

# ARTS RESEARCH

SCHOOL OF ARTS, LANGUAGES AND CULTURES



## OUTPUTS IN FOCUS: WHEN POETRY MET THE INTERNET

Dr Heather Inwood (Chinese Studies) examines the changing situation of modern poetry in the People's Republic of China since the turn of the millennium.

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# FROM THE EDITOR

We do not set out to achieve a single focus for each issue of *ArtsResearch*. Nonetheless, it struck me when editing the features you are about to read that they each, in some way, locate themselves at one or more of the multiple interfaces between science and the humanities. Several adopt humanities perspectives on scientific or technological knowledge (Chris Manias; Colin Richards). Others explore encounters between the arts and technological advances (Heather Inwood; Clara Dawson). A third group involve engaging with collaboratively with scientific disciplines to tackle a shared research agenda (Thea Cameron-Faulkner). There are those which utilise the latest technological tools to pursue humanities concerns (Helen Rees Leahy; Laurel MacKenzie). Last, but by no means least, Stephen Parker outlines his interest in how medical factors impinge on individual artistic creativity. Two immediate thoughts occurred to me when reflecting on these synergies (though I am sure you will have more, and better, insights).

Firstly, few can doubt that the diversity of arts-science engagements reflected in the current issue is testament to the breadth and range of research capacity in SALC and demonstrates how the new (now not so new?) School is coming of age. This small sample of our research reaches to the very boundaries of the human (Chris Manias's interest in the evolutionary history of mammal life). It skirts the boundaries of the humanities themselves (Thea Cameron-Faulkner brings to her work on infant interactions across cultures the expertise she acquired when she worked in the School of Psychological Sciences). It covers the entire chronology of the human race, from prehistoric times to the contemporary age, but also spans the globe, extending in spatial terms from China, through Africa, North America and Germany, to the British Isles. There can be few Schools of Arts in the UK capable of matching the scope and the bold sweep (or, to use one of my favourite untranslatable Russian terms, *razmakh*) of our ambitions. This leads to my second observation.

Most of the work we feature here is firmly grounded in the disciplines to which the researchers owe their primary allegiance and it is all the stronger for that. However, the very fact that I am able to identify so many commonalities across such a diverse set of research agendas begs the question: why are there not more examples of collaborations across disciplinary (and divisional) boundaries aimed at tackling the

fundamental issues underpinning science's relationship with the humanities? To take just a few examples from the pages that follow, it would be interesting to know the extent to which archaeologists, linguists and cultural studies scholars share the historian's understanding of 'deep time'; or to

gauge the translation specialist's perspective on the psychology of interaction across cultures; or to identify parallels and divergences in the way that poetry responds to technological progress in contemporary China and Victorian Britain. The School certainly has the intellectual capacity to do all of this and more.

One obvious answer to my question (there are undoubtedly others) is that *ArtsResearch* can only ever offer a snapshot of what is happening in a School the size of SALC, and that, had I looked elsewhere, I would have found examples of precisely the sorts of collaborations across multiple subject boundaries to which I refer. Another is that 'interdisciplinarity' is an imprecise and over-used concept, or even a false god whom we worship at our peril. A third (my preferred response) is that in order to make further progress in maximising the School's unrivalled interdisciplinary potential, we need to ensure that we have the appropriate stimuli, incentives and structures in place to make that happen. This forms part of the mission of our Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Arts and Languages (CIDRAL) and Jackie Stacey, CIDRAL's outgoing director, has already made an outstanding start. Her successor, Francesca Billiani, will tell you a little more about her plans for taking things to the next stage in the CIDRAL section of the current issue. It will be fascinating in this context to compare the content of *ArtsResearch* in, say 2017, with that of SALC's first few years in existence. That task, I am relieved to say, will fall to my own successor, whoever s/he may be!

**Steve Hutchings**  
*Research Director, SALC*



## EVOLUTION OF THE MAMMALS: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

When most people hear 'palaeontology,' they immediately think of dinosaurs. However, for much of the twentieth century, scientists and public audiences seeking dramatic demonstrations of the history of life focussed on something else: the evolution of mammals. Assumptions that 'the Age of Mammals' represented the pinnacle of development made it crucial for understanding the course of evolution and formation (and possibly the future) of the natural world. Yet this combined with more troubling notions: that seemingly promising creatures had been swept aside in the 'struggle for life,' or that modern biodiversity was 'impoverished' compared to previous eras. To construct the image of this prehistoric past, scientists in Europe, the Americas and beyond sent out research expeditions, and built up large research laboratories and museum displays. This work simultaneously drew off public interest in the animals of prehistory, while attempting to show their importance for understanding the modern environment.

**Dr Chris Manias** (History) has recently been awarded a British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship (£76,038), and additional funding from SALC, the American Philosophical Society and Princeton University Library, to examine this history in a new research project entitled *The Lost Beasts: International Palaeontology and the Evolution of the Mammals, 1880-1950*. The project as a whole examines how scientists in Europe and North America attempted to reconstruct the evolutionary history of mammal life and present it to public audiences, and how these ideas impinged on wider understandings of nature, animals and evolution. Through examining developments across a range of geographical areas (including the USA, British and French empires, and German-speaking Europe), this work will investigate the relationships between international exchange, national traditions and local dynamics in scientific and intellectual work. In doing so, the project links themes in the history of science, intellectual history, environmental history, and the history of human-animal relations, as well as issues of wider interest in the biological and evolutionary sciences.



Alice B. Woodward, *Restorations of Extinct Mammals*,  
Postcards from the British Museum (Natural History), 1924.

One major aim is to investigate how understandings of nature, the environment and animals have been conditioned by concepts of evolutionary history and 'deep time.' The development of mammal life was used to show tremendous change in climate, biodiversity and the complexity of organisms. In the early-twentieth century, it also often reinforced teleological ideas that evolution was based on 'progress' and improvement, but also degeneration and unpredictability. Why some prehistoric creatures, such as the sabre-tooth cat and ground sloth, had become extinct, while others seemed to have been the ancestors of familiar animals like elephants and horses, was a question loaded with cultural assumptions, ambiguity and trepidation. And how humans related to these evolutionary processes, and whether the 'Age of Man' was qualitatively different from the 'Age of Mammals,' led to reflections on humanity's place within the natural world.

The project so far involves archival research in Britain, the USA, Canada, France, Germany, Austria and South Africa, and will lead to a monograph, several research articles, and an online exhibition (to be set up in 2015).

## INVESTIGATING INFANT INTERACTIONS ACROSS CULTURES

Humans are unique in their desire and motivation to share experiences and draw attention to objects and events 'for sharing's sake'. Indeed there is a strong theoretical argument that what is unique to human evolution and to the development of language is the understanding of shared intentionality – recognising that others have intentions and that these can be shared.

Infants begin to display the ability and desire to share experiences from around 10 months of age and research indicates that, in western middle-class families, there is a correlation between pre-linguistic joint attentional gestures and early vocabulary development. There is also a growing body of literature showing that qualitative differences exist within and across cultures in the rates with which people interact with babies in joint attentional contexts, and that cultural differences in parent-child interaction both in terms of language and gesture may be associated with certain aspects of cognitive development.

There has been very little research on non-WEIRD (western, educated, industrialised, rich, democratic) communities in terms of prelinguistic behaviours and interaction. For both theoretical and social reasons it is essential that the focus is widened. The interdisciplinary project 'Investigating infant interactions across cultures', led by **Dr Thea Cameron-Faulkner** (Linguistics and English Language) will investigate the emergence and interaction surrounding prelinguistic communicative gestures in first generation Bengali and Chinese families living in the Manchester area, along with a group of monolingual British families. All families will be drawn from low income communities in an attempt to redress the socio-economic bias found in infancy research. The aim of the project is to find out whether cultural differences exist between the three groups and if so whether the differences have an effect on the early stages of language development.

In addition to fulfilling the core research aim Thea and her team hope that their findings will provide an important insight for community workers and early years practitioners working with low income children and families from a range of cultures. To help with the applied strand of the research, members of the team (with the help of Ms. Anna Coates from the School of Psychological Sciences) are currently piloting a mother



The research team (from left to right); Elena Lieven, Ludovica Serratrice, Thea Cameron-Faulkner, Circle Steele, and Nivedita Malik



Members of the Wai Yin mother and baby group

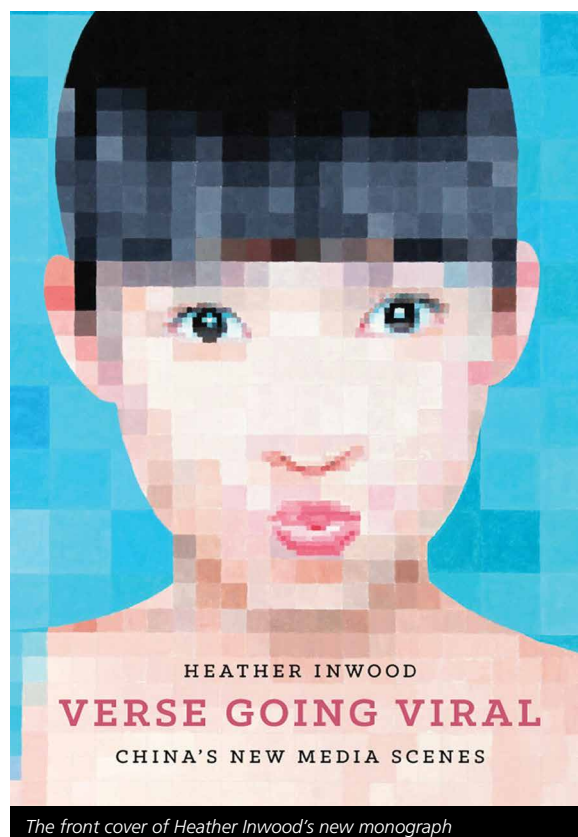
and baby group at the Wai Yin Society in Manchester with the aim of providing support for non-English-speaking mothers and promoting language-rich activities such as shared book reading.

*Investigating infant interactions across cultures* is a collaboration between SALC and colleagues in the School of Psychological Sciences (Dr Ludovica Serratrice and Professor Elena Lieven) and employs two full-time Research Assistants; Ms. Circle Steele, and Ms. Nivedita Malik. The project is funded by the newly established multi-million pound ESRC *International Centre for Language and Communicative Development (LuCiD)*, led by Professor Elena Lieven, (School of Psychological Sciences, UoM). The LuCiD Centre is based across The Universities of Manchester, Liverpool and Lancaster and aims to bring about a step change in the understanding of how children learn to communicate with language, and to deliver the evidence base necessary to design effective interventions in early years education and healthcare.



## WHEN POETRY MET THE INTERNET

**Dr Heather Inwood** (Chinese Studies) has published her first monograph, *Verse Going Viral: China's New Media Scenes* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014). This book examines the changing situation of modern poetry in the People's Republic of China since the turn of the millennium and explores poetry's interactions with various forms of media, including face-to-face events, print publications and the internet. The late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries are an era in which modern Chinese poetry – and 'high culture' in general – is widely thought to be heading towards extinction, its fate sealed by the rise of consumer culture and the visual arts. *Verse Going Viral* draws on extensive ethnographic research into China's poetry scenes in the 2000s and 2010s, during which Heather participated in poetry events across the country, from Hainan island in the south to Inner Mongolia in the north, and ranging in size from intimate gatherings of poets in bars and restaurants to multi-day, big-budget poetry festivals involving government officials, tourism bureaus and real-estate companies. Heather explores the ways in which poetry scenes are created and delineated both from the inside, by poets themselves, and from without, by members of the public who usually pay little attention to the comings and goings of China's poetry scenes yet still take pride in belonging to a 'nation of poetry'. Despite warnings about poetry's failure to adapt to the conditions of China's consumer economy, *Verse Going Viral* finds that poetry activity is burgeoning across the country, aided by the growth of the Internet as well as by donations of cash from poetry-minded entrepreneurs with cultural ambitions of their own. Shifting media dynamics enliven China's poetry scenes and contribute to the tensions that have long existed between avant-garde and conservative expectations of poetry in China. Ultimately, it is in the often very public struggles of ownership over the genre of poetry that Heather suggests the continued aura of Chinese poetry can be located: not so much in the poems themselves, but poetry as a social form, or the human networks that give meaning to the writing, circulation and reception of poetry.



The front cover of Heather Inwood's new monograph

*Verse Going Viral* reflects Heather's longstanding interest in the broader forces that shape the production, circulation and reception of literature, which she argues are not just political and economic but also closely related to the specific forms of interaction and contestation facilitated by different media. By bringing together research from the fields of literary studies, cultural sociology, media studies and anthropology, Heather hopes that her work will participate in conversations about who gets to shape public narratives about culture in the world today and how individuals and communities assert responsibility for the evaluation and consecration of cultural works in an age of participatory media, when the voices of the masses often ring louder than those of 'experts' or 'professionals'.

## BRECHT: A LITERARY LIFE

**Professor Stephen Parker** (Language and Intercultural Studies) has just published a ground-breaking literary biography of the great German dramatist, Brecht: *Bertolt Brecht: A Literary Life* (Bloomsbury: London, 2014). The writing of the book is a story in its own right and we thought we should ask Stephen to tell it in his own words:

“ The generosity of the Leverhulme Trust enabled me to address a major *desideratum* in my field: a literary biography of modern Germany's foremost playwright and poet Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956). Works like *Life of Galileo* and *Mother Courage and her Children* have made Brecht one of the world's most performed dramatists.

My aim was to construct a new life from first principles, underpinned by archival research, to replace accumulated myths and legends, some attributable to Brecht, many to Cold War antagonisms. I was struck by the fact that although critics had acknowledged the bewildering mass of contradictions of Brecht's singular self, they had remained pre-occupied with Brecht the dramatic theorist and political partisan, a carrier of ideas supposedly uninterested in the merely personal. This left cardinal questions unanswered, not least what shaped Brecht the artist that he supremely was. I had long been intrigued by some trademark aesthetic figurations: techniques like the 'Verfremdungseffekt' to create distance from objects and events; and, dazzlingly idiosyncratic, ironic turns. Where were they coming from and heading to? A better understanding of this singular artistic sensibility was a principal concern.

A quite neglected adolescent diary proved seminal. In it, compositions were interspersed with plaintive expressions of profound anxiety of death in the face of an ill-understood heart condition. This pointed the way for archival work into a first medical history of Brecht, which I summarised for *The Lancet* in 2011. Throughout his life Brecht was dogged by ill-diagnosed cardiac problems, coupled with further serious complaints. This coloured his sensibility with an awareness of the precariousness of existence, which was heightened by living through the First World War. The cardiac and other complaints would lead to an early death in East Berlin after disastrously inept treatment.

The medical history formed a strand in my narrative, interwoven with others: principally writing, business, family, affairs, and politics. All were pitched to elucidate Brecht's works, *the raison d'être* of literary biography.

Brecht tore through a roaring adolescence of stunning precocity before accepting that such a chaotic lifestyle was life-threatening. From the mid-1920s he organised his days with great self-discipline around the act of writing. Yet almost everything else he did still threatened destruction, from his avant-gardist brinkmanship, through a tangled webs of relationships, and on to the precarious existence of, firstly, the unrecognised writer, then the stateless refugee. In those years, as he wrote, he changed countries more often than his shoes. The more forbidding the situation, the greater reserves of creative energy Brecht mustered. Perhaps my major challenge was to establish a narrative adequate to the amazing simultaneity of his compositions in the 'dark times' of 1938-9. Then it was wholly apparent that I was dealing with writings of genius. A corollary is that the charismatic Brecht had some unappealing traits. I did not seek to hide them.

I was fortunate to find in Bloomsbury for the English edition and Suhrkamp for the German publishing houses which shared my aspiration to present fresh findings in a readerly form. The critical reception has been gratifying, discounting those outliers on the old Marxist-Leninist Left and ideological Right still fighting the Cold War.



**Bertolt Brecht**, England, London, 1936 (photographer unknown)

## ELIZABETH GASKELL'S HOUSE, 84 PLYMOUTH GROVE, MANCHESTER

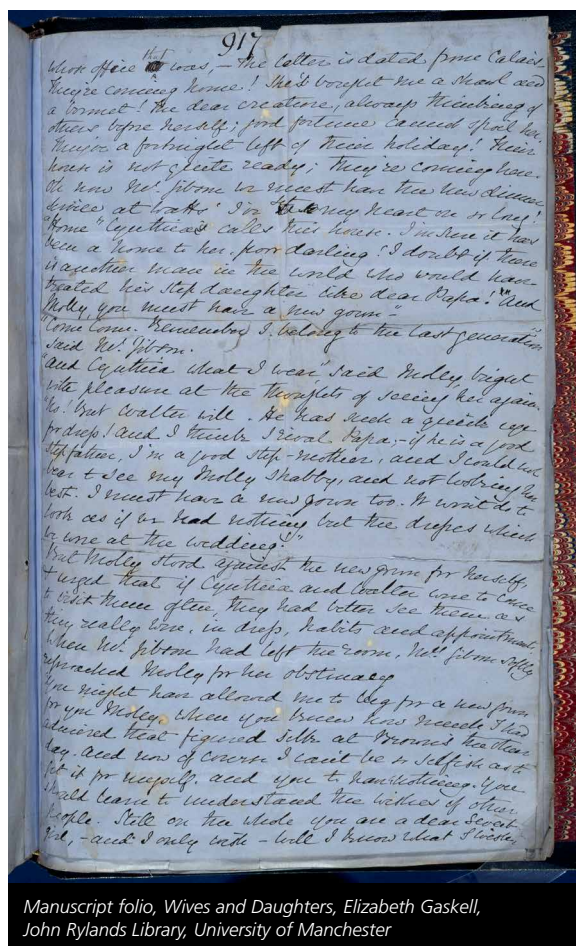
From 1850 until her death in 1865, the novelist, Elizabeth Gaskell, lived in a large neo-classical house on Plymouth Grove, Manchester, built in the late 1830s. For the past few years the house has been empty, prior to its conversion as a house museum dedicated to the lives and work of Gaskell and her family. The restored and refurbished house opened to the public in October 2014. **Professor Helen Rees Leahy** (Museology) worked as Curatorial Adviser to the project, which was primarily funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Helen's brief was to research and interpret the material legacies of the Gaskells, including objects, images and texts, and to find a way of making the contents of the museum available to the public in as informative and enlightening a way as possible.

The contents of the Gaskells' house were largely dispersed in 1913, and Helen tracked down objects ranging from Elizabeth Gaskell's wedding veil to her passport, in a variety of private and public collections. One of the most important repositories of Gaskell material is the Special Collections of the John Rylands Library which holds the manuscripts of two of Gaskell's most famous works, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (1857) and her unfinished novel *Wives and Daughters* (1865). In addition, the Rylands owns manuscripts of two short stories, correspondence, Gaskell's autograph collection, a portrait miniature, a portrait bust and her writing set.

Gaskell's manuscripts reveal a great deal about her writing practice. The flowing texts of her novels and stories have very few corrections: she wrote quickly, often at a table in her dining room. By contrast, writing *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* was extremely difficult and the manuscript pages are covered in numerous revisions and even notes and insertions by her husband, William. Helen believed that visitors to Elizabeth Gaskell's House would be fascinated to see her handwriting, but putting the manuscripts on display was not an option. A solution to this problem was provided by the newly founded John Rylands Research Institute, which enabled the digitisation of the Gaskell manuscripts as one of the pilot projects announced in 2013. Working with colleagues at the Rylands – in particular, Fran Baker, Modern Literary Archivist, and Carol Burrows, Heritage Imaging Team Manager – it was possible to create both high quality manuscript facsimiles for visitors to touch and read, as well as an interactive display which allows viewers to browse and compare pages of Gaskell's writing.



Drawing Room, Elizabeth Gaskell's House,  
84 Plymouth Grove, Manchester, 2014



Manuscript folio, *Wives and Daughters*, Elizabeth Gaskell,  
John Rylands Library, University of Manchester

The opening of Elizabeth Gaskell's House marks the end of the first phase, but not the completion, of research on 84 Plymouth Grove based on the University's Special Collections. There is much more to be discovered about the history of the house in the 20th century, not least during the years when it was owned by The University of Manchester to accommodate the International Society. Work continues to reveal the fascinating biography of this important historical Manchester landmark.



## ERECTING THE GREAT DOLMEN OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

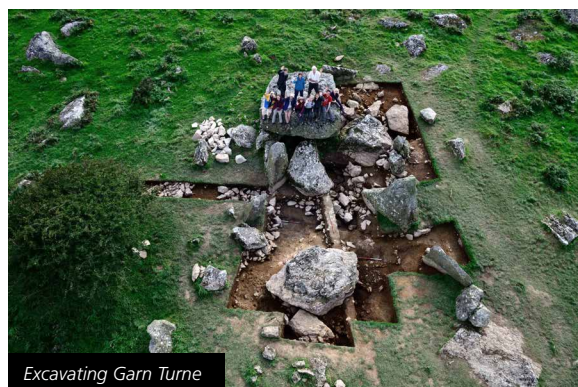
**Professor Colin Richards** (Archaeology) and Dr Vicki Cummings (UCLAN) have been carrying out British Academy funded research into Dolmens - the first stone monuments to be erected in the British Isles. This summer, the research shifted to Ireland. Dolmens appear to have been built between 4000 – 3600 BC, which coincides with the introduction of agriculture and onset of the Neolithic period. With massive capstones weighing up to 160 tons supported on thin stone uprights (orthostats), Dolmens are possibly one of the most spectacular and iconic of all Neolithic monuments. Yet, they are little studied and poorly understood, particularly in terms of function and composition, and until now they have been classified as 'chambered tombs'. This research challenges such interpretations, generating valuable new knowledge and insights that will transform public understanding of the Neolithic period.

Research questions driving the project concern the imagery, composition and dating of the monuments. For many years it was considered that the supporting uprights and capstone constituted a 'chamber' concealed within an earthen or stone mound. However, there is no evidence for such mounds and Colin and Vicki suggest the monuments probably stood on stone platforms. Furthermore, rather than considering these to be chambered tombs (actually human burial is a minimal component of the small amount of material found beneath the capstone), they could actually be an entirely different form of monument. For instance, their architecture is designed to create the most extraordinary imagery: of massive stones almost 'floating' in the air. Hence, through the employment of pointed upright stone supports, the entire focus is on the enormous capstone, its elevation and visual display.

From survey the team has also demonstrated that some capstones were flaked and shaped creating an altered materiality, which makes Dolmen the first monuments (before Stonehenge) in Britain and Ireland where stone is physically transformed. Excavations at Garn Turne in Pembrokeshire, during 2012-13, revealed that a massive glacial boulder was dug out of the glacial clay, then flaked and shaped before being carefully elevated with timber and stone supports and propped on the tips of the supporting upright stones. Unfortunately, probably during this construction process, disaster struck and the monument with its 80 ton capstone collapsed and crashed to the ground. Clearly, social, symbolic and physical risk formed part of megalithic construction.



Gwern Einon



Excavating Garn Turne

This summer during fieldwork in Co Cavan, Ireland, extraordinary evidence for the splitting of a massive boulder in half (like a burger bun) was unexpectedly found in a forest on the Burren. This exciting discovery will form the basis of fieldwork over the next two years. The site is in 'Border country' a few miles south of the N. Ireland border. Given the sensitivities that remain, in conjunction with Sligo Institute of Technology, the team will be involving the local communities in its fieldwork and giving lectures on both sides of the border.

Archaeology is often portrayed as a 'practical' discipline based upon fieldwork and excavation. Of course to some degree this is true. However, sophisticated architecture requires sophisticated interpretations and Colin and Vicki are thinking about these massive monuments in terms of 'assemblages' and an altered materiality creating spectacular monumental imagery embracing 'technologies of enchantment'. To see such monuments was truly to be enchanted by the sheer impossibility of their construction and the social practices enabling the transformation of massive stones; an enchantment that remains to this day.



## LEARNING THROUGH RESEARCH IN LINGUISTICS & ENGLISH LANGUAGE

In the era of 'big data', scientific research is increasingly spreading beyond the academy, with important contributions to data collection and processing being made by members of the public in disciplines like astronomy. At Manchester, the academics in the Division of Linguistics and English Language (LEL) have been experimenting with a similar sort of 'crowdsourcing', but one that's closer to home. Through innovative 'learning through research' initiatives implemented in a number of undergraduate course units, LEL academic staff have engaged their own students as partners in all aspects of the research process. As a result, LEL undergraduates naturally receive valuable training in research skills, but the full benefits of this work actually transcend the classroom, with students regularly uncovering novel results of interest both to academics and to the wider community.

LEL's student-led research projects go beyond the third-year dissertations that are common across the School; entire course units are designed around data collection and analysis. In **Dr Wendell Kimper's** Quantitative Research Methodology, for instance, students carry out their own linguistic experiments in a hands-on approach to learning about hypothesis generation, experimental design, and statistical analysis. **Dr George Walkden's** Historical Syntax has students use computational tools to carry out novel large-scale studies of digitised historical texts. And Prof Yaron Matras' Societal Multilingualism sees students on the ground doing fieldwork into language diversity around Greater Manchester. In all, some element of student-led research is present in nearly every third-year course unit in LEL, and several second-year course units too.

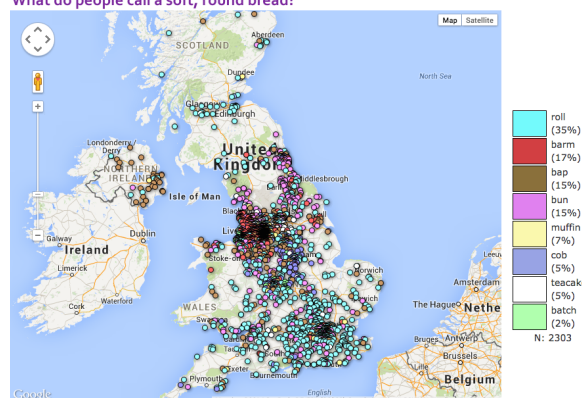
Undergraduate-led research does not have to mean undergraduate-level research, however, and LEL students have been gratified to find their work attracting interest from established scholars.

**Dr Tine Breban** and **Dr Laurel MacKenzie** have both presented results of their undergraduates' research at international academic conferences to positive feedback. Dr MacKenzie's presentation, at the 15th Methods in Dialectology conference, even included a student co-author: **Mr George Bailey**, a former LEL undergraduate student researcher himself and now an ESRC-funded postgraduate student in the Division.



Research into language variation and change by LEL undergraduates has made headlines in a number of newspapers, including the Manchester Evening News, the Daily Telegraph, the Daily Mail, and Metro.

### What do people call a soft, round bread?



A map of variation in people's terms for a soft round bread throughout the UK, based on data collected by LEL undergraduate student researchers

Also co-authoring the talk was **Dr Danielle Turton**, now Lecturer in Phonology at Newcastle University, who oversaw the students' work as their GTA.

LEL's undergraduate research has made a splash outside of the academy. In 2013, Dr MacKenzie appeared on BBC Breakfast to discuss the work done by students of her third-year Language Change Across the Lifespan course unit. The students used state-of-the-art tools for speech analysis to study how David and Victoria Beckham's language has changed over time. Dr MacKenzie's second-year students have been name-dropped in national newspaper articles spotlighting the work they've done documenting variation in English in the UK. And both Prof Matras and Dr MacKenzie have received Social Responsibility in the Curriculum grants from the School, supporting outreach and education initiatives based around student research.

LEL's approach to undergraduate education is much more than setting essays to be forgotten after the semester ends. It results in a perfect symbiosis between learners and scholars, richly enhancing our students' experience while also breaking new academic ground.

## POETRY AND POPULARITY IN THE VICTORIAN ERA

**Dr Clara Dawson** (English and American Studies and Creative Writing) completed her PhD in 'Poetic Voice and Reception in Victorian Poetry' at Durham in May 2012. She arrived at Manchester two and a half years later by way of research fellowships at Baylor University, Texas and the University of Edinburgh, together with a teaching fellowship at the University of Birmingham. While short-term contracts can be stressful, she found it valuable to see how things work at different institutions.

As an undergraduate, she was taught by Michael O'Neill and Gareth Reeves, two excellent poetry critics (and poets themselves) whose teaching precipitated an obsession with poetry and poetic form. She was drawn to the formal complexity and sophistication of Victorian poetry (and a slightly masochistic tendency towards long poems) and her research to date has been concerned with Victorian poetry, together with forays into Romantic and First World War poetry.

Of her research, Clara says:

“My research focuses on the relationship between poetic forms and cultural pressures, and how innovations in literary form and genre correspond to developments in the history of ideas. In terms of my critical methodology, I'm probably closest to what's been called new formalism or strategic formalism. Rather than seeing form as a category belonging only to literature, new formalism sees form's sphere extend beyond the purely literary to the discourses that surround and interweave with poetic texts. I'm currently revising research undertaken for my PhD into a monograph titled *Poetry and Popularity in the Victorian Era*. My use of the word *popularity* is distinct from terms such as 'popular culture' or 'popular press'. Rather than to demarcate a particular section of literature, I employ the term to explore the evaluation of literature at a particular historical moment, and to investigate the systems through which its value is weighed and measured. I've been researching periodicals reviews of poetry and I'm particularly interested in tracing this kind of popularity through valuations of poetic form and poetic style, with the aim of understanding what was at stake for the Victorians in their appraisals of poetry.”



Clara is particularly looking forward to taking advantage of Manchester's nineteenth-century legacies. One aspect of her research is to investigate how poetic form changes in response to industrialisation and the mechanisation of artistic production, so she is excited to be in a city built on that industrialisation, a city where economic and cultural progress have been so strongly interlinked.

In 2013, Clara published a two-volume edition for Routledge, *Critical Heritage: Elizabeth Barrett Browning*. She has forthcoming articles in *Essays in Criticism* ('Writing the Reader: *Sordello* and the Poetics of Reception') and *Romanticism* ('The Romantic Rhyming Couplet'). She is currently working on a chapter on poetry for the *Edinburgh Companion to the First World War and the Arts*, Edinburgh University Press, 2015. In 2013 and 2014 she was co-author of 'Victorian Poetry' in *Year's Work in English Studies*. Two previous articles include 'Browning at 200: His Bicentenary Year', *Literature Compass*, October 2013, and '"A tale of little meaning": The Mind's Ear in Tennyson's Early Poetry', *Tennyson Research Bulletin*, Autumn 2010.

## CENTRE FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN THE ARTS AND LANGUAGES

## PARTING WORDS:

## JACKIE STACEY

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This semester CIDRAL has had an open theme and our events have included three interdisciplinary events: one on the subject of Commemoration Fever with a keynote by Professor Ann Rigney (University of Utrecht); another on Prefiguration in Contemporary Activism with a keynote by Marianne Maeckelbergh (University of Leiden); and a closing seminar on 10 December 2014 on Traditional/Digital Humanities and Cultural Criticism with Marilyn Deegan (King's College/Simon Visiting Professor, UoM), Martin Bright (CEO, The Creative Society) and Michael Stocking (Managing Director, Armadillo Systems).

In addition to these events, CIDRAL hosted a special public lecture by Professor Stefan Collini (Cambridge), 'No Accounting for Quality: Universities and Society'. Author of *What Are Universities For?* (2012). As well as frequent contributor to *The Guardian*, *The London Review of Books*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, *The Nation* and other publications, Collini has in recent years established himself as a public intellectual who has produced a detailed and impressive challenge to the current audit cultures in HE. His lecture for CIDRAL offered a thorough critique of the inconsistencies and contradictions arising from the imperative to quantify

in empirical and statistical terms values and judgements that often escape quantification. Taking as his two case studies the measurement of 'impact' within the REF exercise and the ranking of intellectual quality through a series of 'proxies' that produce the statistical basis for international league tables, Collini demonstrated the inadequacy of current HE evaluative policies, especially for the Humanities.

Our thematic focus in the second semester will be Sensing the Arts. These events will open with a roundtable on this subject with Adam Phillips on Wednesday 4 February 2015. Speakers in the rest of the series include: Denise Riley (UEA), Susan Stewart (Princeton), Charles Zika (Melbourne), Elizabeth Bronfen (Zurich), Annette Kuhn (QM, London) and closing with Dick Hebdige (UC Santa Barbara). In addition to these lectures and roundtables, CIDRAL theory intensives continue with Anastasia Valassopoulos (EAC) 'On Spivak', 11 February, Vincenzo Susca (Sorbonne) 'On McLuhan', 4 March, and J. Jack Halberstam (UC Davis) 'On Queer Theory' 11 March.

This is my final year as Director and I am delighted to be handing over to Dr Francesca Billiani who is already planning next year's programme and who will be canvassing Divisions in SALC for suggestions of interdisciplinary speakers for lectures, masterclasses, roundtables and funding workshops in 2015-2016.

## THE INCOMING CIDRAL DIRECTOR LOOKS AHEAD...

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Over the years, CIDRAL has vigorously championed interdisciplinary research by welcoming to Manchester an impressive array of international speakers in conjunction with many stimulating events, spanning workshops, public events, and masterclasses. As new CIDRAL Director, I would like to follow in the footsteps of my predecessors in promoting interdisciplinarity as a core theoretical principle informing the School's framework for collaborative research, its contribution to international scholarly debates, and its response to UK and EU research funding programmes such as Horizon 2020. It is my firm belief moreover, that CIDRAL's eclectic research vision can simultaneously enhance its function as a platform for encouraging initiatives aimed at raising the School's external research funding profile. CIDRAL's main challenge will therefore remain that of fostering and consolidating internal and international clusters of research expertise capable of generating



Stefan Collini (Cambridge):  
CIDRAL Lecture  
25 November 2014



J. Jack Halberstam (UC Davis):  
CIDRAL Queer Theory Intensive  
11 March 2015

innovative research agendas. But it will also be working to align those agendas with the interests and concerns of a still wider range of academic audiences and a greater diversity of external partners. This is the main reason why the two themes we have selected for the next academic year are: 'Finance and the Market' and 'Cultures and Temporalities'. We are confident that these themes will be of interest to all SALC colleagues in view of their wide applicability, theoretical flexibility, and social topicality. All are welcome to the events we organise around these topics.

*Francesca Billiani*



## RECENT PUBLICATIONS



Staff in the School have published the following books, many of which were presented at the CIDRAL/SALC Book Launch on Monday 1 December 2014 at Blackwells Bookshop, Oxford Road.

**Zelda Baveystock and Owain Rhys (eds.)**

*Collecting the Contemporary: A Handbook for Social History Museums* (Edinburgh: MuseumsEtc, 2014)

**Caroline Bithell**

*A Different Voice, A Different Song: Reclaiming Community through the Natural Voice and World Song* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014)

**Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill (eds.)**

*The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014)

**Jane Bottomley**

*Academic Writing for International Students of Science* (London: Routledge, 2014)

**Ana Carden-Coyne**

*The Politics of Wounds: Military Patients and Medical Power in the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014)

*The Sensory War, 1914-2014*, (Manchester: Manchester Art Gallery Press, 2014)

**Peter Cooke**

*Gustave Moreau: History Painting, Spirituality and Symbolism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014)

**Andrew Crome**

*The Restoration of the Jews: Early Modern Hermeneutics, Eschatology, and National Identity in the Works of Thomas Brightman* (Cham: Springer, 2014)

**Cathy Gelbin and Sander Gilman (eds.)**

*Jewish Culture in the Age of Globalisation* (London: Routledge, 2014)

**Cathy Gelbin and Raphael Gross (eds.)**

*Year Book of the Leo Baeck Institute 59 / 2014* (Oxford Journals)

**Effie Gemi-Iordanou, Stephen Gordon, Robert Matthew, Ellen McInnes, Rhiannon Pettitt (eds.)**

*Medicine, Healing and Performance* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014)

**Heather Inwood**

*Verse Going Viral: China's New Media Scenes* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014)

**Peter Knight, Paul Crosthwaite and Nicky Marsh (eds.)**

*Show Me the Money: The Image of Finance, 1700 to the Present* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014)

**Tanja Müller**

*Legacies of Socialist Solidarity – East Germany in Mozambique* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014)

**Gale R. Owen-Crocker and Susan D. Thompson**

*Towns and Topography: Essays in Memory of David H. Hill* (Oxford: Oxbow, 2014)

**Gale R. Owen-Crocker, Louise M. Sylvester and Mark C. Chambers**

*Medieval Dress and Textiles in Britain: A Multilingual Sourcebook* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2014)

**George Walkden**

*Syntactic Reconstruction and Proto-Germanic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014)

**Cordelia Warr and Anne Kirkham (eds.)**

*Wounds in the Middle Ages* (Farnham / Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014)

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