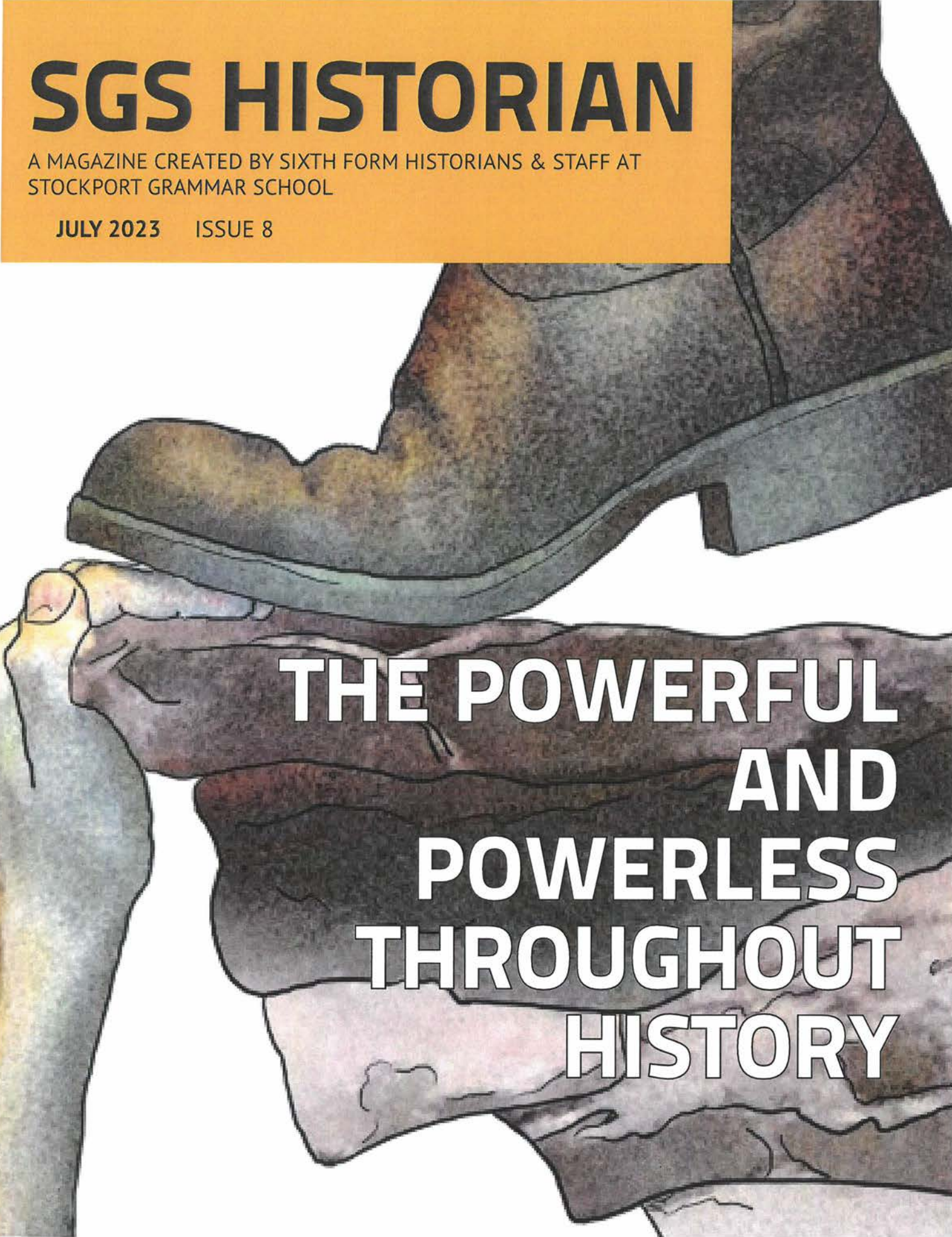


SGS HISTORIAN

A MAGAZINE CREATED BY SIXTH FORM HISTORIANS & STAFF AT
STOCKPORT GRAMMAR SCHOOL

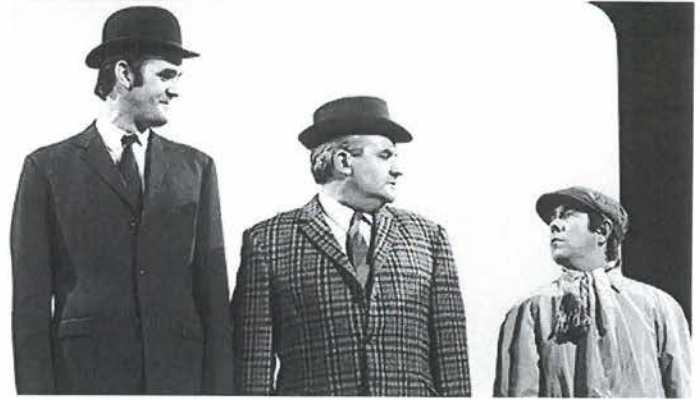
JULY 2023 ISSUE 8



**THE POWERFUL
AND
POWERLESS
THROUGHOUT
HISTORY**

SGS Historian Issue Eight

Contents & Foreword



The theme of power and powerlessness is one that is able to transcend through centuries and has allowed us to explore how people have abused power and more importantly, who was affected by it. It is important to expose the voices and experiences of the powerless and to reveal the untold suffering of those who were, and still are, at the whim of others. The wish to gain and keep power is a commonality throughout history that allowed us to question whether it is innate within humans to exploit others and if so, is there a way we can understand how and why? History is imperative to understand our present and the possibilities in our future and is reflected in the lives of people today and so must be written and explored. Humans desire to exploit, explore and conquer has been the driving force of the development of our world. Edwin P. Whipple stated "power is everything", what we intend to explore is... is this true? *Amelie Batey, L3*

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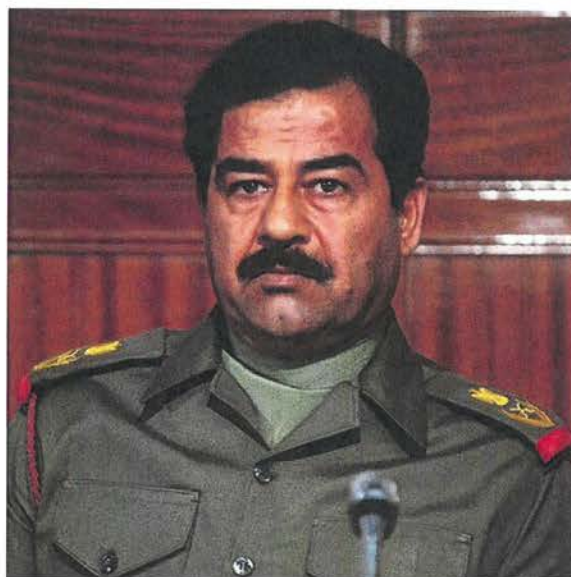
From Hitler to Idi Amin via Pol Pot: the five golden rules to surviving as a dictator, by Amelie Batey L3

There have been dictators throughout the world throughout all periods of history from the kings of Europe to the unchallenged leaders of Asia. Despite their origins and ideologies, they all share a similar “rulebook” that allows them to rise and hold unchallenged power and complete control over their country and people. This will be in focus on modern dictatorships within the 20th-21st century on the most prolific, violent and successful dictators.

Rule One: One of the most important factors to success of dictators is to have a close and most importantly, loyal group of followers. Hitler had a well-known inner circle filled with men completely dedicated to his image of Germany and dependent upon him to gain power and influence. One of the most well-known and loyal Nazi's was Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's head of propaganda. Goebbels loyalty was imperative to Hitler's rule as Goebbels continued to promote Nazi ideals and control the narrative of a failing war after 1941. The loyalty of Goebbels was unwavering even when in 1945 he and his family were surrounded by soviets, sheltered in the bunker beneath the Reich Chancellery. On the 1st May Goebbels and his family, including his six young children,

committed suicide. Hitler had created Sycophants within his inner circle that were completely loyal to him alone.

Saddam Hussein was also able to develop a loyal following within the government before he was able to seize power in 1979. He did this through appointing members of his tribe, the Al-Bu Nasir, to key positions within the military and creating relationships within the Ba'ath party. With the party and the military in his pocket, he was easily able to pressure the resignation of the weakened president, al-Bakr. Loyalty is an absolute must within dictatorships. Loyalty binds people to the dictator and creates unchallenged leadership, which is what all dictators strive for. Loyalty within the inner circle ensures a leader cannot be usurped, as many did to their predecessors and is therefore key to a successful rule.



Rule Two: The saying is to keep your friends close and your enemies closer, for a dictator it is keep your friends close and your enemies six feet under. Oppression is a tried and tested method within all dictatorships to ensure fear and an unchallenged regime. A suppressed opposition can present a political climate of peace and prevent people from challenging your regime. By not allowing substantial, organised groups to oppose you, your complete and prolonged rule is ensured. Juan Perón was the president of Argentina twice the first, 4 June 1946 – 21 September 1955, and



the second, 12 October 1973 – 1 July 1974, many years later after his exile. Perón kept his opposition repressed through removing them from key positions and ensuring their voices were removed from public life.

Although Perón did eliminate many of his challengers through execution his tried and true method was imprisonment and torture. Hundreds of Perón opponents were held against their will at Buenos Aires' Ramos Mejía General Hospital and the basement was converted into a detention centre where torture became routine. Juan Perón imprisoned many of the union leaders who refused to comply to his nationalisation of unions. One of the more famous ones is Cipriano Reyes, the meat-packers union leader. He was accused of treason and tortured in prison. Perón used a mixture of suppression and violence to crush opposition in an attempt to ensure his rule.

Mao Zedong was the first communist leader of China and so had to deal with general opposition to the introduction of communism and the apathetic reception from many of the apoliticised peasants in rural China. The Zhen fan (the suppression of Counter revolutionaries campaign or CCP) were dedicated to re-educating the population and wiping out the remaining nationalist army and the supporters of the old government, the Guomindang. Within the Sichuan province martial law was implemented as this was where the national army was housed. By the end of 1949 7,400 former nationalists were jailed and 361 insurgents were executed. This violent and oppressive campaign continued and expanded throughout China. By 1951 show trials and mass hearings were common and heavily attended. The deadliest mass execution during the reign killed over 200 people by firing squad. Humiliation and beatings were also used. By 1953 Mao declared 700,000 "class enemies" were executed. However modern scholars believe this figure is significantly underestimated.

According to human rights activist Zhou Jingwen, around half a million Chinese people committed suicide, many driven by shame, humiliation or



coercion. More than one million people were also imprisoned or held in forced labour camps. Mao used harsh and continuous suppression throughout his reign and were as a consequence arguably able to maintain power unchallenged to the end of his life. Oppression allowed many dictators to intimidate their enemies and subjects and allowed them to have complete control.

Rule Three: Violence and power go hand in hand with dictators. Fear leaves a dictator unchallenged and reflects the extent that many people will go to ensure power. Saloth 'Pol Pot' Sar was the Cambodian dictator from 1975-1979 and despite his short reign he was able to enact the most violent and devastating rule in modern history. Pol Pot was a hard-line communist and the leader of the Khmer Rouge party. After gaining power after the Cambodian civil war, he was determined to radically reform agriculture, no matter the cost. He separated people into three categories the full-rights members, the candidates, and the depositees. The full-rights members and candidates were often peasants and were allowed to serve in the army and be politically active in the communist party. However, the depositees, mostly new urban workers, were seen as second-class citizens and were often marginalised and targeted. Government officials, intellectual, teachers and many others were meticulously picked out, purged, tortured and murdered.

The people targeted by the regime were buried in 23,745 mass graves containing approximately 1.3 million suspected victims of execution. These mass graves were known as the killing fields as

people were sent out to dig their own graves and then often bludgeoned to death, so, as one Khmer Rouge official said, to not “waste bullets”. Around 25% of the population were buried in these killing fields. Simultaneously famine ripped through the nation and hundreds of thousands were dying from malnutrition.



The effect of the Khmer Rouge devastating agricultural policy was felt even after the end of the dictatorship with an estimated 300,000 Cambodian dying from starvation from 1979-80. The violent suppression of challengers within the regime meant that within a four-year period Pol Pot conducted the largest genocide against his own people in human history. Pot Pol was forced to rescind rule over Cambodia in 1979, but not due to a revolt from his people but the invasion of Vietnam troops. Perhaps suggesting that the excessive violence was successful at sustaining his power.

Rule Four: Every dictator understands that “knowledge is power” and so must ensure that their people don’t have access to it. Censorship has been effectively used by dictators to hide atrocities, failures and to even rewrite history. Joseph Stalin used information as a weapon within Soviet Russia and was able to shift fiction to fact. The infamous photo of Stalin and Lenin sitting on a bench is considered the world’s first Photoshop. Stalin’s face has been blurred to hide his smallpox scars, they have been pushed closer together and Stalin enlarged to create a more imposing presence. All of these were done to try and present Stalin as Lenin’s chosen successor and to

manipulate history. The editing of these photos became imperative during the great purge.

The great purge allowed Stalin to solidify his power by eliminating all possible contenders for leadership. This meant eliminating many of the Bolshevik inner circle and the most notable members of the government. The most famous of these was Leon Trotsky. Trotsky was exiled from Russia in 1929 and assassinated by a NVKD agent, he was killed brutally with an ice axe in Mexico. Stalin spent from 1929 onwards trying to erase all evidence of Trotsky existence. This included photo shopping him out of all photos and destroying all of his speeches and mention in books. Many other Bolsheviks met the same fate and were systemically erased from all soviet history. Stalin also used censorship to hide suffering in the



Soviet Union to promote the success of communism. The great famine of Ukraine 1923-33 was hidden to the rest of the Soviet Union and the world. It was not allowed to be mentioned in newspapers negatively and was even reported by bribed journalist to be prospering.

The continued exportation of grain despite famine ripping through Ukraine means that modern scholars regard the famine as man-made and a consequence of the rapid-industrialisation and collectivisation. It is referred to by the Ukrainian people as Holodomor which translates to, “to be killed by starvation”. It is estimated that 3.5-5 million people starved to death. The secret police

were directly ordered to ensure cases of cannibalism were suppressed and to ensure it was not written and circulated, so that the reality of the famine did not spread to other parts of the empire. Stalin used censorship to both elevate his status and diminish others. By controlling the truth, he was able to control the USSR with an iron fist.

Rule Five: Dictatorships often depend on a singular group of people being targeted and blamed for all of the struggles people experience in their day-to-day life. Scapegoating allows dictators to be held unaccountable for their failings and the suffering of their people. Idi Amin was the president of Uganda 1971-79 and encouraged the rise of black supremacy. The native African people saw the presence of Indian businesses and families as a reminder of the British empire and the continued imposition of British rule. Indian families were regarded as “disloyal” and of taking jobs that should belong to native Africans. Many of the families had been there for generations as they had been encouraged by the British empire to serve as a “buffer zone”. The expulsion of all Indians was announced in August 1972. The Indian population, which was around 80,000, were given 90 days to leave as well as Pakistani and Bangladeshi citizens.



Idi Amin promoted this as allowing native Ugandans to reclaim what was theirs and expelling any presence of the British Empire. Amin became extremely popular with Black supremacists who gained the businesses taken. However the consequences of the expulsion was immediately felt as the well established businesses were now run by inexperienced

workers. It is estimated that 740 million Ugandan shillings was lost in 1972. The Indian population also contributed 90% of the tax revenue and owned 90% of the businesses and so the Ugandan economy collapsed.

The Nazi genocide of the Jewish people, known as the Holocaust is one of the largest cases of deaths of a minority. It is estimated around 6 million Jewish women, men and children were systematically removed of their rights, imprisoned, murdered and worked to death. The infamous extermination camps, such as Auschwitz, was dedicated to the effective murder of over 6 million people.



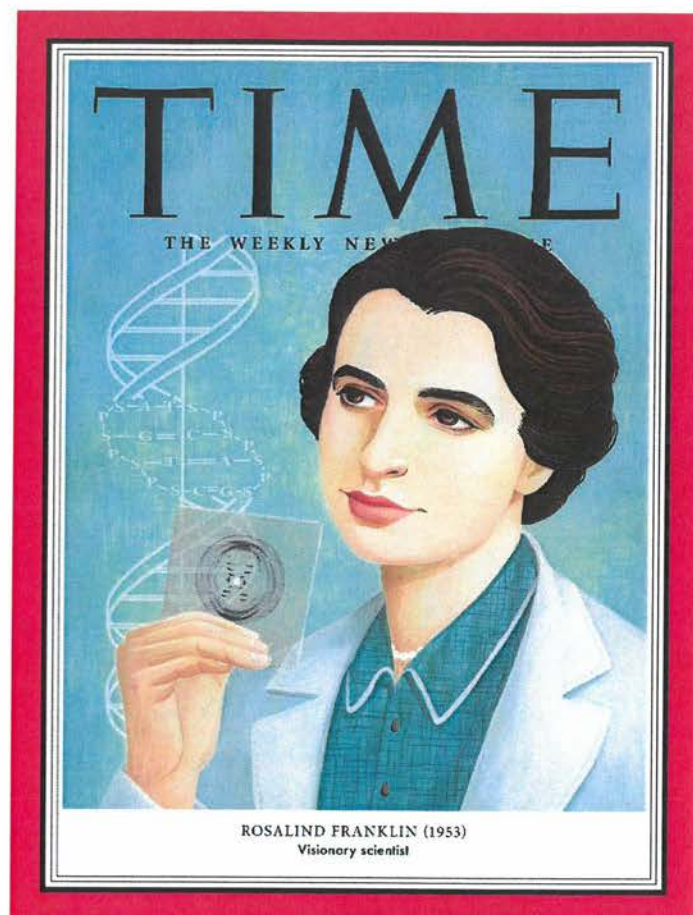
Those considered undesirable in the new Aryan, German race such as Gypsies, homosexuals and the disabled were also imprisoned and murdered. The Nazi blamed the Jewish population of taking the jobs that were deserved by the German people. In both these cases the dictators, Idi Amin and Adolf Hitler respectively, used fearmongering to target the suffering members of their own societies and turned their anger at a minority to suit their political goal and ensure power. These tactics are a commonality within dictatorships purely because they work. They ensured unchallenged rule and unlimited power. Loyalty, opposition, violence, oppression and censorship all create an environment for a dictatorship to thrive. All of these men were able to utilise them to shape their country into their utopia, no matter the cost to their people or followers.

The Growth of Women in Science, by Anna Howard L6

Over the course of the 20th century, we saw a huge growth in women becoming part of the science industry. Women such as Rosalind Franklin, Marie Curie, Barbara McClintock and Roger Arliner Young developed some amazing ideas in the field of biochemistry, chemistry, physics and biology and the ideas these impactful women formed are used today and helped the development of future theories of scientists across the world.

Rosalind Franklin was born in 1920 in London. She studied physical chemistry at Newnham College at Cambridge university and received a fellowship in research at Cambridge, after graduating. During World War 1, she served as a London air raid warden and gave up her fellowship to work for the British Coal Utilisation Research Association. During this time, she investigated the physical chemistry of coal and carbon for the war effort and used this research for her thesis for her doctorate that she received from Cambridge in 1945. From 1947, Franklin studied X-ray diffraction for 3 years in Paris with Jacques Mering. This led to her research on the structural changes caused by the formation of graphite in heated carbons.

In 1951, she joined the biophysical laboratory at King's College, London, where she applied the X-ray diffraction methods, which she had developed, to study DNA. She discovered that the molecule existed in a helical structure and its density. This research laid the foundation for Watson and Crick to establish that the structure of DNA is a double-helix polymer. From 1953-1958, Franklin worked in the crystallography laboratory at Birkbeck College and completed her work on coals and DNA. She also began a project on the structure of the tobacco mosaic virus and helped to show that the RNA was in the virus' protein and not in its central cavity.



They also discovered that the RNA was a single strand helix so had a different structure to the DNA found in bigger organisms. Her work was cut short by her death in 1958 in London, nevertheless, her work was very impactful on the research of DNA which scientists knew little about before and she massively contributed to insight on the structure of viruses. She developed these ideas and discoveries during a time when women were not at the fore front of the science industry, and it was unusual for a woman to go to university and do a STEM subject.

Polish scientist, Marie Curie was born in 1867 in Warsaw. In her early life, she had a general education and was taught about science by her father. In 1891, she moved to Paris where she continued studying at Sorbonne and was given a license to study both physics and mathematical sciences. During this time, she met her husband, Pierre Curie, and developed many theories with him. She succeeded him as the Head of the

Physics Laboratory at Sorbonne and gained her doctorate in 1903.

Becquerel's discovery of radioactivity inspired both Marie and her husband and so it led to their isolation of polonium and radium. They also developed methods for the separation of radium from radioactive residue so that they could study its characteristics and properties. She then became the Professor of General Physics, after her husband's death and was the first woman to hold this position. She was also appointed director of the Curie Laboratory in the Radium Institute of Paris University which was founded in 1914. Curie promoted the use of radium to reduce suffering and did a lot of remedial work during the First World War. She also developed the use of X-rays during this time. She won two Nobel Peace prizes in 1903 and 1911, becoming the first woman to win the prize and the first woman to win two of the prizes. The first was shared between herself, Pierre, and Becquerel for the discovery of radioactivity. The second was for the isolation of pure radium.



Throughout her life, Marie never lost her passion for science and was always enthusiastic about the industry. She had a huge impact on the growth of women in the industry and made some incredible discoveries which were massive for the time and are still massive today.

American Scientist, Barbara McClintock, was born in 1902 in Hartford, Connecticut. She had always been interested in science as her father was a physician. She enrolled as a biology major at Cornell in 1919. She received a master's degree two years later and specialised in cytology, genetics, and zoology for her PhD, which she received in 1927. The research that occupied her professional life was the chromosomal analysis of corn. She examined, identified, and described individual corn chromosomes with the use of microscopes and staining techniques.

In 1931, she published a paper with a colleague that established that chromosomes form the basis of genetics and was then later elected the Vice President of the Genetics Society of the USA in 1939, becoming the society's president in 1944. She was then offered a Guggenheim fellowship but left early because of the rise of Nazism. She returned to Cornell but discovered that they wouldn't appoint a female professor, much to her disappointment. Yet, the Rockefeller Centre funded her research at the University, until she was hired by Missouri in 1936.

She spent the rest of her professional life working at the Cold Spring Harbour Laboratory in Long Island, New York. She discovered that the genetic information of corn was not stationary. She then, using this information, isolated two genes which she named the 'controlling elements'. These genes controlled the genes which determined the pigmentation of the corn. She was finally recognised in 1983 when she won the Nobel Prize for Physiology. She was the first woman to receive this prize on her own. McClintock's work was ahead of her time. She contributed hugely to

genetic research and helped to develop the world's understanding of this topic.

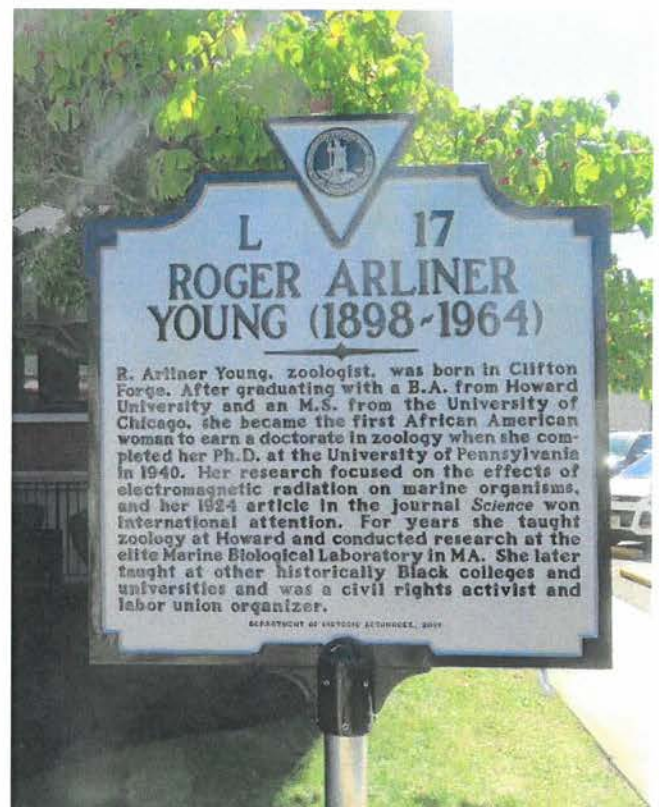
African American scientist, Roger Arliner Young was born in 1899 in Virginia. She initially enrolled into Howard College in 1916 to study music but took her first zoology course in 1921. The head of the department, Ernest Everett Just, a fellow black scientist, saw her potential and hired Young as a faculty after graduating in 1923. Young was famous for her research in the anatomy of paramecium, studying its internal structures that allow it to regulate salt concentrations, and the effects of radiation on sea urchins, which helped with future studies that focused on cancer treatments and how cells change directly within them and indirectly with radiation.



In 1924, she wrote her first scientific article, 'On the excretory apparatus in paramecium', which was published in the journal *Science*, becoming the first black woman to publish in this journal from her field. She completed a master's degree in zoology at the University of Chicago and was invited to join Sigma Xi, a society for honorary students, who usually had a doctorate, so it showed that she was respected in her field by fellow scientists, and they saw her potential. She continued researching marine organisms but throughout her career, dealt with both gender bias and racism.

Despite this, she completed her doctorate in zoology at the University of Pennsylvania in 1940, becoming the first black woman to earn a PhD in zoology. She then taught for the remainder of her career. She was active in the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s and was always dedicated to science. Even when faced with gender bias and racism, Young never lost her passion for science and carried on with her career, breaking many of society's expectations of both African Americans and women in the science industry. She, therefore, was an incredibly influential person and helped the growth of both women and black people in this industry.

Overall, these four women helped to shape the world of science as we know it today. As a female interested in the industry, I feel inspired by these women and admire what they achieved in a time when they faced gender bias and women weren't at the forefront of the industry. Their research and developments were before their time and prompted further theories to form from other scientists in the future.



Pupil perspectives from across the pond – Easter 2023 History and Politics trip to New York and Washington

Sixty historians enjoyed an action-packed tour of New York, Philadelphia and Washington DC as part of their studies. The first day of the tour took the group on an excellent guided tour of New York, led by two local experts. The tour meandered through the city, visiting sites such as Grand Central Station, Times Square and Central Park. The highlight of the first day was visiting the top of the Rockefeller Center and viewing New York from above. On day two, pupils visited the Statue of Liberty and the Ellis Island Immigration Museum before heading on another tour of the downtown Manhattan area. This tour took the group via Wall Street and the New York Stock Exchange followed by the World Trade Center and the moving 9/11 Memorial.

Reflecting on the trip to New York, Lower Sixth student **Alex Carter** said: "For me, the most interesting place we visited was, without doubt, the Oculus Centre and the 9/11 Memorial. The atmosphere was like nothing I have ever experienced and really highlighted the continued significance of the attack in the world today, two decades later.



"New York had much more to offer on top of this of course. This included the top of the Rockefeller Center, the Financial District and Wall Street, the grave of Alexander Hamilton, the Immigration Museum on Ellis Island and, indeed, the Statue of Liberty."

Fellow Lower Sixth historian **Anna Collins-Room** added: "I really enjoyed the tours around the monuments of New York, which were a great introduction to the history of the amazing city. We toured many famous landmarks and it was also very interesting to see historical monuments up close, such as the 9/11 Memorial, which was a powerful experience reflecting the huge scale of the tragedy.



"I also found the Ellis Island Immigration Museum very interesting since it explained the history of modern America, which is built on a diverse mixture of ethnicities and origins. Its content spanned from the excitement of the new world starting in the 16th century, through to the slave trade and its political consequences, and the continued steady immigration to America to this day."

After saying goodbye to New York, the tour then took in a few hours visiting Liberty Hall and the Liberty bell in Philadelphia, the place where the Declaration of Independence was first signed and the political backbone of the United States was first written, the US Constitution.

This was then followed by a drive onto Washington DC, the capital city of the USA. On the final couple of days of the tour the group visited the White House, the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument, and the reflection pool.

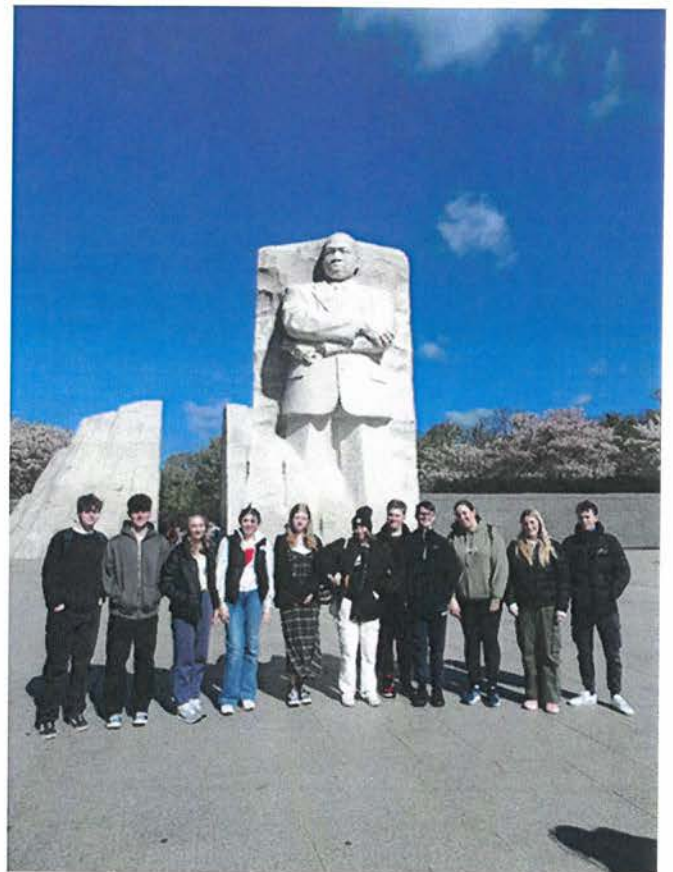


Other highlights of Washington DC were the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the National Archives, Arlington Cemetery – where JFK is buried – and, who can forget, the legendary Ben's Chilli Bowl!

Student **Anna Howard** commented: "Washington was a lot more peaceful than New York. The buildings were a lot more European in nature and



it was beautiful. It was great to see the US Constitution and interesting to learn more about the history of how it came about.



"The African American History Museum was moving and daunting as we saw the movement of African Americans becoming less inferior in society and more recognised. I found it really interesting to see that every statue symbolised a bigger picture, specifically the Martin Luther King statue of him on a piece of rock from a mountain which symbolised his quote: 'Out of a mountain of despair, a stone of hope'.

"The whole trip in general was incredible and a great experience. I'm glad I took the opportunity to attend."

Lucy Smith said: "The most memorable moment of the trip for me was our visit to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. It was incredibly moving to see and read about the topics we will study for our coursework about the Civil Rights Movement, in particular the

effect of segregation. This was particularly impactful when walking through a scale-model of a segregated tram carriage, bluntly emphasising the inequality in basic necessities such as water fountains and toilet facilities.

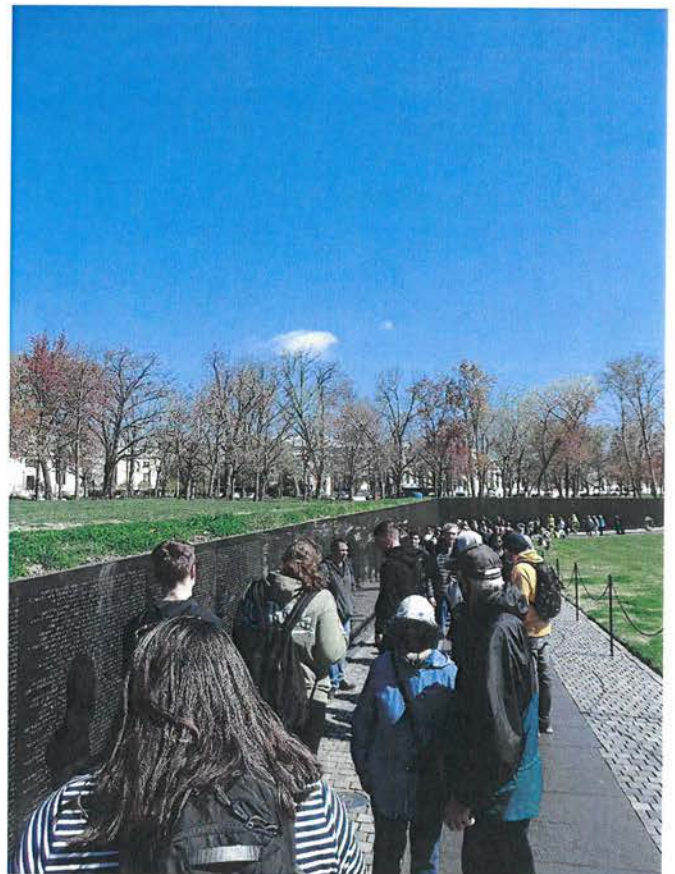
“The contradiction between the unimaginable hardships demonstrated and the abundance of creativity and joy that was clearly shown through the exhibits regarding music and culture was highly moving, demonstrating the pure resilience of African Americans in the face of horrific discrimination.”



Amelie Batey concluded: “The grandeur of Washington D.C is reflected through both their historic monuments, as well as their gleaming white architecture. The sheer size as scale of some of the monuments such as the Lincoln Memorial or the Washington Monument, although physically towered over by the skyscrapers of New York, somehow seem bigger due to their cultural significance to the people of America as well as their international recognisability.

“To see the foundations of American democracy in the form of the Declaration Of Independence or the Bill Of Rights as well as the physical buildings that represent their constitution, such as the White House and the Capitol, was such an interesting experience.

“We were able to see the foundation of our coursework in National Museum of African American History and Culture. The museum excellently highlighted the hypocrisy of American history and the statement of ‘all men are created equal’. The museum was able to show the untold story of many of the forced immigrants of America whilst also highlighting the great achievements of many African Americans against the odds and their fight for civil rights. Washington D.C was filled with culture and history and was an amazing experience.”



The Influence of Empires, by William Seager L5

Ever since the first sails were set and the first swords were swung one part of human nature has remained pretty much the same, the desire to conquer, control and explore. Those who were successful at these primitive acts ended up controlling vast amounts of land, resources and people with the most successful creating empires stretching across the globe and standing the test of time for hundreds and sometimes even thousands of years. Across the centuries many empires have rose with varying causes such as; The British Empire in the name of great economic advancement and power, The Soviets in the name of protecting its inhabitants from what they believed to be the world's great evil in capitalism, and sometimes just the need to control others such as the great Persian empire under the God-King Xerxes.

These great empires have often had great significance on society even after they've fallen through medical and scientific advancements they've introduced, religion and language they've left behind as well as many negatives such as vast poverty and corruption in nations stripped of their resources and people as well as political relations, often rightfully, not being able to move beyond the crimes of the past. However, no matter the location, timeframe, people and methods all the empires across history have shared one key thing in common. They've all fallen, no one power has ever managed to survive the full test of time and they've either been defeated or collapsed with someone stepping up to replace their influence and power in an almost cyclical structure.

The Roman progression from Kingdom to Republic to Empire is a major example of the longstanding and wide spreading influence that can be held by the process of establishing an Empire. Originally beginning as a Monarchy in the Great City and its surrounding area during the years of 753-509 BC



it spread to the entire Mediterranean World following the abolishment of its Monarchy. Like many empires it obtained its new territory through war, fighting against its fellow Italians, the Gauls and most significantly Carthage in the 3 Punic Wars.

Despite its almost constant violence and aggression, the Roman Republic had many significant positive impacts on the world lasting to this day with its Republican Government being one of the earliest examples of a representative democracy alongside many more impacts that we still benefit from to this day such as; the spread of Roads and aqueducts, the creation of agricultural techniques such as crop rotation and mills to process grains, and finally the spread of literature and language with many of their ancient works having significant influence on more modern writings as well as Latin forming the basis of many modern day languages.

In 27 BC Rome made its third but not final transformation into the Roman Empire further expanding from Portugal to Iraq as well as England and Northern Africa spanning 3 continents. This

huge expansion further spread the impacts they have on Modern Day society with many of the old Roads and Cities they built then still standing today. As the empire grew so did the scale of corruption and atrocities that continued to impact the world even after it had fallen. Across Europe, Asia and Africa countless cultures and ways of life were lost to history due to the Roman empire and most were never recovered, instead replacing them with the violent myths and stories of their new rulers filled with rape, fratricide and war.

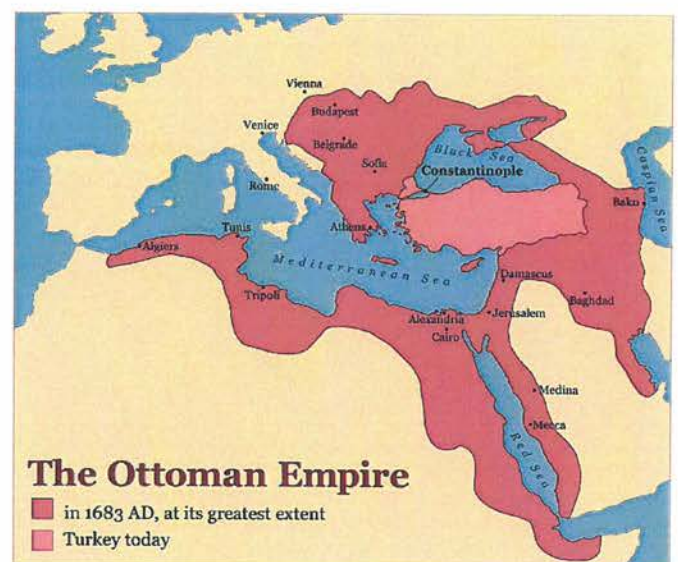
The Roman Empire's slave trade also displaced countless people from across the continents subjecting them to a life of brutality and humiliation. With an estimated five to ten million people enslaved in total by the empire every society they touched suffered and was tainted by their crimes. Arguably the most major societal impact the Roman Empire had for better or for worse was the spread of Christianity across its borders which can still be seen today with the likes of Britain, France, Italy, Spain and Portugal still being Christian Nations.

This spread of Christianity both united and divided Europe from that point onwards with the countless Crusades uniting the continent together in the quest to stop the expansion of the Islamic States and reclaim the Holy Land of Jerusalem and other former Christian territories. However, the spread of Christianity to Europe also divided up the continent in the countless wars between the Protestant and the Catholic nations in the millennia that followed.



Like all Empires, eventually Rome fell leaving long lasting impacts on the world around it. What makes Rome unique in its fall is that it happened at two very different times with the Western empire falling in 476 AD whilst the Eastern part in the Byzantine empire fell in 1453 AD nearly 1000 years later.

With the fall of Western Rome, the economic prosperity of Europe fell massively due to a breakdown of trade and commerce as the largescale road system was not maintained alongside the increase of foreign invasions and sacking of settlements. Most significantly it resulted in the creation of Feudalism, a system that would dominate for hundreds of years, as the continent fell into constant war and the new Kings were desperate to maintain their own kingdoms and expand into others.



Overall, the fall of the Western Roman Empire led to the “Dark Ages” in western Europe with large economic, cultural and intellectual decline halting the progress and advancement of society until the Renaissance. The fall of the Eastern Roman Empire, commonly known as the Byzantine empire, also held great influence over the world at the time marking the beginning of Ottoman rule over the Eastern Mediterranean and Balkans following the seize of Constantinople.

The impact of Ottoman rule over nations can still be seen today with countries such as Bosnia, Kosovo and Albania having large Muslim populations today in part due to Ottoman rule. As the Ottomans took over the remnants of its predecessor, many fled to western Europe fearing persecution helping to ignite the renaissance highlighting the cyclical nature of empires with the collapse of one leading to a rise of power and influence in other nations fighting to step up and take its place.

On the 28th December 1922, The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, more commonly known as the USSR, was established containing Russia, Belorussia, Ukraine and the Transcaucasian Federation, which was later divided into Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. This would become one of the major world powers right up until its Dissolution in 1991 having significant influence on not only nations within it but every corner of the globe for its duration.



The expansion of the USSR mainly came following World War Two with the communist regime spreading all the way into Germany taking over Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Poland on its way. The individual impact on these nations varied however some common themes remained the same. The Soviets ruled with an iron fist and those who rose up against them were brutally crushed. One of the best examples of this was the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 where after a 12-

day uprising Soviet tanks and troops finally crushed the rebels resulting in thousands of casualties both wounded and dead alongside an estimated 200,000 Hungarians fleeing the country.



The overall impact on those within the Iron Curtain at the time was a period of brutality, fear and slow development compared to its capitalist western counterparts. This is best shown across the split in Germany with a high point of 1,700 refugees a day crossing from East to West Berlin a day and an estimated 3 million in total between 1949 and 1961. This resulted in a brain drain across the nation further holding back its future development as well as leading to a tighter, more oppressive Soviet control.



The dissolution of the USSR in 1991 revealed the long-term political consequences of Communist Control over Eastern Europe. Due to the fierce oppression and the brutality of the Soviet Union most nations were quick to distance themselves politically with Russia as they were the main driving force behind the Union with the vast

majority of these tensions not recovering over the last 30 years. The main example of this being Ukraine, made worse by the disagreements over land. The impacts are still seen today with Russia's annexing of Crimea in 2014 and their recent invasion in 2022 showing how long lasting the effects empires have on society can be. With an estimated 22,000 civilian casualties in Ukraine since Russia's recent invasion it serves as a reminder of the consequences countries face in resisting occupation and how the long-lasting impacts of imperialism still hurt society to this day.

Although these two empires have many differences between them in; location, world politics at the time, ideology as well as about 1500 years depending on when you consider the fall of Rome or Constantinople to be the end of the Roman Empire, it's their similarities which show us the shared impacts all forms of empires and imperialism have had on the world.



One of the main examples of this is the erasure and replacement of original cultures which was done by both, the Romans through the spread of their religion and language all across their empire and then the spread of Christianity across it later on whilst the Soviets adapted their predecessors policy of Russification into Sovietization forcing conformity for example over the Baltic States who suffered mass deportations, conscription and executions of their people in order to remove their political and social elite as well as enforcing Russian across the vast majority of its members.



The two contrasting empires also made great advances in society with the USSR getting the first satellite and man in space while the Romans created some of the first surgical tools and were the pioneers behind sanitation systems such as sewers we still see today. Overall, all major empires have impacted the world negatively to a similar degree the only way to get hold and maintain that much land, power and resources is through violent, immoral acts but they have not all had equal positive contributions which is where their influence on the world after them is truly decided.



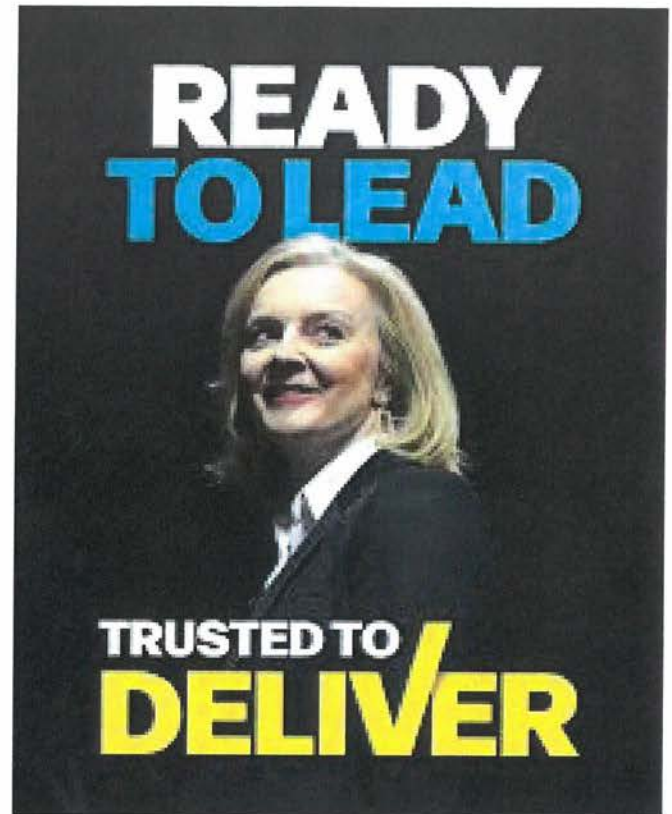
Powerful to powerless in record time – a synopsis of Liz Truss's premiership, by Mr D J Stone

It could be very easy to look at Liz Truss's short-lived tenure as Prime Minister and automatically assume her to have lacked power in many different ways. George Canning was the previous holder of the record for the shortest tenure of a Prime Minister at 119 days; more than double Truss's 45. Death did for him, with his successor The Viscount Goderich lasting a meagre 144 days before the Duke of Wellington took to the helm! Truss did beat Brian Clough's infamous 44 days as manager of Leeds United... just.

While many of the powers that prime ministers hold are fixed, as prerogative powers passed down over time from the monarch, in many ways prime ministerial power is determined by the variables. Support from party, public and ministers, alongside success in policy delivery and a healthy dose of luck. Political scientists from Curtice to Bogdanor and Stone to Leng refer to the elasticity of PM power and, almost inevitably, every Prime Minister's inclination to stretch the band too far until it snaps. Liz Truss's premiership began with much optimism, so why ultimately was she forced from office 45 days later?

It is true to say that Liz Truss became leader of the Conservative Party following a decisive victory over Rishi Sunak in the summer of 2022. Yet she was never really the first choice of the MPs who she would be reliant on in Westminster to advance her policy agenda. Through the early rounds of MP voting following Boris Johnson's resignation, Sunak consistently topped the polls while Truss snuck past darling of the party, Penny Mordaunt, in the final round to make the run off.

In the summer's contest, Truss's economic alternative to Sunak's "Treasury Orthodoxy" plans



focussed on low taxation, increased borrowing and tax breaks for the wealthy. The appeal of Trussonomics to the Conservative grassroots ensured that Truss emerged victorious, in spite of Sunak's supporters deriding what they described as "fantasy economics". Only when it was clear that Truss was going to win did many Conservative MPs hail the wisdom of her vision and abandon Sunak as a "socialist". Maybe one or two had an eye on Cabinet posts and perks...

Prime Ministers who are new in post often find themselves at the peak of their powers, fixed and variable, at the start. Taking pride in the description of herself as a "human hand grenade", Truss was determined to bulldoze her policies through, in spite of much counsel from inside and out of political circles. This made enemies very quickly of ministers, MPs, civil servants and economic advisers. Anyone who had the temerity to urge caution was side-lined in favour of those who sailed with the wind, including so-called Trussketeers who advised the plan was valid but the pace was too fast.

Long serving civil servant, Tom Scholar, was an early casualty, sacked as Permanent Secretary in the Treasury having served chancellors since Gordon Brown. It is easy to see why this figure so connected with austerity, treasury orthodoxy and the “failed economics of the last 30 years” had to go, but to do so immediately with the loss of expertise and experience he held served only to empower those already branding Truss’s government as revolutionary.

The strongest, most powerful leaders are savvy enough to recognise the need to surround themselves with a range of perspectives to ensure the best path is followed. Buoyed by the lack of dissenting voices within the camp, Truss and her newly appointed Chancellor, Oxford history graduate Kwasi Kwarteng, pushed on with the announcement of their “fiscal event”.

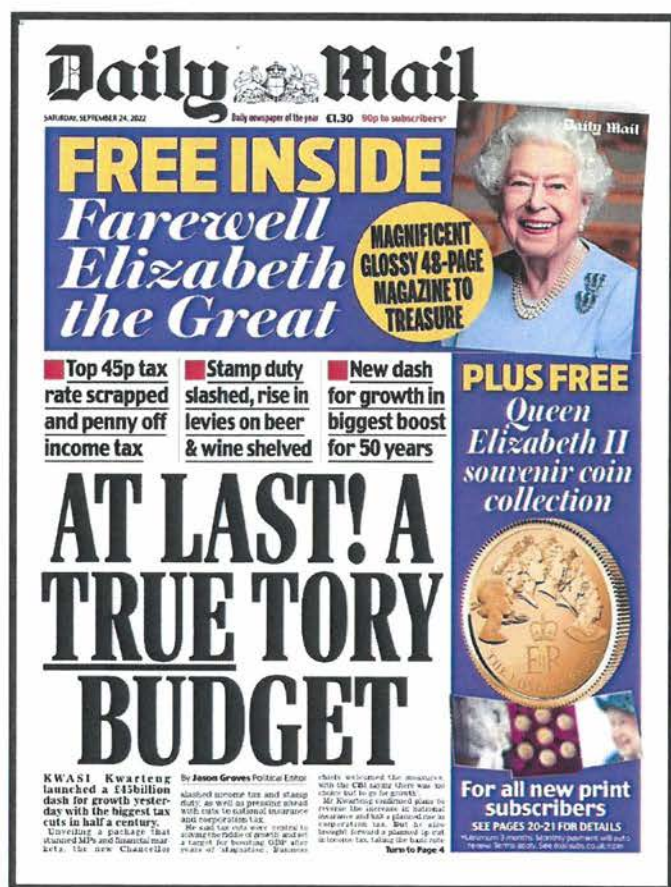
of the plan to spend our way out of austerity and a covid-driven slump. It was the uncoded nature of these proposals, which are usually accompanied by forecasts from the Office for Budget Responsibility, that spooked the markets; even if initially the fiscal event was enthusiastically welcomed by sections of the press and the Conservative party. Truss, oblivious to limits in her power, felt the OBR were often inaccurate in their forecasting and possessing of an entrenched view that cuts would not stimulate growth.



Yet it immediately became clear that the markets and economic thinking was not with Truss and her team. Even a reversal of the 45p tax change, which has proven to be toxic in the court of public opinion, could not stem the collapse in the value of the pound and any confidence in the UK economy or the government, in both domestic and international arenas.

By this stage, Truss recognised that her grip on power was slipping. Kwarteng was dispensed with and replaced as chancellor by Jeremy Hunt. But this was to be done on his terms and the subsequent reversion to a noticeably Sunak-esque economic pathway. The game was up, the letters to Sir Graham Brady, chair of the 1922 Committee, went from a trickle to a flood and the lectern was back outside 10 Downing Street for a resignation speech for the second time in six months.

Since March through a series of interviews and articles, Truss has continued to stand by



Cutting the 45p tax rate for higher earners, swathes of broad but unspecified cuts to services and increased borrowing were the main hallmarks



fighting. Her gravest error is arguably to have battled on regardless, inflexibility hardened by conviction and an inclination to value positive affirmation over constructive criticism. Sometimes, in all walks of life, a dogmatic approach can make leaders weaker and, by default, limit the power they are able to wield. We will never know whether, with more time, the Trussonomic vision would have delivered prosperity or hardship to the UK economy. What we know with certainty is, however, that the elastic band of PM power was stretched very quickly... to the point where it snapped.



Trussonomics and her economic plan for Britain. Truss and her supporters remain of the view that borrowing would have led to the growth needed to tackle challenges in the NHS and the energy crisis. Whilst it is easy to pillory Truss as misguided, ill-advised and unwilling to listen, it is also reasonable to have some sympathy with her given the limits to her powers, even if they were unknown or unnoticed to her at the outset of her premiership. Her allies, such as Nadine Dorries, point to figures like Michael Gove as having orchestrated a coup, but Truss made no effort to reach out to Sunak or any of his allies after the end of the leadership contest.

Critics were viewed as threats, creating a dangerous combination of factions and division within a party still reeling from the Brexit in

Students place themselves at heart of political system during Westminster trip

En route to Westminster, the group visited Horseguards, where preparations were in full swing for Trooping the Colour, Downing Street and Parliament Square; where the students and staff were invited to take selfies of themselves in front of the figure celebrated who means the most to them in their lives.

The first part of the trip was then spent in the Supreme Court, where the pupils were given a guided tour of the Court where they learnt about the distinct and important functions of the highest court in the UK. Sat in the justice's chairs, they were given a recent Supreme Court case to consider looking at the legality of dual enterprise murder and were charged with arriving at their own view on this; with the actual decisions and consequences being discussed within the group.

The time spent in the Supreme Court concluded with a visit to their exhibition/museum, which gave the group the opportunity to consider more of the challenging points of law the Justices are asked to rule on and also see some of the artefacts and gifts given to the Supreme Court by visiting foreign dignitaries.



In the afternoon, the pupils were taken on a guided tour of the House of Commons and House of Lords, led by a member of the Parliament Education Centre's team.

The group spent time in Central Lobby before heading into Westminster Hall. For the historians, this allowed the opportunity to visualise the trial of Charles I in 1648 from where he was sat!

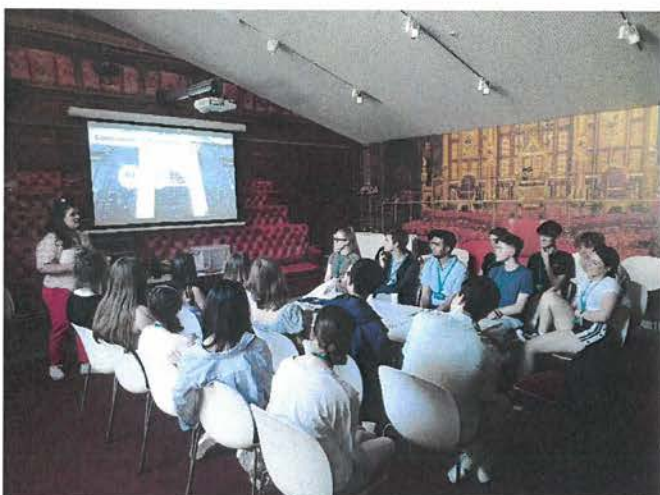
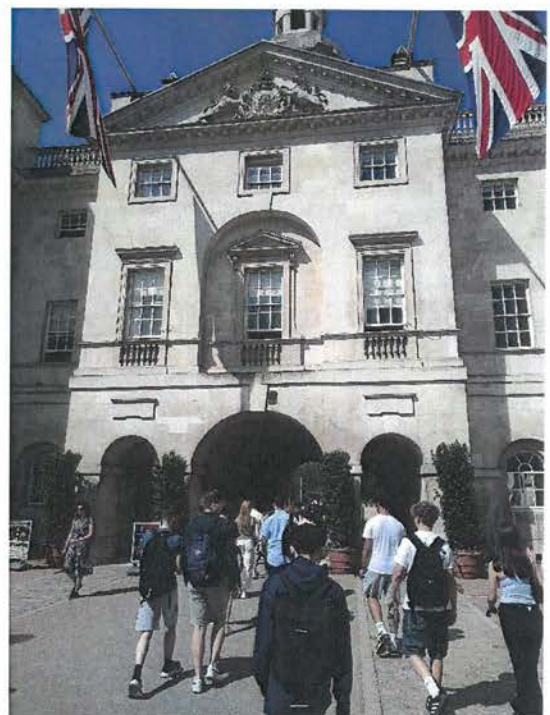




The day provided an informative and exciting opportunity for the students to place themselves at the heart of our political system and will have provided much inspiration and encouragement as they look ahead to their next steps beyond SGS.



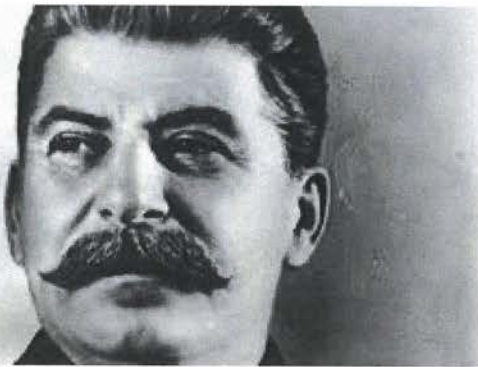
With Parliament at work, the pupils were then able to spend time in the galleries listening to peers and MPs presenting arguments and asking questions in two separate debates. The students, all interested in the option of Law, History, Politics or International Relations at university, then took part in a workshop on laws and debating, working in two groups to consider arguments for and against the abolition of tuition fees, imagining that this was a bill that was being debated in the House of Commons.



The Holodomor – Stalin's 'Terror-Famine', by Alex Carter L1

When historians consider the concepts and instances of total power, it is no wonder that it is often the systems of dictatorships that come to mind. It is also no surprise that Joseph Stalin almost always enters into the political equation.

In the eyes of Russian historian Ronald Francis Hingley, Stalin 'exercised greater political power than any other figure in history', with it being common knowledge today that Stalin, thanks to his complete control of the Soviet Union, persecuted and committed atrocities against a multitude of ethnic minorities, including Poles, Romanians, Kola Norwegians, Volga Germans, the Finnish, Latvians, Lithuanians and Estonians. But there is possibly no better example of the far-reaching influence of the powerful on the powerless, than Stalin's engineered famine on the Ukrainian people from 1932-33 – today known as the Holodomor.



When Stalin became Soviet Leader in 1924, he was immediately alarmed by the growing cultural autonomy Ukraine had been enjoying under the policies of liberalisation that Lenin had allowed towards the end of his life. This increased Ukrainian identity particularly concerned Stalin considering Ukraine's history of resisting Soviet rule. Following World War 1 and with the collapse of Tsardom in Russia in 1917, Ukraine had set up its own provisional government and had declared

itself an independent republic in early 1918. Whilst the Ukrainian People's Republic had eventually lost its struggle for independence and had been incorporated into the USSR in 1921, the fear of intensifying opposition and the secession of Ukraine from the Soviet Union was constantly on Stalin's mind.



To reassert and consolidate his power, as well as encourage modernisation in Russia, Stalin decreed the first of his 5-year plans, which included the collectivisation of agriculture (the transfer of private ownership of farmland to state ownership) and allowed the state to have direct control over the supply of grain for export. Moreover, wealthier and more successful farmers (labelled 'Kulaks'), who opposed collectivisation were declared enemies of the state and targeted as a class that had to be eliminated by the soviet propaganda machine.

Stalin exploited his absolute control further going into the 1930's, setting unrealistically high grain procurement quotas and introducing a 'Five Stalks of Grain' decree in 1932 stating that any individual (children included), who took produce from a collective field should be shot or imprisoned for stealing 'socialist property'. A third of all Ukrainian villages were placed on blacklists, prevented from receiving food and blockaded by encircling troops. This cataclysmic combination of mass repression, manipulation of state-controlled grain purchase and wider Soviet collectivisation instigated a period of terror that would almost completely annihilate rural Ukrainian life.



Widespread starvation and famine began to envelop the Ukrainian countryside as the winter of 1932-33 approached. Already on the brink, ordinary people had their homes ransacked by organised groups of police and communist apparatchiks, with everything edible being seized.

As historian Clarence Manning described it, these 'special commissions' of soviet supporters 'dug up the earth and broke into the walls of buildings and stoves in which the peasants tried to hide their last handfuls of food', predominantly driven by hateful and conspiratorial rhetoric that had been emanating from the highest levels of the Soviet system for decades. Directives sent directly from Stalin and his collaborators, as well as an internalised passport system that prevented travel without official permission, meant Ukraine was effectively sectioned off from the rest of Europe – peasants were deliberately prevented from acquiring food from elsewhere. The immense suffering quickly led to lawlessness, with cases of theft, lynching and cannibalism being well-documented by contemporary soviet sources. Mass graves littered the rural landscape, with Ukrainians dying at a rate of 28,000 people per day.



By 1934, at least 5 million peasants had died (some estimates go much higher), making up over 13% of Ukraine's population. Most shockingly, the official registers gave nowhere near the full account of what was happening in Ukraine. Deaths remained largely unregistered and causes of death were left largely absent to conceal the true severity of the situation. Indeed, Stalin's position of power was so secure that he was even able to prevent the spread of news of the famine to the west, with Western Journalists based in Moscow – such as Walter Duranty of The New York Times – more often than not denouncing any reports of 'actual starvation or deaths from starvation', instead stating 'conditions were bad...but there was no famine.'



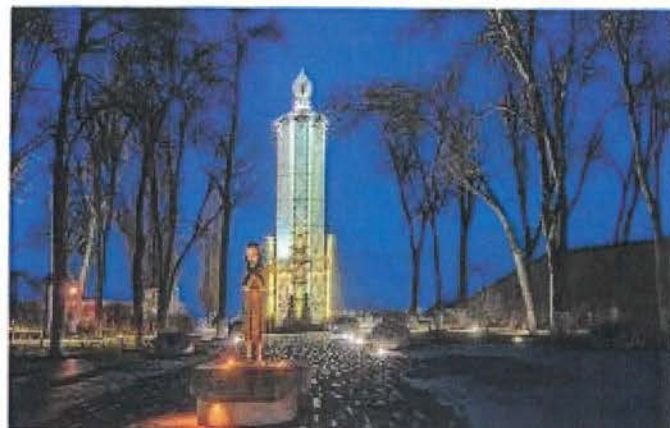
One of the primary points of debate today is whether the famine should be classified as an

instance of genocide. In the eyes of Raphael Lemkin, one of the most forefront experts on international criminal law and the man to coin the word 'genocide', the Holodomor was 'a classic example of Soviet genocide', a view now shared by the vast majority of historians. There is no question that the Soviet Government and Communist Party falsely denied any famine was even occurring at the time and to this day Russia still refuses to acknowledge the deliberate intention behind the 1932-33 famine.

The far-reaching powers of the Soviet state enabled them to extract over 4.27 million tonnes of grain from Ukraine in just 1932, enough to feed over 12 million powerless Ukrainians. Foreign aid was rejected and actively discouraged, with Stalin's government exporting Ukraine's grain abroad at record levels whilst Ukrainian peasants literally collapsed in the street. The disintegration of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991 and the subsequent opening of the Soviet Government archives only served to further consolidate existing sources, with there being almost unequivocal evidence demonstrating Stalin and his allies were very aware their policies, in the public eye created only with the intention to modernise and advance Russia agriculturally, would in fact concurrently result in the deaths of millions by starvation.



As of June 2023, twenty-nine governments recognise the Holodomor as a genocide, with the most recent acknowledgement coming from our own House of Commons on May 25th 2023. Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has run numerous campaigns and lobbied both the UN and the Council of Europe, making it its mission to raise awareness of the famine that was kept out of official public discourse until shortly before Ukraine's independence in 1991.



A Holodomor Victims Memorial, built in 2008, stands in the Park of Eternal Glory in Kiev and serves as a reminder of how the total authority of the powerful can destroy the very fabric of a nation's identity and culture.

Today, Russia threatens once again to destroy the Ukrainian nation, on this occasion through military force. Whilst at first glance these two instances appear very different in their nature, the resemblance between Soviet politics in the 1930s and the Russian antagonism today is, as MP and Holodomor ambassador Pauline Latham argues, 'startlingly evident.' We must therefore acknowledge that the recognition of the Holodomor as a man-made famine orchestrated by Stalin and his Soviet Union is just as important in the preservation of freedom today as the financial and humanitarian support provided to Ukraine against the aggression of Putin and his Russia.

The power of curiosity: A family history journey, by Mr T A Leng

As the ferry pulled up next to Ellis Island, I was overwhelmed by two emotions. The first emotion being excitement due to the historical magnitude of the place I was about to visit. As a history teacher, who had spent many years teaching about the history of the USA and immigration to New York, I felt this was rite of passage for me. It was a real privilege to set foot on the ground where nearly 12 million migrants entered the USA between 1892 to 1954. The second emotion was a wave of curiosity. Approaching the site questions were going through my mind. Why had my grandpa come to Ellis Island with his family in 1936? Why would you visit the USA during a period of economic recovery in the United States? Why did they return to the UK?



Ever since I was young, I have been interested in family history. As a child growing up my parents showed me photos of various ancestors in family albums. In the 1990s one particular photo (pictured) caught my imagination. The large photo pictured my Great-Great Grandparents Sam and Alice Leng, along with three of their children Maria, Harold and Frances Leng. It is one of those photographs that look very formal and there is very little in the way of a smile. Harold in the photograph, my Great Grandpa, lived until 1994 and I have vague memories of meeting him prior

to his death. He outlived my actual Grandpa, his son, Peter Leng who passed away in the 1980s.

As I walked through the door of the Ellis Island Museum, I had one memory in my mind. I remembered my dad once telling me that Harold had taken my Grandpa Peter to the USA via boat in the 1930s. Along with them went my Great Grandma Sarah Leng and my Great Uncle Geoffrey. I made it my mission to research this while I was at the museum. The key question being: Why did they go to the USA?



There was a \$10 fee to use the research facilities at Ellis Island. I thought it was worth it to unlock the mystery. I paid the fee and started exploring the passenger manifests deep in the heart of the site's research facility. To the outsider a passenger manifest is an uninspiring document. They are in effect spreadsheets of information explaining who was entering the country, for what reason, where they were travelling to and any health issues they had. However, after careful searching there it was half way down the manifest. The names of Harold, Sarah, Peter and Geoffrey Leng. It was strange really seeing the story my dad had once told me proven on paper. However, the questions started racing through my head as I read on.



Further along the passenger manifest there was a section about who they were visiting. A name emerged. Mrs T Masterjohn. Then another section about how long they were visiting. 60 days. Well, it was clear from this that they weren't visiting New York for an extended stay or even to migrate. They were there to meet a mystery friend or relative. However, who was Mrs T Masterjohn? For a further sum of money, I printed off the document ready to take home with me to show my dad back at home. After an exchange of texts while I was on the SGS USA tour it was clear he was curious too.

What started as a curiosity now turned into an obsession. Upon my return back to the UK my dad and I now began piecing together what we had found out. He dived into the boxes of family photos and documents. I used a family history website to dig further. Thomas Masterjohn. Italian migrant. Butcher. New York. Married to Maria Elsie Leng. This was the lightbulb moment. The mention of Mrs T Masterjohn in the manifest was actually a reference to Mrs Maria Elsie Masterjohn. She had travelled over to the USA in 1920 on her own to find work as a dress maker. Upon arrival she had met Thomas Masterjohn and they had married fairly quickly in the same year.

The mystery relative in my parents' living room now had a back story and I was intrigued to find out more. Did she have any children? Were there any Masterjohn's still alive today? If there were any, would they be interested in their links to us in the UK?

My research now went into overdrive. I searched for obituaries. Newspaper records. Family history websites. Random google searches. Then the breakthrough came. After a couple of searches Maria Elsie Masterjohn kept on throwing up

another name. Audrey Masterjohn. On a blog post, linked to a school in the Newburgh region of New York, there was a photo of a young woman called Audrey Alice Masterjohn. Upon reading I noted this was a mini obituary letting others who once attended the school that she had passed away. It read that she died in 2000 and that she was the daughter of Maria and Thomas Masterjohn. It also gave information about her husband Nathaniel, her son Noel and her Grandson Scott. Surely one of these people had to be alive still.

Unfortunately, as I carried on my research, I soon discovered that Nathaniel and Noel had too passed away, however Scott seemed to be alive. It is amazing what you find on the Internet really. After finding further obituaries and even the site of the graves of these distant relatives I came across an address. In the world of instant communication, it felt somewhat odd to revert back to 'snail' mail compared to email. I put pen to paper and wrote to Scott. The question was, would he reply?

After waiting for weeks an email alert appeared on my phone. Scott had replied. This was an exciting moment. Someone with Leng genes was communicating with me from the other side of the world. He was writing from Vermont in the USA which is further north than New York state. At first, he was bewildered by this contact. He wondered if this was a scam. After sending him photos of the family and telling him Maria's story he became as curious as me. New photographs emerged from his attic. He sent me images of Maria and Thomas together. A photograph of the butchers that they owned. Finally, the story had reached a natural climax. I informed my dad and he was made up.

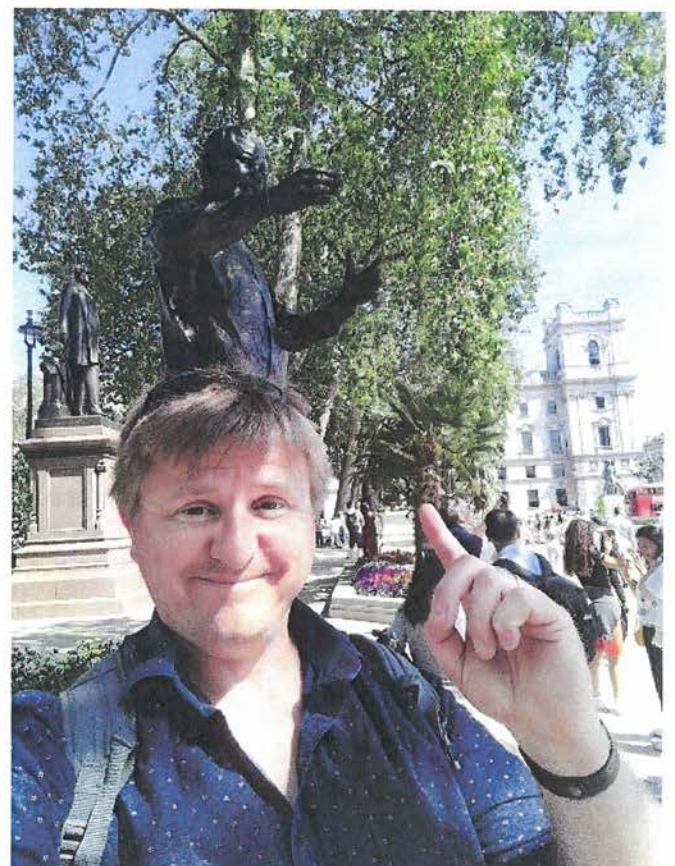
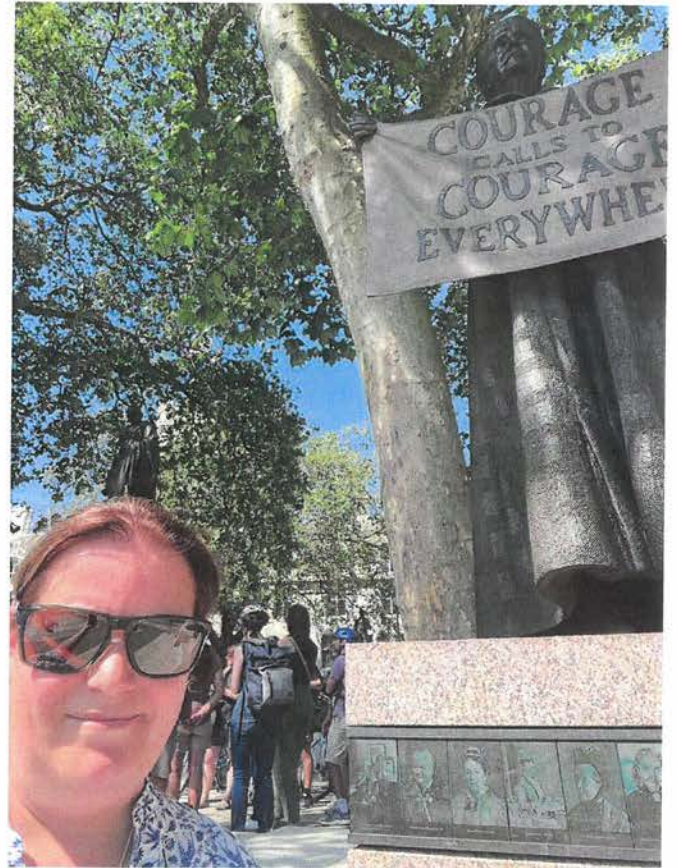


Curiosity is a trait we try to build in our students at Stockport Grammar. We get them to ask questions and take an active interest in what they are learning. It was fantastic therefore that I got a chance to unleash my own curiosity. It was this curiosity that led me on a journey through the past and to modern day America. It was curiosity that ended with a new relative in the US who I am now in regular contact with. This same curiosity completed a section of the jigsaw that was missing for my dad for decades. I would strongly recommend researching your family history. It takes you on an interesting journey and you may even unearth stories or family members that would have been lost forever without taking that first step.

However, my story does not stop there. In that same photo that was on the wall when I was a child there was someone missing. Where was Joseph Leng? The elder brother of Harold. The younger son of Sam and Alice. Why would he not be in the family portrait. This is a story for another edition. Curiosity strikes again.

*Parliament Square
Heroes-selfies from Mr
Leng, Mrs Ashton and
Mr Stone, with Sir
Robert Peel, Millicent
Fawcett and Nelson
Mandela respectively!*

(the students were
encouraged to
contribute... 😊)



Powerful as a child, powerless as an adult: the life of the last emperor of China, by William McCluggage L10

Aisin-Gioro Puyi, the 11th emperor of the Chinese Qing dynasty, was born in Beijing on 7th February 1906. Puyi was the nephew of the previous emperor - the Guangxu Emperor - who had died childless. Puyi was selected to be emperor on 13th November 1908, when he was forcefully dragged away from his parents to the Forbidden City, which had been the home of the Chinese Emperor for around 500 years. Due to Puyi's young age, Empress Dowager Cixi was set to act as a regent for him. Cixi only acted as regent for a day, as she died on the 15th November, the day after Puyi was installed. Due to this, Puyi's father, Prince Chun and the previous empress, Empress Dowager Longyu, were appointed as regents.



During Puyi's reign as emperor he remained within the Forbidden City, where he was treated lavishly and effectively worshipped by those he met, for instance He would wear new clothes every day. This upbringing led to him becoming cruel towards the eunuchs (Imperial servants) within the palace, having them whipped excessively. Puyi himself later described that, 'Flogging eunuchs was part of my daily routine.' Due to the strict hierarchy within imperial China, almost nobody was willing to challenge Puyi, and as such, his cruel behaviour continued. The one person who did try to control Puyi's behaviour

was his wet nurse, Wang Lianshou, who Puyi became extremely close to. Notably, Wang managed to dissuade Puyi from his idea to gift a eunuch a cake filled with iron filings. Puyi came to hate Empress Dowager Longyu, partially due to her removing Wang from the palace when he was eight.



On 10th October 1911, a revolt known as the Xinhai or 1911 revolution began, demanding the removal of the Qing dynasty. This was due to a belief that they had lost the Mandate of Heaven, which was the right of an emperor to rule China. This revolution led to Puyi abdicating on February 12th 1912 in an edict issued by Longyu which was agreed with the new President Yuan. This edict led to the formation of a new Chinese republic, ending the almost 300-year rule of the Qing dynasty, and over 2000 years of imperial rule of China. This change undoubtedly altered the course of Chinese history. Despite his abdication, Puyi's lifestyle changed little. The new republic allowed Puyi to remain in the Forbidden City, and



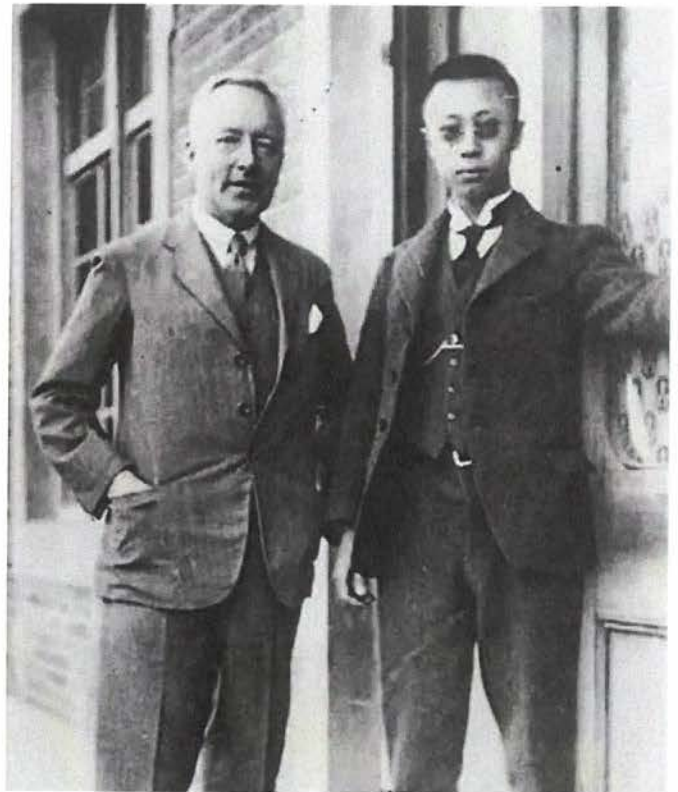
he was still treated as a monarch. Indeed, Puyi himself was initially unaware of his abdication.

Throughout the 1910s there were high tensions within Beijing. Minorities such as Mongolians and Manchus felt the new government was discriminating against them. This led to the government becoming weak. This, in combination with remaining monarchist support, led to numerous attempts at monarchist coups. One of these coups succeeded, and led to Puyi's restoration to the throne of a restored Qing dynasty.

On 1st July 1917, a royalist general, Zhang Xun, entered the capital and announced a restoration of Puyi as the emperor of China, the Beijing police submitted to this meaning Puyi was once again on the throne. This restoration would not last for long however, as the republic was quick to respond, gathering an army and bombing the Forbidden City. After failed negotiations the republican army began an assault against the royalists, leading to Zhang Xun fleeing and another ceasefire. In the end Puyi had been restored to the throne for only 12 days, and the suspicion placed on him by this incident would greatly harm his hopes of returning to power.

On 3rd March 1919, when Puyi was 13, he was assigned Sir Reginald Johnston as a teacher. Reginald was a Scottish scholar who was appointed to prepare Puyi in case of a future restoration of the monarchy. Johnston was

appointed as an English tutor but gained influence due to the respect Puyi developed for him.



Due to Johnston's influence, Puyi took an English name, Henry, and encouraged eunuchs to refer to him with this name. Puyi himself described that 'Johnston had become the major part of my soul'. Johnston also led to Puyi gaining a desire to study at Oxford. Johnston was a monarchist, and taught Puyi that China needed an autocratic ruler. Despite Johnston's efforts to develop Puyi, he remained easily influenced and was noted as being a potential target for manipulation by Japanese diplomats.

In 1922 it was decided that it was time for Puyi to marry. He was shown a number of pictures of potential brides. In the end he married Gobulo Wanrong, the daughter of a Manchurian aristocrat. Puyi always had a tense relationship with his wife and consorts, with one of his consorts eventually filing for divorce.

On the 23rd October 1924, a coup by Feng Yuxiang resulted in Puyi being ousted from the Forbidden city, and being reduced in status to a citizen. Johnston encouraged Puyi to go to the

Japanese embassy in Beijing. Puyi took refuge in the embassy and in 1925 travelled to live in the Japanese section of Tianjin, a treaty port opened after the 2nd Opium war.

During this time Puyi and his advisors discussed ways to reclaim the throne and met with a number of the warlords who occupied China at this time. These meetings were failures, simply resulting in Puyi paying warlords money in exchange for a promise to restore him to the throne, only for nothing to happen. Puyi was also visited by Kenji Doihara, an officer within the Japanese army, who encouraged Puyi to conquer and take power in Manchuria, just as how the Qing dynasty had gained power.



Puyi eventually chose to accept this advice, telling the Japanese that he wished to be restored to the throne. A staged incident began after the Japanese Kwantung army blew up a railway in Manchuria, leading to a Japanese invasion of the region. Puyi was offered a place as emperor once again by Doihara and the Japanese convinced him to agree, despite his wife's objections. On 1st March 1932, Puyi was installed as the head of the state of Manchukuo, but he was given the position of Chief Executive, rather than that of emperor, which he had been promised. Puyi was greatly

offended, given he believed he was the rightful emperor of China. Puyi was moved to the Salt Tax Palace, which was significantly smaller than what he was expecting, causing further tensions with the Japanese.



During his time in Manchuria, Puyi learned he was intended to be used as a puppet by the Japanese. In 1934, the Japanese decided to appoint Puyi as the new emperor of Manchukuo. This angered Puyi, who believed that he should have been restored as an emperor of China, yet he remained hopeful that he would be restored. Puyi was crowned on 1st March 1934 in a ceremony tightly controlled by the Japanese. Puyi's main purpose as emperor was simply to sign off laws made by the Japanese, and to ensure order. As Emperor, Puyi worked to try to gain international recognition for Manchuria, but this was relatively unsuccessful due to the tight control exerted by Japan.

Puyi had another issue during his time in Manchukuo, with a complete breakdown in relations between him and his wife, Wanrong. During their time in Tianjin, Wanrong became addicted to opium, and this worsened once they reached Manchukuo, with her smoking up to two ounces of opium daily, which is a potentially lethal dose. Wanrong also began having affairs during this time, and even had a pregnancy. Wanrong's child was killed upon birth by the Japanese in order to avoid humiliation.



The event that fully demonstrated both to Puyi, and to the world, that Puyi was nothing more than a puppet was the second Sino Japanese war. During the war, the Japanese occupied a number of major Chinese cities, including Beijing and Nanjing. New governments were set up in these regions, rather than being handed to Puyi's regime, showing that the Japanese had no intention of allowing Puyi to become emperor of China again. Puyi was given very little information into foreign affairs, including the war effort. He was told of countless Japanese successes, and as such initially believed that Japan was winning the war. Puyi came to doubt this eventually, and to confirm his suspicions he secretly listened to American radio in 1944, where he realised the extent of Japanese failures.

The regime in Manchuria fell shortly after the 9th August 1945, when the Soviet Union declared war on the Japanese and invaded Manchukuo. This was sooner than the military expected. The Soviets swiftly dealt with resistance through a combination of bombings and a force of over 1.5 million soldiers. After the fall of Japan, Puyi abdicated from his position as Emperor, and attempted to flee and avoid capture by the

Soviets. Puyi was captured before he had the chance to board a plane. Despite his actions, Puyi was not tried as a war criminal, and was simply kept as a prisoner.

After the end of the Chinese civil war and the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Puyi was handed over to be dealt with by the new Chinese government. Puyi was placed in a re-education camp in an attempt by the to appear benevolent and forgiving. However, other prisoners and guards targeted him due to his previous status, and he struggled to adapt to a life without servants. Puyi was released in 1959, and returned to Beijing, working a number of different jobs for the rest of his life, including as a gardener, librarian, and researcher. Puyi became a strong advocate for the Chinese government publishing an autobiography. Puyi died on 17th October 1967 at the age of 61 due to a number of health complications.



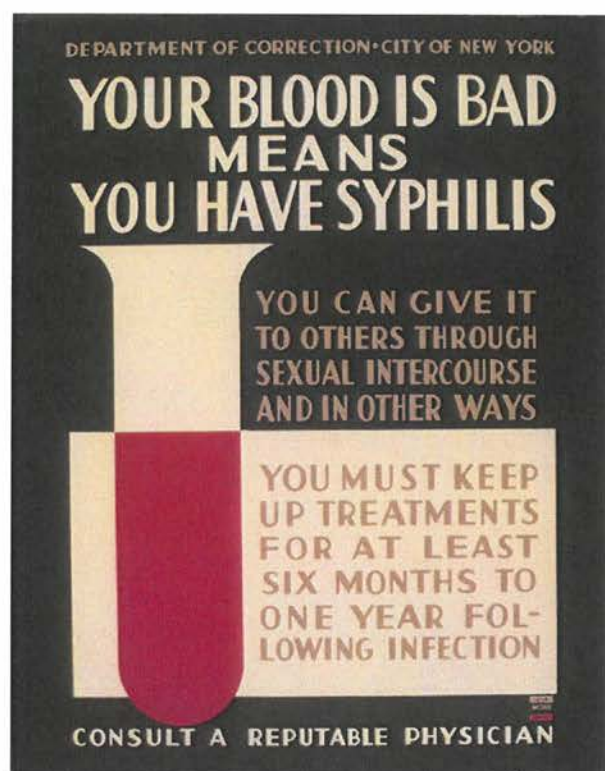
Puyi spent the vast majority of his life close to power, serving as an emperor three separate occasions, yet he was never in control. As emperor of China he was simply too young, and he was too afraid to anger the Japanese as the emperor of Manchukuo. Puyi had been born into a position where he was prepared to be one of the most powerful men in the world, yet a mix of external conditions and poor choices prevented this from ever happening. In the end, Puyi died not as an emperor, but as a citizen, something he, and many others would never have suspected.

Tuskegee: A Medical Disaster, by Kai Spooner L

“The United States government did something that was wrong – deeply, profoundly, morally wrong.”

~ Bill Clinton

Macon County, Alabama, 1932, is the backdrop for when the USPHS (United States Public Health Service) began to work at the Tuskegee institute, conducting a study to record the natural history of syphilis; what was on paper, a constructive experiment meant to advance man in the war against disease, later went down in infamy. The Tuskegee experiment has since been labelled one of the most unethical medical and governmental scandals in the history of the United States, and the rest of the world.



The Tuskegee experiment was initially named the ‘Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male’ and involved the recruitment of 600 black men – 399 with syphilis and 201 who did not have the disease. Researchers informed the men

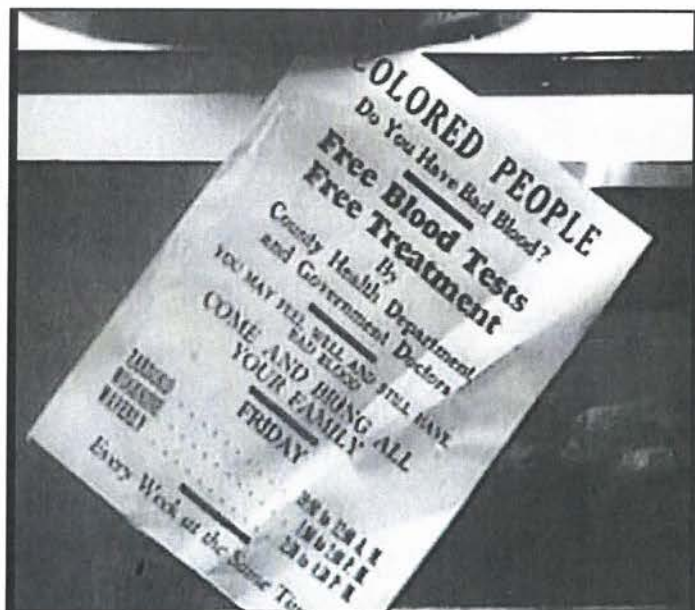
that they were being treated for ‘bad blood’ a local term used to describe a variety of ailments including syphilis, but which extended to anaemia and fatigue. In exchange for taking part in this study, the men received free medical exams, free meals and burial insurance. However, it must be noted that the participants did not give informed consent to take part in the study, which means that they were not provided sufficient information and understanding before making decisions surrounding their medical care – a basic principle in medical ethics and medical law.

Instead of being treated for ‘bad blood’ as the men were promised, they were giving placebos such as aspirin and mineral supplements and observed by health care workers, with no intention of curing the men but rather to monitor the effects of syphilis when left untreated. The broader black community in rural Alabama had been misled by what the USPHS were doing, and many research subjects were recruited by respected members of the black community: doctors, pastors, teachers, and community leaders to name a few, and this conjunction of government and community approval assured many men of the beneficial nature of the trial.

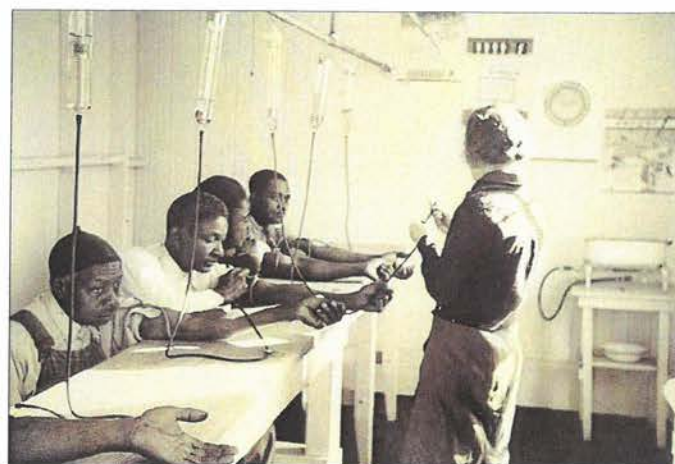


Both scientific and medical authorities of the late 19th to early 20th centuries possessed exceptionally harmful pseudoscientific ideas, with one specifically about the sex drives and genitals of African Americans. It was accepted at the time

that, while the brains of African Americans were under-evolved, their genitals were over-developed and African Americans were seen as inherently immoral, with insatiable sexual appetites.



With these misinterpretations of race, sexuality and health in mind, researchers elected to undertake the Tuskegee study. They believed, largely due to their fundamentally flawed scientific understandings of race, that black people were extremely prone to sexually transmitted infections (like syphilis). They also believed that all black people, regardless of their education, background, economic or personal circumstances, could not be convinced to get treatment for syphilis. Therefore, the USPHS could justify the research at Tuskegee, branding it a 'study in nature' rather than an experiment, meant to simply observe the natural progression of syphilis within a community that wouldn't seek treatment. Something that we know is an untrue and heinously racist hypothesis for official bodies of government to reach.



By the mid-1940s, Penicillin became a standard treatment of choice for syphilis, but the men involved in the Tuskegee study were not treated, and information surrounding this treatment was withheld from them with the best of the government's ability. This is of course, a significant turning point in the trial's harm towards the black community, but many historians note that even before this, treatments that were being used at the time across the US were also being withheld. Resultantly, many of the men died, went blind or experienced severe mental health issues due to the untreated syphilis which ravaged their bodies, with many of their wives and children catching the disease, furthering its spread in rural Alabama.





Moving forwards 30 years to 1972, is Peter Buxtun, an ex-venereal disease investigator who worked at the USPHS and became known as Tuskegee's whistle-blower, credited with ending the experiment once and for all. He began to question why the study was happening, and its ethicalities. It was this year when he made the decision to leak information to the press which prompted national outrage when the story was published by Buxtun's reporter friend.



It was another two decades before a formal apology was given by the United States government, delivered by Bill Clinton. But for African Americans, and the Tuskegee community, this was too little, far too late. Even the name 'Tuskegee Experiment' is resented by the Tuskegee community as they feel that it places the burden of responsibility on them and not for the government responsible for conducting the study.

There is a history of African Americans being tested on non-consensually by physicians – particularly in the antebellum south – and the world owes it to them to remember. Entire fields of study such as gynaecology are built on the backs of black Americans being experimented on by the medical system, with multiple procedures being tested and refined on black women who could not lend their consent and suffered multiple operations and mutilations without anaesthesia. Once perfected, these practices became widespread, reaching the UK and other parts of the world, but by then, they were safe. African Americans had suffered to make this the case.

To this day, research experiments in USA still have few, if any, black participants due to their scepticism towards doctors and researchers which is harmful to medical studies as diversity is needed in order to maximise effectiveness and avoid mistakes in future.

Tuskegee acted as a microcosm of a larger historical trauma that is both historical and contemporary in nature that contributes to an inequality in healthcare. As USC sociologist Karen Lincoln told NPR (National Public Radio) in 2021, "If you say Tuskegee, then you don't have to acknowledge things like pharmacy deserts, things like poverty and unemployment. You can just say, 'That happened then, and there's nothing we can do about it.'"