCE, the silk road has flourished as a collection of routes that carries goods, ideas and religions. It's worth noting that while there are a number of silk roads connecting China to the Mediterranean Sea, the primary trade artery flowed from Chang'an in Northern China west, around the Taklamakan Desert, through Kashgar, a city set at the junction of the Himalayas, Tien Shan mountains and Hindu Kush, west through the Hindu Kush and into Persia, through which the road finally reaches the Levante and subsequently the Mediterranean. Western

historiographic bias has tended to dismiss Central Asia as barren, desolate and sparsely populated with nomadic peoples. This narrative is unfounded: indeed, Central Asia was a fulcrum of economic and religious development as goods from Asia travelled west towards Europe and as cultural exchange took place in both directions. The silk road has been crucial for Eurasian cultural and economic development since its inception – ultimately, this essay will show that the most significant function of the silk road was not the complex religious exchange that it facilitated, but rather trade and commerce.

> The silk road has been crucial for Eurasian cultural and economic development since its inception

The most obvious function of the silk road was the transportation westwards of silk from China. Silk, under the Han dynasty since the third century BCE, was important as a form of money. Bolts of silk were used as forms of payment towards soldiers alongside grain and coins – this makes sense as grain rots and coins are only useful if used for the majority of transactions, which was not the case at the time. Silk was important for internal and external Han Chinese economic exchange since its inception in the third century BCE – the Han paid vast sums of tribute to the Xiongnu tribe, based in modern day Mongolia, with 30,000 rolls of silk being paid to the Xiongnu in 1 BCE. This silk played an important role in Xiongnu society, as it symbolised political power, and was a way the Chanyu, the tribal leader, emphasised his supremacy. In regions directly around the 'source' of the silk road then, silk played a crucial role in society. It was Rome, however, that truly fuelled the demand for silk; after the Octavian conquest of Egypt, Roman traders could turn their attention eastwards, as commercial maritime ventures to India through the Red Sea became more common. The conquest of Egypt allowed for the linking of the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, and goods from as far afield as Java in modern day Indonesia

The Mogao Caves, form a system of 500 temples 25 km southeast of Dunhuang, an oasis located at a religious and cultural crossroads on the Silk Road, in Gansu province, China

were now accessible to an increasingly wealthy Roman middle class. Fundamentally, this eastwards commercial orienteering as a result of the conquest of Egypt, combined with a Han dynasty increasingly building up trading routes west through the Hindu Kush and Central Asia allowed for Rome to taste the luxury of silk for the first time, which soon grew into an unquenchable hunger. This resulted in conservative commentators expressing absolute contempt for the fabric: Pliny the Elder for example remarked that silk 'only enable[d] the Roman lady to shimmer in public'. It became so popular that Roman records indicate that more than 10% of the Roman Empire's annual budget, and 50% of the annual mint was spent on silk goods alone. Indeed, silk became so entrenched in European society that by the time of Justinian I, Byzantine emperors were depicted clad in Chinese silk. Silk also ingrained itself deep into Byzantine monarchy and religion, with strict rules outlawing any non-royal to wear purple silk. The Hagia Sophia's vaults themselves are plastered with Sassanian silk decorations, which have been procured through the silk road, a testament to quite how much, as archaeologist Dr Robert Ousterhout puts it, the silk road 'penetrated into the very heart of the byzantine empire'. The imperialization of silk would have drastic consequences for European kingship – some 250 years after Justinian I, Charlemagne would be buried in silk, highlighting the accepted status of silk as imperial and regal; in fact, this perception of silk as regal has persisted to this day. Considering that the rulers of Xiongnu and various Yuezhi tribes in western China and Mongolia styled themselves in silk acquired (or given as tribute) from China centuries before silk reached the Mediterranean, and that any silk that reached the West must have been transported through these regions along the silk road, it is possible that the very idea of silk-clad-kingship is lifted from the metaphorical textbooks of Central Asian cultures. The silk road, then, was critical for bringing ideas of kingship and monarchy to Europe. The silk routes that brought silk to Rome also brought Roman coins the other way. Not only have roman coins been found in Chang'an at the eastern end of the silk road, but Roman style coins were minted by the Kushan Empire in modern day Afghanistan and northern India. Kushan Emperors sought to imitate Roman emperors by minting coins in the style of Roman coins: in doing so, they were presenting themselves like Roman Emperors. Silk also found itself an important part of Buddhist religious practice – Buddhists at temples along the silk road would often be made to pay in silk for transgressions committed inside monastery walls.

Silk itself is important in evaluating the silk road's importance for a few reasons. Firstly, without silk, Central Asian nomads on Bactrian camels would have never sought routes to Persia as there would be nothing to transport; the silk road does contain 'silk' for good reason. Secondly, the transportation of silk vastly changed

Roman society and post-Roman perceptions of rulership. Thirdly and finally, the silk trade in antiquity financed the Kushan Empire, and later Sogdian merchants, who acted as middlemen between Chinese silk-producers and Roman and Persian consumers, bringing with it Roman ideas about ruling and sovereignty.

History is made in the kitchen. Spices from India and south Asia were transported along the silk road, finding themselves in various recipes across Europe. Le Libre de Sent Sovi, a Spanish cookbook written in 1324 mentions three recipes that use azafrin, the Spanish word for Saffron, and regularly calls for pepper, cloves and cinnamon. Many of these spices were transported along various silk routes, from Arabia up the red sea, or across Persia. The importance of spices for European societies cannot be overstated – King Manuel of Portugal authorised Vasco de Gama's trip to India so that he may find spices. When Vasco de Gama finally landed in India in 1498, he was asked by a Tunisian merchant why the Portuguese had sailed to India, to which de Gama purportedly replied 'We came to look for Christians and spices'. The trip to India was risky: over 50% of de Gama's sailors perished, and in the next 130 years, 28% of ships sailing to India would be lost on the journey. For the Portuguese, and other Europeans, mercantilist practices of Egypt and the Ottoman Empire, only through which the silk road could pass, rendered spices too expensive to continue trading, hence why de Gama's expedition was sanctioned. Up until de Gama's expedition was sanctioned, spice trade had to come through the silk road via North Africa or the Middle East. Considering the risks Portuguese, and subsequent merchants were willing to take in their voyage to India to procure spices, there must have been significant demand in Europe to warrant the risky journey. The silk road's spice trade was important in shaping European culinary culture. This demand for spices would ultimately fuel the discovery of the new world as an alternative route to India. Ultimately, if the discovery of the new world was a result of a need to make bland and unseasoned European stews bearable, then the silk road's importance as a trade artery that facilitated spice exchange cannot be understated; quite literally, the Western world's discovery of the new world and all that followed as a result was inspired by pepper, brought to the kitchens and taste buds of Europeans via the silk road. Clearly then, the silk road was important as a network along which commodities, like silk and pepper, came to be transported across continents, influencing European and Asian societies.

At his birth, the oracles prophesised that Joasaph, son of King Avenner, would only be king for one year, and would convert to Christianity. This greatly displeased King Avenner, who supposedly routinely persecuted Christians, and this news prompted Avenner to persecute yet more Christians. Joasaph, so the story goes, grew up to be intelligent, noble and seemingly perfect for the

> ## By the time of Justinian I, Byzantine emperors were depicted clad in Chinese silk

History is made in the kitchen

Saffron has been cultivated in the eastern Iran region for over 3000 years. Today, Iran produces 90% of the world's saffron. Harvesting takes place between late October to mid-November.

throne, until one day, he asked to see the world outside of the palace confines. There, he encountered a blind man, a man with leprosy, a beggar, and finally an old man. Here, he has a revelation, and understands what it means to suffer. Joasaph then recounts parables to a Christian monk, Valwun, to then reign for a year, convert to Christianity and subsequently go on a pilgrimage to the desert, where he dies an enlightened Christian hermit. Joasaph, in fact, never existed per se. Instead, this is a story from Georgian monasteries that then went to become popular in Byzantium, so much so that there are over 160 existing copies of this story. This story is in fact a Christian retelling of the life of Buddha, transported

along the silk road into Baghdad, then Georgia and finally Constantinople, where the story was popular. Buddhism's western influence via the silk road was more than just tales in which Byzantine children could indulge, however. There are records of a religious sect in Alexandria around the start of the common era which focuses the devotion to enlightenment through prayer, and detachment from the sense of self to find inner calm. This bears a striking resemblance to Buddhism, and must have been transmitted through the silk road. Aside from the occasional story or esoteric religious sect, Buddhism had greater yet influences, with the viturka murda, the infamous Buddhist hand sign where the right hand's

The Xumishan Grottoes are a collection of more than 130 Buddhist cave temples, built in red sandstone between the fifth and tenth centuries, on the eastern edge of Mount Xumi in the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region of China.

The Bactrian camels in the Taklamakan desert were the traditional way of transporting goods across inhospitable terrain. They are exceptionally adept at withstanding wide variations in temperature.

thumb and index finger meet with fingers outstretched, adopted by Christian artists to represent a connection to the divine. In fact, Buddhism and Christianity exchanged so much that they sublated, and, with the help of Zoroastrianism brought west via the silk road, potentially formed Gnosticism. The main tenets of Gnosticism follow thus: 1- the material world as we know it is created not by God, but by a lesser, malevolent deity, often called the Demiurge or Yahweh. 2- human beings contain pieces of God, but are misled into forgetting this. 3- through personal, spiritual knowledge (gnosis), humans can transcend the demiurge's trappings and reach enlightenment. The key similarity to Buddhism is the dualist scepticism with which Gnostics approach the world: just as Buddhists seek to transcend material concerns and suffering (duhka), so do Gnostics seek to shed the malevolent trappings of the material world. Gnosticism is also fundamentally Christian, in that Gnostics tend to believe in Christ and a Christian God of sorts. Gnosticism was a significant threat to early Christianity, and there was significant religious interplay and competition between the two movements, so much so that some scholars believe that Christianity should be thought of as a branch of Gnosticism rather than vice versa. While it is not clear whether Gnosticism was primarily influenced by Buddhism, Zoroastrianism (which is also heavily dualistic) or Platonic thought, if it was influenced by Buddhism or Zoroastrianism, which also must have reached the middle east via the silk road, the consequences of the silk road must not be

The most important facet of silk road Greco-Buddhism was its influence on China

overstated. Gnosticism and early Christianity exchanged ideas through dialectical processes up until the council of Nicaea in 325, where a Christian 'orthodoxy' was first established. Up until 325 CE, religious groups around the Mediterranean and levant would pray side by side with Gnostics; for centuries, Gnosticism, potentially inspired by Buddhism and/or Zoroastrianism, would share and compete with a fledgling Christianity as practices, rituals and ceremonies gradually became more defined and more standardised. Despite later attempts to outlaw it as a heresy, Gnosticism, and thus eastern dualism transported via the silk road, lies at the core of Christianity.

Buddhism also profited much more visibly from the silk road in central and eastern Asia. Buddhism, having originated in India, then became entrenched in Bactria, modern day Afghanistan, having spread via trade routes. Bactria and Central Asia were still heavily influenced by Greek culture, even as late as the seventh century CE, with inhabitants of Central Asia writing in and speaking Greek for centuries after Alexander the Great's conquest of the region. Greek religion, notably the cult of Apollo, was a significant threat to early Buddhism in India and Pakistan – statues of the Buddha only appeared after the cult of Apollo became established in India, as Buddhists felt a pressure to visually represent their religion. In fact, early Buddhist statues seem to be modelled on Apollo, with early standing representations of Buddha using Greek sculptural realism. We see Buddhist iconography all across Asia, and has since become an important

aspect of Buddhist cultural practice; without the silk road, which allowed for religious competition and exchange, this would have never been the case. The silk road not only brought Greco-Steppic culture from Central Asia, but Buddhism to Central Asia. Buddhism spread to the Greco-Bactrian kingdom, and by the time the Kushan Empire came to succeed the Greco-Bactrians, Buddhism carried enough sway in the region for emperor Kanishka to convene the Fourth Buddhist council and translate important Buddhist texts into Sanskrit. Perhaps the most important facet of silk road Greco-Buddhism was its influence on China. Greco-Buddhist monks such as Lokaksema were the first translators of Buddhist texts into Chinese. Also, the founder of Shaolin Kung Fu and of Zen Buddhism, Bodhidharma, is described as being originally from Central Asia, having travelled via the silk road. The silk road therefore was crucial for the spread, adoption and development of Buddhism in China and the far east, as Buddhism eventually spread out of China to Korea and Japan. The silk road was as crucial to Buddhism as Buddhism was to the silk road: Buddhist temples along the silk road acted as important rest stations where traders could rest after travelling through the harsh conditions of the Taklamakan desert. The early development and spread of Mahayana Buddhism out of India in particular relied on the silk road and the Greek culture of those who lived along it respectively.

Christianity benefited from early silk road exchange.

The silk road primarily developed as a set of trade routes along which religion later hitchhiked

While Persian shahs originally were opposed to Christianity, the decline of Zoroastrian noble authority in Sassanid Persia in the 4th-5th centuries CE allowed for Christianity to be tolerated by Persian shahs such as Khrusaw I in the mid 6th century. Christianity then spread to Central Asia, India and even China, with Merv in modern day Turkmenistan, and Kashgar, the silk road city right at the edge of the Hindu Kush which acted as a gateway to China, being home to archbishops long before such religious titles were established in western Europe. Christian culture also made its way east, with the halo becoming a common symbol in Zoroastrian, Hindu and Buddhist art. Evidently, the silk road was a network of complex religious exchange, as religious motifs and ideas were adopted and exchanged in many dialectical exchanges facilitated by the silk road.

Religious spread, however, has not always been peaceful. Islam's spread out of Arabia and to Central Asia was not a slow diffusion along the silk road. While the Arab conquests were not as violent as Christian primary sources make them out to be, the spread of Islam was facilitated primarily by conquest. The Jizya was one such proselytising 'incentive' for non-Muslims to convert. Islamic law defines the Jizya as a per capita tax levied at non-Muslims; as non-Muslims saw Muslims not have to pay the burdensome taxes, many converted en masse. Furthermore, the spread of Islam through territories not controlled by Muslim Arabs was fairly limited in the 6th and 7th centuries. Crucially, considering that Islam

Gnosticism, and thus eastern dualism transported via the silk road, lies at the core of Christianity

is the primary religion in most Central Asian countries, as well as in Iran, the silk road's legacy as a network of religious dialectical exchange is limited with the benefit of hindsight – while Buddhism has been influential in Central Asia, and Christian missions to Central Asia and India did yield lasting results, it is Islam that remains the most influential religion in Central Asia. Furthermore, while the silk road was most important for the history of Buddhism, the religious impacts of the silk road would only come to fruition hundreds of years after the first silk expeditions out of China. The silk road primarily developed as a set of trade routes along which religion later hitchhiked. Spices, too, were an important incentive in the European discovery of the new world, an event which can be compared in magnitude to the spread of Zen Buddhism in and around China. The silk road facilitated the spread of Buddhism, particularly that of the Zen and Mahayana kind (whereas South Asian maritime trade routes heavily benefited the spread of Therevada Buddhism), and influenced the development of Christianity up until the Council of Nicaea in 325 CE. It also allowed for significant dialectical interplay between Buddhism and Greek-inspired religions in Central Asia and India from the 2nd century BCE, which have lasting impacts to this day. It was, however, the silk road's trading potential that facilitated both the spread of Buddhism along the silk road through aid-station temples, and birthed the very existence of the silk road as a collection of routes whereby goods travelled from China, through Central Asia and Persia, and finally to the Mediterranean – without the silk road functioning as a set of trade routes, its religious dialectical capacity would never have sprung to fruition. Furthermore, the legacy of the silk road's commodity exchange lasts in European cuisine, monarchical culture and religious practices, as well as birthing European exploratory ventures that ultimately led to colonialism centuries later. While the silk road's religious exchange was important, without silk or spices to flow through the trade routes, the world would have been even more different.

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Bukhara (Uzbekistan) has been a hub for traders and travellers for over 2,000 years. It lies on a crossroads of Central Asian trade routes and was a vital stopping point for merchants on the edge of the Kyzyl Kum (Red Sand) and Kara Kum (Black Sand) deserts.

The problem with rights

Many believe that international human rights law is one of our greatest moral achievements. **Alexandre Guilloteau** examines the different relationships and tensions between democratic government and rights in America, Britain and Europe.

How to order the functions of government and regulate the powers of the State has been a defining question for philosophers and statesmen for the past several hundred years. It has consumed the minds of fine thinkers, it has provoked revolutions; it has brought forth a library of writing, it has cost the lives of many great men. The question of what sort of 'constitution' should govern political life may have turned the cogs of the last four centuries' history, but, as societies evolve and governance evolves with society, change continues apace. Fundamental debates remain unresolved and are of enduring importance.

Appalled at the abuses that wicked dictators and democracies alike can inflict on unassuming citizens, many nations have turned to the concept of rights: the idea that there are some spheres so sacred to the individual, that governments must be prevented – by some law above them – from invading; some practices so abhorrent, that governments must be prevented from carrying them out.[1] Attractive as they may be in view of genuine problems, the existence of rights runs counter to the democratic processes which underpin our society, threaten the politicisation of the judiciary; and subvert the rigorous public debate which is ultimately the best guarantor of the very rights we wish to protect. I shall compare the American and British approach to this issue, explain why I believe the latter approach is preferable, and explore the effect of the European Convention on Human Rights on Britain.

In the world of constitutions there is a longstanding opposition between systems based upon legislative supremacy, in which the legislature has the final word on the law of the land, and systems based upon written charters or bills of rights which restrain the legislature, and are to be interpreted and enforced by the judiciary. Of the first, Britain is the prime example: with some notable exceptions discussed below, Parliament is the highest legal authority; judicial rulings can be overturned by an Act of Parliament. Of the second, America is the prime example: the federal courts, at the summit of which stands the Supreme Court, strike down Acts of Congress if they are deemed to violate the Constitution (in addition, the fifty
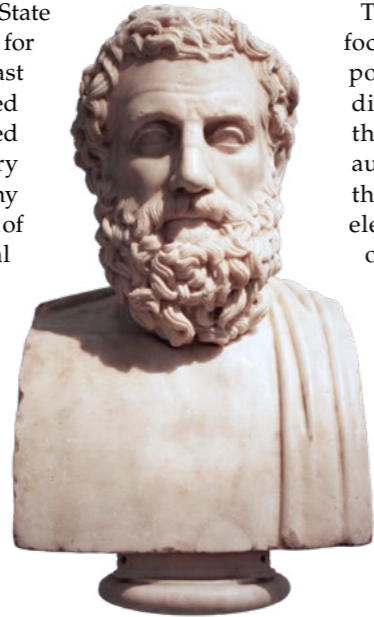
The Herma of Aeschylus

States have similar systems of their own).

The reasoning behind the American rights-focused system is that the individual is so powerless in the face of government, the dissenting citizen so small in the face of the mass of popular prejudice, that some authority protecting him must lie above that of the government (and the people who elect it). Certain rights, such as freedom of speech or the right to a jury trial, so it goes, are so important that they must exist independent of popular support; that since the 'tyranny of majorities' can be as pernicious as that of tyrants', they must be protected from those elected by the people to govern them. In short, they must protected from democracy. The arbiter of these rights, the authority above the Congress and the State legislatures, is the federal judiciary. This system has its merits for the power of the individual is indeed small and governments of all stripes have taken advantage of this. In view of this, the wish to curb the power of rulers is admirable. There are, however, very substantial downsides to the American system. By ordaining an authority of law above the legislative process (excepting the arduous process of amending the Constitution), judicial supremacy is established.[2] That which the courts determine is unconstitutional may not pass, regardless of any vote in Congress or any show of popular support – for otherwise rights would be at the mercy of the baying crowd. This is antithetical to the democratic process around which our society is organised and which is, ultimately, our best hope of preserving freedoms; it also undermines the rule of law and independent judiciary by foisting political questions on the courts.

Judicial supremacy as required by the American Constitution stands in complete opposition to the democratic process which underpins our civil life. It is the democratic political process that can best resolve the conflicting interests and values of citizens, and it is the political process that fosters a tolerant and functioning society. It is surely not controversial that the basis for any free society is mutual respect and the rule of law: the Athenian dramatist Aeschylus recognised this as far back as the 5th century BCE, saying 'let no man live curbed by tyranny or uncurbed law'.[3] Citizens abide by

[1] This is without getting into the even thornier issue of so-called 'positive rights'.

[2] See *Marbury v. Madison*

[3] *Eumenides* 696-7, tr. E.D.A. Morshead

Judge Learned Hand (Library of Congress)

the law, other than from fear of punishment, because of a common acceptance of the process by which the law is created. That process is government (indirectly) by the people – the sentiment that, even though one may disagree with a law, it has been reached by a fair method and deserves respect; because one may some day prevail in another matter and would wish others who disagreed to follow the law too. Elected legislative bodies and political parties answer the questions facing society, producing outcomes that might not have been anyone's first choice, but the greatest number can live with – because they must appeal to the broadest electorate possible. Strange as this may seem when we observe the tenor of contemporary debate, politics, at the height of their function, serve to unite and provide solutions to all manner of issues. Courts cannot serve this vital function because the law is rigid, when compromise is required; because they do not have the democratic legitimacy to command the support of dissenting citizens; because they are (for good reason) unanswerable to the public.

By declaring that some subjects are beyond the realm of public debate, the concept of rights brings a scythe to the process which forms the basis of our political deliberations. It throws matters of fundamental importance to the public onto the judiciary. When might favouring the security of the people be more important than preserving the liberty of the individual? When may we be right to curtail the free expression of citizens? These are difficult questions and I am not sure of their answer.

The existence of rights runs counter to the democratic processes

But I am sure that these are questions for democratic debate – for the citizens whom they concern – rather than for judicial fiat. Fundamentally, it is in this sphere of the democratic process that a healthy regard for the liberty of the individual is cultivated; if that becomes the preserve of the courts, it will die in the people. As the great Judge Learned Hand said, 'Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it…a society so riven that the spirit of moderation is gone, no court can save; a society where that spirit flourishes, no court need save; in a society which evades responsibilities by thrusting the nurture of that spirit onto courts, that spirit will in the end perish.'[4] A relatively recent case of the US Supreme Court demonstrates that allowing political matters to be the subject of public debate alerts citizens to the dangers of State oppression. In the controversial case of *Kelo v. New London*, the Court decided that the Connecticut State government could seize private property and transfer it to another owner.[5] I do not propose to pass judgement on the legal merits of that decision, but its effect is clear. Amidst public outrage at the idea that the State could use its "eminent domain" powers like this, 45 States have passed legislation forbidding such use of eminent domain.[6] Had the courts ruled against Connecticut, there would have been no public outrage, no public response, and no sharpening of public awareness of the threats to property rights. The Court ruled that there was no right here, and the people managed to protect themselves from the government. This is a far better model than judicial fiat. Perhaps we ought to step back and ask ourselves: is Britain, despite its traditional lack of enshrined human rights, any less free than America? In some respects like freedom of speech, I suppose, it is. On the whole, however, Britain is a free country whose liberties many peoples would gladly swap for their own.

By forcing the courts to meddle in what are properly political affairs, rights-based constitutions inevitably lead to a politicisation of justice and, in turn, a lack of public respect for the judiciary. Take the Eighth Amendment, forbidding "cruel and unusual punishment". What does this mean? Is capital punishment "cruel and unusual"? In America, these are questions for the courts, not for the elected representatives. Yet, at their heart, they are political: at what point does the possible cruelty of a punishment outweigh the public safety that it might secure? One need only observe how Americans describe their Supreme Court to see the deleterious effect of this. Judges are constantly referred to as "Republicans" or "Democrats", "liberals" or "conservatives". They are increasingly chosen according to how they may rule on issues important to their appointers (particularly

[4] *Spirit of Liberty* speech

[5] To be precise, the case concerned whether the ensuing economic growth was an acceptable reason for seizing private property as per the 'public use' clause of the Fifth Amendment. The Court judged that it was.

[6] https://reason.com/2019/04/23/will-connecticut-finally-enact-meaningful-eminent-domain-reform/

abortion). Many people – as high as 76%[7] according to one study – have judicial appointments as a "very important issue" when voting. In Britain this would be unthinkable. In many instances, such impressions are unjustified; broadly speaking, judges of the Supreme Court are impartial. What counts, unfortunately, is not the truth, but the impression of the truth. In 2021, 61% of Americans believed Supreme Court judgments were motivated by politics rather than the law[8]. This is the inevitable result of judging on political matters, as the Constitution requires. There is little more that can damage the rule of law.

Britain has traditionally taken a different approach to its

J.G. Roberts, Chief Justice of the United States

constitution. Its animating and most distinctive feature is parliamentary supremacy: Parliament, (partly) elected by the people, is the ultimate authority for the law. The courts have developed a body of 'common law', but any Act of Parliament can overrule this; any unsatisfactory statutory interpretation can be undone by amending an Act. This difference between the American system and the British is a product of the two nations' different histories. As a result of the long struggles between Parliament and the Crown, we have come to see Parliament as the guarantor of the people's rights against the executive – the power of the monarch, or these days of ministers exercising her power. In short, the British system sees one part of government (Parliament) protecting the people from another part (the Crown). America, by contrast, sees its Constitution as guaranteeing the people's rights against the government as a whole; where Britain views Parliament as protecting the people, America protects the people *from* Congress (as well as the executive). The British system largely avoids the problems inherent in rights-based systems like America's: it follows the democratic principle upon which society depends; it places the burden of maintaining liberty on the people and their politicians, rather than the courts; it means the judiciary meddles less in political affairs[9].

Despite all these advantages, Britain has slowly been eroding parliamentary supremacy over the past few generations. In 1951 Britain ratified the European Convention on Human Rights, a document similar to the Bill of Rights in the American Constitution. Containing

eighteen articles and several more "protocols", it binds signatories to respect various rights such as a fair trial (Article VI) and security of the person (Article V). The European Court of Human Rights, based in Strasbourg, interprets the Convention, and determines whether signatory States have breached any rights. This is an offshoot of the Council of Europe, separate from and predating the European Union, so Brexit will not affect our membership. The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporates the Convention into British law, forbidding public bodies from acting in violation of the Convention. The British courts may rule that public bodies have violated the Convention and accordingly award damages; they can also give advisory opinions on whether Acts of Parliament breach the Convention, though the ultimate authority lies with Strasbourg. Like a glistening crystal, Britain's constitution stands out as a fine balance between the powers of Parliament and the Crown, accumulated and matured over hundreds of years. By introducing the idea of human rights, the ECHR is a significant threat to this delicate animal.

Britain's best known collision with the ECHR demonstrates the problems with the Convention's approach to human rights. In the 2005 case of *Hirst v. United Kingdom (2)*, Strasbourg ruled that the blanket ban on prisoners voting violated Protocol I, Article III of the Convention which guarantees free elections. Irrespective of the legal soundness of the ruling, the fact that a court not located in this country, on the authority of a document many people have not heard of, should be able to override a duly passed Act of Parliament is problematic. Whether or not prisoners should be able to vote is a delicate question which deserves a full and frank public debate and a vote in Parliament. If people are unhappy with how their MP has voted, they can choose not to re-elect him. As it happens, successive governments refused to implement Strasbourg's decision after both Conservative and Labour MPs continued to support disenfranchising prisoners; to this day the incarcerated cannot vote. Ultimately, the ECHR had no teeth with which to make itself felt. What then, if the word of Strasbourg does not actually count for anything, is the problem? By signing a treaty and then not adhering to it, Britain gives the impression that there are some laws to be followed, and some not; that there are some commitments to be upheld, and some not. There is little more dangerous to the rule of law than this. Her present confused state is the result of an attempt to be both part of the international human rights framework and not to upset popular decision making. In attempting to square that circle Britain courts the shame that rightly comes with not carrying out one's obligations.

For all its flaws, the American Constitution at large commands the reverence of the people. Its phrases are known the world over and it is inseparable from the

7 edition.cnn.com/2018/09/26/politics/important-issue-vote-pew-supreme-court/index.html

8 poll.qu.edu/poll-release?releaseid=3828

9 A word should be said about the *Miller II* decision on the prorogation of Parliament. Many believed that this constituted an unfair judicial foray into properly political affairs. It was indeed unfortunate that the Supreme Court had to get involved; but, in my view, the decision was the correct one. It affirmed the long-standing principle that Ministers of the Crown cannot act without the consent of Parliament. It did not set up rights against Parliament; instead, it strengthened Parliament. I find it hard to believe that a unanimous decision of the eleven most respected lawyers in the country – with differing views on Brexit – was politically motivated. The Supreme Court was playing its proper role in regulating the structure of government; that it had to get involved in politics was an indictment not of the Court but of Mr Johnson's government.

Britain is a free country whose liberties many peoples would gladly swap for their own

The European Court of Human Rights

vicissitudes of American history. America would be unrecognisable without it. The ECHR, by contrast, is a document which few even know about. It is part of the Council of Europe, a body whose existence many people are unaware of (no doubt confusion with the European Union and European Court of Justice does not help). Where the proud marble columns of the US Supreme Court occupy pride of place in Washington, the modernist glasshouse of the ECHR is tucked away in a sleepy suburb of Strasbourg. It is surprisingly difficult, even with help of Google, to find the names of its judges. Conversely the American Justices' names appear regularly in the newspapers, and some are even folk heroes (or villains).

The comparative remoteness of the ECHR highlights a fundamental problem quite apart from the broader issue with rights. If a body is to override democracy – for that is the purpose of human rights – it must have some legitimacy in place of being elected. The American Constitution is not democratic, but it is (to an extent) legitimate. Now, one may object that the Constitution was not initially respected, only coming to be after decades of struggle; and indeed you would be right. That was the product of years of revolutionary toil and political debate, not the machinations of mandarins hidden in placid Alsace. It is likely that Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary during the ECHR's foundation, insisted the Council should be in Strasbourg since it was far away from the national capitals and the press, and would soon be ignored[10]. Mr Bevin was prescient about this. How can the ECHR build up the popular legitimacy required to stand above democracy when it is out of the sight of the citizens it represents? This is a problem for the ECHR in respect of all its signatories, but at least many of those nations have

rights-based systems of their own[11]. If we are to introduce the foreign concept of rights to these shores; let us do so in the open, and let us not hide from its consequences.

The concept of human rights, enforced against elected governments by the judiciary, menaces the democratic process around which Western nations have chosen to organise themselves by setting up provinces where elected bodies – and, by extension, the people who elect them – may not tread. It compromises the effectiveness of, and popular respect for, the independent judiciary which is the bedrock of the rule of law by forcing it to decide what are properly political questions. In the case of the ECHR, this is done outside the public eye, outside of the national traditions which buttress a free, stable society; and is correspondingly the worse for it. Above all, I think, human rights take the nurturing of the spirit of moderation and liberty from the public care, its best guardian, into the hands of bureaucrats where it must wither. On his last broadcast from Britain after the Second World War, the American reporter Edward Murrow said: *"I doubt that the most important thing was Dunkirk or the Battle of Britain, El Alamein or Stalingrad. Not even the landings in Normandy or the great blows struck by British and American bombers. Historians may decide that any one of these events was decisive, but I am persuaded that the most important thing that happened in Britain was that this nation chose to win or lose this war under the established rules of parliamentary procedure. It feared Nazism, but did not choose to imitate it."* As London was being bombed by day the House of Commons devoted two days to discussing conditions under which enemy aliens were detained. It is this spirit of parliamentary debate which the concept of rights threatens, and which is ultimately the best guarantor of our rights.

10 The 1945-51 Labour Government had strong reservations about a federal Europe. For Bevin's insistence on Strasbourg, https://www.jstor.org/stable/43207240?seq=25#metadata_info_tab_contents; see p.25

11 See for example the *Conseil constitutionnel* or *Bundesverfassungsgericht*.

Scottish Devolution

Benjamin Heyes considers the historical and contemporary tensions between Scotland and the British Government and argues that Scotland has more to gain from being part of the Union, even if the pressure to secede is stronger than ever.

Scottish Independence Rally (Azerifactory, CC BY-SA 4.0)

The tarpaulin has at last been removed from the clockface of the Elizabeth Tower, to reveal the gleaming result of five years' sensitive restoration. And yet, MPs remain divided on how to proceed with the far more expansive project of renovating the Palace of Westminster as a whole. As is customary in public affairs, it is likely that their vacillation will drag the project on for decades, and push costs ever upwards. But a quarter of a century ago, the government of the day had no such qualms about far grander ambitions for the renovation of British democracy. Considered together, the constitutional reforms of Tony Blair's first term represent the most historically significant aspect of his premiership and are perhaps the most radical reorganisation of the British political system in modern times. In particular, the decision to devolve significant authority from Westminster to new national assemblies in Scotland and Wales has had serious and unintended consequences which are becoming increasingly difficult to ignore. Indeed, the calamitous fallout of devolution serves as a cautionary tale for radicals today who assume that aggressive constitutional upheaval will be to our benefit rather than our detriment.

The rise of modern Scottish nationalism did, of course, predate devolution; in October 1974, the Scottish National Party secured 30% of the popular vote in Scotland, and 11 seats – a record until 2015. They have been continously represented in the House of Commons since the victory of Winnie Ewing in the 1967 Hamilton by-election. Nevertheless, it remained a fringe political movement which generally struggled to gain any more than a handful of seats at Westminster. It would also be unfair to blame Tony Blair for being the sole architect of Scottish and Welsh devolution: the previous Labour government of James Callaghan had proposed devolutionary designs based on the conclusions of the Kilbrandon Commission, but each was rejected in referendums held in 1979. But when Tony Blair returned Labour to power in 1997, he decided not only to resurrect the failed attempts of Callaghan, but to substantially increase the scale of devolution. Thus, Callaghan's proposed Scottish Assembly, which would have had a

> ## Calls for a second independence referendum show no signs of abating

limited and specified remit of law-making powers, was replaced with a Scottish Parliament which had law-making responsibilities in every area not included in a specified list of 'reserved matters'. Similarly, the First Secretary gave way to a First Minister – only a hair's breadth from 'Prime Minister'. Indeed, when the SNP gained power in 2007, they were quick to rebrand the Scottish Executive as the Scottish Government. These may only be names, but, after all, "half of politics is 'image-making', the other half is the art of making people believe the image"[1]. No one in contemporary Britain seems to understand this better than the Scottish National Party.

Herein lies a crucial problem with devolution, particularly in relation to Scotland, which Mr Blair failed to adequately understand: while devolved responsibilities in themselves are not necessarily bound to exacerbate, rather than calm, the threat of separatism, the creation of institutions which deliberately resemble the sovereign political institutions of a nation state, in opposition to those of the actual state (the United Kingdom) can only ever have this effect. This confusion was well demonstrated, and cannily exploited, by the SNP matriarch, Winnie Ewing, as she opened the first session of the Scottish Parliament: "The Scottish Parliament, adjourned on the 25th day of March in the year 1707, is hereby reconvened." The decision to call the new assembly a 'parliament', harkening back to a time when Scotland was a sovereign polity, seems a curious P.R. blunder by a government so obsessed with its own image.

The importance of image is reflected in the physical infrastructure of devolved politics. It is said that having been commissioned to design the new parliament building at Holyrood, the Catalan architect, Enric Miralles, strode into the first design meeting and, thrusting a pile of leaves and twigs onto the table, announced: "This is the Scottish Parliament". In fact, the resulting building is an obnoxious mass of metal and concrete which communes with neither the natural landscape nor the cultivated, neo-classical city in which it sits. And yet it does succeed in being transparent as to the nature of Scottish separatism. The airy hemicyclic chamber in which MSPs gather is the deliberate antithesis of the 'adversarial' layout of opposing benches found at Westminster, and compliments the similarly continental practice of proportional representation voting. It seeks to avoid any reference to continuity; it is unashamedly radical, and irreconcilable to the Westminster tradition. The project, infamously, was completed late, at a cost of £431 million, eight times the

Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister of Scotland (Scottish Government, CC BY 2.0)

> ## Half of politics is image-making

original budget. This now seems reasonable in comparison to the £14 billion now being quoted for the work on the Palace of Westminster, though at least that project is aimed at renovating British democracy rather than destroying it. Because, a decade after the Scottish Parliament building was opened in 2004, the success of separatism had become so great and calls for independence had reached such a fever pitch that a referendum was held on the issue. Although unionists secured a comfortable 10% margin of victory, it was Scottish thrift – in the form of concern over the retention of sterling – that swung the vote, rather than any great feeling of attachment to the United Kingdom.

The creation of a distinct and fully formed political identity, in the form of a parliament and a government, has left little room for the Union. Whereas once two identities, Scottish and British, could coexist – one cultural, the other political – devolution has increasingly pushed 'Britain' to the margins. The SNP are as popular as ever, and calls for a second independence referendum show no signs of abating. Rather than, as intended, reinforce British democracy for a new millennium, by bringing it closer to people and directing the forces of local patriotism to a positive end, devolution has brought the Union to the brink of destruction.

The SNP's particular brand of Anglophobic Scottish nationalism now has a stranglehold on political debate north of the border. Since 2007, when the SNP came to power in Scotland, misgovernance has reigned. Not least, the vicious party feud between Nicola Sturgeon and Alex Salmond, which rose to the surface in 2018 following allegations of sexual assault levelled at the latter, has exposed serious failings in the machinery of devolved government. The investigation into the allegations by the Scottish government was found by a judicial review to be unlawful, and the subsequent parliamentary inquiry was so dogged by obstruction from the Crown Office – the Scottish public prosecutor – that serious questions remain as to the independence of such bodies, particularly in relation to the office of Lord Advocate, which both directs the Crown Office and gives legal advice to the government. Although cleared of breaching the ministerial code, the testimonies of Sturgeon and her husband, SNP chairman Peter Murrell, given to the inquiry appeared contradictory, leading the parliamentary committee to conclude that Sturgeon had indeed misled the inquiry. More broadly, incompetence prevails. Despite public spending being 11% higher in Scotland compared to the national average, largely thanks to generous English subsidies, the government has comprehensively failed on almost all fronts of public service provision. In 2020, 1,339

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1 Arendt, *Crises of the Republic* (1972)

The SNP control this Potemkin state

died from drug abuse in Scotland – a rate 3.5 times the national average. NHS Scotland underperforms relative to its English counterpart in waiting times. Having made improving Scottish education the "defining mission" of her government, Nicola Sturgeon has presided over a steep decline in Scotland's PISA rankings in mathematics and science, and stagnation in literacy, such that Scottish schools, once a matter of pride, are now inferior to those of the United Kingdom at large. Much of this is a result of the so-called 'Curriculum for Excellence', in which fixed knowledge-based curriculums have been replaced by a process-orientated, 'constructivist' approach, in which pupils are encouraged to construct knowledge for themselves through an open-ended process of exploration. The results have been far from encouraging. The much-touted victories of the SNP – free university tuition for Scots, free prescription charges and free social care – only come at the expense of a swelling deficit and are thanks more to Barnett *largesse* than ingenious policymaking. Even then, free tuition fees have necessitated a cap on places which has disproportionately pushed poorer students out of university.

In this environment, the SNP can evade responsibility for its sustained failures by invoking the eternal escape clause of devolution: when it goes well, Holyrood can take the credit; when it doesn't, Westminster can take the blame. For as long as the SNP control this Potemkin state, where all the glittering trappings of sovereignty are visible, but with none of the consequences and responsibilities, the allure of separatism will remain. The creation by Tony Blair of the Scottish Parliament was a political error of greater magnitude for the long term prospects of the United Kingdom than the Iraq War. Last year, Blair himself admitted the ultimate failure of the devolutionary project to abate separatism. The Prime Minister, in an unguarded moment addressing Conservative MPs, described devolution as a "disaster". He was publicly criticised across Westminster, though it is probable that few privately disagree with the underlying sentiment.

The threat of separatism was further aggravated by Britain's departure from the European Union, which has taken place in the face of very substantial opposition

from the Scottish electorate. For some time, the SNP has succeeded in claiming that Scottish interests are best served outside the 1707 Union of Parliaments but inside the European Union. The ideological compatibility of nationalism with European integration seems tenuous at best (let alone membership of the eurozone as is increasingly suggested), but this has not stopped the SNP from directing pro-European sentiment in Scotland towards the separatist cause. It taps into the wider feeling that the Scottish desire for more egalitarian politics is frustrated by a dominant conservative England. There is some truth to this sentiment, though as recently as 1955 the Conservatives were the most popular party in Scotland. Moreover, social attitudes surveys suggest that Scots are only moderately more egalitarian than their English counterparts. But the more marked difference of opinion on Europe remains a serious problem for unionists, evidence for which can be seen in the yawning political gap between the Scottish Conservatives and the national leadership.

For the moment, the dominance of the SNP shows no sign of waning. The divisive style and discreditable conduct of the Prime Minister has caused further fractures in unionist politics in Scotland. Although it is possible that some SNP voters are more interested in the increased bargaining power at Westminster of a Scottish government toying with independence than the prospect of full self-government itself, this seems a somewhat fragile assumption upon which to depend. The 1707 Acts of Union were in the first place a marriage of convenience: Scotland, reeling from its failed Darien scheme, was bankrupt, and sought union in the face of considerable public opposition. But in the intervening centuries, a British identity, compromised and limited as it was, did emerge as something compatible with the individual consuetudes of the home nations. Devolution, rather than clarifying this coexistence of national identities, has called it ever more into question. It has permitted demagogues to prosper on the back of false promises and false hopes. There has been no genuine attempt to oppose these hazardous trends. Of course, there remains the prospect of remedy, but the present outlook evinces little encouragement.

Ian Blackford sits alongside the SNP Front Bench in the House of Commons. (UK Parliament/Jessica Taylor/ Stephen Pike, CC BY-SA 4.0)

Retreat in the Middle East

Wylie Brunman combs over recent developments in the Middle East, in which he determines what mistakes have been made and what positive developments give cause for cautious optimism in what is traditionally been seen as an area of permanent tensions.

The evacuation of US and Allied troops from Kabul was rushed and caused panic

In announcing the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Mikhail Gorbachev posed the question: "which conflict will be settled next?". Many will have asked the same question after the hasty Western withdrawal from Afghanistan last year. However recent events prompt hesitancy for future embraces of diplomacy. Regional retreats from democracy and a change in American sentiment serve to question just what the most effective policy for eliciting egalitarianism in the Middle East is.

Nearly 20 years after former President George W Bush declared the 'war on terror', the final troops were extracted from Afghanistan. This evacuation, the so-called end of the Afghanistan War, was intended to indicate a readjustment of U.S. foreign policy, placing greater focus on the burgeoning strength of China, and thus finally fulfilling Obama's 'pivot to Asia'. Yet the impression the world received was far graver. It was a notice that America had waved the white flag, its acquiescence encapsulated in the images of Afghans clinging to the sides of departing planes. This shift in worldview was profound: global belief that America was moving in the right direction declined

from 48% at the start of July to 40% by the end of the withdrawal on August 30th. By the beginning of February, it had dropped to just 34%.

Was this decline in opinion the result of a bungled withdrawal or the notion of withdrawal itself? The original signs of the disengagement were promising. The Doha Agreement, signed between the US and the Taliban in February of 2020, promised a key framework towards peace and prosperity, pledging "the completion and agreement over the future political roadmap of Afghanistan". Furthermore, the adherence by the Taliban to promises of prisoner release and reduced violence (to zero against the US) suggested that such an agreement was reasonable. The Taliban, part of the very reason for the entrance into the Afghanistan war, seemed to be a potential partner ready, willing, and able to help bring sustainable democracy to Afghans – though perhaps this was more out of necessity than desire.

Instead, events such as President Ghani's abscondence, a lack of preparation despite 18 months of advance, and a lack of Afghan military strength caused Kabul to fall before a democratic future could be solidified. As

> It was a notice that America had waved the white flag

Not all signals out of the Middle East are negative

Signing the Abraham Accords:
The Abraham Accords are the 'Treaty of Peace, Diplomatic Relations and Full Normalization Between the United Arab Emirates and the State of Israel'

The "unrealistic attempts to democratise a society made up of many tribes"

P5+1 Meeting Ministers with Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif in Vienna: The P5+1 refers to the UN Security Council's five permanent members (China, France, Russia, UK, and USA) plus Germany which are working on the Iran Nuclear Deal.

Cordesman notes, "the Afghan central government may not have been losing the war before the agreement, but it was clearly not winning it – even with the U.S. land and air combat support." American withdrawal before a free and democratic government had been established left weakened Afghan forces to fend for themselves in the most critical of moments. Such vulnerability could partially be put down to overreliance on the West for the 20 years of leadership under the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Whilst this may be accurate – America spent nearly $1 trillion directly in the Afghanistan – a more controlled and patient withdrawal would have disincentivised Taliban action, if only to avoid squandering everything for the hope of securing something more. If the disentanglement had been implemented as intended, it is likely autonomy would have prevailed rather than tyranny.

Compounding the repercussions of the disastrous disengagement is the conviction behind it. A YouGov poll in April of 2021 found that just 25% of Americans opposed ending the Afghanistan War by September 11th of that year. Such a stance is symbolic of a wider sentiment, one which Charles Kupchan describes aptly as "too much world, not enough America." An American slide back into complete isolationism would likely affect the Middle East twofold: it would remove American physical and economic presence from the region, and it would relegate its image as a role model for civilians in the Middle East to look up to. Thus, proclivity towards political protests in the region would decrease, further entrenching authoritarian supremacy.

This fall of democracy can already be witnessed across the region: over 10 years on from the Arab Spring, none of the 6 countries that experienced revolution have remained fully fledged democracies. Following the Arab Spring, democratic governments were formed in only 2 of the 6 countries seeking it – Egypt and Tunisia. Yet General

Sisi's coup plunged Egypt back into dictatorship in 2014, and President Saied of Tunisia has been ruling by decree for the last year. Many have adroitly termed this descent from democracy into despotism as the Arab Winter and has resulted in a net zero gain for the freedom many fought so hard to attain. Further, despite America's image as the bastion of independence, support for America fell during Egypt and Tunisia's democratic experiments. The percentage of Egyptians with a favourable view of the U.S. halved from 20% to 10% between 2011 and 2014, whilst a 12% drop was found in Tunisia between 2012 and 2019, per Pew Research Center. Insufficient American support in these regions is a big factor in this fall. As Springborg writes in 2012, "The paltry addition to US financial assistance to Tunisia and Egypt has already been noted." In addition, the bleak consequences of change shown through the famines in Yemen and Syria hardly serve as a call to conversion for others in the region. In these many cases, American action, or rather inaction, served as a cause of frustration, an agent of instability, and a catalyst for dictatorship.

Under then-President Trump, a different tactic was used in Iran. The Trump Administration left the JCPOA, a landmark Obama-era agreement limiting Iranian nuclear capacity, in an effort to pursue a 'maximum pressure' campaign. The effort was not without its successes: Iran's gross official reserves fell from an average of $70 billion in 2017 to $4 billion in 2020 amid major sanctions by the U.S. However, the abandonment of the JCPOA actualised the very reality it was intended to stop. The breakout time – that is the amount of time needed to develop enough fuel for one nuclear weapon – has fallen rapidly over the last two and a half years, with U.S. analysts proclaiming the breakout time to be just a few weeks currently, far shorter than the 12-month limit expected from the JCPOA. Such advances invite Iranian supremacy in the Middle East, a

warning shot not only to other nations in the region but also enemies around the globe.

Perhaps an even greater consequence of the subsequent sanctions placed on Iran has been the country's shift to the East. Sino-Iranian relations have boomed over the last few years, most recently through the Iran-China 25-year Cooperation Program signed last year. Such a program will bring $400 Billion of Chinese investment in Iran's petroleum and infrastructure sectors alone, and is on top of the sizeable investments already made in Iran through the Belt and Road Initiative, which is estimated to increase real income in Iran by almost 5%. Moreover, the impact of the Belt and Road Initiative is being felt all over the Middle East and North Africa, with an average of 4.1% estimated growth in real income in the region, sans Iran, Egypt, and Turkey. Such investment and integration serve to threaten Western supremacy in the Middle East and attract countries towards the authoritarian and anti-democratic tendencies of China.

Not all signals out of the Middle East are negative. The 2020 Abraham Accords produced the normalisation of relation with Israel for four Middle Eastern nations – double that of all previously. Persuasion for such deals relied not just on the commercial opportunities in Israel but crucially also on economic and political "sweeteners" - as Egel, Efron and Robinson term it - by America. Support of exporting arms to the UAE from the U.S. was key to garnering their support, as was removal from the U.S. State Sponsor of Terrorism List crucial for garnering Sudanese support for a deal. Economic incentives, both from the West and from increased tourism, have also been central to social reformation in Saudi Arabia under Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. The Crown Prince's Vision 2030 plan, driven in part by the allure of Western prosperity, provides a good model for other countries in the Middle East in moving towards a financially stable

society. Such advances suggest the viability of a 'stick and carrot' method of motivation, with punishments for adversaries and prerogatives for allies.

Furthermore, whilst self-ruling sentiment may be down, it is not out. The 2018-2020 Arab protests, dubbed the Arab Spring 2.0, resulted in the resignations of 3 heads of state and 2 heads of government. Despite the lack of a subsequent shift to self-government for many of the nations, these protests helped to provide many from the Middle East with hope and inspire the continued prospect of freedom. In fact, the 2019/2020 Arab Public Opinion Poll found the highest level of support for the Arab Spring since it had been surveyed. In addition, the democratic experiments which did unfold after the Arab Spring 2.0 have endured, battered but not broken. Despite multi-dimensional poverty numbering 82% in Lebanon last year, a new cabinet was formed in September, showing the force that the will and wants of the people can have when leaders are forced to listen. Such countries could benefit from further foreign aid but are overall a sign of the potential for a rising sun in the Middle East.

Last year, Gorbachev, speaking to Russian News Agency RIA Novosti, described America's failed objectives in Afghanistan as the "unrealistic attempts to democratise a society made up of many tribes." But societal advances across parts of the region suggest otherwise, as does the success of a 'stick and carrot' approach. As the old saying goes, 'money talks'. However, in a time of East Asian ascension, the West must do more to promote democracy; they must go further than the East. In short, they must sell bigger carrots. To do this, a multi-faceted approach must be employed. To ensure a better tomorrow for all, we must inspire the people socially, convince the governments economically, and bring about real change politically.

Fascist Tendencies in Western Politics

Theo Naylor Marlow examines developments in modern politics and discerns the disturbing recrudescence of populist and corrosive trends which undermine the democratic fabric of modern states.

Viktor Orban, Prime Minister of Hungary

It can be no secret that the term 'fascist' has become a particularly cantankerous word in modern politics. It is tempting to seek an absolute, objective definition of a fascist, but it is more useful to understand fascism as a constant temptation on the part of politicians and citizens to retreat to base instinct and emotion[1]. This is what Umberto Eco described as 'Ur-Fascism' – the time*less* human characteristics which when present "allow fascism to coagulate around [them].[2]» These characteristics are deeply ingrained tribal urges which thousands of years of civilisation have conditioned us to repress. The urge to destroy our enemies and exclude those who we perceive as 'others'. It is also the urge to follow the strongest, not the shrewdest, leader and therefore all fascist movements are totally anti-democratic in nature.

Fascism, understood this way, is 'tempting' because it is an appeal to base instincts and evolutionary mechanisms which almost never fail to elicit a powerful and vitriolic reaction from the *polis*. Unfortunately for those committed to democracy, the human drives which fascism makes use of are impossible to expunge from our psyche, hence 'Ur-Fascism'.

Thus, deciding what fascism *is* and how it comes about is essential to understanding (and responding to) its machinations. Without a coherent and convincing vocabulary, the wheels of power can become almost impossible to question – it is one of fascism's many goals to create an 'impoverished vocabulary' and an 'elementary syntax'[3]. A cursory glance at the political rhetoric of Donald Trump will confirm this – Trump does not 'debate' in any traditional sense, but prefers to use slogans and personal attacks to turn the audience against his opponent, a technique that turns 'rational' debate into a political rally.

To respond to anti-democratic forces one must be able to identify the reasons behind that resentment that exists in today's politics in order to remedy them. The rise of, in this case, right-wing populism cannot be extinguished by leaning on an atavistic diatribe that considers the citizens who voice these grievances as being so far removed from politics that they should not even be engaged. This has been the attitude of many who consider themselves 'politically tolerant' and yet it appears to have failed. Following Trump's election defeat in 2020, resentment of 'liberals' in America has reached a fever pitch – more Republican voters than ever believe that Trump won the election, only to have it snatched from him by a malicious cabal of Democrats[4]. Understanding and responding to what Chantal Mouffe has called the 'populist moment'[5]. is what could ultimately turn back a dangerous political force by realising that a huge proportion of citizens feel excluded from debate and, quite reasonably, see that politicians do not care about the things which matter to them.

It can be tempting to dismiss the idea of 'neo-fascists' an of overreaction in the face of something unnatural. However, this seems to also comes from a place of liberal democratic arrogance – the misplaced belief that the values 'we' hold are universal and infallible. If history has taught us anything, it is that the *ancien régime* can fall at any moment, given the apposite circumstances. Therefore, excusing the political tactics used by anti-democrats and their apparent similarity to fascist tactics as a mere coincidence is to fall victim to a normalisation of extremism. Jason Stanley writes:

Normalization of fascist ideology, by definition, would make charges of "fascism" seem like an overreaction, even in societies whose norms are transforming along these worrisome lines. Normalization means precisely that encroaching ideologically extreme conditions are not recognized as such because they seem normal[6].

In the past 20 years, we have clearly been witnessing a growing apathy toward this kind of anti-democracy - as 'the crazies' become a part of everyday politics, we become naturally desensitised to their machinations.

The first of two parallels I wish to make are the similarities in the anti-intellectualism, and by extension suspicion of the media, between now and virtually all fascist regimes. The emotional drive behind, for example, Donald Trump's brand of populism was a sense of feeling ignored by the establishment. This platform was built on a suspicion of 'the swamp', as Donald Trump put it. Coincidentally, 'the swamp' consisted of more than simply alligators: it was, in the eyes of millions, a cartel of politicians, intellectuals and media personalities who all conspired against the livelihood of the working American (Trump voters listed 'the media' as the biggest threat to America[7]. This is, in essence, an archetypal case of the construction of the 'they'. Far from being totally concocted nonsense, many of Trump's voters had and still have good reason to feel maligned: the neo-liberal hegemony of the previous four decades has left them with very few ways to recover following the loss of both income and housing after the financial crash of 2008.

The 'We versus They' dichotomy is the blood of populism and can be mobilised to democratic ends. What is important to recognise is that in the case of right-wing populism, it has been used *against* rational debate, making it a mortal threat to democracy. This opposition to democracy is what, I believe, makes it reasonable to call it a 'fascist' tactic.

The most salient anti-rationalism found among the Trumpists today is a vitriolic hatred of university campuses and professors. The university is, one of the

A constant temptation on the part of politicians and citizens to retreat to base instinct and emotion

1 Stanley, J., 2018. *How Fascism Works*. Random House, p.36.
2 Eco, U., 1995. Ur-Fascism. *The New York Review of Books*, 42(11).
3 Eco, U., 1995. Ur-Fascism. *The New York Review of Books*, 42(11).
4 Guardian. 2021. *Most Republicans still believe 2020 election was stolen from Trump*.
5 Mouffe, C., 2018. *For a Left Populism*. Verso, p.5.

6 Stanley, J., 2018. *How Fascism Works*. Random House, p.190.
7 Brooks, D., 2021. Blame the Bobos. *The Atlantic Monthly*, 328(2).

many foundations of a functioning democracy, it provides a space to study and question the established codes of an era and without them, a society can be rendered politically mute. It is therefore rather telling when *Turning Point USA*, a major conservative 'youth wing', creates a 'Professor Watchlist'[8] with a stated mission to 'unmask radical professors'. The watchlist is particularly directed at new areas of study, such as Gender Studies and African American studies, which ask hard questions of the 'greatness' that Trumpism seeks to restore. Professors who undermine the narrative of a perfect America are, instead of being questioned and debated, derided as 'cultural Marxists', the boilerplate enemy of fascism[9]. It is, put simply, a systematic attack on the freedom intellectuals must have to publish their ideas. Anthea Butler, a professor of Christianity who found themselves on the list wrote in 2016 that:

'[T]he list is not simply designed to expose professors who discriminate; it is designed to silence and smear. And it helps feed information and screeds to similar sites like *the College Fix* and *Campus Reform*'[10]

Despite this, the project is couched as a mission to uphold free speech as these professors allegedly 'discriminate against conservative students'. This is a typical case of Orwellian doublethink, wherein by masquerading for a noble ideal, fascism instead destabilises it. In this case and many others, particular conservatives use a tactic replicated in fascism to undermine the free expression of ideas and thereby threaten the ability of a society to cogently articulate opposition to the far-right creep.

8   Professor Watchlist. 2021. *Professor Watchlist*.
9   Stanley, J., 2018. *How Fascism Works*. Random House, p.43.
10 Butler, A., 2016. *I'm on the 'professor watchlist.' It's a ploy to undermine free speech*.

Donald Trump, former US President

By endangering intellectualism, this fascist tactic wants us to leave behind reasonable questioning and instead emotionally commit to the 'we' of populism. Another way in which right-wing populists are able to stir emotion is something I alluded to earlier – the employment of radically simplified language so as to emaciate the intelligence of public discourse and, in much the same was as opposing intellectuals, it becomes far harder to oppose the ideology on rational grounds. Language is the basis of all political engagements, and thus the danger of a language being manipulated cannot be overstated – it gives those who manipulate it undue influence over the political discourse and, crucially, allows them to 'limit the instruments for complex and critical reasoning'[11]. One of the more typical ways this is done today is through the use of inflammatory or unnecessarily emotive language in public rhetoric.

This can be seen in the language surrounding immigration. The fascists of the 1970s supposed that immigrants consisted almost entirely of disease-ridden scroungers[12]. All that has changed in fascist rhetoric between then and now is the metric by which 'they' are dehumanised. This is, as I say, achieved through the use of inflammatory language such as 'illegal aliens' (arguably a legal term, but it is now used in a very different emotional register), evoking invading groups of dangerous criminals that are not even human beings. To a non-critical listener, it can seem as if the only thing immigration will bring to their country is crime, given the latent anger that a phrase like 'illegal alien' is evidently able to draw out in America. This kind of rhetoric is very useful to the fascist or the right-wing populist as it encourages a discarding of the critical faculties and a retreat to a purely emotional basis

11 Eco, U., 1995. Ur-Fascism. *The New York Review of Books*, 42(11).
12 Hitchens, C., 1974. *White Socialism?*. [online] New Statesman.

of thinking. In other words, it is able to manipulate voters into thinking based on 'first impressions' rather than a deeper analysis[13].

There are, of course, countless theories as to why we now experience a democratic recession – the one I shall address here is that of the Belgian political theorist Chantal Mouffe, who has written extensively on the rise of right-wing populism. She approaches the subject from a post-Marxist perspective, first synthesised by Ernesto Laclau in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, although I shall draw most of Mouffe's reasoning from her 2005 book *On the Political*. I find her reasoning particularly convincing as most of central tenets have been played out in the political arena since its publishing, especially following the financial crisis of 2008 and the subsequent recession of Western economies.

However, economic factors are the not the primary concern of Mouffe's reasoning behind democratic recession. She sees a wider force at play, that of the 'post-political'[14]. Belonging to the tradition of the political theorist Carl Schmitt[15], she sees politics as an 'agonistic' field – that is to say, one sustained by the left-right divide and crucially, one that cannot continue to function without the disagreements between these two visions of a just society. This is the same observation made by Aristotle, who did not believe in such a thing as a 'virtuous hermit' – a hermit in this case being someone who removes themselves from political debate

The danger of a language being manipulated cannot be overstated

– and rather saw political virtue in vibrant and meaningful debate. The primary observation made in *On the Political* is that rather than politics being played in this agonistic way, between left and right, it has come instead to be defined by the 'moral register', wherein disagreements in politics are being defined by 'a struggle between right and wrong'[16].This is what she believes is at the heart of why right-wing populism has become quite so salient – if the liberal democratic system is conceived as *undoubtedly* 'right', then any voice of dissatisfaction to it can only be conceived as 'wrong', and perhaps even 'evil', which turns it from an opponent to be engaged in debate into 'an enemy to be destroyed'. This encourages disagreements to take an antagonistic form of expression, as the channels of dissent are shut off for those dissatisfied with 'the system', increasing their feelings of abandonment even more.

What drives Western politics today is the new individualism of the 20th century, pregnant with the ideals of meritocracy. One can now see the effects of the meritocratic mentality on our politics: as meritocracy

13 'Deeper analysis' becomes even less appealing to someone subject to fascist rhetoric if a demagogue has taken care to discredit any existing media outlets or intellectuals – critical analysis would likely come from these supposedly mendacious channels
14 Mouffe, C., 2005. *On the Political*. Routledge, p.1.
15 Carl Schmitt was to become a prominent Nazi, although she sees his 'intellectual force…not [his] moral qualities, that should be the decisive criteria in deciding whether we need to establish a dialogue with [his] work'
16 Mouffe, C., 2005. *On the Political*. Routledge, p.5.

encourages the successful to believe that they deserve their own success, it has led to demeaning the unsuccessful, both in terms of people and of *ideas*.[17] The 'End of History' mentality of the late 20th century highlighted the success of the highly individualistic, consumerist 'liberal democracy' of the day. It manifests itself in an unwillingness to engage with political opponents simply because of a hubristic sense of self-righteousness. This demeans the importance of those outside the mainstream political sphere and inevitably and ironically leads to increasingly more extreme candidates who promise to bring them back in to the fold of government and, most importantly, acceptability.

Therefore, feeling abandoned by the economic system and then having their grievances attenuated when their demands were suppressed by a neo-liberal 'consensus at the centre' by leaders such as Tony Blair in Britain and Barack Obama in the US, a broad sweep of voters have turned instead to those supposedly outside 'the system' for political representation and solutions. The scapegoats they have provided have been many – 'liberals', the European Union, immigrants or, thankfully less commonly but not unheard of in the mainstream, 'Jewry' (Viktor Orban in Hungary has made of habit of scapegoating George Soros as the source of economic difficulty). What they all have in common is that they are highly emotionally charged and in the case of the extreme end, highly dubious as a point of fact, two things that could help precipitate the eventual success of fascism, even if it has not yet fully developed into the traditional 'fascist' creature. Nevertheless, these simplistic, populistic answers to complex questions have motivated massive turnout in their favour – Donald Trump in America, UKIP, and Boris Johnson in this country.

Fascist tendencies in politics are alive and well in the populist moment of today – it can be found in both the language and actions of a disconcerting number of our leaders, even when it is veiled in seemingly plausible, rational rhetoric. Recognising when and where it appears, and then understanding why it has done so is the only way that it can be effectively combatted. I have presented just a few examples of where it has emerged into the political mainstream and what I see as the best way to explain its success. It may be that by returning to and embracing the left-right, agonistic style of politics that the anti-democratic antagonisms of today's populism can be tempered, and a more vibrant and healthy debate can emerge where democracy and truth remain the guiding principles. I will end with a call from Umberto Eco:

'Ur-Fascism can come back under the most innocent of disguises. Our duty is to uncover it and to point our finger at any of its new instances—every day, in every part of the world'

17 Sandel, M., 2021. *The Tyranny of Merit*. Penguin, pp.13-15.

Britain and the First Opium War

Liberty Osborne analyses the political and economic reasons behind how a trade imbalance between China and Britain developed into a military conflict. British merchants insisted on the principles of free trade, even though opium was an illegal commodity, and after inflicting military defeat, the British forced the Chinese Emperor to sign the Treaty of Nanking.

Seizure and destruction of opium on the orders of Lin Tse-Hsu at Humen, June 1839

Britain's entry into the First Opium War in 1839 marked a significant global shift as Chinese relations with the Western world went from being confined to a handful of merchants in a small area of one port to the 'century of humiliation' that remains resonant in the Chinese national consciousness today. Yet, how exactly the event that determined the past two centuries of Chinese-Western relations began remains understudied and the conflict opens interesting questions for historians as to how Britain ended up entering a full-blown war thousands of miles away against a country it barely knew. Often the war is overdramatised as a either part of a great imperial strategy or an inevitable clash of civilisations as 'the story of how the grand mystery of China faded in the cold light of knowledge', yet, as Lovell argues '[t]he reality was more mundane, however, and concerned with... the activities of a gang of ill-behaved British merchants.'

This article will explore to what extent the initial conflict at Canton was the result of a wider clash of cultures as opposed to merely a series of missteps caused by poor communication, unruly traders and a lack of clear authority. From this initial dispute, it will then consider whether war was inevitable and how much of a conscious choice was made by the British government – for, crucially, when looking at Britain's entry into the First Opium War, even when the war started is in dispute and one has to explore both the causes of the initial conflict in Canton and also the arguments made amongst ministers and in the narrow parliamentary debate a year later. Notably, the debate was not on whether Britian should enter the fight but rather was a no-confidence vote called over whether the government had mishandled the China situation; thus the debate not only marks the start of a wider war but also

itself provides an interesting, remarkably contemporary, and heavily politicised analysis on how the conflict began. If the war was an active decision by the government, there are two main schools of thought regarding their motivations; on one hand, historians such as Ward Fay see them as entirely financially driven; on the other hand, Melancon argues that it was a war fought in defence of national honour. Ultimately, this article will conclude that the main cause of both the initial dispute and the wider war was the role of the merchants in Canton and London who purposefully agitated throughout the 1830s for conflict, then used their powerful campaigning influence to turn that conflict into a war. Economic incentives are predominantly relevant only insofar as they drove the merchants' behaviour. Whilst protecting national

> Protecting national honour was important in motivating the government to fight

honour was important in motivating the government to fight and in the parliamentary debate, the merchants played a key part in exploiting this sentiment as they pushed for war, whilst the honour would have never been threatened in the first place without their provocative behaviour at Canton. In the words of one American writing almost a decade prior to the war, 'Few men are better diplomatists than the merchants and the Chinese brokers' – and, in transforming China from a mysterious self-contained empire to an imperialists' playground, this was to a large extent true.

When analysing the First Opium War, many 'western observers... proclaim a collision of civilisations'– erroneously viewing the conflict as an inevitable clash of East meets West, they think that Britain's entry into war with China, whilst veiled by triggering circumstances, was bound to happen at some point. Ever since formal contact between the nations was made by the infamously rebuked Macartney mission in the 1790s, there had been a dislike

There had been a power vacuum in Canton ever since the end of the East India Company's monopoly

for the 'landlocked, anti-mercantile Qing' present in the British national consciousness and, for many historians, these cultural differences destined the British and Chinese in Canton to clash. To some extent this is evidenced in the missionary observers in Canton in the 1830s who wrote that '[China's] feeling of contemptible vanity Christianity alone will effectually destroy'.6 Written before the conflict by figures who lacked commercial interests, this idea of Western 'Christianity' 'destroy[ing]' the fundamentally vain nature of the Chinese shows the cultural tension present at Canton, poignantly predicting the events of the Opium Wars. Yet, the argument that there was a total hatred of each other's civilisations is not wholly convincing, as many texts instead evidence admiration – in the parliamentary debate, Conservative leader Robert Peel references even Superintendent Elliot, the British official who started the conflict in Canton, writing 'he believed that in many important respects the Chinese were the most moderate and reasonable people on the face of the earth.' Instead, 'a collision of civilisations' was the British excuse for their refusal to cooperate with the Chinese and their sense of entitlement to China's goods – as Lovell writes, '[i]n short, the British wanted everything in China to be exactly as they liked. While the Qing state, not surprisingly disagreed'.

Conversely, some historians argue that the First Opium War, or at least the conflict that sparked it, arose from the administrative mess that characterised British control over their merchants in Canton throughout the 1830s. This was the politically convenient argument put forward by the Conservatives in the no-confidence debate in Spring 1840 over the 'China Question'; in the Peel's words, 'the necessity for the war might have arisen from gross negligence and misconduct of the Ministers'. When the East India Company's monopoly in Canton ended in 1833-4, British relations with China were left in disarray, with

the lack of clear authority leading to constant scuffles. The British attempted to create the role of Superintendent to control their citizens in China, yet, compared to when the East India Company directly employed all the British in Canton, the Superintendent didn't hold any legal power over the merchants. This meant the merchants misbehaved as they pleased, agitating Chinese authorities, as the British government refused to trespass on Chinese sovereignty by legally disciplining them, whilst the Chinese government feared punishing foreign nationals. Thus, in a swift move, the end of the East India Company's monopoly turned one of the most closed-off and diplomatically precarious trading relationships into a mercantile free for all, out of which the illegal, lucrative opium trade flourished, with the British government offering no new mechanism for control. The potential for damaging conflict to arise was spotted both in 1834, when the China Courts Bill was proposed and withdrawn, and also under Superintendent Elliot who consistently begged the government for more powers – Peel quoted a dispatch from Elliot in parliament written in January 1839 asking the superintendent 'should be forthwith vested with defined and adequate powers for the reasonable control of men whose rash conduct cannot be left to the operation of Chinese laws without the utmost inconvenience and risk'; this risk became reality only a few months later. Since Peel's speech was given as the opposition leader attempting to take down the government, his selection of evidence and dissection of the situation as entirely down to Liberal incompetence could not be more politically motivated. However, Peel does point at a wider truth that there had been a power vacuum in Canton ever since the end of the East India Company's monopoly, out of which the First Opium War arose, a position that has gained traction amongst recent historians, such as Lovell, who sweepingly declared that 'to a degree, the Opium War –

The Treaty of Nanking was a peace treaty which ended the First Opium War between the UK and Qing Dynasty in China on 29 August 1842

There is a convincing case to be made that the merchants purposefully agitated for conflict

and all that it led to – was set of in a fit of bureaucratic haste'. Yet, here 'to a degree' is crucial, as whilst the events of 1839 may have been hasty and disorganised from the outlook of those in London, for the merchants in Canton, they came at the end of a tense decade where chaos in Canton seemed to be a recurring theme. Thus, whilst the argument that the Opium War was merely the sporadic result of an administrative mess is to some extent true, one cannot ignore the systemic presence of conflict within Canton during the 1830s that hints at some persistent, underlying cause actively exploiting that mess, perhaps in the form of provocative merchants.

Historians such as Cassan compellingly argue that it was the merchants' uncontrollable, confrontational behaviour in Canton throughout the 1830s that made the eventual conflict of 1839 inevitable. The merchants deliberately disobeyed the British government's orders, shown in 1834 when, despite Prime Minister Earl Grey telling the then superintendent, Napier, that 'persuasion and conciliation should be the means employed - rather than approaching anything to the tone of hostile and menacing language', the British at Canton engaged in a conflict with the Chinese that became dubbed 'Napier's

Fizzle'. Encouraged by merchants, Napier disobeyed Foreign Secretary Palmerston and Grey's explicit orders to prevent British warships entering Chinese inner waters, showing just how little control the British government had over their dispatches and citizens abroad. Elliot himself also believed the merchants were to blame for the tensions of 1839, writing in June 1839 that 'all these desperate hazards have been incurred… for the scrambling, and, comparatively considered, insignificant gains of a few individuals, unquestionably founding their conduct upon the belief that they were exempt from the operation of all law, British or Chinese'.

This is persuasive because the merchants' persistent disobedience means that, even if Elliot had more legal authority as superintendent, the threat of his powers alone would have been insufficient to control the merchants, and Elliot likely would have had to use force in order to punish them or remain ineffectual. In the distant port of Canton, it seems unlikely that this force would have been enough, or that the Chinese officials would have sanctioned British violence on their shores. Peel, motivated by destroying the government, assigns too much blame to ministerial negligence, just as Lovell does to administrative

Chinese opium smokers in a saloon experiencing various effects (Wellcome V0019169)

inadequacy; for, regardless of Elliot's powers, the merchants' behaviour meant that aggression in Canton was inevitable, either in form of the British attempting to control their men and that escalating, or in the form of protecting merchants in a conflict they had started. In fact, there is a convincing case to be made that the merchants purposefully agitated for conflict, as they knew that war could open more of China's ports, but that British military intervention would only happen if the government thought it justified. This is particularly persuasive when you look at the parallels between Napier's Fizzle of 1834, when the merchants urged Napier to be hostile, then used the resulting scuffle to petition parliament for military assistance in order to destroy China, and the events of 1839 when the merchants eventually angered the Chinese officials enough that Elliot was forced to protect them and thus a conflict began. The remarkable similarities between the petitions of 1834 and 1839 suggest that the merchants had been systematically pursuing war for years. Moreover, the massive delay in communication between London and Canton left an extraordinary amount of power in the hands of the merchants as it was difficult for their rash actions be properly considered by the British government. By the time the Cabinet first sat down to discuss the rising tensions in October 1839, Elliot had not only already fired at Chinese ships, but had also promised, under the guise of his Foreign Office role as Superintendent, that the government would repay the merchants for the £2,000 of opium he had handed over to the Chinese – a financial commitment that some erroneously think ultimately forced the government into

> The Opium War was the result of a government's forced hand

war in order to repay. This culturally and diplomatically precarious situation in Canton empowered the merchants, who persistently provoked the Chinese government for years until they got what they wanted in the form of the First Opium War.

Crucially, however, the start of the conflict in Canton in 1839 was not necessarily the start of the war, and historians need to look not only at the cause of the scuffle but also what turned that into a proper military intervention. On one hand, war was an unavoidable progression once Elliot had started the conflict in Canton. The parliamentary debate was seven months after when gunshots were first fired in September 1839, by which point it would have been humiliating to abandon their representative Elliot and the British citizens at Canton. Notably, this was a position held on both sides of the House, with even Peel accepting war was necessary, and only questioning why it had come to that. Moreover, even if war was not determined by Spring 1840, the existence of a no-confidence vote on the matter brought it to public attention and required the government to commit to the fight or look pathetic. Rather than being a thought out plan, the Opium War was the result of a government's forced hand as they were compelled to avoid humiliating not only the British in Canton but also themselves in

London after a narrow no-confidence debate where the main accusations were of negligence. Yet, conflict had arisen in Canton several times before when war had not, and there is a huge leap between mercantile scuffles and all-out naval warfare. This is shown in the half-hearted fighting between the British and Chinese officials in 1839, with no sense of a proper commitment to battle – even once fighting had started in September 1839, Lovell argues 'full-blown was not inevitable'. Similarly, when the China question eventually reached British shores, there was a genuine debate, evidenced by the number of high-ranking British officials, such as Auckland, who came out against the Opium War, writing 'upon the prospects of a war with China… I see its embarrassments, and I do not see its end' – the discussion in Britain was alive and meaningful, with no inevitable conclusion. Whilst domestic political factors did put some pressure on the government, several dozen bickering merchants was still not a full naval battle and so, if the traders were desperate for proper European military presence in China, they still had more work to do to persuade those at home.

Arguably, when exploring the British government's decisions, one of the strongest motivators of imperial policy was trade, and the First Opium War was primarily undertaken to further Britain's long-term commercial interests. Whilst the conflict of 1839 and supposed insult to British honour did provide a trigger and justification for the war, Ward Fay argues ‹what finally dominated the discussion . . . was not the war-or-peace aspect of the China question, but the pounds, shillings, and pence of it'. This is shown in how the events of the Opium War and the humiliating Treaty of Nanking that ended it went far beyond anything proportional to the scuffle at hand, suggesting the war formed part of a greater commercial plan. The extreme terms of the Treaty of Nanking, which forcibly opened the Qing empire, was clearly somewhat present in the minds of the Cabinet in 1840. This is shown in Lord Russell, the Home Secretary's, summary of the official explanation of war as 'proceed[ing], first, to obtain reparation for the insults ordered to Her Majesty's Superintendent, and Her Majesty's subjects by the Chinese Government. Secondly, to obtain for the merchants trading with China an indemnification due to the loss of their property, incurred by threats of violence... Thirdly, to obtain security for the protection of persons and property in future, and that their trade and commerce shall be placed upon a proper footing.' Here, whilst Russell's multifaceted explanation does to some extent reflect the complex web of factors that drove the Opium Wars, the first reason serves as a rhetorical veil for the mercantile motivations of the second and third. The ominously vague aim 'that their trade and commerce shall be placed upon a proper footing' hints at the devastation that was to come, suggesting the much broader motivation of opening Chinese markets was in the air from the start.

Yet, if the First Opium War was part of a greater commercial goal, then it is surprising that the British government had consistently refused to become militarily involved in China beforehand. Britain had traded with China for decades under the limited Canton system, and there had been many moments of tension throughout that could have justified war. Instead, the government in London had not only never militarily tried to open China before, instead electing for diplomatic embassies, but had actively refused the merchants' pleas for them to intervene. Rather, the letters from Palmerston to Elliot hint at the exact opposite approach to China and trade, writing in June 1838 that '[w]ith respect to the smuggling of opium . . . Her Majesty›s Government cannot interfere for the purpose of enabling British subjects to violate the laws of the country to which they trade.'18 The Treaty of Nanking came from Britain finding war with China easy and becoming greedy, rather than being the goal that initially drove them to fight. Thus, the argument that Britain entered the First Opium War to further its long-term financial interests seems to contradict both the language and actions of the government right up until war began.

The other main case made throughout Britain for military intervention in China was that of national honour as many saw Lin Zexu's actions against the merchants at Canton as extremely disrespectful towards the British. As a cause of the First Opium War, this argument is made most famously by Melancon who claims that the Chinese were brutal and unreasonable in their treatment of the foreigners, keeping them locked up for

> We are not blind to the absurdity, insolence, injustice and even treachery of Commissioner Lin

six weeks even after Elliot had committed to hand over all the opium. Outrage at these acts certainly dominated both public opinion and parliamentary debate even amongst figures who had previously supported China; the Leeds Mercury, a fervent opposer to the opium trade, wrote that '[s]trongly as we condemn the detestable opium traffic, and decidedly as we approve of the persevering and vigorous efforts of the Chinese Government to suppress it, we are not blind to the absurdity, insolence, injustice and even treachery of Commissioner Lin.' Most notably, George Staunton, one of Britain's most revered Sinophiles who had spent several years in Canton, surprised many by telling parliament he thought Lin's 'atrocities' beyond anything he could have expected and deserving of war; in such a narrow debate, Platt argues that his expert perspective was crucial in firming the gathering sentiment that, regardless of one's wider opinions about China or opium, the events of 1839 were unacceptable and needing of reproach.

In the domestic political sphere, war with China to defend of British honour served as an opportunity for the government to prove themselves as principled; as Hobhouse remarked to fellow minister Macaulay, 'the charges made against us of idleness... could hardly be sustained... [if] we had resolved upon... a war with the master of one-third of the human race'.21 Given

Melbourne's precarious parliamentary position after the 'Bedchamber' crisis, foreign policy was a place where he had more control and freedom to prove himself. Yet, the position of war based on dignity was far from partisan as even the opposition supported war in order to preserve national honour, with Peel declaring to parliament 'It is your duty to vindicate the honour of England where vindication is necessary, and to demand reparation wherever reparation is due.' – in the top arena of political fights, the one thing that united everybody was a sense that their dignity had been insulted and war was needed to restore it.
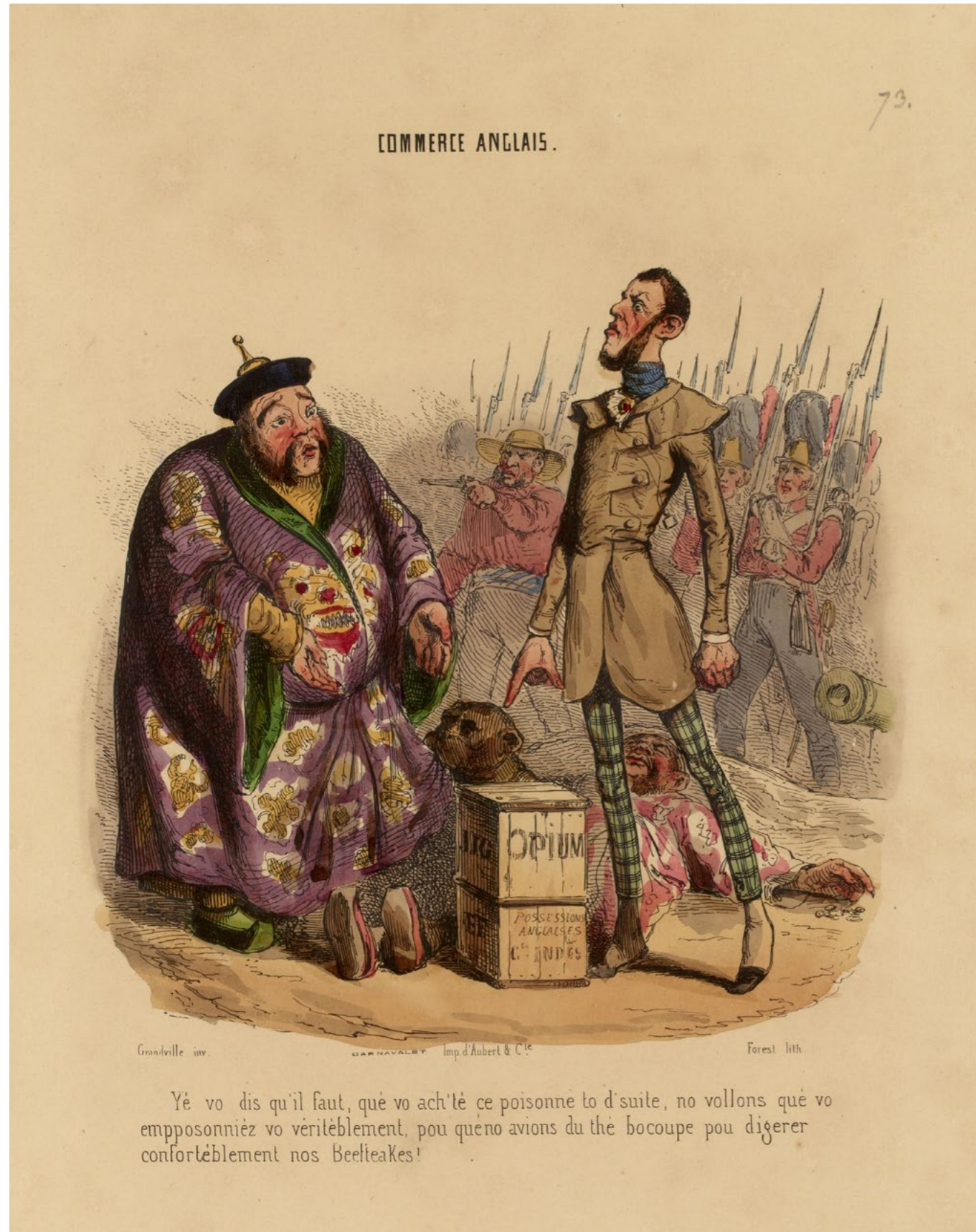
However, when it came to bringing discussions of national honour to the table and spreading news of Lin's insults across Britain, Cassan compellingly explores how merchants worked on a governmental, parliamentary and public level to make the case for war in China. On the ministerial level, prominent Canton merchant Jardine met with Palmerston just as the government was deliberating whether to go to war. Historians such as J.W. Wong argue this meeting played a pivotal role in Palmerston's support for the war, evidenced in the similarity between the radical Treaty of Nanking 1842 and the extreme demands proposed by Jardine to the Foreign Secretary three years earlier. In fact, in a letter to the man who connected him with Jardine, Palmerston wrote '[t]o the assistance and information which you and Mr Jardine so handsomely afforded us it was mainly owing that we were able give our affairs naval, military and diplomatic, in China', explicitly crediting the famous merchant's role in convincing him to go to war. Crucially, in the same letter Palmerston writes that war 'must be attended with the most important advantages to the commercial interests of England', showing how trading interests drove the government, but through the voices of merchants.

Second, when it came to parliamentary debate, most people in Britain knew very little about China and thus the perspective of the merchants who had actually lived in Canton was highly valued. This is shown in the fact Palmerston ended the debate by reading a mercantile petition demanding war by claiming 'the trade with China can no longer be conducted with security to life and property, or with credit or advantage to the British nation'. Palmerston's reflection that '[t]hese [the merchants] are the parties whose interests are at stake' shows how highly-regarded these demands by the merchants were, and, as the closing remarks to a lengthy parliamentary debate, and some of the few remarks credited with experience with China, the power of the merchants in convincing parliament to go to war should not be understated.

Finally, amongst the broader population, the merchants played a key role in stirring up rhetoric around national honour and spreading propaganda about the need for war. One of the primary vehicles for this was Matheson's Canton Register, which served as an essential source for

COMMERCE ANGLAIS.

Yé vo dis qu'il faut, qué vo ach'té ce poisonne to d'suite, no vollons qué vo empposonniéz vo vÉrÉitéblement, pou quéno avions du thé bocoupe pou digerer confortéblement nos Beefteakes!

Lithograph from La Caricature c1840. French satirical drawing showing an Englishman ordering the Emperor of China to buy opium. A Chinese man lies dead on floor with troops in the background. The text says: "You must buy this poison immediately. We want you to poison yourself completely, because we need a lot of tea in order to digest our beefsteaks."

Merchants worked on a governmental, parliamentary and public level to make the case for war in China

people on the activities in Canton and declared that 'the right of the British to demand that China open up to free trade' was 'the right that "barbarism must vanish before civilisation, ignorance succumb to knowledge"', clearly tapping into wider imperialist attitudes. The influence of the merchants on the press extended to Britain, with Matheson writing to Jardine that he could 'secure the services of some leading newspaper to advocate the cause'. Jardine also commissioned best-selling author Samuel Warren to write 'The Opium Question', a pamphlet criticising China and supporting war, writing that, after Britain had won the war, the Emperor would have a 'new and astounding view of the petty barbarians whom he has insulted, oppressed and tyrannised over so long'. Some historians, such as Melancon, claim the merchants' role 'has been exaggerated', with honour being more important for the British government than economic desires, but, as Cassan convincingly argues '[t]hat honor would never have been threatened had it not been for the actions of the British 'barbarians', especially the actions of Jardine, who forced the Chinese to expel him for drug trafficking, and then played on British honour to restore his business'.

In conclusion, Britain's entry into the First Opium War can be best explained by looking at the merchants involved with China and their persistent desire to bring about a fight. Historians of the First Opium War usually mistakenly fall into two distinct schools of thought, seeing the war as either a chaotic, unplanned mistake or the result of grand imperial designs by the British government. In fact, by analysing the role of the Canton merchants, we find that the reality is somewhere in the middle; whilst a 'fit of bureaucratic haste' may describe the start of the war from the government in London's perspective, the British actually present in China had been agitating for conflict for years. The British systems of authority in Canton were deeply inadequate, but it was only through the merchants exploiting these inadequacies that war began. At the other extreme, any arguments that the war was part of a wider cultural or economic plan by the British government face the bizarre reality of a situation in China that involved only a small group of uncontrollable traders six months' communication away from the government and a Britain that knew barely anything about the distant Qing. It took the merchants' blatant disobedience to government orders and subsequent influence on the British press to bring about the fight. Ultimately, from agitating for conflict in the first place, to campaigning to ministers, parliament and the population alike, the merchants of Canton played the critical role in every step on the gradual journey to the First Opium War.

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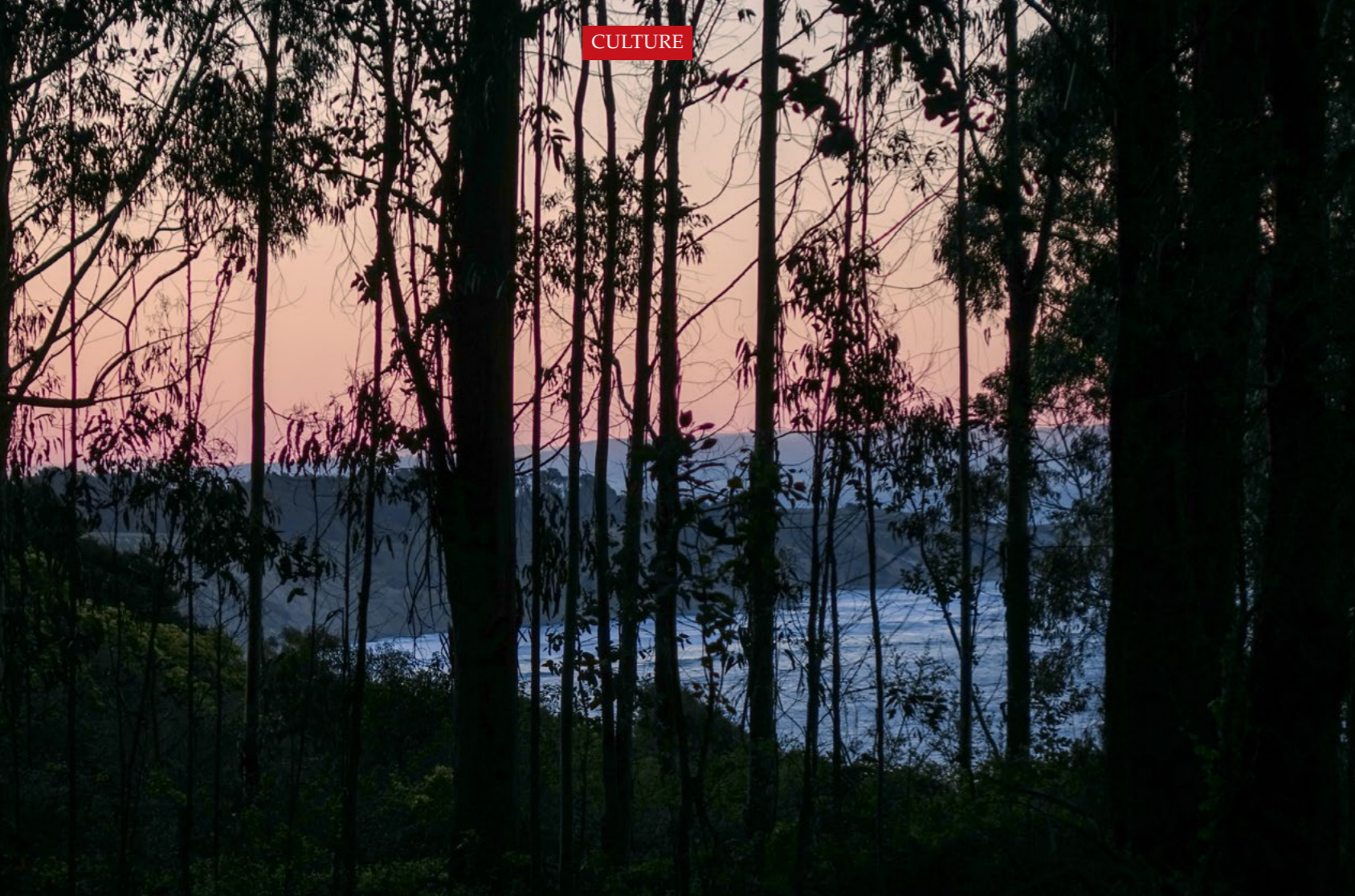
Sunset at Bolinas

The afterlife of the San Francisco Renaissance

Mark Morris explores the literary tradition of Bolinas, California.

The coast of Northern California is picturesque at worst, and ethereal at best. While driving down Route 1, a highway that often sits on the side of cliffs, one can witness spectacular sunsets, and glowing fogs which reduce the horizon to a pink haze in the evening. Occasionally, Route 1 takes you to places that were never meant to be visited.

One afternoon in late October, I drove into a small town by the water. There were houses of many shapes and periods: some looked more in place on the beaches of Long Island, while others were downright surreal, more fitting among realities more fantastical than California. Certainly charming, but I hadn't thought much of it; it was just another town full of twenty-first century hippies, nothing spectacular.

Only a month later did I realise the significance of my discovery. I had stumbled upon Bolinas, an 'unincorporated coastal community' which made an effort to hide itself from tourists. The town was also full of poets.

A brief history of Bolinas would begin with the Coast Miwok people, who hunted salmon there; in the nineteenth century, they were displaced by Spanish and Mexican colonists. Loggers, miners, and summer tourists came next, in waves: so far the history of this coastal town remained unremarkable. In 1906, the town's hotels collapsed into Bolinas Bay during an earthquake. By the nineteen-sixties, the poets first started to arrive, as well as the American counterculture movement, along with strange buildings, from domes to tree houses. At this time aesthetic schools were beginning to form from various cities' countercultural art scenes, from the New York School to the San Francisco Renaissance. The Bolinas crowd hailed from both sides of America: many poets, like Joanne Kyger, Philip Whalen, and Gary Snyder, came from nearby San Francisco, while others like Tom Clark came from New York. People came to Bolinas often to escape the frantic pace of city life.

The premise of Bolinas would have been revered by Romantics and other souls in the search for idealism: the town functioned as the location for a modern day

'Bloomsbury Set' in a beautiful location on the Pacific coast, where a town essentially governed by poets creating works which lavishly described the beauty of nature. Naturally, not everyone agreed that the town was so perfect. It had been called "a poet's ghetto," inhabited by "zonked-out bucolics." Indeed, there was some truth to this statement; copious volumes of drugs were present in Bolinas. Unsurprisingly, most of these drugs would have rendered an interesting creative process; people took great amounts of acid, mushrooms, and mescaline, with some speed on the side, perfect for getting inspiration and then executing the work completely respectively. The Bolinas poets often wrote about nature and everyday occurrences as part of the attempt to put poetry at the centre of the town. This was certainly not a unique phenomenon, it was in part a response to earlier American poetries of place - this didn't mean just an individual poem made in relation to a specific location, but grander, more large scale works that used place for social and historical purposes, not merely descriptive. *Paterson* , by William Carlos Williams, is an example of such a work, putting Paterson, New Jersey in the centre.

However, the difference between works like *Paterson* and the poems of Bolinas was not only the collective nature of Bolinas poetry, where multiple poems by many poets created a picture of the town, but the purpose of the writing itself: whereas Williams attempted to write for the readers of the future, the Bolinas poets wrote specifically for themselves.

The town functioned as the location for a modern day 'Bloomsbury Set'

In *Things to do in Bolinas* by Ted Berrigan, he says "Dig the Recent Philip Whalen Past / scene / smile at Tom / Freeze & sleep / Fuck / Stroll along the edge / of the land / day & night." His writing is sparse (from a language perspective) and when seeing it on the page, it has an almost random pattern of indentation--but a feeling is captured that the Bolinas poets tried to convey through their writing, through the simplicity of describing real-world events mixed with almost surreal images. Other Bolinas poems are less sparse, but are just as raw in their description, such as this extract from Duncan MC Naughton's *Elegy* : "Instinctively, Kirsten, amid the tedious noise of drunks / ruminatively, chuckling to herself, gets up / and comes over with a greyish single-paper joint. / For a drink she will have half of a tequila & / grapefruit juice / which costs fifty cents and I, another vodka. / After that, no words are exchanged. Pool is watched, the evening is over. / It's windy, raw outside." The poems are often descriptions of memories, or musings of the poet, and tend not to be very lofty works with a specific meaning in mind; they are memories and thoughts which the poets want to immortalise.

Among much of the poetry there is heavy inspiration from beat literature, in particular Jack Kerouac's *The Dharma Bums* , a sprawling tale which explores spirituality and the state of living in America, where many of the characters (based on real people) came up with poems spontaneously, like Smith's "Imagine blessing all living and dying worms in eternity and the ducks that eat 'm…"

The reverence for nature common in Kerouac's writing would have definitely inspired much of the Bolinas set, except they brought more emphasis on community. Joanne Kyger, one of the pillars of Bolinas poetry, recalls "women's peyote meetings," where "all these women came and took peyote, in this big open-air house. It was kind of a funny experience. I don›t think anybody knew what ceremony to follow. Someone [a man] asked, 'What should I do? There's all these women.' And someone answered, 'Well just pretend half of them are men." The San Francisco poetry scene at the time was largely male-domnated, whereas the Bolinas scene grew to feature many women.

The literature from Bolinas was wildly varied. There were prose-poetry fusion journals, like *September* by John Thorpe, two line poems by Gailyn Saroyan like *Going to the Moon*, which reads "Light / At night.", or offerings like Joanne Kyger's *A Testimony for Ebbe and Angela on their Wedding, November 29, 1970* , which dips in and out of surreal descriptions like "The sky people go to heaven / up the sky pole / and they came back / and tell what they have found--", beautiful descriptions of nature: "with water against them / long low / long dunes / san banks / foliage dotting / the coast & curves / into the golden harbour--," along with passages like "And Angela will make some soup / for the both of you and / some French bread / with butter plus / a couple." If there was any one poem that summed up Bolinas so well, it would be this one: it is full of memories of psychedelic explorations, with dissociative longing descriptions of nature ("Even tho were are flat plains / even tho' I'm a river bottom"), along with a tender exploration of the Bolinas community. It was in many ways similar to the Beat poetry, hedonistic, free form, spontaneous, and irreverent, but also attempting to speak to a higher spirituality, except perhaps there is a lot more reverence for nature in Bolinas poetry.

Some consider the work that came out of Bolinas never to be very meaningful or important. Maybe it was just the works of some hippies who took themselves too seriously. I would disagree with both these stances. Throughout my reading of *On the Mesa: An Anthology of Bolinas writing* (which contains a wide selection of poems from Bolinas or set in Bolinas, or otherwise related), I was aware that I was reading good poetry, since it spoke to me in a way that was rare. One reason I could attribute was that it spoke of a place I had not known directly, but knew from the landscapes around it. Thus through the poems I could see the San Francisco Bay Area through a different lens, in a way that was enjoyable to read. People like to read about places they know, and they like to hear more about stories they can associate with. Cedar Sigo put it better, saying "This [anthology] functions as an open window onto a closed scene. The poems feel like well-placed mirrors hanging in the midst of a utopia." The Bolinas poetry community arose at a time when the American counterculture movement was taking place, therefore there is some justification in grouping the poets as part of

Their escape from city life was rather pathetic in many ways

The Peace Movement at Bolinas

this movement. It isn't clear however whether they would agree with this grouping, and the Bolinas poet community continued strongly past the collapse of the counterculture movement in 1973, therefore it must be unrelated in some regards. The goals of the poets living in Bolinas must have been different to those of the counterculture movement, therefore when that fizzled out with social progress having been achieved, the Bolinas poets still stayed together, being tied together with more than what the hippies of California were.

Although this countercultural refuge appears very hip, perhaps the Bolinas community wasn't as 'Romantic' as it seemed. The hippie community that made it come to be was largely white New Yorkers and San Franciscans, and their escape from city life was rather pathetic in many ways; the Bolinas dwellers weren›t quite as bohemian as they thought they were. And through their reverence for the nature of Bolinas came obsession, and from that a

serious over-protectionism among the reclusive residents. The Bolinas community avoided outsiders at the time, and still do - the highway turn off sign that led to Bolinas has been continuously removed by Bolinas residents, even after being put back up by authorities, as they try to keep their area free from tourists.

Thus ultimately, perhaps the best way to describe Bolinas is as a continuation of the 'casual poetry' tradition that the characters in *The Dharma Bums* share. While the golden age of poetry for Bolinas has almost certainly passed, driving through the town today it is easy to see what drew together all these different people from the far corners of America. Perhaps the writing itself wouldn't be so powerful if the place the poems revered was not so beautiful.

The Art of Loneliness in Steinbeck and Kerouac

Sam Moorhouse compares the novels *On the Road* and *East of Eden* to elucidate the physical and psychological factors behind the sense of individual loneliness in American society.

Early Sunday Morning, Hopper (1930)

In Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* and John Steinbeck's *East of Eden*, both authors examine the causes, experience, and consequences of loneliness. Steinbeck portrays loneliness as a form of weakness that must be combatted through the cultivation of emotional bonds, to avoid the consequences that many of his characters endure. Kerouac, by contrast, explores the danger that a reliance on emotional bonds poses, suggesting that the need for sustained emotional interaction instigates more loneliness; for Kerouac, loneliness is an enduring experience which other people ultimately cannot alleviate. In different ways, each author considers the relationship between solitude[1] and the experience of loneliness[2]. The examination of loneliness is common to the feelings investigated both in William Wordsworth's *The Two Book Prelude*, namely the exploration of the

productivity that solitude can provoke, and John Williams's *Butcher's Crossing*, which explores the necessity of emotional connection through the extreme withdrawal from society.

Circumstance and experience are instrumental in shaping the narrative and style of both texts. Published in 1952, Steinbeck's presentation of loneliness was heavily influenced by the society he observed in the years before its publication: "I've been practicing for a book for 35 years and this is it"[3]. Steinbeck was fascinated both by contemporary economic migration in the late 19th Century, manifested in his novel as waves of multi-cultural settlers[4], and the societal splintering that occurred in the post-war years which saw the disintegration and destruction of many families.

On the Road is precipitated and driven by a search for family

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1 The state of being physically without other people.
2 The psychological response to the physical state of being alone.

3 Steinbeck John, 1949, quoted in Introduction to *East of Eden*, Wyatt David, Penguin Books, 2000
4 Chinese and Irish immigrants being the conspicuous examples, increasing the population of California by 560% between 1850-1870

Nighthawks, Hopper (1942)

Steinbeck›s family interactions were so influential that the secondary characters, such as Sam Hamilton, are based on his relatives. Similarly, Kerouac's novel of 1957, as Spangler highlights, "engages with the psychological […] landscape"[5] following the Second World War, particularly those consumed by loneliness caused by their loss of family members: "loneliness has always been woven into the fabric of war and its aftermath"[6]. This aspect of society is evident in Kerouac's preoccupation with incomplete families, which dictates many of the protagonists' actions. Spangler writes: "*On the Road* is precipitated and driven by a search for family - or at least a memory of one"[7]. Whilst I would argue this is an incomplete interpretation, given the importance of self-discovery, the "spiritual and political loneliness"[8] across the United States acts as the wider context influencing the thematic prevalence of loneliness in both these novels.

The interconnection between being physically alone and the psychological state of loneliness is characteristic of both narratives. Each author examines the protagonists' attempts to surround themselves with people as a bulwark against their feelings of loneliness, and the ways in which physical proximity affects the development of loneliness. Kerouac exemplifies the comforting quality of others through the description of Sal's extensive efforts throughout the novel to ensure he is not lonesome. However, the transience of these experiences suggests that it is the physicality of "people" rather than individual personalities that comforts Sal. For example, Kerouac describes Sal's experiences of meeting random girls: "we picked up two girls […] they were dumb and sullen, but we wanted to make them."[9] Kerouac's use of denigrating

adjectives conveys the low regard in which Sal holds his temporary company. The desire to "make them" -despite their apparent unattractiveness-indicates the heightened importance of the *physical* encounter. Similar "hook-ups", according to the Kinsey Report of 1950[10], were increasingly common practice in Kerouac's contemporary society[11].

Kerouac uses this episode to exemplify the systemic move away from traditional and permanent bonds, such as marriage, towards ephemeral ones. Kerouac offers a reason for this shift through the juxtaposition of Sal's meeting with an acquaintance: "I went to see a rich girl I knew," and his newly found positive outlook: "all my problems were solved"[12]. People's issues, such as Sal's loneliness, are temporarily relieved by proximity to others. Steinbeck similarly explores the use of a saturation of company as a coping mechanism for loneliness. For example, the "crippling loneliness"[13] Adam feels is resolved by his "rush into a crowd for warmth, any crowd"[14]. Steinbeck uses the metaphor of warmth to indicate both the physical and emotional comfort that the unknown crowd provides: "he sighed with pleasure […] he absorbed the contact"[15]. Steinbeck's use of "impulse"[16] suggests he believes the search for others when lonely to be an instinctive reaction. This suggests other people can become a necessity for a lonely character: "loneliness is a powerful force in man derived from the need of others for the sake of survival"[17].

On the Road confirms the importance of social interaction in combatting loneliness through the portrayal of Sal's need to retain his existing friendships, an impulse

> **People's issues, such as Sal's loneliness, are temporarily relieved by proximity to others**

5 Spangler Jason, "We're on a Road to Nowhere: Steinbeck, Kerouac, and the legacy of the Great Depression" *Studies in the Novel*, vol. 40, no. 3, 2008, pp. 308

6 Stein, Jacob & Solomon, Zahava., "The lonely side of war's aftermath: Traumatization and isolation among veterans", 2018, pp.1

7 Spangler, op.cit, pp. 317

8 Davidson Michael, "The San Francisco Renaissance: Politics and Community at Mid-Century", Cambridge University Press, 1991

9 Kerouac Jack, *On the Road*, Penguin Books, 2000, pp.31

10 Kinsey Alfred, *The Kinsey Reports*, quoted by Duenil Lynn, *"The Modern Temper:American Culture and Society in the 1920s"*, Hill and Wang. p. 136.

11 By 1950, pre-marital sex had increased 22% from pre-1900 levels.

12 Kerouac, op.cit. pp. 165

13 Steinbeck John, *East of Eden*, Penguin Books, 2000, pp. 50

14 Ibid, pp.50

15 Ibid, pp.50

16 Ibid, pp.50

17 Fromm Erich, *Escape from Freedom*, 1941, quoted by McDaniel Barbara, "Alienation in *East of Eden*: The 'Chart of the Soul,'" in *Steinbeck Quarterly*, Vol. 14, No. 1–2, Winter/Spring 1981, pp. 38

that is unreciprocated. Kerouac's self-diagnosis[18] that he spent his time "shambling after as I've been doing all my life after people who interest me"[19] provides insight into his personal value of others. This belief is embodied by Sal's unanswered yearning for and obsession over others: "Where is Dean and what is he doing right now"[20], which suggests both a level of dependency that is hidden by his friends and an inability to appreciate his own company. The perpetual nature both of Sal's loneliness and longing for others is used by Kerouac to highlight that, ultimately, it is this lack of self-sufficiency that ensures Sal remains lonely. Given the autobiographical nature of this novel, Robert Ginn's suggestion that Sal's insufficiency stems from Kerouac's own familial dynamic, in which he was "never as good"[21] as his "saintly"[22] brother Gerald, is certainly plausible. Through the reports of Kerouac's own coping mechanism, "Jack […] always fled to the busyness of city life"[23], one can see the reliance on others as a remedy to loneliness.

Steinbeck suggests that a reliance on the physical presence of others originates from fleeting encounters used as a *replacement* for emotional attachment. Steinbeck uses the symbol of the whorehouse, the embodiment of pure physicality, to stress the relationship between physical and emotional interaction. In *East of Eden*, prostitutes provide distraction from Charles' loneliness: "Charles was abysmally timid of girls […] he satisfied his normal needs in the anonymity of the prostitute."[24] The word "satisfied" is used by Steinbeck to subvert the reader's preconception of Charles› actions: it is not out of enjoyment but a requirement. Additionally, Steinbeck's equates the whorehouse with institutionalised religion - "the church and the whorehouse […] a different facet of the

> **Other people are not an antidote to problems**

same thing […] of the churches to take a man out of his bleakness for a time, and so did the brothels"[25]- to portray their common purpose: the replacement of bonds. Whilst the whorehouse provides physical compensation for a lack of emotional attachment, the church fills a spiritual emptiness by providing a connection to God. However, the comparison of the church with a whorehouse highlights the contemporary disintegration of the power of religion. Coined by Handy as "a religious depression"[26], America was affected by a spiritual emptiness that saw a reduction in belief and consequently a lost source of purpose. Despite the blasphemous juxtaposition, Steinbeck presents the whorehouse and the church as a panacea, a means by which loneliness can be subdued. Consequently, Steinbeck suggests that those without need of institutional interaction or other people, noted by Franklin: "many people […] are not at all bothered by those periods of time when they are separated"[27] are, paradoxically, the least lonely.

Similarly, *On the Road* portrays friends and strangers alike functioning as compensation for the protagonists' deficiencies. The extensive description of Dean's exploits suggests he is filling a void within himself: "Moriarty, what's this I hear about you sleeping with three girls at the same time?"[28] The revelation halfway through the novel of Dean's unfortunate familial situation, "Dean had never seen his mother's face,"[29], causes the reader's view of his seemingly ridiculous social interactions to change. It becomes increasingly clear that women compensate for his lack of maternal love. Kerouac's exposition of broken family and homelessness, through the sympathetic voice of Sal, offers the reader insight into the damage caused by the Depression and forces the reader to pity Dean. Whilst it doesn't replace his mother›s affection, the number of different women distracts him from his familial loneliness.

18 Kerouac insisted Sal was a self-portrait.

19 Kerouac Jack, quoted by Charters Ann, *"Critical Introduction to On the Road"*, Penguin Books, 2000, pp.9

20 Kerouac, op.cit. pp. 34

21 Ginn, op.cit. pp. 20

22 Ibid

23 Ginn Robert, *"The Paradox of Solitude: Jack Kerouac and Thomas Merton."*, The Merton Seasonal, Vol 24, 1999, pp.20

24 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.47

25 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.217

26 Handy, Robert T. "The American Religious Depression, 1925-1935." *Church History*, vol. 29, no. 1, 1960, pp. 3

27 Franklin Adrian, "On Loneliness.", *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography*, vol. 91, no. 4, 2009, pp. 348

28 Kerouac, op.cit. pp.42

29 Kerouac, op.cit. pp.119

The accusation of Galatea, that Dean has "absolutely no regard for anybody but yourself"[30], serves to confirm Dean's obvious commodification of others. This episode conveys Dean's noticeably solipsistic outlook, a mindset that causes much of Dean's loneliness. The revolving of everything around him ensures that no one can connect emotionally with Dean. The release from loneliness that others provide is highlighted further by Kerouac's description of the crowd at a musician's performance: "his great eyes scan the audience"[31]. Kerouac uses the word "scan" to convey the desperate way in which the musician looks at others, symbolising the universal attempt to find an escape amongst other people. Kerouac uses the "crowd"[32] motif to highlight the potential of others in finding freedom from loneliness. For example, he uses associative language to compare the "crowd" with various substances people take to escape from their own lives: "he wasn't drunk on liquor, just drunk on what he liked [...] crowds of people milling."[33] Given his background of alcohol and Benzedrine abuse, Kerouac's relation of the feeling of the crowd to a state of drunkenness suggests the intoxicating quality of others and embodies the power that contact with other people has in warding off loneliness.

Steinbeck, however, highlights the deficiency of solely physical interaction. He suggests that other people are not an antidote to problems; rather, it is the lasting emotional connections *formed with others* that counteracts loneliness: "it was not the quantum or spatial proximity of the bonds in question or the degree of support they offered, but the quality of the bond itself"[34]. Franklin's analysis is exemplified in Steinbeck's portrayal of the lives of the whores, which evoke the inadequacy of physical touch and the consequences of the prohibition of emotional attachment: "they were forbidden on pain of beating [...] to fall in love with anyone"[35]. This emotional imprisonment is juxtaposed with Steinbeck's description of the desire to escape their own lives: "you have to keep suicide at an absolute minimum and whores [...] are flighty with a razor"[36]. The blasé language used to describe their suicidal tendencies conveys the frequent consequences of the insufficiency of physical interaction; being subjected to an excess of physical contact whilst deprived of emotional connection is a dark experience the prostitutes are desperate to escape. As noted by Barbara Heavilin: "Steinbeck is not blind to the dark, reductive and destructive life of the whore" [37]. This is an accurate reading given the extreme suffering conveyed on account of the combination of physical interaction and emotional restriction. The inescapable nature of the lives of the prostitute is explored in *Butcher's Crossing*, in which the devastating consequences of an emotional connection formed by a prostitute is laid bare. Through the interaction of Andrews and Francine, which sees Andrews abandon Francine following her advances towards the protagonist, "it's for love"[38], Williams exposes the ineluctable role of the prostitute, "the look of her face changed [...] he was assailed by the knowledge that others had seen this face"[39]. This episode is used to convey also the insensitivity of people to the loneliness of others: Andrews, who we see develop into the loneliest character, is inconsiderate to the loneliness Francine feels, shown through his display of little empathy, «It-must be a terrible life for you»[40]. It is clear from this intercourse that solely physical interaction, embodied by the prostitute, is a trap in the form of a vicious cycle of inescapable emotional constraint.

Steinbeck highlights the consequences of a life devoid of emotional bonds through the characterisation of Cathy. For example, his description of Cathy's rooms, which "mirror the emptiness of her life"[41], acts as a representation of her loneliness: "the room was impersonal [...] nothing to indicate that a girl had grown up in it [...] the room had no Cathy imprint"[42], and then later, "her room [...] no photographs, none of the personal articles which identify"[43]. This reveals Steinbeck's view that identity -the sense of oneself- is constituted by memories. Through the association of identity and loneliness, Steinbeck highlights the relationship between an awareness of the physical presence of things and the emotional state of loneliness. For example, being devoid of emotional intelligence, Cathy's lack of memories means that she fails to create a sense of her own existence: "there isn't a goddam thing in there but money"[44]. Steinbeck is commenting on the role memory plays in existence, something that is questioned in Cathy through the description of her "malformed soul"[45]. The link between the physicality of objects and loneliness is an aspect considered by Wordsworth, in which he juxtaposes "in my thoughts [...] solitude/Or blank desertion"[46] with "no familiar objects"[47]. The word "familiar" is used by Wordsworth to emphasise the relationship between recognition and loneliness, an ability Cathy crucially doesn't possess. This develops the idea that loneliness and the inability to recall happy memories are inextricably linked. Steinbeck contrasts the rooms of Cathy with the Hamilton women to highlight their different societal positions, but also to illuminate the impact of memories on loneliness: "immaculate and friendly house [...] crowded with photographs [...] knacks of many

Identity – the sense of oneself – is constituted by memories

birthdays and Christmases"[48]. The reference to "knacks of birthdays and Christmases", examples of "personal articles which identify", is used by Steinbeck to connect the sociability of the Hamilton women to their memories, possessions Cathy lacks. Steinbeck aligns a lack of identity with loneliness through the depiction of the emptiness which surrounds Cathy. Steinbeck uses the motif of Cathy's "remote"[49] and "desolate"[50] eyes to highlight her hollow soul: "as though she had gone away, leaving a breathing doll to conceal her absence"[51], and questions her very existence: "there was something inhuman about her"[52]. This confirms Steinbeck's philosophy that "living is people"[53]. Tragically, Cathy's inability to form connections ultimately results in her loss of identity, epitomised by her suicide. Her demise displays the reduction of the whore to nothingness: "disappeared [...] she had never been"[54], and exposes the relationship between emotional ineptitude and loneliness.

Steinbeck examines the dangers associated with a lack of emotional connection through the interaction between family members, notably in the hostility between Charles and Adam, which results from Charles' father›s preference for Adam: "I love you better."[55] Throughout violent episodes, such as Charles' attempted murder, Steinbeck relates the events to Charles› insecurity caused by his father's lack of love. When interrogated as to why Charles attacked him, Adam intuitively responds: "he doesn't think you love him"[56]. Relating Charles's violence to his envy of the emotional connection between Adam and his father confirms that loneliness breeds violent behaviour as a coping mechanism: "I don't want to be mean. I don't want to be lonely"[57]. The invocation of God by Caleb, "Dear Lord"[58], confirms that the response is instinctive: Caleb believes God has made him mean and lonely, and as such expects him to be able to reverse this. The connection between his lack of kindness and his loneliness highlights that the violent characteristics of Charles and Caleb originate from their loneliness. Steinbeck uses the character of Lee as an objective voice to dictate the importance of parental love: "the greatest terror a child can have is that he is not loved"[59]. The impact of a lack of parental love is examined by Wordsworth in the narration of his feelings following the death of his mother: "I was left alone/ Seeking this visible world [...] The props to my affections were removed"[60]. Through the evocation of the blow his mother's death caused to

This confirms Steinbeck's philosophy that "living is people"

the poet's affections, one can see the impact parents have on the emotional capability and behaviour of children. Wordsworth's juxtaposition of the word "alone" with "affection" confirms the connection between emotional capability and loneliness; Wordsworth clearly recognises the importance of emotional connection in subduing feelings of loneliness. Similarly, Steinbeck portrays the quality of the emotional connection as far more important than the bond itself through the distinction made between strangers and friends: "associates he had, and authority and some admiration, but friends he did not have,"[61]. This exemplifies Franklin's analysis: it is the quality of the bond rather than its presence which is crucial in combatting loneliness. It is weak bonds, such as associations rather than friendships, which create loneliness.

Kerouac suggests that the reliance and constant need for strong emotional bonds prolongs feelings of loneliness. Franklin puts this astutely: "loneliness can be defined as longing for an enduring bond."[62] The inability to be self-sufficient, mitigated by constant interaction with people, ensures loneliness remains. *East of Eden*'s final climactic scene is an embodiment of the dangers of reliance on emotional connection; Caleb is desperate to be forgiven and fails to realise the damaging nature of his desire for his father's love. Instead, Steinbeck suggests he should focus on the fact he *can* love. Similarly, the faults of emotional bonds are highlighted by Kerouac through the exposition of the idea of phoney community in America. Kerouac portrays community as provocation for loneliness through Sal's interaction with other people: "solitude gives way to community, community to solitude, in a continuing oscillation"[63]. This is confirmed by the ease with which people close to Sal, with whom he shared so many bonding experiences, leave him: "Dean will leave you out in the cold any time it's in his interest"[64]. The danger of reliance on others is highlighted by Kerouac through Sal's realisation towards the end of the novel: "when I got better, I realised what a rat he was"[65]. The eventual degradation of his closest relationship at the end of the *On the Road* conveys the inevitable infirmity of bonds, and the futility of the emotional connections Sal makes, in line with Franklin who remarks that "loneliness could be experienced regardless of whether sufferers are connected to a spouse, family unity, neighbourhood or a friendship circle"[66]. Regardless of any bonds made, there is always the possibility that loneliness will remain.

Kerouac suggests that the root for loneliness arises from one's personal mindset. Sal's journey evokes the common misinterpretation that loneliness is caused by

30 Kerouac, op.cit. pp.176
31 Kerouac, op.cit. pp.159
32 Kerouac, op.cit. pp.49
33 Kerouac, op.cit. pp.49
34 Franklin, op.cit. pp.344
35 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.47
36 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.222
37 Heavilin Barbara, "Steinbeck's Exploration of Good and Evil: Structural and Thematic Unity in *East of Eden*," in *Steinbeck Quarterly*, Vol. 26, Nos. 3–4, Summer/Fall 1993, pp. 90-100

38 Williams John, *Butchers Crossing*, Vintage, 2014, pp.68
39 Ibid, pp.69
40 Williams, op.cit. pp.66
41 Heavilin, op.cit, pp90-100
42 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.85
43 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.223
44 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp562
45 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.74
46 Wordsworth William, *The Two-Book Prelude*, jacklynch.net, line.1.124
47 Ibid

48 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.386-387
49 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.186
50 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.327
51 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.186
52 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.137
53 Steinbeck John, *letter to Elaine*, quoted by Wyatt, op.cit. pp.9
54 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.553
55 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.30
56 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.34
57 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.380
58 Ibid
59 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.271
60 Wordsworth, op.cit. lines 2.325-7

61 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.443
62 Franklin, op.cit. pp.334
63 Miller Alan, "Ritual Aspects of Narrative: An Analysis of Jack Kerouac's "The Dharma Bums"" *Journal of Ritual Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1, 1995, pp. 50
64 Kerouac op.cit. pp154
65 Kerouac, op.cit. pp.276
66 Franklin, op.cit. pp.344

surroundings. This is embodied by Dean's plea to Sal: "we gotta go […] I don't know [where], but we gotta go"[67]. The desperation of Dean, evoked through the repetition of the imperative "we gotta go", conveys the protagonists' belief that physical situation influences their problems. The confluence of Sal's constant desire to keep moving, which he argues rids him of "confusion and nonsense"[68], and an "absence of coherent destination"[69], prompts the reader to view his journey as an escape attempt. Kerouac conveys the fleeing nature of Sal's movement, which Hemmer compares to an "outlaw"[70], through the use long paragraphs and sentences which often seem to have no end. This narrative style stems from Kerouac's writing process, in which he wrote the novel in three weeks on one, continuous 120-foot-long scroll. In *On the Road*, there is a corresponding sense that Sal is afraid to stop. Whilst Leslie Fielder suggests that *On the Road* is about the inescapability of mid-century American culture, the continuing nature of Sal's problems, even when removed from American society, suggests that *On the Road* is precipitated by the inescapability of oneself. Loneliness cannot be outran, because it is psychological.

Steinbeck also examines the inescapability of loneliness. For example, he compares Adam's loneliness to an ever-present animal: "Adam walked through the dark town, increasing his speed [...] his loneliness sniffed along behind him"[71]. Steinbeck's use of zoomorphism is deeply ironic. By comparing his loneliness to a "companion animal"[72], the embodiment of love and intimacy, Steinbeck exemplifies the presence and strength of Adam's bond to loneliness. In a similar vein, Kerouac uses the repeated symbol of the ghost, the embodiment of emptiness, which haunts Sal throughout the novel, to confirm the inescapability of loneliness: "something, someone, some spirit was pursuing all of us across the desert and was bound to catch us before we reached heaven"[73]. The uncertainty with which Sal considers this form confirms its intangibility and, consequently, its psychological nature. Loneliness, consequently, accompanies him regardless of surrounding.

The discrepancy between physical and psychological states is similarly examined by Williams in *Butchers Crossing* through the description of the emptiness that Andrews feels on his journey through the desolate Colorado landscape: "he felt himself to be like the land, without identity or shape; sometimes one of the men would look at him, look through him, as if he did not exist"[74]. The juxtaposition of "identity" and "shape"

is used to convey the connection between the internal and external, and the effect of loneliness on both. The dichotomy between physical and psychological emptiness is confirmed by Andrews's response to this void of feeling: "he had to shake his head sharply and move an arm or a leg and glance at it to assure himself that he was visible"[75]. This self-examination shows the strength of this feeling of emptiness: the psychological causes himself to question the physical. This confirms Kerouac's suggestion that people can feel lonely even when amongst a crowd: "I was just somebody else, some stranger, and my whole life was a haunted life, the life of a ghost"[76]. This reference provides evidence of the all-consuming nature of loneliness, causing him to detach himself from his own life: "I had lived and loved in the spectral past"[77]. All his memories, which Steinbeck argues make up identity, are plagued by his loneliness. There is an emptiness which remains unconfronted: "What myth, what ghost, what spirit?"[78]. The presence of unresolved doubt even towards the end of *On the Road*, portrayed through Kerouac's use of rhetorical questions, shows the unintelligibility of loneliness, leaving Sal feeling empty. However, it is ultimately this enforced emptiness that makes him aware

of his spiritual insolvency. It is on account of the ghost that Sal discovers his own identity: "suddenly rising, and roaming America, serious, curious".[79]

The notion that loneliness has some benefit is explored further by both authors. For example, *East of Eden* illustrates

Loneliness breeds violent behaviour as a coping mechanism

how emptiness often results in an increased state of productivity, as working avoids the mutually reinforcing combination of boredom and loneliness. In Steinbeck's own life, it was when emotional bonds were broken that he was most creative. For example, Steinbeck wrote *East of Eden*, which he considered his *magnus opus*, when he was consumed with the breakdown of his second marriage and the death of his close friend and marine biologist, Ed Richetts. Similarly, Kerouac attributes much of his creative ability to loneliness he enjoyed in his "monastic life"[80] with his mother. Novel writing was clearly an "adaptive response"[81] to the loneliness endured. The "intellectual fascination with loneliness"[82], and wider psychological states, originates from an interest in the benefits that stem from it, highlighted in Steinbeck through its "meditative tone"[83]. Kerouac, for example, was desperate to become "an adventurer, a lonely traveller"[84] with "his own mind"[85]. Given the authors' shared experience and desire for loneliness, their research and writing facilitated this.

I am inclined to agree with Miller, who suggested that "psychologically for Kerouac, his actual, compulsive travels were a kind of desperate self-therapy"[86]. Both authors suggest that loneliness promotes freedom of thought: "when she was alone [...] she permitted her mind to play"[87] and "all alone in the night I had my own thoughts"[88]. Steinbeck's correspondence with John O'Hara in 1949- "the only creative thing our species has is the individual, lonely mind"[89]- highlights the relationship between creativity and loneliness. The breakdown of emotional bonds also benefits some of the characters in the novel. Adam's elation following the relinquished attachment to Cathy, "I'm free. I don't have to worry anymore."[90], offers insight into the liberation that comes from the breakdown of emotional bonds. Adam realises that the grip Cathy had over him was more damaging than any loneliness he feels on account of their separation. This echoes the beneficial separation from Steinbeck's second wife, whom he had demonised: "she became a monster in John's mind"[91]. Loneliness provides safety from others, described as "soft protective folds"[92], and promotes the development of "self-sufficiency"[93]. The isolation from people is a protective and attractive barrier: there is only yourself to be hurt by.

Kerouac explores the potential benefits of loneliness through the description of Sal's paradise-like experience. When Sal is at his most beat, the tone becomes beautifully poetic: "shining in bright mind essence, innumerable lotus-lands falling open in the magic mothswarm of heaven."[94] The use of sensuous prose evokes the immense pleasure that Sal gains from his release from everyone: "I felt sweet, swinging bliss, like a big shot of heroin in the mainline vein; like a gulp of wine in the afternoon"[95]. Kerouac's uses images such as "heroin", a forbidden substance but not completely unfamiliar, to act as a metaphor for loneliness; it is a frowned-upon state, but one that is both damaging and enjoyable. The pleasure that can be acquired from loneliness is examined too by Wordsworth, who described the "visionary power"[96] that he received during his solitary nocturnal activities. This feeling of bliss was attributed in *The Two-Book Prelude* to the ability to be satisfied when lonely, coined as "the self-sufficing power of solitude"[97]. However, the reference to "power" embodies Wordsworth's belief that more than simply being satisfied, loneliness is the very thing that creates benefits, shown through his use of the simile "sweet as solitude"[98]. The use of the adjective "sweet" is the same adjective Kerouac uses, displaying the common, unmistakeable experience of loneliness. In a similar vein,

Film Poster for the Spanish version of *On the Road*

Kerouac portrays the limitless possibilities of being in a beat state. Kerouac himself discovered that loneliness is accompanied by potential gain and self-discovery through his own travels and those of Sal. Miller describes Sal's journey as one of discovery: "the pilgrim journey was as important as the arrival at the holy destination"[99]. The relation of Sal's journey to pilgrimage, the embodiment of experience, conveys the extent of the experiences had when lonely. Miller describes this as "the experience of solitary communitas.""[100], and claims that sustains life. Kerouac arguably believes that one must experience loneliness in order to gain the mental strength to understand it, and consequently to stop feeling lonely.

Whilst both authors present loneliness as essentially a psychological state, Steinbeck suggests it is formed by a lack of emotional interaction with other people, whereas Kerouac firmly believes that loneliness is a much deeper personal experience: the state is caused by a lack of self-sufficiency. However, there is much common ground between the two authors. The idea that the experience of loneliness is inescapable, constantly on the shoulders of people, but also not universally negative, is shared by both. Finally, there is also a distinct agreement that loneliness can lead to heightened productivity for characters and authors alike, and the novels themselves are the compelling evidence of this point.

67 Kerouac, op.cit. pp.217
68 Kerouac, op.cit. pp121
69 Kupetz Joshua, "Jack Kerouac", *The Cambridge Companion to American Novelists* (Cambridge Companions to Literature), Cambridge University Press, pp.221
70 Hemmer Kurt, "Jack Kerouac and the Beat Novel", *The Cambridge Companion to the Beats*, Cambridge University Press, 2017, pp.225
71 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.151
72 Franklin, op.cit. pp.350
73 Kerouac, op.cit. pp.112
74 Williams, op.cit. pp.87

75 Williams, op.cit. pp 87
76 Kerouac, op.cit. pp.15
77 Kerouac, op.cit. pp.153
78 Kerouac, op.cit. pp269
79 Spangler, op.cit. pp.311
80 Charters, op.cit. pp.9
81 Wyatt, op.cit. pp.9
82 Newhouse Thomas, "The Beat Generation and the Popular Novel in the United States, 1945-1970", McFarland and Company, 2000, pp.3
83 Wyatt, op.cit. pp. 14
84 Kerouac, quoted in Charters, op.cit. pp.10
85 Ibid

86 Miller, op.cit. pp.47
87 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.25
88 Kerouac, op.cit. pp125
89 Kerouac in "Journal of a Novel: The "East of Eden" Letters", 1968, quoted in Wyatt, op.cit. pp12
90 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.331
91 Jackson Benson, quoted in Wyatt, op.cit. pp.10
92 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.562
93 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.116
94 Steinbeck, op.cit. pp.442
95 Kerouac, op.cit. pp.157
96 Wordsworth, op.cit, line 2.363
97 Ibid, line 2.78
98 Ibid, line 2.348

99 Miller, op.cit. pp.42
100 Miller, op.cit. pp.52

Tune and Text

Melinda Zhu is enchanted by the melody of music and the musicality of modern literature.

'Music and literature' represent both an unlikely and inevitable pairing. Aside from the ancient association between music and verse, there is a treasure trove of music in modern literature; as soon as one starts looking, examples crop up everywhere. The intersection of the two disciplines is one of the most complex to explore, because where to start? What is meant when we say that music influences literature, and literature affects music – without pinning down the nature of the interaction, everything influences everything. It is true that there is not only one channel through which the two forms interact. It is often the case that the influence is subtle and hard to define. Nonetheless, the exploration of one creative form, framed as a metaphor or analogy of another, opens new angles of interpretation. Perhaps it comes down to the fact that those musically disposed are correlated with those who are literarily inclined, and vice versa. Whatever the method or reason, the connection runs deep, with the shared words and notes infusing our experience of both tune and text.

The examples of modern literature that reference music would be encyclopaedic. A mention of a song in the background, or a significant CD perhaps. Music permeates the literary universe just as it can be an important backdrop to lives in reality. The ways in which literature responds to music, is about music, imitates music, leads to more prominent musicalities, texts including Vikram Seth's *An Equal Music* and *Jazz* by Toni Morrison. To start off with, the respective titles mark out a musical territory in which their literary worlds are based. The Daily Telegraph's review of Seth's novel read, 'The finest novel about music ever written in English'. The book is a very musical one; the plot centres around Michael, the second violinist of a string quartet. We quietly sit in on their rehearsals, from the ritualistic scale played at each session, to the frustrations of transposing music and sourcing instruments. The book is probing in its exploration of what it means to not only make music, but our very experience of it, and how these two modes interact. And from this book about musicians, we are able to learn not a little about classical music, but even more about the nature of emotion. The power of music to contain and retain memory is not dissimilar to the very words on the page that describe it.

In a similar vein, Elifriede Jelinek's *The Piano Teacher*, and Kazuo Ishiguro's short story collection 'Nocturnes' is as much *about* music as the lessons that the music teaches us. Clearly this is an area of great literary interest, with

Ozawa conducting the New Japan Philharmonic playing Bartok in Boston.

both authors being Nobel Prize laureates. Add Toni Morrison's *Jazz* to the list and that makes three. Besides content and narrative, the influence of music reaches into the formal elements. Ishiguro's five short stories form a cycle, not unlike a song cycle in classical music. Each story is a complete 'piece' that can stand alone. But reading them in succession, the refrains and motifs – including the return of Lindy Gardner in the four story 'Nocturne', from a different perspective than her first entrance in 'Crooner' – the separate meaning develop into a larger work. The book's title, 'Nocturnes, Five Stories of Music and Nightfall', draws out the idea that the meanings of music and the rhythms of life are closely interrelated, not only complementary forces, but in some cases inextricable. Morrison's Jazz is written in a way that reads like jazz music. The structure of the narrative feels spontaneous, improvised, atemporal, like the music of the title.

The structural foundations of music and literature can be discussed using the same metalanguage; voice in song becomes a narrative in a book, seeping into polyphony. The use of voices and voicing appears in T. S. Eliot's *The Wasteland*, which in turn was inspired by Charles Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*. Rhythm, together with recurrence of themes and variations are common elements. Indeed, the way in which we read books, and listen to music, have distinct overlaps. Unlike painting, or other visual media, both have an ingrained temporality within each of its structural units, beginning with a word or note, arranged, written, composed into a specific sequence and order. In this way both forms rely on this 'direction of travel'; there is a word that follows another and then another… just as notes are played in the order encoded on the staves. Pictures, in contrast, have focal points without the same temporal bounds and direction. You can look left to right and right to left, but you can't read in both directions, nor can you listen to a piece of music backwards without fundamentally altering its meaning.

Interviews of writers have revealed how the experience of music and writing are so intertwined, that it often seems that they are symptoms or iterations of the very same process and concerns.

Kazuo Ishiguro has said that 'I used to see myself as a musician', beginning as a singer-songwriter before becoming a novelist. In a sense, he was always a writer, composing music and lyrics; 'One of the key things I learnt writing lyrics – and this had an enormous influence on my fiction – was that with an intimate, confiding, first-person song, the meaning must not be self-sufficient on the page. It has to be oblique, sometimes you have to read between the lines." [1] Once the reader starts to read between the lines, reading the staves on which his writing is laid down, other musical references and influences emerge. In Ishiguro's novel *Never Let Me Go*, the title refers to a 'jazz standard by Jay Livingston that recurs throughout the

book'[2]. The track is a figure in the novel, an object that is able to hold the nostalgia and memory of a specific time. The mnemic residue of music is one of the reasons it so compelling, how it can channel emotion and experience.

The prolific writer Haruki Murakami has explored this theme in not only in his writing but through his own life. Prior to his career as a novelist, Murakami ran a jazz bar in Tokyo. His characters populate these spaces, and each of his novels have their own distinct soundtrack, in which they reference specific tracks from the Beatles, to Beethoven, forming another channel of understanding between writer, text, and reader. These musical influences can be read as another form of intertextuality, where the fabric of music weaves itself into words. Musical references form a metatext to the words on the page. Murakami's most famous novel, *Norwegian Wood*, is a reference to the Beatles song on the 1965 album *Rubber Soul*. The intense nostalgia, and grief over things lost permeates song and book. As in Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*, the song becomes the title track of the book, making the experience of reading almost cinematic.

Murakami's book with the conductor Seiji Ozawa, *Absolutely on Music* illuminates similarities in the craft of writing and conducting. Told in six conversations, the process of synthesis behind each work suggests similar sensitivities to tone, textures, and pace. Murakami's extensive knowledge and passion for music is also clearly evident. Here, the boundaries between the two different art forms seem porous.

> These musical influences can be read as another form of intertextuality

Broaching this theme from another angle, the angle of musicians writing literature, we are led to Bob Dylan. In 2016, he received the Nobel Prize for Literature, not without surprise. The panel's motivation of giving Dylan the prize was "for having created new poetic expressions within the great American song tradition". Bob Dylan, the song-writing legend, is known for the introspective depth of his lyrics, his rough-and-ready delivery, coupled with the uncut rawness of his voice which leads to music which has cajoled, comforted, and charmed millions. Does that make him a poet?

The testing of this boundary is more contentious. There are others who straddle both disciplines – see Leonard Cohen, John Cooper-Clarke, or even Simon Armitage, the poet laureate who has his own band Land Yacht Regatta. Is this not another expression of what is evident from all of the examples discussed so far, that writing, and music are symptoms of the same cause? Even if we do not agree on the 'same' cause, the relationship cannot be further than adjacency. For writer, read 'composer'. For song, read 'story'. These shared meanings run across the fabric of creative thought.

1 https://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/mar/15/kazuo-ishiguro-i-used-to-see-myself-as-a-musician

2 https://www.npr.org/2021/03/17/978138547/kazuo-ishiguro-draws-on-his-songwriting-past-to-write-novels-about-the-future?t=1641227036879

The Parisian demi-mondaine in Art and Literature

Carlotta Shahenshah explores how prostitution became a powerful symbol of the flaws of society in 19th – 20th century bourgeois Paris, as displayed by French painting and literature of the period.

Edouard Manet, Olympia. «Shocking⟩was the word used to describe Edouard Manet›s masterpiece when it was first unveiled in Paris in 1865.

In spite of its being 'the oldest profession', prostitution is not widely considered a field of interest deserving of sophisticated analysis. However, certain art and literary critics, share, like myself, the view that this trade, and its presentation in various media, is in fact one of the most poignant symbols of the collapse of modern society. In France, or perhaps more specifically in French art and literature, prostitution has served as a prevailing beacon towards everything wrong with 19th and 20th century bourgeois Parisian culture, with some even arguing that it symbolises the downfall of the French State's power. From the Mary Magdalene to the trope of the 'fallen woman', prostitution is no short of representation in the written word. In this essay I will be centralising on a specific type of prostitute: the 'demi-mondaine'. The *demi-monde* was the world occupied by elite men and the women who entertained them and whom they kept; a

pleasure-loving and dangerous world. 'Demi-mondaine' became a synonym for a courtesan or prostitute who moved in these circles[1]. The prostitute as a greater symbol was brought into fashion by the writers and artists of the July Monarchy, the time of the Third Republic and 'La Belle Epoque' after the First World War (the beautiful era), a period of optimism towards which many Parisians felt nostalgia and wistfulness. The primary painters in question include Edouard Manet and Henri Toulouse-Lautrec. Alexandre Dumas (fils), Marcel Proust and Charles Baudelaire make up some of the writers who adopted the prostitute motif in their work, the latter even claiming: '"What is art? Prostitution." The claims of modern art are *reduced* to prostitution, while prostitution

1 Alice B. Fort & Herbert S. Kates. "Le Demi-monde, a synopsis of the play by Alexander Dumas (fils)".

Manet's Nana (1877) was refused at the Salon of Paris. Manet decided to exhibit his painting instead in a shop window on the Boulevard des Capucines, one of Paris's main streets.

Used to expose the hypocrisy in the ever-expanding Parisian bourgeoisie

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Salon de la Rue Des Moulins (1894). Toulouse-Lautrec was an eager exponent of society scenes in the Montmartre area and was renowned for his provocative scenes of decadent life in Paris.

itself is *elevated* to art. Art and prostitution mirror a double-spectre'[2]. Analysing the artwork and literature of this period allows one to, at least in some sense, understand the downfall of 19th- early 20th century Parisian society, and perhaps also why this period of time which was so cherished (by some) had to come to an end, all underscored by the presence of prostitutes.

The sheer number of different nouns to describe various types of prostitutes should be a testament to its prevalence in French literature, these including: *lorettes, filles publiques, grisettes, demi-mondaines, courtisanes* and *dames entretenues*, to name just six. The difference in type of prostitute lay mostly in their relationship to the man, for instance, whether they fulfilled an additional role as a companion or caretaker. The *lorettes*, though higher in rank than

filles publiques, were considered «aspiring courtesans.» Working outside of *maisons de tolérance*, or authorised and «tolerated» brothels, *lorettes* were considered *insoumises* (undocumented or unregulated) and therefore subject, when arrested, to the government's harsh prostitution laws. Inhabiting the neighbourhood around the Notre-Dame-de-Lorette Cathedral on the right bank, they were rounded up and taken to jail simply for being out too late[3]. On *lorettes*, Dumas wrote «This breed belonged entirely to the feminine sex: it was made up of charming little beings, tidy, elegant, flirtatious, whom one could not classify according to any known type: she was neither [...] a street walker, nor a *grisette*, nor a courtesan./ She wasn›t the bourgeois type./ And she certainly wasn›t the honest/ decent woman type[4].»

Yet, although their existence in the arts prevailed, this is not to say that these novels or paintings were ever presented through the lens of the courtesan. "Baudelaire never wrote a poem on prostitution from a standpoint of the prostitute[5]." They were a symbol, not a voice. They were not the spokespeople of the Parisian underclass, they were a representation of the failings and corruption of the French upper classes, and later on I will discuss how they exemplify the tragedy of late 19th century Paris, to which they ultimately fell victim. Prostitution is worth further study because it concerns the two facets regarded as the most important in life: sex and money. These elements lie at the heart of society, the heart of corruption, and the heart of politics. At the time and still to this day, one of the only ways to yield power is to hold one of these two things over someone else; prostitution involves both. There is a real sense of duality regarding prostitution, serving as the only way in which women could seize any power over men at the time, exposing them for their true feeble natures; however, the tragedy was that these women won the battle and lost the war, with men always prevailing - as shown by history - and these women not *allowed* to be 'victims' due to their taboo profession. Proust's *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu* features a double-entendre in the final word, with 'perdu' both meaning lost as well as wasted; the time wasted by the state trying to fix the corruption in society. French art and writing attests prostitution to be a paradoxical endeavour, with the empowerment these

women attain proving ultimately fruitless. The state finally took the narrative that, simply speaking, the earlier discourse on public order had been taken to a new level; everything tied to prostitution was an assault on society and a denigration of the kingdom and God's order. Prostitutes were not sex workers, they were "fallen women"[6].

Used to expose the hypocrisy in the ever-expanding Parisian bourgeoisie (a more nuanced term for the upper-middle class) and their practices in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, prostitutes are omnipresent in French literature of the time. To take Dumas' *La Dame aux Camélias* as an example, the attitude towards prostitutes is presented to have changed considerably. Partially rid of their vulgar, contemptible perception with their newfound appearance in high-class circles, prostitutes became more accepted into mainstream society. *La Dame aux Camélias* presents Marguerite Gautier, a prostitute, as having redeemable qualities which challenged society's condemnation of the "fallen woman". This controversial portrayal altered the public's view of the "fallen woman" to a more realistic perspective, causing them to recognise their humanity[7]. Dumas' semi-autobiographical work renders his lover Marguerite, though not wholly benignly,

with compassion and tenderness, portraying her as prepared to sacrifice her luxurious lifestyle for him, only to be deterred by an event out of her control (the arrival of Armand's father). *La Dame aux Camélias* makes a larger statement about the fragile world of a courtesan. Ironically, though Marguerite is a prostitute, she possesses an air of innocence and naivety in her portrayal, giving her only partial culpability for the tragic fate she receives at the end of the play. Instead, Dumas gives the audience the sense that society instead is at fault for what has happened to her. One of the most famous lines of the play is her deathbed outcry: "I have lived for love and now I am dying of it". In this way, Marguerite is just one example of how prostitutes were exploited and admired until all of their beauty (and in her case, health) was gone, and then discarded by society to die, with no regard to their - very human - emotions.

One of the most celebrated pieces of French writing, Marcel Proust›s *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* also utilises a prostitute, Odette, as an ideal vehicle to criticise the hypocrisy of bourgeois mores, with the socially stratified world of prostitutes presenting a fascinating microcosm of French society as a whole[8]. As a character, Odette comes across almost completely in contrast to Marguerite. Instead of being wronged by others and her downfall caused by fickleness, Odette is an adroit seductress who causes noble protagonist Swann's most horrible suffering. Without beauty or wit on her side, she

> They essentially embody the entire value system of this new social class

schemes to work her way up the social ladder, deceiving Swann and preventing him from seeing who she really is. Proust therefore presents prostitutes, superficially, in a more negative light, as Odette is essentially a villain in this volume. However, though an unsympathetic figure, Odette does symbolise a woman with power over a man. Without even needing to use good looks, she manages to completely ensnare and disarm Swann by using his own vanity against him to make him fallaciously fall in love with her. Through this, Proust highlights the weak and feeble nature of these men in aristocratic Parisian circles, who allow themselves to be deceived and their lives to be infiltrated by these courtesans. The role of the prostitute in Proust's work is completely different to it in that of Dumas', but both present them as causing turmoil in the high ranks of Parisian society, proving how, somewhat irrespective of how they ended up, prostitutes yielded significant power over men with authority.

The ninth instalment of Zola's 20-volume *Les Rougon-Macquart* series, *Nana* is a novel entitled after its demimondaine protagonist. Much like Odette, Nana destroys every man who goes after her, usually either by ruining them financially or, in multiple cases, causing them to take their own lives. As George Becker said: «What emerges from *Nana* is the completeness of Nana›s destructive force, brought to a culmination

2 "Baudelaire on Beauty, Love, Prostitutes and Modernity." *The Wire*, accessed Aug. 2021.

3 "La Lorette: Types of Prostitutes in 19th Century France. A La Recherche Des Femmes Perdues." Oberlin College Library.
4 Alexandre Dumas, "Filles, lorettes, courtesanes", 1844.

5 "Baudelaire on Beauty, Love, Prostitutes and Modernity." *The Wire*.
6 Conner, Susan P. *The Paradoxes and Contradictions of Prostitution in Paris.* Brill, 23 Aug. 2017.

7 Johnson, Christiana. The Kabod: 'La Dame Aux Camelias' Effect on Society's View of the "Fallen Woman."

8 "Women of Ill Repute: Prostitutes in Nineteenth-Century French Literature | French | Amherst College."

in the thirteenth chapter by a kind of roll call of the victims of her voracity[9]". On the other hand, her demise is reminiscent of that of Dumas' Marguerite, dying of a painful case of smallpox which spoils her beauty and reveals her true nefarious nature and ugly character. Yet Zola's portrayal of Nana seems to allude to a larger picture of society at the time, her actions only being a product of her environment; she represents the values of the particular age. When she spends money extravagantly, when she acts capriciously, and when she demands excessively from the men who adore her, she becomes a symbol of the age which sacrificed virtues to enjoyments[10]. Furthermore, her downfall coincides with the start of the Franco-Prussian War, one which will ultimately end in defeat for France and the end of the Second Empire. This substantiates the claim that not only are prostitutes partly free from responsibility of their behaviour as they are merely a reflection of their surroundings, but more crucially, that they are a paramount symbol of the collapse of the French Empire. Zola employed Nana in his novel to wreck all facets of high society: from journalists to Counts to wealthy government men, until there was nothing left to destroy, and when Nana herself is on the verge of death, there is a total breakdown in the whole of society and the whole country (represented by the war). Nana cannot be entirely blamed however for this disintegration, as she is merely a personification of everything destructive which generations of being mistreated and punished by the State and by society has led to. Fundamentally, what Proust, Dumas (fils) and Zola used prostitutes for in their literature was not to highlight the immorality of these women and the inefficacy of society in dealing with them, but rather the immorality of society itself, and why these pitiful prostitutes emerge from such a repugnant environment.

In art, the approach taken differs slightly. It may be fitting to begin with the painting of the same name of the novel prior discussed. Manet's 1877 oil painting *Nana* was in fact rejected by the Salon de Paris for its subject matter, as it was deemed too frank a portrayal of prostitution for French society at the time, ironic considering that the very men likely engaging in these practices found it too 'direct' to see visualised in a painting. One reason why prostitution was such a commonly adopted motif in Manet's works is that he was famed for being a 'realist' painter. Now, what is more 'real' than simply depicting the prostitutes omnipresent in Parisian high society in the late 19th century? Obviously, this proved to be too 'real' for the Salon de Paris, demonstrating a lack of accountability and ability to confront themselves with the corruptions in their own associations. Prostitution became the pinnacle of modernism, as it revealed everything which society could not admit about itself. It represented a beautiful, alluring exterior behind which hid a scandalous core. 'Manet's work is an incarnation of the disease called «modernism,» whose chief symptoms are commercial noise, aesthetic aberration and moral degeneration. And all those who defend, buy or condone such work are inexorably tainted with the disease[11].'

Manet's other and more celebrated painting involving a prostitute is *Olympia* (1863), one which truly challenged romantic ideals of female nudity and sex work in French society at the time[12]. Manet was very influenced in his thinking about art by Baudelaire (whom he probably met in 1858), the author of the infamous *Les Fleurs du Mal*, a volume of poetry which resulted in two charges of offences against public morality. On modern (19th-20th C) painting, he wrote: "I observe that the majority of artists who have tackled modern life have contented themselves with official and public subjects…However there are private subjects which are very much more heroic than these. The pageant of fashionable life and the thousands of floating existences - criminals and kept women ('entretenues') - which drift about in the underworld of a great city…The life of our city is rich in poetic and marvellous subjects…[13]". This 'underworld' is led by the 'entretenues' ('kept women' or prostitutes), and insight to it is awarded, for one, through Manet's paintings. Baudelaire and Manet would both have called themselves *'flâneurs'*: men of leisure who watch their social environment *'with cold detachment'* always from the side-lines. It is a dispassionate but also non-judgemental position, giving credibility to Manet's 'realist' paintings of prostitutes. Olympia is perversive, confronting 19th century Paris with its own corruption. She is a high-class prostitute, not a Venus lying nude in a coy demeanour. There is no way for a viewer to argue that they are looking at it for the sake of divine beauty; one is confronted with their own sexual appetite. Outlined in black; her flesh hardly emphasised and her hands being filthy all indicate her unembellished vulgarity. The lack of 'care' and precision to cover up the brushstrokes and paint emphasises that bare, rough, nakedness which we are forced to confront. Olympia stares the viewer in the eyes and makes it impossible for her to be ignored. Manet gives the power to Olympia in this painting, she makes society uncomfortable with the exposition of its sinfulness. Manet chose not to mollify anxiety about this new modern world of which Paris had become a symbol. For those anxious about class status (many had recently moved to Paris from the countryside), the naked Olympia coldly stared back at the new urban bourgeoisie looking to art to solidify their own sense of identity. Aside from prostitution - itself a dangerous sign of the emerging margins in the modern

> She makes society uncomfortable with the exposition of its sinfulness

9 Becker, George J. (1982). Master European Realists of the Nineteenth Century. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co. p. 118.
10 Brown, Frederick. "Zola and Manet: 1866." *The Hudson Review*, vol. 41, no. 1, 1988, pp. 71–92.
11 Arbiter, Petronius. "An Unethical Work: 'Nana' by Manet." *The Art World*, vol. 2, no. 6, 1917, p. 536.
12 Greer, Germaine. "Artists have always glamorised prostitution. Manet savaged all their delusions". *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media. Retrieved 10 April 2018.
13 The Salon of 1846: "On the Heroism of Modern Life", Charles Baudelaire.

Symbols of the degraded morals, societal decadence or oppressive politics of their time

city - the painting's inclusion of a black woman tapped into the French colonialist mindset while providing a stark contrast for the whiteness of Olympia. The black woman also served as a powerful emblem of "primitive" sexuality, one of many fictions that aimed to justify colonial views of non-Western societies[14]. In these ways, Manet's paintings can be seen as using prostitutes as a means to make a more overarching criticism of and confrontation to French bourgeois society.
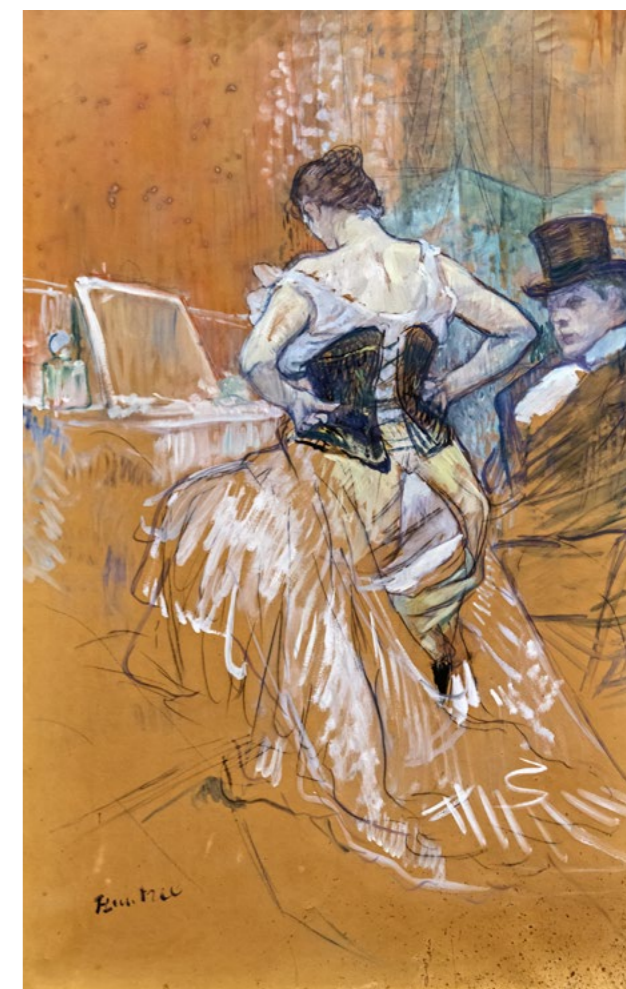
Generally speaking, artists and writers of the July Monarchy who focused upon prostitutes in their work tended to use them as symbols of the degraded morals, societal decadence or oppressive politics of their time. The Second Empire came to be associated with a particular order of clandestine prostitute: the glittering courtesan, who emulated the fashions and refined postures of the upper echelons of bourgeois and court society. This occurred because there were highly visible «real» courtesans to depict, to be sure, but also because the rebuilding of the city by Emperor Napoleon III produced social fears explicitly tied to a discomfort with the blurring of social boundaries in Paris - a state of affairs that artists and moralists alike often found embodied by the courtesan. Representations of this theme in the July Monarchy and Second Empire shared a tendency toward an overtly symbolic or emblematic use of the subject of the contemporary prostitute[15]. Contrarily, Toulouse-Lautrec shed light instead on the *less* glamorous aspects of being an - albeit 'high-class' - prostitute. In *The Medical Inspection*, one of the most dreaded parts of the profession is displayed: the examination for sexually transmitted diseases, which were rampant in elegant Paris at the time. The discomfort and knowledge of what is to come is evident in the tensed facial muscles of the depicted women with their dresses raised in unwelcome anticipation. The social indulgence and debauchery which was so characteristic of this period in Paris is revealed for its true foulness here, and we see that the onus of dealing with the *ugly* parts of bourgeois lifestyle falls solely on these women so mystified and romanticised by others. Toulouse-Lautrec is an exception; he exposes the irony and hypocrisy of those who glamorise these prostitutes, simply by highlighting only some of their suffering. This painting would also have been somewhat of a cautionary tale and a reminder to the men, many of whom would have been married and in eminent positions in the government, of who they were dealing with, and perhaps more importantly, who they were allowing to languish without necessary support by state or by society.

The reason why prostitutes are so fitting with regard to the emergence of the French bourgeoisie is because they essentially embody the entire value system of this new social class, and yet, hypocritically, were mistreated and scorned by the same people who engaged in sexual acts with them. Most notably, all of the government men who were known for keeping several courtesans at a time. The bourgeoisie was established to allow an upper middle class of elegant, educated and liberal people to prosper (the difference being between them and the nobility before them that the bourgeois class actually had occupations), with the freedom of the individual and importance of industry and success being some of the most paramount bourgeois principles. Therefore, how can a high-class prostitute, an emblem of allure and a poster girl for employment as a means to affluence, be anything other than a reflection of the society around them? When the bourgeois' obsession with social caste intensified, prostitutes were left neglected and even punished with strict laws forcing them into even harder lines of work, and as these women fell, so did society.

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Conquête de passage, 1896

14 Édouard Manet, Olympia (2017). *Édouard Manet, Olympia*. Khan Academy.
15 Painted Love: Prostitution in French Art of the Impressionist Era, Hollis Clayson, 2003, Getty Publications Virtual Library.

We Three Kings of Orient Aren't

Brendan Bethlehem examines the history and reliability of the well known story.

We three kings of Orient are,
Bearing gifts we travel afar.
Field and fountain,
Moor and mountain,
Following yonder star.

John Henry Hopkins

ἐν ἡμέραις Ἡρῴδου τοῦ βασιλέως, ἰδού, μάγοι ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν παρεγένοντο εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα,
λέγοντες, Ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ τεχθεὶς βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων;

The Three Magi, Byzantine mosaic c. 565, Basilica of Sant›Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, Italy. Byzantine art usually depicts the Magi in Persian clothing which includes breeches, capes and Phrygian caps.

The confusion which surrounds the Magi is rather extraordinary. There are other biblical figures shrouded in more mystery – a notable example might be the "brothers" of Jesus, a cause of endless theological quibbles all by itself[1] – but there are none who have achieved such a place in the mental image of Christmas as the "three wise men".

Even the term *three wise men* is something of a misnomer. Matthew's original text never refers to the number of magi explicitly, and so the number is entirely derived from the number of gifts which they brought. The use of μάγος *magos* for 'wise man' is in fact a *hapax legomenon* – the usual translation is something closer to 'sorcerer', or alternatively 'Zoroastrian priest', in fact its origin.

As a result, it seems that all we can say with Biblical evidence is the following: after Christmas, at least two men came from the East with three gifts – gold, frankincense, myrrh – to a house in Bethlehem where Jesus was staying. It can be gathered as extraneous evidence that they were men of some means – such a long journey would not have been a cheap undertaking – and that they arrived not twelve days after the Nativity, as modern tradition supposes, but around two years, as is suggested by the phrase [...] ἀπὸ διετοῦς καὶ κατωτέρω κατὰ τὸν χρόνον ὃν ἠκρίβωσε παρὰ τῶν μάγων ([...] two years and younger, according to the time he obtained from the magi)[2].

They are perhaps conspicuous by their abscence in early records: Josephus (a Judaean soldier captured in the First Jewish War by the Romans and subsequent author of a history of the Jews, writing between 75 and 100 AD) mentions none of the events of the Nativity save the census. On the other hand, it doesn't seem likely that their appearance would have been a major enough event to be reported amongst to the succession-chaos which surrounded the last years of Herod's reign and his death, so once again we are left in a sourceless conundrum.

At this point it is worth turning to the traditions: for although they are almost entirely fabricated, at the centre of (almost) all there is a germ of truth responsible for their inception. Or at least there is the germ of what was believed to be true several hundred or thousand years ago, which is not un-valuable as information goes.

In the West, they are usually identified as *Caspar* (from India), *Balthazar* (from Arabia), and *Melchior* (from Persia). Where these names are from is anybody's guess – Caspar has been likened to an Indo-Parthian ruler, Gondophares I[3], whose name according to von Gutschmid having been filtered through Old Armenian is the origin of the modern name Casper, French *Gaspard*, and so on. Likewise, the legend of Prester John may have something to owe to this obscure monarch of antiquity.

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1 The general Chalcedonian belief that Mary was a virgin for the entirety of her life is an extremely complicated subject not worth explaining in this article nor covered by its scope; many very early sources are confused on the matter and attempt to resolve it in various ways, making the so-called "brothers" (ἀδελφοί in the original Greek) either cousins via Mary's sister (herself also called Mary, known as Mary wife of Clopas) or via Joseph's brother (in this circumstance being Clopas), or simply children born to Mary and Joseph after the Nativity.

2 Matthew 2:16-18, one of the most frequently dismissed non-supernatural sections of the Gospels, states that Herod ordered the slaughter of all infant males two years and under in Bethlehem and surrounding parts. Although early Christian sources frequently state the number killed as in the thousands (Coptic tradition holds 144,000 as the number of Holy Innocents), Lorenz Knellen put the number as low as six, given the size of Bethlehem at the time. This makes it easier to understand how to square such a dramatic-sounding event could go unreported by Josephus and other near-contemporary historians. Nevertheless, the evidence for the actual event borders between meagre and non-existent.

3 r. around 19-46, a Zoroastrian king of an area covering most of modern Pakistan and Afghanistan. Known primarily from numismatics and one inscription – as well as an apocryphal post-Gospel text relating the Acts of Thomas – it cannot be said that there is a wealth of information surrounding his life.

David's *Oath of the Horatii* and Enlightenment thinking

Johan Orly contends that J-L David's work drew direct inspiration from the writings of the intellectuals of the French Enlightenment about the role, morality and style of art, and the place of man and woman in society.

Fig. 1 Jacques-Louis David 1784 The *Oath of the Horatii*, Musée du Louvre

In eighteenth-century France the most important societal development was the growth of the bourgeoisie, which developed a distinct 'collective identity'. 'New forms of sociability and exchange', such as upper-class literary *salons*, alongside increasing literacy and print media circulation, led to the formation of a 'public sphere', a bourgeois space for debate and the formation of a public opinion. The Enlightenment – a movement of 'intellectual and artistic renewal' – formed the basis of this new public debate, led by intellectuals known as *philosophes*, including Montesquieu, Voltaire, Diderot and Rousseau. The Enlightenment was fundamentally concerned with 'change for the better', with progress to a series of perfect social, moral and political forms, powered by belief in the perfectibility of man, which found its expression in the moral and aesthetic *exempla* of Neoclassical art. The *philosophes* cast a critical eye on the institutions and society of *ancien régime* France, and found much to lament, in particular a despotic and ineffectual monarchy whose immorality was seeping down into society. Under the ineffectual Louis XVI, the monarchy further lost the confidence of the public sphere, which was now dominated by fervent calls for political, moral and artistic improvement.1 The *Horatii*, despite being a royal commission, was painted for reception by this public sphere in the *Salon*, shaped by the same *philosophes* that were to influence David.

Rococo had dominated French painting from the 1720s to the 1770s. It was characterised in subject by pastoral or mythological scenes emphasising hedonism, eroticism and frivolity. The Rococo, dominated in its final flowering by Fragonard and Boucher, was especially championed by court and aristocratic taste; on the other hand, the rising bourgeois art market, attuned to *philosophe* criticism, sought to challenge it; developments included the naturalistic genre painting of Chardin, the melodramatic subjects of Greuze, and the advent of Neoclassical painting, which took direct inspiration from ancient models. However, the *philosophes*' preferred antidote to the Rococo was the seventeenth-century classicism of Poussin and Le Brun, with its focus on history and morality, instead of the antiquarian Neoclassicism of Winkelmann in vogue in the rest of Europe; there was indeed a pronounced Poussinist revival from the 1760s onwards. Nevertheless, it took David, and specifically the *Horatii*, to

> The Rococo was especially championed by court and aristocratic taste

Emotional force and moral elevation

finally establish the primacy of this new style, known to us as French Neoclassicism.

The most fundamental way the *Horatii* reflects the concerns of the *philosophes* is in the treatment of the subject matter, which prioritises emotional force and moral elevation. The *philosophes* despaired at the state of French painting in the 1750s, which they saw as having declined from seventeenth-century 'nobility and grandeur' to 'white, pink, clouds and cupids', as Mirabeau characterised the Rococo. (This decline was blamed on a sense of national immorality, spurred by the hedonism and loose morals of the court of Louis XV.) In his 1765 *Salon* criticism of Boucher's work, Diderot said that 'the degradation of taste… is a consequence of the degradation of morals'; the particular irritant was the Rococo combination of fleshy eroticism, conspicuous luxury and the absence of moral themes, particularly in mythological scenes. Rousseau condemned such painting as 'images of the errors of heart and mind', providing 'models of misbehaviour' for the young; they led him to argue that art was a cause of moral corruption.

Fig 3: Boucher's work, like *Toilet of Venus* , while still very much fashionable, drew the most adverse criticism and the fiercest moral condemnation

Instead, the *philosophes* advocated moral history painting, which could be 'educating, improving and providing models of behaviour' for its audience.

Fig. 2 Jacques-Louis David 1794 Self Portrait, Musée du Louvre.

The notion of such moral elevation was core to the Enlightenment itself, a movement founded on examination and improvement towards an ideal. The critic La Font de Saint-Yenne characterised good art as a 'school for morality', and demanded to see 'the virtuous and heroic actions of the great men, examples of humanity, generosity, grandeur, courage, disregard for danger and even for life, a passionate zeal for honour and saving of the nation'. For these virtuous *exempla*, Saint-Yenne and Diderot prescribed scenes of classical history and its heroes to provide a model for the present, as the painters he admired most, Poussin and Le Brun had done.

As Ettlinger has argued, the backbone of all eighteenth-century education was the 'moral cult of the ancients', and the classics were widely read - doing so was seen as instruction in the highest morals. By arguing for moral, Roman subjects, Saint-Yenne and Diderot therefore advocated a language that was not only broadly studied and well-understood but also one that epitomised stoic morality and civic virtue itself. In addition, Diderot's writings on art became focused on the 'response [art] engenders in the viewer';3 he famously asked of art 'move me, then astonish me, tear me to pieces; make me shudder,weep and tremble, make me angry'. Painting needed not just to show virtue, but to stir the viewer's emotions in order to effectively inspire it.

David arguably fulfilled this prescription of moral didacticism in history painting by choosing to depict the Horatii, from a story by Livy, and probably inspired by the treatment of Corneille's play *Horace*. Set in the ancient war between Rome and Alba Longa, three brothers known as the Horatii are selected as champions and swear to fight their Alban cousins the Curatii to death, even though the families are bound by intermarriage. On the surface at least, this is a straightforward *exemplum* of selfless, patriotic devotion, with men who endanger themselves and harm their own families simply because it is their duty and because, by preventing a full conflict, it is in the civic greater good; this was in perfect accord with eighteenth-century morality. David's stylistic references to the antique – in the costume, Doric columns, and allusion to relief sculpture– reinforce his allusion to the virtues associated with ancient Rome in the period. Furthermore, the painting's stylistic austerity and directness – the few, strongly emphasised compositional lines, the paucity of figures, and the absence of background distraction, the product of a process of constant simplification from earlier sketches – amplifies rather than distracting from the unflinchingly moral theme. By choosing a subject with opposed and extreme feelings, David also gave his work 'a sentimental accessibility', which made its moral theme not just easier to understand but also more effective, as it enabled it to move its audience and 'touch the soul'. Diderot's influence is clear here; he was highly focused on the reception of a painting and the aesthetic emotion it inspired.

The fact that David painted the oath of the brothers, a

Fig. 3 François Boucher1751 The Toilette of Venus

scene of his own invention, as opposed to his earlier sketch depicting the surviving Horatii losing self-control and killing his sister for mourning her Curatii husband, allows him to emphasise their stoicism, a concept which Diderot

was particularly interested in. David painted many other such *exempla*, most notably the patriotic *Brutus* (Fig. 5) and the stoic *Socrates* (Fig. 6), suggested by Saint-Yenne and Diderot respectively. We know that Saint-Yenne played a part in authoring David's curriculum, and that he mingled frequently with Diderot at the *soirées* of his tutor Sédaine in the early 1770s; is it therefore unsurprising that David would realise their views on the need for morally elevating history painting.

It is hard to disagree with Brookner's view that Jean-Jacques Rousseau's impact on the moral content of David's work was 'undeniable'. We lack the definitive evidence of engagement that we have with regards to Diderot and Saint Yenne, but then again David was exceptionally well read, and can hardly have missed such a major philosopher. More importantly, the *Horatii* and the rest of his oeuvre in the 1780s prominently feature many quintessentially Rousseauian ideas, including the general will and the public and private spheres; considering the impact of Rousseau is therefore an important adjunct to my earlier discussion of David's moral subject.

Rousseau's *Social Contract* features the concept of the 'general will', the collective opinion of the citizenry, a public interest to which private, individual interests must submit, as part of one's societal duty; when the individual sees themselves as truly part of a community, the general and individual wills become indistinguishable. The action of the Horatii could be seen as an enactment of this: they act for the good of and according to the will of their community, Rome, subordinating their private interest, as fathers, husbands and brothers; the brothers' individual will is to unquestioningly carry out the general;

Fig. 4 Charles Le Brun 1665 *Alexander the Great Enters Babylon (Triumph of Alexander).*

David arguably fulfilled this prescription of moral didacticism in history painting

Fig. 5 Jacques-Louis David 1789 The Lictors Bring Brutus the Bodies of his Sons.

by portraying them together with very similar poses, David articulates the 'fusion of their identities into a single patriotic will'.

In contrast, the women are struck by grief: 'firm masculinity, by which a man forgets himself… to perform a mortal duty, is contrasted with femininity, which cannot face up to death' (Honour). The sexes are 'radically separated', literally placed in separate arches, and David 'refuses to find form' for any commonality between them. The upright, straight-lined, muscular, *chiaroscuro* forms of the brothers emphasise their steadfast, heroic commitment to the general will; in contrast, the softer, sinuous, slouched, inert ones of the women literally seem to buckle under the strain; the women are also placed further back from the foreground than the men. This clear separation – men prioritising the public sphere, women confined by their emotionality to the private – is in line with Rousseau's views on gender; he believed that women should be 'out of the public eye and back into the domestic sphere', as they were too sentimental to make sacrifices to the general will.

Therefore, it could be argued, as Kampfen has, that

if we take the work as a faithful illustration of the *Social Contract*, the women become models of bad behaviour, othered by their failure to conform to male standards of behaviour, in a similar way to the othering found in Rousseau's work on the subject. The alignment of women and the indulgent, private sphere, set out by Rousseau, features in David's other work in the 1780s: in the *Andromache* the wife of Hector mourns his death for his country; *Paris* (Fig 7) could be read as a condemnation of the titular prince, who chooses the private indulgence symbolised by Helen over the good of his country; in it we can observe a similar rendering of a languid feminine form to those in the *Horatii*, again to emphasise gendered divisions.

However, we should be careful of unquestionably following a Rousseauian interpretation.4 David's *Brutus* undoubtedly engages with the same notion of sacrificial patriotic duty, emphasising the centrality of Rousseau to David's moral content, as Brutus sees the bodies of his sons who he condemned to death for plotting against the republic. However, David's method in the *Brutus* clearly 'invites the spectator to judge him' in relation

Fig. 6 Jacques-Louis David 1787 The Death of Socrates.

to the women;5 Brutus is in deep shadow, and his stoic expression is ambiguously tinged with regret, far from the fervent certainty of the *Horatii*. The sexes are still separated, but here the mother is centre stage, and she, not Brutus, is the one who faces up to death, like the Horatii did, in the form of her dead sons – and she condemns sacrifice rather than endorsing it.6 I agree with Chua: 'we decline and doubt the efficacy' of Brutus's methods in the face of their almost heroic condemnation by the women. Brutus led me to reassess the *Horatii*: as Bryson has argued, its women, who do not participate in the public sphere, are representative of the victims of it, shown by the shadow cast by the men over them; the painting surely illustrates the costs of fulfilling the general will as much as the heroism. Overall, David was clearly influenced by Rousseau's views on the general will and gender (among others), but it is a complex engagement rather than a straightforward presentation.

It has to be said that for all of the cogency with which David engaged with the concerns of the *philosophes* on subject matter, he was by no means alone in doing so; the *Salon* featured ancient moral history across the late eighteenth century. What made the Oath such a huge sensation on its presentation, a dramatic 'cleavage between old and new', was its stylistic revolution: it marks the triumph of the new school of French Neoclassicism, a style that favoured austerity and clarity in the service of dramatic impact, over the Rococo. For this new style, David was clearly indebted to Diderot and Saint-Yenne, but also to broader Enlightenment notions of challenge and criticism.

Saint-Yenne's 1747 *Réflexions* proved the starting point

A dramatic 'cleavage between old and new', was its stylistic revolution

for a growing conviction, one embraced with equal fervour by Diderot, that only a revival of seventeenth-century French Classicism, particularly a 'generous dose of Poussin', could rescue French painting from the corruption of contemporary patronage; for Diderot, it provided the 'classical severity' required to ennoble painting that was so lacking in the Rococo. David's early work however, owes far more to Boucher than Poussin; comparing it to Boucher's, we can observe similarities such as the mythological subjects and the use of soft outlines, dynamic, cloudy backgrounds, nudes and expansive, pastel palettes, all of which David would later reject. It was only during his sojourn in Rome (1775-80) that David 'seized upon the rhetoric of

Fig. 7 Jacques-Louis David 1789 The Love of Paris and Helen, Musée du Louvre

Fig. 8 Nicolas Poussin 1627 *The Death of Germanicus*

Fig. 9 Johann Heinrich Ramberg, Exposition au Salon du Louvre en 1787

seventeenth century art', above all Poussin, and developed the characteristic dramatic-realist approach of his new style. The formative influence of the artist David called the '*peintre-philosphe*' shows how his work reflects the familiar prescriptions of Diderot and Saint-Yenne.

Furthermore, Poussin's influence is key to the *Horatii* itself; David's pupil Peron records the master as stating 'c'est à Poussin que je dois mon tableau' which provides direct evidence of David's adherence to Diderot's Poussinism. Hazlehurst convincingly shows the influence of the group of soldiers in Poussin's *Germanicus* (Fig. 8) on the composition of the three brothers in the second sketch of the *Horatii*, and that of the two leftmost lictors in his *Sabines* on the finished version. More broadly, the stylistic influence of Poussin can be seen in the similarities between the *Horatii* and *Germanicus*: both oppose men and women, and have classical architectural backgrounds, ancient costume, muted, limited palettes, a frieze-like shallowness in the position of characters, and an emphasis on lines and axes, particular the central V-shape formed in the *Germanicus* by spears and in the *Horatii* by the protagonists' legs.

Poussin's work also formed the basis of the most important of Diderot's stylistic prescriptions, 'a new

The severity of the Neoclassical was finally attained

aesthetic of the body', in which it became the 'locus of expressivity and communication'; he wanted *'des sublimes gestes que toute l'éloquence oratoire ne rendra jamais'*. Diderot attributed the failure of Neoclassical painting in the 1760s and 70s to the failure of artists to properly utilise gesture: for example, in the 1769 *Salon* he criticised Greuze's *Severus*, saying that the crucial gesture of the Emperor was 'equivocal', instead of commanding, due to Greuze's misuse of the wrist, and as a result the effect of the work was lost; Diderot further criticised the figures for their stiffness and for not working as an ensemble.

However, David, in painting the *Horatii*, fulfilled Diderot's gestural sublime in 'pantomimic perfection'; in this the severity of the Neoclassical was finally attained. One element of bodily communication David employed to fullest effect here was the use of hands and feet; this further aligned him with Diderot, who characterised them as absolute signs of individual character and emotion. We see the unflinchingly straight hands of the brothers, the resolutely fraternal embrace of the hand of the closest brother's back, the tensile grip of the father on the swords, and their firmly planted feet flat on the ground, contrasted with the curved, 'weak', raised feet of Camilla, and her two wrists limb with grief. David's other stylistic hallmarks – an austere background and an
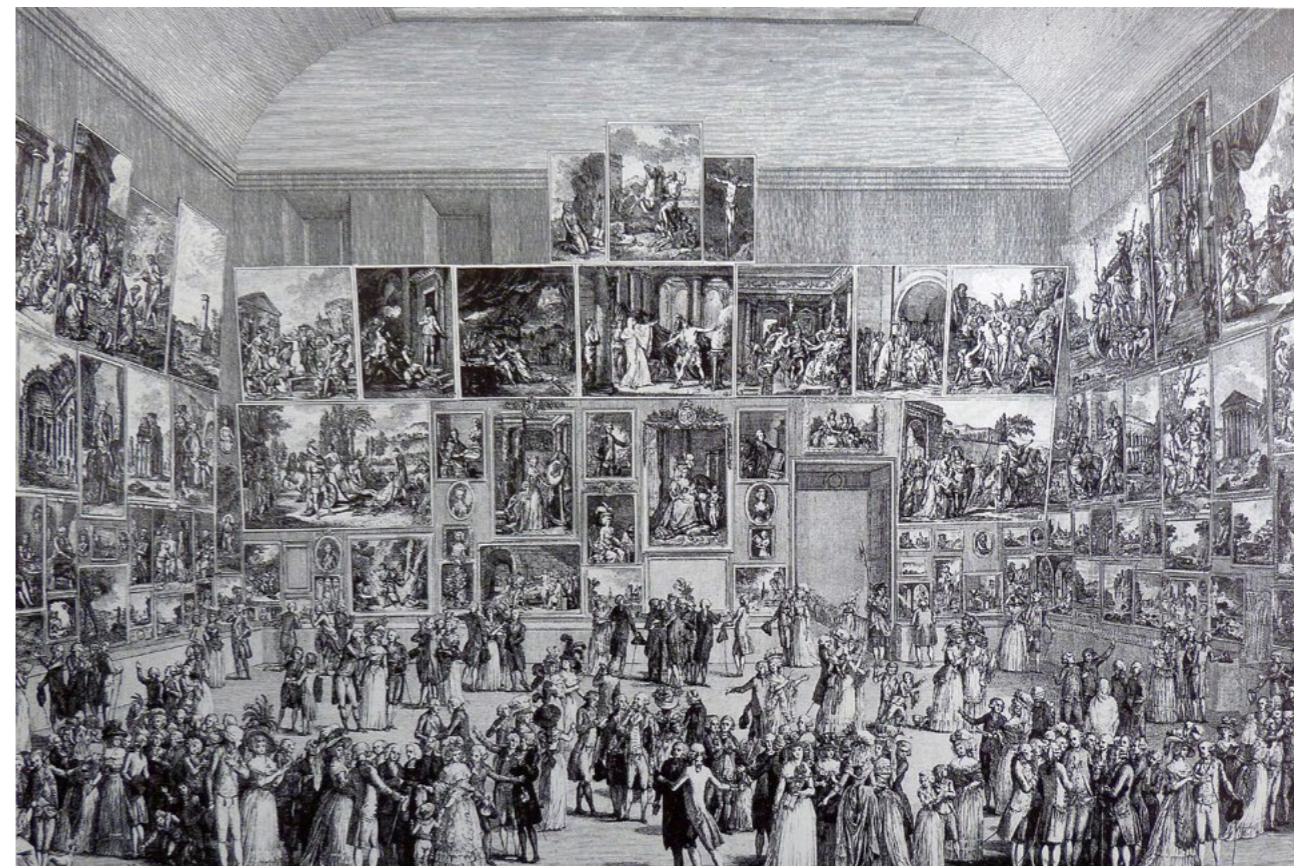
emphasis on axes in composition – accentuate the force of his gestures. When placed alongside the *Severus*, it is clear that David's gestures stood out, hence why contemporaries viewed it as a 'truly revolutionary' redefining of the communicative power of painting. The success of the picture can thus be traced back to David adopting the ideas of Diderot and Saint-Yenne, about the need for a Poussinist style that prioritised corporal communication in moral history painting.

The *Horatii* deliberately disobeyed contemporary academic standards of painting. Compared to Fragonard's acclaimed, academic *Coresus*, its contraventions come into focus: use of a hard contour, absence of a natural background, emphasis on tense stillness rather than motion, unbalanced composition, and an austere, unflinching realism. David minimised official criticism of the work by submitting it late. It could be argued, as Crow has, that the antagonism directed at convention in the picture duplicated 'real antagonisms within the audience' towards the conservative institutions like the Academy. Therefore David's rebellion against convention not only reflected the Enlightenment focus on criticism and improvement of art – as typified by Diderot's *salon* writing – but the same critical approach of Enlightenment public opinion towards institutions, including the monarchy and the church.

Overall, there is compelling evidence that the ideas of the *philosophes* – particularly Diderot, Rousseau and Saint-Yenne – were the major influence on the subject and style of the *Horatii*. First, it adheres to their calls, in reaction to the frivolous and superficial subjects of the Rococo,

for serious, noble art that moves and morally elevates its audience, by providing an exemplum of patriotic, virtuous behaviour in ancient history, in this case the Roman story of the Horatii and Curatii. Secondly, it critically engages with Rousseau's ideas including the social contract, which requires subordination of the individual interest to the general will, and the confinement of women to the private sphere. Thirdly, the *Horatii* adherès in a multitude of ways to the stylistic prescriptions of Diderot and Saint-Yenne: that Poussin's was the most apt style for noble history painting, with David copying figures from his work, and employing similarly axial, geometric compositions; and that effective bodily communication was essential for dramatic impact, which David fulfilled with powerful use of gesture. The *Horatii*'s contravention of academic stylistic convention could also be seen as reflecting Enlightenment scepticism towards conversative institutions. This comprehensive Enlightenment interpretation has the additional benefit of providing a very plausible explanation for the work's rapturous reception - one critic proclaimed that 'His Horatii are children born of genius' - as the *salon* (Fig. 9) audience, immersed for decades in theoretical Enlightenment discourses, was uniquely thrilled by a painting that finally enacted these theories in practise to their fullest, moral, communicative effect. Similarly, if the painting was to be taken up as a symbol of the Revolution, surely it was because it contended with the same Enlightenment themes of criticism, improvement, virtue and patriotism that formed the basis of the Revolution's moral and political outlook.

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The Reformation and English Religious Music

Amelia Ross examines the impact of the Reformation on the development of English Religious Music in the 16th Century, focusing on the reign of Elizabeth I. The political and religious tensions between Catholicism and Protestantism echo the different approaches to Church music.

In 1517, the German monk Martin Luther asked for reforms to be instigated within the Roman Catholic church. He questioned its authority, argued against the selling of indulgences, and promoted the Bible as the focus of the church service; this catalysed what would come to be known as the 'Reformation.' The Reformation changed the course of political, religious and cultural history, not only in Europe, but on a global scale. It also directly influenced musical history, as in the years that followed, musicians responded to the liturgical changes that resulted from it. These changes and their impact on music are perhaps most interestingly demonstrated during Elizabeth I's reign. In this 'golden age', the queen heralded the English Renaissance following the severe musical restrictions brought about in the preceding reigns of her two siblings. With religious conflict joining with monarchical instability under the Tudors, an environment would be created which would initially restrict music, but then in turn allow it to thrive and evolve further as never before.

In the 1520s, the culture of church music in England, directed by King Henry VIII, was at its zenith, glorifying the ceremony and grandeur of Catholic worship and relishing the complexity and intricacies of its musical forms. However, a dispute between the king and Pope Clement VII would soon ignite the Reformation in England, and subsequently reshape the musical landscape. The 1534 Act of Supremacy created a dangerous environment for musicians, as the newly created Church of England defied the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, favouring simplicity, clarity and monophony in music, in the style of the Lutheran Reformation. The Dissolution of the Monasteries prompted a further decline in monastic Latin music, and a lesser emphasis on the richness of sound and florid ornamentation that had characterised earlier sacred music. Despite this, very few restrictions were actually imposed on musicians of the time such as Taverner and Tye: even Henry himself continued to practise and worship as a Catholic and much of the liturgy remained in the same Catholic vein as previously.

The same cannot be said of Edward VI's reign, which saw a great wave of Protestant reform led by Thomas Cranmer, who was keen to develop an unadorned form of Anglican liturgy in English. Soon after Edward's coronation in 1547, restrictions were imposed on the use of florid Latin music: ornamented melody was greatly pared back, only applying to a single melodic line or authorised polyphony, and plainer, homophonic 'anthems' were promoted. This new syllabic music was closer to patterns of speech regarding of melodic contour and accentuation; the purpose of this was to make music more inclusive for the people, allowing them to understand and participate more in their worship, a precursor to our modern congregational hymns today. However, many composers found that the changes resulting from Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer* (1549) quelled the gloriously rich tradition of English religious polyphony. From a musical perspective, it can even be argued that these borderline puritanical ideals pushed the country dangerously close to Calvinism.

The accession of the staunch Catholic Mary Tudor in 1533 would undo the Anglican Church reforms that had been seen in the past six years under Edward. Mary set about re-establishing, "a more modernized and humanist version of the Sarum liturgy"[1] and composers including Mundy and Sheppard flourished with the task of rejuvenating the chordal homophony of psalm singing with elaborate, florid sacred music. The influence of the Catholic Counter-Reformation occurring in areas of the Continent encouraged more liturgical opulence reminiscent of the ritual 'excesses' of the very early years of Henry's reign, and religious practice returned to Latin liturgy with the temporary restoration of full communion with Rome. Yet Protestant reforms were not totally reversed: Marian Catholicism kept some of the service elements said in English, and since the Council of Trent in 1548, concerns about the audibility of sacred texts had been addressed, leading to a general reduction in superfluous melisma, even in Catholic polyphony. Mary was a crucial and effective patron of religious music, as she recognised the importance it could have in reintegrating Catholicism into society and the didactic role it could adopt; many argue that without her balanced musical and artistic reforms, the sacred choral tradition of England may have been completely lost.

By 1558, the Catholic music Restoration was almost widespread and had been successfully readopted in

> The 1534 Act of Supremacy created a dangerous environment for musicians

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1 Olsen, Ryan A. '*Christ Rising Again:* Context, Function and Analysis of an English Anthem', Arizona State University, Oct 2010

many areas of England. The Elizabethan age therefore presented composers with more uncertainty; having met the needs of the Catholic monarch they now had to switch to Protestantism once more. However, this transition was not as severe as in previous years: Elizabeth's moderate Protestantism and her love of ceremony meant that there was actually a lot more leniency in this period that allowed music of many different forms to thrive. The queen's attitude to the Church of England was clearly Protestant but was unique in that, echoing the early reforms of her father, the character of its liturgy was not clearly defined, retaining many Catholic influences. Traditionalist views were maintained and minor reforms were established, allowing the Reformation to continue but along much more moderate lines. Cranmer's liturgy was re-introduced with Latin forms of procession replaced, yet some Latin services were allowed to remain as they had done under Mary, implementing measures of Catholic tolerance. For example, following the Elizabethan Act of Uniformity, in 1559 the Elizabethan Prayer Book was issued, largely based off the strict Protestant Prayer Book of 1552, but allowing "certain "popish" practices"[2]. Though it seemed evident that Elizabeth was indeed, "more akin to papal ritual than to puritan austerity"[3], she did see the benefits of Anglican ceremony: as well as glorifying God, it exalted the Supreme Head of the Church – herself – an infinitely useful form of propaganda.

Figure 1. Richard Farrant, Lord for Thy Tender Mercy's Sake

Figure 2. Thomas Tallis, If ye Love me, keep my commandments

Mary was a crucial and effective patron of religious music

Elizabeth was a particularly supportive of the Chapel Royal, and it is said that she personally employed over seventy musicians during her reign, including many such as Tallis, whose ability to adapt his music according to the politics of the time, meant that he wrote in nearly every Renaissance genre, with a style encompassing the great polyphonic schools from the Continent and the unadorned Reformation service music. In addition to Tallis, another composer who was a gentleman of the Chapel Royal at this time was Richard Farrant, who after joining in 1550, was also the first composer to write English verse anthems. Here are two examples of hymnals composed under Elizabeth: Farrant's *Lord for Thy Tender Mercy's Sake* and Tallis's *If ye love me, keep my Commandments*.

Both hymnals have short opening phrases and are strictly syllabic, with the melody generally in the upper-voice with slight ornamentation. They are in simple, reformed, four-part chordal style revolving primarily around chords I, IV and V, but whilst Farrant's is more clearly homophonic, Tallis's displays wider use of elaboration and imitation further into the piece. He operates on the principle of "one entry per voice"[4] and echoes contrapuntal styles from the offset with the repetition of his second phrase. *If ye love me* is particularly famous for its subtle harmonic colour with prepared dissonance, and gentle flowing contours.[5] It is cast in ABB form and effortlessly portrays the simplicity and clarity that this sacred music embodied, ending with a typically Renaissance open fifth.

Psalm tunes were also integral parts of the Anglican service. When it came to these, Elizabeth emphasised the

Thomas Cranmer by Gerlach Flicke

2   Hitchens, Susan Hayes, *Religious Change as an Influence on Sacred Musical Styles in Tudor* England, Eastern Illinois University, Masters Theses, 1975, pp.41
3   Fenlon Iain, ed. *The Renaissance*: Monson Craig, *Chapter XII Elizabethan London,* (The Macmillan Press Limited, 1989) pp. 308

4   'Thomas Tallis: Music & Life', www.musicrealm.org
5   'Thomas Tallis's Renaissance choral stunner gets the YouTuber treatment', www.classicfm.com, Jun 23 2016

chordal and syllabic nature that these should adopt, to give clarity to worship in the same way that Edward had done. The tunes had strong momentum, were harmonized homorhythmically with well-prepared cadences and simple rhythms, and only common time was permitted. The example below uses much contrary motion between the parts, and has a simple symmetrical structure.[6]
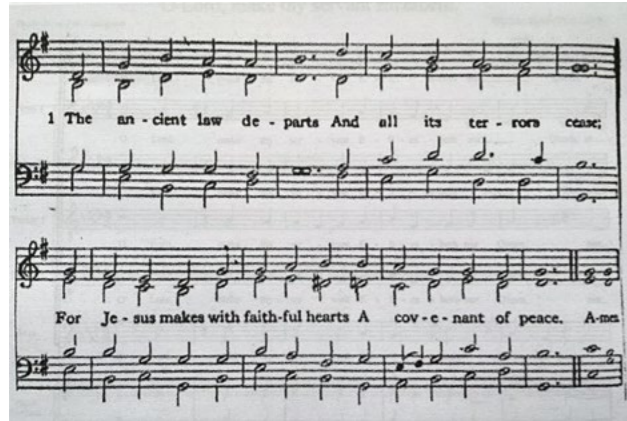

Figure 3. ex. of chord change in a Psalm tune, St. Michael.

Though the prevailing sacred music of the Elizabethan age used English liturgy and Protestant ideals, Elizabeth's Protestantism was moderate enough to allow the Catholic forms she relished to flourish in music. There were Catholic composers who worked in the Chapel Royal including Tallis and William Byrd. The Tudors had a great loyalty to Tallis: in 1577 he made a statement claiming to have,

"served your Majestie and your Royall ancestors these fortie years",[7]

and Byrd, a younger rising star, was an organist in the Chapel Royal and Tallis's student. In 1575, the queen granted them both a monopoly on music printing, and permitted them to compose motets with Latin texts in addition to English settings for Anglican service music.
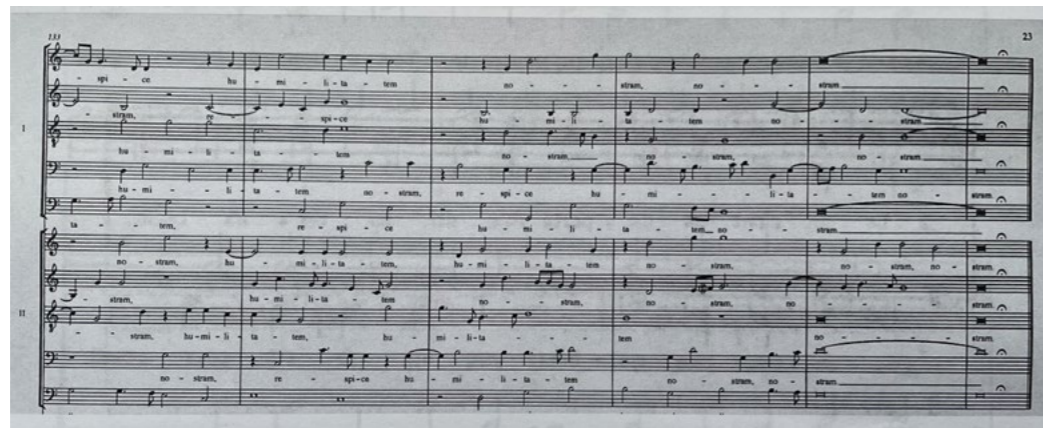

Figure 5. Final bars from Tallis's Spem in alium nunquam habui, Choirs I & II

The first work that the two composed and published together was the epic volume of 34 Latin motets titled *Cantiones quae ab argumento sacrae vocantur,* dedicated to the Queen. Though some publications favoured Protestant devotional material, this work was intended to showcase English musical achievements abroad, and Tallis's and Byrd's mastery of polyphony were clearly best placed to display this.

Figure 4. First page of Byrd/Tallis Cantiones quae ab argumento sacrae vocantur, (1575)

Other notable works by Tallis include *Spem in alium nunquam habui.* This monumental motet for 40 voices (of eight five-voiced choirs) is renowned for its complex use of counterpoint and shifting tones and colours; a sea of fluidity and heavenly prayer. Even though it is primarily Catholic in style, Tallis expertly blends homophony for key words such as '*Domine Deus, creator caeli et terrae,*'[8] with limited melisma, for a clearer, distinct sound. The work was intended to be sung in the round and also from balconies: if the choirs are arranged in circular fashion sequentially by number, this allows the music to 'rotate' through the opening points of imitation, and antiphony can also pass between choirs above

...and below. The conclusion of the piece is particularly spectacular, as all 40 voices enter on one chord, and then

grow into the most elaborate, harmonically-rich polyphony yet, "framed by the strong rhythms of the ensemble"[9]. According to some scholars, it was presented at court on the occasion of Elizabeth's 40th birthday in 1573[10], presenting a reason for Tallis's choice of 40 voices, and also linking to the Biblical sanctity of this number.

Byrd was also an extremely versatile composer, and as well as developing Catholic music he also wrote for the Anglican Church. This can be seen in his six-part anthem, *O Lord make thy servant Elizabeth our Queen to rejoice,* (Figure 6). Intended to glorify Elizabeth, the words of this anthem are based on Psalm 21; it is mainly homophonic and syllabic, with

He felt compelled to compose his three settings of the Latin Mass for secret use

clear phrasing and rich chordal entrances. Another example of one of Byrd's English settings is his *Great Service:* a complete English service for ten voices in seven sections. In this work he sets the English liturgy on a much grander scale, making full use of 'double imitative' writing and half-contrapuntal textures, included within the homophony. Whilst Byrd dazzles with his experimentation and new technique, here he also draws from Latin sacred music, keeping these traditions alive even in English liturgy.

Figure 6. O Lord, make thy servant Elizabeth our Queen to rejoice, William Byrd

Towards the end of the 16th Century, despite Elizabeth's leniency, hostility towards Roman Catholics intensified with the uncertainty of who would succeed her. Byrd was even persecuted for his Catholic activities and open practice in 1593, but the queen continued to give him her protection.[11] It was at this time that he felt compelled to compose his three settings of the Latin Mass for secret use in Roman Catholic homes. For many such as Byrd, even though it was essential for their survival that they adapted their music to the whims of the current monarch, it must

have been incredibly difficult to compose works which were at such odds with their personal beliefs. Elizabeth's reforms certainly gave musicians more liberties, but primarily, music was still under the overbearing influence of the Reformation and religious attitudes, a hugely important component of society that had to be adhered to. Despite this, the endurance of Elizabethan composers and the epic works they created, goes to show that the new Protestant music was no less magnificent than that of the old Catholic traditions: music had successfully evolved in spite of the restrictions that came with the Reformation, and had taken on a contemporary, sophisticated and innovative form.

The 16th Century was undoubtedly one of the most turbulent in English religious and musical history. The impact of the Reformation would have huge repercussions on the production, style, and attitude towards music that would reverberate throughout the following centuries. As monarchs and their religious doctrines changed, the Reformation altered musical forms radically, but the personnel who performed this music remained surprisingly untouched by these disruptions; composers had to have wide stylistic range in order to adapt to the quickly changing politics of the day. In addition to the integral role that religion played in the development of music, the monarchs of England were undoubtedly crucial in influencing musical changes. The fact that the monarchy realised the importance music could have in society and its potential as propaganda, facilitated musical changes and spread these widely to the people. It was the encouragement of a queen like Elizabeth that really promoted music and let its evolution be accelerated by the political and cultural changes of the time; a great patron of music was essential to provide a channel into which the arts would progress and be mutually enhanced.

When the reign of Elizabeth came to an end in 1603, religious conflict would continue, resurfacing in the Divine Right of Kings, Civil War, and the 1688 Revolution. All of these conflicts were rooted in the Reformation, and further political, social and religious changes would continue to have a profound impact on culture. The Reformation fundamentally changed the very nature of English religious music and it is clear that its impact, can still be felt today.

6 Hitchens, Susan Hayes, *Religious Change as an Influence on Sacred Musical Styles in Tudor England,* Eastern Illinois University, Masters Theses, 1975, pp.48

7 Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia, 'Thomas Tallis', *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* Apr 24 2017

8 Philips, Peter (Tallis Scholars), 'Spem in alium' *Hyperion Records,* 1994

9 Legge, Philip, 'Spem in alium nunquam habui, A motet for 40 voices by Thomas Tallis', Notes, Melbourne, Nov 2004 revised to Feb 2008

10 Schwarm, Betsy, 'Spem in alium nunquam habui', *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* Jun 1 2018

11 'Music in the Counter Reformation', http://blogs.shu.edu/ecww/ project/music-in-the-counter-reformation/

Stravinsky's uncompromising, non-reactionary Serial Progression

Martin Alfonsin Larsen analyses the changes in Stravinsky's late musical output and the influences which led to his espousal of Serialism.
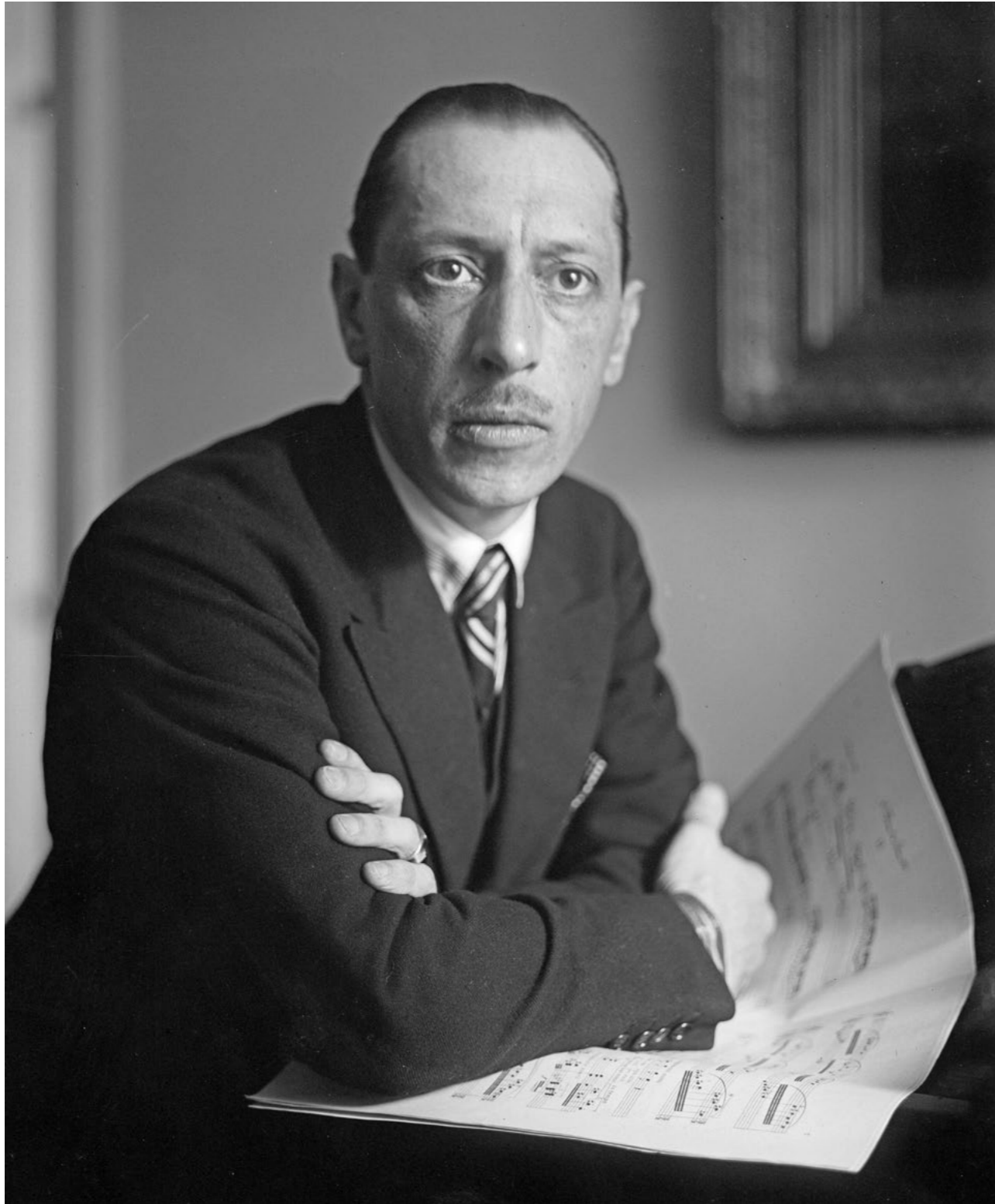
20th-century musical modernism can widely be characterised by the ideological conflict between Serialism and Neoclassicism, the latter of which is observed as a rebellion against a tradition of 'German Romanticism'[1].

The serialist movement of the Second Viennese School (primarily Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg and Anton Webern) is considered an atonal continuation of this Romanticism. This is because it develops the significant chromaticism and trends toward musical devices dissonance and atonality initiated through Romantic works such as Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* while retaining more philosophical ideas on concepts like expression in music. Smaller experiments like Franz Liszt's *Bagatelle sans Tonalite* are also important. Neoclassicism, represented by figures such as Igor Stravinsky and Paul Hindemith, instead borrowed properties from 18th century music, reacting against the perceived emotional excesses of Romanticism[2]. The conflict can be described as ideological because of figures like Theodor Adorno or Nadia Boulanger (representing Serialism and Neoclassicism respectively), who imparted their views onto future composers through their essays and teaching respectively. Adorno identified 'progression' in serialist music and influenced through publications such as *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (1949), while Boulanger's teaching passed neoclassicism to composers such as Copland, who was coined the 'Brooklyn Stravinsky'[3].

Given this conflict, it could then be seen as surprising that bastion of neoclassicism Stravinsky turned to serialism late into his compositional career.[4] However, there are a variety of factors that rationally explain his interest in Serialism.

This shift was termed by Stravinsky as 'crisis number two'[5], with the first being the crisis of losing his Russian motherland which prompted him to Neoclassicism in the first place. Critically, this shift from Neoclassicism to Serialism was not sudden, with a transitional period between the two styles in which Stravinsky's music became considerably more chromatic and 'serial' (not just in its increasing tendency to be dodecaphonic). The significance of this transition is critical: it 'provides a window into the compositional processes of a great composer as he was tackling a new style', with Stravinsky 'practising' 'his serial skills over a five-year period'.[6] It is also important to note that Stravinsky did not engage with twelve-tone features immediately: as Milton Babbitt notes, a work can be serial without being dodecaphonic, while the inverse is certainly not true[7].

Several intriguing questions emerge from this turn to Serialism. Among them are, for example, whether Stravinsky engaged with Serialism to appeal to 'the young' generation of composers by whom he was now considered outdated, whether the turn to serialism is 'surprising'

> **Stravinsky's stylistic reorientation began to tentatively emerge in 1952**

past the superficiality of the turn itself, how Stravinsky's serialism compares with that of its Viennese forebearers, and importantly the extent to which these serial works are an example of Stravinsky's consistent progressive attitude.

Stravinsky's stylistic reorientation began to tentatively emerge in 1952, soon after the completion of *The Rake's Progress*. After the work premiered in Venice on the 11th of September 1951, Robert Craft, Stravinsky's artistic 'alter ego'[4], an invaluable source for understanding much of the late serialist music, wrote:

'In September, in Venice, *The Rake's Progress* was regarded by most critics as the work of a master but also a throwback, the last flowering of a genre. After the premiere, conducting concerts in Italy and Germany, Stravinsky found that he and Schoenberg were everywhere categorised as the reactionary and the progressive.'[8]

This quotation is useful as it helps us to answer whether the turn was a 'reactionary' one, perhaps fuelled by a desire to remain 'in vogue'.

Deviation from neoclassicism began after the premiere of the *The Rake's Progress*, and while the opera was positively received, it certainly did not challenge the popular Adornian narrative regarding Stravinsky's neoclassical music. The quote's reflection on Schoenberg is reflected in the views of Pierre Boulez, whose interest was in Serialism: 'Since the discoveries of the Second Viennese School, all non-serial composers are useless.'[9] Oliver

1 Cross, J. (1998). *The Stravinsky Legacy*, pp4-7. Cambridge University Press.

2 *Neoclassical Music - New World Encyclopedia*. (n.d.). https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Neoclassical_Music

3 Cross, J. (1998). *The Stravinsky Legacy*, pg7. Cambridge University Press.

4 Hans Keller and Milein Cosman, *Stravinsky Seen and Heard*, pg9. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1986), 9.

5 Straus, J and Cross, J. (Ed.). (2003). *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky. 'Stravinsky the Serialist'* pp150-1. Cambridge University Press

6 Hughes, T. S. (1995). *An Argument for the Reassessment of Stravinsky's Early Serial Compositions* pg4

7 Babbitt, M. (1964). Remarks on the Recent Stravinsky. *Perspectives of New Music*, 2(2), 35. 10.2307/832481

8 Robert Craft, "Assisting Stravinsky," The Atlantic Monthly (December 1982): 70-71

9 Cross, J. (1998). *The Stravinsky Legacy*, pg4. Cambridge University Press.

Messiaen is another example of a younger contemporary who was not enthused by Stravinsky's neoclassical efforts: 'I admire Stravinsky, but I believe that Le Sacre marked the pinnacle of his genius'.[10] Given the demonstrated reception to Stravinsky, one could certainly posit that Stravinsky's turn was motivated by a desire for respect in the face of disregard of his own modernism.

Hexachords used in *Requiem Canticles*.

However, it seems mostly unfair to argue that Stravinsky made this change to appeal to a younger set of composers. While this may have been a factor in his thinking, we must note that Stravinsky composed with a marked persistence after the completion of *The Rake's Progress*, writing 21 works of varying scale using this constantly developing serial style throughout. Stravinsky also wrote using 'new' devices, showing a desire to innovate and not to emulate the 'recognised' styles of

The opening of the piece establishes its nature as a serial work

serial composition. For example, his last major work, *Requiem Canticles* (1966), used rotational arrays to generate hexachords, as well as the more conventional twelve-tone principles established by the Viennese. In fact, *Requiem Canticles* presents the culmination of Stravinsky's serial style, which relies on dodecaphonic serialism with innovative rotational arrays. The work's second movement, Exaudi, begins with a hexachord (A#-B-E-D-C#-C) played in the harp, the chord itself built from a rotational array[11]. Rotational arrays work by selecting the first half of a twelve-tone series (e.g. C-A-B-D#-E-F) and then moving the series forward by one note, creating a reordered sequence

(e.g. A-B-D#-E-F-C). To maintain continuity across a piece, these hexachords are then transposed so all hexachords have a common pitch (C), resulting in a new chord (e.g. C-D-F#-G-Ab-Eb). Stravinsky's serial harmony is not just horizontal: the fifth block of Exaudi uses the first series of hexachords vertically, with six total hexachords in the finale of Exaudi.

The 'chorale'-esque harmonies generated through alignment of row forms

Another form of serial harmony that Stravinsky uses in the late serial works (especially choral works) is where a prime row undergoes standard serial variations (I, R, RI) and lines them up, extracting twelve four-note chords vertically. Joseph Straus notes that these chords also generate whole-tone harmonies, a feature not commonly associated with Stravinsky[12]. These devices demonstrate a composer who has not just engaged with the standard forms of serialism (i.e. using a twelve-tone row and varying using three techniques) but expanded the style's range to create new serial

ABOVE: The 12-tone row (inverted) for Schoenberg's *Septet*.
BELOW: The 16-tone row for Stravinsky's *Septet*. Note the similar melodic profile.

harmonies. Therefore, it is fair to assume that Stravinsky's main reason for changing styles was, for the most part, not a matter of ego or feeling of neglect from a new generation of composers. Instead, this serialist music represents a 'genuine', non-reactionary desire to innovate, something that is especially remarkable given Stravinsky's septegenarian and later octogenarian status when writing this progressive music.

The premiere of *The Rake's Progress* was followed by a trip to the Mojave Desert with Craft and wife Vera, where Stravinsky described being afraid that he 'could no longer compose' and 'wept'. Around the same time, Craft had also been leading rehearsals of Schoenberg's *Septet Suite* (1925/26, Op. 29) and Webern's *Quartet* (1928-1930, Op. 22), to which Stravinsky attended all the rehearsals. During his weeping in California, Stravinsky mentioned to Craft his interest in the *Septet Suite*, which later influenced his diatonic serialist work *Septet* (composed 1952-3, premiered 1954), and is one of the first examples of serialist-influenced Stravinsky. This rehearsal displays one of the ways in which Craft informs Stravinsky's serialist turn, as

the *Septet* bears many similarities to the Schoenberg *Septet Suite* Op. 29. A first and obvious similarity is in the choice of instrumentation: Schoenberg chooses three clarinets (E flat, B flat and bass), along with violin, viola, cello and piano accompaniment. Stravinsky uses a clarinet in A, along with a bassoon, horn in F and the above accompanying instruments. Beyond the somewhat superficial choices in instrumentation, there are similarities between the 'rows' used in both pieces (pictured above), which makes sense. In the third movement especially, the work is highly contrapuntal, with themes appearing in the prime, inversion, retrograde and retrograde inversion. In fact, the highly contrapuntal nature of the piece leads Stephen Walsh to question whether or not the work is even really serial: 'The one relevant technique not used in the Gigue of the *Septet* is serialism. The only ordering of pitches is that of the fugue subject itself, which is copied by the other entries and by the later repeats and inversions, which is no more serialism than what happens in any baroque fugue.'[13] Moreover, Babbitt states that the *Septet* has movements which are 'not significantly serial at all', and agrees with Walsh's viewpoint that the Gigue's theme essentially serves as a 'subject for imitation' somewhat similar to a Baroque fugue[14]. Throughout the work, there is also considerable centricity, specifically around the pitch of A. These features demonstrate that Stravinsky is still clinging somewhat to neoclassicism, while potentially experimenting slightly with serial techniques. However, it is clear that without Craft's presence, Stravinsky would not have even engaged with this quasi-serial style, given that he had previously derided Schoenberg's music for what he considered its display of emotional bombast. This work also helps to demonstrate that the serial turn was not overly reactionary: if Stravinsky had really sought immediate validation from contemporaries, his immediate focus could have been to focus on writing dodecaphonic serialist music almost entirely derived from a figure like Schoenberg.

Main forms of *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas*, as well as mentioned overlapping

Music was instead organised with a set of predetermined dissonances or notes

Craft's position as a resident in Stravinsky's house for many years lends quasi-voyeuristic insight to Stravinsky's daily routines and habits. Craft specifically notes the focus on order in Stravinsky's life, with one especially curious description of Stravinsky's desk which Craft likens to the 'surgeon's instrument case'[15]. This quote and Craft's wider testimony serves as an example of how the composer's personal views align with his musical ones. Stravinsky also had paradoxical ideas on order and its relation to freedom: 'the more art is controlled, limited, worked over, the more it is free'[16]. Given this interest in order, Serialism presented an opportunity for Stravinsky to organise flows of notes and intervals just as he had done in his previous styles; by its very nature, serial music allows a set of chosen intervals to be repeated and varied while maintaining the Schoenbergian ideal of intervallic continuity. A hallmark of Stravinsky's style, especially his early style, is the use of 'block' forms primarily constructed from pre-determined ostinati and intervals, short motifs and their various repetitions and variations, notably in compositions such as *The Rite of Spring, Petrushka and Symphonies of Wind Instruments*[17]. Serial music shares some traits with this as a way of organising a selection of chosen intervals or 'sounds' in a row for variation, similar to how Stravinsky 'composed with intervals'[11] in his motifs. Considering this, a turn to serialism no longer seems 'reactionary' but rather a somewhat natural succession following the Neoclassical period, despite Stravinsky's initial ideological opposition. A work which demonstrates Stravinsky's complete compliance with serial methods is *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas* (1954). This is an unmistakeably serial work (crucially *not* yet dodecaphonic) that uses a chromatic spanning of a major third, rearranged to be in the sequence E-Eb-C-C#-D which Stravinsky labels as a theme. The opening of the piece establishes its nature as a serial work. The theme in prime form is stated, with three crotchets in the 2nd tenor trombone playing E 3 times in crotchet form before moving to Eb, then to C, C# and finally concluding on D. A bass trombone answers, playing the same theme, before the inversion and retrograde inversion of theme are heard spread across the trombone quartet. This comes

10 Cross, J. (2015). *Igor Stravinsky*, pp159-161. Reaktion Books.
11 Straus, J. N. (2012). Three Stravinsky Analyses: Petrushka, Scene 1 (to Rehearsal No. 8);*The Rake's Progress*, Act III, Scene 3 ("In a foolish dream");*Requiem Canticles*, "Exaudi." *MTO*, 18(4). 10.30535/mto.18.4.6

12 Straus, J and Cross, J. (Ed.). (2003). *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky*. 'Stravinsky the Serialist' pg172. Cambridge University Press

13 Hughes, T. S. (1995). *An Argument for the Reassessment of Stravinsky's Early Serial Compositions* pg17
14 Babbitt, M. (1964). Remarks on the Recent Stravinsky. *Perspectives of New Music*, 2(2), 35. 10.2307/832481

15 Cross, J. (2015). *Igor Stravinsky*, pg172. Reaktion Books.
16 Straus, J and Cross, J. (Ed.). (2003). *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky*. 'Stravinsky the Serialist' pg152. Cambridge University Press
17 Cross, J. (1998). *The Stravinsky Legacy*, pp17-33. Cambridge University Press.

together to create a highly polyphonic and imitative work, which is in places canonic, similar to Webern's serialist music[18]. In the second movement, an interesting element of Stravinsky's serial technique in the work can be observed – 'overlapping' of the different forms of the row, with the vocal part being simultaneously the inversion and the retrograde[19]. Despite only having a five-pitch row, the work demonstrates a composer becoming more willing to engage with the atonal and chromatic nature of traditional Schoenbergian serialism, also evidenced through Stravinsky's unwillingness to repeat notes unless the repetition is immediate or ornate. Significant progress can also be traced, beginning from the point of departure that is *Septet*, which will culminate in *Requiem Canticles* twelve years later.

As demonstrated through all of the analyses in this essay, Stravinsky did maintain many common features of previous serialist music. One was that, in the place of tonality, music was instead organised with a set of predetermined dissonances or notes. Whenever this organisation is presented in transposition, inversion, retrograde or retrograde inversion, it retains its basic intervallic identity. In *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas*, Keller also notes that Stravinsky has also acquired the Schoenbergian serial technique of not repeating any notes of the row until all the notes are 'over' unless they are 'immediately or ornately repeated', showing a contradiction between some of the earlier transitional works and later dodecaphonic ones. For Stravinsky, the series clearly provides the basic pitch material for composition, just as it did for Schoenberg. However, the two begin to differ from that starting point. Schoenberg and Webern, for example, both partition themes into many voices, with Webern taking this to extremes with pointillistic textures. This is certainly not something that Stravinsky engages with, as seen in the harp and voice melodies from *Requiem Canticles* and *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas* respectively. Moreover, Stravinsky splits with Schoenberg on what he viewed as the bombastic emotion in Schoenberg's music, famously quoted as saying 'music is powerless to express anything at all'[20]. Despite this, it is worth noting that whether Stravinsky chooses to acknowledge it or not, many of these

works are highly expressive, particularly *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas* and *Requiem Canticles*, both of which centre on themes of death.

Straus also identifies a schism between Stravinskian and Viennese serialism, in that Schoenberg treats the collection as a basic structural unit and creates aggregates within the series, whereas Stravinsky is more concerned with repetition of some notes. One thing is for certain, though – if Stravinsky's work aligns with a certain serialist more than another, it is Webern. The two share mutual focus in canonical treatment of inversions, contrapuntal textures, inversional balance (e.g. in Webern the inversion and prime against one another)[21]. The analysis of the above works mostly proves the idea that the music of the Second Viennese School provided an invaluable starting point for Stravinsky, but that in several key areas, Stravinsky innovated and changed aspects of the music that was not to his taste. This again affirms that the serial music is non-reactionary and progressive, as he treated the Second Viennese School as a point of departure for his own interpretation of serialism.

The serialist music of Igor Stravinsky may appear as surprising on a superficial level to those who are unfamiliar with some of the subtleties of his earlier works, Russian especially, or his fascination with order. It can also safely be concluded that the music was not born from a reactionary tendency, and that Stravinsky was not overly concerned with the reactions of younger composers and commentators like Boulez, Messiaen, Stockhausen or Babbitt. The late serialist music was also not immediately dodecaphonic: it began with diatonic 'serialist' works, such as the *Septet*, progressing to works that used rotational arrays to generate serial hexachords. Moreover, even when the later works are dodecaphonic, they still do not obey all of the 'rules' of Viennese serialism, given Stravinsky's treatment of these ideas as a point of departure for personal innovations. Especially considering the emotionally challenging situation in which Stravinsky found himself after the composition of *The Rake's Progress*, this body of over 20 works shows a remarkable progression for a composer this late into his career and his life. This music confirms that a key constant in a prolific career, from *The Rite of Spring* to *Requiem Canticles*, is Stravinsky's uncompromising, progressive compositional attitude.

> Stravinsky splits with Schoenberg on what he viewed as the bombastic emotion in Schoenberg's music

18 Straus, J and Cross, J. (Ed.). (2003). *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky. 'Stravinsky the Serialist'* pp162. Cambridge University Press
19 Keller, H. (1955). *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas*: Stravinsky's Schoenbergian Technique. *Tempo* , *35*, 13–20. 10.1017/s0040298200052360
20 Stravinsky, I. (1935). *An Autobiography* p.163

21 Straus, J and Cross, J. (Ed.). (2003). *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky. 'Stravinsky the Serialist'* pg155. Cambridge University Press

The Flagellants: Corporal punishment at Westminster School

Elizabeth Wells takes a look at a system of punishment which was legal until 25years ago.
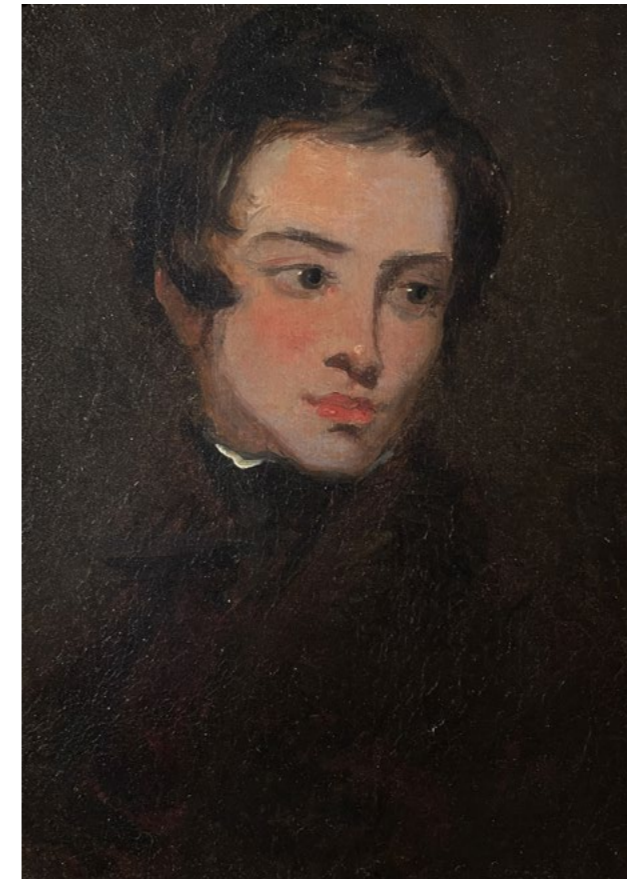
A portrait of Robert Southey, just a few years after his expulsion from Westminster

In 1792, Westminster School pupil Robert Southey, was expelled by the Head Master, William Vincent. Southey's crime was the publication of an unofficial school magazine, or, more specifically, the content of the articles which it contained. The magazine was named 'The Flagellant' – a reference to the victims of flagellation or whipping. The term was commonly applied to those who practiced self-mortification as part of their religious beliefs, but those reading would have appreciated the allusion to schoolboys who were beaten by their teachers. In the magazine's fifth issue, Southey made an impassioned argument that corporal punishment should cease. The school masters who physically chastised their pupils were likened by Southey, who was writing under a pseudonym, to 'THE DEVIL!!!!!'

Following this issue's publication, Head Master Vincent, who was a minister within the Church of England, went to the printer of the pamphlet and demanded to know the identity of the authors. Once Southey's identity had been

> 'Friday Corrections'

revealed to him, Vincent not only dismissed him from the school, but also prevented his former pupil from entering Christ Church, Oxford. Southey was furious at this treatment and harboured a deep resentment for Vincent for many years.

Corporal punishment was a part of Westminster School life from earliest times. A 13th century manuscript in Westminster Abbey sets out some rules for school boy conduct, which were possibly in use in the monastic grammar school that ultimately became Westminster School. 'Transgressors of these rules' were to be 'instantly beaten', and if a boy was caught speaking in English or French in reply to Latin they were to 'endure a stroke for any word.' The statutes granted to the school by Elizabeth I in 1560 specified that if any of the prefects 'commits an offence, or carries out his duty negligently, he shall be severely beaten, as an example to others.' The week's timetable allowed for 'Friday Corrections' in which 'those who have committed any serious offence shall be charged: for it is right that evildoers be properly punished.' Any attempt to leave the school without correct authorisation was to be chastised by 'severe flogging'.

Juniors in College literally made the rods for their own backs – they were responsible for manufacturing the birch whips used for discipline. Old Westminster, Frederick Forshall, recorded that the 'Westminster rod was no mere collection of twigs, but an instrument of highly finished construction. The twigs that projected beyond the string-bound handle were eight in number, never more, never less.' Forshall added that they were 'wore down to stumps by use.' Originally there was even a 'rod room' for their construction and storage, behind the shell up School. We still have the 'rod table' - pictured here up School, with birches protruding from its drawer. These were symbolically arranged 'business end' out, as seen, only when the school was not in session, at all other times they were placed in the drawer with their handle protruding - ready for use.

Dr Richard Busby, Head Master from 1637 until 1695, was particularly renowned for his frequent use of corporal punishment. It was said that Busby boasted that he had beaten all of the Bishops sitting on the bench in the House of Lords, although we have been unable to verify this claim. There are numerous other anecdotes relating to Busby's beating his pupils. Indeed one story relates that Busby whipped a young Frenchman, unconnected to the school, who had been passing through Dean's Yard and was brought to him by his pupils for punishment. Once he had recovered from the ordeal in a nearby coffee house, the Frenchman sent a porter to the school with a challenge to Dr Busby – Busby responded by
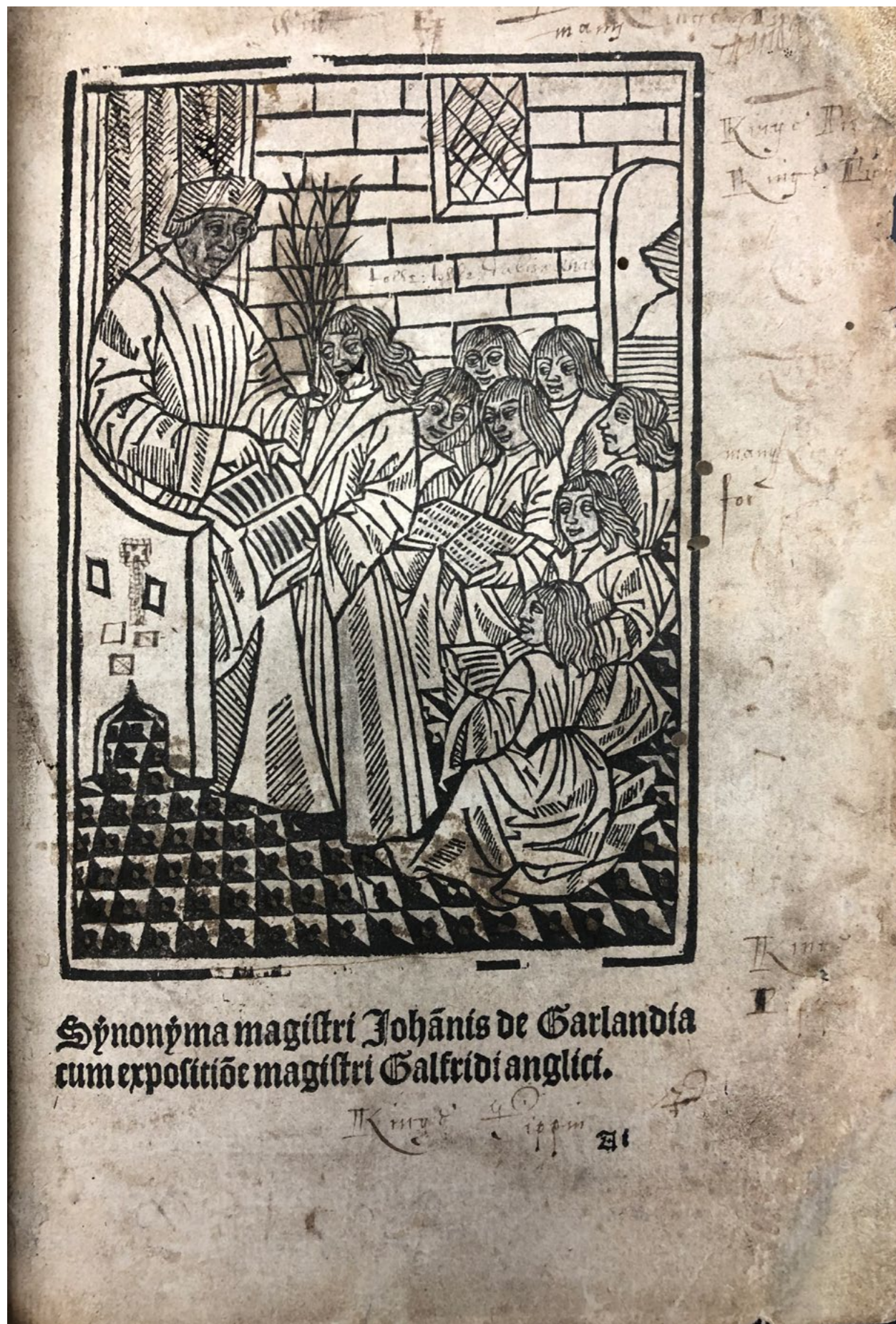
Woodcut illustration of a medieval classroom, complete with birch rod, from *Synonyma magistri Iohanis de Garlandia cum expositione magistri Galfridi anglici* [reference PRS/2/3]

whipping the porter as well.

The association between Busby and the birch was commemorated in the cartoon of 'Sedes Busbiana' or 'Busby's Chair', which depicts a rod being wielded at a pupils' bare buttocks as a coat of arms on the seat's back. Nearly a century after Busby's death, his name was still synonymous with a fearsome school master. A political cartoon by Gillray from 1785 plays on the idea of Parliament as 'Westminster School', with Charles Fox playing the role of Dr Busby, beating his naughty pupils who include 'Master Billy' - Pitt the Younger.

In the print culture of the late 18th century corporal punishment was primarily a subject for humour. A pamphlet purporting to concern 'The Opera of Il Penseroso' included a cartoon of pupils being beaten and music and lyrics for a song to accompany such 'performances' which were 'acted with authority at the Royal Theatres of Eton and Westminster' by 'Mr. Twigg-him, Mr Monitor, Miss Birch and Others.' However, voices such as Southey's, calling for the abolition of such punishment, were a growing minority. Francis Burdett, another Old Westminster who had also been expelled, in his case cudgelled by the Head Master for his involvement in a pupil riot, campaigned for an end of flogging in the

The rod table, complete with birch rod, 'business end' out

Busby boasted that he had beaten all of the Bishops sitting on the bench in the House of Lords

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army, although he was ultimately unsuccessful.

Interestingly, the use of corporal punishment in schools was rare in continental Europe, declining alongside the rise of Enlightenment thought in the 18th century. In France caning was dubbed 'The English Vice.' It grew to be associated with sado-masochistic sexual pleasure which was viewed as peculiarly English. Former pupil, John Cleland, depicts such a scene in his erotic novel Fanny Hill, the publication of which saw him imprisoned in 1749. By 1838, flogging was provided as part of the services of 20 different brothels in London.

It is important to remember that although the subject has become laden with both comic overtones and sexual inuendo, being physically chastised at school was often a traumatic experience. Wounds might heal, but psychological scarring could remain. For older boys in particular, the humiliation of being publicly beaten could inflict far more damage than the strokes of the rod. In 1819 the Head Master Dr Goodenough flogged a sixth former who had turned up to school drunk. The boy later stabbed himself with his own pen knife as a result of his shame and nearly died as a result.

Opposition to corporal punishment continued to have a voice in the 19th century, but instead of campaigning for its abolition, attention was instead focused on curbing excesses in its application. The Reverend Stephen Rigaud, who was once master of the house which now bears his
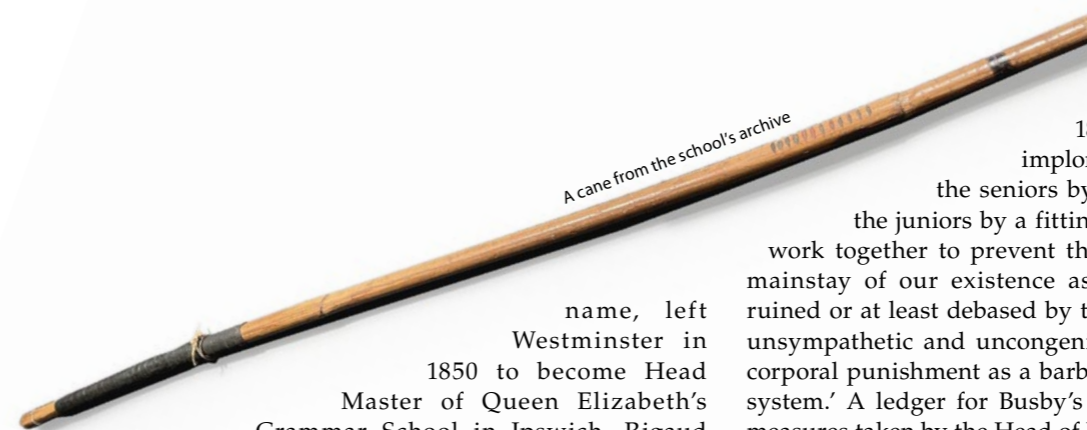

Sedes Busbiana, or 'Busby's Chair'

Gillray's 1785 cartoon of 'Westminster School'

name, left Westminster in 1850 to become Head Master of Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Ipswich. Rigaud was accused and prosecuted for punishing a pupil with 'undue severity'. Although the case was unsuccessful, Rigaud found it difficult to continue as Head Master following this public scandal and left to become Bishop of Antigua.

In the late 19th century, school masters increasingly devolved responsibility for punishment to pupil monitors who used bamboo canes to 'tan' pupils, rather than the traditional birch rods. The appropriately named Lawrence Tanner, who was Head of Grant's House 1908-1909, recalls in his diary the experience of having to physically chastise fellow pupils. The process was highly ritualised and pupils had the opportunity to appeal against their punishment, firstly to a council of school monitors, chaired by the Captain of School, and then to the Head Master himself. Tanner found the experience highly stressful, had difficulty modulating his voice and, after he had prosecuted his first 'case' suffered 'a bad reaction of nervousness afterwards,' the exact nature of which remained unspecified.

Despite the negative impact on both punisher and victim, the system continued to enjoy popular support. In a letter to The Elizabethan, the school's magazine, in

In France caning was dubbed 'The English Vice'

A cane from the school's archive

1890, one Old Westminster implored: 'Let both sides, then, the seniors by justice and forbearance, the juniors by a fitting respect for their elders, work together to prevent the monitorial system, the mainstay of our existence as a public school, being ruined or at least debased by the crushing weight of an unsympathetic and uncongenial tendency to decry all corporal punishment as a barbarous relic of an obsolete system.' A ledger for Busby's records the disciplinary measures taken by the Head of House and other monitors term by term from soon after the house's formation in 1926. Although lines were often the initial punishment, there are numerous references to 'strokes' of the cane.

Although a number of Old Westminsters who were at the school in the post-war period claim responsibility for leading an abolition of corporal punishment and fagging (the system in which junior boys performed menial tasks for old pupils), the decline was a gradual one which occurred in the late 60s and early 70s. A number of factors assisted in this transition, but a key moment was the admission of girls to the school. The movement away from physical punishments also reflected a broader societal shift. On 17th May 1972 thousands of school pupils walked out of school to protest outside the Houses of Parliament against corporal punishment.

As is often the case, the statute books came to reflect what was already common practice. In schools in receipt of government funding, corporal punishment was outlawed by Parliament in July 1986. An earlier ruling by the European Court of Human Rights in 1982 had already established that physical punishment could not be administered without parental consent, and education could not be withdrawn from children who refused to submit to corporal punishment and had their parents' support. Finally, in 1998, corporal punishment was banned in all schools, over two hundred years after Southey's original protest. Despite its abolition in the UK, corporal punishment is still part of the school experience for thousands of children across the world.

Illustration from 'The Opera of Il Penseroso'

Excerpt from Busby's punishment book

Shoes

Bethany Duck follows in the footsteps of Old Westminsters.

It is impossible to move around Westminster School without being aware of walking in the footsteps of countless Old Westminsters, but you probably don't think as much about the shoes on the feet making those footsteps.

A lucky charm?

During a 2006 renovation of 19 Dean's Yard, a pair of shoes was discovered under the floorboards. Leather with a metal heel and buttons, they date to the late nineteenth century and were possibly worn by a Westminster pupil before they found their way under the floor of Liddell's. Their placement there was no accident.

Secreting shoes within the fabric of a building is not an uncommon practice: the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery keeps a register of over 3,000 reported finds of shoes hidden within buildings and there are likely many others yet to be discovered. These shoes were generally well-worn and damaged before being hidden, perhaps because new shoes were too expensive to spare for the practice, and most were concealed between the 1700s and late 1800s.

Hiding a shoe within the fabric of a building was originally thought to be an attempt to ward off evil spirits. Suggested theories have included the notion that spirits could be trapped inside shoes or that they could act as a diversion for a spirit to attack instead of a household member. It is also posited that shoes were hidden by builders rather than occupants, to bring good luck during construction work. Building a house in the 1800s was, after all, more of a risky business without modern health and safety standards.

The current prevailing theory of concealed shoes, however, tends to be less focused on warding off evil spirits and more on bringing good luck and hope to those inside the home. Boots were associated with hard work and the potential riches which might result. We don't know exactly why shoes were concealed at 19 Dean's Yard, or whose shoes they are, but thankfully Liddell's has yet to be swarmed with evil spirits following their relocation to the archive.

> Hiding a shoe within the fabric of a building was originally thought to be an attempt to ward off evil spirits

Coronation dress

It is far easier to trace the owner of the other pair of shoes that currently calls the Westminster School archives home. A pair of size eight black patent dress shoes with metal buckles, these were worn to the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. King's Scholar (and, for a year before he left in July 1954, Queen's Scholar) David Michael Collison took part in the coronation ceremony in the usual way awarded to scholars, by hailing the new Queen with 'Vivat Regina' as she was crowned. So proud of this event, Collison kept not only his shoes but also his breeches, stockings, gloves and tie from the occasion. They were donated to the school in 1997 by Mary Collison, his mother, following his death. As the Queen celebrates her Platinum Jubilee, so does this pair of shoes.

So few pairs of shoes exist in the archive because they not specific to Westminster School. All manner of school ties have been returned to us as they are both identifiable as Westminster School uniform and often serve no purpose once a pupil leaves, but shoes continue to be worn. Unless they are carefully saved as a memento of a coronation, they are an inherently functional object that often saw heavy daily wear until they needed to be replaced. There even used to be a school bootmaker, who made and maintained shoes and footballs for schoolboys.

Cobbler Foot

In the 1830s, this position was held, in a pleasing case of nominative determinism, by William Foot. A portrait of this man wearing a brown coat and red tie is hung in Ashburnham House. Purchased in 1965 for £1,000, the acquisition of the painting of 'Cobbler Foot' is recorded in The Elizabethan:

'The portrait […] shows him standing with his head thrust forward belligerently and holding in one hand the strap with which he used to belabour junior boys who interrupted him in his work. It was a time honoured joke to send unsuspecting new boys to provoke his wrath, and in his other hand is a piece of paper on which can just be discerned the words: «Please give the bearer two measures of strap oil.»'

The request for 'strap oil' was a fool's errand and the boys send to ask for the non-existent substance would instead be rewarded with two lashes from Foot's leather strap.

After Cobbler Foot retired from his post, a Mr M. Martin would take up the position of school bootmaker and hold onto it for 54 years. Perhaps he was the one to make the pair of shoes later concealed beneath the floor of 19 Dean's Yard.

Shoes concealed Caption: Shoes concealed

Coronation shoes Caption: Coronation shoes

Time

The cradle rocks above an abyss, and common sense tells us that our existence is but a brief crack of light between two eternities of darkness. Although the two are identical twins, man, as a rule, views the prenatal abyss with more calm than the one he is heading for (at some forty-five hundred heartbeats an hour).

In the admittedly sententious opening of the novelist, Vladimir Nabokov's autobiography *Speak,Memory*, he discusses how throughout his life he's come to see time as a prison rather than a blessing. He goes on to state how he has tried everything short of suicide to free himself from this spherical cage. He foraged through his dreams repeatedly, searching for some sort of key to escape but still these two walls bookending his life would always prevent him and his bruised fists from the freedom of timelessness. Eventually he gave up hope in ever solving this puzzle of time, and instead found solace in small moments of absurdity and his treasured memories of childhood.

Over Lockdown, time moved simultaneously slow and fast. Hours dragged on endlessly, but weeks flew by. 2020 felt like forever in the moment but at least for me, in retrospect feels much briefer than a normal year. These contradictory impressions of the passage of time aren't exclusive to the pandemic. Time in the present is often warped by emotions and our activity. The more attention we give to it, the slower it feels. When looking back on time, however, the mind instead

Eventually he gave up hope in ever solving this puzzle of time

considers memories. Think of a holiday, it flashes by in an instant, but later when you think back on it, it feels like so much happened. We remember the big and the small in life – the concerts and parties where we let go of ourselves and the moments of intimacy – the conversations that last for hours, where we live in the present, even if it's just for a short moment.

Personally, for instance, I still remember vividly the final conversation I had with my grandfather. Still in my mind today the cigarette slowly burns down in his hand, I can still see the coffee cup and the brown ring it left stained the table. It was a finite crystallized moment of humanity. It was a trivial, meaningless conversation, but one where time seemingly slowed, and I was living in the moment.

There's a scene in the 1983 film Nostalgia by the Soviet art house filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky where a strange man tries to walk across an empty pool without letting a candle that he's holding die out. After about 4 minutes of walking, the candle dies, and the camera follows him walk slowly back to the start again. He walks out again. The candle goes out a second time and it's only on the third walk across the pool that he finally makes it, in a single tracking camera shot lasting nearly 5 minutes. The scene is deeply unnerving and entirely irrelevant to the plot, but it somehow transcends past interest or boredom and instead connects with us on a visceral level, making us feel every second. Usually when we're focused on time this intently it's when we want it to pass quickly like we're waiting for someone or something to happen. This instead is different; Tarkovsky lets us witness a short glimpse of the infinity between day-to-day rhythms of life and allows us to live entirely in the present even if it's only for a few moments.

Life, much like film is a mosaic of time –some sections move fast, others drag on endlessly. Perhaps the pandemic let us see the mosaics of time in our lives, allowing us to better sculpt how we use it in the future and not end up in crisis like Nabokov – begging for an extension on what he though was a short and meaningless life.

Thank you
Trey Miller

Vasily Vereshchagin - The Doors of Tamerlane

List of Contributors

Brendan Bethlehem is in the Sixth Form

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Raaghav Das (LS) is passionate about politics and the power of modern technology in helping young people actively engage in topical issues. He has published Chronologie, a multi-award winning student e-newspaper, covering a range of themes, from deteriorating human rights during the pandemic to global vaccine inequity. He has also made several appearances on FYI Sky News.

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Eleonora Gallenzi Minervini is a Remove pupil and plans to study French and Spanish at university. A keen linguist, she also enjoys Gothic literature, rock music, portrait painting and German Expressionist films.

Alexandre Guilloteau is in the Sixth Form and is interested in law, especially public law, as well as Classics. When not poring over Greek verb tables, he enjoys cycling around mediaeval churches and seeking out old books.

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Martin Alfonsin Larsen is in the Remove and has an offer to study Music at St Catherine's College, Oxford. He is an aspiring musicologist who loves to play the piano and flute, and conduct. Outside music, he also enjoys reading about politics, drinking espressos, and analysing popular culture.

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Sam Moorhouse has started studying History at the University of St Andrews.

Mark Morris is in the sixth form, studying Physics, double Maths and English. When he is not rowing, he likes to pretend that he is a humanities student by writing subpar essays about the things that interest him.

Johan Orly (PP, 2021) is currently reading History at Christ Church, Oxford. His primary interests are in French history and early modern court culture. In his free time he is an avid cellist.

Liberty Osborne is in her first year of studying Chinese at Oxford. She is enjoying her degree and time there, although she is yet to try Opium herself.

Titus Parker is a Remove pupil interested in central Asian history, artificial intelligence, and blockchain technology. He enjoys cooking for his friends.

Nathaniel Read is currently in the Sixth Form studying English History Latin and Greek but keeping a keen interest in philosophy and economics on the side. He founded the Psychology Society and enjoys anything that helps one infer something about the human psyche. He is also particularly curious about what caused the rise and fall of 6th century Athens. In his spare time he likes writing, playing board games and trying out new things.

Amelia Ross is in the Sixth Form studying English, History, Latin and Maths. She is interested in the Medieval period and relishes learning under the cultural and historical backdrop that Westminster presents. When she's not watching a film or reading with a cup of tea, she enjoys her other great passion - music - with a variety of eclectic tastes ranging from Classical Symphonies and Scottish fiddle music, to reggae, Broadway musicals and the Beatles.

Carlotta Shahenshah is in the Remove. She will be studying French and Russian at university and has a particular interest in journalism and international affairs.

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Melinda Zhu is in the Remove. She likes to think about measuring things, the notion of value, and words. She is unsure whether that makes her a student of Economist or English, but realises that it's probably a false dichotomy.