Annual Report and Review
2016

Championing the humanities through public engagement
Promoting the creation of digital resources
Advancing interdisciplinary research
Improving cross-cultural understanding
Internationalising the academy

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Stained glass window by Ervin Bossányi, c. 1935, in the Goldsmiths’ Library, Senate House Library. The room, which formerly housed the Goldsmiths’ Library of Economic Literature, was built at the Goldsmiths’ Company’s expense. The window was added to commemorate this gift. Its central features are the arms of the Goldsmiths’ Company surrounded by roundels representing goldsmithing tools.
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The School of Advanced Study

Championing the cause of humanities research

The School of Advanced Study (SAS) has a unique mission in UK higher education:

- to champion the cause of humanities research in the UK, ensuring that the social, cultural and economic benefits of humanities research are publicly recognised;
- to provide world-class support to individuals, networks and organisations conducting humanities research, nationally and internationally;
- to identify and lead debates that stimulate new agendas and innovative thinking;
- to show creativity in developing research services, resources and research training.

Our mission stems from the special role and funding for research promotion and facilitation across the UK and internationally that we receive from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). The School is supported by the University of London and enhanced by the internationally recognised research produced by our academic staff and by our outstanding postgraduate programmes leading to University of London degrees.

As in previous years, our Annual Report and Review for 2016 provides examples of the many ways in which the School has sought to fulfil that wide-ranging mission. This year, however, we are focusing on one particular aspect of our role in championing the cause of the humanities: our exciting initiatives in the area of public engagement. Only by reaching out to non-academic audiences can we hope to contribute to a proper understanding of the many ways in which humanities research enriches society as a whole.

Sharing our knowledge

In a period of economic uncertainty, and at a time when the mechanisms for the funding of humanities research are undergoing change, it is vital for the public to have confidence that government spending in this area is producing work of excellence that benefits the whole community. In that respect, public engagement is a practical imperative for an organisation like SAS. But there are even more fundamental reasons for concentrating our efforts in this area. In something of a personal manifesto, Sarah Churchwell, who joined the School in October 2015 as our first Chair in the Public Understanding of the Humanities, sets out this rationale (p. 18). As a community of scholars, we are custodians of ‘the wealth of knowledge that has accrued over the centuries’. We have an overriding duty to share that knowledge in ways that are ‘accessible and challenging, rigorous and dynamic’. As the person charged with coordinating our public engagement activities, Sarah provided a highly successful example of the way in which the ‘joy, curiosity and pleasure’ of humanities research can be conveyed to a wider audience. This took the form of the launch in May 2016 of the Living Literature series. The inaugural event, which took as its theme F Scott Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby, provided an audience of around 500 people with an opportunity to be immersed in the material culture of the United States in 1922, the year of the book’s publication (p. 22). They were even able to sample Fitzgerald’s very own recipe for bathtub gin! The event generated widespread and enthusiastic media attention.

As part of their public engagement activities, our institutes have sought to showcase the latest developments in their discipline areas and highlight their relevance to contemporary society. The IHR launched a series of monthly seminars, History Now and Then, in which leading historians
including David Reynolds and Sir Ian Kershaw demonstrated how debates and innovations within the discipline are having an impact on popular perceptions of the past (p. 36). IALS took as its theme the Humanity of Law and included among its offerings an exhibition of the work of the artist Isobel Williams, who chronicles the proceedings of the UK Supreme Court (p. 38). SAS institutes are frequently at the forefront of public debates bringing together academics, journalists, practitioners and policymakers. A report organised by the IALS Information Law and Policy Centre was submitted in evidence to the parliamentary joint select committee scrutinising the government’s controversial investigatory powers bill (p. 32). Highlighting the practical significance of humanities research is particularly important in relation to subject areas that are under threat. In an important initiative that crosses the boundaries between conventional academic research and public engagement, the IMLR is leading a four-year, AHRC-funded project, Cross-Language Dynamics: Reshaping Community, exploring the ways in which foreign language teaching and learning impacts on a range of pressing contemporary issues including migration and social cohesion (p. 8).

On the road

The School takes extremely seriously its claim to be a genuinely national research centre for the humanities—with an added international reach—and this is fully reflected in our public engagement activities. While we might not share the ‘90s band Catatonia’s aversion to London, we all certainly ‘come alive outside the M25’. Our major initiative in the field of national public engagement, the Being Human festival, continues to go from strength to strength (p. 20). While we were delighted by the response to our inaugural festival in 2014, the second one, in 2015, was twice the size of its predecessor, drawing together 75 universities and research organisations with more than 21,000 people attending in person and three million engaging online. This ambition to make an impact on a national scale is also reflected in the School’s Public Engagement Innovators Scheme (p. 19), which was launched in 2015 to allow staff, students and fellows at SAS to develop their own public engagement projects.

This Annual Report and Review provides numerous examples of the national reach of our institutes. The IALS Library staged its very own roadshow designed to showcase the richness of its collections and provide training on the use of its digital resources (p. 24). In 2015-16, the roadshow engaged with librarians and researchers at the Universities of Aberystwyth, Bangor, Brighton, Kingston and Wolverhampton. Staff from the IP were also widely travelled. In June 2016 their exhibit at the Cheltenham Science Festival’s Discovery Zone provided the public with hands-on experience of research into the nature of consciousness (p. 27). Meanwhile, audiences in Edinburgh were able to engage with the findings of the School’s AHRC-funded Human Mind Project through a series of public talks and demonstrations on the subject of Computers and Minds (p. 28). A key feature of the visiting professorships based at the School is that they enable audiences across the country to have access to the expertise of leading international academics. This was certainly true of Greg Crane’s recent tenure of our ST Lee Chair. Crane, who holds positions at Tufts University in the US and Universität Leipzig in Germany, was based at the ICS. But he took the opportunity to ‘preach the gospel of a digital philology in a global age’ up and down the country, speaking to gatherings in Glasgow, Durham, Manchester and Oxford, as well as London (p. 25).

The reach of SAS also extends well beyond the UK. IALS library staff were involved in providing research training in Paris and Piraeus, and played an active role in the International Association of Law Libraries conference in Berlin (p. 24). In partnership with the German Academic Exchange, the IMLR has sought to promote cross-cultural understanding by sponsoring an essay writing competition aimed at all learners and speakers of German (p. 48). The 2015-16 competition saw more than 200 entries from across the UK. Meanwhile, in March 2016, ILAS hosted a major international conference on the relationship between Britain and Brazil (p. 37). The event was supported by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Embassy of Brazil and the Brazil Institute at King’s College London. Rick Rylance, who joined the School in 2015 as director of the IES, offers his own reflections on the broader opportunities that the internationalisation of the academy might bring to SAS (p. 49).
Enriching our community

In its public engagement activities, the School also takes full advantage of the rich resources that are available to it in its immediate locality. In December 2015, the IHR won a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a major public engagement project that will allow residents, visitors and those further afield to explore the successive Layers of London from Roman times to the present day (p. 30). SAS is an enthusiastic participant in the annual Bloomsbury Festival and has been using this partnership to create new and innovative initiatives. Its most important contribution in recent years has been Festival in a Box (p. 43), developed in collaboration with Festival organisers and Age UK. This project explores the impact of cultural engagement on socially isolated people with dementia. The 2015 Bloomsbury Festival also provided an opportunity to raise public awareness of the IES’s major AHRC-funded project on the history of the Ministry of Information, which was based in Senate House during the Second World War (p. 33). The Festival saw Senate House illuminated with images of some of the secret documents that will be digitised as part of the project. Another aspect of the history of our building was opened up to the public with the IMLR-led initiative Senate House Revealed (p. 34), which allowed the audience to explore the work of architect Charles Holden. In the summer of 2016, Senate House Library staged a major series of public engagement events related to its Shakespeare: Metamorphosis exhibition, which showcased its rich collection of Shakespearean holdings, including a First Folio (p. 42). Meanwhile, the 150th anniversary of the birth of Aby Warburg provided an opportunity for the institute that bears his name to organise an international festival celebrating his life and work. This brought together more than 30 distinguished speakers and an audience of nearly 1,200 (p. 40). The event provided a chance to reflect on how the legacy of the Warburg Institute’s founder continues to inform its mission to encourage genuinely interdisciplinary research.

Supporting all aspects of humanities research

Along with our initiatives to encourage public engagement with humanities research, and to demonstrate its value to society as a whole, we continue to provide a broad range of services to the scholarly community. A key aspect of our work is the creation and support of digital research resources. The IHR was a partner in a major international collaborative project aimed at enhancing access to the parliamentary proceedings of the UK, Canada and the Netherlands. On the UK side, this has resulted in Digital Hansard, which for the first time is fully searchable (p. 44). The ICwS completed work on its AHRC-funded Commonwealth Oral History project, which makes transcripts of interviews with nearly 70 major figures in the recent history of the Commonwealth freely available in digital form (p. 45).

Our workshops and conferences continue to promote dialogue on a national and international scale. In June 2016 we hosted the annual conference of the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes, which brings together members of more than 230 organisations in 26 countries. The four-day conference saw distinguished scholars from across the world discussing Area Studies in a Globalising World (p. 13). The School’s Refugee Law Initiative held its first annual conference on The Future of Refugee Law (p. 12). We continue to encourage genuinely interdisciplinary dialogue through our events programme. In October 2015, for example, in partnership with the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust, the ICS organised a workshop that drew on insights from classical studies to explore philosophical approaches to the end of life (p. 46).

This Annual Report and Review can present only a small sample of the myriad ways in which SAS supports and champions humanities research. But we hope it will give you a taste of what we do, and that you will be encouraged to work with us to fulfil our important mission.

Professor Roger Kain CBE FBA
Dean and Chief Executive
University of London, School of Advanced Study
‘The University of London, 1943’ (detail) by Sir Henry Rushbury RA, presented to Lord Macmillian on the occasion of his retirement as chair of the University Court. Used by kind permission of the owner.
Our institutes

IALS  INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES

The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS) conducts and supports legal research in its broadest sense, both nationally and internationally. Founded in 1947, it houses specialist research centres and innovative partnerships and is home to an active community of researchers, fellows and postgraduate students. It promotes new research agendas in specialist and interdisciplinary areas of law that directly impact policy and practice. It provides research training and online services, a meeting place for organisations and legal scholars from around the world, one of the world’s great legal research libraries and a busy programme of seminars and public events.

ICS  INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

The Institute of Classical Studies (ICS) is the national centre for the promotion and facilitation of research in Classics and related disciplines throughout the UK and abroad. Founded in 1953, it runs an extensive events programme, comprising seven standing seminars, guest lectures, workshops, conferences and public events. The ICS also publishes a Bulletin (BICS) with a supplement series, hosts web resources for the national classics community and (together with the Hellenic and Roman Societies) manages a major research library. The ICS also hosts research projects, offers graduate teaching and training, and is the meeting place for the UK’s main classical societies.

ICwS  INSTITUTE OF COMMONWEALTH STUDIES

The Institute of Commonwealth Studies (ICWS) is the only postgraduate academic institution in the UK devoted to the study of the Commonwealth. Founded in 1949, its purpose is to promote interdisciplinary, inter-regional and policy-orientated research on the Commonwealth and its member nations, primarily in the fields of history and politics. Its areas of specialism include British imperial history, the history of decolonisation, international development, human rights, north–south relations and conflict and security. The institute also hosts the School of Advanced Study’s Human Rights Consortium and is home to two interdisciplinary MA programmes in human rights and decolonisation, democracy and development.
Founded in 1999, the Institute of English Studies (IES) facilitates advanced study and research in English studies for the benefit of the national and international academic community. Its extensive seminar and lecture programme covers topics from medieval manuscripts to modernism. The institute offers an MA/MRes programme in the history of the book and runs research training activities in the areas of palaeography, print history, textual scholarship and digital publishing.

Founded in 2004 by the merger of the Institutes of Germanic Studies and Romance Studies, founded in 1950 and 1989 respectively. It is committed to promoting dialogue and research in modern languages for the academic and wider community across a range of disciplines and interdisciplinary fields in the humanities. IMLR publishes the much-respected Journal of Romance Studies and 'imlr books' series as well as other important publications.

Founded in 2005, promotes and supports high-quality research in philosophy, making it available to the widest possible audience both inside and outside the UK academic community. It is home to three active research centres: the Centre for the Study of the Senses, the Centre for Logic and Language and the London Aesthetics Forum (sponsored by the British Society of Aesthetics).

The Warburg Institute is the premier institute in the world for the study of cultural history and the role of images in culture. It is cross-disciplinary and global. It is concerned with the histories of art and science, and their relationship to superstition, magic and popular beliefs. Its researches are historical, philological and anthropological. It is dedicated to the study of the survival and transmission of cultural forms—whether in literature, art, music or science—across borders and from the earliest times to the present.

Founded in 1921, the Institute of Historical Research (IHR) is at the centre of the study of academic history. It provides a stimulating research environment supported by its two research centres, the Centre for Metropolitan History and the Victoria County History, as well as its own publication department. It is home to the Wohl Library, an outstanding collection of open access resources; it also hosts events and seminars and has a dedicated programme of research training.

The Institute of Latin American Studies (ILAS), founded in 1965, is a national coordinating centre dedicated to serving the UK’s Latin American and Caribbean studies community. Internationally recognised as a centre of excellence for research facilitation, it serves the wider community through organising academic events, providing online research resources, publishing academic scholarship and hosting visiting fellows. It possesses a world-class library dedicated to the study of Latin America and is the administrative home of the highly respected Journal of Latin American Studies.

The Institute of Philosophy (IP), founded in 2005, promotes and supports high-quality research in philosophy, making it available to the widest possible audience both inside and outside the UK academic community. It is home to three active research centres: the Centre for the Study of the Senses, the Centre for Logic and Language and the London Aesthetics Forum (sponsored by the British Society of Aesthetics).
IMLR explores the impact of modern languages in community life

A consortium led by the Institute of Modern Languages Research in the School of Advanced Study, the University of Manchester, and the University of Durham has launched a four-year language research programme that will investigate the impact of modern languages learning on issues such as social cohesion, migration, business and diplomacy. The Open World Research Initiative programme ‘Cross-Language Dynamics: Reshaping Community’ is funded by a £4 million grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It will feature three strands of research, each exploring a particular kind of language community: multilingual communities (urban populations whose identity is shaped by language diversity), transnational communities (those sharing a single language dispersed across different nation states) and translingual communities (those formed through cultural creativity across language boundaries). The IMLR will lead the third of these three strands. Working across several world languages, primarily Arabic, Spanish and Russian, the programme will incorporate perspectives from literary, media and cultural studies; international relations; the arts (music, film and theatre); linguistics; and visual anthropology.

Read more: sas.ac.uk/about-us/news/imlr-multi-million-pound-research-bid-demonstrate-global-value-modern-languages
Leverhulme Trust supports ILAS research on Latin America’s border-crossing ‘knowledge practices’

The Leverhulme Trust has awarded £124,000 to ‘Border Crossings: Latin America and the Global History of Knowledge’ (LAGLOBAL), a project led by the Institute of Latin American Studies that is enabling scholars from Europe and the Americas to demonstrate Latin America’s overlooked contribution to the global development of knowledge. Directed by Mark Thurner, LAGLOBAL is building on a growing body of research that has moved beyond national and imperial traditions and approaches to the history of science and philosophy. Its brief is to investigate the history of border-crossing ‘knowledge practices’ where Latin America has been a pioneer, and to use this research to generate a model for a border-crossing academic practice. The project will consist of four transatlantic working groups composed of leading scholars in the fields of Latin American studies and the history of knowledge drawn from seven prestigious partner institutions in Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, Spain, the UK and the US.

Read more: sas.ac.uk/about-us/news/crossing-borders-knowledge

IALS lends expertise to new Ghana Institute of Advanced Legal Studies

The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS) played a major role in the establishment of the Ghana Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (GIALS). Led by founding director Stephen Offei, GIALS is a legal think-tank and research institution focusing on research and policy dialogue. The opening of the institute, which is based in Accra, was celebrated in June 2015 at a ceremony attended by leading figures in the country’s legal community. Jules Winterton, director of IALS, was among the speakers and assisted at the ribbon cutting marking the opening of the institute’s premises. During his visit, he delivered a public lecture at the British Council in Accra that surveyed recent developments in legal education in England and Wales. IALS has longstanding interests in supporting the development of legal studies in Africa and previously played a role in establishing the Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies. It has supplied books for the GIALS library and negotiated sponsorships by HeinOnline, a product of William S Hein & Co., and by LLMC Digital.

IALS ‘Legal Records at Risk’ project aims to identify and protect vulnerable documents

The Legal Records at Risk project, based at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, is working to identify and facilitate the rescue of legal records of potential value that may be at risk through globalisation, digital obsolescence, physical neglect, lack of interest on the part of information owners or reduced archival resources. Begun in September 2015, the project defines ‘legal records’ broadly, expanding the concept from its traditional definition as court records or deeds to the business records of private sector institutions specialised to law (ISLs), including arbitration and mediation services, barristers, insolvency practitioners, legal executives, licensed conveyancers, multi-disciplinary practices, notaries, patent attorneys, pro bono legal services, scriveners, solicitors, trade mark attorneys and providers of ancillary services such as law publishers and legal stationers. All private sector institutions in the UK face similar information management challenges, but modern legal records are particularly vulnerable due to recent developments in legal services that are transforming the nature, organisation, regulation and economics of legal services. It follows that the traditional processes by which legal records are managed, disposed of or preserved for posterity also need to change. The project is not collecting records but acts as a conduit through which legal records of value (in all formats and media) are identified, preserved and made available for research. In doing so, the project hopes to raise the awareness of the information-owners as to the value of their records and assist them in unlocking the potential of the records for both internal business reference and external research use. The project is being led by Clare Cowling, an experienced archivist and records manager.

Read more: ials.sas.ac.uk/research/lrar/lrar.htm

IALS Library wins Wallace Breem Award

The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Library was awarded the Wallace Breem Memorial Award for 2016 by the British and Irish Association of Law Librarians (BIALL) and the Inner Temple in recognition of especially good contributions to law librarianship. Laura Griffiths and Katherine Read received the award from Karen Palmer, BIALL president, at the BIALL conference in Dublin in June 2015. The library was honoured for its work on two projects of benefit to law librarians across the UK. The first was the compilation of the Current Awareness column, which is published in Legal Information Management and made available through the free caLIM database on the IALS website. The column highlights recent publications of interest to law librarians, arranged by key theme. The second was the annual BIALL/SLS Survey of Academic Law Libraries, which has been administered by David Gee and Laura Griffiths since 2011. This survey provides a snapshot of staffing levels, expenditure, subscriptions and services provided by academic law libraries in the UK and Ireland. It is the only survey of its kind and provides data that academic librarians can use to benchmark their own services. The report is published each year in the winter edition of Legal Information Management and made available on the IALS website.

A war of words: IMLR explores literary responses to the Spanish Civil War

Few 20th-century conflicts were as ideologically and emotionally charged as the Spanish Civil War, which lasted three years, from 1936 to 1939. Fewer still can claim to have united a generation of young writers, poets, photographers and artists (for example, Auden, McNeice, Dos Passos, Ehrenburg, Hemingway, Koestler, Bell, Lee, Malraux, Neruda, Orwell and Vallejo) in political fervour. Internationally, writers responded with moral outrage to the murder of the poet Federico García Lorca and the attack on democracy by military and fascist forces. Others took an alternative view, and supported the coup to stop the spread of communism. Writers harnessed their pens to create the world’s memory of a conflict that had a profound impact far beyond Spain’s borders. To mark the 80th anniversary of the war, the Institute of Modern Languages Research held a two-day symposium, ‘The Spanish Civil War and World Literatures’. It attracted a who’s who of international literary critics and historians who came together to examine the role that literature played in the war, especially in the Spanish Republic’s fight against fascism.

Read more: sas.ac.uk/about-us/news/war-words-literary-response-spanish-civil-war

The Human Rights Consortium’s MA in Understanding and Securing Human Rights celebrates its 20th anniversary

The MA in Understanding and Securing Human Rights marked its 20th anniversary in 2015. Established at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies (ICWS) in 1995 and now offered through the School’s Human Rights Consortium, the MA is the longest-running interdisciplinary, practice-based human rights degree in the UK. The 20th anniversary of the MA provided a uniquely appropriate time to reflect on the degree, recognise the educators who have shaped it and, most importantly, celebrate the achievements of the students who have been awarded their degrees in human rights over the last 20 years. Many of them have made a profound contribution to the protection of human rights around the world, whether as lawyers, activists or practitioners in the field. The important anniversary was celebrated through a day-long conference that focused on topics of particular relevance to human rights practitioners. In delivering the welcome address, ICWS director Philip Murphy noted the Institute’s longstanding concern with human rights, which emerged out of scholarly engagement with the anti-apartheid movement and the Institute’s ongoing interest in the lasting effects of imperialism on the modern world. Alumni of the programme spoke on topics ranging from how to successfully build and manage a human rights NGO to new strategies in campaigning and how to protect human rights defenders. The final session of the conference was a plenary debate on whether the UK is a friend to, or foe of, human rights today. Current students on the MA assisted with the organisation of the conference and developed a special issue of the Institute’s alumni magazine to mark the occasion.

Read more: sas.ac.uk/hrc/publications/open-access-publications/contemporary-challenges-securing-human-rights

A new publication, Contemporary Challenges in Securing Human Rights, includes a foreword by MA founder James Manor in which the programme’s origins, including its development in collaboration with Amnesty International, are explored.
The Refugee Law Initiative explores the future of refugee law in its first annual conference

The Refugee Law Initiative (RLI) hosted its first annual conference in 2016. ‘The Future of Refugee Law?’ pointed to the renewed challenges that refugee protection faces on the ground in a number of regions across the globe, not least as a result of humanitarian crises such as Syria, and the innovative new directions in which refugee law doctrine is moving as the discipline reflects on its relationship to the wider field of international law. The conference also marked the RLI’s fifth anniversary.

The three-day event brought together 150 participants from across the globe from governments, courts, NGOs, international organisations and agencies, legal practice and academia to debate and exchange ideas on the protection of forced migrants and stateless persons. More than 60 papers were presented. Distinguished keynote speakers included Guy Goodwin-Gill, emeritus professor of international refugee law at the University of Oxford; Madeline Garlick, head of protection policy and legal advice, Division of International Protection, UN High Commissioner for Refugees; Walter Kalin, professor of international law at the University of Bern; Chaloka Beyani, special rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; and Eleanor Sharpstone QC, advocate general at the Court of Justice of the European Union. The RLI was pleased to welcome a number of students from its distance-learning MA in Refugee Protection and Forced Migration Studies. Delivered through University of London International Programmes, it is currently the largest programme on forced migration in the world. Students presented their research in a special poster session, with prizes generously donated by Brill, the publishers of the RLI’s International Refugee Law Book Series. The RLI conference is set to continue each year and serve as a dedicated forum for bringing together decision makers and practitioners, policymakers, academics and students to share, discover and debate the latest thinking and developments in the refugee protection field.

Read more: sas.ac.uk/rli/annual-conference
The ‘Davos’ of the humanities comes to Senate House

From 28 June to 1 July 2016, the School of Advanced Study hosted the annual meeting of the international Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes (CHCI). Members of this global consortium, created in 1988, represent more than 230 organisations and affiliates in 26 countries, making it one of the largest gatherings of humanities experts in the world. Over the course of four days, participants grappled with the challenge set by CHCI: to interrogate the past, present and future of the humanities in this era of globalisation under the theme ‘Area studies in a globalising world: past, present, future’. CHCI’s annual meetings are designed to generate critical conversations and feature eminent speakers, heads of funding agencies and leading scholars addressing key challenges in the humanities. SAS was delighted to be asked to host the 2016 meeting in recognition of its leading role in promoting and facilitating humanities research.

Read more: sas.ac.uk/about-us/news/davos-humanities-comes-senate-house-university-london

The Centre for Postcolonial Studies holds inaugural workshop

The Centre for Postcolonial Studies inaugural workshop in December 2015 brought together the heads of postcolonial studies research centres from across the UK and beyond with a view to building collaborations and exploring how the School of Advanced Study can best support and promote research on the subject. The Centre was founded in 2014 under the direction of Andrew Hussey. Its mission is to make a significant contribution to the field of postcolonial studies and to highlight the value of policy-relevant research in the humanities. It coordinates contributions from the School’s constituent institutes with the aim of promoting and advancing research into the postcolonial world and facilitating dialogue between policymakers and academic researchers. It also aims to become a London hub for UK postcolonial studies, activities and events, and for international research and collaboration.

New senior appointments strengthen SAS academic community

Philip Carter, a historian and digital publishing specialist, has been appointed head of digital publications at the Institute of Historical Research. Previously senior research and publication editor at the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Dr Carter will be responsible both for existing IHR digital resources (such as British History Online and the Bibliography of British and Irish History, both of which are used extensively by historians and members of the public) and new digital historical projects, some of them located in the IHR, others in collaboration with other SAS institutes, and some with external partners in the university and heritage sectors.

Diamond Ashiagbor, an eminent expert in labour law, has been appointed to manage the research promotion and facilitation strategy as well as the research studies programme at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies. Professor Ashiagbor, a University of Oxford graduate with a PhD from the European University Institute in Florence, will work with colleagues in IALS and elsewhere in SAS to develop the institute as a vibrant intellectual centre for research in law and scholarship that brings together law with the humanities and social sciences.

Michelle O’Malley has been appointed deputy director of the Warburg Institute. An expert on Renaissance Italian art, Professor O’Malley has a distinguished academic profile, significant experience in higher education management, and longstanding links with Warburg, not least of which is her PhD, which she gained in 1994. She received her BA from Newton College of the Sacred Heart and an MA from Boston University. Her work focuses on issues of production, value and quality concerning painting and other material objects in Renaissance Italy.
New SAS appointment heralds expanding digital humanities programme

Jane Winters, who was promoted to a personal chair in digital history in 2014, has been appointed to the School’s new chair in digital humanities. Professor Winters led digital publications at the Institute of Historical Research and has played a major role in developing digital resources for historians. She is at the forefront of national and international debates on the future of digital publication and the handling of ‘big data.’ Most recently, she was awarded funding to develop a research network investigating born-digital big data and methods for the arts and humanities. Professor Winters is currently leading on the development of an open-access monographs service within the School.

Professors Roger Kain and Greg Woolf elected to the Academia Europaea

The School of Advanced Study’s dean and chief executive Roger Kain CBE FBA, and Greg Woolf, director of the Institute of Classical Studies, have been elected members of the prestigious Academia Europaea. Founded in 1988, the Academia has 2,800 members worldwide, including 52 Nobel Laureates. The Academia’s objectives include the provision of independent advice to public and private bodies across Europe and the promotion of better public understanding of the benefits of knowledge and learning and of the scientific and scholarly issues affecting society, quality of life and living standards.

International honour for SAS neuroscientist

Sir Colin Blakemore, director of the Centre for the Study of the Senses, has won the Elise and Walter A Haas International Award given by the University of California, Berkeley. It recognises distinguished international work by a UC Berkeley graduate and is one of the university’s most prestigious honours. In announcing the award, UC Berkeley Chancellor Nicholas B. Dirks praised Sir Colin’s contributions to biomedical research and his extensive range of influence that, he said, has ‘significantly impacted the wellbeing of people around the world.’ The prize is given annually and carries a cash award of $15,000. Sir Colin spearheaded the launch of the Human Mind Project, which is hosted by SAS, and now leads an international group of leading researchers from the humanities and the sciences who are working together to understand the nature and significance of the human mind. He is also the principal investigator for Rethinking the Senses, an AHRC-funded project aimed at unifying philosophical and scientific approaches to the study of perception.
Prestigious Latin American geography award for ILAS director

Linda Newson, OBE FBA, director of the Institute of Latin American Studies, has received the Preston E James Eminent Latin Americanist Career Award, the highest accolade available from the Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers (CLAG). Now in its 39th year, the award recognises outstanding research contributions on the geography of Latin America and the Caribbean. This is the second time Professor Newson has been honoured by CLAG. In 1991, the organisation presented her with its C O Sauer award for distinguished scholarship.

Three ST Lee Visiting Professorial Fellows for 2015–16

Three visiting scholars—one language expert and a historian—held prestigious ST Lee Visiting Professorial Fellowships for 2015–16.

Greg Crane, Humboldt Professor of the Humanities at the University of Leipzig, was based at SAS in May and June 2016, in close association with the Institute of Classical Studies. His work combines classical philology and computer science to systematise human cultural development. His reputation as a pioneer of digital humanities stems from his development of the Perseus Digital Library, a comprehensive and freely accessible online library for antique source material. Professor Crane’s high-profile public lecture series focused on the theme of ‘Greek, Latin and digital philology in a global age’.

Suresh Canagarajah, an applied linguistic expert, was based at SAS for four weeks in June 2016, working closely with the Institute of Modern Languages Research. He is a prolific author, with seven books and more than 25 scholarly articles to his name. His monograph Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations (Routledge, 2012) has won many awards, including the American Association for Applied Linguistics Book Award. Professor Canagarajah’s public lectures explored how the use of English as a lingua franca works in contexts of super-diversity today. They took place at SAS, the University of Göttingen, the University of Leeds and Edinburgh Napier University.

Melanie Nolan, professor of history at the Australian National University, is interested in the construction of different versions of the 20th-century British welfare state and how they were built—partly independently but also through mutual influence—in the UK, New Zealand and Australia. While at the School in May and June 2016, she worked closely with the Institute of Historical Research to deliver public lectures on ‘The race for entitlement and social welfare in the Anglo-Antipodean world’. Professor Nolan, who is also general editor of the Australian Dictionary of Biography, spoke at SAS and at the Oxford Centre for Global History. In addition, she presented, with IHR director Lawrence Goldman (former head of the Dictionary of National Biography) on ‘National lives and national dictionaries’.
ICwS research becomes major motion picture

Susan Williams, senior research fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, saw her book on the extraordinary post-war attempt to suppress the mixed-race relationship between the heir to an African kingship, Seretse Khama, and Ruth Williams, a 23-year-old shipping clerk, turned into a major motion picture. A United Kingdom, for which Dr Williams was historical advisor, stars David Oyelowo and Rosamund Pike. It opened the 60th BFI London Film Festival in October 2016.

NZ-UK Link Foundation Visiting Fellow for 2015–16

Each year, the NZ-UK Link Foundation Visiting Professorship programme enables an outstanding New Zealand senior academic to spend three months in the School with access to extensive research facilities and academic specialists, as well as the opportunity to deliver a series of public lectures. Judy McGregor, head of Auckland University of Technology’s School of Social Sciences and Public Policy, was the first equal employment opportunities commissioner in New Zealand. At SAS, she fostered debate on the critically important global human rights agenda. A lawyer and human rights researcher, Professor McGregor enhanced the School’s strengths in human rights expertise within the Institute of Commonwealth Studies and the Human Rights Consortium. Her four lectures explored human rights treaty obligations and how state parties implement their obligations.

National Gallery director receives honorary doctorate from SAS

Sir Nicholas Penny, renowned art historian and former director of London’s National Gallery, received an honorary degree from the University of London at the School’s degree ceremony in December 2015. His Doctor of Literature honoris causa recognised his outstanding support of the Warburg Institute, particularly its very successful MA in art history, curatorship and renaissance culture, which is run in collaboration with the National Gallery.
Championing the humanities through public engagement

‘Joy, curiosity and pleasure’

Sarah Churchwell

Why do I think public engagement in the humanities is so important? There are many reasons, but perhaps the most fundamental is that public engagement is a natural extension of the pedagogical impulse. I don’t believe that, as educators, we should restrict our energies to students and other academics. We mustn’t neglect those core constituencies, but we must find ways to reach out. The wider public is crying out for knowledge. Lifelong learners abound, and we all believe in the general civic benefit of a well-educated populace. It is also true that in the UK all taxpayers help support a higher educational system from which not all taxpayers directly benefit. This is a way of sharing the wealth of knowledge that has accrued over centuries, and which all academics are charged with safeguarding and transmitting. So we should share that knowledge, and we should do so in ways that are accessible and challenging, rigorous and dynamic. We should raise the bar, not lower it. There are people who are concerned about the ‘dumbing down’ of society, or academic discourse, through public engagement. I believe firmly that our job as educators is to encourage everyone to ‘smarten up’.

But I also believe that, as academics, it behooves us to return to the sense of joy, curiosity, and pleasure that led us all into becoming researchers in the first place. Public engagement provides opportunities for communicating and sharing that sense of joy, returning pleasure, play and creativity to academic enterprise. We need creativity along with critical thinking, and we need to communicate both more widely. To that end, we are working hard on the Being Human festival, the UK’s only national humanities festival, which in 2016 will enter its third year with more than 250 events in 45 cities in the UK at the end of November, working with over 220 cultural partners, to celebrate the best and most innovative humanities research being done today. And we have launched ‘Living Literature’ as an annual flagship public engagement event at Senate House each spring, which brings a classic novel to life in immersive, experiential ways. The series launched with ‘Living Gatsby’ in May 2016; in May 2017 we will offer ‘Living Proust’. It is also my intention that Living Literature events will lead each year to exhibitions, online resources, seminars, symposia and lectures, offering more traditionally academic perspectives on the subjects being celebrated.

And that’s the task the School has set for itself: to be a national centre of excellence for public engagement. That project can only begin with national excellence in research, but upon those foundations we can continue to build creative yet rigorous methods for advancing the national conversation about the humanities.

‘Bisclavret: a medieval werewolf tale’ (University of Liverpool and The Liverpool Players, Being Human 2015)
Public engagement with the humanities: a renaissance

The School of Advanced Study is a special organisation, with a unique role in the higher education landscape. Its remit to facilitate and promote research in the humanities means that it acts as a vital hub for research communities. But this mission also means that SAS is perfectly placed to reach out beyond the subject community, and to promote public engagement with humanities research. As far back as 2014 the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement described the School as poised to initiate a ‘renaissance in public engagement with the humanities’. Since then, we might say, we have seen that renaissance in full flow.

In many ways, 2015-16 was the year that public engagement came into its own in SAS. The School appointed its first Chair of Public Understanding in the Humanities, Professor Sarah Churchwell, and dramatically increased the reach and scale of the Being Human festival of the humanities, which featured more than 300 events in 36 towns and cities across the UK in November 2015. At the grassroots level, the School has developed strong links with community organisations in Bloomsbury and beyond, and has offered training, support and funding for staff to become ‘public engagement innovators’ in their own right.

Being Human festival

Being Human is the School’s flagship public engagement initiative. From its inception in 2014, the festival has drawn together inspiring individuals and organisations from across the country to fill a previously puzzling gap in the festival map in the UK, which had a national festival of the social science and many local arts, literature and science festivals, but not a multi-site festival of the humanities with a genuinely national reach.

In 2015, the festival more than doubled in size. It offered a programme supported by 75 universities and research organisations, with events staged everywhere from the Outer Hebrides to Dartmoor. More than 21,000 people attended in person. More than 3,000,000 engaged with the festival online. Last year also saw the introduction of five festival hubs linking activities together outside London. Universities in Aberdeen, Northumbria, Sheffield, Nottingham and Swansea coordinated programmes rooted in the histories and cultures of their regions as well as the internationally excellent research taking place in their institutions.

Changing perceptions

Reflecting the core aims of the School itself, the Being Human festival aims to increase public understanding of humanities research—but does so in ways that are engaging, creative and fun. Rather than follow a well-established ‘public lecture’ format, we encourage academics to think creatively about the best way of reaching audiences that are not already engaged with their subject area. A great example of this from the 2015 programme saw academics from the V&A and the University of Sheffield run an event exploring the history of intoxication in the Sheffield Tap, a busy local pub.

More than 90 percent of those who offered feedback on the festival stated that it had increased their knowledge of the humanities, with 88 percent stating that it had increased their understanding of the relevance of the humanities to their everyday lives. We found that many of those who attended the first festival in 2014 returned in 2015, and that 87 percent of those who returned reported visiting other humanities events following the festival.

Across the UK, researchers in the humanities are using the festival as a way to gain new perspectives on their work and share it with a wider audience. Some of those taking part have years of public engagement experience, but many are making their first forays in this field. They have all been overwhelmingly positive about the structure and support that the festival provides to help them with this. As one researcher told us, ‘when members of the public engage with and contribute to your research it reminds you why you got into arts and humanities research in the first place. It’s joyful!’

Engagement innovators

Being Human acts as a national network driving innovative public engagement activity in the humanities. But we are also committed to developing skills in this area closer to home. In 2015 we launched the Public Engagement Innovators Scheme—which offers small seed-funding awards for SAS staff, students and fellows to develop their own public engagement projects. To date, 13 awards have been made, supporting everything from subterranean explorations of Senate House led by scholars from the Institute of Modern Languages Research to events probing ‘the humanity of lawyers’ led by the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies.

Over the past year, a notable project led by the Institute of Commonwealth Studies in collaboration with Senate House Library and staff across the School has seen academics heading into a very different type of classroom. These researchers have developed and delivered English for Speakers of Other Languages lessons at the Cardinal Hulme Centre—a charity working with homeless young people, badly housed families and others in need—for an important new partnership for the School.

Through large-scale projects such as the Being Human festival, therefore, and through our Innovators scheme, we are continuing to develop and encourage humanities researchers to engage beyond the academy. We are empowering them to lead the way in the still relatively new field of public engagement with humanities research.
Being Human festival: a national forum for public engagement

Being Human is the UK’s only national festival of the humanities, and the School’s flagship initiative for public engagement. Established in 2014, the festival has grown quickly to become an annual fixture—providing researchers in the humanities with an outlet to share their work with new audiences in ways that are creative, innovative and fun. The festival provides an incentive for researchers and institutions to collaborate with cultural and community organisers and to test new ways of working with partners.

The festival returns

In 2014 the festival was conceived as a pilot—a test run to gauge the public appetite for a new festival dedicated to the humanities. Based on the success of this ‘experiment’, which saw festival events popping up right across the UK, the festival returned in 2015 with renewed and increased support from the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the British Academy and with additional support in the form of a grant from the Wellcome Trust.

Between 12 and 22 November 2015, the School presented a significantly larger programme of free activities for the second festival. Across the country—as far north as Orkney and as far south as Exmoor—more than 70 universities and independent research organisations took part in 36 towns and cities. Participation significantly increased across national museums and collections, including the V&A, the National Archives and the National Museum of Scotland.

An estimated 21,000 people attended festival events in 2015 and the reach online via the festival website and social media channels was more than 2,000,000.

Festival hubs

In the festival’s second year, the School focused on making it a genuinely national event. Feedback from the 2014 festival highlighted a lingering impression of ‘London centrism’. To remedy this, festival hubs were created in 2015. The Wellcome Trust grant funded centres of activity in Aberdeen, Northumbria, Sheffield and Swansea, alongside the coordinating hub in Senate House. The hubs aimed to produce carefully curated programmes to demonstrate best practice in humanities public engagement. The School hoped they would create activities that would link directly to the everyday lives of people in that area.

The hub programmes proved to be incredibly rich and imaginative, from events in Northumbria exploring witchcraft and civil war radicals to activities in Swansea exploring heritage, health and wellbeing. One event in Sheffield brought researchers and the public together in a local pub to explore the history of drinking songs and intoxication.

Cemeteries and shanty mobs

The programmes put together by the festival hubs in 2015 were incredible. But there was also a wide range of innovative activities in the broader festival programme across the UK. In Cardiff, researchers from the University of South Wales staged a series of ghostly walks in Cathays Cemetery, bringing the stories of long-dead residents to life with dramatic readings based on archival research. In Liverpool, researchers on maritime history and musicologists from Liverpool John Moores University staged a series of ‘shanty mobs’ across the city—breaking into song at hostelries across the city centre and inviting revellers to join them afterwards for a series of talks at the Merseyside Maritime Museum.

Back in Senate House, the School delivered a programme based around the theme ‘hidden and revealed’. Researchers from the IMLR drew on research into subterranean urban spaces to lead visitors on tours of tunnels and hidden corners of the building. IALS staff explored the ‘humanity of judging’ and the IP explored the mysteries of ‘sounds that move us’.
Feedback on Being Human 2015

Since its beginning, the Being Human festival has been independently evaluated against its stated objectives. In 2015, feedback from across the UK was overwhelmingly positive from both audiences and event organisers:

- 93 percent of audiences reported that the events they attended were ‘excellent’ or ‘good’, the two highest ratings
- 91 percent said they had increased their knowledge of the humanities
- 88 percent of attendees said they had increased their understanding of the humanities’ relevance to everyday life; 87 percent said they were likely to explore the humanities on their own as a result of their participation
- Nearly 100 percent of event organisers said they would take part in the festival again and would recommend participating in Being Human to others

The 2015 festival underlined the depth of the public’s desire to find out more about humanities research. It also underlined the enthusiasm of researchers to meet that desire and their willingness step outside their usual roles in order to do so.

As the first, and still the only, national festival of the humanities, Being Human provides a forum to share work in the humanities with the broadest possible public audience. The festival is thrilled to be returning in 2016 with a nine-day programme themed around ‘Hope and Fear’.

Read more: beinghumanfestival.org
Living Literature: creating innovative encounters with ideas and aesthetics

In May 2016, the School of Advanced Study launched a new annual flagship public engagement initiative, Living Literature, which will be held each spring at Senate House. The series, designed by Sarah Churchwell, the School’s chair in public understanding of the humanities, is designed to transform the public’s expectations about what it means to encounter serious academic research in the humanities. Each event will aim to bring an iconic literary work of art to life by creating an immersive, interactive event for public audiences that gets into the spirit of an individual book, using expertise from across the School to create innovative encounters with the ideas and aesthetics of the work. The first event, Living Gatsby, sought to recreate an evening in 1922—the summer in which The Great Gatsby is set—with as much specificity and accuracy as possible. This curated Gatsby evening was designed to feel like a party but also to be teeming with information and experiences that challenged received wisdom about the novel with historical and textual accuracy.

A museum-style exhibition of material culture (newspaper accounts, magazine covers, advertising posters, first editions, Hollywood films from the early 1920s, documentary films of New York from the early 1920s, early jazz recordings, recordings of Scott Fitzgerald, and film footage of Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald) provided the backdrop for actors from world-renowned theatre troupe Punchdrunk. Bathtub gin (using Scott Fitzgerald’s handwritten recipe, discovered in the archives) was created in partnership with local businesses the London Gin Club and Sacred Gin and partners Blackwell’s and the How-To Academy. There were historically accurate perfumes to try (and buy), created for the event by an historical perfumer; food prepared from cookbooks published in 1922; authentic Prohibition cocktails and non-alcoholic drinks; and a surprise performance from popular comedian Joe Lycett as the character Owl-Eyes.

All of these were integrated with the text of Gatsby itself, which was reproduced throughout the event in myriad ways, from a light show as guests entered to a large screen scrolling the text of the novel throughout the night. A printed programme gave guests mini-essays, explanations, examples of the material culture, and context; throughout the evening, the idea of the party as a central metaphor in Gatsby for modern life was played out. And in a final flourish, the iconic tower of Senate House was lit green in tribute to Gatsby’s iconic green light so that The Great Gatsby quite literally illuminated our corner of London’s Knowledge Quarter for the night.

The sold-out evening attracted 500 paying guests (all dressed in the style of Gatsby, including elegant men in ‘white flannels’ and jazzy flappers to match), as well as a great deal of media attention, including The Guardian, The Times, The Times Literary Supplement, the Evening Standard, and BBC Radio 4. The audience included research specialists in the subject area, GCSE students and everyone in between. ‘Roaming experts’—including Institute of English Studies postgraduate students working on Fitzgerald, who helped curate the event as part of their development training—shared their knowledge with the guests, all of whom were encouraged to encounter the material independently, in whatever ways they chose.
Living Gatsby was designed to showcase research expertise within the IES, bringing key research ideas alive for people in new ways, emphasising direct experience (rather than indirect lectures) and active, rather than passive, learning. It was also designed with an eye to creating flexible ways of keeping such events as widely accessible as possible. The event’s ticketing scheme encouraged those who could afford it to sponsor students and low-income guests. In addition, the investment in the displayed materials mean that it is possible to mount them again as a free exhibition in Senate House, as well as other sites across the UK and abroad. Interest has been expressed in bringing the event to the United States for the 2017 annual conference of the F Scott Fitzgerald Society, and there is also the possibility of a cross-cultural Living Literature exchange, in which classic works of literature from other cultures are brought to Senate House while the School sends its own events abroad. A website is also being developed that will archive video, photos, social media, and the essays that were produced, so that those who could not attend the event can access the research and the learning.

Audience response was overwhelmingly positive. The historian Simon Schama was in attendance, tweeting that there was ‘brain-scalding bathtub gin at #GatsbyinLondon but also spectacular 1922 Fitzgerald high life fun’. Another audience member noted, ‘Thought I knew Gatsby but learned much this evening, brilliant night’. Among the guests were several publishers, one of whom has commissioned a special, curated eBook based on the research from the event, which will launch in the autumn of 2016. Representatives of the Royal Society of Literature were also in attendance and have offered to sponsor Living Literature going forward.

Planning is currently underway for a 2017 Living Proust event showcasing research expertise in the Institute of Modern Languages Research, the University of London Institute in Paris, and the Institute of Philosophy. It will feature memory and taste experiments and bring to life the historical, social, cultural and literary contexts surrounding À La Recherche Du Temps Perdu. The Institut Français will be a major partner.

Living Literature is ambitious, but its goal is simple: to break down the barriers between audience and lecturer, and between audiences and works of art, by creating dynamic, participatory experiences in which visitors can deepen their knowledge of our culture’s most famous books and the histories that informed them.

Read more: livingliterature.blogs.sas.ac.uk
Public Engagement: On the road

From Bangor to Berlin, IALS helps to facilitate legal research

The IALS Library ‘roadshow’

The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Library, holding the national collections of foreign, comparative and international law, acts as the crossroads of legal research for the nation and attracts scholars from around the world. The Institute provides a neutral space for the discussion of law and policy matters, bringing together academic legal researchers with members of the practising profession, the judiciary, the government and the public.

January marks the beginning of ‘road show season’ at the IALS Library. After the very busy autumn term, when the energies of the library team are spent training new students, attention turns towards another important aspect of its work: reaching out to and supporting PhD students in law across the UK. Providing a library service to all researchers and academics in this country is a core part of the Institute’s national role, and each year library staff visit several law schools as part of its roadshow programme. The purpose of these visits is to highlight the breadth of the Library’s collections and services and to provide training on the many free databases available on the IALS website that are maintained for the benefit of all researchers, wherever they are located.

In 2015-16, universities in Aberystwyth, Bangor, Brighton, Kingston, Middlesex and Wolverhampton were visited with staff providing training to around 120 researchers, academic staff members and librarians. The benefits of the road shows are far from one-sided, however; they also provide IALS librarians with an opportunity to speak to researchers and academics from across the country to find out what they need in terms of library provision and to tap into the national network of law librarians for discussions of best practices.

Research skills training in Paris and Greece

When the administrator of Queen Mary University of London’s LLM in Paris programme contacted the IALS Library for assistance training their students in legal research skills, library staff were only too happy to help. The programme, which was developed by Queen Mary’s Centre for Commercial Law Studies, has been running since 2013; IALS library staff have been involved since 2014. Every January and September, they speak to incoming students about their research needs, helping them improve their research skills through practical workshops and training with the Library’s specialist legal databases. Following the success of the LLM in Paris, Queen Mary’s Centre for Commercial Law Studies launched a new LLM in Piraeus, Greece, that focuses on maritime and shipping law. IALS library staff were once again invited to provide legal research skills training for new students. While the docks of downtown Piraeus could not be more different from the leafy 7th arrondissement in Paris, the calibre of the students and the quality of the programme remain the same, as do the research needs of the students. IALS looks forward to continuing to support these international programmes through its truly global law library.

International Association of Law Libraries Conference, Berlin

IALS was well represented at last year’s International Association of Law Libraries (IALL) conference, held in Berlin. The programme, ‘Within and In Between: German Legal Tradition in Times of Internationalization and Beyond’, featured three days of talks and panels as well as presentations by database publishers. Library staff met other librarians specialising in foreign and international law and were able to develop their knowledge of the law, legal publications and online resources for legal research. IALS Deputy Librarian David Gee is on the board of the Association.

Read more: ials.sas.ac.uk/library
‘I come alive outside the M25’
— Catatonia, Londinium

For two frantic weeks in May 2016, Greg Crane, S T Lee visiting professor in the Institute of Classical Studies, toured the UK preaching the gospel of a digital philology in a global age.

Crane is a phenomenon. One of the first to realise the potential of digital resources for Greek and Latin literature, he was the prime mover for the creation of the Perseus Digital Library, an online collection of most of Greek and much of Latin literature, which is designed to enable students to flip from original to translation and back again, as well as to access dictionaries, encyclopedias, atlas and grammatical tools—in short, to do on a screen what 20 years ago could only be done in a first-rate research library. Crane, a professor of classics at Tufts University (where Perseus is based) also runs a research institute in Leipzig, where he is Humboldt Professor in Digital Humanities. Last spring he came to the School of Advanced Study with a mission to address the UK community as a whole. At Senate House he ran a roundtable on digitising other languages with an Arabist, an Assyriologist and a Sinologist; he gave talks in Glasgow and Durham, Oxford and Manchester; back in London, he discussed philology and citizenship in the 21st century.

Crane’s approach—and his UK tour—epitomise the new outward-facing mission of the Institute of Classical Studies. Founded in 1953 when two learned societies and the University of London put their libraries together, the ICS has always been a very Bloomsbury institution. It has had only three homes—in Bedford Square and then Gordon Square before moving to Senate House in 1997—and for much of its distinguished history was sustained by the effort of the London classics departments and the Hellenic and Roman Societies. They remain vital to the ICS, but like all SAS institutes, it now has a national, and indeed a global, role to fulfil.

‘Sending Professor Crane out on tour was an easy way to do this,’ says Greg Woolf, who has directed the ICS since January 2015. ‘Most of our visiting fellows do the same. Eric Csapo, one of the world’s leading scholars of Greek drama, spent some months based at the ICS as a Webster fellow but also gave lectures (and even did some examining) all over the UK during his visit. We also give small grants to allow workshops around the country to invite slightly bigger names than they could otherwise afford. This year we have funded events in Cardiff, Exeter, Nottingham, Oxford, St Andrews and Rome through this scheme.

But by far the easiest way for the ICS to reach its wider community is through digital means. That is one reason it hired the UK’s first Reader in Digital Classics, and why the ICS website now hosts websites for CUCD, the national subject association, a register of doctorates in progress, listings of academic visitors to the UK, and increasing numbers of podcasts of lectures and seminars and conferences. When the ICS advisory council was asked what the Institute should do for classicists outside London, the answer came back loud and clear: ‘Don’t spend your time running events all over the country for small audiences: make the events you run in the capital accessible to all! There is much more to do. A new publications manager is moving the ICS towards more open access publication and is constantly searching for new resources that could be hosted by the institute. Digitisation projects and off-site access are high on the agenda of the library, too. Perhaps one day it will host a descendant of Perseus.

Of course digital media will never replace face-to-face events. Professor Crane teaches his Boston students Greek from Leipzig at his lunchtime and their breakfast time, but having him physically in the UK made all the difference. The same is true of other ICS visitors. The Combined Library in particular draws visitors from all over the world and this year the ICS has hosted visiting fellows from Australia, Denmark, Germany, Israel, Italy, Poland, South Africa, Spain and the United States. The libraries and museums of London and the powerful academic energy of the colleges and of SAS itself makes the ICS a natural classical hub. But hubs are dynamic entities: they do not hoard energy, but send it back out. The ICS depends for its strength on its connections and its visitors, from overseas and from within the UK, but it is committed, with their help, to making a noise that is audible well beyond the M25.

Read more: icls.sas.ac.uk
The rewards of collaboration: the Institute of English Studies and the Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery

In September 2015, the Institute of English Studies and the Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery embarked on a new academic partnership, one that builds on the success of two previous collaborative projects. The first of these produced an AHRC-funded exhibition of manuscripts and early printed books from Blackburn’s Hart Collection at Senate House Library in 2013. This was followed by a much larger exhibition two years later at London’s 2 Temple Place involving the Haworth Museum in Accrington and Towneley Hall Museum in Burnley. After its run in London, ‘Cotton to Gold’ transferred to the Blackburn Museum and then to the Museum of Lancashire in Preston.

This year the academic partnership has brought a broad range of book historians to work on the Hart Collection under the leadership of Cynthia Johnston, associate research fellow and lecturer in the history of the book at the IES. Nigel Morgan studied Hart’s medieval manuscripts and gave a public lecture on his findings. Claire Bolton did some preliminary cataloguing of the incunables and was filmed by the Blackburn with Darwen Council for a podcast now available on the Council’s website, ‘Blackburn is Open’. Richard Lawrence and Ben Weiner, both of whom work with St Bride’s Library, reconstructed a Columbian press that was in storage in the museum. It is now in the main gallery, where it is used by a local artist funded by the Council to demonstrate the workings of the press. Most recently Sir Brian Vickers, IES senior research fellow, visited the museum to inspect the Shakespeare First Folio on loan from Stonyhurst College, which completes their current display of all four Folios, including the Second, Third and Fourth Folios held in the Hart Collection.

The Blackburn Museum, with the support of the IES, was awarded two research grants in July 2016. The first is a Resilience Grant from the Arts Council, which will enable Institute staff to proceed with cataloguing the Hart collection and to redesign a study centre within the museum for visiting scholars and the general public. The second is a grant from the Islamic Art and Material Culture Network. The Network will supply a specialist to catalogue the collection’s Islamic material, as well as to photograph the holdings and to run workshops for museum visitors.

Read more: ies.sas.ac.uk
Mind and meaning: the Institute of Philosophy explores consciousness at the Cheltenham Science Festival

What does consciousness do for us? In June 2016, researchers from the Institute of Philosophy posed that question at the Cheltenham Science Festival. The festival is one of the UK’s leading public science events, giving the IP the chance to demonstrate the power of the kind of interdisciplinary research that takes place at the Institute under the AHRC’s ‘Science in Culture’ theme, which is directed by Barry Smith, IP director and AHRC Leadership Fellow.

Part of the festival’s ‘Discovery Zone’, the IP exhibit was the only one in which members of the public could contribute useful scientific data as well as taking part in hands-on activities. The question for the day was one that has arisen out of Nicholas Shea’s AHRC fellowship project, ‘Meaning for the Brain and Meaning of the Person’. The issue is: what kinds of tasks is consciousness good for?

The Institute of Philosophy played a pivotal role in hosting the project by bringing together Professor Shea (KCL) with UCL neuroscientist Chris Frith and postdoctoral research fellow Eoin Travers. Their theoretical and empirical work was facilitated by the interdisciplinary environment fostered by the concentration of philosophers, psychologists and neuroscientists at the IP, including the invaluable opportunity to discuss theoretical insights and experimental paradigms both informally and at the weekly Institute lab meetings.

Cheltenham offered the IP a chance to showcase its unique ability to facilitate this kind of research, as well as to demonstrate the highly productive interactions facilitated by the AHRC’s Science in Culture theme.

Science has revealed that a surprising amount of our behaviour is driven by unconscious automatic systems in our brain. In fact, conscious thinking can sometimes get in the way of smooth performance. A contrasting body of results shows that our fast automatic thinking can be highly error-prone. For some problems, only slow deliberate reasoning delivers the right answer. When, then, should we bring conscious reasoning to bear? What kinds of tasks is it especially good for?

At the festival, the team, including postdoctoral research fellow Sofia Bonicalzi and KCL teaching fellow Uwe Peters, was able to demonstrate one of the experimental paradigms that shows the way unconscious stimuli can control behaviour. In the process, members of the public took part in a real experiment exploring the role of conscious and unconscious processes in decision-making. Perhaps most importantly, they were able to see and discuss their results immediately afterwards.

The team discussed the importance of this work with visitors, including the wider significance of theoretical and experimental research on the functions of consciousness. Those taking part in the experiments, as well as the many who stopped by to watch, were keen to share their own views of the topic. The first preliminary analysis of results was presented at a subsequent public engagement event at the Royal Society of Arts. The theoretical background to the experiment was developed in a paper jointly authored by Nicholas Shea and Chris Frith and published in Neuroscience of Consciousness.

Read more: philosophy.sas.ac.uk
Once upon a time, there was a story about the mind. Call it ‘the mechanical mind’. According to this story, the mind is like a machine and the brain like a computer. Throughout its long and distinguished history, this story has helped advance knowledge about the mechanisms and processes of mental activity, its traits and complex structure, only to find itself challenged in recent times by a new and powerful story: that embodiment, rather than computation, is the key to the mystery of the mind. The two stories are not mutually exclusive. To think about the brain as a machine that computes information for action and perception is not to deny the fundamental role of the body. If the mind is what the brain ‘does’, the body is what defines the richness of mental experience. So we need to look at the complexity of bodily experiences and awareness to get a better understanding of how brains process information through prediction.

There is probably no better place than Edinburgh to discuss the state of the art of research at the interface of philosophy of mind, computational neuroscience, robotics and artificial intelligence. The fourth public event of the School’s Human Mind Project, Computers and Minds, looked at these topics through public talks and lectures as well as a demonstration on robotics. Presentations focused on computational theories of mind, the cognitive neuroscience of self-consciousness and body awareness and the implications of the latest advances in artificial intelligence for understanding the human mind.
The ceremonial staircase at Senate House received a makeover for Shakespeare: Metamorphosis.
In December 2015 the Institute of Historical Research was awarded funding by the Heritage Lottery Fund for a new digital public engagement project on the history of London. Described by the media as a ‘social historian’s heaven’, the project will incorporate heritage assets from key partners, including Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA), London Metropolitan Archives, Historic England, the National Archives, and the British Library. These will be linked in an innovative new website and a mobile app, allowing the public to create and interact with many different ‘layers’ of London’s history from the Romans to the present day. The website will be at the heart of an extensive public engagement and schools programme across the capital’s diverse boroughs.

The origins of the project lie partly in the institute’s existing relationships with bodies such as MOLA. Indeed, its Centre for Metropolitan History, working with MOLA, undertook two previous projects, funded by SAS and by JISC, that created digital maps of early modern London (one of which can be consulted online at www.locatinglondon.org). These provided the technical ‘proof of concept’ for this ambitious new project, which is creating a series of layers of maps and images of London from the Roman period to the 21st century, with detailed information about streets, buildings, boundaries and topographical features.

The two overarching principles of the project are first, to make valuable information about London digitally available via Creative Commons licences, and second, to adopt a crowdsourcing approach, actively engaging with the public to encourage them to contribute to the resource itself.

In other words, by digitising historic maps, photographs and other resources and making them publicly accessible, Layers of London provides a platform upon which researchers, community groups, schools and members of the public can create their own projects, create and upload content such as images and digital recordings, or simply benefit from increased access to information. A pilot project in Barking and Dagenham began in May 2016 and is already demonstrating that such historical resources are in high demand and that there is clear community interest in developing and sharing information about local history and identity.

The range of groups that have shown interest to date is diverse and includes DABD, a Barking-based group that works with socially excluded people all over the UK; Studio 3 Arts, a Barking community arts group currently running a project to document the Gascoigne Estate, which is in the process of being demolished and redeveloped; the Catholic Diocese of Brentwood; and Eastside Community Heritage, which has a substantial track record documenting oral history and other forms of social history in East London. Local schools also see the potential of the Layers of London project as a resource for projects in history, geography, ICT and maths, suitable for both primary and secondary students. One of the most important new ‘layers’ to be created will be a mosaic of 24,000 aerial photographs taken by the RAF in the late 1940s: these will be georeferenced by schoolchildren across London and used first by schools in Barking and Dagenham.

One resource that Historic England is keen to share is the Greater London Historic Environment Record, which includes more than 87,000 entries providing data on archaeological sites, historic buildings, and historic parks and landscapes. Making this database accessible through Layers of London will enable Historic England to achieve a long-term aspiration relating to this vast body of information that is of interest to academics and policymakers as well as the wider public.

Layers of London will have another important public impact. In some cases, heritage collections and the physical resources to digitise them are available but the required human resources are lacking. It is hoped that Layers of London will create synergies between community volunteers and heritage collections to enable digitisation on a much larger scale. Calls for volunteers to test the Layers of London prototype website have demonstrated a willingness on the part of local residents to provide feedback on its user friendliness and input into the development process. Even at this early stage, it is clear that both the public and the custodians of London’s heritage see the value of digitisation, crowdsourcing, and dissemination as important ways of engaging with the history of the city.

Read more: layersoflondon.blogs.sas.ac.uk
Layers of London will digitise and georeference many of the key historical maps of London, making it possible to understand the city’s development over time. Above: the late 17th-century Hollar map of the city.
The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies frequently hosts important discussions around the development of government policy on surveillance and access to information, and the past year was a particularly busy one. Following publication of the government’s draft bill on investigatory powers in autumn 2015, the Institute’s Information Law and Policy Centre (ILPC) facilitated an ad hoc research group of academics and practitioners to consider its sources. Members of this group published a clause-by-clause review examining the Bill’s provenance and assessing whether the clauses came from existing legislation or were newly introduced. Based on this exercise, Lorna Woods, IALS senior associate research fellow and professor of law at the University of Essex, submitted evidence to the joint select committee scrutinising the Bill, which the committee then cited in its report published in February 2016.

Members of the ILPC have also spoken at a range of policy-oriented events. In June 2016, for example, Christina Angelopoulos was invited to the European Parliament to speak at an event on freedom of speech and copyright in the digital single market. The ILPC also helped facilitate two stakeholder workshops at Friend’s House in London on the implications of Brexit for information and communications policy as part of an ESRC-funded initiative led by Alison Harcourt, professor of politics at the University of Exeter. A range of invited participants from industry reflected on the opportunities and threats they perceived for their sector in relation to the regulation of the audio-visual and broadcasting sector and data transfer within and outside the UK.

A key challenge for humanities academics is finding ways to engage with industry and policymakers, particularly at the PhD and early-career levels. In November 2015 the ILPC organised, with support from History & Policy, an AHRC-funded workshop on government, civil society and law as part of an initiative led by the London Arts and Humanities Partnership. Involving experienced practitioners and academics at different stages of their careers, it offered practical advice on ways that scholars can relate their research to public policy and increase their chances of achieving meaningful policy impact.

Read more: ials.sas.ac.uk/research/research-centres/information-law-policy-centre

Guy Fawkes mask, a symbol of anti-government and anti-establishment protests around the world, especially those related to information policy.
The Ministry of Information project: bringing new perspectives to wartime history

The AHRC-funded project Make Do and Mend: A Publishing and Communications History of the Ministry of Information, 1939-45 enjoyed a successful year in 2015-16. Alongside extensive archival research undertaken by its staff in London, Manchester, Warwick and Belfast, it began a major digitisation project that will see the Ministry’s Home Intelligence Reports and Wartime Social Surveys made freely available and fully searchable for the first time. This has been achieved with the support of the project’s partners at the Department of Digital Humanities at KCL and the National Archives. This will result in the creation of a major public resource for studying the political and social history of the war in Britain, which will be hosted on the project’s website, MOI Digital, from early 2018 onwards. Some of this material was presented by the project’s principal investigator, Simon Eliot, in a keynote address to ‘Reading Communities: Connecting the Past and the Present’, a conference held in Senate House in September 2016.

The project started a series of public seminars addressing different aspects of the Ministry’s work, with the aim of airing project members’ research-in-progress and gathering feedback. These are free to attend, and have so far attracted a mix of scholars and interested members of the public. The programme continues this coming year, featuring papers from project members and invited scholars. Topics will include the Ministry’s Arabic-language propaganda, wartime illustrators and the Ministry’s activities in Argentina.

The Bloomsbury Festival (October 2015) provided further opportunity for collaboration and public engagement. Marc Wiggam, lead research fellow, introduced the Hacking the Archives event, which saw Senate House lit with images from wartime archives. He also gave a public lecture on the subject of power and propaganda for the festival’s Speaker’s Corner event.

Project staff have been highly visible at conferences this past year. Wiggam presented work on the Ministry’s propaganda work in neutral countries at the International Communications Association conference held in Fukuoka, Japan, in June 2016 and on the Ministry’s regional organisation at the International Association of Media and Communication Research conference held at the University of Leicester in July 2016. Simon Eliot presented a paper surveying the wide range of the MOI’s outputs to the triennial conference of the International Association of University Professors of English held in London in July 2016. These papers were well received and raised the profile of the project ahead of its own conference, which will be held in July 2017.

The project’s research team expanded with the recruitment of doctoral candidate Katherine Howells (based at the Department of Digital Humanities at KCL) and two postdoctoral research fellows, Hollie Price and Christopher Bannister. Howells’s research looks at the popular memory of the Ministry of Information’s campaigns. Price is examining the development and impact of the Ministry’s output of films and other visual materials during the war, while Bannister is researching the Ministry’s overseas campaigns, with a particular emphasis on its work in Central and South America. The project team now consists of specialists in publishing, media, film, Spanish and digital history, becoming a truly multidisciplinary project that will bring new perspectives to the history of the Ministry of Information.

Read more: moidigital.ac.uk
In November 2015, as part of the Being Human festival, the Institute of Modern Languages Research led Senate House Revealed, a web- and social media-based project to reveal the hidden geographies, histories and heritages of Senate House and share it with a wider audience. It was designed to encourage engagement with and explorations of the Charles Holden-designed building on the part of students, staff, library visitors and the public.

In his blog post ‘Under Senate House’, Peter Oakley described a tour of the subterranean spaces of Senate House as an opportunity too good to miss: ‘I was intrigued to find out how similar this impressive yet slightly austere and forbidding building really was to its architectural contemporaries. The tour presented some visual surprises and, more subtly, some profound insights into how distinctive the material culture of a building such as Senate House is in relation to less individualistic examples.’ One of the first revelations was the extent to which large parts of the building, though not intended for general access, were nonetheless built and furnished with as much care as the ‘public’ face of the building. ‘This was epitomised by the ubiquitous teak doors and door frames as well as the tiled walls’, Oakley writes. ‘One can assume that the general expectations of the people specifying, paying for, or procuring the material assemblage that became the interiors of Senate House had a common understanding that this was to be a special and unified place. It is even possible to argue that, despite the social disparity of the staff in terms of roles and comparative status, the building, to some extent, was capable of engendering some form of social solidarity amongst its inhabitants.’

Insistent and careful inscription is another prominent feature of the building, even in places where it is unlikely to be viewed. For example, the names of contractors and wiring diagrams were etched onto enormous copper sheets affixed to the original control boards, and a metal plaque riveted to a main power breaker informed the reader that the equipment had been made at the Festival of Britain.
For students, staff and visitors alike, Senate House remains the stuff that both dreams and nightmares are made of. It is a common experience of those who work in Senate House, especially on a weekend, to come through the front door and find themselves in another space and time, rewinding to the past or fast forwarding to the future. Senate House is Gotham City, the Ministry of Truth, a Victorian rail station, a 1970s disco floor and much more. It is the ultimate time machine.

Above all, it is modernity embodied, like metropolitan London. Both are monuments to the utopian promises of the future. Like the city, Senate House embodies an original form of utopia. It is a site of utopian investment, a blueprint of the cosmos. The viewer cannot but experience terror and delight, danger and exhilaration. The perspective is lifted, both physically and spiritually. This is a total theatre, a total spectacle, delighting us with horror, pathos and enduring enchantment.

Read more: senatehouserevealed.blogs.sas.ac.uk
In 2015-16, the Institute of Historical Research held six monthly seminars through the autumn and winter on the subject of ‘History Now and Then’. Convened and led by senior fellow Daniel Snowman, the series considered the current state of historical studies in the company of leading historians.

The seminars examined in turn the remarkable vogue for history in the media over the past generation; the growth of the ‘heritage industry’ and its effects on the study of history; the relationship between history and historical myths, which prove so enduring and also so diverting; the need felt by each generation to rewrite the past; the growing use of visual sources by historians and their impact on the way we ‘see’ and ‘picture’ the past; and the abuse of history by those who would turn it into ideology, vindication, consolation or pure nostalgia.

Those speaking—four historians at each seminar—including David Reynolds, chairman of the Cambridge Faculty of History; Paul Lay, editor of History Today; Maria Misra, an Indianist at Oxford University; Simon Thurley, former chief executive of English Heritage; Peter Burke, Cambridge; Justin Champion, president of the Historical Association; Penny Corfield, a historian of the 18th century; Sir Ian Kershaw, Hitler’s biographer; Simon Goldhill, a classicist and head of the Cambridge Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH); Vic Gatrell, the cultural historian; Paul Preston, a historian of modern Spain; and Peter Hennessy, a historian of, and commentator on, contemporary affairs.

The Wolfson Centre in the IHR was full for each occasion and it was a matter of some interest to the speakers that they found themselves addressing large, mixed audiences of academics, postgraduates and interested members of the public. The latter group has always made up an important component of the IHR’s core audience and has helped to keep the Institute outward facing and focused on ‘public history’ as well as the academic variety.

Though each speaker had barely 15 minutes to develop their ideas, the format worked well and stimulated questions, comments and dissent from the audience, as was the intent. Speakers used their opportunity differently. Peter Hennessy reflected on his own historical education, Paul Preston took the audience deep into political disputes in contemporary Spain that have been played out in historical controversies in which he has been involved, Vic Gatrell illustrated the importance of visual sources by speaking to four different images of the execution of the Cato Street conspirators in 1819, Paul Lay examined the role of the media in spreading accurate and inaccurate versions of the past.

All of our speakers seemed to agree that history was in rude good health if judged by its popularity on television and radio, cinema and theatre, and in the bookshops. Even the number of takers of an A-level in history and of applicants for university places in the subject have held steady in recent years. The British are, it was agreed, an historically-minded people and history is still considered a firm basis for a good education. But there was less agreement about the versions of the past we are fed: the word ‘myth’, addressed explicitly in one of the seminars (‘Does the “real” past matter?’), was heard throughout the series as historians expressed their frustration with deep-seated and unshakeable popular versions of the past. Some participants railed at the abuse of the past, others thought this was inevitable: all societies tell stories about themselves, whether of victory or defeat, which are used instrumentally by elites to create national cohesion. The job of the historian is one of eternal vigilance in explaining and puncturing these misuses and in showing how history is employed for ulterior ends.

A second set of six seminars, one each month from October to March, will be offered in the coming year with another group of leading historians and practitioners who will reflect on the state of their subject.

Read more: blog.history.ac.uk/2015/09/history-now-then/
Britain and Brazil: assessing a complex relationship

The Institute of Latin American Studies was delighted to host, in March 2016, an international conference on the longstanding relationship between Britain and Brazil, held in partnership with the Brazil Institute at King's College London and supported by the Embassy of Brazil and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

‘Britain and Brazil II: Political, economic, social, cultural and intellectual relations, 1808-present’ built on the success of the first ‘Britain and Brazil’ conference, held in May 2014, which addressed the underexplored topic of the historical role of the British in Brazil. This first conference took as its starting point Gilberto Freyre’s 1948 work Ingleses no Brasil (The English in Brazil), moving beyond the scope of this personal first-hand account. The interdisciplinary approach of this conference was recognised by attendees as a key to its success in stimulating debate and identifying new questions for future research. The first conference laid the foundations for the second conference, which, it was agreed, would aim to include a greater number of early career scholars from a broader range of humanities disciplines to add new perspectives on historical and contemporary relations between Britain and Brazil.

From the 19th century until the First World War, Britain and Brazil enjoyed exceptionally close relations, with Britain acting as Brazil’s principal trading partner and a rare source of capital for the country. During the First World War and thereafter, Britain’s position was increasingly challenged by the United States. By the end of the Second World War, Britain had been almost entirely eclipsed by America and Brazilian-British relations declined. British commercial, financial and political interest in Brazil revived as the country emerged as an increasingly important regional and global power during the 1990s.

However, the ‘Britain and Brazil II’ conference provided another perspective as scholars emphasised the cultural, educational and religious exchanges that persisted even when political, financial and diplomatic relations were in relative decline—from literary exchanges between British and Brazilian poets to the emergence of transnational educational practice. Persistent foreign policy debates about the way in which the British state should balance human rights obligations and trade relationships were also seen with respect to British-Brazilian relations, as demonstrated by a paper focusing on President Geisel’s state visit to Britain in 1976. It was noted how protests from MPs and NGOs over the repressive nature of the Brazilian state at the time contrasted with the Callaghan government’s anxiety to secure commercial agreements. Even the predominant image of declining financial relationships between Britain and Brazil following the First World War were revised, as this pattern did not apply to all sectors, including coffee.

It was evident from the papers delivered that there remains a wealth of undiscovered scholarship on the nature of the relations between Britain and Brazil, from diplomatic to cultural, and that future conferences on this theme would continue to be welcomed by scholars, diplomats, policymakers and the public.

The conference report, ‘Britain and Brazil II: Political, economic, social, cultural and intellectual relations, 1808-present’, written by Asa Cusack, is available through the School of Advanced Study’s Publications Office and online.

Read more: ilas.sas.ac.uk/publications/open-access-house-publications/britain-and-brazil-ii-report-economic-political-social
Humanity of Law: communicating law through art and debate

‘I see nervous hands clenching and unclenching behind a QC’s back, out of sight of the bench’, says the artist Isobel Williams, who, with the court’s permission, draws from the public seats of the UK Supreme Court. A summer exhibition of her work on the theme of law and justice formed part of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies’ public engagement programme in 2015-16.

With events centred on the theme ‘Humanity of Law’, IALS sought to offer insights into the processes of law, particularly those that are hidden. This was the starting point for its ‘Humanity of Barristers’ event at the Inner Temple as part of the Being Human festival in November 2015 and a public conversation between two judges—one from Germany, one from the UK—on the emotional dimensions of their work, in April.

The programme attracted a wide range of participants, some of whom had no previous connection with the study of the humanities or law. Events melded the theoretical and the practical: from discussions around the ‘detached’ professional identity of barristers to an explanation of the national Act for the Act campaign, which champions the real-life stories of people who have benefited from the Human Rights Act 1998.

Read more: ials.sas.ac.uk/about-us/news/body-law-exhibition-drawings-isobel-williams

The Global Reach of La Rioja: blending history, literature and viticulture

On a cold evening in November 2015, more than 200 people packed Chancellor’s Hall, Senate House, at an event organised by the Institute of Modern Languages Research, ‘The Global Reach of La Rioja: Literature and Wine’. The evening, sponsored by Bodega Classica (Vintae Rioja), celebrated the Rioja region of northeast Spain, famous not only for its outstanding vineyards but also for its significance as the founding site of literature written in the Spanish language.

The evening opened with talks by Gonzalo Capellán, professor of history, University of La Rioja, and Andrés Pascual, bestselling novelist and native of Logroño in the Rioja region, who has published five novels translated into several languages. Capellán spoke on ‘Spanish language landmarks: from Gonzalo de Berceo to the Hispanists in the UK’, focusing on the 12th-century author Gonzalo de Berceo (born in La Rioja), who is traditionally credited as the first Spanish-language poet, and four outstanding moments in the history of the Spanish language. Andrés Pascual’s talk, ‘Build Your Own Universe’, described how, after training and practising as a lawyer, he had ‘turned himself into’ a novelist. He outlined his narrative techniques, explaining how he constructed his own fictional world in words. Finally, José Miguel Arambarri, manager of Bodega Classica (located in San Vicente de la Sonsierra) sketched the history of wine production in the region and gave an overview of the production methods used today, which incorporate the latest scientific and technological developments.

Audience members were invited to taste the various wines supplied by Bodega Classica, Hacienda López de Haro red and white, and the sumptuous tortillas specially sent from Spain for the occasion, as well as tapas beautifully prepared by Senate House catering services. The organisers were enthusiastically commended for this enjoyable event that combined short lectures on the history of the Rioja region, Spanish language and literature, and wine-tasting.

The evening was widely promoted by social media, attracting not only academics and prominent individuals from the Spanish community in London, but also members of the diplomatic corps, school teachers, journalists, students, translators, lawyers, film producers, musicians, food and wine connoisseurs, charity workers, book publishers and many other young professionals. For most it was their first time in Senate House. The event was covered in the local Spanish press in an article titled ‘La Rioja, seen from London’ and was celebrated as ‘a real literary and cultural fiesta’ held in a location of ‘great cultural and academic prestige’, the University of London.

Read more: imlr.sas.ac.uk
The renowned Honduran painter, muralist and actor Javier Espinal was the focus of an exhibition hosted by the Institute of Latin American Studies in autumn 2015. More than 60 of Espinal’s murals can be seen on the walls of various Central American capitals and, more recently, cities in Italy and the UK. Espinal’s method is known as muralismo colectivo (collective mural painting): participants are invited to contribute to the artwork as it is created. The photographs on display in the ILAS exhibition were taken during Espinal’s tour of Europe between October 2014 and September 2015.

Honduras has consistently faced social strife and communal violence, and while the population is small—around 8.25 million—the country has the world’s highest murder rate and is regularly described as one of the world’s most violent. Espinal developed muralismo colectivo to enable the audience to participate in the creation of art and, in so doing, engage in critical reflection about current political, cultural and economic issues concerning Central America and beyond. His tour, which invited audiences including students and other artists to participate in creating murals, was intended to draw attention within Europe to the current political situation in Honduras.

Espinal’s work draws on his Lenca background. The Lenca are the largest indigenous group in Honduras and have long struggled to secure land rights; Lenca community activists have also been strongly associated with opposition to the Agua Zarco dam project. This opposition has often been met with threatened and actual violence. In addition to Lenca symbolism, Espinal’s murals are inspired by the resistance of indigenous community activists to these hydroelectric and mining projects, many of which have encroached on their lands and access to common resources. Espinal provides imagery of non-violence and dignity as a response.

By showcasing Espinal’s work, ILAS enabled audiences to learn more about the history and society of Honduras and the challenges faced by its communities. At the launch event, a representative from the Environmental Network for Central America provided an introduction to Honduras’ contemporary political situation that gave deep insight into the context in which Espinal develops his murals. The murals themselves enabled visitors to engage with the transformative imagery typical of Espinal’s work and also provided a space to reflect on the relationship between violence, art, and the power of art to engage with the challenge of building a peaceful society.

Read more: ilas.sas.ac.uk

Cosmovisiones de diversos colores (2014), part of a community collective mural; acrylic over a block wall, 20 x 2.5 m. Via Gino Bonichi, Parrocchia San Giorgio Martire, Acilia, Rome.
Aby Warburg 150 – Work, Legacy, Promise: forging living connections between past, present and future

‘He would have loved today, I am quite sure. He would have been proud, he probably would have been embarrassed.’ These are the words of the archaeologist John Prag, one of Aby Warburg’s grandchildren, as he thanked David Freedberg and Claudia Wedepohl, the organisers of a three-day conference at the Warburg Institute to celebrate the 150th anniversary of his grandfather’s birth. More than 30 distinguished speakers and an audience of nearly 1,200 gathered over two-and-a-half days in June 2016 to pay tribute to Aby Warburg’s ‘work, legacy and promise’. Prag also noted that Warburg would have been thrilled by today’s technology: surfing the web, sending emails and finding images on Google.

There is no doubt that Aby Warburg (1866–1929), the German scholar and founder of the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg in Hamburg, took note of the momentous industrial and technological advances that happened in his lifetime. He was excited and fascinated by air travel, for instance, but also recognised the threats posed by modernisation, warning of the impact that the telephone and telegraph would have on our sense of distance and ‘the space for contemplation’—the precious moment in which we formulate a measured response to anything that prompts a reaction. Thinking of photography, Warburg feared that the human mind was in danger of being swamped by a sudden profusion of images. What would he have made of the spread of the internet and the omnipresence of mobile phones? That question was hanging in the air when WJT Mitchell compared the simultaneous display of images in Warburg’s famous Atlas of Memory with the world wide web.

Warburg was deeply aware of the creative tension between what he termed ‘Athens’, the realm of reason, and ‘Alexandria’, representing, in his view, irrational impulses and the irresistible allure of magic and superstition. Though Warburg called upon Athens to subdue Alexandria, he acknowledged that the reasonable city was ever-ready to be reconquered by its irrational counterpart. Warburg believed that the energy produced by this polarity propelled the transmission of cultures across time and space, and lay behind the survival of the classical tradition. The fascination with ‘energy’, Kurt W Forster reminded the conference audience, was shared by many of Warburg’s contemporaries, while Cornelia Zumbusch recalled the long history of the idea that art itself is a form of energy.
and snails. Important names were dropped, including those of Darwin, Manet, Durkheim, Freud, Pauli and Panofsky. We learned about Warburg’s antecedents and followers, his times and places. Offering significant advances in our knowledge of Warburg, the papers delivered represented a rich variety of viewpoints, spanning cultural history, media culture, aesthetics, history of science, art, philosophy and literature. Every contribution showed the undiminished power of Warburg’s ideas. In an increasingly complex and irrational world, troubled by wars and conflicts, overwhelmed by an abundance of images, permeated by digital technology, it is not difficult to understand why David Freedberg, the new director of the Warburg Institute, insisted that, ‘in setting out the historical, psychological, anthropological and political dimension of art and culture, the work of Aby Warburg underlines the continuing relevance of the humanities today’.

In his introductory remarks, Freedberg discussed Warburg’s concern with the effects of technology and the proliferation of images on human reflection and self-awareness; his belief in the importance of the comparative study of human cultures and religions; his vision of a comprehensive cultural science, a Kulturwissenschaft that transcends academic boundaries, embracing anthropology, psychology, politics and biology. Freedberg also noted that, approaching Warburg’s notion of Nachleben, in particular the ‘afterlife’ of antiquity, ‘we should not just be studying the Nach in Nachleben but more importantly the Leben in Nachleben, the life that remains in cultural forms across time’. The question is fascinating. Why do human creations from past ages remain vital? Is there a primordial language of emotional feeling that safeguards expressive gestures across the centuries (Warburg’s Pathosformeln)? Finally, Freedberg stressed the importance of what Warburg termed Brückenbau – ‘building bridges’ across cultures and between the arts and sciences. It was a fitting birthday tribute to the grandfather of a whole way of thinking about human cultures that so many scholars and such a large audience came together in London to build bridges between disciplines, forging living connections between past, present and future.

Read more: warburg.sas.ac.uk/events/aby-warburg-150-work-legacy-promise
Shakespeare: Metamorphosis: exploring changes in Shakespearean textual scholarship over four centuries

Engagement is a key part of Senate House Library’s operating plan, linked to the goal of raising footfall by 15 percent by 2018-19. Three seasons of engagement activity are planned each year, with three-month programmes in the spring and autumn aimed primarily at academic audiences and an extended five-month flagship summer season intended to attract a broader public audience.

In 2016, the Library marked the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death, taking full advantage of this first opportunity to put its new approach to public engagement into practice. With the support of colleagues across the University, the Library successfully applied for funding to deliver a prominent public exhibition on the ground and first floor, a marked change from the traditional display space within the Library on the fourth floor. Running from 14 April to 17 September, Shakespeare: Metamorphosis examined changes in Shakespearean textual scholarship over four centuries. A key feature was a piece of installation art that used vinyl overlays to transform Senate House’s ceremonial staircase into a pictorial representation of Shakespeare. Visitors were encouraged to view display boards on the first floor before registering for free access to see related parts of the Library’s collections, including a First Folio, in Convocation Hall.

To support the exhibition, the Library commissioned a microsite that included digital versions of the books and other items on display, supported by 30 short films featuring the exhibition’s curators, who provided insights into the relevance of the items they had selected. The microsite also featured a short film with actor Paterson Joseph reciting the ‘seven ages of man’ soliloquy from *As You Like It*, with contributions from leading scholars promoting the value of the Library’s collections. A social media campaign using the hashtag #7Ages2016 further raised the profile of the season, with the result that during April the number of visitors to the microsite often exceeded those visiting the main Library website.

A full and varied events programme accompanied the exhibition, featuring more than 20 free lectures by leading scholars from the Institute of English Studies, various federal members of the University of London and other UK universities, as well as the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and the National Archives. One highlight was an exploration of Shakespeare’s sonnets led by Professor Sir Brian Vickers with the actors Edward Fox, Joanna David and Dominic West, who read from a selection of sonnets throughout the evening. The event, which was free and open to the public, filled Beveridge Hall.

The season was promoted using existing media channels as well as new ones (including a Tube poster campaign), with the result that events received repeated coverage in *Time Out*, *What’s On London*, *Culture 24* and *This is Local London*, boosted by television and radio coverage, including BBC Radio London. By the beginning of July, more than 400 non-members had visited the Library for the first time—a very high number compared to previous engagement campaigns—in addition to those who attended one or more related events.

Plans are in place for the next three seasons—Utopia / Dystopia (autumn 2016), Radical Voices (spring 2017) and Reformation (summer 2017), with advance planning already in progress for flagship seasons through 2020. Apart from delivering the Library’s specific engagement aims of raised profile and increased footfall, Shakespeare: Metamorphosis brought together colleagues from across SAS and the central University, demonstrating the benefits of a coordinated approach to public engagement that will enable Senate House to enhance its status as a beacon for cultural activity—not just for the University, but for Bloomsbury and beyond.

Read more: shakespeare.senatehouselibrary.ac.uk
Bloomsbury Festival in a Box: lifting the lid on community engagement

How do you take a festival to people who are unable to leave their homes? How can community festival organisers engage with those who have become isolated from the society around them? How can we make sure that the stories and memories of an area’s longest established but most vulnerable residents are not lost, but remain a crucial part of narratives of place and community?

These are questions that have been at the heart of the Bloomsbury Festival in a Box project. Starting life in 2013 as a research project funded as part of the Arts and Humanities Research Council’s national Cultural Value Project, the initiative set out to investigate ways of measuring the impact of arts outreach activities on socially isolated people with dementia. The first project of its kind to engage directly with people with dementia in their own homes, it worked with Age UK Camden’s Dementia Befriending Service and UCL’s Faculty of Brain Sciences to pilot and evaluate a scheme that took a ‘cultural meals on wheels’ service to people living alone in Camden.

Over the course of six months between 2013 and 2014, a small group of artists associated with the Bloomsbury Festival was assembled and trained to take part in the project. These artists were chosen to reflect the interests of people using the Dementia Befriending Service, many of whom had passionate interests in culture and the arts. Artists then undertook a series of weekly visits, incorporating everything from poetry, ceramics workshops and opera performances.

This ‘Festival in a Box’ drew together a community of artists, participants and researchers. It also created an archive that developed over the course of the project, including a collection of research materials, audio transcripts and artworks created during the visits.

Following the completion of the project in 2014, it seemed essential that the contents of the Festival in a Box archives should be shared with the widest possible audience and that the stories gathered there should continue to be heard. With that in mind, a series of dissemination activities was undertaken throughout 2015. In Scotland, pop-up exhibitions and workshops were created as part of Luminate, Scotland’s creative ageing festival. In Yorkshire, outputs from the project formed the basis of an exhibition at the Leeds College of Art that was seen by some 2,000 students embarking on their own careers in the arts.

In 2016, the box came back to Bloomsbury. Supported by a small grant from St Andrew Holborn and by the School of Advanced Study, the project entered an exiting new phase. Now embedded as part of the Bloomsbury Festival’s year-round outreach programme, Festival in a Box delivered its ‘cultural meals on wheels’ service to more than 40 people with dementia this year. The project continues to work with artists and performers associated with the Bloomsbury Festival. Increasingly, though, it is also opening up opportunities for academics across the School to undergo training with Age UK and to undertake visits themselves.

As a three-way collaboration between the Bloomsbury Festival, Age UK and the School of Advanced Study, the Festival in a Box project continues to bring together representatives of the diverse but endlessly fascinating communities of Bloomsbury. It provides a way of sharing some of the cultural and intellectual riches of this special area of London, and of preserving and sharing the stories of some of Bloomsbury’s most vulnerable residents.

Read more: bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/festivalstories/festival-in-a-box/
Promoting the creation of digital resources

Digital Hansard: improving access to our parliamentary heritage

In 2016, funding from the Digging into Data Challenge enabled a large international collaboration to provide enhanced access to the parliamentary proceedings of three countries: the UK, Canada and the Netherlands. Work in the UK focused on marking up the text of historical Hansard, which has provided a record of parliamentary debates since 1803, to identify individuals, constituencies, political parties and even the gender of MPs. With Hansard fully searchable by speaker and party for the first time, it is now possible to explore how certain issues have been discussed in the House of Commons over decades and even centuries; how the careers and interests of particular politicians have developed, or not, over time; and the ways in which different policies and questions have mattered to different parties.

A search for Labour MP Ellen Wilkinson, who was first elected to parliament in 1924 representing Middlesbrough East but is best known for her association with the constituency of Jarrow and the 1936 Jarrow March, reveals that she spoke in parliament 2,438 times. She had a diverse range of interests, from voluntary hospitals to the Second World War home front and the iron and steel industry. Poignantly, on 5 December 1935 she asked the Minister of Labour whether he was ‘aware that the new Employment Exchange recently opened for Jarrow and Hebburn is already too small; that men are having to stand out in the rain without protection’. The Conservative Nancy Astor, the first female MP to take up a seat in the House, spoke 558 times. On 28 October 1943, she contributed to a discussion on the rebuilding of the bomb-damaged Commons. Responding to Prime Minister Winston Churchill, with obvious contemporary resonance given the need to renovate the Palace of Westminster, she remarked, ‘like the Prime Minister, I should like to get back to the old House. Naturally people of a certain age hate changing houses and hate changing customs. But I do feel the Prime Minister is thinking backwards instead of forwards … He is thinking of what we have been used to; he thinks the world is going on as before. I do not think that at all. I believe that just as the houses in which we live are changing so public places will have to change.’ Every aspect of society is here to be explored.

It is also possible to investigate which MPs have mentioned particular topics most often in the House of Commons, and the type of language that they have used. So ‘European Community’ is mentioned by Conservative MPs more than twice as frequently as by Labour politicians (10,865 instances versus 5,066). John Selwyn Gummer (former MP for Suffolk Coastal, later Baron Deben) leads the field, followed by fellow Conservatives John Major (former prime minister) and the notably Eurosceptic Bill Cash (MP for Stone). Conversely the three speakers who have mentioned the Trident nuclear missile programme most often in the Commons are all Labour MPs: Bob Cryer (former MP for Bradford South), Denzil Davies (former MP for Llanelli) and Jeremy Corbyn (the current Labour leader).

Similarly, a search across parties for ‘education’ reveals differing priorities. For the Liberal Democrats, scientific and higher education are prominent. Science is important for the Conservatives too, but so is religion, while adult education is mentioned more often by Labour speakers. There are also opportunities for international comparison. MPs in the Netherlands, for example, have quoted Hamlet’s famous ‘To be or not to be’ soliloquy no fewer than 149 times in parliament—compared to just 29 in UK Hansard. Shakespeare himself occurs in Hansard 1,296 times. Other words and phrases will appear just once. Searching for these elusive unique terms led to the discovery of the following quip: ‘An aardvark never killed anybody’ (Labour MP Stephen Pound, 14 March 2008)!

This major digital research project has the potential to make the UK’s parliamentary heritage accessible to everyone, shedding light on more than 200 years of history.

Read more: dilipad.history.ac.uk
Search the database: search.politicalmashup.nl
The AHRC-funded Oral History of the Modern Commonwealth project was completed in 2015–16. It has succeeded in its original aim of producing a unique digital research resource on the history of the Commonwealth since 1965. It makes freely available the transcripts of major interviews with nearly 70 leading figures in the recent history of the organisation. In addition, it includes the transcript of a witness seminar on the workings of the Commonwealth Secretariat and key documents on the organisation’s history, as well as introductory videos and blog articles linking the materials with contemporary news events. The project has already established itself as an essential research tool for anyone investigating the history of the Commonwealth, and a means of promoting interest in and understanding of the organisation. Its interviews contain the views of a wide range of Commonwealth actors—politicians, diplomats and civil servants—on the evolution of the Commonwealth and its activities since the creation of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The project draws directly on SAS’s strengths, past and present: the Institute of Commonwealth Study’s past contribution to the study of political transition in South Africa—in particular under the leadership of the former director, Shula Marks, and her personal support for South African dissident academics and scholars—and its present research direction focusing on the Commonwealth and Southern Africa. The central London location of the School was another extraordinary advantage in reaching out to the range of senior figures who agreed to be interviewed.

Detailed observations of the Commonwealth and the struggle against white minority regimes is far from the only aspect of this unique research facilitation project. The online library of diplomatic and institutional knowledge and its coverage of diplomatic engagement and activity throughout the 60-year history of the modern Commonwealth represents an extraordinary repository of personal insights and informed opinion on the evolution of this international organisation.

The body of knowledge being gathered by the project shines a critical eye on past achievements as well as unsung areas of activity and contribution to international relations and social progress. It represents an excellent case study into the challenges of adaptation of a mid-sized international organisation in times of accelerating political and technological change, dramatically different media and information environments, and new ‘hard power’ challenges from non-state actors and social movements. This is an international association that is open to the new political actors of civil society organisations and professional opinion networks while struggling to maintain the formal attention of its political leaders.

The outputs of the project have been used to support staff learning at the Secretariat on the Commonwealth as a diplomatic actor, how it functions and why its members should continue to engage with this unique postcolonial association. It also has important implications for the present British government, which has long had a complex relationship with this outgrowth of empire: how to support, as well as to use, the Commonwealth ‘platform’ in its own diplomatic and developmental agenda. The project will soon offer training to embassies, high commissions and international organisations based in London as a way of promoting understanding of the Commonwealth and its networks and how these can usefully be incorporated into their own work. A further benefit of the project is the research platform it provides for further study of Commonwealth ‘soft power’ diplomacy and activity, such as the importance of sport, the relevance of shared educational experiences and the influence of lifelong personal and professional contacts. The interviews collected to date are also being used to train postgraduate students in oral history methodology and techniques.

Read more: commonwealthoralhistories.org
The search for a ‘good’ death: assessing philosophical approaches to the end of life

It seems to me most strange that men should fear,
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come.
— William Shakespeare, Julius Caesar

How should we die? That ancient question has a new poignancy today when medical science is more and more able to postpone our last moments. But should it? At what price do we strive to defer the inevitable? Do we most want power over the circumstances of our death? Or the power to decide when to sign off? And what about those who are left: what makes a good death for the survivors?

These were among the questions debated in a meeting held in October 2015 during an event co-sponsored by the Institute of Classical Studies and the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust, one of the UK’s leading centres for promoting mental health and well-being. Leading the discussion were an Assyriologist, a classicist, a psychoanalyst and a professor of social work. Around 90 people attended the talks and contributed to the discussion that followed. Perhaps unsurprisingly, we found that time and again similar thoughts had been expressed in different civilisations. For all of us the end of life is a dead certainty. Yet responses to death turn out to have been very variable.

Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar—speaking here hours before his own assassination—faithfully transmits one of the key tenets of the Epicurean philosophy to which the historical Caesar subscribed. Epicurus had developed an ethics based on a wholly material view of the world. Everything in it—people with their bodies and souls included—was mortal, temporary configurations of the only truly permanent objects, which Epicurus was the first to call atoms. At our deaths these atoms were dispersed, perhaps to be recombined to form other objects. We had not existed before our births and we would not exist after our deaths. If there was no afterlife, then death was a simple absence of being and how could any person reasonably fear an absence of being? The lesson Epicureans drew was that life should be lived in the present and measured against the here and now, not fears or hopes of future rewards or punishments.

Others have always expressed something like Dylan Thomas’ ‘rage, rage against the dying of the light.’ Eleanor Robson (UCL) spoke about the treatment of death in the world’s oldest surviving poem, the Epic of Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh, King of Uruk, two parts god and one part man, lived a life of wild license until the gods punished him with the death of his great friend Enkidu. Heartbroken, Gilgamesh went on a quest to seek a cure to death, past scorpion men at the edge of the world, to speak with the Babylonian Noah. Gilgamesh is unsuccessful, but in the course of his adventures becomes reconciled to death and returns a wise and gentler king, determined to make the best use of the time allotted him.

The lesson that we should live well because we do not live long was taught by many Greek philosophers. Socrates chose to die rather than break the laws of the city. But there were many other Greek views of death, as Mike Trapp (KCL) made clear, beginning (as the Greeks always did) with Homer. Achilles has the choice of a short glorious life or a long one of obscurity: he chose the former. But Homer also offers us the spectacle of the impact of Hector’s death on his wife and infant son, his aged parents, and all the people of Troy (whose imminent collective massacre hangs over the poem). And in a poem of gods and men it is the mortality of humans that makes their actions tragic and meaningful, and those of the gods often seem petty and trivial.

What came next? Socrates, unlike Epicurus, looked forward to an afterlife in which he would be even more himself, freed of worldly distractions. Oddly (to modern eyes) the question of whether or not a part of us survives the death of the body was not a matter of impassioned debate, simply of different views. The fearlessness of both philosophers in the face of death became a model for others, and the scene of the dying wise man consoling his grief-stricken friends echoed throughout antiquity.
And today? Mary Bradbury of the Psychoanalytical Society spoke of the results of her ethnography of death in modern Britain, looking at the social organisation of death in contemporary London, and also at the experience of loss as she had encountered it in clinical practice. Thinking of the two together—how we handle our dead, and how we handle our loss—raises the question ‘good for whom?’ What is best for the dying, and what is best for those watching them die? Today we work hard to make it happen at the right time, in the right place, looked after by the right professionals (ante- and post-mortem) and then we manage the aftermath through a ‘medical-legal framework’. Perhaps our desire for this measure of control is as unrealistic as Gilgamesh’s desire to avoid death, and perhaps, Bradbury suggested, the very idea of a Good Death is an idealisation. Maybe we should be kinder to ourselves and try to find a Good Enough Death?

The final presentation was by Andrew Cooper, who teaches at the University of East London and is a member of faculty at the Trust. Through a series of testimonies—some quite close to home—he explored the different engagements of professionals, the bereaved, the dying and those who fear they are about to die. We all die alone, but it does not need to be a lonely experience, and some of our best understandings of the Good Life emerge from conversations with the dying and about the dead.

Learn more: sas.ac.uk/videos-and-podcasts/classics/good-death

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**IMLR conference in Scotland explores modern languages research methodologies**

In May 2016, the Institute of Modern Languages Research held its first event in Scotland. ‘Research Methodologies (Modern Languages)’ took place at the University of St Andrews, the second in a series of IMLR conferences exploring the disciplinary and interdisciplinary parameters of modern languages research in the UK and elsewhere. The conference was scheduled to coincide with the University of St Andrews School of Modern Languages’ Research Away Day and was extremely well attended, with more than 50 participants including colleagues from nearby universities (notably Glasgow, Edinburgh and Napier).

IMLR director Catherine Davies gave her views on the current state of modern languages research in the UK and on government funding priorities, highlighting the many opportunities for interdisciplinary and cross-language research projects. James Hadley (IMLR) discussed two relatively new research approaches in modern languages: translation theory and digital humanities, and explained his work on secondary translations (translations of translations) in Japan. This session was followed by an inspiring talk by Julia Prest (St Andrews) who had been involved in a research project translating French opera for the Byre Theatre, St Andrews. Her experience led her to formulate a novel view of teaching-led and practice-led research. Chris Pountain (QMUL) ended the day with a keynote on the diverse research methods employed in historical linguistics.

Other presentations focused on ways of doing modern languages research, from translation history and notions of commensurability in India (Hephzibah Israel, Edinburgh); the transnational in modern languages research (Derek Duncan, St Andrews); language contact and change (Alessandro Carlucci, Oxford/IMLR); Chekhov as performed on the Spanish stage (Margaret Tejerizo, Glasgow); research-led teaching and curriculum reform (David Eldridge and Michael Graetzke, Hull) and transnational cinema (Carol O’Sullivan, Bristol). The final keynote, delivered by Christine Lorre-Johnston (Paris, Sorbonne Nouvelle), focused on research in literary archives, notably the Alice Munro collection at the University of Calgary.

By bringing together researchers from across the UK, the conference successfully showcased the multidisciplinary aspect of current research (language, linguistics, literature, opera, film, history, theatre, translation), the diverse methodologies in practice (literary and film analysis, archival research, performance and cultural studies, digital technologies) and the important interventions that modern languages researchers are making in public engagement and curriculum reform. As a result, the IMLR will run an annual UK regional conference scheme starting in 2017–2018.

Read more: modernlanguages.sas.ac.uk
The DAAD-IMLR translation competition

In 2015-16, the Institute of Modern Languages Research teamed up with the German Academic Exchange (DAAD) once again to host a writing competition for all learners and speakers of German. Following on from the resounding success of the 2014-15 competition, which called for poems to be written on any of the objects from the British Museum’s ‘Germany: Memories of a Nation’ exhibition and which culminated in a prize-giving ceremony in the British Museum’s Renaissance Gallery, we asked this year’s competitors to put themselves in the shoes of a translator and to tackle a short passage from Berlin author Annett Gröschner’s hugely complex and entertaining novel Walpurgistag (The Witches’ Sabbath), published in 2011 by Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt. The competition was accessible online and open to secondary school pupils, undergraduates, postgraduates and anybody else up to the challenge of translating a passage of German literature into English. The competition aimed to encourage a deeper engagement with the German language and culture through the complexities of the translation process, as well as to celebrate language work at the school, undergraduate and postgraduate levels and beyond.

The task was not easy, for Gröschner’s novel is a breathtaking work of fiction with a rhythm of its own and a sensitive and sophisticated use of a multiplicity of voices. The title refers to the ‘Walpurgisnacht’, the night of 30 April, which is the date of an annual witches’ meeting according to German folklore. Gröschner collected the accounts of more than a hundred Berliners of how they spent one day, 30 April 2010, in their city—and on the basis of this material produced a novel that beautifully and vibrantly encapsulates the atmosphere of everyday life in Berlin. Walpurgistag is an intricately woven web of characters and intersecting stories: many strands cross and swirl around one another and thus provide multiple visions of life in Berlin on this one day. Contestants were asked to translate a set passage of the novel. The entry categories were assigned different passages, each with its own linguistic and contextual challenges. Children’s rhymes were interspersed in the texts, broad Berlin dialect had to be considered, and equivalents for humorous nicknames and long-obsolete East German functionaries’ jargon to be found.

The IMLR was overwhelmed by the response: 205 entries came in from all over Britain, from East Anglia to Northern Ireland and from Cornwall to Aberdeen, as well as from abroad: one winning entry came from Hawaii! The quality of the entries, too, was astonishing across all four categories. According to teachers Liz Black and René Koglbauer, the judges of the Schools category (which had drawn no less than 69 entries), ‘The high standard of submissions shows that working with literature at secondary school level is a welcome challenge. It shows once again that high expectations lead to success, motivation and creativity’.

All prize-winners were invited to an evening of readings and discussion with Annett Gröschner and her translator Katy Derbyshire in December 2015. They were able to compare their own texts with those provided by the professional translator—and in many cases confidently defended their own decisions, gaining an understanding of the nuanced and multiple ways in which translation can bring a text to life in another language along the way. This format of meetings between author, translator, students and the general public is the basis of a well-established series of events that the IMLR runs in collaboration with the University of Nottingham: the ‘Encounters’ series is a hands-on way of exploring language and text and of drawing in listeners and participants of all ages and walks of life. This particular ‘Encounter’ was followed by a prize-giving ceremony attended by representatives of the sponsors and supporters of the competition, including the German Embassy, the Goethe Institut London, the Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, the Cambridge German Network and the Greater London German Network. The generous donation of prizes shows how highly the Institute’s cultural partners value the initiative of this competition and the profile it accords to the Institute’s work within modern languages in this country. Prizes ranged from invitations to translation workshops at the University of Cambridge, subscriptions to a German youth magazine and books to a DAAD scholarship for a summer language course at a German university worth €850. Preparations for next year’s competition are already underway.

Read more: daad.org.uk/en/28468/index.html
Internationalising the academy

Q&A with Rick Rylance

Professor Rick Rylance, director of the Institute of English Studies and until recently chair of Research Councils UK, believes passionately that the internationalisation of research and higher education is crucial to the future of research itself and of the UK’s role in it. For several years he has been active in developing cooperative initiatives and the sharing of international expertise. Until June he was a member of the Governing Board of the Global Research Council, a federation of the world’s leading research funders, which aims to develop common approaches to matters of policy and its implementation. It freely shares strategic approaches on issues central to modern research, including peer review, research integrity and open access. The themes for 2015, jointly convened by the UK and Indian research councils and co-organised by Rylance, were the role of women in research and approaches to interdisciplinarity. Since 2014, he has been a member of the international Scientific Advisory Board for the French Agence Nationale de Recherche and advised the Namibian government as it seeks to develop its research infrastructure. He is currently chairing a review of research support in Hong Kong that will conclude in May 2017.

Q: What factors are influencing the future of academic internationalisation?
A: China—which is predicted to produce half of the world’s scientific publications within the next few decades—is the most conspicuous example of turbo-charged investment in research. UK data indicate that research quality, judged by citations, is correlated with internationally collaborative authorship. Facilities in big science are usually too costly for individual nations and CERN-like consortia are becoming common (though rarely on that scale). In the humanities, consciousness of cultural difference, the intermingling of histories, populations, thought and belief, and the potential of cross-national collaboration are exciting topics for many. Scholars are also becoming increasingly aware of the importance of research for the realisation of humanitarian development goals.

Q: What is the best way to deploy investment in research?
That’s a question that is currently preoccupying many national governments. In the UK, we already have strong systems which, internationally, are thought to be in the premier league for such things. Nonetheless these need continuing attention and 2015 brought us the Nurse and Stern Reviews of research support and assessment respectively. The world regards what the UK does in this domain with great interest and sometimes—as in the case of Brexit—alarm. Whatever the flavour of the Brexit negotiations from here, it is essential that we help international research engagements to thrive. It is self-harming to do otherwise. We risk quality, efficiency and reputation if we do not. Many of the world’s research agencies look to UK know-how in developing their own systems. Higher education and research are among those relatively few areas in which the UK is genuinely world-leading.

Q: What is the benefits of academic internationalisation?
A: Academic life is increasingly international. Most countries in both the developed and developing worlds are boosting investment in research and higher education because of the dividends they bring in terms of economic performance, advanced skills, innovation, cultural and social contentment, international influence and so on. Data support this policy. A 2016 report from the Centre for Economic Performance at the LSE, using data from 78 countries over half a century, found that growth in higher education is linked to four percent average growth in GDP, an achievement (the report argues) that can be sustained. Other studies correlate individual contentment and civil engagement with educational participation.

Q: What is the School’s role in this?
London is a global city and the School of Advanced Study plays its part in the enhancement of international research exchange by hosting major international conferences and addressing many of the pressing topics of an internationalised world. This role should only expand in future.

Read more: ies.sas.ac.uk
An ‘Asian pivot’: the first Anglo-Taiwanese historians’ conference

It was the British Foreign Secretary (and later briefly Prime Minister) George Canning who in 1824 said that he had ‘called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old’. He was referring to British recognition of the new Latin American republics as British foreign policy pivoted away from Europe after the Napoleonic period. Canning’s statement has come to mind several times in recent years as the Institute of Historical Research has pivoted not westwards but towards Asia, most recently in August 2016 when the IHR hosted a group of 17 historians of Britain and Western Europe from Taiwan.

The IHR has longstanding links with the Japanese historical profession that date back to the 1980s. More recently it has established connections with Chinese historians, notably at PKU, Peking University, founded in the 1890s and still known by its original name. The IHR organised a party of historians to visit PKU in 2015 to participate in a joint conference on Magna Carta in its 800th year. Now it has hosted historians from Taiwan. It is gratifying that the IHR is the first point of contact for scholarly communities who wish to work with historians in Britain. It is equally gratifying that British historians are willing to reciprocate and to meet with Asian scholars in the sort of colloquium that the IHR organised over three days recently.

The Taiwanese historians came with a fascinating variety of papers on aspects of British political and cultural history since the medieval period. These were used as the basis for several conference sessions, along with papers from British historians at work in similar areas. There were plenary lectures designed to introduce the Taiwanese community to the latest ideas and research. Martin Daunton (University of Cambridge) spoke on the history of the public finances; Richard Drayton (KCL) provided a tour through the changing historiography of ‘global history’; Pat Thane (KCL) spoke about the role of historical scholarship, and of historians, in the British public sphere, engaging with politicians and providing historical context for political arguments; Joanna Innes (University of Oxford) provided an overview of the so-called ‘linguistic turn’ that, since the 1980s, has changed the way that British and western historians have worked with sources. Language, style and expression are now recognised as important in themselves rather than as merely the carriers of historical messages.

One of the best sessions was provided by IHR postgraduate students nearing the completion of doctorates in Victorian history. The week had begun with a tour of the Palace of Westminster, an excellent and highly enjoyable way to demonstrate ‘contemporary history’ and show the relevance of past to present. The Taiwanese historians heard MartinSpychal’s paper on the issue of parliamentary constituency boundaries at the time of the 1832 Reform Act, highly controversial then as now, and another paper on the cultural and political effects of the destruction of the old Houses of Parliament in the fire of 1834. Becky Moore is working on British politics in the period after the fire, when parliament met in other locations in London and procedure and political culture consequently changed. Having been told that the renovation of Sir Charles Barry’s Palace will cost the British taxpayer at least £5 billion and necessitate another temporary move from Westminster, the Taiwanese were convinced that British political history was indeed marked by continuity.

The participants in the colloquium enjoyed the traditional hospitalities of Bloomsbury pubs and restaurants; one evening, they were joined by the Taiwanese ambassador, until recently his country’s foreign minister. Almost the first thing to occur after the founding of the IHR in 1921 was the holding of a conference in London with historians from the United States, the first of the famous ‘Anglo-American’ conferences. The IHR’s foundation was of immediate interest also to historians in France: the great medievalist Marc Bloch was on hand to witness and write about the Institute’s opening. Now, nearly a century later, in an era of the globalisation of scholarship, and as Britain reassesses its historic position and alliances, the IHR is looking eastwards as well as westwards. George Canning would surely have approved of the IHR’s ‘Asian pivot’ and the new scholarly relations it is helping to build with Asian historians.

Read more: history.sas.ac.uk
Selection of staff publications in 2015–16

Monographs

*Understanding the Value of Arts & Culture: The AHRC Cultural Value Project*
Geoffrey Crossick (co-authored with Patrycja Kaszynska)
Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2016

*Insurrections en France, Du Maghreb Colonial Aux Émeutes de Banlieues: Histoire d’une Longue Guerre*
Andrew Hussey
Éditions du Toucan, 2015

*British Town Maps: A History*
Roger J P Kain
(co-authored with Richard R Oliver)
British Library, 2015

*Christian Pilgrimage, Landscape and Heritage: Journeying to the Sacred*
Alessandro Scafi (co-authored with Avril Maddrell, Veronica della Dora, and Heather Walton)

*The One King Lear*
Professor Sir Brian Vickers
Harvard University Press, 2016

*Jüdin und Moderne: Literarisierungen der Lebenswelt deutsch-jüdischer Autorinnen in Berlin, 1900–1918 (Jewish Women and Modernity: Models of Femininity and Jewishness in the Works of Female German-Jewish Writers in Berlin, 1900–1918)*
Godela Weiss-Sussex
De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2016

*Spies in the Congo: America’s Atomic Mission in World War II*
Susan Williams
Hurst (UK) and Public Affairs (USA), 2016

Journal articles


Review


Series editorship

Selection of books produced by SAS Publications in 2015–16

Institute of Classical Studies

Space in Greek Tragedy
Vassiliki Kampourelli
2016
ISBN: 978-1-905670-61-1

This study illuminates the ways in which space contributes to the creation of meaning in Greek tragedy. It analyses the interaction between different types of space in a wide range of works by Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. This provides a frame of reference for detailed studies of the uses of space in Persae, Hippolytus and Philoctetes.

Studies on Wealth in the Ancient World
Errietta M. A. Bissa and Federico Santangelo (eds)
2016

Seven authors offer distinctive insights into overarching issues in the study of wealth across the Greco-Roman worlds: the sources and maintenance of wealth, the implications for different societies of the division between wealthy and impoverished individuals and groups, and the moral implications of that divide.

Institute of Historical Research

Medieval Merchants and Money: essays in honour of James L. Bolton
Martin Allen and Matthew Davies (eds)
2016

This volume contains selected essays in celebration of the scholarship of the medieval historian Professor James L Bolton. The essays address a number of different questions in medieval economic and social history in its explanation of the activities of merchants, their trade, legal interactions and identities, and the importance of money and credit in the rural and urban economies.

Ravenna: its role in earlier medieval change and exchange
Judith Herrin and Jinty Nelson (eds)
2016
ISBN: 978-1-909646-14-8

In the long-debated transition from late antiquity to the early middle ages, the city of Ravenna presents a story rich and strange. From the fourth century onwards it suffered decline in economic terms. Yet its geographical position, its status as an imperial capital and above all its role as a connecting point between East and West ensured that it remained an intermittent attraction for early medieval kings and emperors throughout the period from the late fifth to the eleventh centuries.

Institute of Latin American Studies

Los Nuevos Desplazados: Crimen y Desplazamiento en América Latina
David James Cantor and Nicolás Rodríguez Serna (eds)
2015
ISBN: 978-1908857-16-3

(Spanish language edition) In Latin America, recent years have seen an unprecedented rise in the number of people forced to flee from their homes due to the activities of organised criminal groups. What are the reasons behind this emerging crisis of forced displacement in the Americas? As the first book to deal with this rapidly evolving phenomenon, this innovative collection offers a range of fresh perspectives from leading experts working across Latin America.

Provincialising Nature: multidisciplinary approaches to politics of the environment in Latin America
Malayna Raftopoulos and Michela Coletta (eds.)
2016
ISBN: 978-1-908857-20-0

This book reveals the challenging scenarios and original perspectives that have emerged in Latin America in relation to the globally urgent issues of climate change and the environmental crisis. Two interconnected analytical frameworks guide the discussions: the relationship between nature, knowledge and identity and their role in understanding recent and current practices of climate change and environmental policy.
The Window (London German Studies XV)
Heide Kunzelmann and Anne Simon (eds)
2016

Windows: those thinner patches in the external skins of buildings that function as both barrier and channel between the individual and the outside world. They structure the facades of buildings and hence our everyday environment. Through the built environment in which we live, windows even function as building blocks of our personal identity. This volume illustrates how an item so central to our everyday life comes to govern aesthetic discourses concerned with openness and knowledge.

Poets as Readers in Nineteenth-Century France (imlr books, 10)
Joseph Acquisto, Adrianna M. Paliyenko and Catherine Witt (eds)
2015

This volume of essays focuses on how poets approach reading as a notion and a practice that both inform their writing and their relationship with their readers. The 19th century saw a broadened and increasingly self-conscious concern with reading as an interpretive and political act, with significant implications for poets' individual practice, which they often forged in dialogue with other poets and artists of the time. The essays examine a wide range of authors and their diverse approaches to reading as inscribed in—and related to—creative writing.

Women Political Prisoners (Bithell Series of Dissertations, 44)
Kim Richmond
2016

One of the few major enquiries into women's narratives of political incarceration, this volume examines first-person accounts written against a backdrop of momentous historical events in 20th-century Germany. Rosa Luxemburg's prison letters are the starting point for the study, encapsulating prevalent notions about womanhood, prison and political engagement. The diaries of Luise Rinser and Lore Wolf from National Socialist prisons show, in different ways, how the writer uses language to 'survive' prison, whereas Margret Bechler's and Elisabeth Graul's retrospective accounts of GDR incarceration give insight into the elastic concept of both the political prisoner and the 'good' woman.

The Warburg Institute

Colloquia 27, The Cosmography of Paradise: the other world from ancient Mesopotamia to Medieval Europe
Alessandro Scafi (ed)
2016

This book considers the general theme of paradise from various comparative perspectives. Its focus is the way the relationship between ‘the other world’ and the structure of the whole cosmos has been viewed in different ages and traditions around the Mediterranean basin, spanning from the ancient Near East to medieval Europe. It is precisely the emphasis on cosmography that allows the discussion of several traditions: Sumerian, ancient Iranian, Greek, Jewish, early Christian, Gnostic, Byzantine, Islamic, Scandinavian and Latin Western.

Colloquia 28, Palaeography, Manuscript Illumination and Humanism in Renaissance Italy: studies in memory of A. C. de la Mare
Robert Black, Jill Kraye and Laura Nuvoloni (eds)
2016
ISBN: 978-1-908590-51-0

Albinia de la Mare (1932–2001), OBE FBA, professor of palaeography at King’s College London, was one of the last century’s outstanding palaeographers and the world’s leading authority on Italian Renaissance manuscripts. In November 2011 a conference was held at King’s College and the Warburg Institute to honour her memory, and this volume offers revised versions of most of the papers read on that occasion as well as three additional contributions.

For more information, or to order any of these publications, please visit sas.ac.uk/support-research/publications
## Financial summary

### Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>2015–16 £</th>
<th>2014–15 £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding council grants</td>
<td>8,770,595</td>
<td>8,551,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic fees and support grants</td>
<td>1,505,159</td>
<td>1,513,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research grants and contracts</td>
<td>1,619,980</td>
<td>1,936,843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other operating income*</td>
<td>5,365,869</td>
<td>3,623,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of London contribution</td>
<td>4,022,040</td>
<td>3,242,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endowment income and interest</td>
<td>529,478</td>
<td>397,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td>21,813,211</td>
<td>19,264,043</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>2015–16 £</th>
<th>2014–15 £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff costs</td>
<td>9,524,841</td>
<td>8,382,958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other operating expenses</td>
<td>1,212,092</td>
<td>1,247,534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional fees</td>
<td>171,546</td>
<td>172,370</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic expenditure</td>
<td>2,336,088</td>
<td>2,426,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration expenditure</td>
<td>1,220,770</td>
<td>1,111,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal charges (e.g. space, Finance, HR, IT)</td>
<td>5,875,267</td>
<td>5,264,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditure</strong></td>
<td>20,340,604</td>
<td>18,605,061</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Balance before transfers to/from reserves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>2015–16 £</th>
<th>2014–15 £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance before transfers to/from reserves</td>
<td>1,472,515</td>
<td>658,982</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Note to the accounts

* Other operating income includes internal income, commercial income, other grants.
SAS by the numbers

Digital resources and information platforms provided
All SAS projects have either a web presence or an online database capturing research data acquired throughout the project’s lifecycle. In 2015-16, SAS boasted 22 research project websites, 12 archived sites and 15 online databases, each of which is available to the research community and the wider public. Project websites attracted three million page views; project databases attracted 58.2 million page views.

Number of digital resources and information platforms 227
Number of visits made to digital resources and information platforms 24.4 million
Number of page views requested 86.7 million
Number of unique users 12.5 million

Events
The School organised more than 2,000 events in 2015-16. More than 70 percent of these were multidisciplinary in subject matter. A significant proportion (42 percent) were collaborative, drawing on the School’s extensive disciplinary networks and partnerships. Forty percent were co-sponsored with other higher education institutions; 47 percent were co-sponsored with organisations outside the higher education sector. Nearly half of the School’s events had a public engagement component.

Number of research dissemination events, including library events 2,007
Number of speakers and participants: (across UK: 57,192; rest of world: 6,747) 63,939
Number of podcast views and downloads 328,419

Publications produced
Number of print and online publications produced by the School and its staff 469
Number of print and digital journals published, many of which are open access 12
Number of e-journal page views requested 1.4 million

Research training provided
Number of research training events 264
Number of participants (across the UK: 6,472; rest of world: 438) 6,910
Research training digital platform page views 120,516

Library
Number of registered readers (across the UK: 14,208; rest of world: 3,017) 17,045
Number of visits 194,145
Number of volumes in stock 702,615
Number of volumes acquired 9,920

Staff and fellows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of School staff</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of visiting research fellows</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(average stay: 5.15 months)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of research fellows and associates</td>
<td>786</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students
Full-/part-time and writing-up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate taught*</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate research</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total student numbers</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Excludes enrollment in the MA in Refugee Protection and Forced Migration Studies (distance learning) programme administered by University of London International Programmes.
Acknowledgements

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