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In this week's *Oxford Magazine* we publish an article by Denis Galligan on the subject of Oxford's Employer-Justified Retirement Age (EJRA) together with an article in response, in which Stephen Goss explains the University's current position on this scheme. The scheme goes back to anti-ageism discrimination legislation enshrined in the Equality Act of 2010—itsself influenced by earlier EU legislation—whereby age-linked compulsory retirement became illegal unless the operational interests or requirements of an institution to retain a fixed retirement age could be "objectively justified". As Stephen Goss explains the University introduced its scheme in October 2011 quoting a number of justifications, details of which are available via the intranet. Academics wishing to continue in post after age 67 could apply to do so but would only succeed if various demanding criteria were satisfied. Denis Galligan was initially denied this extension but he appealed and won his case, and has therefore automatically remained in his academic position. In the light of this the University is now, inevitably, reviewing all the relevant procedures and arguments.

The submissions and arguments in the appeal were heard over five days. The 75-page appeal report was written by the independent and hugely experienced Court of Appeal judge who chaired the EJRA appeal process. The article by Denis Galligan illustrates the complexities of the case and the issues, a result of the multiple grounds on which EJRA is defended and the extent to which every one of them is open to challenge through legal arguments based on very wide considerations (e.g. human rights, protecting academic freedom and values, etc). It is, or should be, no surprise that EJRA

EJRA and first principles

has come under legal challenge. The Supreme Court has recently ruled that an application of EJRA hinges primarily on the balance of "inter-generational fairness" (i.e. sharing fairly between generations the limited opportunities to work in a profession) and "dignity" (i.e. avoiding the need to dismiss older partners by reasons of underperformance). It is unclear how far, or even whether, the Act has been implemented by UK employers in general, or among all UK universities in particular. Many businesses probably use financial incentives to achieve required retirements.

As in so many of the most complex and contentious areas of social policy the need is to achieve a balance between multiple countervailing considerations, each with potentially very important implications and consequences. The case for allowing a negotiable continuation in post rather than a fixed retirement age is not just based on the avoidance of age discrimination, but also considerations regarding the best academic interests of the University. Traditionally academics near retirement have moved to the USA so that they can continue their productive work. We all know of examples where distinguished colleagues have produced some of their finest work after 67, when freed of the constraints of teaching and admin as well as the requirements of the REF, grant capture, etc, etc. Moreover, to force retirement is potentially to throw away the accumulated experience and skills of the best teachers and administrators, some of whom characteristically want to continue to work: the University could be wasting all of the hard-won breadth of their perspectives. On the other hand the arguments against abolishing a retirement age are equally clear, e.g.

INSIDE

● RETIREMENT RIGHTS
Pages four, six

● METRIFYING ACADEMICS
Page sixteen

...and much more

the need to open up jobs for younger academics and to minimize costs (money, space and resources).

Cambridge brought in a EJRA scheme one year after Oxford. Though similar it apparently manages to resolve these conflicting interests to some extent. Whereas Oxford's process relies heavily on "negotiation" among the interested parties—and therefore potentially lacks objectivity and detailed documentation—Cambridge offers an explicit series of alternatives arrangements, including a "voluntary research agreement" or the flexible option of an agreed reduction of hours and salary, both of which release posts for re-filling. Clearly there are many ways in which it could be made possible for academics wishing to do so to retain suitable working positions within the University without significant costs, while also freeing posts for early career colleagues.

Unlike Cambridge's Oxford's scheme in itself seems to contain a new form of discrimination: the EJRA only applies to academic and academic-related staff, while support staff are exempt. On the horizon are further issues of age-discrimination that Oxford needs to address: for example, should the current age limit for membership of Congregation be removed?

* * *

The issues arising in the context of the EJRA bring to the fore themes of very wide significance. In Cambridge the arguments for and against introducing the EJRA were of widespread concern and were debated at some length by the Regent House. There has been no subsequent challenge in Cambridge. By contrast in Oxford there was neither a Congregation Discussion nor a debate or vote. There were two "consultations" (i.e. submissions from the usual narrow range of official bodies and concerned individuals; hardly evidence of widespread interest or awareness) and, as usual, responses were taken to mean that there was "broad support" for the EJRA. Responses to the consultations were made available on the intranet, but are no longer accessible.

It could be argued that better and more widely informed awareness of the issues at the time might have reduced the likelihood of an early challenge, and of the need now for radical revision. As in so many cases in recent years (e.g. titles and merit differential pay enhancement), Congregation took no notice and potentially difficult and contentious aspects of Council's proposals went through by default, without benefit of constructive wider examination. In Congregation we have the privilege of a powerful statutory mechanism which is both democratic and a means to inform and educate the academic community. Congregation has played little more than a token role with regard, for example, to the Stra-

tegic Plan and reform of Statute XII; Discussions were initiated by Council rather than Congregation itself and turnout for the Discussion meetings in the Sheldonian has been disappointing. Collectively we are allowing Congregation to become non-functional and redundant.

A second theme fundamentally relevant in connection with any EJRA is the way in which academic freedom is brought into question. EJRA is one of many examples (e.g. the REF, titles and merit awards, access to salary enhancements, deployment of disciplinary procedures involving "underperformance") where the work of academics is put under management-controlled constraints and becomes subject to value judgements by committees that cannot possibly be omni-wise or omni-objective. Implicit in the EJRA process is the question of how the University decides whether to allow or deny exemptions to retirement at 67. The decision is made by a panel of three; the P-V-C (Personnel and Equality) and two (current or recent) members of the Personnel Committee (or a senior and relevantly experienced seconded individual). It is clear from the published protocols that the panel will be open to evidence and influence through inputs from heads of departments or divisions, and therefore open to patronage and prejudice. Recorded proceedings of panel discussions are, unsurprisingly, confidential (even to the applicant). Congregation is not even told the numbers of applicants or successes.

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Denis Galligan's article regarding the appeal judgment sets an important precedent for the University. It is important that the grounds for the successful appeal are known because they could affect the cases of new, current applicants for EJRA exemption. In theory such information might have been sought by way of an FOI request. But quite apart from the fact that use of FOI goes against the spirit of the ideal of free access to information in the academic world, an FOI request cannot be made if you do not know in the first place that the document exists.

At stake here is the importance of the adequate availability of information about policies undertaken, in Congregation's name, in Wellington Square. Without clarity in this area trust in our managers will be eroded, with obviously dire consequences.

Given that Wellington Square holds almost all the cards, Congregation must rely on the administration to take proactive steps to improve internal communication and to explore new arrangements that enable Congregation to operate properly and effectively as a policy forum.

T.J.H

This is the first issue of Oxford Magazine to be distributed using the revised mailing lists. If you were expecting to receive your own copy but haven't, or if you have received a copy but hadn't requested it, please contact gazette@admin.ox.ac.uk explaining the situation so that we can amend the lists in time for the next issue.

Please also let us know if you would like a copy of this issue sent to you.



Reminders



It is the time for New Year's resolutions. Pope Francis' recent listing of the "ailments of the curia" sets a high standard that is perhaps applicable in Oxford as much as in Rome – ed*

1) *Feeling immortal, immune or indispensable.*

A Curia that doesn't criticise itself, that doesn't update itself, that doesn't seek to improve itself is a sick body.

2) *Working too hard.*

Rest for those who have done their work is necessary, good and should be taken seriously.

3) *Becoming spiritually and mentally hardened.*

It's dangerous to lose that human sensibility that lets you cry with those who are crying, and celebrate those who are joyful.

4) *Planning too much.*

Preparing things well is necessary, but don't fall into the temptation of trying to close or direct the freedom of the Holy Spirit, which is bigger and more generous than any human plan.

5) *Working without coordination, like an orchestra that produces noise.*

When the foot tells the hand, 'I don't need you' or the hand tells the head 'I'm in charge.'

6) *Having "spiritual Alzheimer's".*

We see it in the people who have forgotten their encounter with the Lord...in those who depend completely on their here and now, on their passions, whims and manias, in those who build walls around themselves and become enslaved to the idols that they have built with their own hands.

7) *Being rivals or boastful.*

When one's appearance, the colour of one's vestments or honorific titles become the primary objective of life.

8) *Suffering from "existential schizophrenia".*

It's the sickness of those who live a double life, fruit of hypocrisy that is typical of mediocre and progressive spiritual emptiness that academic degrees cannot fill. It's a sickness that often affects those who, abandoning

pastoral service, limit themselves to bureaucratic work, losing contact with reality and concrete people.

9) *Committing the "terrorism of gossip".*

It's the sickness of cowardly people who, not having the courage to speak directly, talk behind people's backs.

10) *Glorifying one's bosses.*

It's the sickness of those who court their superiors, hoping for their benevolence. They are victims of careerism and opportunism, they honour people who aren't God.

11) *Being indifferent to others.*

When, out of jealousy or cunning, one finds joy in seeing another fall rather than helping him up and encouraging him.

12) *Having a "funereal face".*

In reality, theatrical severity and sterile pessimism are often symptoms of fear and insecurity. The apostle must be polite, serene, enthusiastic and happy and transmit joy wherever he goes.

13) *Wanting more.*

When the apostle tries to fill an existential emptiness in his heart by accumulating material goods, not because he needs them but because he'll feel more secure.

14) *Forming closed circles that seek to be stronger than the whole.*

This sickness always starts with good intentions but as time goes by, it enslaves its members by becoming a cancer that threatens the harmony of the body and causes so many bad scandals especially to our younger brothers.

15) *Seeking worldly profit and showing off.*

It's the sickness of those who insatiably try to multiply their powers and to do so are capable of calumny, defamation and discrediting others, even in newspapers and magazines, naturally to show themselves as being more capable than others.

* <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/the-pope/11308360/Pope-Francis-15-ailments-of-the-Curia.html>

Goodbye to the EJRA

D.J.GALLIGAN

On 25th September 2014 a notice appeared in the *Gazette*, tucked away on page 7, informing readers that the University's Appeal Court has "recently raised some issues regarding the EJRA policy and procedure".* It went on to inform readers that the "University will consider the *comments* of the Appeal Court and *may* bring forward the date of the five-year interim review". In the meantime, "the current policy remains in effect until such time as it may be changed".

Readers will be curious to know the nature of those "comments". First the background. In 2010, Parliament passed the Equality Act 2010 which, following the law of the European Union, adds age to the categories protected against discrimination. To discriminate on the ground of age is unlawful. Compulsory retirement on the ground of age constitutes discrimination and is therefore illegal. However, the Act allows an institution to claim exemption and reintroduce a compulsory retirement age for "legitimate aims". In 2011, the University administration reintroduced compulsory retirement at 67 for academic staff, claiming legitimate aims in doing so. The scheme was neither debated nor voted on in Congregation. The scheme is known as the EJRA.

In order to soften the effect of mandatory retirement, the administration added a procedure for extension beyond 67, if certain conditions were satisfied. Colleges with one or two exceptions followed suit and adopted their own EJRA's. The legitimate aims claimed were: certainty in planning; diversity; inter-generational fairness; refreshing the workforce; the joint appointment system; and the desire to avoid performance management. In order to justify the EJRA the administration must show that it is a proportionate means for achieving the legitimate aims. That requires balancing the aims against the effects of discriminating against older staff.

Under the Statutes of the University, the Appeal Court hears appeals from a range of internal procedures, including refusal to allow a member of the academic staff to continue working beyond 67. Its decisions are binding on the University. The judges of the Court are very senior judges, usually no longer sitting full-time, of the High Court and Court of Appeal. In this case the judge was Dame Janet Smith, formerly of the High Court and then Court of Appeal, in which courts she served with distinction for 25 years and she is one of the most senior and respected judges in the land, an indication of which is her presiding over the Jimmy Saville enquiry.

As the one who brought the appeal, I argued that the EJRA scheme is not "objectively justifiable" as required by law and therefore dismissal for age constitutes unlawful discrimination. After lengthy written submissions and oral hearing; the Court, on 1st September 2014, issued a reasoned written judgment upholding my appeal on the following grounds:

(i) The EJRA as a scheme, including the age of 67, is not objectively justifiable as required by law.

(ii) The procedure for extension is so unfair that denial of extension is "an inevitably unfair dismissal".

* * *

After extensive written and oral argument, during which the administration was represented by a barrister and solicitors, the judge thoroughly examined each of the legitimate aims and concluded as follows:

Inter-generational fairness and refreshing the workforce * *

The Court concluded that:

"It does not seem right to me to rely on the aim of inter-generational fairness when seeking to impose a compulsory retirement age on a group of statutory professors even though it may be a valid consideration for some other grades. [61]" [A point the judge left open].

The Court decided that it is not necessary to have an EJRA as low as 67 "in order to achieve [and] to maintain a reasonable level of turnover of senior staff or to avoid difficulties in the transitional period." Experience of the EJRA to date "suggests that there would be no great problem in having a compulsory retirement age of, say, 70." [62]

Planning

The judge accepted the organizational need for predictability as potentially a legitimate aim. But, she continued, that aim:

"cannot of itself justify any particular EJRA. However, I do not think it could ever amount to weighty justification because there are other steps which could be taken to reduce the difficulties caused by any uncertainty in the date of retirement." [65]

Diversity

The Court acknowledged that the promotion of gender equality is a legitimate aim for the University. It concluded, however, that:

"the actual benefits of an EJRA in promoting gender equality are very slight when one considers that they are achieved at the expense of causing a different form of discrimination." [66]

Avoidance of performance management/collegial system

Since the performance management of older academic staff would be discriminatory, the alternative would be to have performance management for all staff. The need to avoid this was advanced by the administration as a legitimate aim. It was also claimed that the collegial system made Oxford special in such way as to justify mandatory retirement. On these points the Court concluded that:

“neither the avoidance of performance management nor the existence of the collegial system cannot (sic), for Oxford, amount to a legitimate aim or objective which an EJRA will help to promote.” [67]

Age 67

According to the law developed in the European Court of Justice and the English courts, in addition to showing that the scheme as a whole is objectively justified, the institution must show that the age selected for mandatory retirement is itself objectively justified.

After considering the arguments for 67, the Court drew attention to the “spirit and purposes of the legislation” which are that people are living longer, enjoy better health, “and should be permitted and encouraged to work longer” [56]. The age of 67 does no more than take the University back to what was the situation in the 1960s. The Court concluded that 67 is not in the spirit of the Equality Act and is not objectively justifiable.

Conclusion

In light of these findings, the judge concluded:

“I do not think that the policy of imposing retirement at 67 can be objectively justified. The aims and objectives which could justify any compulsory retiring age (“refreshment” and succession planning), have not been shown to be weighty. The University was so determined to hold on as closely as possible to the previous situation that it failed to consider the issues openly and objectively. I have not been shown either evidence or argument why it was reasonably necessary to select an age as low as 67 as opposed to some later age, which would clearly be less severe in its discriminatory effect. The legitimate aims and objectives to which I have just referred do not appear to me to be of such weight and importance as could properly outweigh the legitimate expectations of academic staff to work longer and to have an element of choice as to their retiring age.” [68]

Procedure for extension

The Court asked whether the existence of an extension procedure could assist in justifying a policy, which would not otherwise be justifiable. The administration’s case was that the effect of the mandatory retirement at 67 is mitigated by what are described as: “the fair, transparent and inclusive processes of extension”. [69] The question was whether the procedure for allowing some employees to stay on after 67 means that the discriminatory effect of the policy is much reduced and so helps to justify the EJRA as a proportionate means of achieving its aims.

The judge rejected this argument in no uncertain terms. She concluded that the existence of this extension procedure does not assist in the justification of a compulsory retirement age. The opposite: it undermines the whole purpose of having an EJRA. She continued:

“The University is in effect saying to its employees, when you reach the age of 67, you will enter a process for deciding whether you will be allowed to stay on. If that process results in rejection, the University cannot say that the principle reason for dismissal is that the employee has reached an objectively justifiable retirement age; it is because his application to stay on has been rejected. It follows that the University cannot rely on the EJRA to show that the dismissal is automatically fair.” [72]

The scheme depends for its validity on a balance being struck between the wishes of the person wanting to continue and the needs of the University. The Court found that in the document stating the procedure for extension, there is no “attempt to balance the wishes of the individual with the needs of the University”. [82] The wishes of the staff member:

“have little place in the procedure. He or she has a right to be heard. Also, he or she may advance personal circumstances which may justify exceptional treatment. Other than that, the criteria are all related to the interests of the University.” [82]

According to the judge, the procedure has several defects, the most severe and fatal being that the extension procedure is:

“Designed not to mitigate the discriminatory effect of the EJRA but rather to enable the University to pick out those members of staff which it wishes to retain while requiring any others to retire.” [88]

The conclusions are striking:

“The evidence that I have heard has confirmed the clear impression I had gained from the documents that this procedure was not in reality designed to complement or improve the EJRA policy. Rather it was designed to allow the University to have the ha’penny of making some people retire at 67 (without having to be paid compensation for unfair dismissal) and the bun of allowing the University to retain those employees which it wished to keep. I accept that the University has some good reasons for wanting a compulsory retirement age and in some respects wanted an EJRA. But its overriding wish was for a means of choosing who stays on and who goes. As I have said earlier, I am quite satisfied that the University acted in what it believed were its best interests but it has created a process which not only has internal flaws but is fundamentally unacceptable as a means of deciding whether someone should be dismissed. In my judgment rejection of an application under this procedure could never amount to a potentially fair reason for dismissal.” [100][emphasis added]

The judge concluded that requiring an established employee “to demonstrate that he is indispensable or be dismissed is an inevitably unfair dismissal”. [101]

* * *

Effect of the judgment

The Appeal Court prepared two judgments, one dealing with the general issues as set-out above, the other as an appendix dealing with the facts of my own case. My argument was that in order to decide my appeal, the Appeal Court had to decide whether the EJRA scheme is legally justifiable. At a preliminary hearing, the administration opposed my argument. The Court adjourned and, on 8th April 2014, Dame Janet handed down a written judgment in which, after thorough consideration of the matter, she concluded that the Court had jurisdiction to consider the validity of the EJRA scheme.

The point of writing two final judgments, one on the general issues and one on my case, is then plain: the findings in the first judgment concern the validity of the EJRA and therefore are of general interest and importance to the University and all members of academic staff.

The judge left us in no doubt in stating:

“I have decided this appeal on issues of principle unrelated to the particular facts of the appellant’s case.” [101]

The important issue, however, is that the University’s own Appeal Court, within the confines of the University rather than in a public forum, has ruled decisively and definitively on the legality of the EJRA. It is now time for Congregation, the Sovereign Parliament of the University, to take an active role in considering how best to proceed. There is no better place to start than to insist that the administration accept the ruling, suspend immedi-

ately the EJRA, and jointly with Congregation plan for the future.

* The University’s published responses to the appeal can be found at; http://www.ox.ac.uk/staff/staff_communications/update_on_major_issues# and <http://www.ox.ac.uk/gazette/2014-2015/25september2014-no5070/notices/#169699>

** All the quotations in this article are taken from the judgment of Dame Janet Smith entitled: *In the Oxford University Court of Appeal: In the Appeal of Professor Denis Galligan* (1st September 2014). The number following each quotation refers to the paragraph in the judgment.

Consideration of comments on the EJRA made by the University’s Appeal Court

STEPHEN GOSS

THE University has operated an Employer-Justified Retirement Age (EJRA) of 30 September before the 68th birthday for all academic and academic-related staff since October 2011. The policy includes a process under which individuals may apply to extend their employment beyond the EJRA, such applications being considered by the EJRA Panel. If the panel declines a request, the individual may appeal to the University’s Appeal Court.

As reported in the *Gazette* of 25 September 2014, the University’s Appeal Court has recently heard such an appeal and has raised some issues regarding the EJRA policy and procedure. The decision of the Court is binding only in relation to the appeal of the individual concerned, and does not create any binding precedent on the University as a whole. The other observations of the Court on the EJRA policy are for the University to use in its consideration of the future of the policy.

The EJRA was established, with the agreement of Congregation, in 2011, following changes in national legislation. After two rounds of wide consultation across the collegiate University, the underpinning amendment to Regulation 7(1) of Council Regulations 3 of 2004 was published to Congregation in the *Gazette* in the normal way: no objections were received, no alternatives were proposed and no Debate was requested. Accordingly, the amendment was implemented.

It was agreed that the EJRA would operate for an initial period of ten years with an interim review after five years. In addition, annual reviews are undertaken by the Personnel Committee.

In the *Gazette* of 25 September 2014, the Personnel Committee reported that it would consider in Michaelmas term how to respond to the issues raised in the judgment. In the *Gazette* of 13 November 2014, it was reported that the Personnel Committee had met and held an initial discussion as to whether the five-year review should be brought forward from 2016/17. The committee, mindful of the importance of giving the issues raised in the judgment careful and thorough consideration, decided that it needed further information prior to another discussion at its meeting in seventh week of Michaelmas term.

The Personnel Committee met again in seventh week and discussed this matter further. It was concerned to ensure that any review of the over-arching EJRA policy has the benefit of sufficient data on which to base reasoned recommendations to Congregation should any changes be considered desirable. Personnel Committee was also aware that those matters raised by the Appeal Court that can be considered in the short term should receive attention as soon as possible. In this context, the committee decided that, in the course of 2015 and with detailed work carried out by a sub-group with some co-opted members, it will consider:

1. Whether the aims of the EJRA need to be clarified;
2. Whether changes are needed to the Considerations (the criteria) for extensions to employment; and,
3. Whether there should be other procedural changes relating to the process for considering requests for employment beyond the EJRA.

The Committee will also oversee the data collection required to inform a wider review of the EJRA and, in the longer term, it will bring proposals to Council to set up a working party to undertake that review. It is anticipated that the working party will consider the extent to which the EJRA is meeting the Aims identified when the policy was established, whether the EJRA is appropriately set at the 30 September before an individual’s 68th birthday, and whether it applies to the right staff groups. These issues, and any others that seem relevant, will be considered in the context of case-law at that time and data concerning the impact of the EJRA at Oxford in comparison with other higher education institutions with and without a retirement age.

Council considered and endorsed this plan of action at its meeting in eighth week of Michaelmas term. Congregation will be kept updated on the committee’s progress. The current policy remains in effect until such time as it may be changed.

The Metrification of ‘Quality’ and the Fall of the Academic Profession

CHRIS LORENZ

IN 2012 the British sociologist Roger Burrows published an article titled ‘Living with the H-Index. Metric assemblages in the academy’. In the opening lines he explains the long term effects of the economization of the university on the workforce as follows:

...“Something has changed in the [British] academy. Many academics are exhausted, stressed, overloaded, suffering from insomnia, feeling anxious, hurt, guilt, and ‘out-of-placeness’. One can observe it all around: a deep, affective, somatic crisis threatens to overwhelm us [...] We know this; yet somehow we feel unable to reassert ourselves [...]. In our brave new world, it seems that a single final criterion of value is recognized: a quantitative, economic criterion. All else is no more than a means. And there is a single method for ensuring that this criterion is satisfied: quantified control”.¹ ...

In this article² I will take Burrows diagnosis as point of departure and I will argue that the neo-liberal reforms of the universities since the 1980’s have installed a type of governance—usually known as ‘New Public Management’—that is undermining the very idea of professionalism.³ NPM does so basically by replacing professional ideas and practices concerning the judgment of quality—and thus of professional selection—by the ‘metrification of output’ in both the domain of teaching and of research. As the very idea of the modern university is based on the idea of professional specialization, NPM is simply making the discussion about ‘the idea of the university’ irrelevant while we speak.⁴ NPM does so because metrification implies the replacement of professional autonomy by permanent quantified assessments, by the gradual replacement of tenured faculty positions by casualized academic labour and—in the Dutch case—also by ‘performance agreements’ between the government and the universities. I use the example of the Dutch universities in order to analyze ‘Impact Factor’ measurement and “performance agreements”.

* * *

The basic argument behind my thesis is that professions need professional autonomy in order to function properly and that quantified control makes this impossible. In order to explain this I want to elaborate on the sociological characteristics of professions and on the differences between professions on the one side, and workers and employees on the other.

The crucial sociological distinction is that professions determine their own *standards*—their own criteria of evaluation—in order to ensure the quality that their professional performances specifically require. Therefore all professions determine their own professional hierarchy; locally, nationally and globally. This hierarchy is ultimately based upon the reputation of the individual professionals. His or her reputation is in turn based on the assessment by the professional community; in this case,

the contribution of the individual scholar to the profession’s body of knowledge. Moreover, professions determine their own procedures of inclusion and of exclusion. Because of this self-determination, professions are basically self-governing institutions when it comes to quality standards. In order for the professions to function, academics need this autonomy, and universities—in order to take quality control seriously and to function professionally—need representative shared-governance by the teaching and researching members of the faculty.⁵

In the Netherlands, however, the principle of shared-governance was replaced in 1997 by a strictly bureaucratic top/down model including a strict hierarchical ordering of all faculty positions and tasks, like in an idealised Weberian bureaucracy. Typically all faculty activities since the introduction of the ‘Universitaire Functie Ordening’ (UFO) in 2003 are subdivided in a limited number of ‘competences’—since 2011: 40!—which are strictly connected to ‘functional profiles’ (“functieprofielen”) and thus to the hierarchical positions. Typically too all important activities require the authorisation and the signature by ‘the superior’ (‘de leidinggevende’).⁶

This model received the Orwellian name ‘steering at a distance’ and was—also faithful to the inverted logic of Orwell’s ‘1984’—advertised as the solution to ‘the problem of bureaucracy’.⁷ Since then, the academic-professional concept of quality has been replaced by the NPM-notion of ‘educational efficiency’ in teaching and ‘impact factor’ in research.⁸ And since ‘educational efficiency’ and ‘impact factor’ are fixed in quantitative terms and are controlled by NPM-management based on its political priorities—namely, budget cuts on public spending—the academics can no longer work according to their own professional standards.⁹ Both the self-governance of professionals concerning quality standards and the professional time regime (that is the time needed to meet the professional criteria) have been replaced by a rigid regime of quantified control.¹⁰ As to the individual and collective ‘performance’ in research the ‘impact-factor’ of publications has over the last 30 years turned into the ‘golden standard’ of ‘quality measurement’.

The steep rise to the ‘top’ of ‘impact factor’ measurement has recently been analyzed by the Austrian sociologist Christian Fleck and both its short history and its utter lack of any disciplinary rationality are nothing less than bewildering.¹¹ This holds for the fields that are recognized as ‘disciplines’, the journals that are excluded and the new ones that are included in the citation indexes, the time span that citations are tracked, and last but not least: the way in which the nationality of the authors of publications is established by the firms that produce the citation indexes.

Fleck did a case study of the field of sociology with remarkable results:

*“A case-by-case check brought strange results: In practically all cases the ostensible ‘country of publication’ was indeed the location of the publishing house. For instance the Journal of Sociology is indicated as being located in England only because its publisher Sage is, whereas the editors are located down under and the journal is nothing less than the official journal of The Australian Sociological Association (tasa). Scrutinizing all journals’ websites revealed that it is impossible to assign a nation state to each of them. Whenever the group of editors assembled scholars from more than one country, I moved them to the “international” group, in sum. The alleged ‘nationality’ of the journals changed dramatically in some cases, in particular the United Kingdom and the Netherlands lost many, whereas the number of journals located in the United States went down only slightly”.*¹²

Flecks ‘discovery’ that the nationality of the academic journals is identified with the nationality of the publisher may explain, among other things, what is known as ‘the Dutch paradox’. This paradox refers to the supposed ‘fact’ that the ‘output’ alias the ‘productivity’ of Dutch researchers is significantly higher than of most researchers outside the Netherlands.¹³ This ‘fact’ is quite surprising because Dutch spending on the universities and research is below the European average. Moreover, it is increasingly sinking in relative terms due to the sustained Dutch saving policy on education and research.¹⁴ Therefore successive Dutch governments have congratulated themselves on basis of the ‘Impact Factor’ (IF) statistics that suggest that the Dutch have discovered the formula of “sitting on the first row for a penny” (“voor een dubbeltje op de eerste rang zitten”). What is regarded as common sense for most other professional activities—from playing football or tennis to performing music or collecting art—the insight that there is a strong and positive correlation between the size of an investment and its ‘output’—is explicitly denied for academic activities.¹⁵ Therefore the Dutch governments, irrespective of their political colours, have stubbornly continued to save money on the universities since the 1980’s.

Fleck’s ‘discovery’, however, suggests that the comparatively good ‘productivity’ of Dutch research may be attributed to other factors. The first factor is that the Netherlands—being a ‘tax haven’ for multinationals—is the registered ‘home base’ of some big publishing houses that produce above average numbers of academic journals—like Elsevier Reed and Wolters Kluwer. This fact helps to explain why ‘Dutch’ journals are doing so well in international comparisons.

The second factor is the fact that publications are registered as ‘Dutch’ when at least one of its authors is based at a Dutch university (and not necessarily being a Dutch citizen). This factor accounts for some 50% of the ‘Dutch’ publications, because half of the ‘Dutch’ publications have at least one author who is based at a non-Dutch university.¹⁶

The third factor is also due to the method of measurement. The relative high ‘productivity’ can partially be explained by the relative low number of Dutch researchers, as the authors of the NOWT-report mention in a footnote.¹⁷ The fourth factor is again related to the method of measurement: the authors state that the (high) level of aggregation of their data may have a “significant influence” on the collection of publications and thus on the citation and impact scores.¹⁸

The fifth factor explaining ‘Dutch’ ‘productivity’ is

also mentioned in the footnotes of the very same report that ‘registers’ the Dutch ‘success’: possible ‘biases’ due to methods of measurement, like the English language bias of the ‘Web of Science’ and the limited validity of the measurements due to changes in the categorisations of journals, making comparisons over time adventurous to say the least.

A final factor concerns the assumption that the introduction of the measurement indicators of ‘Web of Science’ is not causing disturbing ‘external’ effects itself—and if they do, that they do this everywhere in the same manner.¹⁹ The retrospective nature of rankings is thus carefully ignored, including the established fact that the retroactivity varies with the ‘local’ effects of rankings.²⁰

So, all in all, on closer analysis one wonders on what grounds *other than political* anybody would take the ‘measurement’ of ‘productivity’ based on ‘impact factors’ seriously *at all*. Fleck’s conclusion seems inescapable:

*“The quite recently established regime of IFs [Impact Factors] is driven by the business concerns of two international corporations, Thomson Reuters and Elsevier, and accepted as the gold standard in today’s academic market by the newly emerging elite of university administrators and policymakers, using it whenever it fits their impression management strategies”.*²¹

A recent case study on impact factor measurement by the Dutch philosopher of science Hans Radder corroborates Fleck’s findings. Radder analysed four issues of well known journals in philosophy and the social sciences and checked how the factual citations compared to the presuppositions of ‘impact factor measurement’.²² First he came to the conclusion that there are no factual grounds to prefer journal articles to book chapters because more than half of the factual citations in his sample refer to book chapters. His second conclusion is that the ‘Journal Impact Factor’ (JIF) is based on a far shorter time frame—two years—than the actual citations suggest and therefore is arbitrary and meaningless. Moreover, circa 25% of the citations to journal articles refer to journals that are not included in ‘Web of Science’ so their ‘impact’ is missing in the ‘JIF’.

All in all we can conclude that the installing of the new regime of ‘impact factors’ was and still is the ‘Great Leap Forward’ in the de-professionalization of the faculty. Paradoxically, simultaneous with their factual de-professionalization, academic professionals are systematically being represented in NPM-discourse as entrepreneurial subjects responsible for their own ‘business’, that is, for the (financial) ‘output’ they ‘produce’ for ‘the university’ through cost ‘efficient’ teaching and ‘excellent’ research. Due to the continuing casualization of academic work research in the meantime has been transformed into a (financial) privilege of the happy few who are successful in obtaining researchgrants.²³

As Rosalind Gill has shown, the precarious working conditions of the casualized academics—and most of the newcomers in NPM-universities are casualized—in the meantime have become very similar to the casualized labour force in the cultural sector.²⁴ Of course this observation does not ignore the fact that the—fast shrinking—tenured part of the faculty, especially the full professors, are working under different and far better

conditions than their casualized ‘colleagues’. The point is that casualization has become the NPM-rule while tenure-track and tenure have become the exception for newcomers in the university system.²⁵

The crucial fact here is that these control systems—increasingly advertised as ‘audits’—are not set and run by professionals themselves but by politicians and university managers according to their political agenda.²⁶ The reality that many managers and politicians are *former* professionals is not relevant. What is relevant is that they no longer behave like professionals because they do not stick to the quality standards of their profession. Professionals know and acknowledge that ‘the Gods may be uncooperative’. To the contrary, managers and politicians presuppose that the Gods can be forced to cooperate and to obey their policy plans and statistics. If the facts contradict the statistics, it is so much the worse for the facts.

As soon as the academic professionals are transformed into ‘producers’ of fixed ‘outputs’—and students into their ‘consumers’—the perversion of professionalism is guaranteed because professional standards of quality go down the drain. ‘Perverse stimuli’ in order to meet policy goals—by adapting the ‘output’ to policy statistics irrespective of quality standards—then move to the center of the university system—with ‘institutional dysfunction’ and cynicism on the workforce as predictable results.²⁷ ‘Campbell’s Law’ in social psychology would predict that much: “The more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social process it was intended to monitor.”²⁸

Let me illustrate my last statement about ‘fixed outputs’ and forcing the Gods to cooperate with policy plans and statistics with the example of the University of Utrecht—which is the Dutch university that usually ranks highest.²⁹ Just like all the other Dutch universities the University of Utrecht in 2012 has signed so-called ‘Performance Agreements’ with the Dutch government concerning the ‘improvement’ of the ‘quality’ of education and research.³⁰ For simplicity’s sake I will restrict myself to the area of ‘educational efficiency’.

In order to increase the NPM-‘quality’ of education, the management of University Utrecht has promised to reduce the drop-out rate of students systematically. Utrecht promised the government to reduce the drop-out rate after the 1st year from 20% in 2006 and 18% in 2010 to 15% in 2016. Politicians and managers regard the reduction of the dropout rate as a crucial indicator of the improvement of ‘quality’ that is identical to the ‘success’ of their own policies and those professionals that don’t produce the right ‘improvements’—at least in their statistics—are facing serious problems. In this context the fact that the ‘modern’ universities are silently abolishing tenure and tenure track jobs, leaving most newcomers completely dependent on HRM-‘evaluations’ for new, temporary, contracts, is all the more significant.³¹

Utrecht has also promised the Dutch government to deliver more ‘excellent’ students. Utrecht will raise the percentage of ‘excellent’ students participating in ‘honours courses’ from 5% in 2006 and 9% in 2010 to 12% in 2016. Again we see the promise of guaranteed ‘progress’. It is ‘excellence on delivery’—by silently speeding up the diploma mill.

Utrecht University is by no means the only institution promising the Dutch government exactly what it asks for; that is, more ‘quality’ in education and research for less money. All do. For instance, the ‘Fontys Hogescholen’—a conglomerate of professional schools—have promised to ‘deliver’ 95% of its students with a degree within 5 years! In comparison to Fontys the promise of Utrecht University even appears fairly modest: it will only raise its present percentage of 74% ‘successful students’ within 4 years to 77% in 2016—in 2006 the percentage was 69%—so there is still plenty of room for further ‘improvement’ in the future.

So much for my educational examples of quantified systems of control, systems of which the ‘Performance Agreements’ only represent a top level, together with the university rankings. Below this top level there is a whole network of other quantified control systems, working from the level of the individual faculty member over the institutional and national levels to the international level. I am referring to the citation index, workload models, transparent costing data, research assessments, teaching quality assessments and university league tables. Ideally, all these systems are somehow coordinated by so-called ‘Human Resource Management’ which is an integral part of New Public Management.³² In fact, they all put increasing pressure on all faculty members, especially on the fast growing majority without tenure or tenure track, while stimulating a bewildering variety of perverse and counterproductive effects, ranging from strategic citing over (self-)plagiarism to outright fraud.³³

* * *

Characteristic of all these external systems of control is that they basically replace the idea of professional quality by measurable quantity. They exchange professionalism for metrification. This metrification is predominantly based on so-called output indicators: output of research, output of teaching, etc. New Public Management claims that metrification confers ‘transparency’ and ‘objectivity’ to ‘quality control’ in closed and self-serving professions. Therefore (supposedly democratic) ‘transparency’, (supposedly democratic) ‘accountability’, and (economic) ‘efficiency’ are the buzzwords in NPM—discourse.³⁴ All the ‘free market’ rhetoric notwithstanding, Richard Münch and Len Ole Schäfer have argued that ‘output-financing’ of the universities simultaneously generates oligopoly-formation and “a kind of academic cannibalism” in which the financially successful departments, universities, etc. are driving the financially less successful ones out of competition. This tendency is undermining the diversity and capacity for innovation of the university system *as such*.³⁵

In the last instance NPM has moved the power of the professions to determine their own criteria of evaluation to a very small number of mainly Anglo-Saxon corporations that produce the data for university rankings. For the humanities this is very bad news because the humanities hardly matter for these corporations. The typical ‘output’ of the humanities—the monograph, especially—does not show up in their ‘output indicators’. I am now referring to corporations like *Thomson/Reuters*, that produces the *Web of Knowledge*; *Google*, that produces *Google Scholar*; *Elsevier Reed* that produces *Scopus*; the *Times Higher Education*, that pro-

duces the *THE* ranking, etc. This also holds for the Dutch NOWT-report that is based on the data of 'Web of Science'. In the report's overview of 'impact factors' the humanities are all of a sudden excluded on the basis of the argument that... citation scores in this domain are poor indicators of 'quality'.³⁶

Because all university rankings are based on a mix of 'output indicators', the rankings produce widely diverging results for most universities.³⁷ For example, two years ago the global ranking of the Dutch university of Utrecht varied somewhere between place no. 50 and place no. 100 in the various rankings. Nevertheless, climbing in these rankings has become the primary policy goal of university management because climbing in ranking is perceived as the only 'proof' of the 'success' of management policies and of thus of the 'improvement' of the university's NPM-'quality'. The fundamental fact that universities almost invariably occupy quite different positions in different rankings—with the remarkable consequence that the 'climbing' and the 'falling' of a university may occur *simultaneously*—is simply ignored. This variety in ranking results may even be seen as a managerial advantage because it always allows management to pick its favourite ranking for its 'public relations', as Fleck also observes.

However this may be, the best thing university management can do is to establish its *own* ranking, as Leiden University understood some years ago. In that case you can fix your own mix of output indicators and you can basically fix your own ranking.³⁸ We could call this '*rank fixing*', a term inspired by the recent discovery of 'match fixing' in sports. This has been studied by sociologists³⁹, and is an instance of what "Campbell's Law" states in social psychology.

Given its fundamental policy relevance in NPM ranking is far from an 'innocent' practice. Increasingly university management is channeling research funding exclusively into those branches of 'their firm' that make 'top' contributions to the university's position in the rankings and are withholding funding from those branches that do not. This practice has already led to the shutting down of quite a few departments in the humanities and social sciences over the last 20 years—and most certainly there is more 'concentration' to come because neoliberal governments are simultaneously deciding which branches of the university are important for 'the economy' and therefore are worthy of public funding in the future. In the UK and in the US the so-called 'STEM' sciences have been labelled as such—Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. In the Dutch case the representatives of nine economic 'topsectors' have been installed by the government to determine which researchers shall live or die in the future. The 'topsectors' are: 1. Horticulture and Basic Materials; 2. Agri & Food; 3. Water; 4. Life Sciences & Health; 5. Chemical Industry; 6. High Tech; 7. Energy; 8. Logistics, and 9. Creative Industry.⁴⁰ For those academics who nevertheless may miss the 'message' the Dutch policy paper stated explicitly: "No business as usual, the task [of the government] is to use science more effectively as fuel in the pipeline 'Knowledge-knowhow-cash register'".⁴¹

As a consequence of this economic policy the Dutch universities are now demanding the 'valorisation' ('valorising') of research from the faculty—meaning that you can show how your research will fuel the pipeline

'knowledge-knowhow-cash register'—and vice versa many academics in the human sciences that apply for research grants now are trying to make plausible that their actual core interest and activity was and is "creative industry", being the only designated economic 'top sector' which looks slightly familiar to them.

* * *

So academics are actually losing their jobs as a direct consequence of the policy and practice of 'valorisation' and of ranking.⁴² Moreover would-be future academics in an increasing number of 'uneconomic' branches are confronted with blocked or non-existing career paths as a consequence of ranking policies. Small wonder therefore that not all faculty members are enthusiastic about ranking and assessments.

This lack of enthusiasm among the faculty is not unknown to university management given the fact that quite a few authors have published advice on how to deal with this 'toxic' problem.⁴³ Tara Newman for instance advises university managers to actively recruit "missionaries" and "cheerleaders" among the faculty who can help management to solve the problem that "overwhelmingly, administrators are being faced with faculty resistance to assessment efforts":

"The overwhelming viewpoint of faculty is that accreditation—and therefore assessment—is other-imposed and not meaningful to their work as instructors".⁴⁴

Newman explains to management that this lack of enthusiasm of the faculty is based on their lack of understanding:

"When there is a lack of understanding of assessment, faculty members tend to feel imposed upon. Questions of academic freedom arise. When the understanding is clear, however, an intrinsic motivation begins to develop and higher levels of importance are placed upon the efforts".⁴⁵

Now the 'trick' is to convince the faculty that continuous assessment is just part of *their* profession and to develop "a culture of evidence within an institution".... "If administrators want faculty buy in, they have to invite faculty to be engaged in the process—not merely go through the motions to satisfy external requirement"—especially because in an "overall low-trust environment" faculty will just be "playing the game".⁴⁶ In the end everything depends on making the faculty understand that assessment is part of teaching and management can do this by "promoting professional development" and creating "Faculty Learning Communities (FLC)".⁴⁷

Next to the creation of FLCs in order to 're-educate' the faculty, the only problem university management has left is to get their own ranking system—if they develop one—accepted by other universities that have gone down the same road. For good New Public managers that is no problem because they simply presuppose that if the Gods are not cooperative, you just can make them cooperate: they all share a principled preference for the world as it is described in their policy statistics. If you don't like or distrust the facts as a manager, you better fix them beforehand.

- ¹ Roger Burrows, 'Living with the H-Index? Metric assemblages in the contemporary academy', *The Sociological Review*, 60 (May 2012), nr. 2, pp. 355-56. Burrows is citing: Grahame Lock and Herminio Martins. 'Quantified Control and the Mass Production of "Psychotic Citizens"'
- ² This article is an abridged version of 'Fixing the Facts. The Rise of New Public Management, the Metrification of "Quality" and the Fall of the Academic Professions' that will be published in: *Journal of Social History and the History of Social Movements* 52 (2014). I dedicate this article to my former colleague and friend Grahame Lock, who untimely died on July 21st. 2014.
- ³ Burrow's diagnosis is supported by many others. See Rosalind Gill, 'Breaking the Silence. The Hidden Injuries of the Neoliberal University', in: Ryan Flood and Rosalind Gill (eds.), *Secrecy and Silence in the Research Process. Feminist Reflections*, London 2010, pp. 228-244; Susan Ryan, 'Academic Zombies. A failure of resistance or a means of survival?', *Australian Universities Review* 54 (2012), nr. 2, pp. 1-11; Katherine Bode and Leigh Dale, "'Bullshit'? An Australian Perspective; or, What can an Organisational Change Impact Statement tell us about Higher Education in Australia?', *Australian Humanities Review*, (November 2012), nr. 53, at: <http://www.australianhumanitiesreview.org/archive/Issue-November-2012/bode&dale.html>; Andrew Nadolny and Susanne Ryan, 'McUniversities revisited: a comparison of university and McDonald's casual employee experiences in Australia', *Studies in Higher Education*, 2013, 1-16; Rosalind Gill, 'Academics, Cultural Workers and Critical Labour Studies', *Journal of Cultural Economy* Vol. 7, nr. 1, 2014, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/10.1080/17442019.2014.900000>; Nikki Sullivan and Jane Simon, 'Academic Work Cultures: Somatic Crisis in the Enterprise University', *Somatechnics* 4 (2014), nr.2, pp.205-218; Nan Seuffert, 'Engagement, Resistance and Restructuring: A Legal Challenge', *Somatechnics* 4 (2014), nr.2, pp.272-287.
- ⁴ See for academics as professionals: Keith Roberts and Karen Donahue, 'Professing Professionalism. Bureaucratization and Deprofessionalization in the Academy', *Sociological Focus*, 33 (October 2000), pp. 365-383; Frank Donogue, *The Last Professors. The Corporate University and the Fate of the Humanities*, Fordham UP 2008.
- ⁵ For the historical relationship between education and democracy as ideals in the US see: Wendy Brown, 'The End of Educated Democracy', in: *Representations*, 116 (Autumn 2011), nr. 1, pp. 19-41; 'Save the university', Berkeley 26 September 2009, at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aR4xYBGdQgw>.
- ⁶ See http://www.vsnul.nl/functie_ordeningsysteem_ufo.html
- ⁷ Chris Lorenz, 'If you're so smart, why are you under surveillance? Universities, Neoliberalism and New Public Management', in: *Critical Inquiry*, Spring 2012 Issue, pp.599-630.
- ⁸ When all students get their (ECTS) creditpoints 'on time' the 'teaching efficiency' of the teacher is 100%. When 10% of the students are 'delayed' in obtaining their creditpoints the teachers 'teaching efficiency' is 90% etc. Therefore striving after maximum 'teaching efficiency' always manifests itself in striving after a minimal 'drop out' rate. Also 'selection' of student performances by the teacher on qualitative grounds always appears as a 'drop out' and as a 'loss of production' within this scheme. See Lorenz (1995) op cit., pp.601-610 and 621-625.
- ⁹ See Lock and Martins, 'Quantified Control'; Grahame Lock and Chris Lorenz, 'Revisiting the university front', *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 26 (2007), pp. 405-418; Lorenz (1995) op cit.
- ¹⁰ For the effects of the neoliberal time management see: Paula Baron, 'Working the Clock: The Academic Body on Neoliberal Time', *Somatechnics* 4 (2014), nr.2, pp.253-271.
- ¹¹ Christian Fleck, 'The Impact Factor Fetishism', *European Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 54 (2013), nr.2, pp.327-356.
- ¹² Fleck, op cit., pp. 344-45.
- ¹³ See Nederlands Observatorium van Wetenschap en Technologie (NOWT), *Wetenschaps- en Technologie Indicatoren Rapport 2010*.
- ¹⁴ See Chris Lorenz, 'It's getting better all the time! Universiteit en New Public Management', in: Fenna Vergeer (ed.), *De Onderwijsbubbel. Over kennisverarming en zelfverrijking*, (Garran: Antwerpen 2011), pp.86-111.
- ¹⁵ Cf. Gail Kinman, 'Doing More with Less? Work and Wellbeing in Academics', *Somatechnics* 4 (2014), nr.2, pp. 219-235.
- ¹⁶ *Wetenschaps- en Technologie Indicatoren Rapport 2010*, p.89, note 41.
- ¹⁷ *Wetenschaps- en Technologie Indicatoren Rapport 2010*, p.91, note 44.
- ¹⁸ *Wetenschaps- en Technologie Indicatoren Rapport 2010*, p88-89, note 38.
- ¹⁹ *Wetenschaps- en Technologie Indicatoren Rapport 2010*, p.89, note 40.
- ²⁰ See Wendy Espeland and Michael Sauder. 'Rankings and Reactivity: How Public Measures Re-create Social Worlds,' *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol.113 (2007), pp.1-40. They point out that rankings especially generate strategic retroactive action in the 'border zones' of rankings, because management tends to find it important that their institutions obtain or keep e.g. a position in the national or global top-10, top-20, top-50, top 100 etc.
- ²¹ Fleck, op cit., p.355.
- ²² Hans Radder, *Waartoe wetenschap? Over haar filosofische rechtvaardiging en maatschappelijke legitimering*, at: http://dare.uvu.vu.nl/bitstream/handle/1871/50855/Afscheidscollege_Radder.pdf, pp. 8-9. The researched journals are *Journal for General Philosophy of Science/Zeitschrift für allgemeine Wissenschaftstheorie, Philosophy of Science, Minerva, and Science, Technology, and Human Values*.
- ²³ See Hilde de Weerd, 'Taken for granted', *Times Higher Education*, 16 August 2012, at: <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/features/taken-for-granted/420848.article>.
- ²⁴ Gill, 2010, op cit.
- ²⁵ Also see: Tanner Mirrlees and Shahid Alvi, 'Taylorizing Academia, Deskilling Professors and Automating Higher Education', *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies* (2014), Vol. 12 Issue 2, pp. 45-73.
- ²⁶ Cris Shore, 'Audit Culture and Illiberal Governance. Universities and the Culture of Accountability', *Anthropological Theory*, 8 (July 2008), pp. 278-299; Mary Strathern (ed.), *Audit Cultures. Anthropological Studies in Accountability, Ethics and the Academy*. (London: Routledge 2000).
- ²⁷ Wendy Espeland and Michael Sauder. 'Rankings and Reactivity: How Public Measures Re-create Social Worlds,' *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol.113 (2007), pp.1-40 make the same arguments for the effect of rankings.
- ²⁸ Richard Münch and Len Ole Schäfer, 'Rankings, Diversity and the Power of Renewal in Science: A Comparison Between Germany, the UK and the US, in: *European Journal of Education* 49:1 (2014), pp. 60-76.
- ²⁹ *Strategisch Plan Universiteit Utrecht 2012-2016*, at: http://www.uu.nl/university/utrecht/NL/profiel/Profielenmissie/Documents/Strategisch_Plan_0122016.pdf?referer=university/utrecht/NL/profielenmissie/Documents/Strategisch_Plan_2012-2016.pdf [accessed 28th. March 2014].
- ³⁰ 'OCW en Universiteit Utrecht Tekenen Prestatieafspraken' at: <http://pers.uu.nl/ocwuniversity-utrecht-tekenen-prestatieafspraken/> [accessed 2^{8th}. March 2014].
- ³¹ See Richard Moser. 'Overuse and Abuse of Adjunct Faculty Members Threaten Core Academic Values', *The Chronicle Of Higher Education*. 13 January 2014.
- ³² See Matthew Waring, 'All in This Together? HRM and the Individualisation of the Academic Worker', *Higher Education Policy*, 26 (September 2013), pp. 397-419; Burrows, 2012, op cit.
- ³³ See Willem Halfman and Hans Radder, 'Het Academisch Manifest', *Krisis. Tijdschrift voor Actuele Filosofie*, 2013, nr. 3 (www.krisis.eu); Ruud Abma, *De Publiciteitsfabriek. Over de betekenis van de Affaire Stapel*, Nijmegen 2013; Russell Craig, Joel Amerinc and Dennis Tourish, 'Perverse Audit Culture and Accountability of the Modern Public University', *Financial Accountability & Management* Vol. 30 (2014), no.1, pp.1-24.
- ³⁴ In Lorenz, 2012, op cit: I have analyzed NPM-discourse on education as a 'bullshit-discourse' in the sense that Harry Frankfurt gave the term in his *On Bullshit*, Princeton 2005.
- ³⁵ Richard Münch and Len Ole Schäfer, 'Rankings, Diversity and the Power of Renewal in Science. A Comparison between Germany, the UK and the US', *European Journal of Education* vol.49 (2014), nr.1. pp. 60-76.
- ³⁶ *Wetenschaps- en Technologie Indicatoren Rapport 2010*, note 47, NOWT 2010, p.97, noot 47, Tabel 5.3
- ³⁷ See e.g.: David D. Dill and Maarja Soo. 'Academic Quality, League Tables, and Public Policy: A Cross-National Analysis of University Ranking Systems', *Higher Education*. Vol. 49 (2005), no. 4, pp.495-533; Alex Usher and Massimo Savino. *Higher Education in Europe*. Volume 32 (2007), no. 1; David Pontille and Didier Torny. 'The Controversial Policies of Journal Ratings: Evaluating Social Sciences and Humanities', *Research Evaluation*. Vol. 19 (2010), no. 5. pp. 347-360; Christophe Charle. 'L'évaluation des enseignants-chercheurs. Critiques et propositions', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'Histoire*. Vol. 102 (2009), pp. 159-170; Hildegard Matthies and Dagmar Simon (eds.), *Wissenschaft unter Beobachtung. Effekte und Defekte von Evaluationen*. (Heidelberg: Springer. 2008); Fleck, op cit.
- ³⁸ Actually the Leiden ranking put Leiden University on place nr. 58 in 2013 and Utrecht University on place 64—in the world, that is. See: <http://www.leidenranking.com/ranking> (accessed 3rd. January 2014). The THES-ranking put them on place 67 and 74 respectively while the Sjanghai ranking reversed their hierarchy and put Leiden on place 73 and Utrecht on place 53 in 2013. For many universities the range of variation among the various rankings is even more impressive.
- ³⁹ Espeland and Sauder, 2007, op cit.
- ⁴⁰ For the Dutch 'topsectoren' policy see: <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/ondernemersklimaat-en-innovatie/investeren-in-topsectoren>.
- ⁴¹ "Geen business as usual, de opdracht is de wetenschap nog beter in te zetten als brandstof in de pijplijn kennis-kunde-kassa", *Kwaliteit in Verscheidenheid 2011*, at: <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/rapporten/2011/07/01/kwaliteit-in-verscheidenheid.html>.
- ⁴² See Frank Donogue, *The Last Professors. The Corporate University and the Fate of the Humanities*, Fordham UP 2008.
- ⁴³ See Marla Gottschalk, 'Managers Beware: What Toxic "Jane" or "Joe" Can Do to Your Team', <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/article/20140426191009-128811924-managers-beware-what-toxic-jane-or-joe-can-do-to-your-team/>; Hanny Lerner, 'How To Get Rid Of Toxic Employees—And Hire Right', at: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/banmylerner/2013/10/05/how-to-hire-the-right-employees-and-discover-the-toxic-ones/> (accessed at 23-05-2014); Simon Springer, 'The Violence of Neoliberalism', in: Simon Springer a.o (eds.). *The Routledge Handbook of Neoliberalism* (forthcoming).
- ⁴⁴ Tara Newman, 'Engaging Faculty in the Assessment Process: Recruiting Missionaries and Cheerleaders', *The Journal of Academic Administration in Higher Education* vol.6 (2010), nr.2, pp.9-14.
- ⁴⁵ Newman, op cit., p.10.
- ⁴⁶ Newman, op cit., p.10. Cf. Vincent Icke, 'He no playa da game?', in: Lorenz (ed.), *If you're so smart why aren't you rich?*, 269-281.
- ⁴⁷ Newman, op cit., p.11.

Tributes to Jon Stallworthy (1935-2014)



Jon Stallworthy by Alexander McIntyre
bromide fibre print, July 1999
11 in. x 12 5/8 in. (279 mm x 322 mm) image size
Photographs Collection, National Portrait Gallery

'Keen-eyed and skilful mentoring'

Jon Stallworthy's death last November has left a huge gap in the lives of his friends, as well as of course among literary scholars, poets, and all lovers of a good sentence across the English-speaking world. Jon was an attentive, considerate and wise friend, whose warm words of encouragement and lively interest still resonate in my ears, as if he were speaking them right here in the room. It is almost impossible to believe that he will no longer come striding round a corner at Wolfson College, or briskly descend the brick staircase running down from his eyrie study, to dispense warm greetings and good advice on whatever might be the matter of the day--a tricky opening paragraph in a new piece of writing; a finicky copy-right question; a matter of college administration.

I first came to know Jon as my MPhil examiner back in the late 1980s when, with characteristic generosity and panache, he found, he said, two strongly contrasting aspects to like in my work, what he called 'the writing', and my commitment to studying West African literature in the Oxford English Faculty, where till then it had not been taught or researched before. It is no exaggeration to say that our meeting changed my life in profound and lasting ways. Most importantly, perhaps, Jon took a gamble by agreeing to become my DPhil supervisor, while openly admitting to having little expertise in that same area of African literature. As my funding was tied to Oxford, and there was no other available supervision, he thereby bailed me out in ways of which I only became properly aware much later on. At the time the story he spun was that, having carried out his national service on a Nigerian border post in the 1950s (in fact serving as second lieutenant in the Nigeria Regiment of

the West African Frontier Force), he could pretend to some knowledge of the relevant part of Africa, and for the rest he'd be happy to correct my punctuation, especially in respect of commas (a punctuation mark Jon felt was generally suffering neglect, though in my work in particular).

Jon and I always took great pleasure in retelling and of course embellishing this story as the years went by. Yet the truth is that his light-touch but always keen-eyed and skilful mentoring provided first-rate guidance throughout the DPhil and beyond. Indeed, as his graduate students will all attest, Jon encouraged different kinds of literary achievement in every one of us. When, one year into the DPhil, I went to ground for a few months and wrote a novel, *Screens Against the Sky*, Jon was equally supportive of that work, read it through in draft, and once again in published form, and gave devastatingly insightful feedback, as well as sprinkling his trademark thick black commas throughout the MS. It was a great honour for me to be appointed, in 2007, to the position in the English Faculty and at Wolfson College that Jon once held, and it remains a huge privilege to continue to walk, to the extent I am able, in his path.

Across the years Jon Stallworthy and I often talked about war poetry, as he of course did with so many of his friends and colleagues, but in our case in particular the poetry of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), in which at the time of the centenary in 1999, we had a shared interest. Choosing a poem of Jon's, in his memory, I have settled on a 'round' that he contributed to a 2000 South African War anthology I was involved in editing, and which he since included in his own collection *Body Language* (2004). It draws together, I feel, Jon's distinctive technical mastery, and his strong capacity for bringing to imaginative life the interstices of human history.

'A Round'

Lead ore lifted from a Cornish mine,
married in a furnace to Cornish tin,
their one flesh pewter, a barnacled plate
salvaged from the ribs of a ship of the line,
in Cape Town market sold for a florin
bartered for biltong in the Free State,
a farmer's wedding present for his bride
to shine, until—with the wagon-team
taken, the farm in flames—she cried
as he melted it down, tilting its gleam
to the lips of his bullet-mould, one
of whose slugs would open a seam
in a Cornish miner's son.

ELLEKE BOEHMER

Elleke Boehmer is a novelist, critic, and Professor of World Literature in English. She is a Professorial Governing Body Fellow at Wolfson College, and Associate Director of the Oxford Centre for Life-Writing.

'The leading scholar of war poetry'

I am writing this at the old Hydro building in Craiglockhart, which is now a university but was once the famous war hospital where Owen met Sassoon. Here in Edinburgh, at Owen's 'free-and-easy Oxford', which Sassoon found 'gloomy', there's now a War Poets Collection, and, looking at the shelves of books, there are of course several books with Jon's name on the spine, but there are also so many others that would not have been the same, or have been written at all, without him. He was the leading scholar of war poetry, and a friend, supervisor, supporter and guide to many others in the field. So, to take two examples, Tim Kendall's *Poetry of the First World War* is dedicated to Jon, 'tutor, mentor and friend', and Santanu Das's *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature* thanks Jon for being extremely generous with his time and learning. In my own book too I was keen to thank Jon for his support and kindness. This is a thread that runs through books on the literature of the war, and if I picked any book off the shelf here at Craiglockhart there's a good chance that there would be some acknowledgement of Jon's support, kindness and expertise.

'Good poets are survivors', Jon wrote, even if they die at 25 like Owen, but as editor, teacher, critic, anthologist and biographer, Jon helped them to survive. Jon was the editor and biographer of Owen and the editor of *The Oxford Book of War Poetry*, and also the author of *Anthem for Doomed Youth: Twelve Soldier Poets of the First World War*, and *Survivors' Songs: From Maldon to the Somme*. It is also worth remembering that he became an authority on the literature of the First World War because of his work on Yeats, who in 'On Being Asked for a War Poem' said 'I think it better that in times like these / A poet's mouth be silent'. Jon started to take an interest in Owen because Yeats disliked Owen's poetry and omitted it from *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse* (although, as Jon showed, Yeats was an influence on Owen). Owen became the subject of Jon's Chatterton Lecture for the British Academy, and it was then that Owen's brother Harold invited Jon to become Owen's biographer and editor (Jon dedicated the biography to his friend Harold).

Yeats continued to feature in Jon's work. His *Louis MacNeice* is a biography of a poet who wrote a book on Yeats and was probably, with Heaney, the leading Irish poet after Yeats. Jon's *Singing School: The Making of a Poet* takes its title from Yeats and tells the story of the making of a Yeats scholar as well as a poet. It ends with a farewell conversation with Mrs Yeats:

'So long, and don't spend all your life on Yeats.'

'I won't,' I said and, even as I said it, I knew that the poem in my pocket was more important to me than all the transcriptions in my suitcase—and tomorrow's poem was more important still.

And Jon was an excellent poet, who brought a poet's eye and ear to his scholarly work. The recent collection of his poetry, *War Poet*, showed how the scholar and the poet had shared a subject. Here is 'Self-Portrait in Snow', the last poem in *War Poet*—it's a poem about Jon at a snowy Wolfson but at the end the war creeps in as he refers to a doomed officer's toast in 1916:

Self-Portrait in Snow

for Tom Fairfax

Repainting the picture-window
from a winter palette, the wind
adds pointillist touches of snow.

It has lowered and darkened
pillow-case clouds. Eiderdown
brush-strokes whiten the island

(low left) but not the river, brown
as the drover's coat of the man
on the bridge. He's looking down-

stream. Looking at what? I can
remember summers seen from there,
high noons before the snow began

to settle, all year, on his hair.
He turns. I know him. He knows me.
Our eyes meet, look away—to stare

upstream—at what? We cannot see
for snow, and now an old toast drifts
unlooked-for into memory:

Gentlemen, when the barrage lifts!

GUY CUTHBERTSON

Guy Cuthbertson is a Senior Lecturer at Liverpool Hope University and his Wilfred Owen was published by Yale University Press in 2014. With Lucy Newlyn he is a General Editor of a six-volume edition of Edward Thomas's prose for OUP and edited the first volume, Autobiographies. He edited the second volume with Lucy Newlyn, and they also edited Branch-Lines: Edward Thomas and Contemporary Poetry, to which Jon Stallworthy was a contributor.

'A model of academic generosity'

I first encountered Jon Stallworthy in Paddy's book exchange when I found (between cowboy stories, soft porn, and battered exotic American noir) *The Astronomy of Love* and *Out of Bounds*, and exchanged for my first poetry books four Armada and Fontana stories of wildly exotic children in Surrey stables and large Devon farms. Years later, the wonderful late Don McKenzie introduced me to Jon. Two terms in to my PRS, I hadn't heard from my supervisor, and was too shy to approach him. Bodley lacked several editions of poetry I wanted to consult; Don said 'write to Jon Stallworthy—he will have them and he'll be happy to help'. A postcard came inviting me to lunch at Wolfson in Jon's characteristic neat blue ink; my first taste of his characteristic hospitality. Having read 'Sindhi Woman' and expecting someone stooped and elderly, in Wolfson Lodge I looked straight past the upright man approaching, and nearly blurted out that he couldn't be the poet. He loaned me several books and offered to read a chapter; my first taste of his characteristic kindness. Working with him on the Norton Anthologies and other projects gave me a model of orderly meticulousness; his quickness to agree to give readings or lectures to Continuing Educa-

tion students a model of academic generosity. He really was always happy to help, whether with comments and gentle critique, undeservedly glowing references, or offers of work. He always remembered details of the lives of friends, acquaintances, and colleagues, and always asked after them; he was always courteous, always encouraging. He is very much missed.

I have chosen this poem of his because the echo of MacNeice is appropriate, and I like to think of Jon's words and ours to him travelling out and on.

A poem is

something that someone is saying
no louder, Pip, than my 'goodnight'
words with a tune, which outstaying
their speaker travel as far
as that amazing, vibrant light
from a long extinguished star.

SANDIE BYRNE

Sandie Byrne is a fellow of Kellogg College and University Lecturer in English. 'A Poem is' appears in Rounding the Horn: Collected Poems (Carcenet, 1998).

NOTICE

Lucy Newlyn, literary editor of the *Oxford Magazine*, will be pleased to read literary submissions of any description—e.g. verse, critical prose, very short stories, segments of dialogue, reviews of new dramatic productions and books, etc. Submissions should be no longer than 750 words, and where possible should be sent by email attachment to lucy.newlyn@seh.ox.ac.uk together with a two-sentence bio.

Not the *Gazette* and not

The next number
of the *Magazine*
will appear in
Second week of
this term.

NB The *Oxford Magazine* is not an official publication of the University. It is a forum for the free expression of opinion within the University.

again
now till
Second
Week

Morning walk with Rosa

In memory of Jon Stallworthy who nurtured till the end

You have to be there at the moment when
The sun works with the milk-thick fog
And both of them are paper-white light.

Things as they are no longer seem the same,
You stand in the field, inside the foot of a rainbow
Looking at fog lifting through the rising sun.

Millions of glistening droplets float by
Leaving your cheeks wet, hair humid
And your breath snagged on a 'spider-made-star'

As Rosa whispers, 'etoile'. So that is what's under the fog:
Spider-made stars. Perfectly symmetrical webs
Of fine silk-like threads hanging on blackberry bushes,

Late pink baby roses, between leaves of trees,
From stem to stem and every branch. And now
The sun turns slightly golden and I see

Delicate parachutes landed between ravaged
Sunflowers' stalks, domes of white sky-light
As if the field is lit up by a thousand white lamps.

The spiders have worked with the fog: their nets
Are clad in tiny droplets, minuscule pearls, diamonds,
Disciplined, in perfect rows hanging to the threads

That have followed the shapes of leaves, for now
We are looking at trampolines made of spider webs
Drizzle-plaited, finished off with pyramid-like tops,

And here come the double, triple layered iridescent sheets
Of honey-comb-like structures swaying to our breaths.
Then back to spider-made-stars

That flutter in the air holding their glitter
Up in the open fields, half green, half brown.
I have never seen so many nets carrying water light.

October weaves her tapestry on grasses,
Nets on trees, and we run fingers along translucent
Threads to collect the water on our skin,

Touching the miraculous. So much to see
In the fog, as in the last days' sadness.
The richness that's around seems deeper

When you didn't know to look for it, and saw it there
As fog's offering--a path full of shimmering stones
To help you find your way when you can't see ahead:

The spider web that hangs to the mailbox
Drawing your mind away from the letter,
Into its calming inner architecture

That depends on just one kind of warmth
Born of a sudden morning chill that makes the vapour rise
From mounds of leaves, and fog breathes rainbows.

CARMEN BUGAN

Carmen Bugan is the author of two collections of poems, Crossing the Carpathians and The House of Straw; a memoir, Burying the Typewriter: Childhood Under the Eye of the Secret Police, and a critical study, Seamus Heaney and East European Poetry in Translation: Poetics of Exile. She lives in France with her husband and their two young children.

Ruskin's Hinksey Diggings

ANN SPOKES SYMONDS

Just over 140 years ago John Ruskin (1819-1900), who was Slade Professor of Fine Arts at Oxford, rode to North Hinksey. Here he noticed that the road through the village was rutted and in such a poor condition that carts avoided it and made their way across the village green, making it unsightly. In wet weather the holes were full of stagnant water and rubbish. Oscar Wilde called it a 'great swamp'.¹

North Hinksey, then in Berkshire, had existed since Saxon times and became part of the estate of the Benedictine Abbey in Abingdon. It is shown on John Speed's map of 1610 as 'Lawrence Hinksey' after the church. It was at one time called Ferry Hinksey after the ferry which existed there until 1928.

Ruskin had the idea that by recruiting undergraduates, who needed instruction in what he called the 'lower arts' the road could be repaired. He thought that eventually the cottages which lined the road would not only become more healthy but, in time, the banks at the side of the road could be planted with turf and wild flowers and become more beautiful than a college garden.² Any mosses and fern on the banks could be retained. Drainage would also be necessary.

Ruskin recruited his own gardener from Brantwood, his country house at Coniston in the Lake District, to supervise the work and he wrote out detailed instructions to be followed.

Ruskin knew that undergraduates were sensitive and would need to be persuaded with great care to become his volunteer roadmakers. He therefore invited a number of men, mostly from Balliol, to meet him every week or fortnight at breakfast in his college rooms.³ Ruskin was a popular figure in Oxford and his lectures were always packed. To be able to meet him in his rooms therefore met with favour. Most of those men who went there on 16th March, 1874 became enthusiastic and Ruskin's scheme took off. Others agreed to take part just out of curiosity.

In a letter to one of the volunteers Ruskin wrote:

'I am very desirous that all men should feel it is no desire for notoriety for myself or any fantastic scheme or self-humbling sacrifice for them, but in the most simple conviction that one can be happy in bodily industry only when it is useful; and that all the best material part of education and scholarship must begin in agriculture and such other homely arts, undertaken for public benefit.'

Ruskin knew that many people would not be convinced of the benefit of his idea and that he risked being mocked for its craziness. Oscar Wilde wrote that Ruskin seemed to think that it was 'wrong that all the best physique and strength of the young men of England should be spent aimlessly on cricket ground or river without an end result at all whereas he wanted to show that in all labour there was something noble'.⁴

However, a possible snag arose. According to Hardwicke Rawnsley,⁵ when the Lord of the Manor read about Ruskin's plans in the local press, he was

alarmed and asked for an explanation. However, Dr Henry Acland (a great friend of Ruskin), and a well-known and revered figure in Oxford, not only in medical circles, put the landlord's mind at rest and he did not impose any veto.

Some 15 students took part in the diggings, about six of them from Balliol, and included not only Wilde (from Magdalen) and Rawnsley but Arnold Toynbee and William Gershom Collingwood (the water colour artist and later Ruskin's assistant) and Alfred Milner.

Work started some time in March, 1874 and continued throughout the summer term. Rawnsley described the men handling pick, barrow and spade and that he himself 'learned much of the monotony of navy work and something of its fatigue'. In the winter term Ruskin came to watch the diggers breaking stones and cracking jokes as they worked. He sat by the road in 'blue frock coat and blue cloth cap with ear flaps pulled about his ears'.⁶ Ruskin had recently lost his mother, who had been very close to him, and watching the diggers gave him consolation.

Some of the volunteers lost interest and enthusiasm and left after one or two days' work. As A.E. Street wrote⁷:

'I was moved by admiration for Ruskin to join in the digging but not with much enthusiasm for a long time; still I did dig.'

Edward Bagnall Poulton (Jesus) records his impressions of 'Ruskin's celebrated experiment in road making'.⁸ However, he did not return to the road after one trial experience. He says that it was once described as 'three men on a toothpick'. The cause had appealed to Poulton who took part in the autumn of 1874. He describes Ruskin's gardener as a 'man round and fat as his master was tall and spare' and John F. Edwards wrote that he was a 'sturdy, elderly man who kept his temper when a pick was broken'.⁹

Ruskin, himself had a few attempts at attacking a stone of 'moderate size'.¹⁰ Some undergraduates went out to look, many of them of athletic build, who smoked as they sat by the roadside in the shade of a hedge 'watching the efforts of men who were, by comparison, but puny and feeble specimens of the race'.¹¹ Poulton believed that Ruskin had failed in his cause and that the work done was 'utterly useless'. Citing Henry Taunt's photograph of the diggings, Poulton writes: 'The road was as bad as any in the County before the Hinksey diggers began and it still remains as bad as ever'.¹² Ruskin's plan to beautify the cottage entrances was never achieved.

One of the villagers, on being asked what he thought of the diggers said: 'The young gentlemen came with picks in 'ansomes, but, Lor bless you, they do go on'.¹³ According to Jan Morris, the diggings became a 'national joke'.¹⁴

In *The Graphic* of 27th June, 1874, accompanying

a double-page picture, the young men were called ‘amateur navvies’:

‘Hardly any of them work for two or more consecutive days and each spell of labour is so short that it can hardly have more physical effect than a good walk.’

The writer of this article speculated that perhaps they might look forward to ‘inter-university contests in road-making and other utilitarian occupations, corresponding to the boat races...’¹⁵ Wilde said:¹⁶ ‘like a bad lecture, it ended abruptly—in the middle of a swamp’.

On the whole the road digging was not counted a success. However, it might have inspired the volunteers to become pioneers in other fields. Hardwicke Rawnsley, for instance, co-founded the National Trust. As a verse¹⁷, published at the time put it:

‘In spite of malice and critics’ menace,
Lovers of Ruskin to him be true;
And the truths he taught in the stones of Venice
He will teach in the stones of Hinksey too.’

¹ Wilde, Oscar Art and the Handicraftsman published in *Essays*, 1879

² In a letter to Dr Henry Acland quoted in: *Jan Morris The Oxford Book of Oxford* OUP 1978

³ Rawnsley, Hardwicke *Atlantic Monthly* Volume 85, April 1900

⁴ Wilde *Ibid*

⁵ Rawnsley, *ibid*

⁶ Rawnsley, *ibid*

⁷ In a letter to *The Times* 1st November, 1936

⁸ Poulton, Edward Bagnall, *John Viriamu Jones and Other Oxford Memories*, Longmans Green & Co. London 1911.

⁹ In a letter to *The Times* 1st November, 1936.

¹⁰ Poulton, *ibid*

¹¹ Poulton, *ibid*

¹² Poulton, *ibid*

¹³ H. M. Raleigh in a letter to *The Times* of 18th November, 1936.

¹⁴ Morris, *ibid*

¹⁵ Quoted in a letter from Sir Claud Russell to *The Times*, 15th November, 1936

¹⁶ Wilde, *ibid*

¹⁷ W.B. Paton Letter to *The Times* 18th November, 1936

A Note from New York

MARY ANN CAWS

THIS is art gallery/museum time in New York’s winter season, There are indeed superb musical events, like Handel’s *Saul*, a rarely-sung oratorio, staged at St. Paul’s chapel, with Jonathan’s corpse, the victim of the crazed Saul, left on the plank of a stage even through the intermission—reminding me of the body of Christ left on the bare box of a table/coffin during the intermission of the *St. Matthew Passion* staged by Peter Sellars at the New York Armory this past fall. What you remember haunts what you experience, when it is sufficiently powerful. And there are plays (some of which you can approach inexpensively with discount tickets), like the redoing of *A Delicate Balance*—and the still ongoing *Book of Mormon*, the wittiest musical imaginable, but for me right now, it’s art season.

So with my daughter, on a visit from Northampton, that ideally laid-back and yet now place she lives in—and from which she can take her foldup Brompton bike to put on a boat on some river I haven’t yet seen—we spent a glorious rainy/sleety day going from here to there. Here was first the splendid Pace Gallery show (uptown, there’s a Chelsea one also on the same topic) of *Picasso and Jacqueline: the Evolution of Style*—so chock-full with 140 works, of etchings and drawings and linocuts, with those wonderful displays of hat and hair renderings, such as *Woman Wearing Yellow Hat (Jacqueline)* of 1961 and *Jacqueline with a Flowery Straw Hat* of 1962 and another *Jacqueline with Floral Hat*. Having seen all those former Picassos of Dora Maar in her various hats, I was particularly drawn to all these. Then all the seated in armchair etchings and the pencil sketch

of Jacqueline knitting—so much fun to compare it with what we saw later at the Met Museum, of *Madame Cézanne Sewing*, with that blank space in the middle of the canvas. All these Jacquelines together here were multiply powerful. And occurring at the same time at the Gagosian’s massive show of *Picasso and the Camera*, where Dora Maar reappears, in paintings and in Picasso’s portraits.

Upstairs in the same building as uptown Pace, we browsed into the end of an Atget show. Speaking of hauntings: these trees and their shadows, these storefronts with their headless figures and the rows of trousers with unreadable price tags(!) you could well understand his saying that with these, in his album of the *Documents pour l’Histoire du Vieux Paris*, “I possess the whole of old Paris.” And you sense that through him, you too have that privilege.

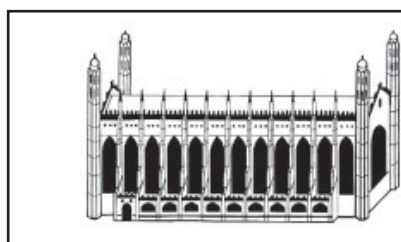
At the Met also, the superextraordinary, enormous, even palatial *Grand Design: Pieter Coecke van Aelst and Renaissance Tapestry* is enough to knock you over. Or down. This is the 16th century gone, if not mad, then at least immense: these works by the Flemish master of the Northern Renaissance were owned by Hapsburgs, the Medicis, the Emperor Charles V, Henri VIII, and François Premier. We see the “petit patrons” or preparations for the cartoons that the weavers hung on the back of their looms to do their super-painstaking slow work. And the Big Things! With their frames sometimes echoing the events: when *Saint Paul is Directing the Burning of the Heathen Books* (1529-30), a putto in the frame is pulling out his fellow putto from beneath a book tum-

bling from the fire into his space. You can see that the tumbling book was added after the *petit patron*, where nothing is falling that far down. So much excitement here, raging fires, beheadings and those headless bodies with the blood dripping, points of spears in endless rows, images of Sloth and Timidity and Despair in the tapestries of the capital sins, horses rushing into you right off the wall.

The Leonard Lauder gift to the Met of his over-the-top grand collection of Cubism was like dessert: the intersection of Picasso and Braque about so much and then about collage you could linger over endlessly, but for me, the Juan Gris part was the Crème Chantilly on top: those still lives with the stemmed glasses and the spoons and cups and grain of the table and tobacco wrapping and everything seen through everything was an eye-ful gone

wild. To say nothing of the portrait of Germaine Raynal on the back of the *Houses in Paris* of 1911 or 1912—no money, no extra canvas, use what you have, just on the other side. I figure there's a lesson for all of us in that.

Quieter, but no less fun, was the exhibition at the very very upscale library showplace, the Grolier Club, of *One Hundred Books Famous in Children's Literature*: with showcases devoted to Fairy Tales and Fables, Faith, Learning, Nursery Rhymes, Poetry, Girls and Boys, Animals, Fantasy, Adventure, Novelties, and Toys. Besides the staggering assortment of inventiveness on show, what fascinated me most was not just the overlap between divisions (signaled by the curator, Chris Loker) but how you go about dividing and inter-referring, a source of constant struggle to those of us writing biographies or indeed almost anything. Even this.



Notes from Cambridge

EVERY year at the end of December Cambridge publishes the *Annual Report of the Council*, the *Annual Report of the General Board to the Council*, and what used to be called the *Annual Accounts* but is now entitled *Reports and Financial Statements for the year ended [31 July that year]*.¹ Every year in January these three Reports come up for Discussion in the Senate House, so that the Regent House has its chance to comment.

So what has been significant this year? The Council Report notes the outcome of a working group's efforts to review the University's governance, as prompted by HEFCE after an audit visit in 2008.² This was published for the Regent House to read in March 2014.³ HEFCE is said to be satisfied.

The working group, however, thought there was room for improvement. One of its proposals already being implemented was the creation of a new 'web-based Governance hub'.⁴ This is at present a bit of a hybrid. It offers on the open web a Beginners' Guide to the way the University works, but it also contains (behind Cambridge's equivalent of Single Sign-On) Council Agendas and Minutes and a number of documents considered at Council meetings, though not all. The plan seems to be to add to these resources to create a consolidated single-visit place to find Agendas and Minutes of other principal committees.

It has been a year of ballots and avoidance of ballots. Proposals to alter the procedure for nomination and election to the Chancellorship have had to be put on hold after the Graces were withdrawn to avoid the alarming prospect of having to organise a possible ballot of the Senate (the counterpart of Oxford's Convocation). Cambridge's procedure is far more complex than Oxford's direct method of allowing the electorate to make the nominations.⁵

Proposals for review of the IT infrastructure had met

with opposition in the previous year but were carried on a ballot, after which the Council has had to set up a new committee structure. Proposals to centralise the organisation of sport in the University proved highly controversial and prompted a long Discussion and a vote in the Michaelmas Term. The General Board Report mentions the contentious Hawking Professorship but not the ballot which took place before the very special arrangements were allowed. A Grace of 22 October permitting the use of electronic (online) voting in ballots, formerly equally controversial, eventually went through—ironically without a ballot.

A Review of Estates Services was announced in the *Gazette* before Christmas,⁶ so it may be of interest that Cambridge has approved by Grace radical 'revised committee arrangements for estates strategy and buildings'. This is timely if it works, in view of the vast risk Cambridge is taking on with the North-West Cambridge project, 'the largest single capital development project that the University has undertaken in its 800-year history.'⁷

On several matters which are the responsibility of the General Board both General Board and Council have something to say in their Annual Reports, so there is some overlap of topics. Some notable points on students first. There is a note in the Annual Reports to the effect that some progress has been made in answering the vexed question of what it actually costs to educate an undergraduate at Cambridge but that this is still a work in progress. This:

*'is reviewed annually by a working group which includes student representation. Work to improve the understanding of College costs in the model has made good progress during the year.'*⁸

Research students have caused some disquiet by their

comments on their experience. So a new Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Students ‘clearly sets out what is expected of such students and what, in turn, those students may expect from their Supervisors, their Degree Committees, and their Faculties and Departments’. The announcement elsewhere of the ‘Aspiring Leaders Programme’, a course on ‘Management Essentials’, and the ‘Emerging Research Leaders’ Development Programme’ should ensure that those responsible now get this right. A course on ‘Speed Reading’ is offered too; that should help with the need to take in the contents of the Code of Practice and ensure that all academics familiarise themselves with it thoroughly.

In one important respect the Code’s expectations are fundamentally different from those which would apply in Oxford with its Confirmation of Status requirement. Cambridge omits this step and places the responsibility for submission solely on the student:

52. Where it is not possible for you to come to a mutual decision with your Supervisor about the readiness of your work for examination, you have the right to decide to submit without your Supervisor’s consent. Ultimate responsibility for the academic quality of the dissertation and the timing of submission lies with you.

The Council has sensibly reviewed student disciplinary procedures ‘with a particular focus on the management of cases which invoked both the disciplinary and complaints procedures’. (Cambridge’s Proctors do not have the same responsibilities as those of Oxford in this area.) ‘A scoping paper with recommendations was circulated for discussion by the General Board’s Education Committee and other responsible bodies in the Michaelmas Term 2014’, but this does not yet seem to have found its way onto the new governance website or the old internal websites where some such things can be found.

For academics, the ‘issue of the year’ was perhaps the proposal in July to initiate teaching-only offices of Lecturer (Teaching) and Senior Lecturer (Teaching).⁹ This was a suggestion which roused a good many speakers to have their say in Discussion in October¹⁰ and it is not yet clear what is to be done to take it further, if anything. However, it raises a bigger question of the potential demand for ‘research-only’ University offices, which would put scientists in unestablished posts on a level comparable with that of University Teaching Officers.

This is hugely important. Cambridge, like Oxford, has thousands of researchers who do not hold conventional ‘teaching-and-research’ contracts but many of whom have been employed by the University for decades on a series of portions of external funding and have reached high seniority as scientists. But they cannot hope for promotion to ‘senior academic offices’ because they do not hold University offices. While the Senior Academic Promotions process has an elaborate procedure, there is no equivalent for these ‘unestablished’ postholders. The HR committee, reporting to the General Board, received a paper in 2013 on a proposed ‘Senior Researcher Promotions Process’¹¹ by which the status of Principal Research Associate (equivalent to a Readership) and Director of Research (equivalent to a Professorship) might be attained. It was admitted that there was a ‘lack of current guidance’. None seems to have been framed yet.

This note can offer no more than a selection of points of interest, but the Reports can all be read in full by anyone who wants to discover what Cambridge has been doing in particular areas of concern, online or in the downloadable printable pdf, in the special issue of the *Reporter* published on 4 December 2014.

G.R.EVANS

¹ <https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2014-15/weekly/6368/>.

² But actually requested in 2011 for delivery by the end of the accounting year 2013-4.

³ <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2013-14/weekly/6342/CambridgeGovernanceReviewReport.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.cam.ac.uk/about-the-university/how-the-university-and-colleges-work/governance>

⁵ See *Oxford Magazine* AWFE ARTICLES. And <https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2014-15/weekly/6361/section1.shtml#heading2-3>.

⁶ <https://www.ox.ac.uk/gazette/2014-2015/4december2014-no5080/notices/#191053>

⁷ <http://www.mvcambridge.co.uk>.

⁸ General Board Report, 7.7.

⁹ <https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2013-14/weekly/6355/section7.shtml#heading2-47>.

¹⁰ <https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2014-15/weekly/6361/section10.shtml#heading2-21>

¹¹ HR Committee paper 24/10/13/HR319.

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Literary Editor:

Lucy Newlyn at St Edmund Hall.

Fossil Fuel Divestment?

Sir – I read with interest the climate change and resource-management articles in *Oxford Magazine*, No. 354, and in particular, Michaela Collord's excellent essay. I hope, though, that Oxford University, along with other investing institutions bearing responsibility for our future prosperity, weighs practicability in the real world against what can all too often look like Green political ideology.

That we must conserve and protect our long-term environment goes without saying. On the other hand, however, we should never forget that it has been fossil fuels of one sort or another, over the past 300 years, that have made possible modern science-and technology-based Western, and then global, civilisation. Indeed, from Newcomen's steam engine pumping water to the power stations that energise our microchips and on to the factories that manufacture our solar panels and wind farm components, fossil fuels have played a crucial role. And potential environmental damage notwithstanding, the use of such fuels has saved and improved billions of human lives worldwide, from facilitating the mass manufacture of nutritious foodstuffs and antibiotics to fuelling the ships and aircraft that carry these vital supplies to global disaster zones.

Fossil fuels, therefore, are so deeply and inextricably bound up with modern civilisation that we should think twice – or thrice – before deciding to abandon the infrastructures by which they are harvested and managed.

If we can, with the further advance of technology over the coming years, develop an economy which does not depend upon fossil fuels, all well and good. But in the meanwhile, let us not throw out the living baby with the ideological bath-water.

I must admit, however, that I always hear alarm bells ringing when I encounter the rhetoric that poor, sobbing, fibrillating Planet Earth is being ravaged by Wicked Western Capitalism. Yet far from being a victim, the spinning rocky ball which we all call home has been around for some 4.5 billion years, and has survived a veritable maelstrom of changes of geography, climate, and ecology in that time, not one of which occurred through human malevolence. And yes, we must do everything within our power to protect the current geophysical eco-system within which we all live, but that need not predicate knee-jerk reactions based upon the latest sociological and political agendas.

Of course, many ethically-driven movements have genuinely helped to change the world for the better – such as the abolitionists' boycott of slave-produced sugar in c.1800, or Victorian campaigns against animal cruelty – but I am sufficiently long in the tooth to be sceptical of many movements driven by middle-class student protest groups. For in my 40-odd years in Oxford alone, I have seen vociferous and

TO THE EDITOR

sometimes violent campaigns for the roseate dream of communist revolution, anarchism, and the sending of JCR donations to a medley of idealised overseas dictatorial regimes, and the anti-collegiate 'CSU (Central Students' Union) NOW' campaign, to say nothing about rabid vociferations against Israel, the USA, bankers, capitalism, and a veritable barn-full of 'Fat Cats'.

And had 99.9% of these campaigns ever become reality, we would have found ourselves living in an academic community and a national society even less free than those that currently exist.

So let us view the movement to divest from fossil fuels within this wider historical context. And as a devout and committed pragmatist, I would exhort Council, Congregation, and all other bodies likely to be deciding upon Oxford University's future investment portfolio to test the soundness of the solid earth beneath our feet before leaping into a fossil-free wonderland.

Yours sincerely

ALLAN CHAPMAN
Wadham College

Sir – Very many hats off and thanks to Tim Horder, John Rhys, Harriet Waters, Michaela Collord, and Friederike Otto for their respective articles on climate change (*Oxford Magazine*, No. 354). At a time in Oxford and Oxfordshire when people are necessarily and understandably much preoccupied with immediate local environmental issues on housing, green belt, student accommodation, the greater threat to us all needs to be written up, read, and re-read.

Oxford Magazine has over recent years been consistent in its attention to global ecological concerns and Tim Horder's reminder that the annual United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris next December will indeed "be the last opportunity we have to take the necessary steps to limit change to 2 degrees" cannot be overstated. Time is now and rather more than of the essence!

Yours sincerely

BRUCE ROSS-SMITH
Headington

Libraries

Sir – Oddly enough, I was rather pleased by Martin Dodsworth's vigorous response (*Oxford Magazine*, No. 354, Michaelmas, Eighth Week) to my complaints about inadequate 'signage' and staffing in the Lower Reading Room. Firstly, it is good that someone finds the Bodleian – one of the major libraries in the world – of sufficient interest to want to enter into debate about it. Secondly, we are actually more in agreement than he may think. Yes, certainly it would have been better 'to write a brief letter to whoever it is looks after the Lower Reading Room'. But neither the *Calendar* nor the internal telephone directory reveals any such person. What I did do therefore, on Dec. 9, 2013, was to write to the then Acting Bodley's Librarian, Richard Ovenden, setting out my concerns. There was no reply, so I sent a reminder on Jan. 20, and received a polite letter, acknowledging 'signage' problems, dated Jan. 24, 2014.

After several months I could not see any improvement, so I submitted the short article for the *Magazine*. But, having done so, on 1 October I sent a copy in advance to the Mr Ovenden, now Bodley's Librarian, with a covering letter raising a couple of other points: the weird shelf-mark system in the Gladstone Link, where the number given by OLIS does not necessarily agree with that on the book itself; and the need for a 'user-name- and 'Password' as well as one's name and the number of one's Library card. I also specifically invited a public response, and engagement in open debate. So far, no substantive response, either private or public.

At a more general level, Martin Dodsworth and I are in agreement in deeply regretting the silence which seems to be the settled policy of both the University Administration and the Bodleian Libraries in the face of any issue over which concerns have been raised (not a word for instance, from the University, in the *Gazette* or *Blue Print* or the *Magazine* or *Oxford Today*, about the very public controversy over the Castle Mill flats).

But these printed publications are not the only means of communication. Every member of Congregation can be reached by e-mail at the press of a button. It is time for dialogue, and open discussion of problems.

Yours sincerely

FERGUS MILLAR
Oxford Centre for Hebrew and
Jewish Studies

Whingeing

Sir – When I returned to Oxford in mid-career I recognized, and quickly tired of, the capacity of academics to talk about themselves till well after the cows had come home. But I was not prepared for their relentless pursuit of vanity titles.

After reading Mr Montagu's letter (*Oxford Magazine*, No. 354 Eighth Week,

Michaelmas Term 2014), I fear the Editor should brace himself to face petitions from beyond the grave for posthumous promotion and entitlement. On this side of the grave, I am content to remain one of the few non-professorial Fellows of the British Academy (which does not, of course, mean that I am content with the Academy).

On the subject of whingeing (not whinging, pleasant or unpleasant, as Mr Dodsworth writes), I can say that I have used the Bodleian library for half a century and never been aware that my usual entry point via the South Staircase was a tradesman's entrance (the lift, the loos, the lockers and the dreaded Link are of little interest to me). In the past Sir Fergus Millar's criticisms, which I share, have been accurate, just and the mark of a frustration born of a true appreciation of libraries and their services. It is the duty of users to identify defects (there are rather a lot of them at the moment). The *Oxford Magazine* is a natural forum for criticism, but emphatically not for whingeing. Can the word and the activity which it denotes be proscribed?

Yours sincerely
TONY HUNT
St Peter's College

Animal Welfare

Sir – Once again the Committee on Animal Care and Ethical Review has published its annual report (*Gazette*, 11 December 2014) and once again it is long on platitudinous generalities and very short on fact. We are told about the 'multi-staged review process' but given no information on how many applications were reviewed, nor on the circumstances in which advice on animal welfare and ethics was proffered nor on the outcome. We have no idea how the Committee promoted the use of ethical analysis and what initiatives it undertook to encourage the 'application of replacement, reduction and refinement strategies'.

Where are the examples of best practice? All is clearly not as well as the bland statements would hope to convey. A long paragraph is devoted to informing the reader of the 'Brown report on an independent enquiry following the infiltration of another establishment and allegations of non-compliance and bad practice at that establishment'. This kind of gobbledegook naturally raises suspicions.

I am not so naive as to think that animal experimentation is going to disappear in the near future but the total absence of statistics in the final paragraph on the prevalence of non-animal methods of research is disappointing—surely any advances should be highlighted as positive achievements. Just as disappointing is the absence of any actual examples of the effective use in Oxford University in 2013-14 of animal experimentation in the 'prevention and treatment of human diseases'. (As an aside, I am always baffled by the total silence of scientists on the benefits to animal health of their work.)

What does the Committee have to lose by transparency? It might even gain some praise for openness. Far better than the present sense of unease created by its smoke and mirrors annual report.

Yours sincerely
ROSEMARY FENNEL
Linacre College

REVIEWS

Church & Perch

Lydia Carr & others eds., *Binsey: Oxford's Holy Place*; 2013, Archaeopress, Oxford; pbk £20.



BINSEY, with its open spaces, grazing land, scattered cottages, church and pub, has been an important asset for Oxford, town and gown, since Saxon times. It remains largely rural and unspoilt, whatever strident correspondents in the local press may allege about the ruination of the skyline by a villainous university. Photographs—small but reasonably well reproduced—in this informative book show how puny, compared with the vastness of the meadow, appear man's constructions—among them St. Barnabas' anachronistic tower, whose demolition the preservationists oddly fail to demand.

Around one third of the book is devoted to the various legends associated with St. Frideswide, much of the material updated from essays originally published in *Oxoniensia*; pages of uninterrupted Latin may deter the general reader, but can safely be skipped. Later chapters cover Binsey's links with 'Lewis Carroll' and

Gerald Manley Hopkins, and the day to day life of Binsey villagers, as recorded in church registers. Another chapter draws comparisons between Frideswide seeking refuge at Binsey and the kind of spiritual refreshment today's visitor may gain.

The penultimate chapter is devoted to what may be the feature of Binsey's landscape best remembered by generations of Oxford undergraduates—'The Perch'. The editors and the former Dean of Christ Church who provides the Introduction, dutifully emphasise the proper order of things—'First the Church, *then* the Perch', seemingly an 'old Binsey saying'. To be on the safe side Church also gets the last word, in the shape of Martin Henig's final chapter on 'Meeting God at Binsey': 'There are,' he concludes, 'few tiny churches which call so insistently to us' as Binsey's St. Margaret's.

No godless reviewer is equipped to dispute that, but what nags at the memory is the evening stroll from Walton Street, the sunset over Wytham, the game of skittles, the pint or two outside the Perch—and wasn't there a redhead from St...? For an altogether more reliable guide to Binsey's manifold attractions, this book is to be commended.

CHRIS SLADEN

Nürnbergvision Song Contest

Richard Wagner: *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Met Encore in HD, Phoenix Picturehouse, Oxford, 16 November; W.A. Mozart, G. Ligeti, C. Nielsen, F. Poulenc *Music for Wind*, New London Chamber Ensemble, Michael Dussek Piano, Oxford Chamber Music Society, Holywell Music Room, Oxford, 7 December 2014.



RICHARD Wagner's three great stage works outside the Ring Cycle, *Parsifal*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, deal with three different aspects of humanity: divine love and ritual, all-consuming passion and romantic love intruding on a closed society. Everyone has their own favourite, hotly defended; mine is *Tristan* which I know best. *Parsifal* I am getting to grips with and would not miss an opportunity to see. *Meistersinger* I hardly know at all, this being only the second time I have seen it, the other occasion in the Royal Opera House long-lived production directed by Graham Vick, only seen

by chance due to a strike cancelled weekend trip to Paris (and costing more). This review must be read with these circumstances in mind.

Die Meistersinger is referred to as Wagner's only comic opera but it is very German comedy and with its nationalist associations has had to outlive a Nazi adoption. Walther von Stolzing, a young knight, has arrived in Nuremberg the day before Midsummer's Eve to stay in the family of Pogner, a goldsmith, with whose daughter Eva he has fallen instantly in love. He learns, however, that to win her hand he has to triumph in a song competition organised by the local Guild of Mastersingers, formed from a group of tradespeople and citizens. To be allowed to compete he has to write and perform a song to the exacting standards and rules of the Guild. The reward on this occasion is Eva's hand. He fails this test which is marked by his chief rival Beckmesser, the town clerk. Following the advice of Hans Sachs, a cobbler and prominent member of the Guild, using fair means and foul, he deceives Beckmesser into stealing a rubbish poem. Walther wins the competition on Midsummer Day and a willing Eva and all ends happily for them. The widowed Sachs suppresses his own more than avuncular affection for Eva and Beckmesser is humiliated but resilient.

Music competitions have been common ever since the 16th century, particularly today. It is perhaps not surprising that the plot sounds like a mixture of a Lieder Festival and the X Factor, though in this day of political correctness and anti-male-chauvinism it is unlikely the prize would be the same, nor all the mastersingers male. As for complex rules, no one could win the Eurovision Song Contest without sticking strictly to the conventions of previous winners though this is far from the aim of preserving the purity and structure of the German language. It is impossible not to refer also to *Strictly Come Dancing* with its continuing debate on what weight one gives to the opinion of the experts against that of the populace at large (also discussed in the opera).

Die Meistersinger is based on real people though not necessarily with the same names or the same occupations. Based on history, Ernest Newman (*Wagner Nights*) narrows it down to about 1560, when the real Hans Sachs, born in 1494, was sixty-six, having been widowed a year before; he died in 1576.

An advantage of attending the Tuesday afternoon encore rather than the direct transmission of the Saturday matinée, here in the evening, are that one feels more at home with the scruffy appearance of the afternoon Met audience but, more importantly, there is the opportunity to listen to the *Live from the Met* radio broadcast on BBC Radio 3 to hear the music in preparation for the performance. On this occasion the conductor was James Levine clearly

restored to full health and stamina. From the first notes of the Prelude to the conclusion six hours later this held the attention with an exceptionally clear reading of the score, bringing out the inner voices. This is particularly astonishing since this opera is an illustration of the old adage: 'There is nothing you can do with a good tune other than play it again louder'.

The production, originally directed by Otto Schenk, dates from 1993 and has received over forty performances since then. This was the first to be transmitted to cinemas. It was a revelation. After the curtain goes up, one forgets it to be a staged production and sits back to watch it as a movie, brilliantly directed by Live in HD Director Mathew Diamond. (At last after a long campaign credited in the hand-out.) This is Ciné Opera *par excellence* and I am prepared to argue, with one proviso, a more rewarding experience than in the opera house. The use of close-up of individuals and groups, medium shot and distance, combined with subtitles on eye-level made it possible to follow in detail the discussions and the action without distracting from the music and the singing. The only proviso, and a serious one, was the quality of the sound in the cinema. It was immediately noticeable that the bass was very weak, even compared to that on my home PC. I hope that is remediable in future.

The twelve Mastersingers were individually characterised and comfortable in their roles. After all, they were playing themselves as they could have been four and a half centuries ago! Among them, notable were Michael Volle as Sachs, Johannes Martin Kränzle as Beckmesser and Hans-Peter König as Pogner. Anette Dasch was a beautiful demure Eva and the other love interest, Eva's nurse Lena and her toyboy David, Sach's apprentice, were sympathetically played by Karen Cargill and Paul Appleby. Matthew Rose gave a straightforward performance as the Night Watchman, oblivious to all the emotional undercurrents of what was going on around him. Last but far from least was the burly Johan Botha in magnificent form as Walther, reminding us that this was Opera where a great voice still comes first and overrides all else, even though he did not at all resemble Eva's pin-up and ideal, the biblical David of Albrecht Dürer.

This was a rewarding experience revealing a humanist side to Wagner which I had not previously appreciated, each character and their interrelations carefully crafted. Even the humiliation of Beckmesser lacked the cruelty of that of Malvolio in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.

But I still prefer *Tristan und Isolde*.

* * *

The second of the season's Oxford Chamber Music Society concerts was a delightful programme of music for wind and piano given by members of the New London Chamber Ensemble with the pianist

Michael Dussek. There were four works, two with piano, the Mozart Quartet with oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon and the Poulenc Sextet with additional flute. These works were reasonably familiar. The other two works, new to me, were six Bagatelles for Wind Quintet by György Ligeti and a Wind Quintet by Carl Nielsen.

The strengths of the Ensemble were displayed in the Mozart. They produced a very robust sound and played with great exuberance. The wind balance was good, though one felt that the bassoon and horn were setting the level, the higher instruments keeping up. The piano, situated behind the wind, was, from where I was sitting, rather overwhelmed—a pity in view of the concerto-like nature of this work.

The six varied bagatelles by Ligeti were deceptively simple and short. Played with humour and precision, they reinforced a wish to become more familiar with the composer's music. I cannot say Carl Nielsen is a composer who normally warms my heart but this Quintet was an exception. A long bassoon solo at the beginning, with the characteristic humour of that instrument, set the light-hearted mood of the piece. The concluding theme and variations were ingeniously varied and instrumented.

Poulenc's sextet, which concluded the programme, is the most complex of his works for wind and piano, all thematically similar. This was an extremely pleasing performance. This time the piano has an accompanying role so the balance was not such an issue.

The next concert is on 18 January 2015, given by the Ligeti Quartet in another interesting and varied programme:

Zorn Cat O' Nine Tails
Beethoven Grosse Fugue in B flat major opus 133
Nicola Pricce Quartet no 1 *world premiere*
Bartók Quartet no 5

PETER SCHOFIELD

Mysterious wisdom

William Blake Apprentice and Master. Ashmolean Museum, 4 December 2014 to 1 March 2015.



As you walk over the bridge to enter the exhibition a panel on the left reads, 'Nothing can tell us more about a work of art than the discovery of how it was made.' Hm-mmmmmmm. This is a quotation from the exhibition's organiser Michael Phillips. On the face of it seems to refer to the technical means, the craft 'mysteries'—the paints, the canvases, the brushes and, in the case of engraving the copper, the waxes the inking pads (the medieval Latin '*misterium*' is occupation).

Yes, they tell us a good deal, but ‘how it was made’ has to embrace the inner vision, the religious and other beliefs crammed into the head of the artist, the habits of perception, some original, some derived from the age and previous artists. This exhibition provides us with insights into all of these, and it is highly satisfying and coherent. It is accompanied by a superb catalogue, which includes essays by Martin Butlin and Colin Harrison.

Blake is an extraordinary phenomenon. In English culture he is the principal example of an artist who excelled at the same time in the visual arts and literature. His only rival is Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who, though good, is not in the same class as Blake. His main rival in European terms is Michaelangelo, who was both a visual artist and a poet. Blake is visionary, and that might at first seem to suggest an artist drawing on inner resources, with no regard to boring technical skills. This is manifestly not the case, and his apprenticeship, as an engraver and a pupil at the Royal Academy, was disciplined and even arduous. I kept thinking of the Yeats phrase from ‘The Phases of the Moon’ while walking round: ‘mysterious wisdom won by toil.’

One can only reel in astonishment looking at the vast copper plate used by James Basire, Blake’s employer, to produce *The Field of the Cloth of Gold* (1774) and at Blake’s *Chaucer’s Canterbury Pilgrims*, complete with the Prioress’s (Madame Egleyntyne) etiolated hounds brought up on wastel bread. (One reels even more in the British Museum, contemplating the vast Triumphal Arch print (1517-18)—one of the largest prints ever made, produced by Dürer and others for the Emperor Maximilian.) Blake developed an elaborate technique of working with ‘raised etchings’.

The art-world has tended to be iffy about prints, and Rowlandson’s *A Print Sale* in the exhibition shows customers as a congregation of ugly old men in tricorne hats. Blake makes one feel differently, since his techniques are, in some ways, as challenging and original as his pictorial and poetic visions. With his books combining text and coloured illustration he looks back, on the one hand, to medieval illuminated books but also forward to the subsequent developments.

One great coup in the show, and the organisers are to be congratulated, is the replica of Blake’s workshop, which used to be in Hercules Building, Lambeth. The dimensions of the ‘footprint’ have been researched, and it came with a replica of a wooden printing press, made by Bates and Lambourne Ltd. of Milton Common. The house was demolished in 1918. Have we no respect for ancestral voices? Surely the person who wrote the unofficial national anthem (‘Jerusalem’) deserved better treatment. Mind you, Turner’s birthplace in Maiden Lane was swept away too. Both

houses two up and two down: greatness can often have humble beginnings.

Blake is perhaps most famous as an artist for his distinctive nudes. They are distinctly mannered, and a lot of people don’t like them, but he got his trade-union ticket by producing highly competent conventional drawings in his teens. And he started very young. In the intriguing Zoffany depiction of Dr William Hunter’s anatomy class in the Royal Academy (circa 1772) there are a couple of lads in the foreground who are only about 14 or 15. One of them could almost be Blake. They have gone straight from childhood to professional art, missing out potato printing *en route*. They are the next generation, who are going to replace the old codger with an ear trumpet. He is Blake’s bug-bear Sir Joshua Reynolds, but the catalogue does not tell us that. I wonder whether the figure with the turban in the left foreground is Hogarth? I know he died in 1764, but that does not necessarily stop him being in a tribute picture. This picture is very badly reproduced in the catalogue incidentally.

A particularly charming image is John Collett’s view of Covent Garden, which Blake would have known well, and it sums up the bustling London which, surprisingly perhaps, appears in the most visionary of poems: ‘Prepare the furniture O Lambeth in thy pitying looms!’ Hampstead, Highgate, Finchley, Hendon, Islington, Marylebone, St Pancras, ‘everweeping Paddington’, Kentish Town (it also appears in Eliot’s ‘A Cooking Egg’), Poplar, Tyburn, Primrose Hill, Saint John’s Wood, and even Muswell Hill are mentioned. These are all in *Jerusalem*. Oxford and Cambridge figure in his strange invented Universe, implicated in the infidelity of the new sciences:

*I turn my eyes to the Schools and Universities
or Europe,
And there behold the Loom of Locke, whose
Woofrages dire,
Wash’d by the Water-wheels of Newton:
black the cloth
In heavy wreaths folds over every Nation.*

Jerusalem is so rambling that a good deal of it doesn’t get printed in my OUP copy of Blake. And yet in the impenetrable wackiness a kind of sense breaks through: that Liberty, which we take for granted and are disgracefully complacent about, is much to be prized. And it was especially prized in Blake’s time when Britain was a sort of police state, and the Habeas Corpus act was suspended. Difficult to be one of God’s spies with government agents skulking about. Politicians in our time are often careless with concepts of civil liberties and need to be watched. Sometimes one thinks ‘Blake thou shouldst be with us at this hour.’

There comes a point in the exhibition when Blake becomes BLAKE and his distinctive anatomy and combination of human forms start to stand out. A very

striking example is the distance travelled from the early version of Joseph of Arimathea (after Michelangelo, 1773) which could be by almost anyone, and the later (circa 1818-27) version, which is distinctively Blakean. There is a lot to impress in the exhibition, but I was particularly struck to see some of the illustrations to Dante’s *Divina Commedia* on view together. One of them (not in the exhibition though) is of Buoso Donati (*Inferno* Canto 25)—presumably related to Piccarda Donati, who appears in *Paradiso* (Canto 3) and T.S Eliot’s ‘A Cooking Egg’.

Samuel Palmer saw Blake working on them in 3 Fountain Court, and looking back on the visit wrote:

‘the scene recurs afterwards in a kind of vision; and in this most false, corrupt, and genteelly stupid town, my spirit see his dwelling (the chariot of the sun), as it were an island in the midst of the sea—such a place is it for primitive grandeur.’

This room was painted in 1882 by Frederick Shields, with spirits hovering over the bed. Needless to say the building has been swept away. Also on view is the tempera portrait of Blake, with the imprisoned Ugolino and his sons on the right. It is significant that artists with a taste for the primitive often go back to tempera; one thinks of the Birmingham artist Joseph Southall at the end of the nineteenth century.

One of the great Blake iconic items is there—*Nebuchadnezzar*, one of the most memorable images in the whole of English pictorial art. Blake has given the language one of its evocative phrases: ‘dark Satanic mills’—although Freddy Bateson was always anxious to stress that these weren’t the cotton-mill factories of popular imagination, but something ‘more like large coffee grinders.’

Given Blake’s training, although he is intensely original, there is nevertheless the inevitable phenomenon of ‘pictorial intertextuality’ which I have referred to in these pages. The classic example is his reworking of the famous antique statue of Laocoön and his sons, which becomes *Jehovah and His Sons, Satan and Adam*, an image which an orthodox Christian would always have difficulty accepting and understanding. Just the title is hard to swallow.

One really impressive exhibit is the life-mask (one of two versions). We stare at the domed forehead, hoping to get to the heart of the mystery. A lot of people think it’s a death-mask, including Sylvia Plath, who in her poem ‘Death and Co’ writes of the eyes that ‘are lidded /And balled like Blake’s.’

The last room contains a number of works by Blake’s young friends ‘The Ancients’: Samuel Palmer, John Linnell, Edward Calvert, Frederick Tatham and George Richmond. The Palmers are some of the principal treasures of the Ashmolean of course. It was very nice to see Blake handing on his knowledge to the young

Richmond by helping him with the preliminary drawing for *Abel the Shepherd*. Palmer did not necessarily see eye to eye with Blake, any more than did other Romantics.

The *Sketchbook of 1824* is open at the page referring to the way in which 'the colour of ripe corn gives to the green trees about it increased depth and transparent richness.' This is very like the observation Hopkins made in Addison's Walk, Magdalen College, looking at the buttercups in the meadow which throw the trees on the far side 'to finer distance' (Journals, 24 May 1866). Another page demonstrates that young chestnut leaves blown in 'a slight breeze' look like arrowlets or 'horizontal pencil dashes' (p. 177). But for Blake nature was a snare and a delusion, and too easily associated with the phenomenal world and the unholy trinity of Bacon, Locke and Newton. Paolozzi missed the point when he copied the pose of Newton for the statue outside the British Library: in Blake's eyes Newton was a villain not a hero. Edward Calvert is there, with sublimity expressed in a square inch or two—superior certainly to the Aids quilt (1987) the size of several football pitches and weighing 54 tons. What is it Yeats says in 'Under Ben Bulben'?

Calvert and Wilson, Blake and Claude, Prepared a rest for the people of God.

Blake scholarship takes us into arcane penetralia, but he has his popular and accessible side too, and the Ashmolean Museum is laying on an 'Inspired by Blake' festival (16-31 January) with 'Tyger Tyger Saturday' (24 January) involving potato printing (easier than 'raised etching') and prizes 'for any children who comes dressed as a fearsome tiger.' This is all some way away from G.E. Bentley Jr.'s *Blake in the Desolate Market* (2014)—on how much he earned.

There is a problem with this exhibition though. To repeat: Blake is an artist and a writer, and the writing aspect of his genius struggles, as it will in any Blake exhibition, and not just because the light is dim. Powerful writing such as his requires what has been called 'deep reading'. Deep reading involves concentration and immersion, and is entirely opposed to the kind of reading done on a screen, with adverts on the edge and the possibility every second of segueing into an e-bay adventure. It's opposed, too, to the kind of reading one can do in a museum, where texts, in any case, are excerpts. As Philip Pullman said in his opening speech exhibitions of writers are always inadequate in some ways, with

their 'props'—walking sticks, hanks of hair and pens.

Even excellent exhibitions such as the Byron (V&A 1974) and the Dickens (V&A 1970) which I saw all those years ago were somehow peripheral to what really mattered. The Byron exhibition I recall had his decoupage screen with pictures of the 'Fancy' glued on. You need 'deep reading' to find out who Enitharmon is, where and what Golgonooza is and why Los 'howl'd in a dismal stupor, Groaning, gnashing, groaning.' You need to go into some retired place to read *The Island in the Moon*; it's not the same thing sampled in a display case. And you need to have a certain cast of mind to wrestle with him—like Gulliver Jimson's in Joyce Carey's *The Horse's Mouth*, say, or Yeats's. (The 'kitchen sink artist' John Bratby was laid on to produce Jimson's paintings in the 1958 film). The prospect that opens before one in Blake poems is positively vertiginous. But deep reading is doomed in our age; we are heading for the shallows and will soon all lie gasping on the strand.

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CONTENTS

No. 355 Noughth Week Hilary Term 2015

EJRA and first principles TIM HORDER	1	A Note from New York MARY ANN CAWS	16
Reminders	4	Notes from Cambridge G.R.EVANS	17
Goodbye to the EJRA D.J.GALLIGAN	4	Letters to the Editor	19
Considerations of comments on the EJRA made by the University's Appeal Court STEPHEN GOSS	6	Church & Perch CHRIS SLADEN	17
The Metrification of 'Quality' and the Fall of the Academic Profession CHRIS LORENZ	7	Nürnbergvision Song Contest PETER SCHOFIELD	20
Tributes to Jon Stallworthy (1935-2014)	12	Mysterious wisdom BERNARD RICHARDS	21
Ruskin's Hinksey Diggings ANN SPOKES SYMONDS	15		

NOTICE

The Editors of the *Oxford Magazine* regret that they cannot publish any material submitted to them anonymously. If the author requests publication on the basis that the author's name and university address be withheld from the readership, the Editors will consider the reasons given and in their discretion may publish on that basis; otherwise the material will be returned to the author.

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