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CLASSICS
ARCHAEOLOGY

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origins

contents

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Head of School

Spring brings with it a new issue of *Retrospect*, which as ever chronicles the interests and enthusiasms of the School of History, Classics and Archaeology's student community. Along with the three subject-focused student societies, the group coalesced around the production of Retrospect represent a fourth important student group directly associated with the William Robertson Wing.

After the last issue highlighting 'Freedom' as its main theme, the first under the editorship of Lydia Willgress, this issue is devoted to considerations of—a fitting theme for springtime and new beginnings —'Origins'. This is wholly appropriate, for matters related to origins are central to much of the work represented within the School.

One excellent piece in this issue looks at the wider beginnings of the 'cocaine fiend'. Cocaine, derived from coca leaves imported from South America, and long chewed (as was tobacco) by some New World communities, has been with us in Europe and North America for a century and a half. During this time it has had a very mixed press, now much less favourable than its initial reception. Doctors were informed in 1885 by the Parke Davis Company (for whom Sigmund Freud acted as a consultant) that cocaine

> can supply the place of food, make the coward brave, the silent eloquent, free the victims of alcohol and opium habit from their bondage, and, as an anaesthetic render the sufferer insensitive to pain, and make attainable to the surgeon heights of what may be termed, "aesthetic surgery" never reached before.

Other origins examined in this issue are those of the Italian military escapade in Ethiopia in the 1930s, usually termed the Second Italo-Abyssinian War (1935-6), and arguably a short-lived high point of Mussolini's achievements. From the same era, appeasement of the rising power of Germany was part of Neville Chamberlain's strategy until the tanks rolled into Bohemia in mid-March 1939; another piece looks at the origins of appeasement in the minds of politicians for whom the carnage of the Great War was still a relatively fresh memory.

There is also an interview with Peter Ginn, who trained as an archaeologist at UCL's Institute of Archaeology and whose most recent television series recreated farming practices of the Second World War period – when the prime requirement was to feed the nation - on a Hampshire farm. The Scottish National Portrait Gallery's The Nation // Live Work, Union, Civil War, Faith, Roots exhibition is reviewed. On until May this year, and curated by Robin Bailie from projects carried out by community groups across Scotland with support from Creative Scotland, the exhibition is in a very different vein from the SNPG of old. Two markedly different recent blockbusters from the cinema—*The Wolf of Wall Street* and the remarkable *12 Years a Slave*—are also examined in the review section.

I'm sure you will find much of interest in the following pages.

IR

LYDIA WILLGRESS

Editor

For far too long I've referred to *Retrospect* as my baby. Now, after three and a half years of writing, editing, designing (if that's what you can call it) and fundraising, I am both saddened and relieved to be passing the baton on to such a capable team. I wish Ellie, Kerry and Sammy —along with the rest of the new editors—the best of luck and hope I can continue to help *Retrospect* in the future, as it has helped me.

I have many people to thank for making my time with the journal so wonderful. I am supremely grateful to the team this year for pulling together and putting up with endless pub quizzes and nagging. Josh Peter, our designer, has also been irreplaceable and his clever, thoughtful and, quite frankly, amazing eye for detail helps make *Retrospect* what it is. Many thanks also need to be given to the History, Classics and Archaeology School (particularly Anne, Niko, Richard and Ian) for continuing to support Retrospect as we've found our feet. To the former Editor, Will Ellis without whom I wouldn't have had a chance in hell, and to Tom Nash, who attended our meetings and, on the off-chance he couldn't attend our pub quizzes, donated money anyway —you guys made me smile! Finally, to everyone who has believed in us since we started and got involved in some way —thank you.

'Origins' is, then, a funny theme for me to bow out on. I am, however, exceptionally proud to have my name as Editor on this final issue. This year we have doubled our membership, engaged with a range of students and (hopefully) have piqued the interest of many more. Our growth is reflected in the quality of the articles. I thoroughly enjoyed editing this issue and I hope it is as much of a joy to read as it was to work with.

I hope *Retrospect* will continue to grow and I look forward to being an alumna for such an incredible journal.

LW

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Edition of 1000

societies

HISTORY

ELLIE BACK

One of History Society's greatest successes is in its provision of different events to suit a range of students. As an academic society, we have aimed to keep our history-lovers happy this semester with a trip to see the wonderful Tom Devine talk at the Filmhouse. There has also been our Innovative Learning Week outing to Stirling Castle, alongside the usual run of lectures on offer. We are also in negotiation with the brand-new Edinburgh University National Trust of Scotland Student Group, so are hoping to get more trips organised very soon.

As always, we have plenty of social events going on too (although we try to get a historical twist in somewhere!). We recently held our first ever flat crawl, a decade-themed night of 1920s speakeasy, 50s rock 'n' roll and plenty of discoing into the 80s. We were also thrilled to win £200 at the recent 'Societies vs. Sports' Big Cheese for bringing along the most members of any society – thanks to everyone who was part of the strong History presence!

We're always on the lookout to throw new and innovative events and last term we even offered free tickets to the fantastic 'RBS museum lates'.

If there's anything going on that you think we should get involved in, we'd love to hear your suggestions. Most importantly, please do 'Like' us on Facebook (search for 'Edinburgh University History Society') to keep updated with everything we get up to, or send us a message to get added to the mailing list. As ever, our wonderful sports teams (women's netball, men's rugby and football) are always on the lookout for new members, so do get involved.

We have now elected a brand new committee for the academic year 2014/15. I have absolutely loved being President this year, and am incredibly proud of some of the things that we have achieved as a committee – gaining almost 400 paid members, throwing the sell-out Winter Ball and keeping such a variety of events going throughout the year. A massive thank you goes to everyone who has been involved in what History Society has been doing – whether you have been part of the wonderful committee, come along to any of our events, or represented History Society playing netball, football or rugby. I wish the next committee the very best of luck and am certain that they will enjoy the experience as much as I have.

CLASSICS

ELERI BOYESEN

It was a busy second semester for Edinburgh University's Classics Society. The first event of the new term was our 'Welcome Back Pub Quiz'. This quiz was a charity event helping to raise money for the Society's chosen charity: Classics For All. Classics For All promotes the teaching of Classics in schools that currently do not offer the opportunity to study Classics. This is an extremely worthy cause in our eyes as it aims to make the study of Classics more accessible and popular. The quiz itself wasn't strictly Classics based and traversed a variety of topics including everything from "Alternative Classics" and Modern History to the Kardashians and Doctor Who. The event was a resounding success, raising quite a lot of money through donations. The winners won not only prizes, but also eternal glory.

Next on the fundraising tour was a Classics bake sale. With everything from Rocky Road to Welsh Cakes on offer, committee members braved the toe-numbing weather to provide hungry students with sweet treats to raise further donations for Classics For All.

Classics Society has also been continuing with lectures each Wednesday from guests who are experts in their field. Another academic success came in the shape of the Dissertation Conference in Innovative Learning Week which allowed eight fourth-year Classics students to present their dissertations to their peers and lecturers. In a three minute thesis, each student had to convey the key points of their dissertation and be prepared to answer any questions.

Also in Innovative Learning Week was 'The Dionysia' theatre festival performances at Bedlam Theatre. A one-day event, 'The Dionysia' is a festival not too unlike the original ancient Greek festivities: the university's theatre societies competed against each other armed with four classically themed plays. The award for Best Production was closely-fought, but the Classics Society came out victorious with a performance of the Eumenides. Congratulations also to Tamsyn Lonsdale-Smith for being awarded the Best Chorus Leader, as well as all the other participants and award-winners. A huge thank you to all the societies who took part in 'The Dionysia' – it would not have been possible without you.

Continuing the dramatic theme of our events, the Classics Society Play for the second semester was Euripides' Medea. As a bit of light-hearted fun, the Society also hopes to make a trip to see 300: Rise of an Empire, if only to point and laugh at all the historical inaccuracies.

HISTORY H
CLASSICS C
ARCHAEOLOGY A
RETROSPECT R
SCHOOL NEWS S

A

Archaeology

TYLER MACKIE & ASHLEIGH WISEMAN

Our Welcome Back Pub-Crawl was a successful affair that included a very sparkly Merlin, a person in full armour, complete with chain-mail, some Monty Python-esque coconuts and wooden swords, Black Death and even some peasants. Needless to say it was all very entertaining and slightly surreal.

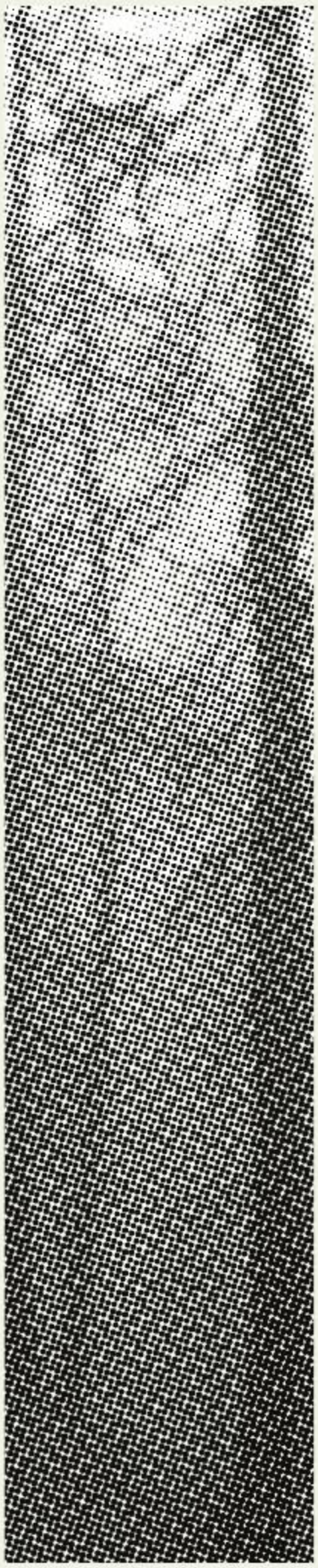
We have had some very diverse lectures this semester too, starting with Chantal Knowles from the National Museum of Scotland (NMS) talking about her work with Ethnography in Papua New Guinea. ArchSoc would like to wish her the best as she starts her new work abroad; she will be sadly missed as part of the NMS team. We have also had Elizabeth Graham convincingly debunk the Mayan Sacrifice myth and provide much debate about New World archaeology, cultural appropriation and colonialism. We have also been privy to a variety of other lectures including ones from Chris Scarre, Michael Fulford and Sue Hamilton, which have provided engaging, funny and deeply thoughtful talks within and beyond the realms of archaeology. We hope our lecture series grows in this way.

We also hosted our third fieldwork and information fair, which had over 30 different archaeology companies - heritage, charity and commercial - to encourage students to get involved and see what is on offer. The Careers Service were also on hand to direct students, for which we were grateful. The fair was opened by the new Head of Archaeology, Professor Robert Leighton, who talked about the importance of fieldwork and how to get involved, followed by a hilarious and honest talk about 'real world archaeology' by David Connolly. The day finished with the National Trust for Scotland highlighting the diversity of archaeology and need for volunteers.

In March we hosted a seminar on the topic of 'The Emotive Materiality of Human Remains', a student-led initiative with the Social Anthropology Society and the Bones Collective Group. The debate and discussion event led us all deep into the questions regarding the cultural ownership and interpretive authority of the meaning and future of human remains.

Membership has tripled this year, our fieldwork fair is growing in recognition and we envision an even greater fair next year. We have had crazy, fun, beautiful socials with very thoughtful costumes and have made lots of memories. Our academic events have ranged from ethical debates to more informal chats in the pub. We have improved links, not only within our department and to our students, but also between departments and opened more dialogue for future academic events. Our new publication, *InSitu*, has been launched and hopefully will develop into an established and more recognised student journal.

We congratulate and welcome the new committee on board and wish them all the best for the future.



RETROSPECT

ELLIE BYRNE

Retrospect began its first event of the second term with the launch of our winter issue 'Freedom', a combination of some fantastic writing, dedicated editing and beautiful design. What a result we got! The whole team was thrilled with the outcome and the launch party went off without a hitch, with writers and readers gathered to see the finished product in print. The success of 'Freedom' only added to our enthusiasm for this issue, 'Origins'.

This term has been another fantastic one for fundraising. Our pub quizzes have repeatedly packed out Teviot Loft Bar, drawing people in with our infamously tricky History, Classics and Archaeology round, as well as the lighter picture, music and sports rounds. At Retrospect we love a pub quiz, so you can look forward to more in the future.

Semester two also brought with it a bittersweet event for a Retrospect era. Our Annual General Meeting took place in March where we decided our top three positions for the next academic year. The event was chaired by our current Editor, Lydia Willgress, who oversaw the nominations for our new Editor, Deputy Editor and Secretary. After all the voting was through, Retrospect was delighted to welcome former Deputy Editor Ellie Byrne as the new Editor, ex-Reviews Editor Kerry Gilsenan as Deputy Editor and Retrospect new-comer Sammy Cook as our next Secretary. Even though we are delighted to welcome our new committee members, it also means saying farewell to our wonderful Editor Lydia, who has been fantastic this year. We wish her all the best in her very bright future in the big bad world of journalism (though we wish we could keep her!).

A special mention for this semester also goes to our former Editor Will Ellis and our current Academic Editor Katherine Dixon, as they both took part in the Meadows Half Marathon. After the event, Katherine said: "For somebody who used to beg her way out of sports at school, running the half marathon was the last thing on my agenda. All the support I got on the day made all the training worth it." This was a tremendous achievement and all of us at Retrospect were very proud to see two of our colleagues (both new and old) take on the challenge for charity.

'If you want to find out more about us next academic year, please visit us at the Fresher's Fair in the first week of term. We'd love to tell you all about our exciting plans for Retrospect in the coming academic year.

SCHOOL NEWS
HEATHER WALKER

Innovative Learning Week 2014

There has been no shortage of new activities to try recently with the third annual Innovative Learning Week (ILW) taking place from 17-21 February. We had a very busy week! Activities included overseas trips to Rome and Florence; UK excursions to Edinburgh Castle, Hadrian's Wall and the Scottish National Gallery. Many practical workshops were on offer and proved to be really popular, with participants trying their hand at making clay pots, the art of meditation, being an archive detective or learning the craft of ancient roman styling.

Scholarships

Following on from the success of last year's School Undergraduate Scholarships for Academic Excellence, we are pleased to invite applications for the 2014/15 awards. We will award up to ten scholarships with a value of £7,000 available for undergraduate students entering their third year of study, awarded on the basis of academic merit.

Student surveys

Survey season is upon us once more. Every year the University collects students' views in order to help shape the way things are done, now and in the future.

With the help of our current fourth year undergraduates, we hope to do even better in the upcoming National Student Survey (NSS) and to keep improving the student experience for future generations of students.

As a School we would like to achieve a higher response rate than last year's 72.7%. The higher the response rate the better the understanding we can gain of what is important to our students. There is even an incentive for our four student societies: a sum of £800 to be shared out if we reach 73%. Taught postgraduate students also have the chance to complete the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), which closes in June. The Edinburgh Student Experience Survey (ESES) for undergraduates in years one to three has now closed for this year.

Alumni Careers event

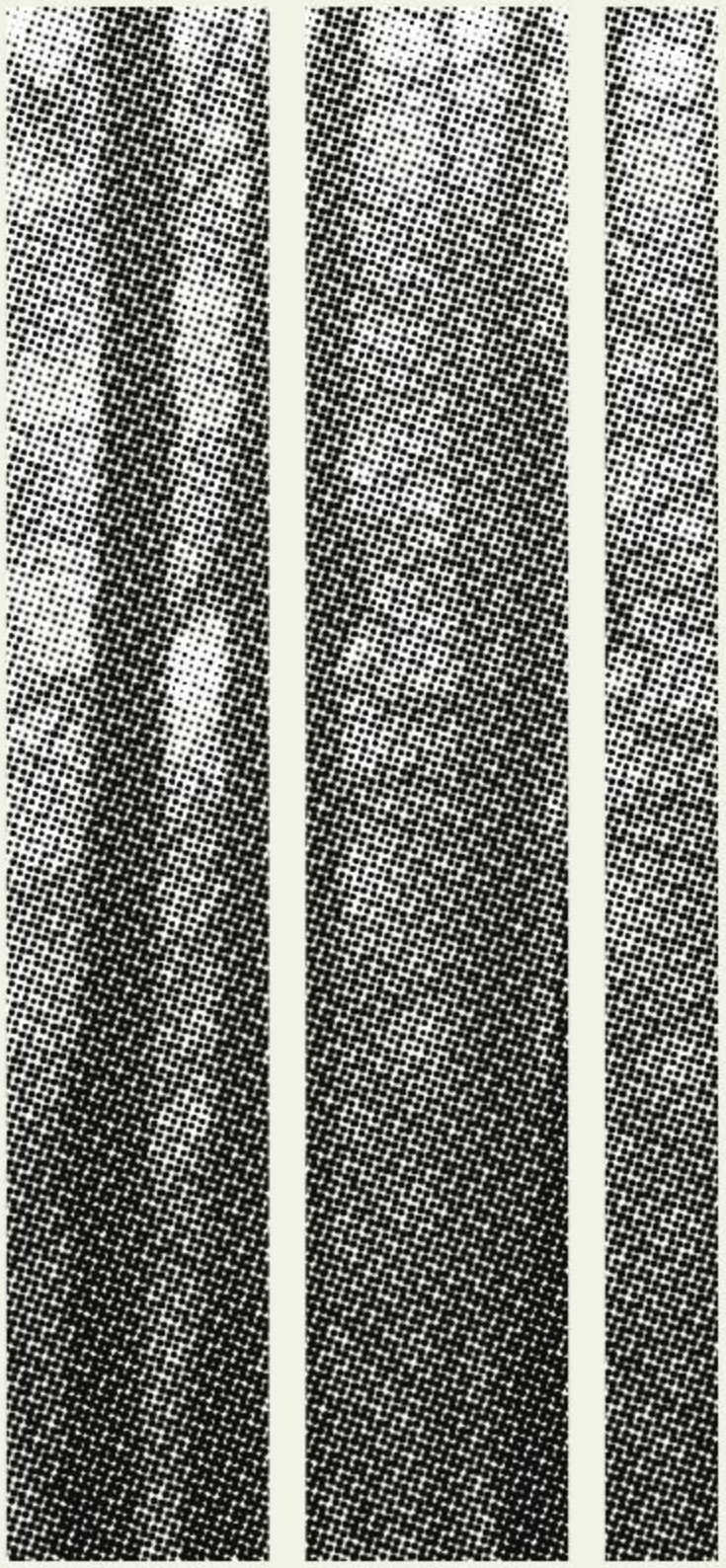
We recently welcomed a group of former students back to talk to our current students about their career journeys following graduation. On Wednesday, 5 March Alumni working in heritage, publishing, policy work and journalism entertained the audience with tales about their degrees, work experience and their journey to where they are today. A relaxed reception followed the talks, which gave plenty opportunity to find out more about the varied and fascinating career paths of our alumni visitors. The evening as a whole was very well received.

Graduation reception

The School will host a graduation reception for all students graduating in the forthcoming summer ceremony, which takes place on Thursday, 3 July at 11.00am. That is all we can reveal for now; further announcements will follow soon.

Student helpers

Throughout the year we welcome prospective students to our School for a series of visit days and open days. We look for student volunteers to help out on the day to talk to the visitors about life as a student here and offer tours of the facilities. Look out for emails from Student Support with further information and to register your interest.



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THE ORIGIN OF THE COCAINE FIEND

Sammy Cook

'Fit for such people as they are.' This was Spanish conquistador Pedro de Cieza de Leon's remark as he observed the Inca chewing coca leaves in 1552. It is enduring for two reasons. Firstly, it continues to remain an integral part of Andean culture in Peru and Bolivia where the leaf is chewed to suppress pain and fatigue, as well as being given to tourists to relieve altitude sickness. Secondly, Cieza de Leon's comment, revealing the sheer contempt he held for Incan culture and the coca leaf, gave birth to a myth that continues to occupy our perceptions of drug users today. More so it plagues the lives of millions of addicts to this day: that of the 'cocaine fiend'.

Cocaine is commonly known as a party drug, equally popular among Hollywood A-list stars and corporate bankers as it is amongst college students at fraternity parties. But the drug has a far less glamorous clientele with almost two million regular users across the United States—many from low income minority inner-city communities. The pervasiveness of the drug crossing gender, racial, social and generational lines has created a dynamic territory of addiction in which categorising all users into a single group is all but impossible. As is the human compulsion to seek to create order where there is disorder and clarity where there is uncertainty, society has nevertheless constructed a variety of ordered profiles, in which the cocaine fiend is but one.

The cocaine fiend is a constructed social myth, which equates cocaine addiction with vice and degeneracy. It draws on an understanding of cocaine in which the association of its use extends beyond the inflicted burden on the individual and includes the wider negative social implications of the user's actions. This thereby compounds the danger of the addict

« cocaine, like the invention of the stream engine before it, embodied the nineteenth century ethos of progress »

and the threat they pose to society. The collective imagination of the cocaine fiend is shaped by generalisations of the social setting, socio-economic status and ethnicity of the user. The image of the addict thus created is predominantly urban, poverty-stricken and, above all, non-white.

The construction of the cocaine fiend is not static and relies on a constant reinforcement of image association to remain dominant in our imagination. In the same way that increasingly popular liberal conceptions of drug use emerged in the 1960s, so too did an equally reactionary conception of the drug fiend develop following the 'crack' epidemic twenty years later. Through stories of crack houses and crack babies in inner-city America the imaginary construction of the cocaine fiend was reinvigorated and continues to dominate our perception of certain cocaine users to this day and in turn serves to justify draconian government drug policy against them. It is however no more than a myth: no such readily identifiable, perfectly homogenous marginalized group exists. The cocaine fiend is thus an illusionary social fabrication and like with most myths, its conception is rooted in the past. The question is, where?

The history of cocaine, first isolated from the coca leaf into its crystallized form in 1855, is one of shifting perceptions. From nineteenth century medical wonder drug to twentieth century demonic plague: what was once celebrated as the cure for the common cold is later chastised as the root of all social evil, ruining the lives of individuals and destroying entire communities in the process.

The late-nineteenth century saw medical pioneers, such as Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud, promote cocaine use as treatment for mental illness, chronic fatigue, and indigestion. Most notoriously Coca- Cola, launched in

1886 and, as its name would suggest, contained traces of cocaine. Along with an aggressive marketing campaign, its mild stimulant effect and appealing taste made Coca-Cola an instant success. A cure for shyness and a source for strength and beauty, cocaine, much like the invention of the steam engine before it, embodied the nineteenth century ethos of progress. But the drug was far from the exclusive prerogative of a few and by the turn of the century the widespread popularisation of cocaine was very much a reality.

The comprehensive demand for the largely unregulated drug led to a proliferation of supply which saw the price of cocaine fall below that of alcohol, the alternative recreational drug of choice. The sinking price of cocaine as well as its wide-scale non-prescription availability led to its increased usage among poor non-white communities in America. The drug was so prolific that employees would often give cocaine rations to workers as a substitute for low wages and to boost manual labor productivity in areas such as construction. Its increasing non-medical use as well as the increasing questionable merit of the drug as a therapeutic treatment served to dramatically alter perceptions of cocaine users. With cocaine's association with pleasure and almost exclusive use as a recreational drug by the 1900s, users were no longer seen as patients and victims, but deplorable self-indulging addicts who, in the words of health officer W.C. Fowler in 1923, were 'mentally and morally degenerates'.

The popular fixation with progress and improvement meshed with the perception of cocaine as a moral and social vice forced cocaine underground. This aggravated the marginalisation of the cocaine user in the popular imagination by turning deplorable self-indulging addicts into criminals. Over ten years this process of socially stigmatizing the cocaine user culminated in the Harrison Act of 1914, which criminalised all unregistered cocaine distribution and use. As the writer Rufus King, in reference to the Harrison Act, succinctly put it: 'Exit the addict-patient, enter the addict-criminal.'

The racial and socio-economic diversification of the cocaine user as well as the extended social setting of cocaine use from the private, domestic sphere for self-medication to the urban street corner for illicit self-gratification lay at the heart of the conception of the cocaine fiend. By 1914, cocaine's moment of celebrity status had long passed. The public perception of cocaine users had changed for the worse: but how?

The cocaine fiend is an imagined peripheral group of cocaine users which has been shaped over the last hundred years by manipulating society's sexual and racial fears of the Other. Our natural compulsion to fear what is different and distance ourselves from what is unorthodox meant that by constructing the cocaine fiend along racial and sexual lines, the association between the drug and moral and social degeneracy was reinforced through fear. Thus, our rational perception was distorted.

Cocaine has always been closely linked with sex. Its stimulant effect saw it promoted in the 1890s as a treatment for impotence and even touted as a cure for venereal disease. Its association with sex extends back to Incan mythology with the story of the first coca plant emerging from the mutilated corpse of a woman who had been executed for her voracious sexual appetite. To this day sex on the eve of the coca harvest is still a sign of good fortune in Andean culture. It required, therefore, no extensive leap of the imagination at the turn of the century to link cocaine with sexual perversion and immorality. Tangibly, the rise of cocaine was seen as intrinsically linked with the rise in prostitution on the streets of 1900s America. The scenes of women trading sex for cocaine in the popular imagination engendered a moral panic in which cocaine

« willfully seduced by the vice of cocaine »

was seen as having enslaved women into a life of sexual deviancy. These women were not perceived as victims however, but willfully seduced by the vice of cocaine. Further compounding of the sexual fears of society occurred due to the notion of cocaine as a moral contagion of depravity. In the same way that prostitution spread and corrupted the lives of weak men, so too could the evil of cocaine. Like a sexually transmitted disease emanating from the street corner, cocaine could spread through society like an epidemic laying moral havoc to entire communities.

The increasing accessibility and subsequent popularity of cocaine among non-white communities in the United States served, within the prominent climate of racism, to demonise the drug in the popular imagination and create a viable target for the social vilification of cocaine use. The stereotype linking race with crime incorporated cocaine, at the turn of the century, with the media fueling this tripartite link with sensational stories of black men high on cocaine engaged in orgies of sexual violence against white women. Sexual and racial fears linked with cocaine thus did not represent separate and exclusive sites of fear in the popular imagination and instead were often interconnected. This served to compound the marginalisation of the cocaine fiend.

The notion that cocaine gave people the illusion of, and, at times, actual Herculean strength, as well as lowered moral inhibitions to violence by exaggerating the ego was the greatest concern that plagued the early twentieth century imagination. It was a concern shared by the Spanish conquistadors in South America with the Incan belief that the coca leaf gave strength and vitality interpreted as an illusion of the devil and evidence of demonic possession by the anti-Christ. In the 1900s, rumours were even disseminated that claimed black men on cocaine were expert marksmen. This led officers to switch to higher caliber firearms specifically to stop the 'cocaine-crazed negro'. The police were thus not only likely to assume a confrontational black man was on cocaine, but that by implication he was armed and dangerous. Combined with the association of violence and cocaine was the belief that the non-white population were more susceptible to addiction, thereby infusing notions of masculinity into the racist cocaine discourse of early 20th century America. Effeminising cocaine use among the non-white population by associating it with gendered notions of moral and physical strength represented another shared site of sexual and racial fear haunting the imagination of mainstream white middle class male society.

The power of a myth lies in its ability to dominate our collective imagination despite an absence of evidence or fact to justify its perseverance. What makes the myth of the cocaine fiend so powerful is that it is centred on, and has further cemented, the link between a defined social group and a set of reprehensible, often criminal, behaviours. In its absolute form the myth no longer requires cocaine at all for it to remain real in our collective imagination. The case of Robert Charles, a man who shot and killed a police officer in New Orleans in 1900 sparking a killing spree that claimed the lives of 28 people, adeptly demonstrates this point. There was no evidence he was on, or had ever taken, cocaine but this was no reason for the media not to speculate, and for the imagination of the public not to already assume, that he was a cocaine fiend. After all, an impoverished, violent, African-American fits the profile perfectly.

British Appeasement at the Dawn of World War Two

Sarah Thompson

In the 1930s the world was just beginning to recover from the Great Depression, which had rendered many nations economically weak. Fascism and Communism were emerging as viable contenders for parliamentary democracy and the horrors of the Great War were still fresh in the minds of the British people. Historians remain divided as to why a British policy of appeasement originated during this period. Some, like P.M.H. Bell, say that national hostility to war was combined with economic difficulties and enhanced a 'desire for peace'. However, critics would cite practical issues such as the failure of the League of Nations or neutrality on the part of the United States of America (USA) as more influential reasons for appeasement. Others would argue that it was driven by domestic considerations including preserving the Empire and Britain's standing as a world power. Attitudes in Britain were changing during this period, crucially towards Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), and there is some debate surrounding which one was seen as the greater threat by British politicians. However, Paul Doerr presents perhaps one of the most straightforward, but most convincing case for appeasing: Britain was simply not in a position to fight. He cites economic and military weakness as reasons for adopting appeasement. This becomes particularly convincing when considering appeasement as a strategic decision geared towards hoping for the best, but, certainly latterly, preparing for the worst.

To begin, Bell argued that politicians and the public alike were opposed to the use of force as a form of foreign policy. Throughout Britain there was widespread hostility to war. The nation was still recovering from the devastating losses sustained in the Great War and they were keen to avoid anything like it happening again. White poppies for peace were sold from 1933, demonstrating a desire to challenge future conflicts or the unnecessary loss of life. Many politicians were reluctant to show support for rearmament because they feared electoral defeat and the fact that suffrage was now universal meant politicians were much less likely to act against the will of the electorate. Indeed, a survey carried out in 1937 showed that 71 per cent of people in Britain were in favour of supporting the League of Nations in order to keep the peace in Europe. There was a prevailing attitude that disarmament was a means of maintaining peace, and Bell gives considerable support to the importance of public opinion in influencing politicians on this issue, as well as economic difficulties. However, he does conclude, '"Appeasement" never meant pursuit of peace at any price … if German aims knew no limits then the British Government would resist them, by war if necessary.'

« the nation was still recovering from the devastating losses sustained in the Great War »

However, the problem with supporting Bell's argument is that, although the people wanted to put their faith in the League of Nations, in reality collective security seemed to be failing. The Abyssinia Crisis had left the reputation of the League in tatters and after the German invasion of the Rhineland in 1937 it became clear that they did not have the power to provide a solution to a war. They had failed to achieve their goal of international disarmament and had been unable to act quickly enough to intervene in smaller conflicts such as the Japanese invasion of Manchuria. Despite the population of Britain appearing willing to put their faith in the League of Nations, the governments of Britain and France became aware that they could not rely on the strength of the League in order to control Germany.

Additionally, the USA was reluctant to get involved in what they viewed to be a European conflict. The Americans had promised their people 'a return to normality' after the Great War which meant they remained strictly neutral. In 1935 the Neutrality Act was passed which banned the sale of arms to belligerents, and they also refused to commit to any alliances. Britain had relied heavily on American imports during the Great War, which would not be an option in any future conflict. In short, if Britain did not appease they would be fighting without one of their most valuable allies and risking defeat due to military weakness.

Maurice Cowling takes a slightly different slant on the issue, and cites a desire to preserve the Empire and Britain's position as a world power as a valid reason for appeasing. The British Army was widely dispersed in order to fulfil imperial tasks. The choice had to be made between defending the Empire from threats such as Japan in the Far East, or bringing their troops into Europe to fight in a war. This is because they were not in a position to do both. In the Great War Britain had been forced to call on even the most independent parts of the Empire, and many countries suffered severe losses for what appeared, to some, to have been for very little gain. In 1931 the Dominions had been granted independence in foreign affairs, so Britain could not force their troops to fight against their will. Asking them to fight may have put a strain on relations between Britain and her Empire and could have made it more vulnerable to the threat of rebellions or further calls for independence. Interestingly, in 1937 the Canadian, Australian, and South African Prime Ministers gave their support for appeasement at the Imperial Prime Ministers' Conference. The newly elected Neville Chamberlain may well have been influenced by these views, although there is no way to say this for certain.

An examination of appeasement would not be complete without reference to Alan Taylor's controversial 1961 work *The Origins of the Second World War*. He presented a vastly different interpretation of appeasement to anything that came before it. An opinion, which was particularly radical at the time, was the fact that he saw Hitler as an ordinary statesman, rather than a dictator with plans to overthrow Europe. Whilst many would dispute this claim, it does raise the interesting issue of whether the politicians and general public of the 1930s truly anticipated the threat that

3

Germany was to pose to European security. The public and politicians alike grew to see the Treaty of Versailles as too harsh, as complete disarmament left Germany open to attack. Britain still saw themselves as a great power and a moral authority in the world, which entitled them to an involvement in the revision of the Treaty. Many British people viewed the Rhineland as German territory anyway and had no real objections with them taking it back. Britain was keen to do business with Germany. Taylor made the point that the occupation of the Ruhr led to French negotiation with Germany, evidence to Britain that 'more was to be gained by conciliation than by threats'. In the early 1930s the British government was unsure what to make of Hitler, and therefore many of them trusted his assurances that he would cease expansion after reclaiming the Rhineland. When Hitler first came to power German was still militarily weak so the government had little reason to suspect the threat that was to come. They still felt relations could be improved by negotiation. By the time the Cabinet realised that Hitler's aims were not as limited as previously thought, it was too late to prevent a war. The fact that Britain, a nation still haunted by the memory of the Great War, was prepared to negotiate with and show sympathy towards Germany shows they saw no threat in appeasing and trusted Hitler's word.

On the other hand, an argument which predates the work of Taylor, but which is still supported by historians, is the theory that a strong Germany could act a as a 'bulwark to Bolshevism'. Ian Kershaw argues that the British government saw the USSR and communism as their serious threat, although they were still wary of Hitler. Allowing Germany to rearm created a strong power in Europe who could prevent the spread of communism across the continent. Hitler repressed communism in Germany, but defeating Germany in a war increased the risk of it becoming a communist country. However,

« by the time the Cabinet realised

Hitler's aims...it was too late »

at this point it was highly unlikely that Britain would have launched an attack on Germany due to its constant overestimation of the strength of the German army. But, this overestimation could instead be seen as evidence for Britain viewing Germany as a strong contender against the USSR and communism in Europe. Appeasement could be seen as a way of preventing communism without jeopardising their own armed forces as they believed a stronger nation, would do it instead. Also, allowing Germany to rearm kept Britain in Germany's favour, thus reducing tension between the two nations.

However, whilst all of the aforementioned factors were certainly important factors in the origins of the British policy of appeasement, ultimately, appeasement was sustained because Britain was simply not in a position to fight. Doerr proposed that a combination of economic and military weakness led to Britain sustaining appeasement, even as the threat of a war became more and more serious. Many of the great powers hoped to become more self-sufficient after the Great Depression and Britain was a country fairly heavily reliant on imports from Europe. They were still paying off their war debts from the Great War, and another conflict would have interrupted trade and put further strain on the economy.

More so, increasing defence expenditure would have compromised people's living standards, as the nation was still recovering from the Great Depression. The government was now taking more of an interest in its people and the Liberal Reforms had begun to help with reducing poverty and providing benefits to those in need. Progress which had been made in these areas would have been compromised if money had been channelled towards rearming at this time. It has been said that Britain could not afford to seriously rearm in 1934. However, by 1937 the government was spending enormous amounts into developing their armed forces.

Additionally, Britain had not anticipated another war and so had not adequately invested in their Army or Air Force. Its technology was also badly out of date. Overall, it can be said that Britain had no choice but to appease in order to buy time for their economy and military to regain strength. Rearmament was not just limited by financial restrictions; it was also restricted by a lack of factories and manpower to allow rapid expansion. Additionally, a stable economy was seen by many as an advantage in a war, as victory usually went to the nation who could sustain themselves for the longest. There was a fear that rearming too quickly would destabilize the economy unnecessarily. The Royal Navy was supposed to embody British power and national pride, and it had been weakened by international disarmament agreements. Overall, whilst Britain probably would not have appeased out of economic weakness alone, when combined with other factors such as the lack of a strong army, the case for appeasement becomes much stronger.

To conclude, deciding which factors were the most influential in Britain appeasing ultimately depends on an historian's opinion as to whether or not it was a viable course of action. After examining a number of factors it can be said that the practical reasons for delaying war provide a more convincing case for why appeasement was followed than less tangible factors such as public opinion or attitudes towards political ideologies. Although it was understandable that Britain wanted to cling to its position as a world power, in reality it was economically unstable and did not have enough strong allies to go to war without seriously developing its armed forces. This line of argument would lead one to the conclusion that Britain appeased from a position of weakness rather than strength, in an attempt to postpone war until it was absolutely necessary. Whilst this is correct, it should also be noted that waiting until 1939 to finally begin the conflict allowed Britain to enter the war far stronger than they would have previously. Ultimately, appeasement bought time for the nation to become more financially and militarily viable, whilst still addressing all of the other factors that have been attributed to why Britain appeased.

The Expansion of Rome

Nathan Low

Was the expansion of Rome and the growth of the Roman Empire defensive or aggressive in nature? This question is key in any exploration of the origins of the Roman Empire. To find an answer, and for us to begin to dig at the roots of this monolith of Western history, we must analyse the importance of several factors: the idea of self-defence or 'defensive imperialism', the Roman desire for wealth and Roman martial tradition. Firstly, however, before moving onto these broad themes, in our endeavour to understand more clearly how Rome managed to achieve such a dominant position in the Mediterranean we shall investigate a few specific instances in Rome's Republican history. We will look briefly at the nature of the Roman confederation in Italy and then at the Punic Wars and the removal of Carthage as an influential power.

Michael Crawford believes that Rome's dominance of the Mediterranean partly grew out of Rome's magnanimity towards her surrounding Italian allies, tribute was not demanded, and so it became necessary for Rome exert their dominance in a different way. Rome demanded manpower rather than material wealth and Italian men were required to fight in Roman armies whenever they were called upon. By exerting their leadership and dominance in this specific manner Rome suddenly possessed a surplus of potential conscripts: the outcome of this could only be new war conquest outside of Rome's immediate Latin and Italic neighbouring lands.

Rome's success in the wars fought over the course of the third century BC, specifically the Punic Wars, lead directly to the establishment of Rome's first permanent commitments outside Italy. It was in these wars that Rome achieved a position of military and naval dominance of the seas surrounding the Italian peninsula: a position of advantage from where future leaders could exploit the Mediterranean world to their own ends. These wars made Roman expansion possible and led to the development of organised Imperialism, however they were not the direct reason for, and cannot be seen as the true 'origin' of Rome's empire.

It has been suggested that the cause of the First Punic War came primarily down to self-defence. Polybius stated that 'the Romans were worried lest if the Carthaginians became masters of Sicily they would be overpowering and dangerous neighbours for them, surrounding them and threatening all parts of Italy' and after the invasion of Italy by Pyrrhus of Epirus, the fear of invasion did play strongly on the minds of Romans (Polybius 1, 10, 1-11, 2). This idea of 'defensive imperialism' became the accepted explanation for Roman expansion and war in general during the nineteenth century: influential scholars such as Theodor Mommsen pressed this thesis. Other influential historians such as M. Holleux in the twenties and F. W. Walbank also put forward this thesis. Their argument suggests that Rome's perpetual warring did not come as a result of aggression or greed (contradicting other historians of the time who had been influenced by the writing of Joseph Schumpeter and V. I. Lenin) but was forced on Rome, as they had no other choice but to defend themselves and their allies. This explanation of the origins of the Roman Empire, though it contains important elements of truth, especially concerning the First Punic War, cannot be seen as complete. This argument must be seen in its contemporary context and thus can also be interpreted as representing apologetic European imperial interests of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Similar to the First Punic War, the First Illyrian War has often been seen as a war of defence. H. H Scullard stresses that Rome saw the Illyrians as a direct threat to their Italian hegemony. It could be argued however that the Romans began this war with the intention of dominating the Adriatic, which was crucial in their campaign to secure territory and control in the Po Valley. It is more likely that they saw the subjugation of the Illyrians, as eventually with the Carthaginians, as an opportunity to achieve dominance of the seas surrounding Italy.

Even with the wars that seem easiest to define as 'defensive', there remains a significant degree of contention. Ultimately, the idea of defensive imperialism rests on our interpretation of only a few individual wars and so cannot fully explain the larger question of the origins of Roman imperialism.

« the promise of booty was also a significant factor in the Romans sending a force »

Polybius notes that in the First Punic War the promise of booty was also a significant factor in the Romans sending a force to aid the Mamertines. 'These men [the Senate] . . . also dwelt on the great gains which would clearly accrue to every individual citizen from the spoils of war, and so a resolution of sending help (invading Sicily) was carried' (Polybius, 1.11). The role that economic factors played, here highlighted by Polybius as a motivating force in Rome's wars, has always been a matter of controversy in modern historiography. Many would reject the idea that it was the initial motivation for conquest. The historian Ernst Badian, in his decidedly 'anti-Marxist polemic' goes as far to dismiss outright the Weltanschauung that appears through 'the blood-red spectacles of Marx' and argues assuredly that the development of Rome's Empire had no economic motivation whatsoever.

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Can anyone be so indifferent or idle as not to care to know by what means, and under what kind of polity, almost the whole inhabited world was conquered and brought under the dominion of the single city of Rome, and that too within a period of not quite fifty-three years? (Polybius, 1.1)

The opportunistic nature of Rome's early foreign wars, does suggest that the acquisition of wealth was not the sole motivation for expansion. However, Badian's statement is undoubtedly overstated, for it is undeniable that as Rome fought more wars and as the empire expanded further, it benefited economically. Rome could gain wealth in several ways through war: through direct acquisition of wealth from plunder and slaves, through taxation of annexed territory (taxation exerted after Pompey's consolidation of the Asian provinces more than doubled state revenue) and via the control of commerce.

The establishment and success of a system of economic exploitation, after the formative wars of the third and second centuries BC, may be seen as an explanation of why Rome continued to expand and exert its control throughout the Mediterranean world. Cicero emphasises the crucial importance of waging war, specifically in Asia, for the Roman economy. He argues that war was necessary as it maintained a stream of incoming revenue. This desire for wealth is used comically by Plautus to explain Rome's regular warfare and expansionism:

> Yes, you both go in, for I shall now summon a meeting of the senate in my mind, to deliberate on matters of finance, against whom war may be best declared, so that I can get some money thence (Plautus, Epidicus 158 – 60).

Roman greed was in some cases thrown back in their face. Symbolically, Mithradates, King of Pontus, executed the legate Marius Aquillus by having molten gold poured down his throat. Crassus met the same fate, after his greed and his desire for military recognition led to complete disaster in his Parthian campaign.

This pressure that Crassus felt to achieve military success was deeply rooted in Roman society. Polybius tells us of the highly militaristic, ruthless and ambitious nature of Roman culture. This militarism can be clearly seen within the Republican political structure: no one in Rome could run for even the lowest offices and magistracies without serving in the army for at least ten campaigning seasons and the most revered and esteemed political and senatorial positions in Rome (such as Consul or Praetor) were ultimately army commands. Rome made war almost every year: from 327 BC onwards for eighty five years the Roman state experienced only four or five years without war, 'warfare was almost constant' (Cicero, De officiis 2. 45). War was the central part of every Roman male aristocrats early adulthood, and the experience of war will have dominated and shaped the lives of these men. Outstanding military performances and victories were the key roads to an individual attaining power, status, influence, and wealth.

Romans accepted as a given fact that they would have to wage war every year. Around 13 per cent of the population who were not from noble decent would join the army annually (during the campaigns of the late third century, the percentage was closer to twenty five annually). These cultural attitudes were central to Republican society and can be seen as the primary and central explanation for expansionism, and the origins of empire.

It is often argued however, that Rome's militarism should not be seen as exceptional, as many other Hellenistic states were also heavily militaristic and were too regularly at war. This is seen as one of the main problems surrounding the study and understanding of Roman cultural militarism in the Hellenistic Mediterranean. Nevertheless, William Harris' argument that Rome was exceptionally militarized and militaristic, not just in modern terms but also in ancient terms, still stands. The ideas of *laus* (fame) and *gloria* (glory) are key in differentiating Roman militarism from that of other Hellenistic states. By gaining *laus and gloria* one could achieve the ultimate Roman attributes of honour and virtue and this would drastically increase their reputation and public stature and thus, their political influence. These socially esteemed values can often be seen in the art and the material culture of Rome. A coin from 70 BC shows virtue and honour personified on one side. The presence of these traits on coinage indicates their importance in Roman society. On the opposite face of the coin Roma is shown hand in hand with Italia, placing her foot on the globe—symbolising Roman dominance over the world—clearly demonstrating militarism and aggression.

It was social pressure and aristocratic competition to achieve gloria and honorem that exacerbated militarism and ensured Rome was so often at war. These Roman desires meant that more and more peoples, territories and wars were needed to satiate the personal needs of the Roman ruling classes. This culturally rooted competition as it developed also ensured that Rome would descend into years of civil war. The significance of this competition for glory can clearly be seen in the *pax augusta* (Augustan peace). As princeps, Augustus would accept no challenge to his dominance, and it was consequential of this lack of political competition that after years of perpetual warring, Rome endured a period of relative peace.

This aristocratic, culturally engrained competition and desire for glory was something that made Rome exceptional and ensured that it was nearly always at war:

> It is incredible to recount how great the state became in a short time. So strong was the desire for glory that came over them… competitions for glory were among them the toughest competitions. Each man was in a hurry to strike the enemy, to climb a wall, to be noticed doing such deeds. They thought that this was true wealth: this meant a good reputation and great nobility. They were greedy for praise…they wanted glory that was huge, wealth that was honourable. (Sallust, Catiline's Conspiracy 7. 3-7).

Ancient writers saw the motivation behind Rome's imperial wars in very different lights. Polybius, a Greek, only saw aggression and expansionism. He believed the Romans wished to get ever closer to 'their goal of universal dominion' (Polybius, 1.2.1-6). Whereas aristocratic Romans like Cicero and Caesar writing years later, wished to protect their Empire and saw their wars as a matter of defence. Cicero stated that wars were fought by Rome 'in order to live in Peace without harm' (Cicero, De officiis 1.34-6). Neither of these viewpoints, nor any of the aforementioned factors can alone answer the question of the origins and motivations of Roman imperialism. A synthesis must be developed that takes into account all external and internal circumstances and factors.

After the First Punic War it would be apologetic to use the phrase, 'defensive imperialism' to explain the origins of the Roman Empire. Without believing that Rome was the primary aggressor in every single war, we have seen that it is possible to argue that Rome was, in general, expansionist and aggressive. During the Second Punic War,

« war was a central part of every Roman male aristocrat's early adulthood »

Rome used the premise of defence to destroy Carthage entirely and seize dominance in the Mediterranean. It was Scipio's decisive victory in this war that opened up the Mediterranean to Rome: Rome's desire for wealth and new territory could thereafter be unleashed, and the Mediterranean world could be exploited to the benefit of Rome and Romans. Ultimately though, it was Rome's martial tradition and the desire of her highly militarised aristocracy to achieve laus, gloria and honorem that is the 'critical variable' in explaining the origins and the subsequent success of Roman imperialism.

SAWDUST CAESAR: MUSSOLINI'S ETHIOPIAN WAR

Mark Loughridge

'Lift high your banners, your weapons, and your hearts, O Legionaries, to hail the reappearance of the Empire on the sacred hills of Rome after fifteen centuries'.

In 1937, before an innumerable crowd, Mussolini could finally announce the genesis of his Roman Empire. In his own twisted, quixotic mind, the course of Italian history had finally returned to where it had been most comfortable—the age of Rome, of Augustus, of Caesar. Yet to what extent Mussolini genuinely believed he had re-founded the Roman Empire remains somewhat of a mystery: the historiography concerning the conflict having been frequently couched in economic or social terms. Many scholars have approached the subject anachronistically, attempting to portray Mussolini as a nineteenth-century mercantilist enticed by the mythical riches of Ethiopia. This manifestly ignores the role of ideology in twentieth century politics, something scholars have failed to properly address in their respective approaches. Other scholars have maintained that the Duce wished to unify his divided party elite, divided as it was between left and right during the Great Depression. In essence, these factors do not sufficiently stand up to scrutiny but are often in fact teleological, treating coincidental outcomes (such as increased party unity) as relevant factors for war. I intend to argue that Mussolini was driven not by a desire to unify his country or even his party around a popular war but was in fact motivated by his ideological predispositions that centred on the Roman legacy.

Mussolini was not the first Italian to twist the Roman Empire to his own ends. Even in the eighteenth century, rebellious sorts across Italy were reusing the symbolism of Rome for political means. The greatest flowering of this

« not the first Italian to twist the

Roman Empire to his own ends »

romanita (loosely defined as 'Roman-ness') was after the reunification of Italy. The Italian statesman Massimo, Marquis D'Azeglio, demanded that 'we must make Italians' but, with no real definition of what an 'Italian' was, the mantle fell to the next generation to resurrect a notion of national identity. Shortly after the reunification of Italy, Italian businessmen began buying small plots of land in Somalia and the North African coast, developing these small enclaves into areas of trade and economic development. Soon their relative success caught the attention of the Italian government who now had cause to embark upon an imperialist foreign policy, stimulated somewhat by the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. In this new-found imperialism, a fresh sense of 'Roman' identity was slowly being developed. The eventual consolidation of these lands led to the formation of proper Italian colonies which were now given classically-inspired names fitting of their prestige: 'Libya' coming from the Greek term for Africa and 'Eritrea' evoking the writings of the geographer Strabo. The first seeds of a pan-Italian sense of *romanita* had been planted.

However, the liberal elite of Italy soon began to lose control of the country as social tensions heightened across the nation. The attempt to conquer yet more of Africa to feed Italian prestige was thwarted at the Battle of Adwa when, in 1896, the Ethiopian Army under Emperor Menelik II crushed an Italian expeditionary force, leading to riots across the nation and bringing down Francesco Crispi's already weak government. The result of this national embarrassment was the development of new political ideologies designed to replace the crumbling liberal edifice. Enrico Corradini founded the Italian Nationalist Association (ANI) which had, at the centre of its creed, a commitment to an aggressive imperialist policy designed to reawaken the Roman Empire. Countless journals were filled with utter nonsense about Italy's capacity to reclaim what was rightfully hers. Medici del Vascello, for instance, wrote: 'Remember gentlemen, that Constantinople was built by a Roman Caesar on the gorgeous banks of the Bosporus . . . and, while the call of the Muezzin rocks the Turk in his fatal torpor, the Galata tower sighs imploringly still to its Genoa: come back Italy!' Soon Italian Nationalism took on quasi-mythic connotations; Corradini himself outlining his cultic love of Julius Caesar in his play Giulio Cesare: '[Caesar] is not a man, but a cosmos, a numberless people, rigid as iron, agile as the wind.'

Within this intellectual climate stood Benito Mussolini, a young socialist who despised the Nationalists, once proclaiming that 'to us the national flag is a rag to be planted in manure'. However, by 1926, his own Minister of Colonies proudly declared that 'the dictatorship has rendered anti-imperialism obsolete for Italians'. Why this change of heart? I believe the answer lies in the Nationalist propaganda effort initiated prior to the 1911 Libyan War. Seizing upon the collapsing Ottoman Empire, Italy embarked upon a colonialist project

designed to capture yet more of Libya for herself. The Nationalists saw this as an opportunity to promote their own form of romantic imperialism, printing huge numbers of flyers and organising mass demonstrations designed to appeal to the whole political spectrum. The Socialist response was rather pathetic. Filippo Turati, a Socialist activist, admitted that the Nationalists had caught the leftists 'unprepared'. The result of this Nationalist campaign was the acceptance of the tenet of romantic imperialism by those who had once even been hostile to the Nationalist Party. Mussolini, though opposed to the war up to its conclusion, was, I believe, profoundly influenced by this devastating propaganda campaign, thus eventually leading him to absorb the principles of Nationalism and the legacy of Rome.

Following his support of Italy's entry into the First World War, Mussolini was expelled from Italian Socialist circles. His response was to formulate a new ideology, a new party: the National Fascist Party (PNF). At first, the party had no ideological compass whatsoever. Tannenbaum describes the early Fascist squadristi as the equivalent of Hell's Angels, running around the Italian countryside beating people with big sticks. This irrepressible exuberance was encapsulated in the phrase *me ne frego*, translated simply as 'I don't give a damn'. A lack of ideology was at first beneficial to the Fascists with many young men simply being swept up in the violent and 'anti' nature of the party. Nevertheless, as support grew, the Fascist elite needed to find an ideology. Step forward Gabriele D'Annunzio. Following Italy's humiliating settlement at Versailles, D'Annunzio, a famous Italian poet and statesman who had frequently compared Italian imperialism to 'Roman duty' in his works, demanded that Italy be given land in Dalmatia as recompense for this international snub. No one seemed to listen too much to D'Annunzio outside of Italy so, instead of campaigning diplomatically, the poet organised a small army and seized the town of Fiume in modern-day Croatia. With his new enclave being organised into corporations, each with elected 'consuls', and his army being divided into legions and maniples, D'Annunzio had infused his 'gay parade' with the very essence of Rome. Now Mussolini had a system to emulate. His love of D'Annunzio had stretched back to the First World War when he had copied many of his ideas, and even his handwriting, when campaigning for Italian entry. Mussolini now used the Fiume regime as a political 'blueprint': his 1927 Labour Charter, for instance, bearing a striking resemblance to the corporatist charter implemented by D'Annunzio. The gaping ideological hole in Fascism had been plugged by a combination of Nationalist imperialism and D'Annunzian Romanism. This, I believe, created a powerful idea within Mussolini's mind, the idea that he could rebuild his own Roman Empire and make himself the next Augustus.

But why did Mussolini decide to invade in 1935? Mainstream historiography frequently points to the Great Depression as a social and political catalyst. I believe this ignores the far greater catalyst beyond the Alps: Nazi Germany. With someone copying his own ideology, Mussolini, a man taken in by any appeal to his colossal ego, felt that he was now superior to many of the other European leaders. Gallo states that Hitler even consulted Mussolini at his first Cabinet and began making speeches in praise of the Duce: 'I have

« insanity...developed due to the flattery of his people and the absurd idealism of his party faithful »

gained the keenest admiration for the great man who governs south of the Alps.' Winston Churchill also expressed his admiration for Mussolini, stating that 'the Roman genius personified by Mussolini, the greatest living lawgiver, has shown many nations that the pressure of socialism can be resisted'. His ego was now out of control. Hospitals were even instructed to use his name as an anaesthetic. Gallo believes that 'these congratulations and panegyrics were like alcohol to Mussolini', hence in 1933 he proclaimed in the aptly named Julius Caesar Hall to a group of visiting Asian students that 'Rome and the Mediterranean are resuming their universal mission'. Sadly, unlike the triumphant Roman general, he did not have someone reminding him that he was 'only a man'. With his mind filled with the poetry and politics of D'Annunzio and his party elite increasingly staffed with romantically-minded Nationalists, a perfect storm was being created. Mussolini would now stop at nothing in conquering Ethiopia, the last free nation in Africa. Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary, tried to negotiate with the Italian government but was rebuffed, Mussolini having instructed his Under-Secretary of State to strike down any attempt at compromise: 'I want no agreements! Unless I get everything including the Emperor's surrender.' Prior to the war he addressed a 20,000-strong crowd of Avanguardisti, vowing to 'carry through to the end' his plans of conquest, thus showing his rigid determination.

The conflict, sadly, was a defeat for the Ethiopian Army, who for their part fought valiantly against an army of 500,000 men, the largest force ever sent on a colonialist venture. Mussolini's speech was replete with references to past Roman glories, announcing that he had brought Pax Romana and civilisation to Ethiopian 'barbarians'. His ego was now so large that he even started to statistically monitor Britain, believing an Italian led invasion was only the next step in his insane plan. Once, at a military parade, he exclaimed 'we can mobilise eight million men at any time in a couple of hours on a single order from me!' The man had clearly gone completely insane, an insanity that had slowly developed due to the flattery of his people and the absurd idealism of his party faithful.

As we have seen, it is quite clear that Mussolini had been driven to war because of a simple idea. But we should not take that simplicity to mean that it is not relevant. Some scholars have tried to paint Mussolini as an anomaly in Italian politics, partly because of the toxic legacy of Fascism, particularly in its German context. But Mussolini's ideology was not vastly different from his contemporaries: I would hazard to guess that had Enrico Corradini or Gabriele D'Annunzio been in his position they would have attempted to implement a similarly absurd foreign policy. But to credit Mussolini with some sort of economic or social foresight in his declaration of war is to flatter him. Mussolini did not care about the intricacies of politics, only his own self-image, a self-image that led to the delusion of his own people and the death of countless Ethiopians. His death perhaps was entirely fitting: he was given no ceremonial burial, nor was he afforded a noble Stoic suicide. Instead he was lynched by his own people, his body being pelted with stones and spat on at a rural petrol station: a fitting end for this 'Sawdust Caesar'.

This article is based upon a forthcoming dissertation by Mark Loughridge.

damnant quod non intelligunt

A case in favour of medieval writing

Katherine Dixon

The average heart sinks when it hears names and titles such as Chaucer or Beowulf batted about. That is if it knows anything of the words in the first place: they are antiquated, boring, and therefore dismissible. Similarly medieval manuscripts are regularly seen as things of beauty, although this is where, more often than not, it is conceived that their value ends. Even historians approaching medieval sources for the first time can overlook historically useful pieces, discouraged by their mythical content or blatant factual errors. This article will present an alternative overview, one in favour of the writing of the Middle Ages. As opposed to what is commonly believed, writing during this point of history can be academic, politically important, literarily complex, and poignant. Through exploration of this claim this article will show how, rather than approaching medieval writing as something primitive and in need of bettering, texts of the Middle Ages are best seen as formative pieces. When approached correctly, this article will provide a sweeping overview of medieval writing, both academic and literary, and suggest that within them one can trace the origins of modern writing. It will also propose that they are robust and historically valuable in their own right.

Popular media has long sculpted an image of medieval Europe as a place of regression and rigidity, one dominated by superstition and even witchcraft. Truly, Umberto Eco refers to the period as the 'shaggy' Middle Ages. This view is not entirely false, however it is limited and only reflects very specific cases. The overwhelming trend of this period rather sees a

« a clear divide between a literary and a historical work had yet to be drawn »

continuous increase in academic study, firstly focused in monasteries and then later extending to universities of which many were established from around the twelfth century. For example, Pope Innocent IV granted university status to Oxford by papal bull in 1254 however the establishment had been a place of academic study for over a century before this. The vast majority of bureaucratic and academic documents that survive from before 1300 concern the church, as it was the clerics who made up the majority of literate proportion of the population. So too, even after this point it is easy to dismiss a great deal of the academic work that emerges from academic institutions because their writers' primary focus was nearly always religion. Christianity was an undoubtable pillar in their daily lives. Indeed the principal method of both teaching and learning remained the close study of holy texts.

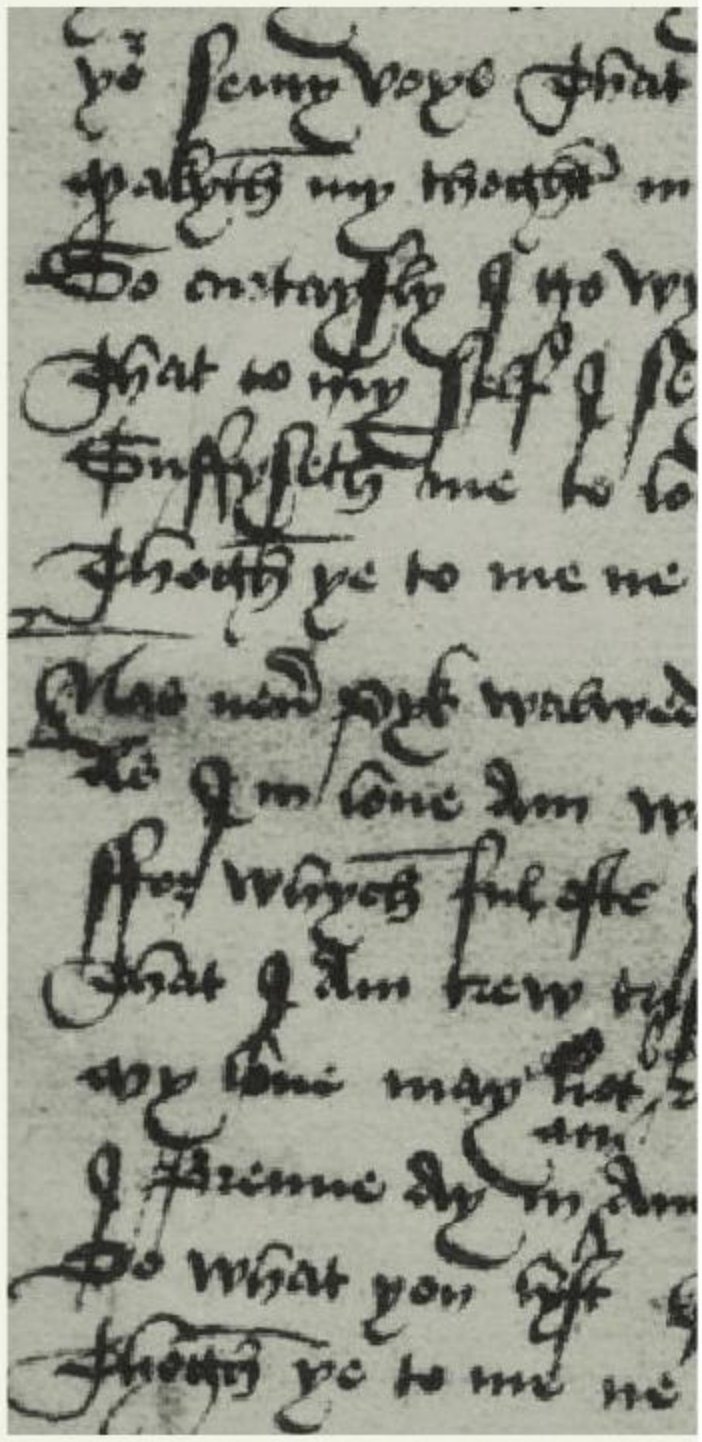
This is not to say however, that universities were places of the 'pious plagiarism' which had characterised earlier monastic learning methods. Rather as the period went on, teaching came to be typified by disputatio (argument) and quaestia (questioning). Both of these approaches encourage the critical questioning of religious doctrine. Notorious early scholastic thinker Peter Aberlard produced a work titled *Sic et Non* (Yes and No), in which he presented contradictory religious teachings side by side for his students. The text makes no attempt to resolve these inconsistencies, thus inciting discussion. More so, it is at this time that books first started to be ordered in the ways we now take them for granted with, for example, chapters. Another commonly seen feature were marginalia, these being explanatory notes and questions alongside a piece of text to prompt and guide the reader.

In a similar vein, and as an inevitable result of this style of learning, evidence was increasingly used by writers to back up the ideas which they were promulgating as the Middle Ages progressed. To provide an example, Saint Anselm of Canterbury, under whom Aberlard taught, combined theology with the secular in his proof of the Holy Trinity using mathematics: 1 x 1 x 1 = 1. Formal ontological proofs of the existence of God still studied today can be directly traced back to Anselm's work.

Having said this, key thinkers of the age did consider a vast spectrum of issues which had a focus other than religion. Politics and government were frequent topics for analysis and debate. Thomas Aquinas' *De Regno* was a heatedly discussed treatise on the necessity of kingship which he wrote to the King of Cyprus in 1270. While such works inevitably drew upon the divine right of kings as a means of justifying their rule, political theorists also considered society more broadly. The social hierarchy of Western Europe was often presented metonymically as a body: John of Salisbury's description of the 'body politic' explains this particularly well:

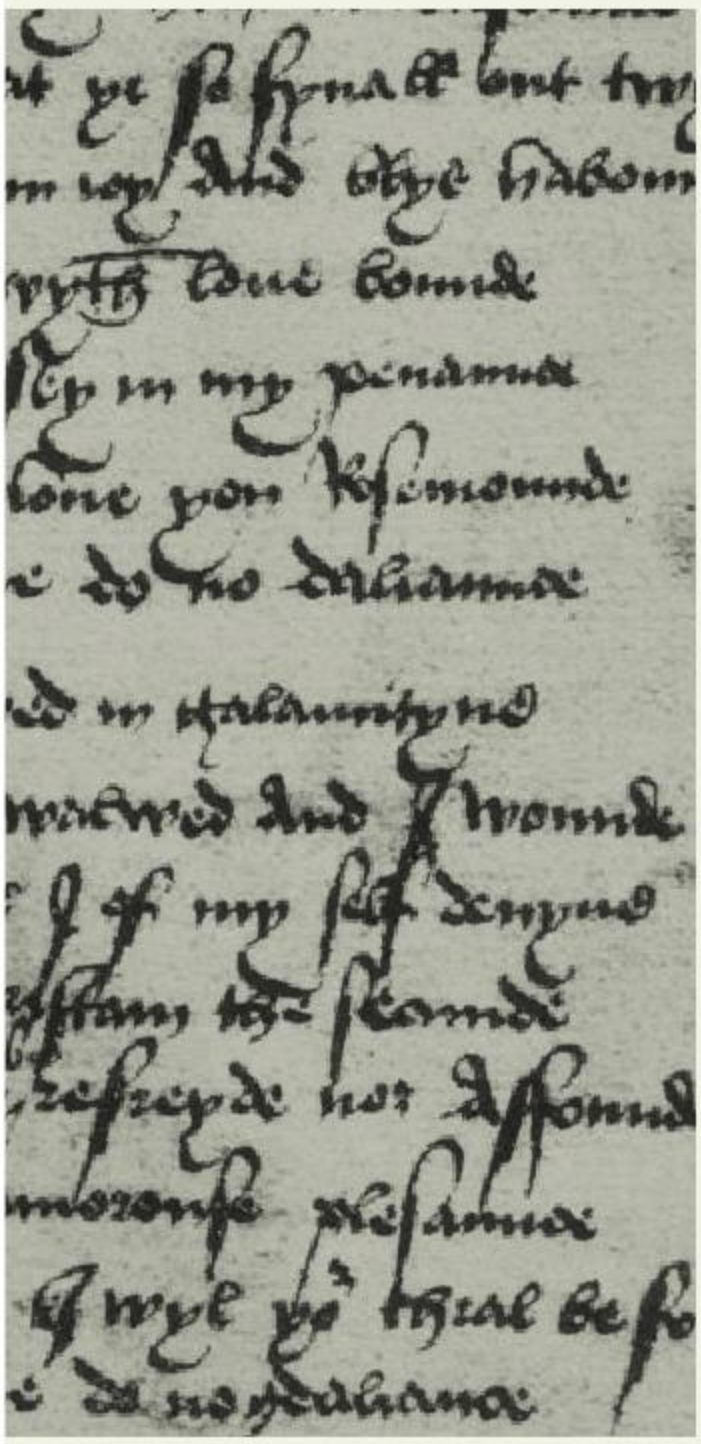
> The hands coincide with officials and soldiers. Those who always assist the prince are comparable to the flanks. Treasurers and record keepers … resemble the shape of the stomach and intestines … Furthermore the feet coincide with the peasants perpetually bound to the soil, for whom it is all the more necessary that the head take precautions.

An issue does emerge however, when written



sources such as these are taken too literally by contemporary historians. Take for example another frequently cited lens through which medieval people envisioned their society. The 'Three Orders' of Western Europe divided the population into *bellatores* (those who fought), *oratores* (those who prayed), and *laboratores* (those who worked) certainly is a neat insight into medieval conceptions of social division by thinkers of the period, but is unrealistically rigid and limiting. It presents a society far less complex than the one of academic rigour that

has been suggested thus far. Consider for example Bishop Odo, commissioner of the Bayeux Tapestry: as well as maintaining an important religious position, he is depicted on the tapestry as a dedicated soldier. He appears on the piece third only to William the Conqueror and King Harold. Similarly the Cistercian monks whose days revolved around prayer were also renowned, at least in the branch's infancy, for their agricultural skill and dedication to hard labour. Without the ability to critically approach medieval sources, historians risk deriving falsities from them. It becomes easy to see how a popular conception of the period as one of limited intricacy, of backwardness came to be.



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Even if one is able to overcome this difficulty posed by medieval sources, there are still elements of medieval texts that can be difficult to swallow. It is not rare for a writer to provide an account of a king performing miracles, or for medieval annals to suggest that a popular figure lived for well over one hundred years. When approaching sources medievalists often consider truth very differently than perhaps they would approaching more modern pieces of evidence. Marc Bloch considers the established belief across England and France of the 'royal touch': that a king could cure scrofula through a moment of contact with the diseased. Written and visual sources of the period document this miracle being performed on several occasions. Rather than enquire as to whether such miracles occurred, Bloch's focus is rather upon what the spreading of such tales reveals about medieval society. For medievalists presented with impossible sources the question becomes not, 'Did this happen?' but rather, 'Could this conceivably have happened to a medieval person?' Their belief in the king's touch exemplifies the mystical, God-given status of monarchs at this time. So too the spread of sources expressing this belief aid an historian in understanding how medieval kings spread propaganda and maintained their authority.

At this point in history a clear divide between a literary and a historical work had yet to be drawn. Jean Froissart is one of the most renowned chroniclers of his age. His writings usefully document numerous wars spanning Western Europe and are often drawn upon for evidence of medieval concepts of chivalry. Kenneth Fowler argues that even though his works would not stand the test of modern historical method, they are still historically useful because he offers insight to the 'dramatis personae of a vanished world.' Even if his characters are not entirely accurate representations of their referents, they at least point out to modern historians the qualities which were praised or criticised by the medieval mind.

Indeed chivalry was a topic of many a medieval poet's tales and there is plentiful evidence that these, as much as the more formally instructive documents, were read by great knights for inspiration. Geoffroi de Charny, a leading French knight of the mid-fourteenth century, knew the timeless Lancelot

« for thogh we slepe, or wake, or ryde.

/ Ay fleeth the tyme, if hyl no

man abyde »

do Lac and scorned those who didn't act as Lancelot did. R. W. Kauper uses facts such as this to argue that a historian should approach historically inaccurate texts such as this as prescriptive, rather than descriptive, documents about medieval conceptions of morality. The knights of these stories, and even the knights of chroniclers such as Froissart, are written to embody the qualities deemed ideal for a knight to possess. Thus, though the texts may exaggerate an individual's prowess and success, this does not prevent them being useful source. Rather a historian can draw a great deal of information from it when they approach it correctly.

It is also during this period that texts and tales in the vernacular first properly emerged and were recognised to be of equal calibre to Latin writing. Geoffrey Chaucer, who is almost indisputably considered the greatest English poet of the Middle Ages, lived in the latter half of the fourteenth century. His works exemplify medieval literature at its best, but are far from the only precedent of high quality writing in this period. He is the penman of many phrases that remain well-circulated today. 'For love is blynd alday' is found in *The Merchant's Tale* while *The Clerk's Tale* contains the words: 'For thogh we slepe, or wake, or ryde,/ Ay fleeth the tyme: it nyl no man abyde.' In other words, 'Time and tide wait for no man'.

It is often much harder to date medieval dramas and poetry because they would have existed traditionally long before they were captured on paper. The sheer act of preserving what were in the first instance aural tales in writing is illustrative of the shift in mind set that took place in the Middle Ages regarding stories in the English language. Where once only ancient Latin and Greek writers or religious texts were deemed worth being retained on precious and costly manuscripts, now local religious lyrics and plays were also elevated to this height. Indeed a contemporary treatise asked:

> Sithen [since] it is leveful [lawful] to han [have] the myraclis of God peyntid, why is it not as wel leveful to han the myraclis of God pleyed, sythen men mowen [may] bettere reden the wille of God and His mervelous werkis in the pleyinge of hem than in the peyntynge.

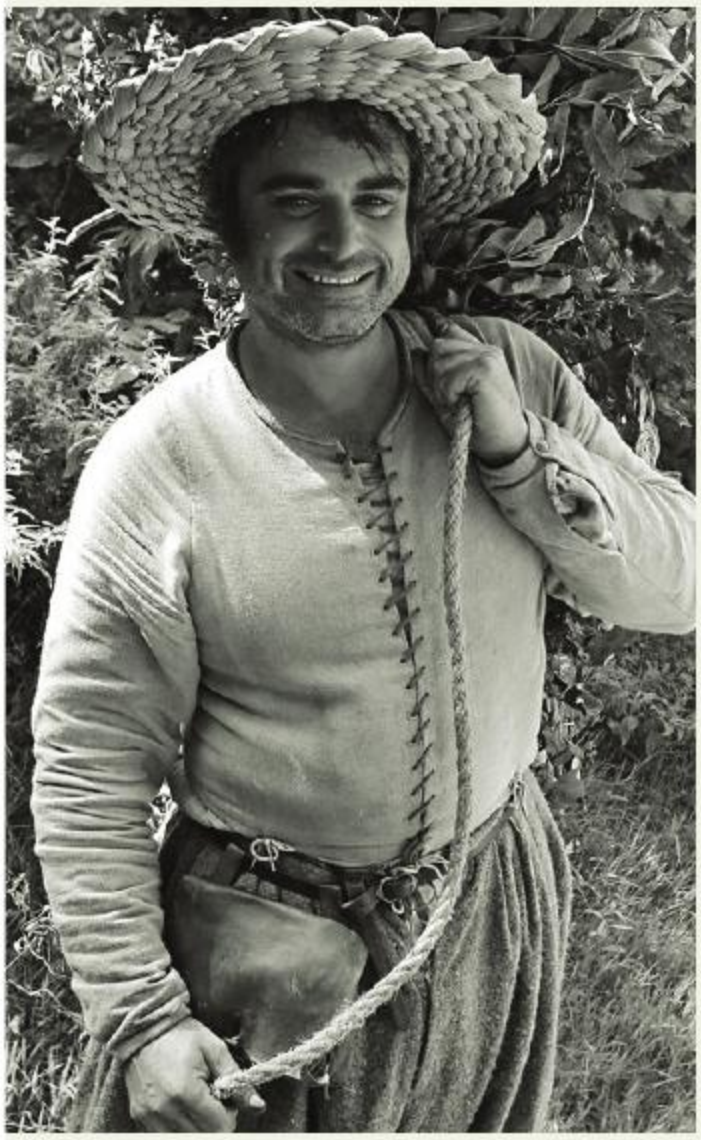
This is indicative of how important collective literary activities were deemed to be, both socially and morally. Mystery cycles for example, in which Biblical stories were re-enacted, were unifying experiences for communities. Each vocation in a town would be given a relevant part of the Bible to present to their community: the fisherman of York, for example, were responsible for telling the tale of Noah's Ark. Despite the highly moral focus of these plays, an exemplification of their popularity is the fact that Pope Innocent III grew so suspicious of this enormously popular and influential display of religious celebration in a language other than Latin that in 1210 he forbade clergy from performing on any stage.

Consequently, it can be seen that medieval writing, in whatever form it came in, was far from null or dismissible. From formal academic writing to popular literature, and every text falling elsewhere on the spectrum, when approached correctly it is impossible to miss the quality and originality of texts of the Middle Ages. One sees the origins of many modern writing traditions which we today take for granted. During the period a shift began to occur from Latin to the vernacular, academic writing became presented as we recognise it today and ever more dependent on evidence to back up its claims. More so literature, both entertaining and morally instructive, was a socially valuable commodity and put to paper to preserve previously aurally retained tales. Even when written sources seem of dubious academic utility, when approached correctly they can offer a great deal of historically useful information. Thus far from something to be overlooked, a lot is owed to the writers of the Middle Ages who have influenced and inspired since they first put pen to paper.

Interview: Peter Ginn

Niamh Keenan

Peter Ginn is a renowned historian and archaeologist. His television work includes the BBC series *Victorian Farm* and *Tudor Monastery Farm*, which see him re-create everyday life on small farms using period equipment and techniques all whilst retaining a smile.



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When did you first become interested in history?

My mother says that, as a toddler, I was forever picking things up that were lying around. I remember being fascinated by pottery fragments that were found at my friend's house and a musket-ball that I found. When I started my secondary education, I ended up doing work experience with the Oxford Archaeology Unit. When UCAS time came, I opted for archaeology as I had studied both sciences and arts. It provided a nice balance and I liked its hands-on aspects.

My time at University College London (UCL) was one the happiest periods of my life. When I arrived at the Archaeology Institute, everyone was called by first names and I was one of the minority who had come straight from school. Many had taken a gap year but half were mature students. This gave me a very balanced university experience. I was mixing with people who had worked and who brought a lot to the table. And needless to say I fell in love.

Speaking of school, how do you feel about Michael Gove's proposed revisions to the history curriculum?

When I first started secondary school, teachers struggled to keep up with curriculum changes. I remember having to use three different notations for logic gates depending on the exam board. My point is that politicians are forever fiddling with education.

I have always viewed history as a comet: the piece of iced-up dust and rock that is hurtling through space is the here-and-now. The very point at which we exist is what you can never capture, the tail is living memory, and the path it has taken is what we might call 'history'. Although it matters what we study, perhaps the most important element is how we study history.

I think that getting primary school children to look at events in living memory could be interesting. And the rewrite seems to address many of the fears that the initial proposal created. I think the key is that the Department of Education needs to guide. The history curriculum should be all-encompassing but flexible. Ultimately, the outcome should always be to equip the pupil with the tools needed to study, analyse, and critique.

I'm glad that teachers can make the government backtrack. We should support them as they will be doing the teaching. However, all pupils are different and although there are elements that a child needs to know when it comes to history, different subjects will pique different children's interests. I'm a big Brunel fan, but I think Berners-Lee is a national treasure. He is also very relevant to children today: the fact that there is no visual record of the first web pages is a good debating point as to the nature of history.

If the Browne Review or similar changes were implemented, what do you believe would happen?

I was lucky enough to attend university before fees. Had I waited two years, I doubt I would have gone. I was shocked that a Labour government instigated fees – this coupled with the creation of numerous universities. Suddenly there were far more people going to university and they were coming out in debt.

University has never been free. The whole system is in a state of flux. To have a degree is no longer unusual: therefore it is unsurprising to find many unemployed graduates. Universities are trying to adapt, compete on a global scale and attract foreign students to top up the coffers. If fees go through the roof, there has to be a pay-off. Essentially, you need to be spending that kind of cash with the knowledge that you will get a reciprocal job.

I can see why the Browne Review says that sciences should be supported. Science needs to be studied at university level prior to progression in the workplace. So I think those wanting to study science will do so after school and applications will probably go up. The arts won't necessarily decline but there will be more purpose in taking an arts degree: essentially people will think more carefully before doing it, and may come to the humanities later in life.

« I have always viewed history as a comet »

Do you think history should be mandatory throughout schooling in our present educational climate?

I am a firm believer that history should be universally accessible but that doesn't mean that it should be compulsory. I think everyone should be given a good foundation at school. This will include the ability to analyse sources and to assess their validity. As much as this is the domain of history, there is a lot of cross-over with English. Much of my ability to read history comes from a fantastic English teacher. So give everybody the skills to study history at school but ensure that there are resources available for study in later life.

Why do think it is important to present history to the public?

'Educate, inform, entertain' was the BBC's initial mantra. I have always believed that

everyone pays the licence fee, therefore it must provide programming for everyone's interests: part of that is history. However, in order to educate and to inform, you must first entertain.

We could have gone down the route of making dry programmes, but part of making history accessible is to make a programme that the viewer can watch as enjoyment as well as gain knowledge. Alex and I always used to say that on average in 60 seconds, you need 50 seconds of pratting around and beautiful shots, and 10 seconds of hitting the viewer with the facts.

Why is this programming important? I think it is important because our intention is to make history accessible to a wider audience: to make programmes that people who wouldn't watch history programmes would enjoy; to tell the stories of our ancestors through walking a mile in their shoes.

We are living at a time that is starting to hark back to the past, whether it is the popularity of watching historical dramas or of adopting a 'make do and mend' approach; what would you attest as the reasons for this act of recapturing the yesteryear?

Fashion repeats itself. When we filmed The Lord of Misrule for Tudor Monastery Farm Christmas, this was a concept the Tudors had revived. Throughout time we have revived the past. Recapturing yesteryear ties in very nicely with the Green movement and a move to a more sustainable future. Mankind has the ability to conquer nature insomuch as we have the ability to create a built environment; but in doing so we divorce ourselves from nature. Harking back to the past in the vintage/make-do-and-mend way is a tangible way of keeping alive those things that can give us an enormous sense of satisfaction. It also brings us back to the comet. As time progresses, our relationship with the past changes.

The shows do important work by displaying British heritage, but they are also popular. What do you think are the causes for their acclaim?

When we make a film, it has a narrative arc. Everything we do on-screen, be it pluck a goose or saddle a horse, has to have a pay-off. Furthermore, we are featuring daily lives: what you see on screen, we actually do, but equally we never pretend to live in the past, so we have hindsight.

We have honed what we do over 11 years, and I think that when Victorian Farm came out it looked and felt unique. With Green Valley, we were just crazies on a Welsh hill. There was a director who lived nearby and edited at home. He had studied for a PhD in history so was into getting the programme bang on. With Victorian Farm, the half hours became hours. We got another director who is still here. He was interested in the light-sided elements as well as the facts. We are very lucky with our small team. As much as we 'present' the programmes, it is a collective effort. I wouldn't change it for the world.

All your shows, from Tales from the Green Valley to Tudor Monastery Farm, show not exactly the lowest of the low, but neither do they depict the upper echelons of society. Why do you think that the lot of the common man is popular to follow now?

I don't necessarily think that this has gained a lot in popularity. Rather this everyday life approach to history has perhaps tapped into an existing interest. While I was at university in the late 90s, the British Museum was altering its Egyptian galleries to incorporate how ancient Egyptians lived as well as how they

« I have broken many a bone...

but you just get on with it. »

died. Our programmes are similar in that we tap into a history to which people can relate. There is always the wider socioeconomic situation as a reference but looking at how someone lived can be far more relevant than studying the Sun King. I know from my family tree that many of my ancestors were tradespeople. Also when you've done the hard work making something as simple as a brick, you never look at an inner city terrace the same way again.

Onscreen you do many tasks, from creating silage to trying your hand at stonemasonry. What skills have you learnt that you couldn't have gained without these shows?

I realise that I am very lucky. There are so many skills that I have had a chance to turn my hand to. I also think that the programmes have enabled us to get to grips with many skills in the same way as our ancestors would have done. For example, when we made lime in the kilns, we loaded them by hand. When we unloaded them with two shovels, we had rags over our faces, and had to get used to the burning sensation of the quicklime dust.

However, my favourite activities consisted of driving a steam train, building pigsties, converting Colin's ambulance to use coal-gas, and bringing in the harvest on Victorian Farm. I think the greatest appreciation that I have got from these programmes is just how much time and effort is involved in everything.

It must have been tough at times to live out there. What were some of the hardest trials?

We are never fully cut off from life but life could be quite 'remote'. I suppose what makes it onto TV is essentially edited highlights of our year. However, we have spent a year living these lives and as with any year there are ups and downs.

Often it can be the cold. We wrap up warm but often the weather can be bitter. For me it is always my feet that feel the cold, due to the hob-nailed boots. Walking around on metal studs is great for grip but they conduct the cold like nothing else.

Also I have broken many a bone working on the farm but you just get on with it. I remember putting a metal wheel back onto a shepherds' hut with my right hand swollen up as if someone had inflated it. When I finally got it checked out, I had two broken bones, but nothing could be done as they had started knitting together.

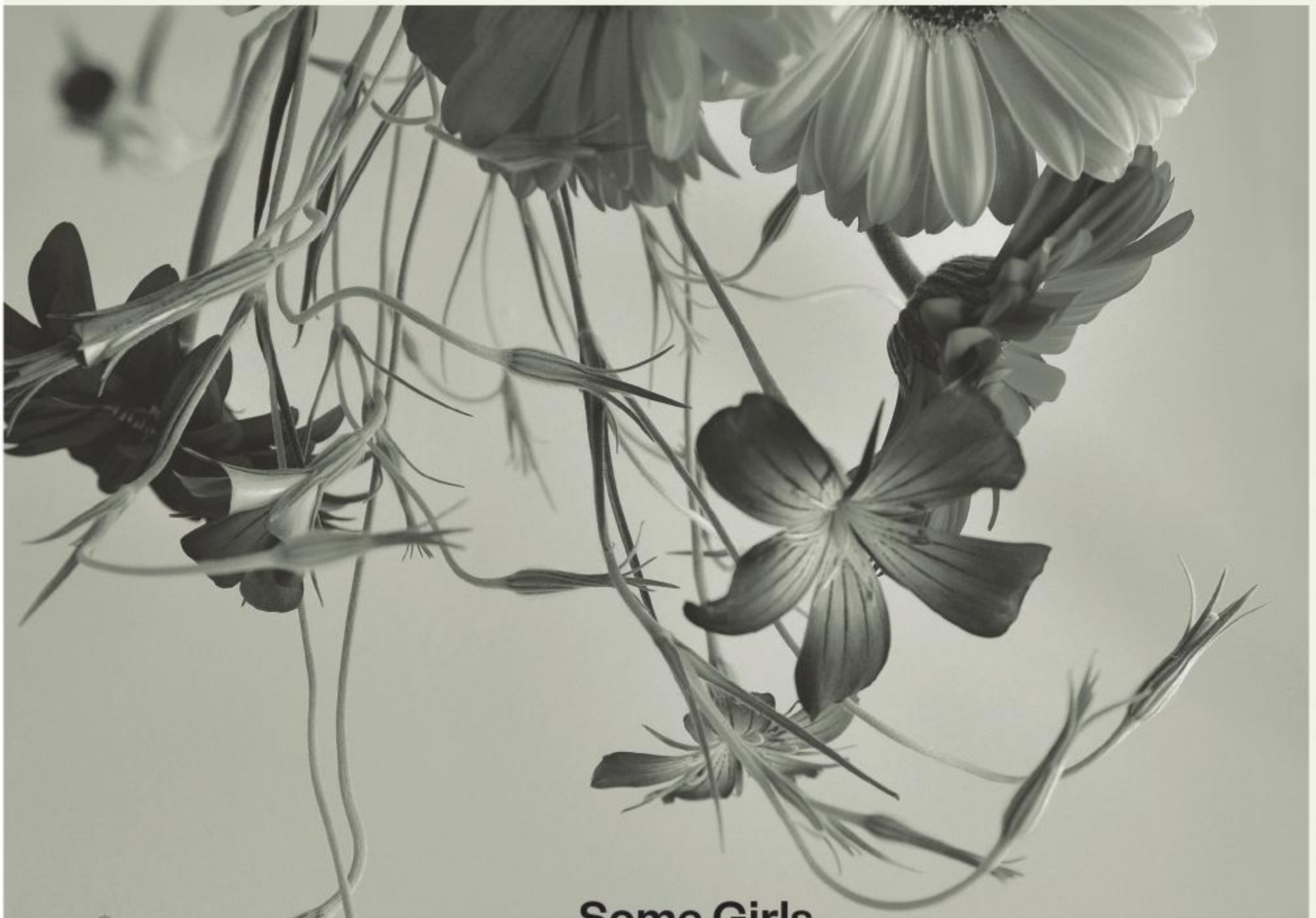
That being said, one cannot help but notice the most genuine smiles on everyone's faces. What have you enjoyed the most?

We all like each other and we have a great time. I am very lucky to do this as a job and I have always liked getting stuck in and doing the hard work. I've always liked a challenge. What have I enjoyed the most? We once went steam-ploughing for Victorian Farm, which was quite amazing. With Tudor Monastery Farm, I think my favourite activity was the lead mining. The weather was amazing, the work was hard, but the results were impressive. But perhaps the thing that I enjoy the most on every project is that point when you are costumed in a period setting, with a fire warming a pot, and you look around and for just a flash you are back in the past.

The theme of this issue is Origins, so it just remains to ask if there will be another venture of yours starting at some point in the future?

The BBC want to change the precinct of the programme so we are swapping the farm for a castle and we will spend a year helping to build a castle using only period tools and techniques.

features



Some Girls, Some Hats and Hitler

How Trudi Kanter's Narrative Voice Highlights the Difficulties Experienced by Jewish Refugees Leaving Their Country of Origin

Francesca Street

Vienna, 1938. Successful young hat designer Trudi Kanter is running a stylish millinery business and preparing to marry her businessman fiancé Walter. 'We were young, and the world was ours,' recollects Kanter in *Some Girls, Some Hats and Hitler*, her recently republished memoir, 'I was in love with Vienna'. But Trudi's Vienna is a city on the eve of the Second World War, the Nazi Anschluss with Austria is impending, and Trudi and Walter are Jewish. Trudi uses her good foresight, her business connections, and her unrelenting determination to ensure safe passage to Britain for herself, Walter and her ageing parents. Trudi Kanter's memoirs vividly highlight the difficulties, both bureaucratic and emotional, faced by those who attempted to leave Nazi-occupied territory. Outwardly, Trudi pragmatically fights for her family's future. Inwardly, she is fighting an internal battle between her love for her home town of Vienna and her knowledge that Austria has now become part of Nazi Germany, and she is no longer welcome.

Some Girls, Some Hats and Hitler is a thought-provoking, emotive tale from one of the most wretched periods in European history, told entirely from the perspective of Trudi's arresting narrative voice. The memoir is as much about Trudi's all-consuming love affair with Walter and the society and fashions of 1930s Europe, as it is a thought-provoking account of her experiences fleeing Nazi-occupied Austria. The memoir was first published in the 1980s, at a time when, as Grant notes, publishers had yet to 'become interested in accounts of the Holocaust by ordinary individuals'. Readers would have viewed Trudi's conversational style and vibrant descriptions of fashion and love affairs as unsuitable for a Holocaust memoir. Twenty years later views have changed. A British publisher who stumbled upon Trudi's out-of-print memoirs in a second-hand book shop quickly became enamoured with her passionate, personal narrative. *Some Girls, Some Hats and Hitler* was republished in 2012 and was praised by literary critics and historians: praised for the way Trudi's vivid prose offered enlightening insights into the experiences of fleeing Nazi occupation. Trudi's narrative voice is arguably the highlight of the book. She is brave, resourceful and admirable, but still imperfect. Through presenting herself in a frank, unromanticised and resolutely human way, Trudi's memoirs are rendered all the more powerful: They remind us that victims of Nazi persecution were exactly like you or I.

The process Trudi must undergo in order to ensure refuge in Britain for her family is fraught with difficulty. Her prosperous hat business has given her connections throughout Europe, but her attempts to gain entry for Walter and her parents are problematic. Trudi stresses just how difficult it was to gain a foreign visa. The book also deals with the emotional difficulties associated with leaving. For the twenty-first century scholar, studying this period in hindsight, it can be difficult to comprehend why so many people chose not to leave their home country once it was threatened with Nazi-occupation. On their way to safety in England, Trudi and Walter visit Walter's family in Prague and once there the couple attempt to persuade Walter's relatives to leave Czechoslovakia. This advice is in vain. Walter's family do not want to leave: they cannot, or do not want to, imagine themselves to be in danger in their home country. Trudi recalls: 'It is hard for us to say goodbye. Uncles, aunts, nieces and nephews, cousins, grandmother. Seventeen people. I remember a tiny pink-and-white gingham dress [...] None of Walter's family survived Theresienstadt.'

Your home and country of origin are intertwined with your identity. Leaving this behind is impossibly difficult in the twenty-first century, but was incomprehensible to many living in 1930s Europe. Trudi finds leaving Vienna heart-breaking. In her evocative prose the Austrian capital becomes a character of its own: at the beginning of her memoirs, Trudi vividly describes Vienna's beauty and the way she sees it as definitively a part of her identity. She subsequently is forced to watch the country of her origin become corroded.

« your home and country of origin are intertwined with your identity »

Her view of Vienna changes. The image of a cuckoo clock which hangs in her hat shop is used by Trudi as a metaphor for this change. Early in the text, shortly after the German invasion, Trudi notices the cuckoo clock, which she has owned since she was a child, and notes 'I used to love it. Today its beady black eyes and frozen expression mock me.' The clock, which she has owned since she was young, symbolises her Viennese identity. Later in the text she notices that 'the cuckoo looks really vicious to me now. Maybe he's a Nazi?' Finally, Trudi comments upon it for the last time when she is leaving Vienna 'I won't miss you, I think. Your hard, shrill voice. Your beady, soulless eyes.' The progressive alteration in the way she views the clock acts as a metaphor for the way her view of Vienna slowly changes. Despite this, Trudi never truly comes to despise Vienna. She emphasises in her book that many Austrians, some of whom were Nazi supporters, aided her in her attempts to leave. The book makes it clear that the divide between good and evil is not always clear-cut and Trudi remains unable to divorce herself from her Austrian origins, both on a practical and emotional level. Once living in London, Trudi and Walter soon realise that to the war-worn, British public, they are 'enemy aliens.' Ultimately, Trudi realises she does not need to forgo her Viennese identity and even if she never returns to Austria, it will always remain a part of her life. At its core, *Some Girls, Some Hats and Hitler* is a love story. Trudi met Walter in Vienna, and she will always associate their love affair with her home town. This allows Vienna to remain a part of her identity forever.

9

A King, A Kaiser and A Tsar: A Family Affair

Ellie Byrne

The 4th August 1914 signified the beginning of one of the most devastating wars in modern history. In the centenary year, we are continually reminded, and rightly so, of the horrors that war brought to Europe between the years 1914 to 1918. Yet, while so often taught in broader terms in the school classroom, why was it that an extended family came to hold the fate of the continent in their hands, and how did it go so astonishingly wrong?

George, Nicky and Wilhelm, the three cousins whose family ties date back to Queen Victoria, were indeed the main figureheads of their respective countries in the run up to war. Britain and Germany were perhaps the most closely related in terms of social and cultural ties, with Russia bringing in the Eastern element. Their connections, their friendships and above all their rivalries would play a significant role in the events that led to that fateful summer in 1914. How Britain came to ally with Russia against their more natural companion, Germany, is one of the great inconsistencies of the twentieth century. Queen Victoria's decedents, who occupied no less than 10 European countries, created a 'dynastic web' which led to the greatest 'domestic drama' the world had so far seen. The origins of the First World War are really the story of 'how royalty dragged Europe into the abyss'.

It was the alliance structure of Europe which concerned the German Kaiser the most. Britain and France had signed the Entente Cordiale in 1904, ending years of Anglo-French rivalry, and over a decade earlier France had established ties with Russia in the Franco-Russian pact of 1892. Drawing parallels to the private alliances of Europe's ruling family, Wilhelm had not only been left out again, but he was also surrounded. For the family, paranoid Wilhelm had never been a warmly welcomed guest at family events. The tangled relationship between the German Kaiser and his English mother, Vicky—the oldest daughter of Queen Victoria—had a huge impact on the young Kaiser's attitudes. Disabled from birth, Kaiser Wilhelm had a complex love/hate attitude towards Vicky, which transferred itself to Britain as a whole, strongly influencing his foreign policy. As David Butcher describes him: 'the cousin nobody wanted to play with. Bullying, crass, unstable, tactless, clownish—and a competitive bore. We're left with the impression he was a war waiting to happen.'

« the First World War is really the story of how royalty dragged Europe into the abyss »

The last ever meeting of the three men took place at the Kaiser's only daughter's wedding in Berlin in May 1913. As historian Miranda Carter explains, Wilhelm was delighted they all came, and he put on a great show for the other royals, but, she insists, he was also paranoid that they were all talking about him. He wouldn't let the King and the Tsar be alone together for fear of being left out. There is a great paradox and irony in that this event held in Germany; a great meeting of all the continents royals, but one that left its organiser feeling isolated.

Just over a year later the Austro-Hungarian Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo by Serbian nationalists. Serbia was Russia's ally, Austria-Hungary was Germany's. The complicated alliance system of the great families of Europe was about to threaten peace on the continent. Nicholas begged the Kaiser 'in the name of our old friendship' to stop Germany allies going too far with Russia's own.

In Britain, King George was anxious there would be no war, but he had no real power. The constitutional monarchy stopped him from having any true say in the events of July and early August. Meanwhile, the autocratic Tsar and authoritarian Kaiser had a lot more control. In the perception of the decision makers, there was no other way than war of protecting essential political and economic interests. To give up now, Tsar Nicky thought it would essentially be an abdication of Russia as a great power. In Berlin, the Kaiser's attitude was more complex. 'Wilhelm the timid', as so nicknamed by his army, was also not in a position to back down and his mongering towards supporting Austria in a 'little Balkan war' was about to explode on a continental scale.

The First World War is one of the greatest tragedies in human history. In total, 30 countries would be involved in the conflict. By the end of World War One, over nine million soldiers had been killed, and another 21 million wounded. Over one million soldiers were killed in the infamous Battle of the Somme alone, including approximately 30,000 in just one day. An estimated 11 per cent of the population of France was killed or wounded during the war. Roughly 116,000 Americans were killed, even though the US was only in the war for seven months. 'For Europe's royalty a very personal family tragedy loomed'. The war brought about the end on Europe's ruling class as it was: George escaped relatively unscathed by his lack of power, but the Kaiser's inevitable abdication left Germany without a monarch and the forced abdication and eventual assassination of the Tsar left Queen Victoria's family legacy in tatters.

In the end though, the Great War wasn't just about the one family. As this year reminds us, it is about the countless men and women who sacrificed so much for their country. Neither greater than the other, neither lesser than the other. But it does call into question why those at the top, with so much power, didn't do more to prevent such a disaster.

'If any question why we died,
Tell them, because our fathers lied.'
-Kipling

10

‘Fortes bella gerant, tu Felix Austraie nube:’ The Habsburg Family

Nicol Ogston

Long faces, drooping chins and gaping mouths are hardly the characteristics associated with Emperors. But whether it is Titian or Durer painting the illustrious Habsburgs—trying hard to downplay these traits—they still dominate the canvass. These gawping Habsburgs, however laughable their appearances, have been one of the most consistent features of European history: making their presence on the continent felt in varying capacities for over seven centuries. Such a successful family by requisite requires an auspicious beginning. For the Habsburgs, what came as a promising start soon turned sour and they would have to wait for 130 years before taking their place at the head of the Holy Roman Empire in 1438. The origin of this family is much like their reign: unique and ingenious with some of their early claims verging on lunacy. But without hindrance, they came to be the most successful noble family of the eighteenth century. Charting such a feat is not simple, but by analysing their origins it is evident how this deeply ambitious family triumphed where others failed. The end of the Habsburgs under Karl I lends insights into how the same characteristics which built them up, brought them crashing down. Durability, reliability and adaptability are synonymous with the name Habsburg as their genesis, reign and demise all indicate.

The Bishop of Strasbourg and his brother Werner completed a white tower on the Wulpisburg above Brugg in Switzerland in 1020. The two men would use the castles name, Habictsburg (Castle of the Hawk), later Habsburg, as their surname. The early Habsburgs were descended from the Aargau lands and by the mid-thirteenth century their possessions had been recognised by the German Emperor. After quelling a few rebellions by their Swiss tenants, they began to command some political authority but did not quickly move towards ideas of Imperial succession until the Council of Electors met at Frankfurt in 1273. Rudolf I, Count of Habsburg, was selected Holy Roman Emperor over the equally ambitious and powerful Ottokar II, King of Bohemia. Herein lay the first challenge for the infant dynasty as Ottokar refused to recognise Rudolf as Emperor, culminating in the Battle of Marchfield 1278. The outcome led to Ottokar’s defeat and to Rudolf acquiring the lands of Austria and Styria. Rudolf I failed in securing his son Albrecht’s succession to the throne but fortunately due to the short reign of Adolf of Nassau, Albrecht ‘the one-eyed’ was elected Emperor. He was the exact antithesis of Rudolf: Overly rash, short-sighted (literally and figuratively) and stubborn, making him extremely unpopular amongst his peers and his family. His nephew eventually became so concerned at the security of his inheritance, which Albrecht refused to confirm, that he assassinated him during a return visit to the white tower. The Habsburgs lost the crown

« the origin of this family is much like

their reign; unique and ingenious »

and retreated into an Empire of thought for the next 130 years. They built a commemorative abbey, Konigsfelden to the ‘martyred Albrecht’ and began to cultivate a new self-image and past. The result culminated in claims to divine right over the Holy Roman Empire supported by a long, if somewhat fabricated, ancestry from Charlemagne to Jesus Christ.

The Habsburgs during these long years nearly came to be ascribed as simple landowners in the footnotes of history. A single forged document created by Rudolf IV, Duke of Austria, in the fourteenth century reversed this possibility inevitably. The Privilegium maius sought recognition from the Holy Roman Emperor that the Habsburgs by right should head the Empire. Recognition did not come but the Habsburgs had managed to force what then appeared as a legitimate document into the public consciousness and moved their Empire of thought into one of reality. Albrecht II (r.1438-1439) returned Habsburgs to the throne and permanently for the next 400 years. The origin of the Habsburgs emphasises their ability to adapt and change to the political terrain. When they lost influence they collected land, cultivated their image, pushed out rivals and fought for recognition of their divine right. 130 was a steep price but due to their adaptability they prospered in over 400 years of monarchy.

Although the early years indicate how intrinsically ambitious the Habsburgs were, it does not explain how they solidified rule for 400 years. In order to explain this, I have narrowed focus on three rulers: Maximillian I (1459-1519), Maria Theresa (1717-1780) and Franz I (1768-1835). Maximillian was without doubt the Habsburg who moved the family from being provincial to international. His marriage to Mary of Burgundy, inheritance of Tirol in 1490 and a treaty endowing him with Bohemia in 1491 outline some of his early successes. He attached his son, the future Charles V, to the Heiress of Ferdinand, lending the Habsburgs all the Spanish dominions. His internal governmental reforms, including the formation of the Reichschlusse, handed a degree of imperial power to the prince electors, making the Habsburgs an immovable fixture in German politics (in the eyes of the princes). Indeed Maximillian became so self-asserted that by 1508 he aimed to be both Emperor and Pope simultaneously but it was not to be. Maria Theresa and Franz I are testaments to the Habsburgs’ ability to confront changing environments. Maria famously outlawed capital punishment, a move well beyond the times, and extended some political reform. Franz would go on to tackle the threat of Napoleon by dissolving the Holy Roman Empire and establishing the Austrian Empire. Each of these monarchs represents a singular facet of Habsburg quality. Maximillian represents the unwavering ambition, Maria Theresia the commitment to evolution and durability, and Franz to the adaptability which ensured Habsburg survival at a time when most European countries and their dynasties were failing.

The 1914 war signalled the twilight hours of the Habsburgs. German attempts to gain mastery of the continent saw Kaiser Wilhelm II barter Austrian lands, side-line their military and intertwine the Austrian empire with German nationalism. Karl I subsequently withdrew from government but never renounced his claim to the Austrian throne. From the island of Madeira where he took refuge, one single flame of Habsburg quality continued to shine through untouched after seven centuries: consistency. Unfortunately, the curtain fell on seven centuries of gaping-mouthed Habsburgs and the durable, reliable and deeply ambitious family were ascribed to the footnotes of twenty-first century history. The origins of the Habsburgs are the key to understanding how they established and followed through on a colossal reign which made them Europe’s most successful dynasty.

What have the Romans ever done for us?

The origins of satire

Emily Rushton

The humour evoked from satire has always been for an acquired taste. Satire relies on a small niche of humour, finding fun in others misfortune, or stealing laughs from public mockery. Today, satire exists more as the clever man's insult, acting as an exclusive type of humour, only to be readily accessed by those 'in the know' or those 'with the time' to find out. But where did it all begin? In modern culture, satirical forces like Private Eye and Monty Python may highlight the irony within a plethora of first world problems, but without the first world problems of many Roman elites from the Republic to the Empire, satire would not exist at all. How could a literary genre, relying on mockery and the lowest form of wit, ever manifest itself into the rich man's slapstick?

Apart from sanitation, medicine, education, wine, public order, irrigation, roads, the fresh-water system, public health and, of course, satire, it's understandable why some would query quite what the Romans ever did for society: it is not all necessarily true. Many of the solely 'Roman' innovations that characterised their infallibility have in some way been contest by either a rather artistically licentious Greek, or a modern scholar with too much time. Satire, however, is completely Roman. The genre's use of eloquent metaphor combines their literary intelligence with their growing license to chastise higher authorities. The growing importance of urbanitas, the wit of a city man, meant that the ability to understand humour on a new level became integral for appearing civilised in a competitive, elitist society. Take a true lust for the pain of others, combine this with incontestably clever language, and you create something so Roman that it is still intact almost 2,000 years later.

« without the first world problems of many Roman elites...satire would not exist at all »

Although Muecke suggests there to be Greek words (very tenuously) conveying the idea, the true satiric genre began to take shape from the middle of the second century BC. Tragic poet Ennius used his artistic license in a way never seen before, openly altering the length of his poetic meters in his Saturae, and beginning to use almost dialogue, whilst solely focusing on the Roman elites in Southern Italy during the Roman republic. However, as many scholars agree, it was the poet Lucilius who truly canonised the genre as it remains today. Wight Duff puts it perfectly: it was Lucilius' 'almost violent interest in the Roman society and politics' that spurred on his creation of a genre that, to begin with and in many ways continues to thrive off of the culture of the elite.

The manner in which Lucilius looked at Roman elitist culture inspired an influx of new writers, especially in the empire, who made it their sole purpose to thrive off of mocking their audiences. Horace, famous for his patriotic Odes, dabbled in satirical writing, although it was much softer than that of later writers, like Juvenal and Petronius. Because of his background in lyric poetry, Horace's attempts to satirise were still executed with natural, literary beauty, whereas Juvenal's much harsher approach to the genre resulted in damning portrayals of emperors and metaphors that would have been fit for a Ciceronian speech.

However for a true demonstration of perfected satire, one can go no further than turning to Petronius, the writer of the intangible Satyricon. In its outer framework, the piece is sold as a rather questionable odyssey, caught up with feasts, orgies, and overflowing with wit. Petronius himself was described by Tacitus as a man with a 'carefully practised elegance', and his understanding of the satiric genre demonstrates that he failed to be anything else.

Whereas Horace and Juvenal used their poetry as a vehicle to satirise, Petronius created what is effectively a Homeric epyllion, in its most tenuous state of understanding. There is certainly a protagonist, but rather than seducing and deserting women, he usually ends up entangled in a week-long 'one-night-stand', with any man or woman whom he encounters. He certainly ends up in adventures, but rather than inciting heroic acts, he incites orgies. He even encounters interesting, foreign characters – but rather than wise oracles, he meets fat freedmen playing with the balls (tennis, obviously) of young boys. Even the title of the work satirises itself. Although, on one level, the title introduces his satirising of the empirical court under the emperor Nero, it also alludes to the mythical satyrs, a group of goat-like men who caused mischief, predominantly with their sexual promiscuity. Whereas now, it takes Private Eye a whole magazine to satirise a weeks' worth of events, Petronius manages to perfectly satirise an entire race in a few extant books.

Another of Wight Duff's descriptions of Lucilius, almost entirely sums up my view on satire. He says, 'Lucilius is an honest satirist. Though he pillories others, he does not pretend to be better than he is or better than those whom he censures.' This, for me, is the key. The origins of satire do not lie in simply taking the mick, but in ostensibly pushing the true subject to such an extent that its own absurdity becomes wholly apparent. Satire in its purest form highlights social wrongs, and does not make the idea of mockery a social right. But of course, when needs must, everyone should indulge in satire for a little comic relief. As Juvenal says: 'When a Eunuch takes a wife . . . it's hard not to write a satire!'

Importing Liberalism

Petra Balazic

Although it is difficult to predict whether recent unrest in Bosnia and Herzegovina will prove to be fatal for the future of the state, they are certainly a reminder of the deep underlying issues Bosnia is failing to resolve even with the international help granted to it by Dayton Agreement in 1995. With a soaring unemployment rate of 44 per cent and ethnic tensions between Orthodox Serbs, Muslim Bosniaks and Catholic Croats, conflict seems inevitable with complete reconstruction being perhaps the only possibility for a brighter future. However, it is questionable whether the West's urging for the adoption of liberal political and economic policies are the solution for a country as complex as Bosnia.

At the end of the Cold War Francis Fukuyama proclaimed 'the end of history' and the unstoppable spread of liberal democracy. As the bipolar system of the post-World War Two international order crumbled, many interpreted this to be the final defeat of communism, at the time the only apparent alternative to liberal democracy. Such hopes were rather quickly shaken, as not only did communist regimes of China, Cuba, and North Korea persist, but the religious states, especially Islamic regimes of Middle East, also asserted themselves as prominent global actors. However, the idea of liberal government still has an overwhelming appeal to peoples who feel oppressed. The Arab Spring, Ukranian protests and Bosnian unrest have all heard calls for 'basic human rights' as granted by the liberal government.

Protesters in different cases mostly refer to the original ideas of liberal political theory in their yearnings for a more democratic future. Although the history of liberal thought can be traced as far back as Plato's writing, its modern origins are usually associated with the French Revolution. The ideas which inspired the revolutionaries can be seen as the culmination of the Enlightenment period of political philosophy. Reason had triumphed over the irrationality of the ancien régime. The cry for 'liberty, equality, fraternity' became the basis for contemporary political liberalism. Economically, it fitted perfectly with laissez-faire and the retreat of the state from various aspects of life. The government became, in the words of Thomas Paine, a 'necessary evil'. The freedom of an individual had to be protected at all costs.

Since then liberal ideas have in practice developed in various directions. Natural rights of men were, after a long struggle, extended to include women and members of other races. These rights, however, have become a distinctive issue, often separated from politics and usually the core grievance of social movements. Liberalism as a political discourse shifted towards economic theories of free trade and their implementation. In the twentieth century, liberal democrats of European countries were thus more inclined to focus on ideas such as Keynesianism and neoliberalism rather than exploring and expanding the philosophical aspects of 1789's liberal thoughts.

The meaning of liberalism today depends on the context in which it is considered. In most western European states, where basic human rights are satisfactorily incorporated into the constitution and public life, being a liberal is mostly associated with economic beliefs. Similar is true for the United States, although the meaning implies the other direction of economic thought, that is favouring state intervention rather than retreat. On the other hand, in the countries where people are being oppressed or discriminated against, or where the legitimacy of the government is brought into question, calls for liberalism fixate on the political and humanitarian origins of the thought, namely the fundamental freedoms of persons.

Bosnian protesters have expressed the need for complete reconstruction of government structure. Leaders of the recent Udar revolt movement have proclaimed the Dayton Agreement to be at the end of its course. If it does lead to the disintegration of the structure set up by the Agreement, a new one would have to be created essentially from scratch. It is almost certain that the model chosen would be that of a liberal democracy. Importation of modern western liberal thought into Bosnia and Herzegovina might however prove to be more difficult than is perhaps anticipated.

« the idea of liberal government still has an overwhelming appeal to peoples who feel oppressed »

The modern version of liberalism clashes with some of the most prominent aspects of Bosnia. As an ideology which places an individual above everything else, it automatically overlooks the history and ethnic configuration of the country. During the period of socialist Yugoslavia from 1945 to 1990 it was community which was strongly emphasised. Bratstvo (brotherhood or fraternity) was heavily propagated and given the highest priority in all aspects of life. The war that followed the break-up of Yugoslavia strengthened the importance of national communities, although it divided the three peoples within Bosnia herself. Fraternity, in the modern West the most neglected of the French Revolution's cries, is thus an outstanding feature within the Bosnian population. The protesters are accordingly very much concerned with the future of the community, with the majority of groups wanting free healthcare for all and voting participation laws.

On the other hand, even some fundamental aspects of liberal thought, dating back to the late-eighteenth century, seem inappropriate in Bosnian context. For contemporaries liberalism was meant to become a secular theology which would shift allegiances from the Church to the state. While Bosnia would probably benefit greatly from such a development, her history and fragmented structure make it unlikely, at least in the nearer future. Religious allegiance is deeply rooted because it is a part of personal identity and is linked to person's national origins. The unrests have seen a significant extent of cooperation between different groups – mostly through the perception of the corrupt government as the common enemy – yet the fact that nationalist parties receive as high as 40 per cent of votes indicates the people still feel an enduring sense of belonging to their specific ethnic group. The strong feeling of community within a group then also means the mentality of us versus them creates the basis and potential for conflict which modern liberal democracy attempts to avoid.

Many expect liberalism to eventually prevail in global politics. Since its origins in the 1789 Revolution it has indeed been the most enduring form of government. Nevertheless, the question remains whether its modern form is so successful mostly because the nations that have embraced it already had the historical and structural predispositions that enabled its implementation, and whether its success would be possible in different societies such as Bosnia, where priorities and grievances lie elsewhere.

A Journey to the Chinese Origins

Katrin Heilmann

Chinese New Year is the most important festival in China, standing at the core of Chinese tradition. tradition. It is based on the 12-year cycle Chinese zodiac calendar originated in the Han Dynasty (206-220BC). The calendar names each year after an animal: the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog and pig. The system also attributes one of the five elements – earth, water, fire, wood and metal - to the animals.

Tradition and Superstition

Chinese New Year starts weeks before the actual New Year's Eve with sweeping and cleaning of the houses to metaphorically sweep away bad luck. Once the house is cleaned, lanterns, paper cuts and paper scrolls bearing '福' (fu, good fortune) or '财'(cai, wealth) are put up. When a friend and I prepared to go to Harbin, where a Chinese friend's family was going to host us, we bought gifts for the family. We got two Beijing spirits, fresh fruit and eight chocolate bars. In China, quantities matter because of phonetics. For example, you should never give four of an item because the Chinese four '四' (si) sounds like death '死' (si), even though they are different tones. The Chinese for eight—'八' (ba)—is associated with prosperity and wealth. Odd numbers tend to be considered less fortunate since the Chinese consider that goods things should always be repeated. While eight and nine always bear a positive connotation, there are also lucky numbers depending on the zodiac. In the year of the horse two, three and seven are said to be especially lucky.

The Journey Home

For Chinese New Year all of China is on the road to travel home to their families. Chinese New Year starts with the new moon on the first day of the New Year and ends with the full moon 15 days later (this year on Valentine's Day). It is the peak travel period, which tourists are advised to avoid by travel guides such as the Lonely Planet due to the immense amount of people on the roads, trains and airplanes. Once people start leaving for their hometowns, whole cities suddenly become a lot emptier. In Beijing, where it is ordinarily almost impossible to find a seat in the subway during rush hour, there were empty spots as well as a lot of travelling families with bulky luggage.

On our train ride to Harbin, we sat in our hard seats trying to shift around to somehow be able to stretch out our long legs in the small six-seat arrangement. Originally we had wanted to buy more comfortable seats but despite sitting with a Chinese friend at 1.30pm at the day of the release of the train tickets in front of the computer, we could not get any better seats because the other tickets had already been sold internally – despite Xi Jinping's actions against corruption, which received a lot of media attention. At least we did not have to stand on the train like one of my Chinese friends who stood through a 15 hour train ride, where she would sit only occasionally when people left for the bathroom or the board restaurant.

New Year

On New Year's Eve, families have a large reunion dinner, which includes many different dishesa.o. chicken, pork and fish. In accordance with a Chinese proverb '年年有鱼' (nián nián yǒu yú, every year there is fish), some of the fish is on purpose left on the plate and stored in the kitchen overnight because the fish is a

11

metaphor for surplus. There is also a lot of drinking to the future, health and prosperity. Red envelopes (红包, hongbao), which are filled with money, are exchanged. In the whole New Year period, there are frequent firecrackers all over the streets, though the majority of Chinese light fireworks on New Year's Eve. The days following New Year's Eve, most families stay at home or visit others. On New Year's Day, the grandchildren traditionally pay a visit to their grandparents. In the following days more relatives and friends get together for more eating, drinking and chatting. Our host family in Harbin combined visits to other friends' houses with sightseeing and took us to the Ice and Snow Festival as well as the Harbin International Ice Sculpture Competition.

Harbin Ice & Snow Sculpture Festival

In places, which are warmer than Harbin, many families go to the Temple Fair. Temple Fairs were originally organized by Buddhist and Taoist organisations and served the promotion of faith. Today, the religious origin has faded mostly into the background, as commercialism and entertainment have taken over. At one of the largest Temple Fairs in Beijing, Ditan Park (地坛), crowds of families were eating street food (barbeque meat and fish) while watching Chinese comedians, dancers, singers and acrobats perform. Children were jumping on trampolines, posing for pictures or being carried around in a traditional sedan chair, while their parents were taking pictures of them.

Temple Fair in Beijing Ditan Yuan

While traditions are at the core of Chinese New Year (some of them quite superstitious), much of what China used to be has vanished – first in the rages of the Cultural Revolution and later in the endorsement of Deng Xiaoping's socialism with Chinese characteristics. To this day Chinese identity is complex, there are strong regionalist tendencies, while identification in terms of ethnicity are also quite common. In all that religion has been sidelined and in many cases pushed underground leading to unrest in Xinjiang and Tibet, where sub-nationalist groups demand independence. The Year of the Wood Horse has been traditionally associated with war. Both domestically and also internationally with regards to the tensions with Japan, the Year of the Wood Horse, which has been traditionally associated with war, promises to be an interesting one.

12

review

12 Years a Slave

Jonathan Falconer

With the 86th Academy Awards coming up, Steve McQueen, director of *Hunger* and *Shame* looks likely to become the first ever black filmmaker to collect an Oscar in the 'best director' category for *12 Years a Slave*, his unflinching telling of the story of Solomon Northup, a free-born African American man from New York who was kidnapped and sold into slavery in 1841. McQueen's basic and straight-forward direction, expressive performances by both Chiwetel Ejiofor as Northup and Lupita Nyong'o as Patsey, and gorgeous cinematography by Sean Bobbit all combine to present an emotionally resonating depiction not only of the horrors of Solomon Northup's personal odyssey, but of the transatlantic slave trade as an entirety.

The problem with adapting a diary for a motion picture is that one often ends up with a somewhat predictable, limited narrative. However, in *12 Years a Slave*, the form is utilised gracefully and brutally. The audience is with Northup from beginning to end, and the horror and frustration of being taken and imprisoned against one's will radiates from this film, creating an atmosphere of discomfort that is almost stifling. This is as it should be. By making this film difficult to watch, Steve McQueen has remained faithful to those he is paying tribute to, and to what he set out to do in the first place. *12 Years a Slave* is a highly emotive experience, without being convoluted or needlessly sentimentalist. The power in McQueen's film lies in its frankness and simplicity.

This honest and emotive style is amplified through a perfect performance by Chiwetel Ejiofor. Rather than resorting to over-the-top theatrics, Ejiofor is perfectly in sync with the director's style and delivers a nuanced performance that relies more on subtle facial expressions and gestures, rather than all-out melodrama. The inclusion of the character of the owner William Ford (Benedict Cumberbatch) toys further with the audience's emotions. Cumberbatch's character is relatively sympathetic to the other slavers in this film, somewhat winning over the audience. However, it's only a matter of time before you remember his profession. This beautifully elicits moral dilemmas within the viewer.

Michael Fassbender's performance as Edwin Epps is by far the most over-the-top thing about this film and occasionally detracts from the simplicity and realism that makes the rest so powerful. Hans Zimmer's score is lukewarm, repetitive and unoriginal. These barely significant flaws aside, McQueen's depiction of Northup's struggle manages at once to be both gorgeously sumptuous, and violently stripped back and direct.

13

the horror and frustration of being taken

and imprisoned against one's will radiates

The Railway Man

Rafael Koukkoullis

Attention dear lover of cinema and enthusiast of any motion picture pertaining to have the slightest indication of historical content. What I am about to describe contains vivid imagery and a pinch of the old 'ultra-violent'.

Jonathan Teplitzki's, *The Railway Man*, based on the riveting autobiography of the same name, is a film that will captivate and shock you. The heartfelt story of Eric Lomax (Colin Firth) begins with the typical 'boy meets girl on train' and turns into a dark ballad of vengeance, hatred and human perseverance. Lomax suffers from the demons of memory as he relives the torture he experienced being a prisoner of war in Burma during World War Two.

a dark ballad of vengeance, hatred and human perseverance

The only path to redemption is tracking down his Japanese tormentor and seeking revenge, however how far can Mr. Lomax go without allowing his past to destroy his present? A complicated dilemma arises be-tween right and wrong, revenge and forgiveness: a dilemma that will separate audiences between justice and morality (I chose justice).

This visual adaptation of Eric Lomax's odyssey truly speaks from the heart regarding the tragedy of war coupled with the base loathing it breeds as well as its lingering bitter recollections. *The Railway Man* contains vivid scenes of ferocity and torture that will make John McCain's experience look like a split lip and a headache. The acting is superbly original. Firth pulls off an admirable portrayal of Lomax, with Nicole Kidman and Stellan Skarsgård performing to an equally high standard, thus ensuring the success of this best-selling story in the realm of cinema. I recommend anyone to see it as well as read the book. Though you will not be disappointed, I cannot promise a pleasant relaxing viewing—prepare to be troubled and traumatised by this epic story. Then again, pleasantness is overrated.

The Nation // Live: An Exhibition

Katrina Chambers

The Scottish National Portrait Gallery's 'The Nation // Live' exhibition displays a National Galleries of Scotland communities outreach project that includes information on Clydebank, Inverness, Dumfriesshire and Skye. I was intrigued by the idea of 'nation' and its origins to each community throughout time. The exhibition's themes include: roots, union, work, civil war and faith.

The exhibition explains these themes and pursues debates concerning: 'jobs and unemployment, Scottish independence, religious belief, tolerance and sectarianism and economic migration.' Each theme has individual sections and uses quotes, gallery items, and the communities' interpretation of the themes through various art forms. The exhibition's central focal point is a Daniel Warren film that ties together each community's involvement in the project.

'Roots' focusses on migration in Scotland's history. It involves a central Scottish community alongside the University of Edinburgh's School of Scottish Studies. The section contains Charles Avery's drawing 'The Place of the Route of the If'en' and Drew Wright's vinyl, 'Wounded Knee' concerning migration oral culture.

The 'Union' theme, consisting of four parts, shows the 1707 Union of the Parliaments and the Jacobite rebellion, utilising the communities of Inverness and Fort George. The first two parts incorporate Jacobite and Hanoverian medals from the gallery's collection, and oversized medals by community members inspired by aforementioned medals, demonstrating their interpretation of the regions' identity. There is also a drawing entitled 'The Battle of Culloden by Luke Sullivan,' and finally a contemporary multi-coloured flag, 'The Flag of Our Land,' designed by local school students, representing Moray's landscape and community identity.

The 'Work' theme refers to Clydebank's industrial, commercial and trade unionist origins, using Kenny Hunter's orange Jimmy Reed bust, a wooden speaker's podium, and school children's self-portraits. The community emulates these origins by enacting a reconstruction of a mass trade union meeting.

'Civil war' shows the origins of fighting for strong religious beliefs during the covenanting period. The belief of Covenanters' is demonstrated two-fold: by Wagstaff's engraving 'The Battle of Drumclog', depicting the Covenanters' triumph, and Sir George Hervey's 'The Covenanters' Baptism' book. Photographs exhibited the community's covenanting reenactment, along with the wigs that they had worn.

'Faith' is displayed using Scotland's religious origins in a photograph of Hole's 'St Columba' mural from the gallery. Another photograph, 'Vision of Faith,' depicts Skye's young faith community alongside their turquoise spray-painted stones project. Finally, a rectangle containing wooden plaques collects their comments on faith.

I recommend this free exhibition at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, as it shows different communities' exploration of Scotland's identities, getting to the heart of Scottish origins.

The Wolf of Wall Street

Tilly Adcock

The story of investing. A jungle full of bulls, bears and danger at every turn. Martin Scorsese (Director) captures the real life story of stockbroker, Jordan Belfort (Leonardo DiCaprio), an optimistic man from a family of accountants, looking to make it big on Wall Street.

After gaining a job at the reputable trading firm 'L.F. Rothschild,' Jordan is thrown into the corrupt and unstable world of Wall Street, where he encounters drugs, sex, and the potential to make millions. Whilst on Wall Street, Jordan is exposed to an attitude of 'fuck the clients', which can be seen by many as a realistic view of how Wall Street treats its clients. The film goes on to explore the origins of Jordan Belfort's own brokerage firm, 'Stratton Oakmont', which specialised in selling useless shares through aggressive sales tactics.

But rather than focusing on the consequences of the firm's fraud, the film has a strong focus on the antics of Jordan Belfort and his friends, which are portrayed in a humorous light. Jordan lives a life of luxury at the expense of others. He drives six cars, lives in a mansion, is married to a supermodel, and has three horses, two vacation homes, and a 170ft yacht.

However, there is a darker side to Jordan's lifestyle. Corrupted by money, Jordan proudly admits, and even boasts, that he 'gambles like a degenerate', 'drinks like a fish', enjoys the company of prostitutes five to six times a week, is a drug addict, and has three different federal agencies looking to indict him. There have been different interpretations about this film's message. Audiences have expressed anger over the film's 'glorification' of unsavory exploits, saying that it completely ignores the victims of Jordan Belfort. But, in my opinion, it tells the sad story of a talented man with a promising future, who is corrupted by Wall Street and money.

Like Scorsese's *Shutter Island*, the audience is given clues that Jordan Belfort's life is an illusion and that his impression of himself is imagined as shown by the 'story telling' nature of the film. Jordan has to correct details, such as the colour of his Ferrari, and most importantly, in the scene where it is revealed that Jordan's 'successful' journey home was imagined, we are shown the destruction he leaves behind him.

The film reflects an issue that is very much a contemporary one: getting cheated out of money by risky investment companies who advertise 'get rich quick' schemes. In many ways, this film represents the origins of this type of scam, and shows the dangers of excess.

audiences have expressed anger over the film's 'glorification' of unsavory exploits

Career Pathways: A Week in Publishing

Kerry Gilsenan

During Innovative Learning Week, I decided to spend five days on a work placement at White Light Media, a design and publishing agency based in Leith. As a writer and Reviews Editor at *Retrospect*, with an interest in the workings of publishing operations, the week provided the perfect opportunity to consider the production of magazines outside of the university sphere.

A company keen to showcase its own talents, White Light Media publishes its own magazine Hot Rum Cow three times a year, aimed at those interested in the world of drinking, and has recently announced the launch of its own beer. Whilst gaining practical experience in the publishing industry, my time at the company gave me a great deal of insight into how publishing agencies further the interests of their clients: these publications can act as marketing tools to enhance the image of clients to targeted audiences.

Despite the inevitable strain on the continuation of newspapers and publications with the digitalisation of print, White Light Media is moving with the times and is as busy as ever. The increasing popularity of corporate publications and the diversification of marketing tools have sustained a steady flow of business. Furthermore, White Light Media does not only operate in print, but produces digital publications, adapting to the changing scene. Listening in on a rehearsal pitch for a prospective client revealed the thoughtfulness and flair of the editorial and design team, turning a brief into a thorough flat plan in a matter of weeks.

Primarily, my time at White Light Media furthered my ability to write in multiple styles, adopting different voices to suit the audience or nature of a piece. For example, work with Hot Rum Cow involved a less formal tongue-in-cheek style, unlike that of any academic journal I have previously worked with. I was particularly grateful for the opportunity to write my own pieces, including an 'Interesting Drinks Worth Trying' feature on Denmark's Gammel Dansk, and a 'Transatlantic Beer War' piece, comparing five UK and US craft beers using the context of the American War of Independence.

Aside from their own magazine, White Light Media produce a vast array of publications for a variety of companies—Equiniti's business magazine Source, Standard Life's Standard, and Howden's Howden Life to name a few. These commercial projects reflect the growing desire for businesses to build their profile through print. Transcripts of interviews with Gordon McAlpine from Channel 4's The Secret Millionaire, as well as Ryder Cup sponsors Standard Life Investment, dealt with unfamiliar subject matters; yet they usefully demonstrated the use of differing interview styles, such as spotlight pieces, and more focused Q&A sessions.

The biggest challenge, on my final day of the placement, was compiling a feature introducing Hot Rum Cow beer. This unique brew, chosen by the White Light Media team, reflects their shared desire to drink great beer. As a piece promoting the beer, this feature required me to be sensitive of the portrayal of the Hot Rum Cow brand, as well as talking the reader through the brewing process, drawing insight from interview transcripts with brewery staff. Learning how to compile pull-quotes, research and getting a feel for the publication's voice provided a sound understanding of how to approach a feature with marketing undertones.

The week also involved the development of my editorial skills, again with an awareness of a multitude of styles. Proof reading pieces for the University of Liverpool's Realise magazine —aimed at showcasing the university to research and business collaborators—with Adobe Acrobat, required acknowledging the tone of the previous two issues. Transcripts, too, demanded some editorial know-how and different approaches to bringing out relevant material, ranging a great deal in length, from an hour and half to fifteen minutes.

Most notably, the week demonstrated the importance of work experience in clarifying the direction of a career path. The work placement was incredibly easy to obtain, flexible and of great use. If the magazine industry is of interest to you, I highly recommend working with White Light Media to further your aspiration. I have thoroughly enjoyed working in a role that caters for both writing and editorial tasks, researching and planning, and strongly believe that the experience has established an invaluable basis for the future – the origins of an ambition.

the importance of work experience in clarifying the direction of a career path

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