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## Measuring the Natives: Beatrice Blackwood and Leonard Dudley Buxton's work in Oxfordshire

*Alison Petch, Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford*

I have been engaged for some years on research projects examining the history of the Pitt Rivers Museum (PRM) at the University of Oxford and its collections.[1] Recently, I have been examining the English collections held at this ethnographic museum in close detail, as part of the UK Economic and Social Research Council-funded project, "The Other Within." [2] Although the findings reported in this paper have turned out to be only tangentially related to my main research subject, they provide insight into one form of anthropological fieldwork at the University of Oxford in the UK in the 1920s and 1930s. This work was related to philosophical and scientific debates widespread at that time, not only in academia but also in politics: all over Europe, scholars, politicians and members of the general public were increasingly interested in nationalism, defining "native populations" and historical antecedents.

### The protagonists

The first hero of our tale is Beatrice Mary Blackwood (1889-1975). She was an undergraduate at Somerville College, Oxford between 1908 and 1912, before Oxford conferred degrees on women, studying English Literature and Language. She returned to Oxford in 1916 to study for the Diploma in Anthropology at the PRM, which she earned with distinction in 1918. In her coursework, she had studied a diverse range of anthropological subjects, [3] but she must have been most interested in physical anthropology, choosing to undertake further study with Arthur Thomson (1858-1935), the Dr Lee's Professor of Human Anatomy. He worked in the Oxford University Museum (of Natural History) adjacent to the PRM.

By 1920, Blackwood was Departmental Demonstrator, teaching physical anthropology to students as well as researching and cataloguing the anatomy collections. In 1928, she was promoted to University Demonstrator. Thomson had a very high opinion of her work in Human Anatomy. In support of her nomination for the post of University Demonstrator, he noted that she was skilled in microscope technique, had an intimate knowledge of the details of physical anthropology (particularly psychological methods used to investigate racial groups), had helped to collect material for the department's collections (including photographs illustrating racial types, modes of life and geographical environments), and was an experienced fieldworker. (Oxford University Archives, file FA/9/2/90, 15 November 1927) Blackwood spent much time cataloguing and arranging a collection of over 2,000 skulls, as the Departmental Annual Report for 1928 recorded. (*Oxford University Gazette*, 12 June 1929, p.688)

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Blackwood also undertook gruelling fieldwork expeditions to North America, New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands. (Knowles 2000:252-266, Gosden and Knowles 2001:139-141) Most of her fieldwork was devoted to ethnography, and social and cultural matters. In 1936, she transferred to the PRM as University Demonstrator (later Lecturer in Ethnology), and worked on its ethnographic and archaeological collections until her death in 1975, some 16 years after formal retirement.[4] By the end of her life she was known primarily for her Pacific ethnographic fieldwork, collections and publications, and her work on the PRM's

collections and documentation (Petch, 2003, Percival 1976:114), rather than for her cranial studies. In one of her obituaries, she was described as "a person of great integrity and friendliness. . . [She] wore her eighty-six years, her deep and wide knowledge and her many honours so lightly and with such modesty that perhaps we were inclined to take her for granted and only now realize what a rare person we have lost in her." (Percival 1976:113-4)

The other hero of this story is Leonard Halford Dudley Buxton (1889-1939). He had also obtained a distinction in the Diploma in Anthropology at Oxford, six years earlier than Blackwood, in 1912. He was appointed Demonstrator in Physical Anthropology in 1913. He met Blackwood when he taught her while she studied for the Diploma in Anthropology. Buxton was appointed Lecturer in Physical Anthropology in 1922 and University Reader in 1927, the first Reader in Physical Anthropology at Oxford. (Blackwood 1939: 204) His work was assessed by one of his professional descendants:

Buxton undertook some craniometrics and was, for example, involved in examining archaeological material from Crete and Mesopotamia. But he never became a slave to the approach like so many of his contemporaries. He was much more interested in general ethnology and recording the patterns of human variety around the world. . . . A particularly insightful piece of work [Arthur Thomson and Buxton] undertook was to examine the global distribution of variation in the nasal index. This showed a high correlation with the variability in the geographical distribution of atmospheric relative humidity and was perhaps the first occasion when anthropometrics were examined in a functional way. (Harrison 2007:125)

In her obituary for Buxton, Blackwood remarked:

[H]is interests were wide and his knowledge extended to fields little suspected except by those who knew him well. He had, for example, a special liking for willows and knew the appearance and habits of every conceivable variety, together with the folklore connected with them. Another of his interests was ritual, and his book on University ceremonial is authoritative. He . . . was never at a loss for some odd bit of lore to enliven an argument or drive home a point. (Blackwood 1939:204)

Buxton fulfilled a wide variety of roles for the University in addition to his teaching, being at different times Senior Proctor, Curator of the University Parks and of the Schools and Bursar, Dean and Tutor at Exeter College. He served as a city councillor and was also on the Council of the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI). (Blackwood 1939: 204) Although Buxton was largely a physical anthropologist, he was interested in wider anthropological matters, ethnography and folklore studies. (Blackwood 1939: 204) He also wrote a guide to the Pitt Rivers Museum in Farnham (founded by Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers, the founder of the museum in Oxford).

Blackwood and Buxton worked closely together in the Human Anatomy Department of the Oxford University Museum (of Natural History) from 1921 until she moved to the PRM in 1936. Together, they ran the Diploma students' practical classes and human anatomy

lectures. They chose not only to work together on several special projects but also to publish together. She called him "Bones." (PRM manuscript collections, Blackwood papers, Box 4, letter dated August 1935) No personal correspondence between them survives, but a flavor of his astringent character is conveyed in a letter from Blackwood to Skinner, in which she comments on Buxton's cutting tongue. (Mills 2007: 83) However, she also praised his "capacity for getting on with different kinds of people." (Blackwood 1939:204)

A letter in the PRM manuscript collections reports that Arthur Thomson had believed "that his young team of Buxton, Miss Blackwood and Penniman [5] were going to make revolutionary discoveries in evolutionary history." (Blackwood papers, Box General Correspondence M-S, Letter from J.M. Edmonds of the Oxford University Museum to K.P. Oakley at the British Museum 25 September 1967) This promise was not fulfilled, since Buxton died prematurely and Blackwood's interests changed.

### The methodology and work

Buxton announced at the 10 June 1920 meeting of the Oxford University Anthropological Society (OUAS) that he was undertaking to collect the "folklore etc. among the people of the Cotswolds." (OUAS meeting book 1, PRM manuscript collections)[6] One feature of his project was physical measurement of the Oxfordshire population, past and present. Buxton and Blackwood explained, "Although the ancient inhabitants of Britain from prehistoric times onwards have received considerable attention at the hands of anthropologists, the problem of the physical type of their modern descendants has been to a large extent neglected." They would "attempt to determine whether the Oxfordshire countryfolk of today are more akin with their medieval or to their Saxon and Romano-British predecessors, or whether they in fact represent an amalgamation of these somewhat diverse physical types." (Buxton et al 1939: 1, 5)

Buxton described how their work began:

I started on a study of the modern population by chance. I was invited to lecture in a village to the Y.M.C.A. I lectured on the shape of people's heads, and measured them at the end as a kind of free side-show. Miss Blackwood soon joined me, and concentrated on Women's Institutes. The modern Oxfordshire people were all examined in villages, often the remoter ones. In addition to taking purely physical observations we enquired as to the birth-place of the subject and of his parents. Although in many cases the information must be considered not entirely reliable, the figures give a good idea of the movements of the people at a period just after the Great War, when the modern motor-bus system had hardly been developed. We have altogether measurements on just under 500 people. (Buxton and Blackwood, 1934:43)

The 1920 Annual Report of the Oxford University Museum (of Natural History) related that Buxton and his associates--"Miss B. Blackwood, Miss Mond, and Miss Russell"--enjoyed "the hearty co-operation of the local clergy and also the assistance rendered by the Oxford branch of the Y.M.C.A. under the auspices of which many of the lectures have been given." (p. 20)

In a later publication their methodology was again described:

Of the original observations on which it is based, those relating to males were made by [Buxton], and most of those relating to females by [Blackwood], ... The data were collected in Oxfordshire during the years 1922 and 1923, either in village halls or at Women's Institutes. Our regular procedure was to give an informal talk on the history of the district we happened to be visiting and to follow this with a description of Neolithic, Bronze Age and Romano-British skulls. As the archaeological remains are well known to and keenly appreciated by the people, in whose folklore they play an important part, members of the audience usually responded with enthusiasm when invited to be measured for comparison with their forbears. (Buxton et al 1939:1)

Blackwood had certainly begun her anthropometric work on women in Oxfordshire villages by 1922-3. (*Oxford University Gazette* 13 June 1923, p.668) At some point between 1920 and 1939, Blackwood undertook an anthropometric study of female students at Oxford. Her data were not published and were apparently lost, but they were referred to in a 1939 article, which described the survey participants as "a stringently selected population" and stated that "[m]ost of the female Villagers and all of the University women were measured by a single observer [Blackwood] and within two years of each other." (Buxton et al 1939:7) She must have carried out this work at some point between 1920 and 1925.

The anthropometric measurements of villagers were not extensive, and the subjects were not fully compliant. Because they could not be persuaded "to remove their boots, statures could not be recorded, and we finally decided to confine our observations to measurements of the head, which were all made by contact." (Buxton et al 1939:2) Even taking head measurements may have seemed quite intrusive to subjects:

Head length (L) was taken from the glabella to the most distant part of the occiput, the female "bun" [hair-style] being raised or lowered to facilitate the measurement. Head breadth (B) was first taken over the hair and then, when the maximum diameter had been ascertained, partings were made at the appropriate spots and the callipers applied ... The minimal frontal diameter (B<sub>1</sub>) was found by palpating the external angular processes of the frontal bone and then moving the forefingers along the temporal crests ... [other measurements are then described] (Buxton et al 1939:2)

Blackwood may have been rather more industrious than Dudley Buxton; measurements were taken of 310 females, and of only 71 males. (Buxton et al 1939:2)

Blackwood and Buxton supplemented their anthropometric data with archival research, tracing specific families using the parish registers at Stonesfield, and finding "that there were certain families which had been in the parish for at least three hundred and fifty years, and probably much longer." (Blackwood and Buxton 1934:41) Their field methodology now seems a little suspect, since they used the ruse of giving lectures in small villages to gain opportunities to obtain physical measurements. They apparently did not give their subjects the possibility of fully informed consent. Furthermore, they judged that they could take measurements only once in each village; they must have



felt that villagers might smell a rat if asked to participate in the free side-show of measurement twice. They commented:

The work stopped because, although the population was not exhausted, villages in which we had once been heard were afterwards closed preserves. We measured everybody who was prepared to be measured, but in our final count we rejected all who were stated to be under twenty years of age and also those with any known Irish, Scotch, Welsh, Channel Island or foreign ancestry. There were no Manx ancestors. In a number of cases we actually made pedigrees, though this was often impossible. Everyone we examined was domiciled in the immediate neighbourhood of Oxford and employed in a village or in the city itself. A few sibs or parents and children are included in our series, but most of the subjects were unrelated. (Buxton et al 1939:1)

Buxton carried out similar work, at around the same time, in Malta and Gozo, with fieldwork in December 1920 and January 1921. In that study, he worked with three women, Miss Moss, Miss Russell and Mrs. Jenkinson. The women examined "about a hundred men and women at Gozo," conducting most of the measurements on crania on women. Russell investigated the long bones and "about half the children." Buxton himself carried out all the remaining measurements of living subjects and studied all the skeletal material. Evidently, Buxton had no problems working with women. Although Blackwood did not contribute to the Maltese fieldwork, she was well acquainted with its results, having helped prepare its findings for publication and checked proofs in Buxton's absence. (Buxton 1922:165)

The work in Malta and Gozo concentrated on skeletal material from four different sources and different time periods, as well as measurement of the living. As regards the latter data, Buxton commented that, "as far as possible . . . typical Maltese were taken." The researchers sampled schoolchildren, and males and females from both Malta and Gozo and both rural and urban populations. They obviously went to some lengths to try and get a representative sample, reporting, "The individuals measured include among the men representatives of all social classes; among the women the lower social grades are chiefly represented." Some efforts were made to exclude people with foreign heritage: "all those who were either born of Maltese parents abroad, or although born in Malta are not of pure Maltese parentage, have been rejected." (Buxton 1922: 174-5) The same methodology was followed when sampling from populations closer to home, in Oxfordshire.

Buxton and Blackwood also worked on skeletal material in the Oxford University Museum collections. Evidently, Blackwood was the first to examine Oxfordshire bones:

With the help of the diploma students, excavations were carried out on a site at Abingdon, during Trinity Term, by courtesy of the proprietor, A. E. Preston, Esq., J.P., F.S.A. During the Long Vacation, through the good offices of the same gentleman, Miss Blackwood was afforded an opportunity of acquiring a quantity of skeletal material from the site of Abingdon Abbey, in the course of excavations carried out by a Joint Committee of local archaeologists and the Society of Antiquaries. (*Oxford University Gazette* 13 June 1923, p.668)

The 1932-3 Annual Report for the Oxford University Museum reported that Buxton carried out a study of the prehistoric peoples of the Oxford district in that year. (*Oxford University Gazette*, 8 December 1933 p. 206) On 16 February 1933, Dudley Buxton gave a lecture to the OUAS on "Oxfordshire folk," "illustrated with lantern slides and exhibits of crania." (PRM manuscript collections, OUAS meeting book I) The lecture was quite popular; 45 members attended.

Blackwood and Buxton used their own donations as well as skeletal collections from Oxfordshire amassed by other researchers and held by the Oxford University Museum of Natural History. They explained that skeletons were "the best evidence we can have [only] if they are exactly dated"; they could be measured "very accurately in the laboratory" and used "to study in great detail one important part of the culture they represent, *i.e.* burial customs." (Buxton and Blackwood 1934:34-5) Their results were compared to measurements taken from living Oxonians, which were "sufficient to show that the modern Oxfordshire folk differ entirely from the medieval skulls from Abingdon." (Blackwood and Buxton 1934:37)

### The findings

In 1934, Buxton and Blackwood published an article in *Folklore* that described their work in Oxfordshire. There is no record of why they decided to publish some eleven years after the majority of their fieldwork had been completed. Their choice of journal influenced their article's content; rather unsuccessfully, they attempted to link folklore, anthropometric measurement and speculation about racial origins. Their decision to publish in *Folklore* may have been made because of the considerable interest in folklore in Oxford at this time. It has already been reported that Buxton had given a lecture titled "Oxfordshire Folk" to the OUAS on 16 February 1933. At the next meeting (9 November 1933), there was another talk of local relevance; Elsie Corbett presented "Folklife Survivals in an Oxfordshire village" to an audience of 50 members, "including members of the affiliated Oxford Folk Lore Society." Henry Balfour [7] also spoke to the society on 26 April 1934 on "Notes on some British folklore material in the Pitt Rivers Museum," and a Miss Violet Mason talked about "Oxfordshire folklore." On 20 February 1936, F.G. Parsons described "The Chiltern Crosses." On 2 November 1939, Ellen Ettlinger delivered "Documents of British superstition in Oxford." Folklore was obviously in vogue among anthropologists in Oxford during the 1930s. (PRM manuscript collections, OUAS Meeting book I) Both Blackwood and Buxton were members of the Folklore Society.

Buxton and Blackwood introduced their article by saying:

The study of the Oxfordshire folk covers a very broad field. . . . In this paper we propose to deal only with a very narrow aspect, and to limit ourselves to the relation of the population to folklore, and especially to study the composition of the people, and to consider how far there has been a definite continuity of the history and people of the region.  
(Blackwood and Buxton 1934:29)

To the reader, they were more successful in achieving the second of these aims than the first. Their paper began with a long description of the geological and geographical characteristics of the area. Then followed a short historical description of the various

groups of people who settled in Oxfordshire, particularly the Romano-British. There was little discussion of folklore in the paper. After much consideration of the history of the Oxfordshire population, the essay concluded:

What has all this got to do with folklore? It seems to us a great deal. We have plenty of evidence of a very mixed population . . . But local culture is a very different thing . . . The continual movement of people has probably always been backed by a static population. These old families are regarded by the people with a mixture of contempt and admiration, not unmixed with awe . . . What appears to be happening is that the old folks have their local tales, which certainly in North-west Oxfordshire they treat very seriously . . . Further, the people who stay provide a continuous static base. In about three generations, the new-comers are part of the old regime. Thus the physical type tends to homogeneity and our measurements of Oxfordshire show a remarkably homogeneous type, in spite of diversity of origin. So to a certain extent does the folklore. . . . But after a while . . . the old superstitions, once associated with primitive agricultural instruments, lie dormant on field trials with a brand new Fordson tractor. But after a while . . . the Oxfordshire mud converts the new plough, and the ploughman regards it as he did his old one, and his forbear his reaping hook. . . . There is a great task before the folklorist who would try to disentangle the various elements in this complicated palimpsest. (Blackwood and Buxton 1934:45-6)

Blackwood and Buxton's attempt to connect physical measurements of the current Oxfordshire populations with the historic population was one thing; their allied attempt to link that with folklore seems not to have been assayed in any detail. They did record some interesting ethnographic findings: 51 out of 123 people "who claimed to be truly Oxfordshire folk . . . were born in the same village in which both their father and mother before them had been born"; contrary to expectation, the villagers were not "patrilocal, but actually there is little difference between the number of cases where the subject was born in his mother's or father's village, and the subject and both parents were born in different villages." (Blackwood and Buxton 1934:43-44)

The final outcome of the research was an article published in the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* in 1939, "Measurement of Oxfordshire villagers." Pages 4-8 of the article give detailed findings. To twenty-first century eyes, some of the conclusions seem quaintly of their period. Plotting the home villages of the participants, the researchers found, unsurprisingly, that they were dealing with "an essentially South Midland rural population," and their sample represented "the ordinary peasant folk of the region." Most people's "family homes" were originally either in Wiltshire, Berkshire or Buckinghamshire (all neighbouring English counties) or in Oxfordshire itself. (Buxton et al 1939:2) They concluded, "[T]he Villagers are closer to the medieval people in head length and to the Saxons and Romano-Britons in head breadth." (Buxton et al 1939:6) They did not discuss the significance of this finding.

#### **An unhappy ending**

In 1939, the partnership was brought to an abrupt ending by the sudden and unexpected death of Buxton on 5 March, only a few weeks after the curator of the Pitt Rivers

Museum, Henry Balfour, had died. Just 49 years old, Buxton succumbed to pneumonia after only four days' illness. The rush to publish was not linked to his ill-health because his health had previously been good. A note in the *JRAI* article records that Buxton died while it was "undergoing its final revision for press." (Buxton et al 1939:1)

Blackwood had now lost two of her long-term mentors in the space of a few weeks, only a year after her return to Oxford from her final period of prolonged fieldwork and four years after the death of her closest counsellor, Arthur Thomson. The city must have seemed a very different place to her after 1939. In the short term, her mentors' deaths dramatically altered and increased her daily workload, as she struggled to cover both Balfour and Buxton's teaching and museum commitments.

Blackwood's interest in English ethnography and archaeology continued after Buxton's death. She joined the Oxfordshire and District Folklore Society, established in 1948 to "collect, record and study the folklore of Oxfordshire, and the neighbouring counties, and to further the study of the international folklore of these districts." (PRM Blackwood manuscript collections, uncatalogued box, Folder "The Folklore Society 1948-9") However, her commitment to the group only lasted until the following year, when she resigned because of other obligations. She was also a member of the RAI's 'British Ethnography Committee', contributing to the discussion about setting up a Museum of English Life and Traditions (which never eventuated). She continued to take an interest in local archaeology until her death in 1975.

#### Forgotten research?

Between 1920 and 1939, Blackwood and Buxton tried to link folklore, local history studies and anthropometric research into a seamless whole, which would illuminate the local Oxfordshire population past and present. The links they perceived between local ethnography and physical anthropology were in part affected by the academic arrangements in Oxford and the historic way in which anthropology in Oxford had developed.

The Pitt Rivers Museum (to which Blackwood transferred in 1936) had been closely associated with the human anatomy department since its foundation was in 1884. Its ethnological displays were initially put under the control of Henry Nottidge Moseley, Linacre Professor of Anatomy. This association was strengthened when Arthur Thomson and Henry Balfour formed two parts of the "Trinity" or "triumvirate" who taught anthropology to generations of students from the 1890s until the middle 1930s. [8] For most of this period all Diploma students in anthropology were taught physical anthropology and cultural anthropology. (Gosden and Larson 2007:93) Physical anthropology was itself divided into Zoology—"the zoological position of man," Palaeontology—"the antiquity of man," and Ethnology—"the comparative study of man's physical characteristics." (Gosden and Larson 2007:125)

Physical form was not an important feature of the Pitt Rivers Museum's displays. In the original exhibit of his collection at Bethnal Green Museum in London, Pitt Rivers had allowed only limited space for a very small number of skulls; he wrote that these were "examples of the typical skulls of some of the principal race." [sic] (Lane Fox, 1874:1) However, he acknowledged the importance of studying and teaching physical anthropology. (Bodleian Library, Acland papers, Pitt Rivers to Henry Acland, 10 May

1882, MS Acland d. 92, fols. 79-90) In Oxford, material culture and ethnographic and archaeological artefacts dominated the displays, though some human remains (such as shrunken heads, and trophy heads) have always been shown (and been very popular with visitors).

Blackwood and Buxton's fascination with the people living around the University, and their belief that examining and measuring them would shed light on distant and ancient times, came out of general interest within human anatomy at Oxford with "the affinities of groups of people with one another, with their classification into so-called races and with establishing historical connections between past and present groups." The only way to study past groups was to examine their skeletal remains, so a great deal of attention was paid to bones, particularly to skulls; data indicated "considerable variation within and between human groups. Comparisons were made by meticulous measurement and sophisticated statistical treatment." (Harrison 2007:125)

Blackwood and Buxton's work was not the last investigation of local villagers by Oxford physical anthropologists, however. From 1965, members of the Department of Biological Anthropology (as it was then called) undertook to research the total human biology of a group of villages in the Otmoor area. This site was chosen because of the excellence of local church records from the sixteenth century on, allowing the historical demography of the region and changing environmental and social conditions to be factored into the analysis. Researchers took blood samples and tested for "various genetic polymorphisms"; stature, bodyweight, IQ and personality traits were also measured. (Harrison 2007:128-130) They did not draw on Buxton and Blackwood's studies. This would have been difficult, since Buxton and Blackwood did not publish the names of the villages in which they worked, though they evidently did in Stonesfield, Otmoor and Wychwood.

Today, Buxton is a forgotten figure in general anthropological circles and Blackwood is best remembered for her pioneering work on cataloguing ethnographic museum collections and for her fieldwork and collections from the Pacific. However, in a letter to an Elsie Corbett of Spelsbury near Charlbury, Oxfordshire on 16 February 1931, Blackwood described her anthropometric research as her "immortal work." (PRM manuscript collections, Blackwood papers, uncatalogued) Evidently, she was committed to human anatomy and physical anthropology during the 1920s and 1930s, though her attention turned towards museum ethnography and material culture as time went on. Indeed, it is clear that even after she moved to the Pitt Rivers Museum in the mid-1930s, she still felt that her craniological research was important. This paper sheds light on this obscure part of her career, and an almost forgotten collaborative partnership.

The fieldwork Blackwood and Buxton undertook in Oxfordshire (and at the University itself) did not lead to any major discoveries, but it did show an early inclination to study "the other within," from which the current research project to which I am connected can be said to descend. Our project does not study crania, but examines other physical evidence, the manuscripts and publications written about the collections by museum staff and researchers, as well as artefacts themselves as the raw data by which to measure the natives.

**Notes**

[1] The Pitt Rivers Museum is part of the University of Oxford and holds a large collection of ethnographic and world archaeological artifacts. It was founded in 1884 when a collection was donated to the University by Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers (1829-1900). The museum has been described as one of the great ethnographic collections in the world (Gosden and Larson 2007:xvii).

[2] For further information about this research project see <http://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/englishness.html>. For more information about the findings of the project see <http://england.prm.ox.ac.uk/>. It follows an early project, funded from the same source, called the 'Relational Museum' project with Professor Chris Gosden and Frances Larson. For further information about this project's findings see <http://history.prm.ox.ac.uk/>.

[3] She studied under Henry Balfour, Arthur Thomson, Dudley Buxton and Robert Ranulph Marett. The subjects included Balfour's series on aesthetic arts, industrial arts and prehistory; Marett's seminars on social origins, world-wide ethnology and prehistoric Europe; Thomson's lessons on human anatomy; and Dudley-Buxton's lectures on geographic conditions and racial types. Some of her lecture notes survive (PRM manuscript collections, Blackwood papers, box 1 and box 1A). Further information about the diploma in anthropology course and its teachers in Rivière, 2007, *passim*.

[4] I am extremely grateful to Geoffrey Harrison, Fran Larson, Chantal Knowles and Peter Rivière for providing information about Blackwood and Buxton's careers.

[5] Thomas Kenneth Penniman (1895-1977), was born in the United States and moved to Oxford after the First World War. He studied for the Diploma in Anthropology, and later worked at the Department of Human Anatomy and the Institute of Social Anthropology before being appointed the Curator of the Pitt Rivers Museum in 1939, succeeding Henry Balfour. He was another very close lifelong friend and colleague of Beatrice Blackwood.

[6] The Cotswolds is the name of a range of hills in southern England. It is not a clearly delineated area but can be taken to include parts of west and north Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire as well as smaller parts of Wiltshire, Somerset, Worcestershire and Warwickshire. It is well known for its wolds (gentle hillsides), villages with stone-built houses and is often thought of as "typically English." The Oxford University Anthropology Society was launched in 1909 "to promote an interest in all its branches by lectures, the reading of papers, discussions and the exhibition of specimens." (Parkin 2007:139, quoting information in the Pitt Rivers Museum manuscript collections)

[7] Henry Balfour (1863-1939), the first Curator (Director) of the Museum.

[8] The third was Robert Ranulph Marett (1866-1943), Reader in Social Anthropology at the University of Oxford. Blackwood wrote a memorial paper, "R.R.M. as Anthropologist: a paper read to the Lankester Society at Exeter College on June 2nd, 1943." (Pitt Rivers Museum manuscript collections Blackwood papers Box 21) In it, she remembers referring to Thomson, Balfour and Marett as "the Triumvirate, or, alternatively, the Trinity."

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### DISSERTATION PRIZE

The Forum for History of Human Sciences of the History of Science Society awards \$100 for the best doctoral dissertation in history of human sciences. (This award alternates annually in rotation with the FHHS's award for best published article.) Entries are encouraged from authors in any discipline, as long as the dissertation is related to the history of the human sciences, broadly construed. The winner will be announced at the annual History of Science Society meeting, November 6-8 in Pittsburgh, and the prize will be publicized in various publications. To be eligible, the dissertation must have been formally filed within the three years previous to the year of the award—in this case, 2005, 2006, or 2007. Send three copies of the dissertation (PDF format on CD, if possible) to Nadine Weidman, secretary of FHHS, 138 Woburn Street, Medford, MA 02155, by July 10, 2008.

### UPCOMING CONFERENCES

**Orientalism, Thirty Years Later:** A one-day symposium at the University of York, UK, Saturday 1 November 2008

This symposium commemorates the thirtieth anniversary of the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism*. Said's most influential and controversial work has inspired countless appropriations and rebuttals from scholars around the globe, and it continues to shape the ways in which literary studies, Middle East studies, East and South Asian studies, anthropology, history, politics, and related disciplines are conceptualised and practised. The symposium will address the reasons for the book's reception and lasting significance, as well as its relevance for contemporary scholarship. The date of the symposium would have been Said's 73rd birthday.

We invite proposals addressing any aspect of Orientalism's legacy. Topics might include:

- Where and how do we situate Orientalism in the Said canon? (in relation to secular criticism, humanism, etc.)
- The intellectual genealogies of Orientalism : e.g., is the Foucault of Orientalism and Beginnings the same as the Foucault of *The History of Sexuality*? What is the place of Vico in Orientalism and *The World, the Text and the Critic*?
- What has the impact of Orientalism been on the Israel/Palestine conflict?
- The reception of Orientalism in the Orient and in Africa.
- How useful is Orientalism for the study of orientalism before 1800?
- Orientalism and Edward Said's returns to philology.
- Orientalism and other -isms (racism, feminism, Marxism, etc.)
- Orientalism and the Anglo-American academy: its influence on postcolonial studies, ideas of identity and otherness, etc.

Titles and abstracts of 250 words should be sent electronically, along with a 50-word biography, by 1 September 2008 to Anna Bernard (ab609@york.ac.uk) and Ziad Elmarsafy (ze500@york.ac.uk).

**Empire, Modernity, and the British Social Sciences: 1700-1950**, An interdisciplinary conference sponsored by the Nicholson Center for British Studies, The University of Chicago, April 24 – 25, 2008.

The study of the emergence of the social sciences in Britain has for the most part been insular, marginalizing comparative work on continental Europe as well as a serious consideration of the impact of the imperial periphery on metropolitan theory. This two-day conference at the University of Chicago aims to relocate the emergence of the British social sciences within a broader transnational context, by considering the circulation of key concepts and practice both between core and periphery and among the emergent disciplines themselves. In order to explore the diverse ways in which society came to be conceived as an object of study, we propose to focus on the development of methodological instruments such as fieldwork and surveys and on a few central topics, including poverty and the relation between caste and class. To what degree was the empire a subtext for metropolitan accounts of modernity? To what degree did the empire serve as a tool box from which concepts could be appropriated by the emerging disciplines? In such contexts, how was society increasingly conceptualized as having its own laws and rhythms, as distinct from economy, politics and culture? Henrika Kuklick (History and Sociology of Science, University of Pennsylvania) and Sudipta Sen (History, UC Davis) will deliver the two plenary lectures at the conference. We invite proposals for pre-circulated papers (20 – 25 pages in length) on these and related questions from both faculty and graduate students. Proposals should include both a 600-word prospectus of the paper and a curriculum vitae.

Submit proposals to Fredrik Albritton Jonsson at fljonss@uchicago.edu by Friday, November 21, 2008.

Questions about this or any other Nicholson Center event may be addressed to Eva Wilhelm at 773-834-3403 or ewilhelm@uchicago.edu.

The **Edward Said Symposium** will bring together Said readers and debaters from Literary Studies, Cultural Studies, Theatre Studies, Media and Visual Studies, History and the Social Sciences, so as to open a transdisciplinary dialogue on the legacies of his work. It will take place from 25 to 27 September 2008 in a conference hotel at Lake Griebnitzsee, near Berlin, well connected to the city centre by public transport.  
Email: saidsymposium@gmail.com  
Website: edwardsaid2008.de

**Mémoire (s) d'ici et d'ailleurs. Hommage à Ernest-Théodore Hamy (1842-1908)**  
This conference is sponsored by the Université du Littoral Côte d'Opale, and will meet 16-18 October 2008 at Boulogne-sur-Mer (France). See [http://www.univ-littoral.fr/rech/even\\_scie/appe\\_comm.htm](http://www.univ-littoral.fr/rech/even_scie/appe_comm.htm)  
For information, contact: [jose.contel@orange.fr](mailto:jose.contel@orange.fr)

**150 Years of Evolution – Darwin's Impact on the Humanities and Social Sciences**  
San Diego State University, November 20, 2009  
Researchers and scholars from all disciplines are invited to submit papers addressing the impact of Darwin's ideas in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Both disciplinary-specific and broadly interdisciplinary approaches are encouraged. Papers accepted for the symposium will be included in a volume to be published by San Diego State University Press. Please submit abstracts of no more than 500 words in length to Mark Wheeler, Symposium Chair, no later than 30 November 2008, [mark.wheeler@sdsu.edu](mailto:mark.wheeler@sdsu.edu). Accepted papers will be announced 1 February 2009.

#### ORAL HISTORY MEDIA

Silas Michalakas, from Goldsmith's in London, and I have finished producing the film of the 2007 personal-histories discussion with Meg Conkey, Henrietta Moore, Ruth Tringham and Alison Wylie and that DVD is now loaded on YouTube at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYQSanfIjPg>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yli3XBx9tz4>  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKZ108\\_1Ql4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKZ108_1Ql4)

David Redhouse and Alan Macfarlane, from Cambridge University, have another version on

<http://www.arch.cam.ac.uk/personal-histories/video.html>

The podcast is available at

<http://www.arch.cam.ac.uk/podcast/personal-histories-retrospect-2007.mp3>

Copies of the DVD are available by surface mail by contacting Dr Pamela Jane Smith, Cambridge Donald Institute for Archaeological Research, [pjs1011@cam.ac.uk](mailto:pjs1011@cam.ac.uk)

And, I am also very pleased to report that the personal-histories retrospective discussion for 2008 is now scheduled for Monday afternoon, 3 November 2008 in Cambridge, UK; this event will be fully advertised closer to that time but, as a brief preview, the speakers are Leslie Aiello, Rob Foley or Marta Mirazón Lahr, Meave Leakey, David Pilbream (hopefully) and Chris Stringer with Adam Kuper as Chair; the narrators will recall memories and recount experiences of their study of human evolution during the last 40 years.

**HAN**

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