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The Nature of History

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EDITOR'S LETTER

The world in which I entered Retrospect Journal as a Columnist almost four years ago has changed dramatically to the one in which I write this foreword. We have experienced a global pandemic, mass mobilisation in response to racial injustice and political despotism, an ongoing cost-of-living crisis, and humanitarian emergencies as a result of warfare, conflicts and an unprecedented rate of climate change. Whilst this list is inexhaustive, these issues have prompted us to consider the way in which we approach history – as an academic discipline and as a continuous narrative – in several of our most recent print editions. When deciding on a theme for the first journal in my tenure as Editor-in-Chief, it felt appropriate to follow the wonderful work of my predecessors in attempting to bridge the gap, so to speak, between the past and present. With this in mind, I am delighted to present "The Nature of History".

Of course, the circumstances in which this idea was conceived are far from positive. With spiralling crises affecting our daily life, the disastrous consequences of climate change cannot be understated. We have been forced to consider our relationship with the natural world and the resources which we have come to depend upon – and we are already bearing witness to its catastrophic effects. With that said, this edition is not solely about times of crisis. In asking our contributors to consider our relationship with the natural world, we asked for wide-ranging interpretations of what was a (purposefully) very loose brief, for as much as this issue was inspired by the current climate emergency, there is also – as our writers have discussed – much to be celebrated about the planet we call home.

This edition begins in the Upper Paleolithic period, some 36,000 years ago before moving through the Middle Ages and Age of Revolution, bringing us into the twentieth century. We read of Roman poets and English folklore; political policies and the environmental impacts of war. It is a broad-ranging edition and one which I could not be much prouder to present to you. I hope that this will incite conversation and encourage consideration of the world around us, as well as enjoying the wonderful articles which I am sure you will savour as much as I have.

The production of this edition would not have been possible without the wonderful contributions of those whose articles appear in this edition, so thank you to everyone who has taken the time to share their brilliant work. Of course, there are also a number of individuals busy working behind the scenes to make this possible so a heartfelt thanks to our team of Copy Editors. You will also notice a number of beautiful original illustrations, thanks to Aoife Céitinn and Isla Boote (who also produced our covers), and stunning graphic design work throughout the journal by Ella Garrod. And last, but my no means least, I must give a very big thanks to the Senior Editorial Team: our Secretary, Katie Reinmann; our Treasurer, Ailsa Fraser; and our PR & Academic Liaison, Sam Marks. Retrospect would not exist without you so thank you, for your incredible work and for always keeping me in check.

Lastly, a massive thanks to YOU for reading this edition and for supporting the work of Retrospect Journal! I hope that you enjoy "The Nature of History" – and perhaps feel inspired to submit your own work for publication in the future, which we gladly welcome.

Happy reading!

Tristan Craig
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
School of History, Classics and Archaeology

SOCIETY UPDATES

HISTORY SOCIETY

First semester was a great success for the society and we are looking forward to continuing our work throughout these next few months!

Last semester we ran a number of great events. On the academic side we worked with a number of Eastern European student societies to hold a talk on the Russification of that region. We also took a look at the US midterm elections with a live podcast Q&A with The Whiskey Rebellion Podcast, hosted by Edinburgh's own David Silkenat and Frank Cogliano.

Our social calendar was full of events and our wonderful sponsor Pilgrim provided a great venue to socialise. We held a successful boardgames night and our annual Halloween social there with some impressive costumes! Outside of the pub we hosted several coffee mornings at Teviot which went down a treat.

This semester is just as full and exciting and we started the semester off with a welcome back drinks social, just what was needed to get back into the swing of things. Live music was provided by the incredible Violet Monstera and New Amphion proved the perfect venue for a chill and social evening.

This semester will also see the first of our undergraduate conference seminars in collaboration with Retrospect. This seminar will be focused on the 'History of Celebration' and we can't wait to see the wonderful work being shown off. The academic conference seminars will continue throughout the semester with the second looking at the 'Frontiers of History' and our final one in March looking at the Histories of the Future'. This is a great opportunity to share your knowledge and learn something from your fellow students!

In February we will see the return of the much loved overseas trip. This year the society will be jetting off to Milan during reading week to soak up the culture and history of that magnificent city. The task of organising an overseas trip is no mean feat so a massive thank you to our wonderful trip officers, Olivia and Chelsea.

Closer to home we have a number of other exciting events in the works. We will be joined by the wonderful Dr Sarah Goldsmith for a talk on 'Invisible Masculinities' so keep an eye out for information on this!

We've had a great year so far and can't wait to continue the hard work for this coming semester!

CONNALL MACLENNAN
HISTORY SOCIETY PRESIDENT 2022-23

CLASSICS SOCIETY

Semester 1 has featured fun, togas and lots of dancing! From the Fresher's Toga Pub Crawl, to the Halloween Social and our charity Ceilidh, we've had a ball of a time celebrating the student community finally back in person.

Literacy through Latin has come back strong, with the amazing Charities Officers - Ella Rowe and Lucy Thomas - working tirelessly to create great content for the kids, and recruiting volunteers. Thank you both for your ongoing work, and a massive thank you to those volunteers who turned up week after week to expand the horizon of some young minds.

Our now annual (perhaps) inter-society pub quiz returned at Le Monde (our sponsor). Thank you to the joint effort between Archaeology and History society, and well done to ArchSoc on their win - but will you be reigning champion again next semester...?

We've raised an incredible amount of money for our charities

Literacy through Latin and LGBT+ Health and Wellbeing Scotland. Our book sale raised a brilliant £244, and the Ceilidh raised a sensational £1,000! This money will make a huge difference to so many.

We thank every single individual who bought a ticket, our photographer (@jamiespillett) and ceilidh band (Edi Uni Folk Soc) for creating a wonderful night; and of course to our social secretary Oli Afonso-Drury, who planned the majority of the event & handled it wonderfully.

We are excited to host more academic talks this upcoming semester, pub socials & some exciting cross-society events, and our highlight of the year - Hadrian's Ball - is BACK! Join us for a fun night of dancing, drinking, and the chance to win some amazing prizes! Find tickets online via the EUSA website.

Finally, I'd like to personally thank the committee for all their hard work this semester - ClassicsSoc's biggest committee to date & everyone has managed to produce some great work. I am thankful for your dedication in creating a safe space for all, and your ability to teach yourself about communities which you're not a part of. In a time which causes much uncertainty and many can feel outcast at this university, you have listened and shown understanding, and continued to strive to make the society better. I am grateful to call you my committee for the 2022/2023 academic season.

An honorary shoutout is given to Freshser's Rep Izzy Reid, for conducting our first 'Q&Slay' of the year on our instagram, posting some very funny tweets and memes on twitter (follow us! - @edclassicssoc), and keeping the Fresher's voice heard - which can sometimes be overlooked by societies.

GEORGE MCADAM-CROSS (THEY/THEM)
CLASSICS SOCIETY PRESIDENT 2022-23

ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY

It is with great pleasure that I pick up the pen where our previous president left off. This academic year has been amazing for Archaeology Society, with record breaking membership, exciting events and more to come!

Last Semester, we kicked off the year with freshers week events organised by our wonderful Social Secretary Sofia. We loved meeting so many new faces at our 'Artefacts and Crafts' event, where many of you put our committee's crafting abilities to shame with your Roman face pots. Freshers week also saw our 'Scavengers at The Museum' event, where we set members loose in the National Museum in pursuit of a prize. We really enjoyed hosting these events and finally feeling like numbers had bounced back after Covid.

Semester One also saw the continuation of our excavations at The Cammo Estate alongside The Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society. On Monday Mornings many Archsoc members put on their wellies, wrap up warm and head down to Cammo for a day of digging. We are so grateful for the Field Society, allowing students to get some digging experience and offering artefact handling sessions. This fieldwork opportunity will continue to run throughout semester two, so if you're interested in joining us please do reach out, no previous experience necessary! A massive thank you to Jonathan and Jasmine, our Dig Chiefs, for everything you do.

Coming into Semester two, our committee has been working really hard to bring you an exciting semester two. In February, we see the return of our annual Fieldwork and Careers Fair, allowing students to network with potential employers in the heritage sector or look for summer fieldwork opportunities. February also brings us the Scottish Student Archaeology Society Conference, set to take place this year in Aberdeen. We have been working with the Universities of Glasgow and Aberdeen to bring this conference back for another year, so we hope to see many of you trekking up north with us to attend! Semester two also brings the second instalment of our lecture series, with an amazing line up prepared by our Academic Events officer Elizabeth Coleman.

I wanted to use the last bit of space I have to extend a gigantic thank you to the Archsoc Committee, John, Ross, Elizabeth, Kara, Sofia, Jasmine, Jonathan, Hollie, Sarah and of course Lizzie B. You are all amazing, Archsoc would not be what it is without your hard work.

DARCEY SPENNER
ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY PRESIDENT 2022-23

THE CAVE OF ALTAMIRA: WRITING ON THE WALL FOR HUMANKIND'S CREATIVE CALL

SAM MARKS

In 1879, amateur archaeologist Marcelino Sanz de Sautuola was taking his eight-year-old daughter Maria on a walk through some caves on their property in Cantabria, Spain. De Sautuola had been excavating the cave in Altamira for about a decade in the hopes of finding prehistoric artifacts. Just after he and Maria entered the cave, she wandered into a nearby chamber, looked up towards the ceiling, and allegedly exclaimed, 'Look, Dad, oxen!' Looking up at the ceiling Maria saw drawings of bison and other animals, unaware that she had just made the first recorded discovery of cave paintings. Described by reporter Benjamin Jones as the 'Sistine Chapel of Paleolithic art', the Cave of Altamira was the beginning point for a long series of explorations, analyses, and debates surrounding cave art.

The cave paintings in Altamira have been dated somewhere between 36,000 and 13,000 years ago, placing them within the late Paleolithic (50,000 to 12,000 years ago). While there has been considerable research into what the oldest cave paintings are, Altamira's paintings stand out from the rest of the cave systems for being the first in the region to be discovered. Altamira was just one of the many cave systems inhabited by humans in the Franco-Cantabrian region in the north of Spain and southern France.

Ancient historians have argued that the region was home to the densest population of humans during the late Paleolithic. This era saw the occurrence of the Last Glacial period, where the average temperature of the earth was 7.8 degrees Celsius cooler than in 2019. The cooler climate potentially caused large migrations toward the equator, making the Iberian Peninsula a literal and figurative hotspot for European travelers. These migrations most likely led to the high density of the area, enabling many caves to become populated. Over 300 caves in the Franco-Cantabrian region contain cave art or other remnants of Paleolithic humans living there. It was not until 1903, twenty-four years after Altamira was discovered, that a second cave with paleolithic art, the Caves del Castillo, was found.

Sautuola was assisted in the excavation by Juan Vilanova y Piera, a professor of geology at Madrid University. The two published their research in 1880 and showcased the discovery at the 1880 Prehistorical Congress in Lisbon. But the Altamira project was subject to immense scrutiny and debate that kept the cave painting's authenticity under speculation.

In Lisbon, Sautuola's and Vilanova's research was not well-received. Most prehistorians rejected the idea that cave people would have been intelligent enough to construct such paintings. At the time, prehistorians largely regarded Paloelithic humans as 'savage' when compared to the modern 'civilized' humans. This was a byproduct of the growing Social Darwinist ideology, the application of natural selection and survival of the fittest to social and political concepts, at the time. Additionally, the extensive detail and preservation of the cave art displayed in Altamira led many to believe that the paintings were not genuine. Sautuola had even been personally accused of hiring an artist to paint the caves. The rampant attacks from the Congress severely damaged the focus on Altamira.

Key instigators in opposing the validity of Altamira were

Emile Cartailhac and Gabriel de Mortillet. Both were well-known and well-respected prehistorians in Europe. Cartailhac had been the supervisor for prehistory at the 1867 fair in Paris and was the chief editor of *Matériaux pour l'histoire naturelle et primitive de l'homme* (*Materials for the natural and primitive*), which was founded by Mortillet. Their accusations against Sautuola and Vilanova resulted in the Prehistorian Congress never visiting the Caves of Altamira to see the paintings firsthand. Cartailhac eventually visited Altamira for himself twenty-two years after the Congress. Seeing the cave for himself, Cartailhac went from Altamira's most significant skeptic to its most significant proponent.

Apologizing to Maria de Sautuola (her father Marcelino died in 1888), Cartailhac wrote an article *Mea culpa d'un sceptique* (*My guilt as a skeptic*) that gained widespread attention in the academic community. In it, he blamed himself for holding back the scientific study of cave paintings for over two decades and stressed the importance Altamira played in the role of understanding human development. Around this same time of this publication, the Cantabria experienced a boom in cave painting discovery.

In 1903, a second set of cave paintings were found at the Caves del Castillo, located around ten miles from Altamira. Discovered by Hermilio Alcalde del Rio, a major pioneer in early cave art exploration, El Castillo provided authenticity to the Paleolithic art in Altamira. Additionally, El Castillo held significant importance among the anthropological record of cave paintings. A major feature of the caves was the presence of hand stencils, allowing archaeologists to learn more about the Paleolithic painters themselves.

In 2013, a study was conducted to measure the lengths of fingers on hand stencils found in El Castillo. Hand stencils were a common form of cave art throughout the Franco-Cantabrian region and serve as some of the leading ways archaeologists can identify the painters. According to the measurements, it was concluded that a majority of the stencils were of female hands. This was significant in that prior to this study it was widely believed that cave art was a primarily male-dominated activity. Additionally, the cave paintings have been dated to around 40,000 ago. This

makes it very possible that the El Castillo was painted by Neandertals, an extinct species of humans, rather than Homo Sapiens.

El Castillo served as one of many Cantabrian caves that were discovered to contain cave art in 1903. The same year saw discoveries of paintings in El Salitre, Hornos del la Pena, Convalans, and Le Haza, all of which were located close to each other. All of these cave systems having distinct and well-preserved paintings ultimately closed the debate on the validity of Franco-Cantabrian cave paintings. This gave way to a study of cave paintings outside Europe.

One particular example of importance were the caves of the Maros-Pangkep karst on South Sulawesi, Indonesia. While known to locals for centuries before European involvement, the cave was brought into wider focus by Dutch archaeologist Heeren-Palm. Palm explored the caves in the 1950s, finding similar hand stencils to the ones located in El Castillo. In 2011, when dating these stencils, they were estimated to be somewhere between 35,000 and 40,000 years old. This discovery changed the previous understanding of the chronology of cave paintings. It was formally believed that the earliest cave paintings were created in Europe. However, with Maros-Pangkep cave paintings being dated to a similar time as the paintings discovered in El Castillo and other Franco-Cantabrian caves of the same time, there was clearly a more universal artistic movement between Paleolithic humans across the world. From Europe, to Indonesia, to Southern Africa, to India, and to Australasia, the cave paintings discovered all shared similar qualities.

For starters, Paleolithic cave paintings contained both figurative and abstract art. Figurative art is any form of art that has a strong resemblance to the real world while abstract art has independent qualities from visual references. A common theme among the cave paintings was the inclusion of animals. Like Altamira, bison, horses, and other mammals were depicted through cave paintings. It's also worth noting that most of these cave paintings have been dated tens of thousands of years before humans domesticated animals or plants. Additionally, hand stencils have been found in caves in Europe and Indonesia. While their meaning is unknown, it has been speculated that they are a reference to some type of ritual conducted by people in the Paleolithic era.

Cave paintings that have been dated more recently tend to include abstract art as well as figurative art. Engravings, stencils, and various signs have all be observed in cave systems. One particular thing of note is finger flutes. Finger fluting is the practice of creating abstract patterns by creating lines on the surface of cave walls. These were mostly made out of Moonmilk, a soft clay-like substance found in limestone. A plethora of theories have been uncovered by archaeologists on what flutes might have meant, but, as with hand stencils, these views are largely speculative. But, regardless of why these cave paintings were made, what is perhaps most fascinating about them is how well they show a universal feature of humanity: creativity.

Regardless of region, time, and even species, if Neanderthals did partake in cave painting, human beings have found creative outlets since the Paleolithic period. The use of figurative art is significant in showing that Paleolithic humans understood their external environment well enough to document it. Abstract art can show how different rituals or even recreational activities were applied to life in the time. Even the use of various substances like Moonmilk to create different types of cave art show developing methodologies in regard to painting. Since the Paleothic period, all these qualities have remained intrinsic parts of human identity and creative expression that have continued to the present. Even after 36,000 years, the young Maria Sanz de Sautuola was able to recognize the painted bison. Cave paintings are a window into the past that clearly show how timeless art is.

OBEDIENT TO COMMANDS? ELEPHANTS AS WEAPONS OF WAR IN CLASSICAL HISTORY

VERITY LIMOND

'The elephant is the largest land animal and is closest to man [sic] as regards intelligence, because it understands the language of its native land, is obedient to commands, [and] re-members the duties that it has been taught'.
– Pliny the Elder, (*Natural History*, Book VIII, Chapter 1).

Hannibal, the great Carthaginian general who waged the Second Punic War (218-201 BCE) against Rome, is most often associated with the use of war elephants due to his ambitious attempt to bring them across the Alps. Although this is the most famous usage of elephants in a military campaign, it was not the first, the most typical, or the most successful instance of their use. This article looks at the origins of the elephant as a weapon of war in Indian kingdoms, traces their use in many classical conflicts, and considers their value and effectiveness.

It is not clear where the use of elephants in conflict originated. They were utilised in India from around 1000 BCE, where the rulers of Assam struggled with a climate that was not conducive to breeding horses and turned to elephants as an alternative. There is also evidence that the Shang dynasty in China (1723-1123 BCE) used them and that they appeared in conflicts in Syria around 1500 BCE. Thus, it seems that several civilisations independently came to similar conclusions about how to use and counter elephants in conflict. But more than merely being beasts of burden in war, elephants acquired political value, eventually becoming a symbol associated with military and royal prestige as use of elephants spread both eastwards and westwards from India. Textual, visual and numismatic sources, albeit sometimes imprecise, testify to their presence in battles in Persia, Hellenistic Egypt and Syria, Macedonia, Greece, Carthage and Rome.

Many of the generals who deployed elephants on the battlefield soon discovered certain essential characteristics. Although elephants served to carry armed troops, they also fought with their tusks and trampled the enemy. Furthermore, elephants often had a role in psychological warfare, as the mystique and uncertainty associated with them served to terrify raw recruits and horses. On the other hand, elephants have never been selectively bred successfully, meaning that they are only ever tame enough to co-operate with their trainers, rather than being domesticated. An elephant wounded in the eye or trunk is virtually impossible to control. Consequently, elephants in a battle have been compared to gas, something that can cause as much harm to its own side as to the enemy. They could be made more aggressive with alcohol or loud noises, but they were not useful in sudden engagements or on difficult terrain.

Alexander the Great encountered elephants when facing Darius III at Gaugamelan in Persia in 331 BCE, as Darius had been given fifteen of the animals by Indian rulers to use against the Macedonians. In the end, they were sent away because they caused too much disruption among their own side prior to the battle, allowing Alexander to capture them unharmed. Later in his campaign he faced more war elephants in India. Notably, Porus fielded 200, wearing armour made of leather and quilted fabric, in well-organised formations at the Battle of Hydaspes (326 BCE). Despite the destruction and fear they caused among Alexander's troops, they were eventually boxed in

by the Macedonians so that they trampled their own side, and Alexander won the day.

Although Porus was defeated, Alexander's army refused to move further across India, partly in the knowledge that the larger Indian kingdoms could field up to 4000 elephants in a single battle. Despite having overcome them, Alexander was interested enough to collect a string of elephants and incorporate them into his army even though elephants were not very compatible with Greek/Macedonian tactics, most especially the use of the infantry phalanx and highly mobile cavalry. Due to his early death, it is not known how he planned to train or deploy the elephants that he had taken such care to acquire.

However, Alexander's interest in elephants influenced the subsequent Wars of the Successors (322-281 BCE), which broke out after his death. Perdiccas, the regent of Alexander's half-brother, used 40 elephants against Ptolemy I, former companion of Alexander and founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt. The elephants dismantled the palisades at the fortress Castellum Camelorum (321 BCE), but they were forced to withdraw after Ptolemy ordered his men to attack the elephants' eyes. Alexander's former general Seleucus ceded large tracts of land to the Indian ruler Chandragupta Maurya in return for 500 war elephants. These elephants played a decisive role at the Battle of Ipsus in 301 BCE, where Seleucus won after training his cavalry to co-operate with the elephants.

It was also during the Wars of the Successors that towers (howdahs) were used on elephants for the first time in the western world, thus increasing both the number of men mounted on each animal and the overall firepower while shielding the mounted archers and spear-throwers. Various iterations of armour gave the animals better protection and their natural weapons, their tusks, could be enhanced with spikes. But just as the elephant as a weapon became more sophisticated, so did anti-elephant technologies. Ptolemy pioneered the idea of capturing

Illustration by Aoife Céitinn

elephants by using chains of interconnected iron spikes to entrap them. At the Battle of Gaza in 312 BCE, his troops were instructed to kill the mahouts while the elephants stepped on iron hooks that injured their feet, creating chaos in the army of Demetrius.

Returning to Hannibal, his famous march into Italy in 218 BCE was not even the first time that the Carthaginians had used elephants against the Romans, as they had been part of the Carthaginian arsenal in Sicily during the First Punic War (264–241 BC). Nor had the Carthaginians been the first to use elephants against the Romans, as Pyrrhus had employed them at the Battle of Heraclea in 280 BCE to terrify the cavalry, with the Roman gladius sword rendered useless against them. Hannibal's distinctive achievement in including elephants in his forces was to keep them alive on such a long journey.

It appears Hannibal's progress was not slowed by the fifty-eight elephants that he took with him, despite the need to supply them with 70-150 litres of water and 150-300kg of feed daily. In his use and management of elephants, he was informed by his study of Pyrrhus's tactics. But although all his elephants survived the journey, only one survived the subsequent battles and winter in Italy, and it has been suggested that this was a significant contributor to his inconclusive campaign.

Hannibal, understanding how valuable elephants were against cavalry and inexperienced troops, used his elephants in battle at the River Trebia in 218 BCE where, though he demonstrated a better ability to manoeuvre them around the battlefield than other commanders had in the past, it is unclear how essential they were to his victory. There were no elephants used at Trasimene (217 BCE) or Cannae (216 BCE), where he also enjoyed victories, as most of them had died during the Italian winter, although he considered them a significant enough loss to ask Carthage for more. In general, elephants were not of huge value to the Carthaginians in Italy, as Rome engaged in delaying tactics and tried to avoid major set-piece battles, which were the only context in which elephants were effective.

They were also not the right weapons to employ at the Battle of Zama (202 BCE), at which Carthage ultimately lost the Second Punic War, as Scipio Africanus used loud noises and grappling hooks to startle the elephants, rendering them more dangerous to the Carthaginians than the Romans. When they charged, they passed through the empty passages that Scipio had created in his troop formations, so they could be cut off from the rest of the Carthaginian army. Despite their relatively inefficiency at the Battle of Zama, Rome still compelled Carthage to surrender its elephants afterwards. Rome ended up employing war elephants in more battles than her long-time enemy, including against the Carthaginians themselves at the battle of Nepheris in 146 BCE. Caesar even brought an elephant with him to Britain but they fell out of use during the Roman Imperial period. This was partly due to the relative calm of the Pax Romana and partly because the Roman obsession with ivory had depleted elephant populations.

However, elephants continued to be used in combat through the Middle Ages and beyond in various regions of the world. British soldiers and locally recruited sepoys in India fought against them in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including at the siege of Arcot (1751), when they were used as living battering rams. Outside of combat, the British Indian army used them for transport and engineering purposes throughout the Second World War, making for perhaps 3,000-3,500 years of their obedience to commands in war.

THE MUDDY RIVER: WATER AND WORDS IN HORACE *SATIRES* 1

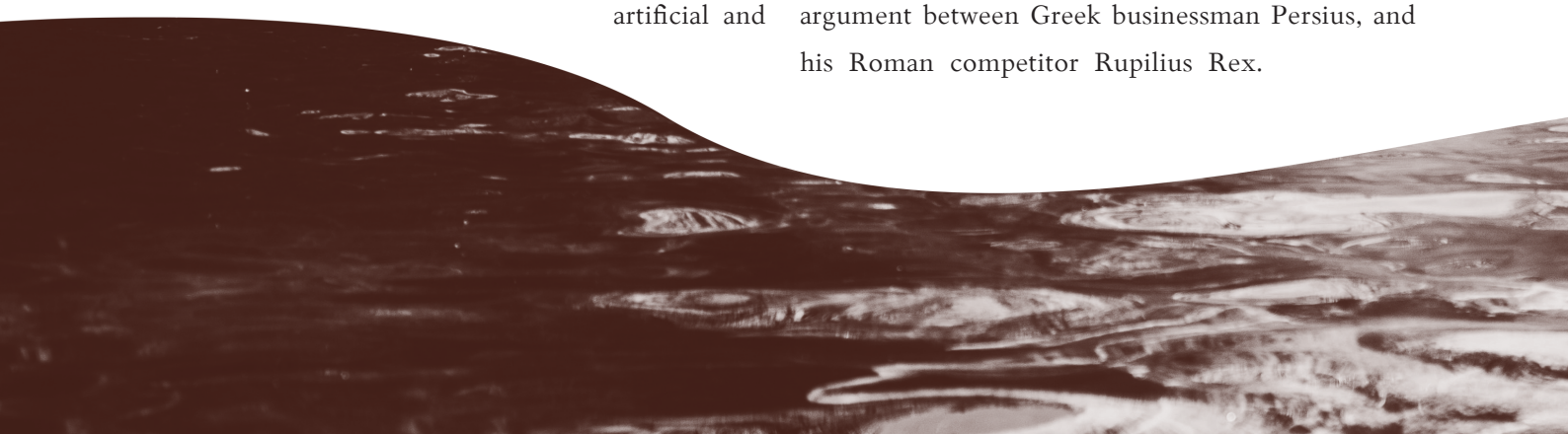
FIONA MACRAE

One of the most well-known images of Horace's *Satires* 1 is his criticism of fellow satirist Lucilius, whose poetry 'flowed like a muddy river' (1.4.11). Horace uses the image of the river and other liquids to illustrate the purity of poetry and speech throughout *Satires* 1, with the purity of the words corresponding to the purity of the water. According to Horace, the ideal form of poetry is Callimachean: light, witty verses that do not criticise or drag on. On the other hand, bad poetry is shown using images of impure water and other liquids, just as Lucilius is described as a muddy river.

Lucilius with his muddy river of speech is Horace's primary target in 1.4. The metaphor continues as Horace says he wishes to pull bits of debris from it (1.4.11), and that he is not impressed by the volume of verses he produces (1.4.12). This is not only a muddy river but a polluted and garrulous one too. Lucilius is not the only one to be criticised for unclean water in poem 1.4: several other unnamed poets are criticised using water and liquids. The poet of lines 1.4.36-8 hands out his poems to people coming from the bakehouse and water tank. These were facilities for the poor, thus showing that his poetry is of poor quality. The water tank was a man-made reservoir or cistern for collecting water and it was associated with promiscuous women. This implies to Horace's reader that the poetry is artificial and immoral, morality being another chief concern of *Satires* 1. Sample poems hang outside a bookshop on lines 1.4.71-2 where they are sweated on. The inclusion of bodily fluids portrays this poetry as impure, especially as they are often used to reflect the character of a person in Roman satire. The specifics of what classifies a poem as impure are laid out by Horace in lines 1.4.100-3, where he likens insulting people 'the ink of the black cuttlefish' (1.4.100) and 'unadulterated venom' (1.4.101). These liquids are dark and dangerous, making them the least desirable for a poet intent on a pure flow.

Satire 1.10 returns to the topic of Lucilius and his muddy river, with other poets brought in to contrast him. Horace reiterates his criticism that Lucilius' poetry is a muddy river (1.10.50-51) and this time supports it with criticism of a number of other poets and writers. In this poem, the image of the muddy river is applied to other poets. The criticism is not for Lucilius alone, but rather for the wider group of poets in Rome. A poet called Alpinus splits open a muddy head for the Rhine (1.10.37), and Cassius' poetry is like a river in spate: gushing and uncontrollable, and full of silt (1.10.62). In this way, the image of the impure river is picked up and expanded as a commonplace issue in poetry.

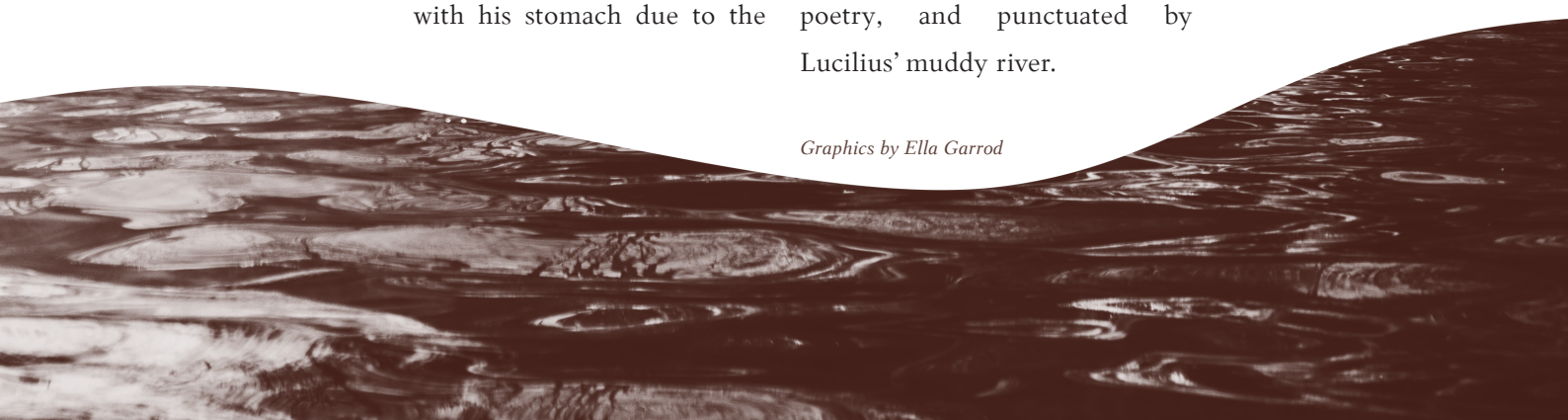
The metaphor of the river is also used in 1.7 in an epic argument between Greek businessman Persius, and his Roman competitor Rupilius Rex.



Their speeches are portrayed as contrasting forms of liquid concerned with the place of origin of the speakers, a battle between Callimachean Greek rhetoric and Republican abuse, and a continued criticism of Lucilius' poetry. The half-Greek speaker Persius flows on like a river in winter (1.7.26-7), which we imagine would be flooded, but there is no criticism of Persius' speech here. It is not muddy, like Lucilius', or sweaty and artificial like some of the other poets in 1.4. Instead, it is a clean, forceful stream of rhetoric. The speech is punctuated with a pun on *ius* (7.20), meaning 'law, judgement' but also 'soup, sauce', playing on the liquid imagery of the poem. Persius' Roman competitor, Rupilius Rex, responds with not water, but wine, freshly pressed from the vineyard (1.7.29). Not only this, but it is vinegar (7.32), sour and scathing abuse, the very thing Horace condemns in 1.4.46, using the same word, *acer*, to criticise Lucilius' poetry. The contrasting liquids of the opposing speakers draws an image of an epic battle of Homeric scale, and in this epic battle Horace's preferred Callimachean style comes out on top, the puns win over the abuse. He earlier criticised the bitter abuse represented here by vinegar, and now his Greek-inspired style conquers it with only a pun.

Liquids also have a poetic meaning relating to Lucilius in 1.5, but as a demonstration of the correct way to write. The journey down out of Rome is a theme Lucilius' himself wrote about, therefore Horace has emulated it to demonstrate how his poetry should have been written. The poem is full of hazards for the poet which he must overcome, often associated with liquids, thus subtly hinting at the problems Horace wishes to address in Lucilius' own works. The whole length of the journey, Horace struggles with his stomach due to the bad quality of the water. Almost every place they visit has an issue with water quality, most notably the town which cannot be mentioned because the name does not scan, which has particularly bad water (1.5.87-9). Rainfall towards the end of the journey makes progress difficult and slow as the road is muddy from the rain (1.5.95), and the next day the road is even worse (1.5.96). These obstacles slow down Horace, but Lucilius makes this journey in a single day in his original poem paying no heed to the obstacles in his path, thus illustrating the difference between muddy Lucilius who swept through quickly and Horace who took care not to get muddy. Horace, despite taking his time, has managed to achieve light Callimachean verses, whereas the efficient Lucilius has a lengthy poem full of debris. The poem comes to an abrupt halt as the group of travellers reach Brundisium, and we expect the journey and the poem to go on for longer or to end with more ceremony, but this is a demonstration of Callimachean brevity, so it is moderate in length and content.

In this way, Horace uses the image of the river as a launch point for his criticism of poetry, and the worse the quality of the poetry the more impure the liquid it is associated with. As a form of programmatic satire, it is very self-conscious in how it expresses this criticism. If Horace criticises Lucilius and other poets for being unclean in 1.4 and 1.10, he must demonstrate his own Callimachean cleanliness and brevity as he does in 1.5. *Satire* 1.7 tells this story of the light verse emerging victorious of the bitter abuse, creating a battle narrative for his criticism of Lucilius. The water imagery unites these passages, creating a set of programmatic poems dedicated to the superiority of pure Callimachean poetry, and punctuated by Lucilius' muddy river.



Graphics by Ella Garrod

ETHEREAL CONTACT: THE HUMAN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OTHERWORLD

MELISSA KANE

Tales of the otherworld, its landscape, inhabitants, and relation to the mortal realm have long fascinated and illuminated British folklore and its understanding of the supernatural world. Discussions of another plane of existence, whether that be fairyland, the land of the dead, or the land of fallen angels, have developed alongside understandings of our own world, across numerous lands and cultures, leading to an understanding of a symbiosis between the two. For the purposes of discussion, the otherworld, also known as fairyland or the ancestral plane, may be regarded as an alternate land or dimension, related to and in parallel to our own, akin in structure and content but distinct in its own regard, usually through the inheritance of magical properties and features. The otherworld represents a twin to the mortal realm, symbiotic in human and supernatural power, necessary to cosmic peace. This intrinsic relationship between the two informs tales of the otherworld, which is usually formed as a reflection of local cultural attitudes and conceptions.

Entrances to the otherworld often inform the baseline of mythological tales of supernatural communication. Usually, these are places of power within the local landscape and either hold natural or religious cultural significance which informs the development of folkloric structure. Both formats involve a highly sought-after sense of emotion and spiritual relief, with an ability to evoke particular thoughts, connections, and behaviours that cement a supernatural association. Often defined as 'liminal spaces', the transition to the otherworld can take place in several fashions, once again related to the cultural community of creation, narrowing and enlarging to fit customs, ideologies, and traditions. Such spaces, as discussed, are often related to the natural foundation and sites of significance of these communities, with their cultural or psychological connotations marking them as boundary places with the power to transport, transfigure, or even disappear. The power of the entrance as a cosmic connective tissue evokes a ritualistic or shamanistic element of communication with the otherworld. Anthropologist Keith Brasso has suggested that the significance of these places within local cultures leads to their 'interanimation', where the individual begins to pay much more in-depth attention to their surroundings; this, in turn, animates spiritual thoughts and feelings, particularly when associated with a place of religious significance such as a natural site or burial ground.

Communication with the otherworld is a cultural and historical experience, informed by local social and religious beliefs as well as communal structures and environments. In the study of otherworld conceptions, and consequent human interaction with their symbiotic siblings, historians have developed an interesting timeline of progress combatant to changing religious beliefs and social development. The first, largely referred to as the 'Celtic' form, informs us of the otherworld as a land of the dead. This is chiefly a pre-Christian imagining of the otherworld, often linked to the familial group formats of British settlement in the post-Roman era and found most strongly in Ireland and the Scottish Highlands. The otherworld as an afterlife placed high spiritual value on burial spaces and ancestral monuments, such as the Cave of Cruachan in Ireland, which could be seen as a transitional space for spiritual beings both ethereal and human. Figures such as the *sidhe* place constant connection with

these spaces in both Scotland and Ireland, and many also associate lore regarding changelings with these beliefs, stating it as a survival of the idea that the souls of the dead may return to inhabit the bodies of mortal children. The trial of Bessie Dunlop of Ayrshire, furthermore, ignited these beliefs of a 'land of the dead' as late as 1576.

In the eighth through tenth centuries, this interpretation of an accessible and communicative otherworld came under threat from the growing popularity of Christian belief in the British Isles. Although belief did invariably change, it did not die, and was instead assimilated into a theologically accessible format. Otherworldly souls were reimagined as fallen angels: angelic hybrids who had fallen to earth during Satan's rebellion against God, later given a demonic reimagining during the early modern period as familiar-like creatures. The adaptation of fairy belief in this way demonstrated the strength of the belief as a given feature of the natural world whose origin story changed with social needs and cultural development. The communicative symbiosis with the otherworld needed to remain, even if it meant an evolution to different forms of being and structure.

In the fourteenth century, communication of the otherworld itself began to change, rather than adapting to Christian tales as it had previously. Literary tales, rather than the Celtic and early Christian oral adaptations, began to dominate otherworld culture. Here, tales of chivalry and elite social life became solidified in popular culture, taking on features of the Arthurian mythology of the later medieval period and featuring stock usage of the fairy court, introducing figures such as Auberon, King of the Fairies; the Fairy Queene; the Fisher King; and even King Arthur himself. Despite an apparent lack of accessibility in literary format, these new romantic images of the otherworld remained in the popular imagination, as seen in the case of Janet Boyman who, in 1572, claimed to meet her fairy familiars and the legendary King Arthur himself at the foot of his namesake site in Edinburgh.

The idea of transitional experiences from our world into the otherworld is a common feature in these tales, oddly specific in comparison to other elements of folklore. The aforementioned 'liminal spaces' hold power in their ability to touch either side of their liminal boundary and to hold hands with both the mortal and immortal, therefore allowing those who enter to do so in a ritualistic or shamanistic function, and in some cases to experience a form of metamorphosis. Examples of these spaces include caves such as Oweynnagat in County Roscommon, Ireland, or islands cloaked in mist, such as Isle Maree of Gairloch, and even times such as Samhain and Beltane which are viewed as tears between the two lands. The representation of these spaces allows for the travelling individual to adopt many transformational ideas into their own magical thinking, idealising a journey to fairyland or the land of the dead, while the ritualisation of such crossings invokes experiences such as trances and hallucinations of creatures and landscapes in a shamanistic attribute.

Within these traditional tales, a distinct emphasis is placed on the role of music associated with travel to the otherworld, which can also be argued to hold a ritualistic function. The common folkloric connotation of the musical player – usually a piper as in the case of Edinburgh's Royal Mile, or a drummer as in the Drummer Boy of Richmond – can be seen as an interpretation of the relationship between music and travel, with the player lost to the otherworld in the depths of an underground tunnel or cave representing the land of the dead. Here, the playing of music signifies a transitional point of the journey, only to end once it has been completed through the full disappearance of the player, who may sometimes be said to reappear on certain transitional events. Moreover, with specificity to these cases, a significance may also be held in the fact that these individuals move in the direction of holy sanctuary, for instance an abbey, but are lost along the way, finding themselves in a liminal space between the mortality of man and God's sacred land.

Although many of the discussions above hold a uniquely historical complex, the ability of these tales of the otherworld and the continuity of its folklore to be adapted into new streams of being in the modern era make them valuable in comparison and observation. The modern UFO phenomenon holds several similar principles to the conceptions of the otherworld that we have seen above and was first observed by Jacques Vallee in 1969. Consistent points of comparison between tales of fairyland and adventures on UFO spacecrafts – including the most famous element of these narratives, the abduction itself – evoke many of the rituals and changes of the transitional experiences. The difference between these traditional and modern narratives, however, can be seen as a product of the community in which they were created: unlike the nature-based Celtic myths of the Tuatha de Danann, UFO otherworlds can be seen as reflection of the prominent role of technology in modern society. Alien structures are seen to be much more advanced in their abilities, just like the magical fairies before them, and contemporary discussions of space and space travel are constructed as a new kind of natural boundary.

Conceptions of the otherworld, therefore, are not merely reflective nor refractive of the cultural community they are created in but are also developmental and transitory as features of significance, belief, and ideology change within them. In the examination of these features, understandings of the otherworld may only be deemed of value when examined in association with contextual creations of historical, social, and religious significance. The otherworld is a land that was created from and remains a key functional element of folklore and heeds value as a combatant companion to the mortal realm, allowing for understanding of a range of features – from the comprehension of death to the feelings and emotions associated with nature and religious sites – as well as a means of understanding ritualistic metamorphosis.

MONSTERS OF THE SEA: THE WHALE IN ANGLO-SAXON AND NORSE LITERATURE

TRISTAN CRAIG

From diabolical beasts to riddling metaphors, the whale appears in various guises within the literary tradition of the Anglo-Saxon and Norse peoples. Whilst those who inhabited the northernmost regions of Europe encountered many different species of marine mammals which were distributed along their coasts, those who lived in Early Medieval England had far more limited interaction. As a result, the relationship that these two peoples had with the sea and the creatures that dwelled therein frequently diverged in their writings, despite a shared textual tradition through their relationship with Christianity. By examining semantic distinctions in Old English and Old Norse works, this article will explore how the distinct knowledge and cultural perceptions of cetaceans influenced each culture's literary output.

The emergence of the medieval *Physiologus* can be traced to Alexandria, Egypt, where an anonymous Greek writer, influenced by Eastern folklore and mythology, produced a didactic work containing descriptions of the natural world with a distinctly Christian message sometime between the second and fourth centuries CE. It was not composed as a zoologically accurate account, but as a means of teaching moral lessons through observance of the natural world. The text was subsequently dispersed throughout Latin Christendom, where it would serve as the basis for works including the Old English *Physiologus* of the Exeter Book, thought to have been compiled between 965 and 975 CE. Utilising allegorical tropes and literary metaphors, it presents a cosmological reading of the Christian world explained through the animals at the centre of each poem: *The Panther* (earth), *The Whale* (hell), and *The Phoenix* (heaven).

The tripartite division of the *Physiologus* follows the order laid out in Book XII (*De animalibus*) of Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae* – an etymological study covering a wide range of topics – from the early seventh century. In *de piscibus* ('Fish'), Isidore makes a distinction between whales (*ballena*) and 'sea-monsters' (*cete* or *bellua*), revealing the danger of monstrous entities lurking in the seas. The Biblical tale of Jonah being swallowed by one such *cetus*, whose 'belly was so big that it resembled hell', is used to demonstrate this point. The 'great fish' of the Book of Jonah, whilst saving the prophet from drowning, is a vessel employed by God to force Jonah to repent for attempting to flee his divine mission. God later hears Jonah's cries 'out of the belly of hell' and ultimately saves him.

Whilst the whale of the Book of Jonah was employed by God Himself as punishment for absconding, the whale of the Old English *Physiologus* is far more cunning in capturing unsuspecting humans:'Sailors think him a lovely island, / When they see him, so they can safely fasten / Their high-prowed ships to that un-land.' Ostensibly, this passage reads as an innocuous event: weary seafarers discover what they perceive to be a place to rest and berth their ships but are cruelly tricked when 'the demon dives down, / Rides the salt-roads into the sea-depths, / Settles on the bottom where he drowns them all.' Unlike Jonah, there is no apparent indication that the sailors have committed any atrocities by finding a place to settle for the night; however, like the prophet who attempted to escape his Christian duty, it is the act of self-indulgence which serves as the basis of the allegory.

Whilst the Old English *Physiologus* highlights the fear of whales in the Anglo-Saxon mind, Old Norse texts employed similar allegorical allusions, but with a

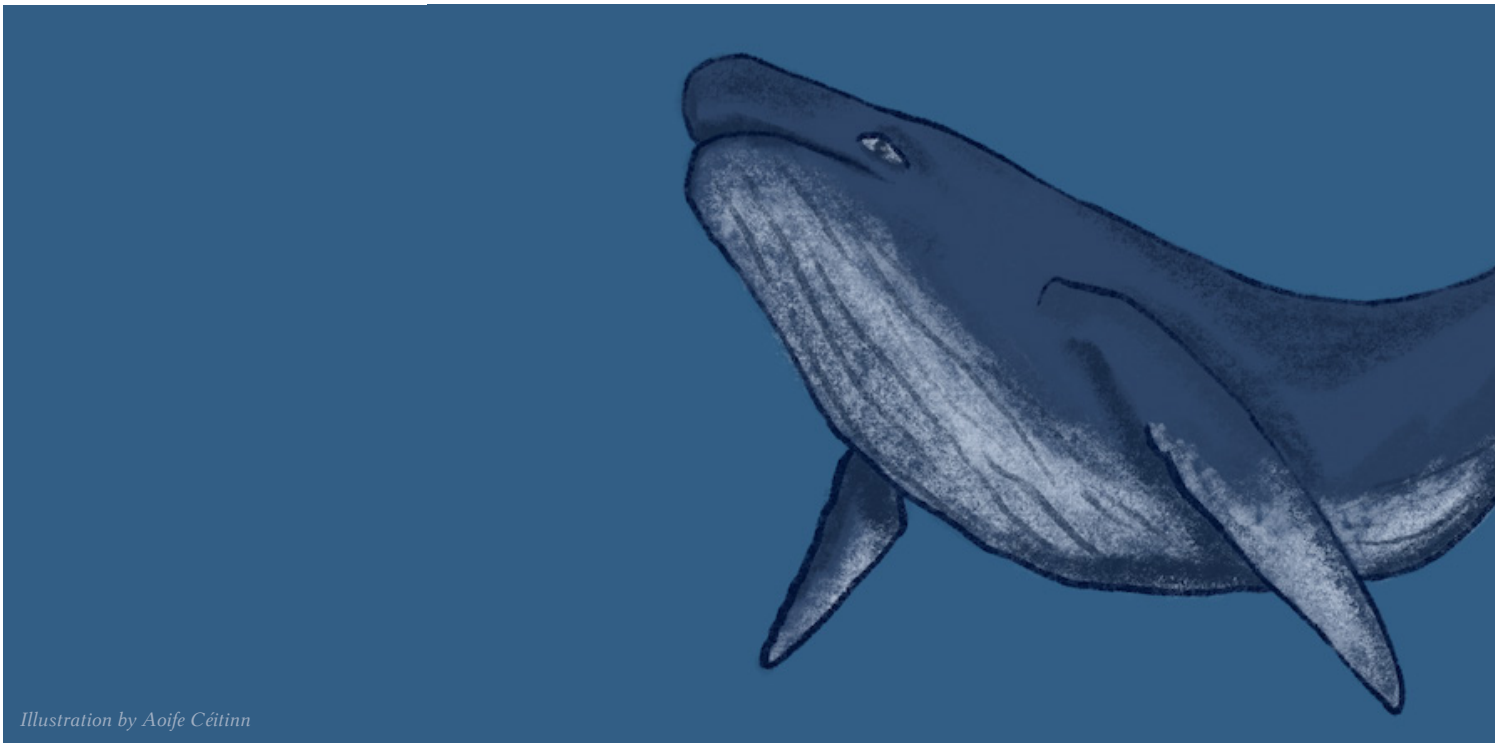


Illustration by Aoife Céitinn

markedly different approach to the marine mammals. Written in the thirteenth century, the Old Norwegian *Konungs skuggsjá* ('King's Mirror') takes the form of a conversation between father and son, addressing the lives of those across the Norwegian social stratum of the High Medieval Period, but is most insightful in the context of this present discussion for its discourse on the natural world. Chapter XII introduces 'The Marvels of the Icelandic Seas: Whales; the Kraken' and provides a reading firmly situated in natural history: a far cry from the monstrous whale of the *Physiologus*.

The reader learns of the variety of whales found in the waters surrounding Iceland, those which are safe to consume or otherwise use, and their relationship with humans; for example, the *reyður* (rorqual), which is 'the best of all for food' and, despite being incredibly large, has 'a peaceful disposition and does not bother ships.' This made the rorqual the whale *par excellence,* and it appears more than any other in the Icelandic sagas. By contrast, the humpback whale will swim directly in front of a ship, forcing it to mount the whale, which subsequently causes the animal to 'throw the vessel and destroy those on board.' The treatment of both cetaceans demonstrates the ability of Scandinavian fishermen to discern between those which pose no threat and those which are inherently dangerous, manifesting in a naturalistic reading of their behaviours. However, not all marine mammals of the *Konungs skuggsjá* are equally as conspicuous.

Although the descriptions of the whales surrounding Iceland are telling of the differing treatment of cetaceans between the Anglo-Saxon and Nordic peoples, there is one beast which provides a strong link between the *Konungs skuggsjá* and the Old English *Physiologus*: the *hafgufa*. The *hafgufa*, here translated as 'the kraken', presents so great a threat that our author informs us 'it is scarcely advisable to speak out on account of its size.' A striking similarity between the *hafgufa* and the *Physiologus* Fastitocalon is evident, not least in the terror it instils in sailors, but also in its appearance, which is 'more like an island than a fish.' Whilst the author states that they have never encountered the creature, its inclusion highlights the widespread belief of monstrous sea creatures and a conflation of traditional folklore with Christian symbolism. However, unlike the *Physiologus* whale, the *hafgufa* is not presented as a moral allegory, nor does it seem to present an immediate danger to humans beyond its size. Ultimately, a deeper understanding of the creatures who dwell in the seas amongst the Norse peoples is presented in the *Konungs skuggsjá*, providing a secular interpretation of those mysterious monsters rooted in natural history.

A further literary device exhibited in both Old English and

Old Norse texts is the kenning: a compound expression comprising a metaphorical base word and genitive noun in place of another word. One of the most common whale kennings in Old English literature is the *hronrade* as it appears in the early medieval epic *Beowulf*. *Hronrade*, or 'whale-road', is employed here as a kenning for the sea and requires little extrapolation from the context – whales live in the sea. A similar kenning appears in the poem 'The Seafarer', included in the tenth-century Exeter Book, where is it written as represented in Old English as '*pæl-peƶ*' or 'whale-way'. It is also worth noting that both *hron* and *pæl* (subsequently referred to as *hwæl* using the modern English alphabet) appear in Old English descriptions of whales and may indicate an attempted taxonomic differentiation between whale types. By contrast, Old Norse had some twenty-six different words for whale species, a number of which are included in the *Konungs skuggsjá*, and further indicates the variability of marine knowledge by comparison of the cultures.

Kennings are also an important literary device in the skaldic and Eddic poetry of medieval Scandinavia. As Þórr (Thor) embarks on his quest to kill *Jǫrmungandr* (the 'World Serpent') as recounted in *Hymiskviða*, he wields his legendary hammer, *Miǫllni*, against the *hraunhvala* or 'whales of the lava lands' – the giants. Unlike the relatively straightforward Old English *hronrade* and *pæl-peƶ* kennings, there is a riddling element which requires some knowledge of mythology to understand. The 'lava lands' possibly refer to Múspellsheimr, one of the nine realms in Norse Mythology, which was home to a race of fire giants according to the *Prose Edda*. Þórr is not in Múspellsheimr during the events of *Hymiskviða*, but the poet crafts an elaborate word play, utilising mythology as a means of expressing the terror of the *iǫtunn* ('giants'). The whales referred to are fitting in so much as they are incredibly large creatures; however, we have also seen the extent to which they are capable of evoking fear in seafarers. It follows that assimilating *hraun* with *iǫtunn* evokes the trepidation and curiosity of creatures like the *hafgufa* – whilst the Norse peoples undoubtedly harbour a great deal of knowledge, much remains unknown about the creatures of the deep.

The treatment of whales, as in the examples cited, differ between Old English and Norse poetry owing to variations in expression between the two; whereas Old Norse texts utilise poetic language to produce metaphorical riddles, the Old English system privileges relatively unambiguous terminology. Therefore, kennings such as *hraunhvala* and the *gliúfrskeliungs* or 'glen-whales' (another kenning for 'giants') not only follow a cultural linguistic preference but highlight once again the semantic and allegorical variances in Old Norse treatments of the whale.

Each of the texts discussed highlight not only the varying degrees of whale knowledge held by those on either side of the North Sea, but also how this manifested in the symbolism and linguistic techniques of the Old English and Norse literary traditions. Whilst the limited extent of Anglo-Saxon knowledge of cetaceans is evidenced in their treatment of the whale, the Scandinavian sources examined reveal a deeper understanding of marine mammals through their interaction with them. However, by employing similar diabolical whale tropes, these cultures demonstrate a shared tradition firmly rooted in the classical *Physiologus* and in Isidore's *Etymologiae*. In analysing Old English and Norse literature, and the use of kennings in their construction, a greater understanding of the relationship between these two cultures and the mysterious creatures lurking in the deep begins to surface.

THE GIANT FOOTPRINTS OF ARTHUR

JAZMINE CHAMBERS

It would be an understatement to say that King Arthur is a great figure in not only British but also wider European myth and legend. There is little known, however, of his origins. While glimpses of a giant 'Arthurian' figure can be found in literature as well as in the physical British landscape, if one looks at certain place names and the stories behind them, they will find an Arthur very different from the adaptations of his story we are familiar with today. For the purposes of this article, it should be noted that the term 'British' will be used to refer to the people who spoke what is now recognised as Old Welsh, which was prevalent in both Wales proper and the Old North (now Northumbria and south Scotland).

The first reference to an Arthur-like figure occurs in the sixth century. Surprisingly, Arthur is not a British name but comes from the Latin *Artorius*, which translates to 'the bear'. Scholars are sceptical that a ruler of British origin would have been called Arthur because this would be the modern equivalent to calling a child 'Superman'. This has caused much speculation on whether Arthur was a real person: not only are there no references to this supposed legendary figure, but it is also a medieval Welsh tradition to name children after historical heroes. The fact that there is little mention of any Arthurs in the record can be interpreted as there being no historical figure to speak of.

The *Historia Brittonum*, a supposed history of Britain written around 839CE, records twelve battles in which Arthur defeated the Saxons. This may sound quite the feat, and it is. Locating these battles on a map reveals great distances between them, making it virtually impossible for all that is described to have occurred within the short time period given. It is interesting to note that at this time, Arthur is not recorded as being as a king, but rather a warrior. This collection of evidence leads to one of the most interesting theories of early Arthurian legend. Literary works from medieval Britain present us with pieces of a picture muddied by romanticism and interpretation: Arthur may not have been a real person, but a mythological giant created to give oppressed peoples a hero to believe in; or perhaps, the hero they should have had. At this time, native Britons were being defeated in battle and forced to assimilate by the Anglo-Saxons. There was a great sense of loss, and it is theorised that Arthur may have arisen as a heroic figure to give people hope. If he was a giant, this would have made his 'victories' against the invaders even more probable and stirring. There are several places throughout Britain that are alleged landmarks left by his enormous presence.

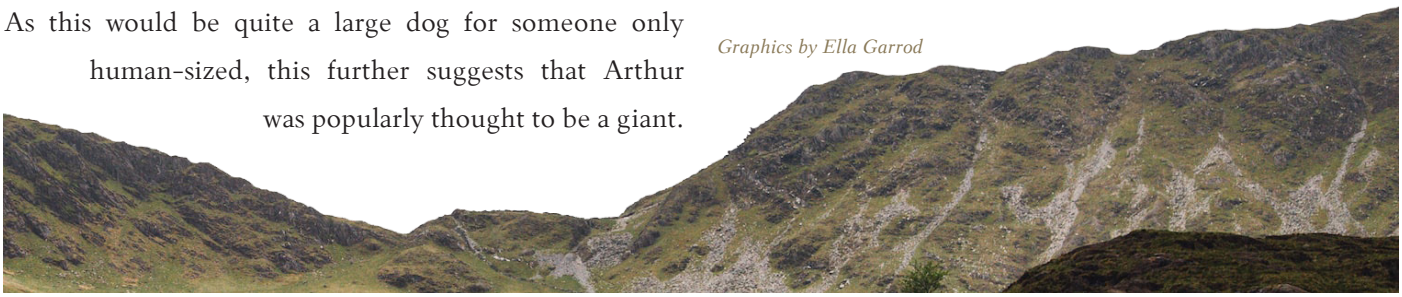
Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh, for example, is shaped like a 'seat' because Arthur sat on it! Only a giant's behind could leave such an impression, or so the legend goes. Another impression is noted in the *Historia Brittonum*'s appendix, where there is mention of Arthur hunting a boar called *Trwyd*. It is said that on the trail of *Carn Cafall,* reputedly somewhere in Wales, one can still see the gigantic footprint of Arthur's dog *Cavall,* who helped him hunt. Arthur's dog was reportedly huge, and we know this because *cavall* translated into English means horse. As this would be quite a large dog for someone only human-sized, this further suggests that Arthur was popularly thought to be a giant.

Arthur's Bed, a large rock in Bodmin in Cornwall, is also strangely non-human sized; it has no story explicitly linking it to a legend of Arthur, yet it has been called that for many centuries. Perhaps it was a giant bed for a gigantic Arthur to rest his head after slaying Saxons?

Furthermore, in the Brecon Beacons in Wales, one can find Arthur's Chair: two peaks beside one another that look similar to a throne and were intended for the warrior to sit on, the myth says. Arthur's Stone in Swansea, as may be guessed, is also of a considerable size; the megalithic monument was given its name in the thirteenth century, showcasing yet again the trend of naming significant natural landmarks after the legend of King Arthur. Though modern science has deduced that these formations are the result of mere geology and not the work of a giant ethereal warrior, all these place names imply that the legend of Arthur affected the people of Britain in a deep way, enough for them to attribute sites of tremendous size to his powers.

While King Arthur's origins do not lie with a true historical person, examples of Arthur in the landscape of Britain are a fascinating result of a superlative figure that surpasses legend. Arthur's beginnings as a supernatural warrior that defended Britain against its foes in a time of need was quickly lapped up by other cultures. Invaders who become the English created their own versions of this hero, and this spread to Europe. The figures of Merlin-- another character perhaps based upon a British historical figure-- Guinevere, and Lancelot, as well as the transformation of Arthur from a giant warrior into a king were all later additions that served the needs of people from later generations and different cultures.

Graphics by Ella Garrod



SPREADING THE WORD TO THE BIRDS: ANIMAL INTERACTIONS IN *THE REDISCOVERED LIFE OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI*

REBEKAH DAY

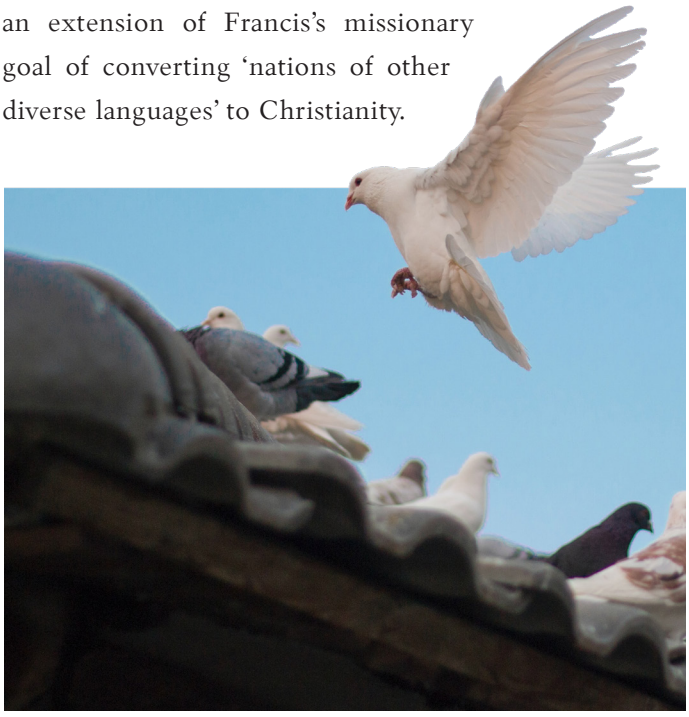
The Rediscovered Life of St Francis of Assisi was written by Thomas of Celano in the thirteenth century. Thomas had been given the task by his superiors, Brother Elias and Pope Gregory IX, who criticised his original version for being too long. Nervous about having to 'cut and to prune' from the record of St Francis's life, the author is adamant that his account of the miracles described cleaved 'everywhere to the line of truth.' The text describes how Francis, regularly preaching the Christian gospel to large gatherings of birds, freed trapped hares, released and prayed over fish, and rescued every worm he saw from being trampled. Despite repeatedly stating that these creatures are not 'capable of reason,' Francis endeavours to treat them with the same respect as any fellow man from his monastic community. Regardless of an animal's inability to communicate or comprehend religion, the reader is encouraged to admire Francis for striving to make the spiritual and physical benefits of Christianity available to outsiders.

With the author's intent laid clear in the opening letter – to remove superfluous detail, and to record the truth of Francis's life – we can assert that the content which did make it off the cutting room floor must have been significant to the narrative. However, the extraordinary nature of miracles, which modern readers know to defy science or reason, makes it hard to reconcile the usefulness of hagiographies as historical sources. Leah Shopkow explains that any reader is likely to only identify evidence within a text that will support the beliefs they already hold (known as *positionality*).

Acknowledging that one's modern understandings are influenced 'by the environments in which we develop,' we can say the same of the medieval author and audience. When Thomas of Celano gathered the accounts of Francis's life and miracles, and when the medieval monks read the *Rediscovered Life,* they were also likely to have identified evidence in these stories which perpetuated their pre-existing beliefs. For example, we find an overt biblical allusion in the text when Francis quotes the words of Jesus from verse 6 of Psalm 22, stating 'But I am a worm, and no man.' Taking this literally, Francis endeavoured to remove every worm he saw on the road to spare them from injury. In another instance, Francis is offered a fish that had been caught. However, the saint 'called him brother fish' and released it back into the water – but rather than swimming away, the fish 'played around next to the boat' while he prayed, only leaving once given permission. The author, Thomas, attributes these actions as evidence of 'the spirit of charity' which Francis bore not only 'toward men, but also even toward mute and brute animals [...]'.

Rather than considering these episodes as naïve or wilfully deceptive because of their miraculous qualities, we can instead consider the animal interaction as literary *topoi*. This symbolism was a symbol familiar to medieval hagiography, a literary tradition established over centuries of religious writing. For example, in the *Life of St Columba* from the late seventh–early eighth century, author Adomnán credits 'divine providence' for the fact that Columba shared the same name meaning as the biblical prophet Jonah. He states that 'in the Scriptures the dove is generally taken allegorically to represent the Holy Spirit.' Adomnán also recounts a time when Columba meets a group of Pictish people living in terror of a local 'water beast,' which had mauled a man to death in the River Ness. When the beast next appears, the locals 'froze in terror' but Columba simply 'raised his holy hand and made the sign of the cross' and so he was able to command the beast to leave. Columba is also miraculously able to command a wild boar to drop dead while it's being hunted – both these episodes leave no doubt that the intention is to highlight the power and holiness of the saint.

David Salter affirms that the narrative role of animals in hagiography is indeed to imply something about the subjects 'social, cultural, or religious milieu.' Where Columba's miraculous deeds ultimately exploit the animals for the benefit of human needs in the two scenes discussed, Francis's do the opposite. This implies that the allegorical role assigned to animals in medieval religious writing was subject to change and could be moulded to fit the author's intended message. Killing a wild boar and scaring off a monstrous water beast in *The Life of St Columba*, are markedly different interactions to those described in the *Rediscovered Life*. Where animals represent obstacles which can be overcome by Christian belief in *Columba*, the kindness shown toward animals in the *Rediscovered Life* is presented as an extension of Francis's missionary goal of converting 'nations of other diverse languages' to Christianity.



In one such interaction, Francis is described as delivering a sermon to a crowd of swallows. Initially 'making a loud noise,' he tells the birds to listen silently to his 'sermon of God,' which they do. The birds open their beaks and spread their wings as though responding to his words, and each allow Francis to touch them without flying away until given permission. This would not be the only occasion where Francis is undeterred by a language barrier and carries on preaching, regardless of the audience's expected receptiveness to his message. Six years into life as a Christian convert, Francis attempts to travel by sea to the 'regions of Syria' where he wished to 'preach

the Gospel of Christ to the Saracens.' Later he presses on with the intention of preaching in Morocco, knowing that he will likely be killed for doing so in lands ruled by an Islamic emperor. When Francis finally makes it to Syria he approaches the Sultan, who, despite representing the highest authority of the Islamic faith in the region, is so 'deeply moved' by Francis's Christian sermon that he honours the saint 'with many precious gifts.' The dynamic here, between two individuals that did not understand each other's beliefs, is similar to the interaction between Francis and the swallows who listened to his sermon despite being described as incapable of 'reason.'

Regardless of the language barrier between his animal audience and the cultural barrier with the sultan, Francis treats them with the same dignity as the most devout of his Christian brethren. The author confirms the ultimate purpose of recording these miracles was to bring 'new disciples of Christ' into the church, who would be motivated to 'progress in virtue so they might be an example before God and their neighbours.' The animal episodes in the *Rediscovered Life* encourage other Christians not to close off their spiritual knowledge or charitable resources to outsiders. The episodes instead infer that Francis's determination to spread Christianity among the hardest to reach audiences, was a key objective for the exemplary medieval Christian monk to aspire to.

Graphics by Ella Garrod

THE WORLD'S MOST PERPLEXING NATURAL MYSTERY: *THE VOYNICH MANUSCRIPT*

DALMA ROMAN

With a natural world that has only been discovered on its surface. Obscurity and mystery linger deep within its core. The world is filled with mysteries ranging from the perplexing stone heads on Easter Island that stand strategically like soldiers in war to highly sophisticated prehistoric stones that interweave into geometric shapes. Both attract viewers from around the globe. However, one of the strangest mysteries of all lies in a book hidden deep within the ivy walls and mellowed-fluorescent lights that illuminate Yale's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Carbon-dated to 1404, *Beinecke MS 408*, or the *Voynich Manuscript*, has been coined as the 'World's Most Mysterious Book'. This enigmatic yet exquisite manuscript is filled with a wide array of hand-drawn illustrations from astrological symbols and herbal plants to synchronized miniature figurines floating in an eerie green liquid that wraps around a cursive-like text yet to be deciphered by the human mind. The book's mystifying language and imagery have attracted some of the greatest minds in history, yet no historian or master code breaker has been successful in deciphering this enigmatic literary piece. Therefore, like any good unsolved mystery, the physical clues of visual imagery and text allow theories and interpretations to develop and become the ultimate key to unlocking any natural mystery.

The illuminated manuscript has arguably been broken into three sections of medieval illustrations. Considering each section carefully, the perplexing ambiguity of this Renaissance manuscript becomes somewhat comprehensible. Section one is dedicated to a rather mystifying and bizarre collection of plant sketches of florals interweaved with bright colors that seem like they were constructed in a surreal dream. Alongside these plants, herbs displayed in cylindrical bottles are flanked by laboratory equipment that fills the pages of this manuscript to create a setting of a medieval alchemist's lab. To contemporary society, displaying herbs and plants alongside unknown text seems peculiar. However, considering the medieval mindset, plants and texts were common as they used to create Herbals – early encyclopedias that catalogued discovered plants. Herbals were used to describe plants, convey where they grew, and record one's physical reactions if one were to eat them. Therefore, historians have argued a compelling theory that the manuscript may have been a medieval herbal discussing the properties of different plants while simultaneously recording how each herb could be used as medicine for a certain illness. If taking into consideration the fact that these plants may have come from exotic lands and were not seen by these herbalists but rather described by words from travelers, the bizarre illustrations and strange features of these plants make sense. Nonetheless, this theory is flawed as manuscripts were often created with much consideration and attention to detail, while in contrast, the *Voynich Manuscrip*t is drawn hastily, with the imagery being mainly scribbled and not fully colored.

Section two of the manuscript is filled with astrological depictions. Circular charts that fold out into large spreads and zodiac symbols held in the arms of women fill the middle section of the book. Historians have argued that these symbols represent some sort of constellation. The shift from plant depictions to astrological ones would not have been uncommon in the medieval period, as astrology and plants were often linked to medicine. Once

Illustration by Aoife Céitinn

again, presenting how this manuscript could have been a medieval herbal offering health advice on what plants to take during each astrological month. Notably, this section is the only part of the manuscript that has readable text. Historians have deciphered the text under the zodiac signs to be a language called Occitan, a tongue previously spoken in the South of France.

The strangest imagery is seen in section three. This section is interweaved with miniature naked figures washing their bodies in green liquid while simultaneously relaxing in aquatic swimming pools and waterslides displayed throughout the pages of this mystifying book. Even more bizarrely, is that if one were to flip through the pages, the aquatics featured begin to depict even stranger imagery as the waterslides turn into twisted tubes that transport the green liquid and are operated in a factory by the naked figurines. Nonetheless, historians believe that these features were just a hygiene guide or map to hot springs and public baths locations that Renaissance medievalist created for citizens. This, ultimately, presents how the majority of theories reflect a connected theme of health, presenting how many believe that this manuscript was a health guide, or a medieval textbook used for personal well-being. Nevertheless, this theory is still largely debated as the enigmatic text accompanying the imagery has yet to be deciphered, making this manuscript an ongoing contemporary mystery within the natural world.

Finally, to conclude the interpretations, one must look at the writing engraved within this medieval manuscript. The unique alphabet of the *Voynich Manuscript* contains Gallows and Latin script to never seen letters in any known alphabet. Since the manuscript contains a unique

alphabet, figuring out whether the text is real has been a tedious task. Nonetheless, from word distribution, spelling, and keywords, most historians agree that the words embedded are one of true nature. This has led to the rise of a multitude of theories by researchers and historians, with a few even claiming to have solved the mystery. Initially, historians believed the manuscript to be a cypher hiding information. However, most cyphers use the fingerprint of an original language and intermix that with symbols, but the *Voynich Manuscrip*t does not behave like any known language, debunking this theory.

Nevertheless, in 2016 two researchers, Hauer and Kondrak, were able to create an algorithm to prove that the manuscript's language was Hebrew. However, a significant number of problems came with their study. Initially, the researchers were not Hebrew speakers and relied on Google Translate as their sole interpreter. Furthermore, the Hebrew translation the algorithm picked up did not make sense grammatically. Likewise, further theories arise that the *Voynich Manuscript* is a constructed or even a long-lost European language. Nonetheless, each theory has been flawed, leaving this manuscript one of nature's most inquiring mysteries.

While the manuscript remains a mystery, many modern-day breakthroughs and discoveries have yet to be found. Nevertheless, the abundance of theories and interpretations has evoked a sense of ambiguity to allow curiosity to emerge further within the viewer. Whether one believes that the manuscript's imagery was once used as a healing property or something more, to the writing being simply nonsense or one that will one day appear as a Rosetta Stone is truly left up to the viewer. However, until then, the 'world's most mysterious book' remains one more unsolved mystery to add to the natural world's enigma and obscurity.

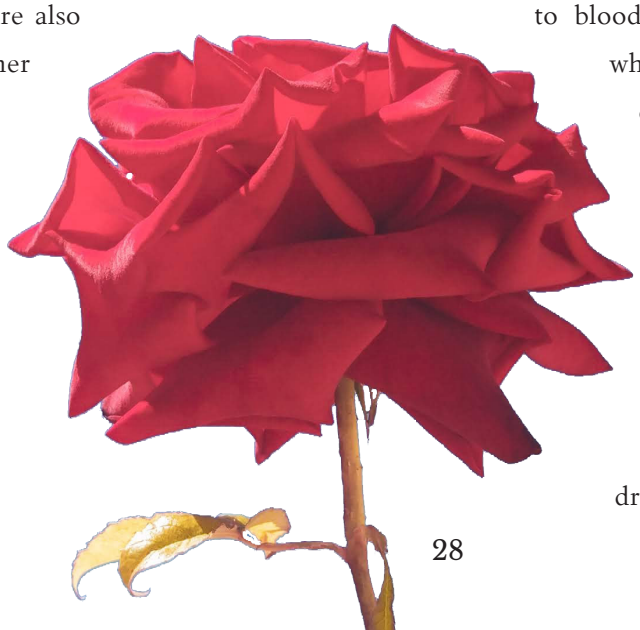
FLORAL SYMBOLISM IN THE WARS OF THE ROSES

MARNIE CAMPING-HARRIS

In *Henry VI, Part I*, William Shakespeare famously sets the scene in which Richard of York and the Duke of Somerset request the allegiance of their fellow nobles in a rose garden. To declare which side of the quarrel they are on, the lords meaningfully choose either a red or a white rose. This was in reference to the heraldic badges associated with the houses that Richard of York and the Duke of Somerset were loyal to: the House of York, portrayed by the white rose, and the House of Lancaster, portrayed by the red rose, respectively. Both of these houses were rival branches of the royal, ruling house of England during the fifteenth century: the House of Plantagenet. While the wars fought between these houses during Shakespeare's time were known as 'the Civil Wars', today they are remembered as the 'Wars of the Roses' for the floral imagery noted on the badges of the competing Yorkists and Lancastrians.

The lack of association with heraldic symbols in the original name for the wars was largely due to the Houses of York and Lancaster having more than one badge or symbol associated with them, relegating the roses to a more minor position. In regard to the House of Lancaster, there are also doubts as to whether the red rose was actually utilised as an emblem during the wars; however, land tenure records from the time do indicate that the rose was worn by those loyal to the house, with Henry VI requiring red roses to be grown yearly by a manor held directly by him. On the other hand, the House of York employed many different badges during the wars, in conjunction with the white rose. The other most popular symbol that the Yorkists used, particularly Edward IV, was the Sun of York, and this was sometimes illustrated alongside the white rose, as the latter remained the most well-known of all the Yorkist symbols. However, in battle, Edward's sun was very similar to his rival's badge of a star and would prove catastrophic in the confusion that occurred during conflict. Other badges in use by the Yorkists included the White Lion of Mortimer, the Falcon and Fetterlock, and the Black Bull of Clarence, all used by Edward IV, as well as the White Boar by Richard III.

The symbols of the roses themselves derived from Edward I, whose emblematic badge was a golden rose. For the House of York, the white rose represented many important ideals that they sought to attain through using it as their symbol, such as light, innocence, and glory--all concepts associated with the colour white according to the Christian religion, with red often being compared to blood and violence. This may potentially be why the House of Lancaster was often deterred from using their badge of the red rose during the wars. Some historians credit Henry VII with first employing the red rose of Lancaster during his victory at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485, where he defeated the Yorkist Richard III; however, during the actual battle, Henry's forces fought under a red dragon, with Richard's forces fighting under



a white boar. The utilisation of the red rose by Henry Tudor instead came during his subsequent marriage to Elizabeth of York, a surviving daughter of the Yorkist Edward IV, as together they combined the red and white roses to form the Tudor Rose. The Tudor Rose was used to symbolise the union of the two rival houses that had been fighting for nearly forty years.

Historians in the eighteenth century were the first to directly reference the roses in relation to the conflict between the Houses of York and Lancaster, with Bevil Higgons in 1727 describing the wars as a 'quarrel between the two roses' and David Hume characterising it as such about twenty years later. However, the term that we use today, the 'Wars of the Roses', was brought into common use by the Scottish novelist and historian Sir Walter Scott. He used the term in his novel *Anne of Geierstein*, published in 1829, claiming to have based it on the scene in the rose garden (Act II, Scene IV) from *Henry VI, Part I*.

Despite not being referred to as such at the time, the 'Wars of the Roses' was one of the first civil conflicts that dominated British history. The floral symbolism used throughout the wars was much more effective than the other badges associated with the Houses of York and Lancaster, and records prove that the symbols had a relatively positive agricultural effect, as roses, whether they be red or white, were grown in abundance for people to demonstrate where their loyalties lay. To this day, the counties of Yorkshire and Lancashire are adorned with their respective floral symbols, proving just how significant they were during the fifteenth century and how they have remained as such through to the modern day.

Graphics by Ella Garrod

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TREES GROWING IN ENGLISH FOLKLORE

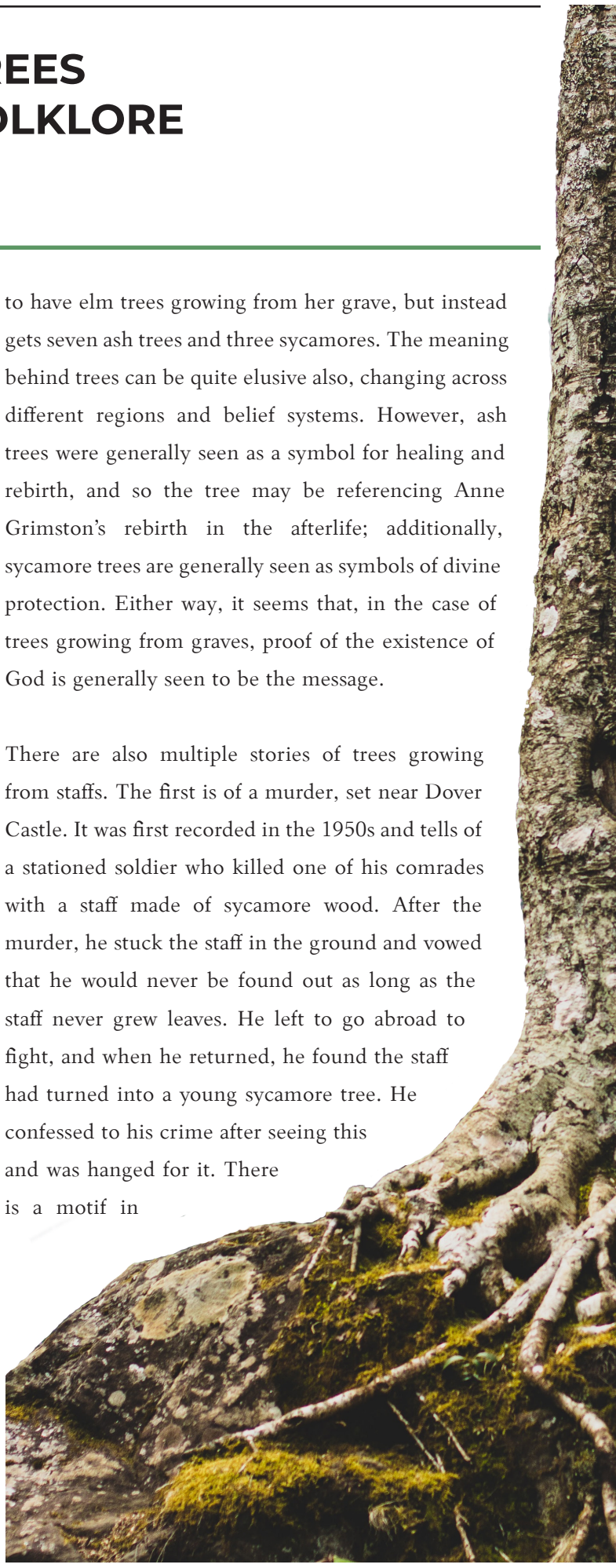
MEGAN CRUTCHLEY

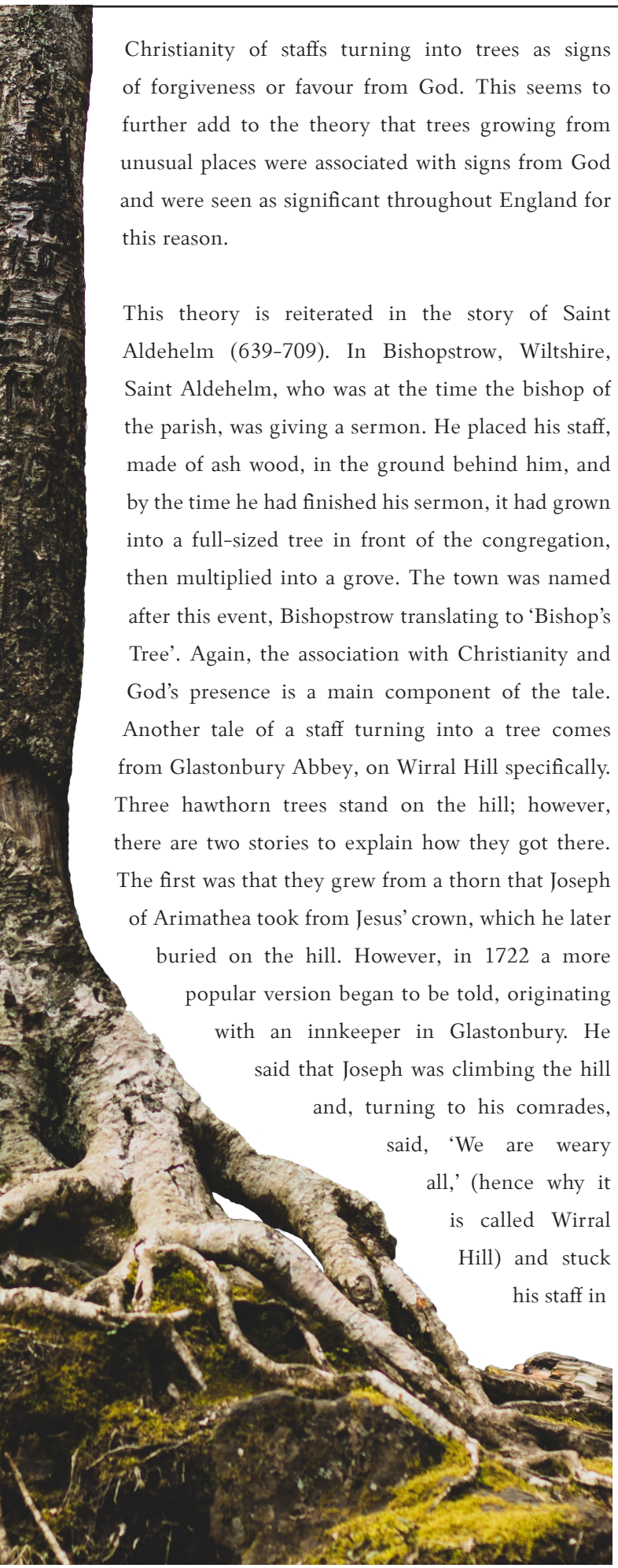
Across England, accounts exist of trees at sites of supernatural occurrences. These trees can grow from graves, staffs, murder weapons, or even wooden stakes. My intention here is to investigate some of these stories and to discover whether any patterns appear concerning the significance that trees growing in peculiar circumstances had as a whole, or whether the tales are more unique and only significant in the specific areas in which they were told. I will first look at the occurrence of trees growing from graves, then from staffs, and finally from stakes.

The first story I will examine is set in Tewin, Hertfordshire, at the tomb of Lady Anne Grimston, whose grave had become nearly horizontal due to ten trees growing from it – seven ash trees and three sycamores. Local belief was that Anne Grimston was an atheist and, on her deathbed, so convinced was she that God did not exist, she said that if He did, seven elm trees would grow from her grave. A similar story can be found in Watford, with a non-believer called Ben Wangford. He stated before he died that he did not believe there was an afterlife, and that when he was buried, he should be buried with an object. If anything came of it, he said this could be taken as proof that his soul was still alive. Once he was buried, a fig tree grew from his coffin. Similar stories can be found across Europe: in Germany, the presence of trees was seen as a direct link to God. Thus, at gravesites, trees served as proof of God's existence in the face of non-believers.

However, with the story of Lady Anne Grimston, it is difficult to determine whether she was really an atheist, with most evidence suggesting she probably was not. The tale originated *after* the trees grew from the stone. There are also inconsistencies with the type of tree which is supposed to have grown from her grave. She predicted to have elm trees growing from her grave, but instead gets seven ash trees and three sycamores. The meaning behind trees can be quite elusive also, changing across different regions and belief systems. However, ash trees were generally seen as a symbol for healing and rebirth, and so the tree may be referencing Anne Grimston's rebirth in the afterlife; additionally, sycamore trees are generally seen as symbols of divine protection. Either way, it seems that, in the case of trees growing from graves, proof of the existence of God is generally seen to be the message.

There are also multiple stories of trees growing from staffs. The first is of a murder, set near Dover Castle. It was first recorded in the 1950s and tells of a stationed soldier who killed one of his comrades with a staff made of sycamore wood. After the murder, he stuck the staff in the ground and vowed that he would never be found out as long as the staff never grew leaves. He left to go abroad to fight, and when he returned, he found the staff had turned into a young sycamore tree. He confessed to his crime after seeing this and was hanged for it. There is a motif in





Christianity of staffs turning into trees as signs of forgiveness or favour from God. This seems to further add to the theory that trees growing from unusual places were associated with signs from God and were seen as significant throughout England for this reason.

This theory is reiterated in the story of Saint Aldehelm (639-709). In Bishopstrow, Wiltshire, Saint Aldehelm, who was at the time the bishop of the parish, was giving a sermon. He placed his staff, made of ash wood, in the ground behind him, and by the time he had finished his sermon, it had grown into a full-sized tree in front of the congregation, then multiplied into a grove. The town was named after this event, Bishopstrow translating to 'Bishop's Tree'. Again, the association with Christianity and God's presence is a main component of the tale. Another tale of a staff turning into a tree comes from Glastonbury Abbey, on Wirral Hill specifically. Three hawthorn trees stand on the hill; however, there are two stories to explain how they got there. The first was that they grew from a thorn that Joseph of Arimathea took from Jesus' crown, which he later buried on the hill. However, in 1722 a more popular version began to be told, originating with an innkeeper in Glastonbury. He said that Joseph was climbing the hill and, turning to his comrades, said, 'We are weary all,' (hence why it is called Wirral Hill) and stuck his staff in the ground. It took root and became the three hawthorn trees. In both of these stories, the theme of Christianity and God's involvement in the natural world recurs.

One enigma in this pattern of stories are the tales about trees growing from stakes. It was tradition amongst the superstitious during times of capital punishment that people who were hanged for murder would be buried on parish borders at a crossroads and a stake would be driven through their heart so that, if they were to rise from the dead, they would not be able to stand and walk nor to find their way back to the village. There are multiple occasions where the stakes people were buried with sprouted trees. One particularly unique story is from Offley Hay in Staffordshire, where it was reported that a giant was killed and a stake was used to hold his body down so that his soul would not be able to walk. Sometime after, a tree grew from the stake. Here, although it does not seem that there is a direct link with God, the story could be linked with the symbolism of staffs turning into trees, and that these stakes growing into trees symbolise forgiveness from God for the sins the people were put to death for. Or they could be taken at face value as a naturally occurring event – a propagation of the tree that has taken root in a natural way.

Having analysed all of these stories, I would say that the phenomenon of trees growing from various strange objects in English folktales was often used to signify proof of God. Even when that link is not made directly, for example in the story about the soldier who murdered his comrade, it can be inferred that this higher power that controls the growth of things is God. Each story attests to there being some sort of entity that controls the growth of nature and so lends significance to natural events. This being was seen to give power and authority to the natural world and allowed it to impact the lives of average people, whether that was interpreted as God or not.

Graphics by Ella Garrod

THE PELICAN AND THE PHOENIX IN ELIZABETHAN ICONOGRAPHY

NAOMI WALLACE

There is no dynasty so well known for their portraits than the Tudors; Holbein's monumental painting of Henry VIII is an enduring image that has become intrinsically tied to the memory of the man himself. But it was his daughter, Elizabeth I, that used portraiture so intentionally and remarkably to construct an image of herself as 'a vision of cosmic power', thanks to whom England would prosper and grow. As Sir Roy Strong argues, 'in the portraits of Elizabeth Tudor we witness [the] creation ... of most of the fundamental patriotic myths that have sustained an island of people for over three centuries'.

Elizabethan portraiture is saturated in subliminal messaging, varying from religious imagery to dynastic symbols, all of which contributed to the creation of the Cult of Elizabeth. This article will focus on the significance of the pelican and the phoenix in Elizabethan iconography and what their inclusion in two famous portraits were intended to convey about the Virgin Queen.

Nicholas Hilliard's 1575 *Pelican Portrait* depicts Elizabeth I wearing a jewel of the bird around her neck, from which the image takes its name. The legend surrounding the pelican was well-established in medieval and early modern bestiaries. Tradition narrated that the mother pelican would pierce its own breast, drawing blood and sacrificing itself in order to revive its young. The 'Pelican in Piety' was linked to charity, devotion, and sacrifice for one's country. It is easy to see where the connection to this could be drawn to Elizabeth, who, especially in her later years, became the mother pelican figure to England and a maternal figure for the country who inflected these ideas of self-sacrifice. The Queen expressed this herself in her speeches; in her infamous speech to her troops at Tilbury on 9th August 1588, she asserted her will 'to lay down for my God and for my kingdom and for my people mine honour and my blood even in the dust'. Using the image of the pelican in her portraiture visually reflected the notion that Elizabeth was a monarch who was willing to sacrifice everything for the country she served.

The pelican, however, was not merely a secular image deriving from folkloric tradition but a highly religious one that was ultimately associated with the Passion of Christ and his sacrifice for mankind. Christ was frequently compared to a pelican in religious literature and liturgy, such as in a Eucharistic hymn by Thomas

Aquinas. It was thus a powerful religious symbol for Elizabeth to employ, one that tied her closely to the God by whom she claimed to be anointed and invoked many associations with the behaviour and characteristics of Christ himself. Meryl Bailey argues that Elizabeth adopted Christological symbols in her portraiture, and the *Pelican Portrait* is a prime example of this. There is, as many historians have also observed, a great deal of Marian imagery in Elizabethan portraiture and this can also be linked to the pelican, the legend of which centres around maternal sacrifice. These are nuanced and deeply theological references of which those behind the portrait would have been aware.

Constructing an image of Elizabeth that interpolated both Christological and Marian iconography was highly intentional, as it drew on both the masculine and feminine. Throughout her reign, Elizabeth was sensitively aware of the issues her sex posed to her as a female monarch on a male-dominated continent. In the year of her succession, John Knox's pamphlet *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, in which the theologian called female rulers 'repugnant to nature', was distributed. Granted, the pamphlet was written during the disastrous reign of her sister and was largely designed to attack Catholic queens, but it was unfortunate that its publication came right as Elizabeth assumed the throne. She thus sought to counter the unavoidable fact of her sex with masculine iconography; in the 1575 *Darnley Portrait*, for example, Elizabeth wears a Polish style doublet, which was a popular item of clothing seen to accentuate the male figure. Nevertheless, her fair complexion and striking red curls convey a sense of ageless beauty. Such juxtaposition between the male style and her feminine beauty gave Elizabeth a celestial quality that elevated her above contemporary notions of gender. The *Pelican Portrait*, amalgamating imagery of the male Christ and his female mother, reinforces this balance between masculinity and femininity that Elizabeth used to her strength as Queen of England.

A strikingly similar portrait of Elizabeth exists, also attributed to Nicholas Hilliard and dated to 1575, in which the jewel she wears is a phoenix, rather than a pelican. The phoenix is a highly symbolic image, particularly as, unlike the pelican, it is a mythological creature. References to classical mythology were ubiquitous in Elizabethan iconography; in *Elizabeth and the Three Goddesses* (1569) she is depicted alongside Juno, Minerva and Venus; the jewel worn in the *Darnley Portrait* (1575) contains five Roman gods; pearls adorning the Queen across many of her portraits allude to Cynthia, goddess of the moon and chastity. All of these references served to construct the image of Elizabeth as a celestial figure, especially later in her reign when it became clear that she would not marry or produce an heir. Instead, the Cult of Elizabeth saw the woman transform into a mythological figure whose duty was to England alone.

The *Phoenix Portrait* is an early example of this, and the mythical bird was a symbol favoured by the Queen, appearing outside of this portrait, such as in the Drake Jewel and the Chequers Ring. Like the pelican, the

phoenix had come to have religious associations, with the tale of the bird 'rising from the ashes' relating to the resurrection of Christ. This reinforces the observation that Christological imagery was prevalent in Elizabethan portraiture.

Resurrection and renewal, in any context, was the core of what the phoenix represented. Consequently, it was a symbol that many monarchs prior to Elizabeth had adopted, including her father, Henry VIII. The phoenix itself could be seen as an allegory for monarchy; the cyclical rebirth of the phoenix was comparable to the promise of the enduring life of a dynasty even after the death of one monarch. This is how the phoenix could be employed in a general sense but does not seem hugely applicable to Elizabeth herself. By the time the *Phoenix Portrait* was painted in 1575, the Queen was in her early forties, and it was becoming increasingly clear that she was not going to produce an heir to continue the Tudor dynasty after her death. We must therefore look to other meanings of the symbol to understand its significance in Elizabethan iconography.

Resilience is the virtue that springs to mind when connecting Elizabeth to the phoenix; the image of the Queen 'rising from the ashes' through all the challenges she faced throughout her reign (questions of legitimacy, smallpox, excommunication, Mary, Queen of Scots, to name a few) is a compelling one. But interestingly, the phoenix was also a reflection of isolation. Elizabeth was, in a sense, alone; she was unmarried and childless, and representing this through the beautiful, mythical creature of the phoenix served to avoid this being seen as a negative, instead reinforcing the view of her as a celestial being above all others. It also asserted Elizabeth's singularity– she was the only Protestant Queen regnant in Europe and her reign was highly unique. It is unsurprising therefore that Elizabeth favoured the phoenix as a symbol for herself as she endeavoured to present herself as a mystical virgin Queen who presided independently and securely over England against all odds.

Queen Elizabeth I of England was an extraordinary character and the presentations of her offered by her portraits are paramount to the creation of the Cult of Elizabeth. No symbols were placed into these pieces of art unintentionally; both the pelican and the phoenix are highly meaningful emblems that served to mythologise the Queen and amplify her celestial and biblical qualities. These two portraits are therefore quintessential examples of portraiture being utilised as propaganda to send specific messages about who Elizabeth was as a monarch and what she stood for.

Graphics by Ella Garrod

THE NATURE OF THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE: EXPLORATION, EXPLOITATION AND DISEASE IN THE CANADIAN ARCTIC

AL INNES

For centuries, the idea of a Northwest Passage – a sea route from the Atlantic Ocean in the east to the Pacific Ocean in the west, navigable during the short Arctic winter – was considered a real, achievable, and valuable imperial endeavour by the British state. But by the close of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, the idea had lain dormant for several decades. Partly, this was a consequence of the wars, but it was also in response to most commercial actors realising the endeavour was too complex and expensive to be lucrative. Despite this, the British Admiralty dominated the first half of the nineteenth century with their revitalised search for the Northwest Passage. They did so in part because they had a surfeit of idle naval officers with no further conflict to advance their station, but also as part of an expanding cold war with the Russian Empire, which was perceived as a strategic threat in the Arctic. The search, too, was not simply seen as one of geographical mapping but as an important scientific endeavour. Arctic journeys from 1817 onward would encompass myriad scientific measurement, capture, and experimentation, as well as research into geomagnetism, meteorology, zoology, geology, botany, ethnology, and medicine. In this way, the study of the nature of the Arctic became both a parallel pursuit to the search for the Northwest Passage and a significant tool for colonial ideology.

While the nineteenth-century public imagination was captured by the explorative nature of Arctic journeys, portrayed as occurring in a vast and empty land hostile to life, there was a growing appetite for information about the naturalistic and scientific activity of the expeditions. These national enterprises were closely followed in the press. Reports published by whalers or merchants were avidly consumed, and speculation about weather, sea routes, and the merits of expedition leaders were the talk of Victorian society. The Arctic imagination was fuelled at home by travel narratives, dioramas, *tableaux vivants*, exhibitions, lectures, cartoons, and advertisements. Even in the dry taxonomy of scientific discovery, the British public were presented with a romanticised and mythologised version of the Arctic itself. In order to explore, chart, and ultimately own the Arctic, it had to first be emptied, and in that emptying the reality of much of the natural flora and fauna had to be erased. The Arctic was too remote to be visited by the vast majority of those consuming information, written or pictorial, about the space, so public perception was easily manipulated. This was largely developed throughout the nineteenth century, with an important legacy seen today in the construction of narratives around climate change, settler colonialism, and resource extraction.

In order to conduct this sort of survey-erasure, a new breed of naval officer was developed, under the leadership of John Barrow and Edward Sabine, whereby concern with science was as much a part of their makeup as the ability to command a ship and its crew. William Edward Parry, James Ross, and John Franklin, some of the most prominent captains of the age, were also elected fellows of the Royal Society of London. Barrow, as second secretary of the Admiralty, was instrumental in reshaping the

Illustration by Isla Boote

image of an Arctic expedition, as he saw earlier accounts of exploration by James Cook and Martin Frobisher as being too irrational and experiential. Through the pages of the influential *Quarterly Review,* Barrow raised up new scientific approaches to Arctic exploration that met his approval and criticised those focused on adventure and danger. In doing so, Barrow, Sabine, and the new generation of chosen officers were consciously constructing a narrative about the Arctic and its nature to suit their needs.

In 1817, Barrow commissioned John Ross to head a search of a suspected Open Polar Sea in pursuit of the Northwest Passage. Accompanying Ross was Sabine, the President of the Royal Society, who was tasked with leading scientific research into magnetism, hydrography, meteorology, and oceanography. Indeed, Sabine would conduct tests as well as make notes about discoveries in the fields of natural history, geology, anthropology, and astronomy – an enormous undertaking given the additional burden of navigating the polar seas. They travelled with multiple experimental instruments aboard, turning the *HMS Isabella* into a floating laboratory of sorts. These instruments, including steering compasses, azimuth markers, and a prototype sounder-sampler, were being tested as much as the magnetic fields the explorers travelled through. The sounder-sampler, as the name suggests, was used to gather samples from the ocean floor and to measure the depth of the ocean. Ross would in fact invent his own version of this device, a 'deep sea clamm' which functioned as a kind of sea-bed digger capable of grabbing material from the ocean floor. Despite returning with a host of new specimens for taxonomy and descriptions of various arctic mammals, Ross' failure to find a navigable sea route (he was turned back by a magnetic mirage of mountains blocking his path) ultimately cost him his reputation with the Admiralty. For all his effort in the field of science, the lack of adventure cost him his commission.

Explorers in North America in the late nineteenth century record trees, grasses, and wildlife in abundance across multiple regions of the Arctic. Ross' private journals depict an abundance of animal food – he was unknowingly combating scurvy amongst his crew with a rich diet of salmon and seal – but pictorial depictions in the nineteenth century emphasised the vastness and emptiness of the landscape even while the botanical shelves of the Royal Society contradicted this version. Removing the botanical richness of the Arctic was designed to emphasise the accomplishment of the geographical explorers. Success in survival, navigation, and even diet was considered from the perspective of the British ship captains discovering

these elements, with no regard given to the support and assistance of the Inuit people with whom they wintered. European Arctic art from the nineteenth century routinely depicts men traversing land and sailing among ice formations – a binary of still white and frozen blue. The few details in these images come from the explorers themselves, the only people represented. White colonial masculinity is rooted in this form of achievement and enterprise, despite explorers' accomplishments repeatedly following a pattern of Inuit intervention. John Ross and, later, John Franklin were utterly dependent on Inuit support in multiple expeditions.

When, in 1819, William Edward Parry, Ross' second in command on the *Isabella*, sailed through the imaginary mountains Ross had spotted in Lancaster Sound two years earlier, he was on a mission that would be considered a far greater success. While Parry received praise for much of his magnetic survey work, reaching the most northerly point of any expedition to that date, his over-wintering was considered as much of a success. He surveyed much new land, spent extensive time with the Inuit, and performed surveys of natural phenomena fascinating to the Royal Society. As the three expeditions progressed, however, the Admiralty's patience for scientific observation (largely conducted when ships were frozen in) grew thin, as there was no discovery of a navigable east-west sea route.

On 19 May 1845, *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror*, under the command of Sir John Franklin, departed England primarily engaged in the search for the final middle section of the Northwest Passage. The ships themselves were centrally heated, driven by repurposed train engines, and contained a cornucopia of scientific instrumentation as well as a full complement of scientific naval officers. Both ships would be lost with all hands. Their legacy and ultimate fate would become forever wedded to superstition, heroism, and the macabre. The scientific importance of the voyage was essentially lost to a romantic Victorian ideal of adventure that would last to the present day. Franklin's final expedition, and the futile search for the ships and their crew, would be the high watermark for Victorian Arctic exploration since its beginning in 1817.

By the time of Franklin's disappearance in 1847, it was clear that the writing was on the wall for the search for the Northwest Passage. The best part of a hundred expeditions were sent out to look for Franklin, his crew, and his ships. None of the Admiralty's own expeditions found a trace. Two private endeavours, the first led by Dr John Rae of the Hudson Bay Company, the latter by Leopold McLintock working for Lady Franklin, were the only ones to find physical remains of the expedition. Franklin was confirmed to have succumbed to tuberculosis, while there were suspicions of scurvy among the crew, as well as possible lead poisoning from either their water tanks or tinned food, and an outbreak of botulism. This most advanced of scientific adventures was ultimately defeated by a fatal combination of disease – no amount of scientific knowledge or medical expertise was able to intervene, and no amount of adventure was sufficient to rescue them.

Victorian society was horrified by the loss of the Franklin expedition, and reports of cannibalism coming from search expeditions in the 1850s compounded profound feelings of shock at such a catastrophic failure. The Northwest Passage was later completed by searchers looking for the lost expedition, and attitudes to travel methods changed quickly – Dr John Rae, who was the first to discover evidence of Franklin's fate and mapped the final link in the Passage, travelled by dog sled and slept in igloos. The era of the nineteenth-century expedition, heavily crewed and weighed down with scientific instruments, was eventually eclipsed by smaller and cheaper expeditions. The search for the Northwest Passage would ultimately shape ideas of the nature of the Arctic for decades to come, as well as pave the way for twentieth-century conceptions of masculinity, heroism, and individual prowess – a world away from the scientific naturalists of the nineteenth century.

BRITISH NATURALISTS AND THE PURSUIT OF NATURAL HISTORY IN QING CHINA

KAT JIVKOVA

China's natural landscape was a mystery to eighteenth-century European naturalists. In the Western consciousness, it was an exotic land filled with beautiful gardens, lavish flowers, and peculiar animals. When British traders landed in Canton in the 1830s, they knew nothing about the realities of the Chinese interior. While the French had used Jesuit missions in the late 1500s to study China's natural history, Britain had seriously lagged behind them in the investigation of East Asia's natural world. The pursuit of natural history by the British in the late Qing period, 1757-1911, has been largely neglected by historians of science, despite natural history being the most extensive focus of Western scientific research in this period. Of the small group of scholars who have investigated British naturalist pursuit, including Fa-ti Fan, a disproportionate amount of focus has been given to the British naturalists in contrast to the Chinese figures involved in its development. Furthermore, it has been widely assumed that China did not have a natural history tradition prior to Western interventions. These misconceptions will be challenged in order to re-centre China in its own history of naturalist pursuit. The following points will aim to reiterate this: (1) a focus on the Chinese figures involved in the investigation of natural history will be placed in the limelight between the pre-Opium and post-Opium war periods; (2) an emphasis on the reliance of British naturalists on Chinese figures will expose the true nature of Sino-Western relations from 1757 onward; and (3) the term 'natural history' will be explained in Chinese terms to reveal its rich history.

Between 1757 and 1811, British traders were confined to the city of Guangzhou, or Canton. All Western trade was based in the Canton port, where foreign visitors were 'literally imprisoned', as described by English botanist John Bradby Blake. The port has been described by historians of science as a 'contact zone' between British naturalists and Hong (Chinese) merchants. Hongs became the main mediators through which British traders could acquire natural history knowledge in this period. These traders were usually members of the English East India Company, but could also be independent merchants interested in Chinese export goods. Canton became a prominent commercial hub in the eighteenth century, where Western and Chinese merchants alike flocked to the port to participate in commercial activity. The British were by far the most regular frequenters of Canton, but were restricted to a district known as the Factories in the corner of the city. On the eastern side of the district, British traders could stroll down the numerous rows of shops and teahouses which offered rice wine and various souvenirs to take home. On the western side, the shops of the New and Old China Streets attracted a richer clientele through trendy art studios, apothecaries, and porcelain carvings. One British account revealed that Chinese methods of 'designing and making these commercial works of art' were far superior to those of Europe, hence revealing the extent of British fascination with Chinese goods.

Many British traders developed commercial relationships with Hongs in order to further their knowledge of Chinese natural history. Hongs sometimes invited Westerners to their own gardens, as was the case with William Kerr. A Scottish naturalist, Kerr became a full-time plant-collector in China, receiving funding from the Kew Gardens and Horticultural Society of London to conduct

his research. He developed ties with the Hong merchant, Puankequa II, whose family owned the most respected trading company in Canton: the Tongyang Company. The Puan family fuelled British naturalist interest by inviting prominent traders to their gardens, or to dine with them. Kerr exchanged many letters with Puankequa regarding rare Chinese flowers and trees after he had returned to Scotland, reflecting on the long-term relationships that the Canton trading system made possible. John Blake also enjoyed the company of the Puan family, who allowed him to paint their gardens, including their first one, the Dongyuan. According to a close friend of the Puan family, Zhang Weiping, the Dongyuan garden contained a variety of plants and vegetables including lotus flower, bamboo, Chinese cabbage, lychee trees and plum trees. Alongside this, the garden contained five Chinese trees known as shuisong, which were all hundreds of years old. This garden was the typical kind owned by Hong merchants across the city, and became of particular interest to the British. The Hongs, such as Puankequa II, manipulated these interests for their own economic gain, selling naturalists a variety of potted plants that they could transport back to Europe. However, there was only so much plant species that could be grown in Canton, and the British naturalists soon exhausted all knowledge of natural history that they could gather in the region.

When the Chinese opened foreign trade up to Britain following the First Opium War, British naturalists were able to traverse further inland for investigation work. However, in doing so, they were forced into dialogue with other Chinese figures beyond the merchants of Canton. When travelling through unknown lands, the British relied entirely on intermediaries, or informants, to help them gather information. For instance, Scottish botanist Robert Fortune depended on information given to him by locals in the Chinese tea districts when conducting observations of tea leaves. While it was previously assumed by European botanists that black and green tea were made from different species of tea plants, Fortune was told by Chinese villagers that the tea leaves were actually of the same species, but were processed differently. Conducting fieldwork in China between 1843 and 1861, Fortune became a prominent naturalist in southern China. His accounts reveal that Chinese figures were not always so keen to provide him with the information he required – he disguised himself as a Chinese merchant countless times during his travels as a means of collecting as much information as he possibly could. Outside of Canton, Chinese natives were much more concerned with guarding their profits and refrained from sharing their plant or gardening knowledge with foreigners. The lengths that Fortune went to in order to acquire this information

demonstrates how dependent the British were on Chinese natives during this period. The English naturalist, Antwerp Pratt, also used Chinese natives to gather knowledge on his journey from Yangzi to Yichang. By hiring a group of locals to collect insects and other specimens in this region, he was able to save time, and also benefitted from the knowledge of villagers who already knew where to find the best specimens. This technique was commonly used on plant-hunting trips by British naturalists, allowing Chinese villagers to become active participants in naturalist pursuit.

However, Chinese natural history existed in China well before the British landed in Canton. It has been assumed by scholars, like Fa-ti Fan, that China did not have its own natural history discipline. The first time the practice of 'natural history' was referred to in China was in 1858, called bowu xue – this term, however, describes Western natural history in contrast to natural history as a distinct subject in China. In reality, China *did* have its own tradition of natural history, but it has been perceived as incommensurable with that of Western tradition – this is not the case. British naturalists began to study Sinology, the knowledge of Chinese custom and textual practice, in order to further their understandings of China's natural landscape. Their research into classical Chinese works, such as the Bencao gangmu, often served as further evidence to their own findings. Charles Darwin himself used Chinese texts in his article explaining natural selection. The Bencao gangmu and another naturalist encyclopaedia, Sancai tuhui, were used to substantiate his claims regarding domestication and breeding. Albert Fauvel also used ancient Chinese texts to discover a type of Chinese alligator that was previously assumed to be an iguana or lizard by European authors. Thus, British naturalists believed that Chinese forms of natural knowledge could empower Western science, contradicting the assumption that Chinese and Western systems of knowledge were incommensurable.

The British may have contributed to the development of natural history in China, but they could not have done so without the Chinese. As shown, they relied often on Chinese figures, from Hong merchants in the pre-Opium War period, to Chinese locals in the post-Opium War period. Scientific exploration in this timeframe should instead be considered a product of cross-cultural interaction and interdependence between the two parties. Notably, there were many Chinese intellectuals who engaged in natural history research independent from the British, such as Xu Shou and Li Shan-lan. Many of these Qing intellectuals encouraged Western forms of learning in China, and participated in the translating of classical natural history works at the School of Foreign Languages in Beijing. British naturalists also encouraged the synthesisation of Western and Chinese knowledge through the study of Sinology, and were placed into dialogue with Chinese informants and locals after the opening of Chinese trade to the British. With all this in mind, perhaps British naturalist pursuit in China should be re-termed as *Sino-British* naturalist pursuit in future scholarship.

Graphics by Ella Garrod

TALKING ANIMALS: ANTHROPOMORPHISM IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

ALICIA WEBB

Illustration by Aoife Céitinn

The close resemblance of much-loved animal protagonists to our own human ways is something that often escapes the notice of children, and yet it could be considered a significant reason as to why children feel a connection to animals in the real world. It is in looking back on our childhood literature as adults that we recognise the nuances, hidden messages, and allegories included in these books produced for the entertainment of children. Animals have had many purposes in print over the centuries: as a tool of literacy and moral education in folklore; as the focus of natural histories; and finally, in the nineteenth century, animals were fictionalised for children as a form of entertainment and, often simultaneously, relayed real-world advice through stories such as *Black Beauty*. Dr Mathew Shaw, librarian at the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London, observes that '[by] the turn of the twentieth century, animals had firmly established themselves as central to the pantheon of tales for children'. This article will consider the humanisation of animals, or anthropomorphism, in four classic examples of children's literature across the twentieth century: Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit,* published in 1902; AA Milne's *Winnie the Pooh,* published in 1926; *A Bear Called Paddington,* written by Michael Bond in 1958; and *Fantastic Mr Fox*, written by Roald Dahl in 1970.

The first important factor in the anthropomorphism of animal protagonists may be surprising, as it is common and yet goes unnoticed. That is, animals are frequently portrayed wearing clothing, providing them with an unmistakable human costume to conceal their natural animal nakedness. This is the case for Paddington, who dons a red hat, blue duffel coat and, in some illustrations, also carries an initialled briefcase. It is safe to say that, although not the style of the typical Londoner, with the addition of human attire, Paddington's appearance is transformed into that of a human being. Likewise, Mr Fox is also never seen without a jacket, waistcoat, and neck scarf. And though AA Milne's Pooh appears naked in the original 1926 book, he gains his signature red top after the first colour illustration in 1932.

The book that best utilises this method of anthropomorphism, however, must be *The Tale of Peter Rabbit,* as all but a few animal protagonists are provided with clothes: Peter Rabbit wears a blue coat, his sisters all wear red cloaks synonymous with the fairy tale 'Little Red Riding Hood', and Mrs Rabbit wears a blue dress with a white apron. The latter clearly signifies Mrs Rabbit's role as mother and, thus, it may be unsurprising that people have called the book a 'treatise for the mother-led, single parent family'. Therefore, it can be said that the choice to clothe the animal protagonists in these books not only makes them appear human, but also is symbolic of traditional gender roles: Mr Fox as a formally dressed father figure and provider of the family's food, Mrs Rabbit as a mother. This demonstrates how twentieth-century children's literature sought to instil accepted gender roles and responsibilities in children from an early age, shaping the minds of future adults to fit societal expectations.

Another means of anthropomorphising animals can be seen in these texts in the way that the animals live like humans. For example, Peter Rabbit's home is located nearby to vegetable grower Mr McGregor and is furnished much like a house, with a kitchen and furniture. The foxes in *Fantastic Mr Fox* also live in a similar manner, near to three farms which act as their source of food. Paddington lives at 32 Windsor Garden, a fictional address in London; thus, the bear constantly comes into contact with humans. Living in the world of humans makes the animals subject to human interaction and also makes them adopt human traits—for example, many of these animal characters walk on two feet. Therefore, by living with the same home comforts as humans and within the human world where interaction with people is likely, the anthropomorphism of animals in these tales opens up children to the world around them, encouraging them to explore the outdoors and have fun with friends in their surroundings.

Furthermore, both Pooh and Paddington are able to communicate with humans, leading them to have largely good relationships with them. For example, Pooh and Christopher Robin are best friends and are often drawn holding hands and playing together. Thus, through Milne's anthropomorphism of Pooh and other animal protagonists in the book, children learn about the importance of friendship. Paddington teaches children to be polite, respectful, and kind to others through his friendship with antique shop owner Mr Gruber and his reaction to the less friendly people he experiences in the city, such as the neighbour Mr Curry. However, neither Mr Fox nor Peter Rabbit is given the ability to communicate with humans and both have similar negative experiences with them. The humans in both books see the animals as menaces that steal from them, as farms are the family's food source in *Fantastic Mr Fox* and there is food for the rabbits growing in Mr McGregor's vegetable garden in *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. Hence, Mr Fox and Peter Rabbit's inability to communicate with humans results in their need to provide food for their families--a human need also--being villainised by the humans. This leads the reader to sympathise with the animals in these books, as well as in the real world, because they realise that the animals' needs are no different from their own. Therefore, it is safe to say that anthropomorphism of animals is a tool for learning social and life skills, particularly how to overcome challenges, as it enables children to 'explore that which [they] would not be comfortable exploring directly', as Carolyn L. Burke and Joby G. Copenhaver have argued.

Animals have been anthropomorphised in twentieth-century children's literature by being given clothes and, in some cases, human speech and interactions with humans, as well as humanlike lifestyles and movements. Through these traits, twentieth-century children's books give a largely negative portrayal of humanity's treatment of the animal world, making children realise the importance of living in harmony with the wildlife that share their home. Also, they inspire children to explore the world they live in. However, they are sadly also used to instil stereotypical gender roles, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Ultimately, anthropomorphism in twentieth-century children's literature can be seen as predominantly positive and may provide an explanation as to why 'books about wildlife or that feature wildlife characters make up one of the largest, most popular categories of children's literature'.

INDUSTRIAL IMMORALITY: THE DESTRUCTION OF NATURE DURING WORLD WAR I AND ITS POST-ROMANTIC ORIGINS

ISABELLE SHAW

Before the nineteenth century, fuelled by romantic poetry, there was an idyllic view of nature and the countryside. Many viewed nature as a place of serenity and respite from the hard work of daily life, and nature received great respect during this period. However, after industrialisation in the nineteenth century, there was a turning point as attitudes toward the beauty of nature transformed into a place of exploitation for human wealth and business. What were once picturesque landscapes soon became sites for commercial provinces. This set a trend for the First World War in 1914 with the carelessness toward the destruction of the environment during battle and the fast consumption of natural resources revealing that nature had become inferior to humans.

One way the war destroyed the environment was through the developing trench warfare system. Trenches were used as protection during battle; however, by digging up the earth, the natural habitat of many ecosystems was destroyed. The extensive nature of trenches that spread from the North Sea to the Swiss frontier stalemates guaranteed a long-lasting destruction of nature. Joseph Hupy argues that the ecology of Verdun became unstable as artillery craters led to soil becoming sediment, proving that trenches transformed the natural landscape for the worse.

Whilst trenches changed the natural landscape, they also displaced many animals from their habitats. Primary accounts describe the appearance of pheasants, rabbits, and moles amongst the fighting, demonstrating that not only was human life lost but also animals were affected badly by the war. This adds to the fact that, due to industrialisation, mankind had turned avaricious and there was no respect for the natural world during the war.

By looking at the impact of war on nature it persuades us that war is wholly destructive and after industrialisation, a pattern of removing animals' natural habitat, albeit not by trenches, continued which can be seen in modern-day humans' responsibility for deforestation which destroys habitats. After the war, there was minimal attempt to recover habitats for the animals or relocate them to other areas. The war removed any sentiment of care toward the environment that had remained after industrialisation.

The use of natural resources during the Great War followed in the footsteps of industrialisation since the use of mining and timber exploited nature to develop defence systems. The extensive use of timber to develop the infrastructure of trenches to stop soldiers from drowning in mud and to create a place of rest had a huge toll on forests. Evidence suggests that over 450,000 acres of trees were cut down in Britain, forcing timber to be imported from India as well. This demonstrates that deforestation began with industrialisation and was accelerated by the war. Nature was increasingly destroyed, and this would have a long-lasting impact on modern-day values towards the destruction of rainforests for wood and palm oil.

Other natural resources used that destroyed the environment included raw materials such as metal ore,

fossil fuels and food. Oil was especially key during the war as it was used as fuel for warfare machines such as tanks, aeroplanes, and submarines. However, the extraction of oil was deeply harmful to the environment since there were no regulations, causing oil spills to be frequent in Mexico, and chemicals released, such as high levels of sulphide, ruined nature and habitats. Additionally, 'mustard gas' worsened pollution and the atmosphere causing a decline in the environment. This is a starting point for the effects of global warming experienced today and shows that industrialisation influenced the use of natural resources at war that in the long term destroyed nature.

Despite attempts to recover the natural landscape after the war, modern-day environmental problems were led by events from 1914–1918 as the destruction of nature to develop technology and human advancements became commonplace after this point. The so-called 'military ecology' was irreversible; despite using funds from Germany, France could not recover the landscape completely, suggesting that industrialisation revolutionised attitudes toward nature permanently. The war was led by the struggle to conquer greater land, but ironically there was little care to protect the natural landscape and little attempt at recovery, and even when recovered it was used to provide natural resources. Industrialisation consequently led to tension between countries to gain superiority, causing battles on land that destroyed the natural world and is an example of how nature was irrevocably changed by the war. The description of nature as a 'desert' from 1917 after the Battle of Yser in 1914 agrees with Ernst Jünger's picture of nature after the war as 'eerie', 'barren', 'devastated' and 'hideously scarred.' Thus, the war had destroyed nature, and, despite some regrowth, patterns of exploiting nature had become set in stone and long-lasting until today.

Overall, the well-deserved consideration of the destruction of human life has often led historians to overlook the impact of the First World War on nature, reflecting an exploitative outlook on the unimportance of nature that began with industrialisation. Industrialisation and nature transformed romantic ideals; nature was no longer viewed as a gift to protect after industrialisation, and this was consolidated by the war.

HOW COLONIALISM HAS AFFECTED THE NATURE CONSERVATION IN NEPAL: PAST AND PRESENT

RUWEYDA AHMED

Nature conservation and the history of nature can typically have positive connotations. The overarching sentiments of those who prioritise nature conservation are those with empathy, pushing for sustainable development and the conservation of precious wildlife and land. However, the historical truth is that the history of nature has very violent and colonial origins. It is very easy to associate imperial missionaries with religion and civilisation, but part of the trilogy that does get forgotten is the pervasive entitlement to indigenous landscapes and wilderness.

The prejudicial assumption that indigenous populations local customs are too 'uncivilised' to preserve and conserve nature that exists on their land overarches environmental choices in the early to mid-twentieth century. With very recent discourse around climate change, it is important to acknowledge and remember the colonial history that has affected all our knowledge of nature conservation. Nepal specifically has been victim of westernisation, even the calling of 'Mount Everest' is a manifestation of direct colonisation. The name was given by Major General Sir Andrew Waugh, Surveyor General of India under the British Empire. The Tibetan name of the mountain is Chomolungma, and the Nepali name is Sagarmatha, the wide use of the anglicised name is a way to highlight the domination of where general knowledge comes from.

Historically, the locals found a link with self-interest and nature conservation which explains how much of the nature was conserved well for centuries. The indigenous population of Nepal social attitudes are closely linked to Buddhism and Hinduism which promoted respect for nature. There was a large local effort of unwritten rules that preserved the nature and wildlife of Nepal. For example, any fines from improper treatment of the nature were used as revenue for conservation, there was plantation of trees that were believed to have religious significance, areas were reserved for wildlife, and there were rules to protect excessive use of resources. The nature of Nepal was successfully guided by local knowledge that promoted self-reliance, the strong co-operation and low costs made these customs effective.

Exploration was a significant part of colonisation for the British Empire; wilderness was an intriguing novelty to be explored by elite Englishman. Wilderness was a part of civilising the New World, changing land into a functioning civilisation based on western standards. This precedent carried into the 1970s where environment movement with international development put western knowledge on a pedestal. Nature conservation is a huge historical theme Nepal, it was the main reason for the bringing of a formal government – to protect the land. Nepal was conserved through the Kathmandu, local and regional agencies which focused on live-stock development, but this was undermined by colonial attitudes, the state and international involvement.

Colonialism in this context may not have been as direct as other countries: Nepal remained largely independent and never became a formal colony but was subjugated to becoming a British Protectorate in 1815. Half of Nepal's historic territory were ceded to the British Raj to expand land and did borrow developmental models from colonial India. With Nepal the proximity to the British Raj is imperative to the negative effects on

nature preservation. The power of colonialism was strong enough to replace indigenous knowledge with westernisation, even indirectly. The history of nature in Nepal is entangled with colonisation and politics in South Asia as it borders India, which was a direct colony of the British Empire. For example, Collier was an official with an Indian Forest Service who played an important role in forest management in India and Nepal, he was tasked with management of Nepalese forests and encouraged new settlements and improving timber harvests. Collier was involved in setting up the removal of trees cut from the Terai forests justifying deforestation by arguing there was an 'endless supply' of trees, which was proven to be false. Collier is a microcosm in demonstrating how the history of nature is deeply entangled with colonisation and western power.

British involvement in Nepal exploited the country's natural resource through the depletion of forests, overgrazing of land and introduction of non-native species that threatened the local ecosystems. This led to a negative impact on the country's biodiversity with many of its native species displaced or close to being endangered. Under the British Empire, there was mass loss of forest cover. Nepal's forests were heavily logged to provide for timber for the empire, leading to widespread deforestation and the loss of habitat for many species. Colonial policies encouraged the overgrazing of land which led to soil erosion. This directly contrasts with indigenous practices that preserved the land and shows the entitlement of exploiting wilderness negatively impacting Nepal's nature and history.

Even with the role of an independent state government and the lack of British presence in India by 1974, the legacy of colonialism continued to be prevalent in nature conversation initiatives. This changed the course of a colonial power representing western knowledge to setting up the stage for western international development roles to continue to override local customs or rephrase them to be new ideas. The history of Nepal's nature has left the country in a precarious position where it has endangered species, poorer biodiversity, and the displacement of indigenous populations. This has completely made Nepal dependent on international aid which is dominated by the West. The loss of biodiversity via soil erosion, overgrazing, and hunting that Nepal currently face today can be traced back to the action of colonial powers. After Britain's presence in South Asia diminished, efforts were made to address the damage caused by colonialism and to protect the country's natural resources. This included the establishment of national parks and other protected areas, as well as the implementation of conservation policies and regulations.

The shift in nature preservation being focused back on conservation and eco-friendly non-exploitative policies is not only through the deterioration of imperial Britain's presence, but largely because of the mobility and autonomy of indigenous groups in the 1970s and 1980s. The Chipko Movement is a non-violent movement to protect the forest areas, this had tremendous impact on environmental policies. This is important to consider when looking at the change in nature policies to preserve forests and natural resources. From the 1970s to the present day this is done through international and national non-profit organisations.

Despite these efforts, we must remember the history and legacy of colonialism to understand the profound impact on Nepal's environment and its wildlife. It is important and empirical to understand how the history of nature has been affected by power dynamics between the 'global North' and 'global South'. Indigenous groups are not passive victims but instead are removed from their physical geographies by imperial powers even if there is no active colonisation occurring.

CHURCHILL'S PLATYPUS: COLONIALISM, CONSERVATIONISM, AND CONTROL OVER NATURE

AILSA FRASER

In 1943, the Australian Minister for External Affairs, H. V. Evatt, named a platypus Winston and sent it to London as a gift for Prime Minister Churchill. Britain had focused on the European side of the second world war and neglected defence of Commonwealth countries like Australia in the Pacific, so Evatt wanted to gain Churchill's ear. Many in the Australian government objected—the transport would be difficult and violated the government's own export ban on platypuses—but Evatt went ahead. The gambit failed: the platypus died a week before it arrived, possibly due to malnutrition: but behind Evatt's project was a long colonial tradition of sending animals as gifts. Similar exchanges still happen, such as China's panda diplomacy, in which China lends giant pandas to international zoos to improve relations with the hosting country. While there has been much change in our relationship to the natural world, Evatt's failed gift is a prime example of many ideas that persisted between the colonial and postcolonial periods. We still view humans as entirely separate from other animals, a binary unheard of in many non-Western cultures, and the idea that humans were given dominion over the earth by God is as prominent in Christian teachings today as it was during the colonial period. In particular, Churchill's platypus shows us how the gifted animal represented its country of origin abroad, the philosophy that underpinned zoos at the time, and how human control over nature was still taken for granted as a fact. This gift exchange came just as Australia was moving towards conservationism, and highlights how the colonial need for control over nature is as present in conservationism as it ever was.

When animals were given as gifts during the colonial period, the selected animals were usually prized for one reason or another, due to possessing desirable traits like strength, their interesting features, their rarity, or a distinct association with their country of origin. In particular the latter was important when the animals were diplomatic gifts because their presence in the foreign court or zoo would remind citizens and leaders of the gift-giver, thus strengthening their presence in cultural thought. To this purpose, Australia's vast array of unique fauna meant they had many animals to choose from, but platypuses were undoubtedly the weirdest. When Europeans first encountered them, their biology reinforced their idea of Australia as a 'backward' land, where everything, including nature, was inverted. Initially, settlers had viewed platypuses as useless: some tried to trap them for their fur, but they were too small to be useful for that. Their national importance developed when the task of building Australian nationalism meant that Australia's unique fauna were used as symbols, meaning animals like the kangaroo, emu, and platypus all grew significantly in popularity. By 1943, they were strongly associated with Australian national identity, so co-opting them for the national interest, despite strict conservation laws, was seen as acceptable. Humans have recognised themselves in animals across time and using them in the name of nationalism was nothing new—Victorian naturalists decided British dogs were more intelligent than Polynesian or Chinese dogs, in the interests of viewing themselves as more 'civilised'—and Evatt's choice of an animal for his diplomatic gift drew on a long tradition of this. Platypuses were animals, viewed as separate from the humans and protected by law due to their inability to protect themselves against poachers. But they were also

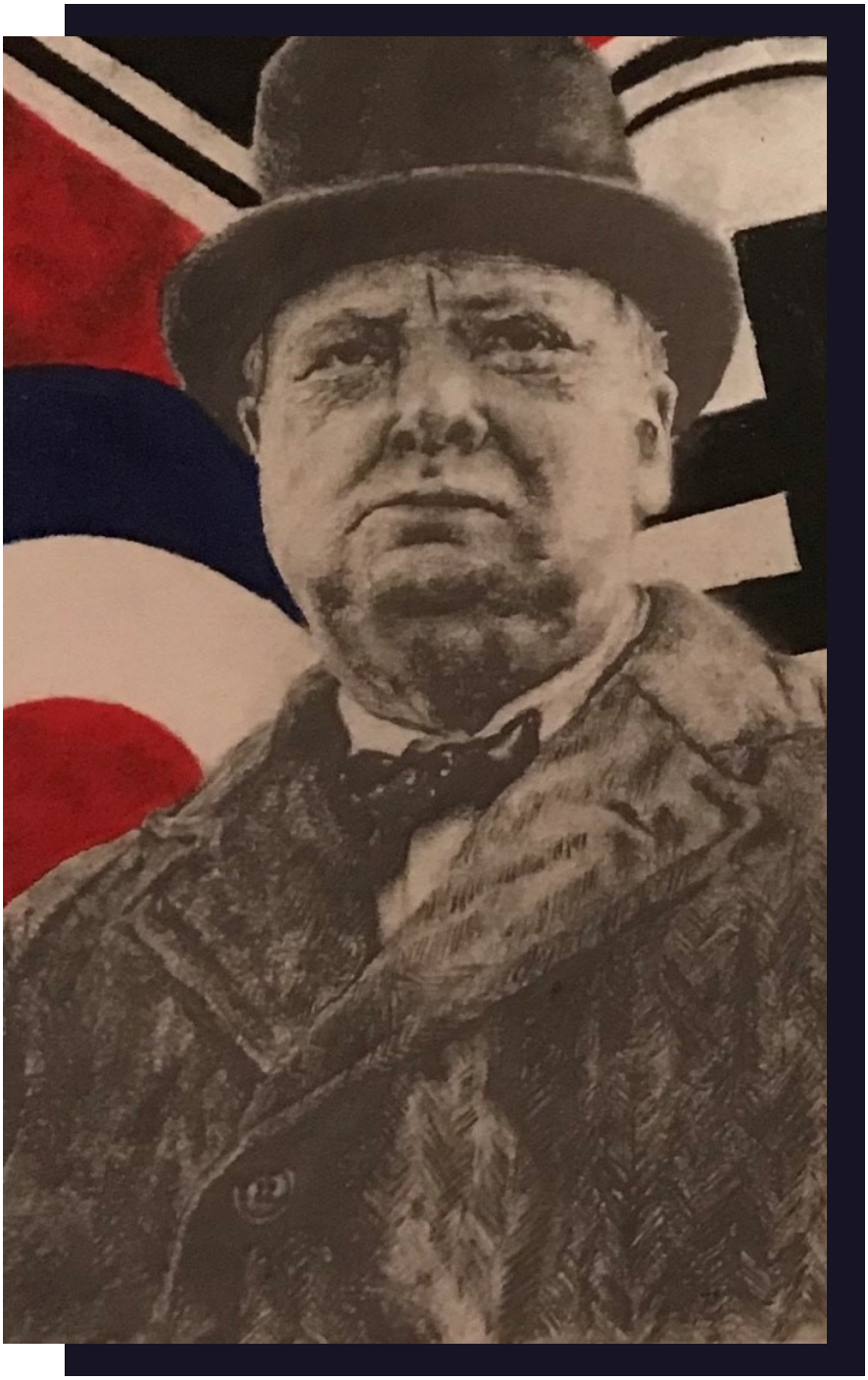


Illustration by Isla Boote

citizens, when governments needed them to be, and were able to represent their country as such. Still viewed as objects, they were nonetheless given the protections and responsibilities of people.

Where these animal gifts are held is also important. While Churchill's platypus never reached London, that it would have been housed in a public zoo was provided much of its power as a gift. When exotic animals were held in a ruler's menagerie, they represented to visitors the ruler's dominion over exotic lands, but also the ruler's dominion over the people there. These ties to the colonial past are persistent in zoos due to infrastructural limitations: Antwerp Zoo still holds a bonobo and an okapi, living reminders of Belgium's colonies in Congo. While today zoos are only considered zoos if their work involves conservation, the ghost of this prestige and power remains. A zoo can only acquire a giant panda from China's panda diplomacy in the name of conservation, but giant pandas lose more money through expensive demands than they gain in ticket sales. Yet their status as the face of animal conservation means they remain in high demand. Their presence in the zoo indicates the zoo's prestige in international conservation circles, just as the exotic animal's presence in a ruler's menagerie represented their dominion over distant lands. They remind those who look at them of their endangered habitats, and their hosts' influence in saving those habitats, as much as their predecessors reminded them of their home countries and their hosts' power over them. The animals still serve as ambassadors for where they come from and as symbols for their hosts' power. If the platypus had reached Churchill, it would have served to remind him and visitors to the zoo of Australia during a war in which Australia had been forgotten, but also emphasised Britain's—specifically, Churchill's—power and influence there. This drew on colonial gifts in a way which fit Australia's situation, but also bears similarities to the use of zoo animals in conservation today. The platypus was both an offering from a member of the commonwealth

to the prime minister of Britain and a way of courting assistance by reminding Churchill of his ability to help and 'conserve' Australia during the war. Power, influence, and control were central to the gift.

Finally, this gift exchange not only epitomises the colonial idea of man's total dominion over nature, but also shows why this idea is problematic. By the 1940s, Australians had moved away from the exploitative colonial mindset and begun to take interest in custodianship of nature instead. A similar shift was later seen in other postcolonial states, such as Tanzania in the 1960s and 1970s, but in both cases colonial laws governing exploitation of the natural fauna did not much change. The Tanzanian state still wanted close control over their own wildlife, not only because of the material resources it provided them, but also because in the international climate, conservation of their rich biodiversity gave them legitimacy. Furthermore, due to destruction already caused by humans, conservation required close monitoring and control over that biodiversity in the interests of maintaining it. Many Western conservationists viewed such ecological conservation as a sign of civilisation, thus creating a strong theme between the control of the 'civilised' coloniser and the control many conservation practices exerted over the natural world. In both cases, human dominion was unthreatened: systematic natural history, which provided the information and knowledge that enabled conservation, became another way for humans to interpret the natural world in a way which best suited them. Evatt's gift to Churchill shows how humans chose to use the nature they conserved to increase their own power, but ironically it also shows the flaws of this. The platypus died en route; humans could not keep it alive for the journey. Despite the paradigm shift towards conservation, humans could not control nature to their own purposes. Just as the Europeans who originally encountered the platypus had no idea how to categorise it, most platypuses in captivity during this period died, as those who cared for them could not keep them alive. Despite man's perceived dominion over nature, nature defied their control.

This particular platypus gift failed. Although Australia would later attempt it again, successfully this time, by sending several platypuses to America, platypuses remained difficult enough to transport that it did not set a precedent, and the number of platypuses exported from Australia remains extremely low. Evatt's attempted gift to Churchill in a time of crisis was a failure, but a useful one for viewing how Australia and much of the world's attitudes towards conservation evolved, and the colonial ideas that continued across this paradigm shift. Animals given as diplomatic gifts continued to occupy a strange position in which they were both objects to be given and ambassadors to represent where they came from. The zoos that held them still relied on their animal occupants to project their power and influence in distant lands within a changing world, though increasingly this held the moral slant of conservation work. The philosophy of man's control over nature remained central in such gifts and broader policies, even into the postcolonial period and the present, as it becomes a source of power. The legacy of colonial thought remained strong in the realm of human-animal relations even into the postcolonial period, as evidenced by the context, intent, and events of this gift transaction. It is even a legacy still felt in conservationism today.

STALINIST ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

ALEKSANDRS SKULTE

The Stalinist period in the Soviet Union (the late 1920s –1953) was profoundly transformative. Stalin extended the Communist Party's control over all aspects of society and expanded the country through imperial conquest. Yet perhaps the most profound change of this period was the country's shift from a largely agricultural society to an industrial one. This was achieved through a series of five-year plans, with the first of these beginning in 1928, which aimed to industrialize the country. The mass industrialization that this plan inaugurated also had wide-ranging consequences for the environment. Whole cities were created where previously forest stood, cities were polluted by newly built factories, refineries, and mills, and forced labor dug out vast mines in the Siberian wilderness. However, this has led to the idea that environmental policy simply did not exist under Stalin. Historian Charles Ziegler wrote that 'Stalin's attempt to forcibly and rapidly industrialize the Soviet Union without regard for the environmental consequences . . . the value of the natural environment was totally ignored in the campaign to transform the USSR into a modern industrial society.' In fact, Stalin undertook conservation and reforestation measures. While not always successful, they demonstrate that some form of environmentalism existed in the Stalinist period.

The Orthodox view of environmentalism in the Stalinist period was that it was entirely subsumed by industrialization. More recent studies, particularly by Stephen Brain, have challenged this interpretation, pointing to his regime's approach to forests. It is a story of various bureaus and acronyms. Stalin prevented the excesses of the industrialists and the Supreme Soviet of the National Economy (VSNKh or 'Vesenkha'), which favored fewer regulations on forests, from deforesting large parts of Russia. From 1925, the VSNKh promoted the ideas of forestry professor Sergei Bogoslovskii who advocated for entire regions as units of management rather than individual forests. This would have allowed the cutting of forests of entire regions of Russia. Yet Stalin's organization the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate (Rabkrin), sided with the bureau that tended toward conservation – the People's Commissariat for Agriculture (Narkozem) – rather than VSNKh.

Stalin used his cadres in Rabkrin, with its 1925 director Valerian Kuibyshev and its director from 1926 to 1930, Sergo Ordzhonikidze, to uphold the principles of conservation. Favor did sometimes swing away from the cause of environmentalism. In 1929, Narkozem lost support as only 48.7 percent of the annual logging target was reached. The favor swung in VSNKh's favor this time, with the VSNKh taking over the management of forests, sideling Narkomzem and pursuing untrammeled exploitation of Russia's forests. However, even then, conservationism was not forgotten, with a close confidant of Stalin, Lazar Kaganovich, commenting: 'When we approach the question about who should be the master of the forest... then we arrive at a sticking point between two agencies? Narkomzem and Vesenkha. Vesenkha has the larger appetite? They say, "I will take it all and never be satisfied." I am afraid that they will gobble up the entire forest.'

It did not take long for the Party leadership to realize they had made a mistake by allowing VSNKh to manage forests. On 30th May 1931, Stalin asked Sovnarkom to draft a law that would forbid cutting forests in certain regions, leading to the establishment of two forest zones:

forest cultivation zones and forest industrial zones. This decree also gave some jurisdiction over forests back to Narkomzem and established a 1 km protection zone around the Volga, Dniepr, Don, and Ural rivers. 1936 saw the strengthening of conservationism with the establishment of an agency to enforce regulations, the Main Administration of Forest Protection and Afforestation (GLO). Although the tide shifted in favor of industrial bureaus in 1941 with the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, from 1943 onwards conservationism won out. 1943 saw the reversal of legislation that allowed for more logging and the establishment of three forest zones, two of which were subject to protection. In 1947, the Ministry of Forest Industry, which was in charge of forests at the time, was dissolved and replaced by a newly created Minleskhoz, which was more active in its protection of forests. With Stalin's death, this epoch in Soviet forest conservation was over: Minleskhoz was dissolved, and forest conservation declined.

While Brain's studies of forest conservation demonstrate that environmentalism was present in the Stalinist period, they do not show Stalinist attitudes to nature and the environment as a whole. Nature was viewed as an object that could be manipulated and conquered according to plan. Massive industrial plants were constructed, and engineers who urged caution toward the environment risked being called subversives and wreckers. Ecologists also had to be careful in how they presented themselves as the Communist Party officials dismissed and arrested conservationists and disbanded ecological organizations. With massive urbanization, pollution was a major issue for cities, yet efforts were superficial. In April 1935, specialists met for the first All-Union Conference on Air Pollution Control in Kharkiv in Ukraine and created special corps of urban sanitary inspectors for pollution control. Regulations were not introduced until after the Second World War but were not followed.

Although Stalinism often showed a desire to conquer and transform nature, at other times, conservationist efforts reflected earlier, more conservative efforts to preserve nature. This was the case initially with the Great Stalin Plan for the Transformation of Nature. It was the first state-directed effort to reverse human-induced climate change. It envisioned the planting of six million acres of forests with the goal of dampening the climate of the southern steppes and reducing the frequency of droughts. The plan represented a longstanding conservative dream to afforest the southern steppes: in 1892, Tsar Alexander III appointed soil scientist Doukachev to determine the cause of droughts. Doukachev determined that the steppes had become climatically unstable due to centuries of unsustainable agricultural practices. He suggested measures, including the creation of forest belts. However, the Great Stalin Plan was gradually hijacked by Trofim Lysenko, a Soviet pseudoscientist, and his followers who believed in Communism's absolute control over nature. They believed that nature was an economic resource, and that Communism was able to alter it for the better. Lysenko invented a collectivist planting technique that drew from Marxism by stating that members of the same species, if planted together, would battle weeds and collaborate instead of competing for resources. Because of this farcical planting technique, only 4.3 percent of trees planted were healthy by 1956. By the time conservationists began convincing the leadership that Lysenko's ideas were harmful, Stalin died, at which point the project was abandoned altogether.

To conclude, environmental policy in the Stalinist period was not absent. This is most clear in the numerous conservation efforts throughout the decades of Stalin's reign. However, overall, Stalinism still tended to have a domineering attitude towards nature, leading its well-being to be subsumed by economic concerns. This manifested as nature being of minuscule concern in Stalin's rapid industrialization of the country. Yet this Stalinist idea of conquering nature was not always present, and instead, more longstanding conservative ideas formed the basis of conservation.

'EVERYDAY LESS OF NATURE, EVERYDAY MORE OF MAN': A DISCUSSION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTARIES OF THE 1970s

MHAIRI FERRIER

Although there had been earlier documentaries made about the topic, the 1970s saw a steady stream of documentaries made about the environment and climate change. This article will act as a discussion of these with arguably the most known of these films, *The Shadow of Progress*, at its centre. This discussion will cover an overview of *The Shadow of Progress*, the relationship between a director and sponsor, and early use of film as a marketing tool.

Taken at face value, *The Shadow of Progress* is a film which documents a moment in time in 1970. This was a much-acclaimed environmental documentary film – directed by Derek Williams – with the British Film Institute stating:

> 'Multi-award-winning, it was distributed internationally, receiving thousands of non-theatrical bookings and (outside the UK) some cinema screenings. The BBC twice televised it as part of the schedule, as well as reusing it as a trade test transmission.'

The film was made when it was becoming increasingly noticeable that we must change our ways and our reliance on new technology, such as the motor car and the aeroplane, which is demonstrated to be damaging the planet. James Taylor, in the *Encyclopaedia of the Documentary Film*, notes that 'It presents a comprehensive account of man's environmental impact – from extinctions to pollution of earth, air and sea: from the downsides of the green revolution through the population explosion to the urbanisation of the world'. Watching this film in 2022, we can see that in fifty years, by and large, we have not made significant changes to our lifestyles. When we see the images of the world – this is a global film filmed across four continents – devastation is the word that comes to mind. It is a call to action, to change and to change fast.

But is it that simple? Can we simply view these documentaries as a call to action, to raise up to our personal responsibilities to counter the effects of climate change?

The Shadow of Progress was in fact sponsored by British Petroleum (BP) working with the very successful Greenpark Productions who had previously made a number of acclaimed social commentary films, such as *There Was a Door*, about the modernising of mental health and disability health care in 1957 (Derek Williams also worked on this film production). A BP advertising poster for the film observed: 'If you enjoy *The Shadow of Progress*, we've failed'. In *The Shadow of Progress*, a great deal of emphasis is placed on individual responsibility for overturning the effects of climate change. The commentary directs 'man' to assess their overconsumption, their reliance on the car, the boom of air travel – reasons stated as the cause of the breakdown of ecosystems and putting many species in danger of extinction. One line of the commentary succinctly explains: 'Everyday less of nature, everyday more of man'. The film discusses overpopulation of the world, simply that the sheer population numbers were putting a demanding pressure

on our food supply. In 1970 the global population was 3.7 billion; now that number is approaching 8 billion. There is not space within this article to discuss the limitations of the concept of overpopulation, which now, often raise racist views and the ideology of 'eco-fascism'.

Of the twenty-five-minute run time, the word 'oil' is not uttered until the first sixteen minutes have elapsed – it is mentioned solely then. Despite, being a BP film, the film does not give any spoken discussion to the role of oil companies in these devasting changes the world was witness to. There are mentions of new technology which are linked to the oil industry, but the connections are not explicitly mentioned. In some shots imagery of oil is present, for example an oil tanker shown in the back of a shot. The film's entry in the Encyclopaedia of the Documentary Film notes:'It doesn't shy from the outcomes of oil use either, disclosing the emissions of automobiles and aeroplane'. Notably, though, this version of 'not shying' away from discussion of the oil industry means not to mention it within the film's commentary. The film features commentary over silent shots and instrumental music. This style was often preferred by BP to allow films to be shown globally, with only the commentary needing amending for showings in different countries. If we view these documentary films through a modern lens, this lack of discussion of the reasons behind climate change is what we would recognise as greenwashing. As noted in the Cambridge Dictionary, the definition of 'greenwashing' is noted as:

> an attempt to make people believe that your company is doing more to protect the environment than it really is or an attempt to make your business seem interested in protecting the natural environment, when it is not.

It is important to note that oil companies' involvement with documentary films did not begin in the 1970s and in fact, had much earlier origins. Shell Film Unit was an early

filmmaking enterprise, with Colin Burgess explaining: 'The Shell Film Unit, founded in 1934, was among the pioneers of the British documentary movement and following the Second World War, when the so-called great documentary era was in decline, it continued to produce outstanding films'. Shell, as other companies came to do also, used film as a marketing tool, a method which they could utilise globally. Shell's Film Unit came to have a level of autonomy from the rest of the marketing department, working on its own objectives. By the 1970s, Shell's unit was well established and other companies, like BP, had followed this marketing direction. As well as producing films for their own objectives, these units worked with other organisations such as the United Nations to make information films for international audiences.

Derek Williams, who in the 1970s directed a steady stream of environmental documentaries (mostly sponsored by BP), came to regret the less critical tone taken by these films. Patrick Russell notes that 'His [Williams] work was lubricated especially by the quickening flow of oil into the western economies: the colossus bestriding his career was British Petroleum [...] Williams became the leading exponent of environmental documentaries'. Williams made a number of other climate documentaries, focusing on effects and North Sea Oil, following *The Shadow of Progress*, his sequel *The Tide of Traffic* (1972) focused on 'escalating traffic levels'. Other titles of this decade included *Scotland* (1973), *The Shetland Experience* (1977) and *Planet Water* (1979). The direction of these films caused friction within BP marketing departments, who believed they were too critical to be used. For a time, BP marketing boards in the UK, Germany and France banned *The Shadows of Progress* from being used in marketing materials. At any rate, as demonstrated these films arguably do not go far enough to question the causes of the damage to the earth during increased industrialisation and the use of new technology. However, these are the limitations, at large, of sponsored documentary films, of which there is a balance act to achieve meeting the needs and wants of a sponsor and the artistic vision of the director. That being said, sponsored films are not meaningless as some documentary criticism would have you believe – we just must question, as in every documentary's case, what is behind the film? What narrative is being directed to the viewer here? The historian cannot take documentary at face value.

Focusing on *The Shadow of Progress*, this discussion has highlighted how there is often much to read beyond the initial viewing of a documentary. In the case of 1970s environmental documentaries, when sponsorship was vital to the production of documentary films in Britain, mostly these films were the product of oil companies like BP and Shell. While such films do provide a great insight into how the world thought about climate change in the 1970s, they do have their limitations as a result of the lack of discussion into the effects of the oil industry. Through our contemporary lens, we could see this marketing tool as an act of greenwashing. There remains much to be written about the place of environmental documentaries within the history of British documentary films.

HOW THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE ALTERED THE IMPORTANCE OF ITS ENVIRONMENT

MAISIE MCGUFFIE

Rwanda is a country situated in central Africa. Its environment is incredibly diverse, with a variable climate ranging from rainforests to dryer sections and an average temperature of 14.5 degrees Celsius. The natural geography and resources that Rwanda has include high levels of natural minerals and land suitable for crop growth, which contributes to its economic gains. However, the prominence of the private properties in Rwanda's environment was exacerbated after the genocide that occurred between April and July 1994, allowing the government to capitalise on lands to regrow. The land within Rwanda also plays a significant role in food production and security as well as allowing the continuation of self-sufficiency within local communities. Therefore, Rwanda is a clear example of how countries can exploit their own natural resources for economic and political gain. Although this has negative effects, it was needed in a post-genocide society for the economy to recover.

From 1996, Rwanda has utilised its resources of natural minerals. Within a decade, the previously state-owned resources had been sold off or leased out to make large and substantial financial gains. The genocide began and ended in 1994, and the fast progression from this to the policy in selling minerals highlights how the government sought to utilise the country's natural resources to recover from the genocide. This exemplifies how in times of recovering from conflict, the environment can be utilised by governments to benefit the country financially, even if the long-term effects directly impact the environment. Therefore, the importance of the environment was seen due to its ability to help the economy.

Whilst the selling of minerals financially provides a benefit to Rwanda on a large scale, the benefit was also seen locally. The Labour Force Survey finding that the mining industry employs more than 60,000 people demonstrates that everyday people relied on the resources of mining. Agriculture is also an important part in providing income in Rwanda. In contrast to the mining industry, agriculture allows local communities to be self-sufficient, but there is still the reliance on the environment. However, in the 1990s, the fertility of soil had dropped within certain areas including a decrease in steep areas due to erosion. Henceforth, the increased vulnerability of the land

created more uncertainty for the people who worked the lands and were dependent on it to survive. Food security is incredibly important in Rwanda and buying food, rather than growing it for yourself, is seen as shameful and would almost bring embarrassment to the family. This highlights the need for the country to protect the natural properties of the soil for families to be able to maintain their current levels of self-sufficiency. When families are unable to produce crops for themselves, they must purchase food for their families. This in turn leads to other families producing more, creating a local scale of markets based on crop production and highlighting that the environment needs to be maintained for food stability and security to continue.

Mining can also have devastating impacts on the environment. In Ghana, the mining activities have led to the contamination of water, which can have devastating impacts on the ecosystems, the wildlife, and the contamination of water which can limit the quality and quantity of drinking water. This example in Ghana is applicable to Rwanda, in showing the environmental consequences, as well as enabling long-term effects on the ecosystem due to the digging and extraction of resources. However, these are created from the need to stimulate the economy which was paramount in post-genocide Rwanda.

Whilst the economic use of the environment has changed since the genocide, it is also important to explore how the genocide itself did incredible damage to the environment. Throughout the war, the water quality was damaged due to corpses being placed there, but the wider environment faced detrimental impacts due to the use of bombs and explosives. Ecosystems were destroyed and animals were killed, as well as the areas that animals had lived in were destroyed. The Rwandan genocide highlights how war not only influences civilians but affects the wildlife as well. Furthermore, the contamination of water sources as well as the destruction of wildlife would need widescale funding for recovery and improvement to restore the country. However, a war-torn country undeniably must place resources into helping the citizens recover and by doing so allow economic gains for the country to recover. Although this was not a priority in the years immediately following the genocide, twenty-first-century Rwanda has been making improvements to protect and restore wildlife. The importance of the agricultural properties had been recognised and actions, such as the protection of land from erosion, have been put in place to protect and improve the current situation.

Rwanda has fallen victim to many natural disasters in the last hundred years, including two earthquakes as well as many flash and riverine floods. With local economies depending on agricultural and mining work, floods and earthquakes could be detrimental to their income. A 2021 report found that only thirty percent of farms are located on flat land which highlights the vulnerability that farmers face. With the importance of farming and the agriculture sector being highlighted as an economical importance after the genocide, policies and actions need to be taken to utilise the land that they have and improve the land that is a possible victim in other areas.

Ultimately, the environment within Rwanda was incredibly important before the 1994 genocide. The agricultural set up, the climate, as well as the land locked nature of the country allows for that sector to dominate economically, thus highlighting the importance of climate change prevention and the need to ensure that livelihood within small and rural communities is maintained. However, this importance was heightened post-genocide, and has altered its importance to a greater level. Therefore, the genocide highlighted how important agriculture is, not only in providing economic stability to everyday citizens, but in being able to stimulate economic funds from the governmental perspective in an economically charged time.

TWO VIEWS OF HISTORY

JOÃO PEDRO HALLETT CRAVINHO

At the end of *War and Peace*, Leo Tolstoy writes: 'Free will is for history only an expression connoting what we do not know about the laws of human history (...) If any single action is due to free will, then not a single historical law can exist, nor any conception of human events.' Like Tolstoy's conclusions, the theme of this issue asks us to reflect on the relationship between history and its nature. If history has a nature, it should correspond to a set of definable behaviours that act in accordance with a set of 'natural' properties. The first view of history presented in this paper will consist of this topic.

The initial step towards a formal theory of history is the establishment of the natural constraints and principles acting upon it, a process which can be made with some degree of confidence with recourse to the archaeological and evolutionary literature. These ask two distinct but mutually productive questions: i) what are the fixed parameters governing the development of symbolic behaviour of humans in their interaction with an environment? and ii) what are the fixed parameters of human species – namely, what is biological about processes like socialization, war, language, etcetera?

The parameters of the first of these questions are mainly twofold: geography and climate, and energy production, storage and consumption. The former acts upon the latter, and the latter acts upon the former (in that order). This set of factors was argued for by archaeologist Ian Morris in his lengthy 2010 work *Why the West Rules – For Now*, with the thesis that the historic configurations of these factors can explain fluctuations in social development. The parameters of the second question, which relate to our biological inheritance, are more uncertain. Improvements in communication technology have shown us that social relationships are unbounded by space and quantity. We are free to participate online in global networks, and indeed riots, rebellions and other violent acts of historic import have emerged from such large-scale (oft spontaneous) social networks. How humans socialize in large groups shows that the intra-species *paths* of socialization must remain an important constraint in historical explanation.

Additionally, the size of sustainable meaningful relations a person may hold has been directly correlated with relative neocortex size. This has important consequences for identifying the meaningful social *space* of interactions in processes like urbanisation, group-formation and social rituals (e.g. marriage, hierarchies, sacrifice of an in-group member) within communities unlike the large-scale networks I described. This correlation, known as Dunbar's number, shows why these processes work differently for different primates, with *homo sapiens* having a possible limit of around 150 sustainable meaningful relationships and other species, like gorillas or lemurs, having much lower values. Dunbar's measure of meaningful social space should explain how paths of social change are enabled or blocked within small-scale groups, thus establishing two levels of socialization constraints in historical explanation.

Though Robin Dunbar also identifies language as a by-product of socialisation, his account is not accepted by most linguists. The emergence of a 'language instinct', to borrow the phrase popularised by Steven Pinker, has roots in a cognitive revolution some 70,000-100,000 years ago and it is this communicative capacity that greatly enables many characteristics of social change, like division of labour or mobilization of resources for mass material

production and resource exploitation.

Having only impressionistically sketched a set of constraints acting upon human history in this short space, the next step is identifying how the moving parts of this scheme interact. I suggest that these parameters fit into a hierarchy that describe the prerequisite conditions for the development of (historico-)symbolic human behaviour. If we assume that history is the movement by social agents towards kinds of social organization (i.e. the French Revolution towards the abolishment of the estates and the promotion of 'citizenship'), what emerges is the following sequence: everything begins with geography and climate (both constraining the variety of possibilities of symbolic social organization), social space (corresponding to how the variety of possible iterations of difference in social organisation is expressed within the two social strata mentioned above), and language instincts (facilitating the creation of inter-personal and social organizations). While some have primacy, they mutually interact, such that even geography and climate can be affected as we move into the Anthropocene. In this sense, history is 'emergent': the shape of social organizations is not teleological but the product of a continuous interplay of constraints and other localized configurations. We are neither at the end nor at the beginning of history: the form of the narrative is not so important as its process. In this view, historical events are unsettlingly treated as secondary, epiphenomenal of the larger theme of human social development.

The second part of the essay will address history not as the study of social arrangement but as reception, as remembering, as a human activity, with reference to the writings of Svetlana Alexievich. History also gathers its value from the lived experiences of its subjects, from the power of its stories and from the humanity of its witnesses. Hearing closely, hearing unflinchingly the testimonies of others, receiving within oneself the suffering memory of others. These are the verbs of history, its natural substance, and its practice. The groundlessness of time becomes the place over which one meets another, over which human tact overcomes circumstance, time or chance. It is where consciousness finds its residence, where humanity cultivates its shape.

In 2015, the Nobel Prize for Literature was awarded to Svetlana Alexievich 'for her polyphonic writings, a monument to suffering and courage in our time.' Born in 1948 in the erstwhile Soviet Union, she has trained and worked as a journalist for most of her life. She began interviewing people to investigate human nature: how much of evolutionary biology, how much of history and how much of ourselves is in the human soul? she asks. Her investigation led her to search in her interviews for those rare moments when people spoke freely, when the interior fabric of consciousness unavoidably appeared in connection with Alexievich's subjects, whether war, the end of the Soviet Union or suicide. This practice of becoming attuned to sincerity alerts one to the cruelty of language and to the cruelty of the historical document.

During the 1919-20 Russian Civil War, Leon Trotsky made his name as a violent commander, brutal both to his troops and to civilians. When confronted by the future admiral N.G. Kuznetsov that 'Moscow is literally dying of hunger', Trotsky answered: 'That's not hunger. When Titus was taking Jerusalem, Jewish mothers ate their children. When I have your mothers eating their young, then you can tell me you're starving.' David Rousset, a Holocaust survivor of the Buchenwald camp, wrote in the *The Days of Our Death*: 'Victim and executioner are equally ignoble; the lesson of the camps is brotherhood in abjection.' Language does not always hide the cruelty of history.

It sometimes can only repeat its obscenities. In Alexievich's oral history of the end of the Soviet Union and the slow death of *homo sovieticus*, *Secondhand Time*, one of her interviewees recalls that his father-in-law said shortly before dying that society needed fear, echoing

the totalitarianism and persecution of the preceding decades in the Soviet Union. '"You need fear. Without fear, everything will fall apart in the blink of an eye." (...) that was the first time it occurred to me – that the victims stick around and testify while the executioners hold their silence. (...) The axe is [still] right where it always was... The axe will survive the master.' The ghost of Stalinism does not fully vanish, forgetfulness incurs disaster, and the axe always survives the master. The effusiveness of Alexievich's interviewees, prophesying, preaching and shouting, showcase history as a perverse human knowledge, a contact with the substance of reality. Strange mantic predictions acquired only from experience.

Alexievich's work on Chernobyl and its apocalyptic landscape led her to say just that: 'It sometimes felt to me as if I was recording the *future*' (my italics), as though the images of our time should be prescient, pregnant both with revelation and withheld meaning. In her words, the disaster of Chernobyl, with its total corruption of matter, of the soil, of our bodies, remains 'an undeciphered sign' beyond testimony or the timescale of human lives. 'The matter will be radioactive for 50,000, 100,000, or 200,000 years'. While Alexievich's work frames practical history as a humane interaction with testimony, it is also cognizant that human history transcends its own bounds, generating events of human, planetary and cosmic proportions. Reading Alexievich, we see ourselves more clearly, we see history as testimony, as prophecy, as the human interaction with the ciphered signs of our condition.

In this view, history nurtures love for the other beyond absolute knowledge of the nature of things. It encourages a special kind of prayer or song of solidarity. Empathy becomes the essential prerequisite for historical understanding. History is the groundless place in which humanity finally finds its shape.

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NOTE ON THE COVERS

Hi! I'm Isla, a fourth year studying English Literature and History joint-honours and I was itching to do a cover piece for 'The Nature of History'. My artistic process is very traditionalist in its composition, I am a traditional artist, paint to paper, I tried digital art but was hopelessly bad at it, so here we are with a hand-drawn and hand-painted journal cover for January's publication.

My art style varies but for the past few years I have become really invested in a psychedelic art style, aka 'trippy' art, which incorporates bright colours and surrealist aspects, as displayed on my cover. I was greatly inspired by Ana Strumpf and Hattie Stewart's bold illustrations on magazine covers, and I wanted to incorporate their illustration style along with my own trippy renditions.

While an odd piece at first glace, it certainly depicts the weirdness of nature and hones in on how we are consumed by nature when we die. The upturned skull on the back cover especially depicts this return to the natural world.

I'll leave the rest of the cover up to your own interpretation, take what you will from it!

Isla Boote
ILLUSTRATOR

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