

Institution: Royal Holloway, University of London

Unit of Assessment: 28 Modern Languages and Linguistics

a. Context

The School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures (SMLLC) supports research with international reach across a range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields. These include literary studies, film studies, the visual arts, modern European history, philosophy, and intellectual and cultural history. SMLLC research, by definition concerned with aspects of European and global culture beyond the British context, is published in multiple languages, in a number of different countries, and consequently registers an impact that can and should be measured internationally. The non-academic user groups and beneficiaries of SMLLC research can be divided into three types: Civil Society and Policy Making; Education; Cultural Life and Public Discourse.

1. **Civil Society and Policy Making** have been influenced by Longerich's chairmanship, since 2009, of the German government's Independent Expert Committee on Anti-Semitism. It is unusual for humanities research to make an impact on these areas, and this impact is explained in full in the relevant case study. The AHRC research project on the Italian Academies, under the directorship of Everson, has influenced the British Library's strategy on digitalisation and enhancing access to its special collections.

2. **Education** in the UK and beyond has been enhanced by public lectures aimed at school pupils in particular, co-operation in the production of educational material such as documentary films ('The Cult of the Duce', see case study) intended for educational purposes, collaboration in the planning of educational resource centres (Longerich, see case study), and co-operation with the British Library (Everson) to make special collections accessible to a wider audience. Williams was co-organiser of the event 'Mai '68: Forty Years On' in Paris in 2008. Drawing on his body of work on postwar French culture, this involved not only an academic conference but an extensive programme involving local adults and children from the Bobigny area, who participated in radio programmes, broadcast by France Culture, to encourage reflection on the changes in forms of protest and self-identification amongst young people in areas of social exclusion.

3. Impacts on **Cultural Life and Public Discourse** have been achieved by researchers in the SMLLC in several ways. By delivering new insights into subjects which generate interest beyond academia, such as the history of National Socialism, the life and work of Goethe, or the parallels between the historical Italian Academies (see case study) and modern social networks, we have directly engaged with a wider public. Major new works by Longerich and Wilson, for example, have attracted significant interest from a general readership, enhanced by the extensive media coverage of the publications. Wilson's monograph, *Goethe Männer Knaben* (2012), was reviewed positively in numerous high-profile media outlets including the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (summarised here: http://www.suhrkamp.de/buecher/goethe_maenner_knaben-w_daniel_wilson_17542.html)

The interdisciplinary research undertaken by our researchers on the relationship between art (including visual art), culture and society has enabled us to shape the public's appreciation and understanding of culture through contributions to museums, exhibitions and festivals. Pieri's research on visual art in Italy resulted in her co-curation of the exhibition *Against Mussolini* (Estorick Collection, London, 2010; see case study). Hemus's interdisciplinary scholarship, focused on the contribution of female artists to Dada, qualified her to contribute a substantial essay to the catalogue of the major exhibition 'The Other Side of the Moon: Women Artists of the Avant Garde', co-organised in 2011-12 by the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf, and the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen (print run of 40,000). Hemus also gave a public lecture at the Louisiana in March 2012, and was an invited speaker at the South Bank Centre's year-long festival of 20th-century culture, 'The Rest is Noise', delivering two public lectures on Dada on 3 March 2013.

Research conducted in the SMLLC has also led to the production of accessible work from which a general audience benefits. Bowie's expertise in the field saw him commissioned to write *German*

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Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction (Oxford: OUP, 2010). Hughes's research on the literature of the interwar period likewise allowed him to produce an extended, illustrated essay as introduction to a new edition of the English translation of Hermann Hesse's novel *Siddhartha* (London: Peter Owen 2012), published on the 50th anniversary of Hesse's death. Williams, the author of numerous internationally significant publications on the work of Jean Cocteau, produced a full audio commentary and liner notes for the re-release of *Orpheus* (directed by Cocteau, 1950; Criterion DVD Collection, 2011).

b. Approach to impact

The SMLLC has been sensitive to all actual and potential impacts emerging from research outputs. In some cases such impacts could not have been planned as a direct consequence of the research, and thus the SMLLC has been flexible in its approach. Many of the impacts featured in the case studies arose from individual research initiatives, reputation and esteem in specific areas, and the careful organisation and management of research projects. The School's research environment encourages collaborative and accessible research, often harnessing it to teaching activities. This particular ethos has made a contribution both to the conception and planning of research projects with impact and interaction with user groups in mind, and to the identification of impact as and when the potential for it has arisen.

In the case of research on visual arts themes and film and on the Holocaust, the potential relevance of the research to public exhibitions, DVD releases, and advisory and consultancy roles was clearly understood from the outset, and interaction with user groups, including professionals in museum curation and in library services, has been built into research plans and projects. Colleagues have also benefited from Faculty initiatives such as the University's 'On Track' researcher development programme, running since 2009, which included an impact tracking exercise in which both Longerich and Wilson participated. Initiatives such as this have helped to sensitise researchers in the SMLLC to the forms impact may take and the ways in which it can be maximised and recorded.

As opportunities have arisen the SMLLC has adopted a flexible attitude to teaching plans and administrative duties to realise the maximum benefit. A departmental Impact Officer helps to coordinate and document opportunities for impact as they emerge. Williams, one of the pre-eminent scholars of French cinema, regularly contributes to public cultural life through open events and engagements to which he is invited, including public lectures on French cinema at the Maison Française, Oxford (2009) and at the Birkbeck Institute of Gender and Sexuality, London (2010). In October 2010 he introduced two films by Marguerite Duras, chairing of a public discussion at Tate Modern, London. Hughes, responding to an invitation based on his research on Weimar Culture and sport, participated in a public panel discussion with the producer and director of a new production of Brecht's 'In the Jungle of Cities' at the Arcola Theatre, London, in September 2013.

The University's press office works effectively as a media liaison for departments to help them to achieve the maximum benefit from their research. Non-academic forums in the media are an effective means of directly communicating research findings to a mainstream audience. Longerich, for example, was interviewed for National Geographic's television series 'Nazi Secrets' (2012) and Pieri's research on Italian crime fiction resulted in an interview featured in the BBC4 television documentary 'Italian Noir: The Story of Italian Crime Fiction' (2010).

The planning of individual teaching timetables to allow, in most cases, two days without contact hours has facilitated a wide range of activities with the potential for impact, such as Longerich's high-profile activities in mainland Europe, Pieri's co-curation of an exhibition during a non-sabbatical term, and Robertson's current joint co-ordination of the planning for a major retrospective exhibition of the work of Hans Arp (the exhibition is to run at the Hepworth Gallery, Wakefield and the Tate, St. Ives in 2015).

Staff have also been given the opportunity to maximise their potential for interaction with users through a competitive internal funding scheme, and through a sabbatical leave rota allowing for

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one term (Trimester) of leave in seven. Beginning in 2010-11, the SMLLC has made available additional funding to support activities that have the potential to lead to interaction with non-academic users, or which will allow a better accounting for existing impacts.

The SMLLC supports and encourages outward-facing activities through the use of Royal Holloway's 'Pure' research profile interface, through liaison with the University's press office and the use of social media such as Twitter, and through specific initiatives aimed at a wider dissemination of research findings. Hughes and Cruickshank have both spoken about the relationship between research and teaching to audiences of school teachers at training events organised by the Prince's Teaching Institutes. Feedback from the event at which Hughes spoke (Jult 2013) was very positive: 'Practical tips offered were really useful'; 'The sessions were very interesting and informative, and will surely help to bring elements of "fun" into the classroom.'

c. Strategy and plans

The SMLLC recognizes the importance of making its research relevant, accessible and where possible influential in wider society. Its strategy for the future involves the following:

The School will maintain the flexible, responsive approach outlined in 'b' above. Funding for 'impact' activity will be maintained, to be co-ordinated by the School's Director of Research, and supported by a Faculty research framework that regularly makes available financial support for impact initiatives via its Strategy Fund. Where possible, local and regional connections and contexts will be identified and prioritised for the generation of impact. The School has identified its strength in 'Visual Cultures' as an area for growth and development with potential for impact.

Research activities will continue to be conducted in a supportive framework within the University, which hosts interdisciplinary and outward-facing research centres such as the Humanities and Arts Research Centre and the Holocaust Research Centre. The University's strategic research themes include 'Society, Representation and Cultural Memory', into which the SMLLC's seminar series, 'Trauma, Fiction, History' (<http://traumafictionhistory.org/>), is integrated. Our goals include a continued improvement in recognizing and exploiting opportunities for impact, and in our documentation of this impact.

d. Relationship to case studies

The Cult of the Duce: Mussolini and the Italians, 1918-2005. This AHRC-funded project originates in the collaboration between Pieri and Professor Stephen Gundle (Warwick, formerly of Royal Holloway). In identifying a subject of wide and continued political and social relevance (the relationship between political leadership and national culture), and by focusing on visual culture with its obvious accessibility to non-academic audiences, the project was designed to have the potential for impact. It emerges from the strong tradition within Italian in the SMLLC of interdisciplinary work exploring boundaries, and of communicating research findings in innovative ways. It is consistent with the School's strategic prioritisation of work in visual cultures.

The Italian Academies. The success of this project, twice funded by the AHRC, and its exploitation of the resources of the British Library, with which Royal Holloway has a long-standing and close co-operative relationship, has driven the School's strategic intention to prioritise regional contexts and resources wherever possible.

Research on the Holocaust and National Socialism – Professor Peter Longerich. Longerich's body of work, and his ability to exploit the impact opportunities it has produced, have been facilitated by strategic initiatives within the School, most notably in the flexible organisation of workload, teaching plans and sabbatical arrangements. The SMLLC and the Holocaust Research Centre provide a supportive research environment for this work.