

LIBERALISM AND MODERNISM IN THE EDWARDIAN ERA: NEW LIBERALS AT FORD'S *ENGLISH REVIEW*

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The *English Review* is well known for combining imaginative writing with political and social commentary, but discussions of its political content have tended to be summary, bundled up with an overview of the review as a whole or preoccupied with the politics of its editor.¹ This essay fills in some of the detail in our picture of the review's politics by identifying a previously unnoticed bloc within its list of contributors, several of whom were associated with a form of Liberal collectivism known to Edwardian observers as New Liberalism.² In what follows I will trace the presence of this group of writers in Ford's magazine, suggest how and why they may have ended up there, and finally propose an oblique and unexpected correlation between their political outlook and Ford's own.

The *English Review*'s political content, along with its social and cultural commentary, was corralled in a section called 'The Month', located at the back of each issue after the monthly dose of poetry, serial fiction, short stories and drama. Notwithstanding the credo of 'No party bias' (*ER* I [Dec. 1908] 159) proclaimed in Ford's first editorial, contributors to 'The Month' tended to come from the left of the political spectrum, whether Liberal or socialist, although Ford's own pseudonymous Tory 'Declaration of Faith' was a notable exception (*ER* IV [Feb. 1910] 543-51). Most critics agree that 'The Month' was Liberal in outlook: Ralph Hermann Ruedy notes that 'the *English Review* supported most of the standard Liberal causes of the day', including especially the defence of constitutional democracy overseas; Frank MacShane says that from mid-1909 it was no more than a vehicle of 'propaganda for the Liberal party'; and Ann Bar Snitow remarks that Ford's own editorials were imbued with the confidence of 'Gladstonian liberalism'.³ Eric Homberger dissents slightly from this consensus, placing the review's political tone

somewhere between William Morris's medievalism and the Fabianism of H. G. Wells.⁴

If the *English Review's* broadly Liberal sympathies are not in doubt, however, none of these commentators has pointed out the close affiliation of several of Ford's contributors with *New Liberalism*, a collectivist strain of Liberal thought that had its heyday in Britain around the turn of the twentieth century.⁵ This collectivist turn within Liberalism reflected a more pervasive trend in late-Victorian political discourse towards concern for the 'social question' and urgent reflection on the state's role in ameliorating social ills.⁶ The New Liberal response largely consisted in rethinking the relationship between the individual and society, departing from the ethos of unchecked individualism that had characterized Victorian Liberalism. New Liberal theorists like L. T. Hobhouse turned to an organic model of society to accomplish this rethinking. As Hobhouse wrote in 1911:

No one element of the social life stands separate from the rest, any more than any one element of the animal body stands separate from the rest. In this sense the life of society is rightly held to be organic, and all considered public policy must be conceived in its bearing on the life of society as a whole.⁷

The rights of the individual were no longer to be assessed in isolation from the social organism:

in the matter of rights and duties which is cardinal for Liberal theory, the relation of the individual to the community is everything [...] An individual right, then, cannot conflict with the common good, nor could any right exist apart from the common good.⁸

This notion of rights being contingent on the common good, coupled with the New Liberal principle of self-development or self-realisation, led logically to what J. A. Hobson described in the *English Review* as 'that saner, more positive and progressive conception of liberty which identifies that word not with absence of restraint but with presence of opportunity' (*ER* III [Nov. 1909] 686). From a practical perspective, this positive conception of liberty was a justification for activist government and the politics of social welfare. As the journalist and Liberal MP J. M. Robertson put it in 1912: "'Laissez-faire" [...] is not done with as a principle of rational limitation of State interference, but it is quite done with as a pretext for leaving uncured deadly social evils which admit of curative treatment by State action'.⁹ Needless to

say, critics of the new movement did not always bother to distinguish between New Liberalism and outright socialism.

To my knowledge, only Paul Peppis has discussed the *English Review* in the context of New Liberalism. For Peppis, however, this term reduces to the policies of the 1908 Asquith Liberal government, 'men who [...] favored a strong state and a strong empire'.¹⁰ 'The *English Review*'s politics', he says:

mirror the attitudes of the (New) Liberal government during this period of perceived internal unrest and external competition: domestically the *Review*'s policies are more progressive and socialistic; internationally its policies are closer to those of the Tories, more conservative, patriotic, and imperialist.¹¹

But the extent to which New Liberal ideology can be equated with the legislation of the Edwardian Liberal *Party* is not so easily ascertained: 'the gulf between the ideas and policies of official Liberalism and the new liberals was often immense', cautions Michael Freeden.¹² Hobhouse, for one, was profoundly sceptical of Liberal Imperialist politicians like H. H. Asquith and R. B. Haldane, whose rhetoric of state efficiency clashed with his own conception of Liberal principles.¹³ It is also surprising to see an attitude of patriotic imperialism ascribed to the New Liberal ethos. J. A. Hobson, another primary architect of New Liberal doctrine, vociferously deplored British imperialism: his *Imperialism: A Study* (1902) was a seminal and widely read critique. (Indeed, Hobson aired his views on inevitable decolonization in the *English Review* itself, in a September 1909 article entitled 'South Africa as an Imperial Asset'.) Moreover, Peppis infers the review's 'policies' largely from Ford's editorials, without discussing the several articles written by New Liberal contributors (although he does mention Hobson's contributions in passing).¹⁴ Whether or not the *English Review* can be shown to 'mirror the attitudes' of a putatively '(New) Liberal' government, the appearance in its pages of significant New Liberal theorists surely merits attention in this context.

The New Liberals were not a strictly defined club, but two New Liberal contributors to the *English Review* are easy to identify: Hobson and Hobhouse, the pair of journalists and maverick social scientists described by Freeden as 'the two most profound of the liberal thinkers of the period'.¹⁵ Hobhouse contributed only one article to Ford's review, in December 1909 on the constitutional crisis, but Hobson published six articles there between July 1909 and January

1910, making him the review's most prolific political writer behind Ford himself.

In addition to these two eminent theorists, three lesser known New Liberal associates also wrote for the *English Review*. There were, first, the foreign policy specialists H. W. Nevins and H. N. Brailsford. Nevins and Brailsford were prominent Liberal journalists who wrote regularly for the weekly *Speaker* and later the *Nation*, where Hobson and Hobhouse were also regular contributors. More importantly, however, all four men were also regular participants at H. W. Massingham's weekly *Nation* lunches, a gathering that provided, along with the Rainbow Circle discussion group and the South Place Ethical Society, 'the semi-institutionalized foci' of New Liberal activities.¹⁶ (Nevins later recalled of these lunches that Hobson rivaled G. K. Chesterton as resident wit, but this quality is not apparent in Hobson's *English Review* writings.¹⁷) Nevins contributed two articles to the *English Review*, on Balkan politics and women's suffrage, and Brailsford contributed three, on the Young Turks, European militarism, and the Foreign Office's lack of accountability.¹⁸ None of their contributions was directly concerned with the finer points of New Liberal theory, but Nevins's suffragist piece does demonstrate his familiarity with the New Liberal vocabulary. Extending the franchise to women, Nevins argued, was not only a question of justice, but also a recognition 'that their happiness, like our own, lies, if anywhere, in the realisation of self [...] The assertion of self, the fulfillment of function, is the final object of life' (*ER* III [Nov. 1909] 695). The idea that self-realisation occurs through participation in society, along with the principle of self-realisation itself, were commonplaces of New Liberal writing. Hobson, for example, in his *English Review* essay 'After the Destruction of the Veto', defined the state 'as an instrument [...] to secure full opportunities of self-development and social service for all citizens', a conception that was, he added, 'foreign to the Liberalism of the last generation' (*ER* IV [Dec. 1909] 111).

Another contributor, the Liberal MP G. P. Gooch, was also a participant in the Rainbow Circle group ('the ideological core of advanced social, and especially liberal social, thought'), bringing the total number of contributors to the *English Review* associated with the New Liberal movement to five.¹⁹ Even without this supporting cast, moreover, the series of six essays by Hobson, the least topical of which were collected in his book *The Crisis of Liberalism* (1909),

constitutes a significant presence at the review.²⁰

However, we cannot conclude from Hobson's frequent appearances and the contributions of his New Liberal comrades that Ford was sympathetic to the New Liberal ethos, because Hobson began writing for the review *after* Ford's brother-in-law David Soskice had assumed partial responsibility for its political content. The financial history of the *English Review* is notoriously snarled, but it is sufficient to note here that when Ford's capital ran out in April 1909, the Russian émigré Soskice formed a committee to manage the review's finances pending its sale to a suitable buyer, in return for partial control over the political section.²¹ Arthur Mizener states that the agreement was formalized on 16 May, and Nora Tomlinson has recently discovered from Soskice's bank pass book that his loans to Ford commenced in that month, although it took until August for Soskice to form The English Review Company, with himself and William Goode as directors (Mizener 188). According to Tomlinson, the cashbooks of the review indicate that Soskice was acting as business manager from July 1909.²² Ruedy observes that 'The Month' did increase in size around this time, doubtless reflecting Soskice's influence, although he also finds that 'the general nature of the views expressed was consistent throughout Ford's editorship'.²³

Ford did not relish the prospect of Soskice and his committee harnessing 'The Month' to their own agenda. In 1909 he wrote to his wife Elsie of 'struggling to keep Soskice from turning the Review into a Whig. Socialist organ', and in June that year he predicted grimly that 'If S. wins the R. will become a Socialist organ pure & simple'.²⁴ As late as 8 June Ford continued to resist Soskice's control of 'The Month', telling him that he had agreed to 'commission a number of friends of your own of a purely partisan nature' only as a gesture of 'friendship and affection'.²⁵ The only contributors answering to this description around June are Brailsford, a colleague of Soskice's at the short-lived Liberal daily *Tribune*, whose first articles appeared in the May and July issues, and Hobson, whose first essay appeared in July.²⁶ In this 8 June letter to Soskice Ford also again voices his objection to 'turning the review into a purely Socialist organ', which he claims would lose the review both readers and advertising. A letter from Soskice to Ford dated 13 August, moreover, states that he does indeed have an essay from Hobson in hand, presumably 'South Africa as an Imperial Asset', which appeared in September.²⁷

To Soskice's involvement, then, can be attributed Brailsford and Hobson's appearances in 'The Month', as well as, presumably, that of Hobhouse, who also wrote for the *Tribune*. To some extent, that is, Soskice did change the political composition of the review, Brailsford, Hobson and Hobhouse contributing ten essays between them from May 1909 to January 1910. At the same time, however, Nevinson had written on the Balkans in the first number of the review, at a time when Ford still had complete editorial control over 'The Month'. It does seem likely that Nevinson came to the *English Review* through Soskice, with whom he was connected through Brailsford and his circle. However, the fact that Ford published Nevinson's foreign affairs commentary while still in full command of the review suggests that he did not recognize Nevinson as one of Soskice's 'friends of a purely partisan nature', even though Nevinson's ideological commitments were very similar to those of Brailsford and Hobson. This is confirmed by Ford's January 1910 editorial, in which he alludes to both Nevinson and Brailsford as two of the *Daily News*'s 'most attractive writers'.²⁸ But however Ford may have felt about these two foreign affairs writers, Hobson's articles must on the whole have struck him as partisan hectoring.

If any writer commissioned by Soskice was going to turn the review into a 'purely socialist organ', as Ford put it, it was surely the rogue economist and anti-imperialist J. A. Hobson. More than Brailsford and Nevinson, Hobson used his *English Review* articles to formulate explicitly New Liberal principles. His essay in July 1909 on 'The Significance of the Budget', for example, voiced a central New Liberal belief about the social generation of wealth, construing the Chancellor of the Exchequer David Lloyd George's taxes on land and industry as 'the first half-conscious recognition that taxation rightly means the assumption by the State of a socially earned income' (*ER* II [July 1909] 800). His article on 'The Extension of Liberalism', moreover, clearly defined the break between liberalisms old and new, arguing that true 'equality of opportunity' required the redistribution of land ownership and the nationalisation of electricity, education, transport, and the legal profession (*ER* III [Nov. 1909] 673). As I have already noted, Hobson called in this essay for a 'more positive and progressive conception of liberty which identifies that word not with absence of restraint but with presence of opportunity'. Hobson's highly literal, rather lurid January 1910 article on 'Social Parasitism', meanwhile, vilified capitalists and land-owners, the illicit appropriators of socially

earned income: 'The persons who live upon "economic rent" or upon the interest of property obtained otherwise than by their personal exertions belong to this parasitic species' (*ER* IV [Jan. 1910] 349).

Hobson's October 1909 article, 'The Task of Realism', is particularly interesting because it directly refers to the journal in which it appears, giving us some idea of how Hobson saw the *English Review* and its aims. What Hobson calls 'realism' is a contemporary descendent of Enlightenment Reason, defined as 'the persistent strenuous desire to reach, present and represent facts, not excluding fictions, illusions, superstitions, but disentangling this sort of facts from the others' (*ER* III [Oct. 1909] 552). The spirit of 'realism' is also distinguished by its tendency towards synthesis rather than fragmentation: it occurs simultaneously in 'religion, politics, art, science, literature', and tends 'to reverse the dissociative current, which everywhere made for separation, and to lay the main intellectual and spiritual stress on harmony and unity' (551). It is this quality of holism, achieved by spanning a variety of fields, that makes the *English Review* an appropriate platform for realist views. Hobson concludes that:

those who accept the view that experiments in collective self-consciousness, as a means of accelerating and directing the 'urge of the world' towards human enlightenment and well-being, are likely to yield great results, will recognise that a rendering of realism in many fields of thought and art is the most profitable use for such a Review. (554)

What seems particularly to have attracted Hobson to the *English Review*, then, was its combination of imaginative writing with social and political commentary, which represented an effort to tie together the many manifestations of 'realism' into a single *Zeitgeist*. In this way, Hobson's perception of the review confirms Mark Morrisson's reading of its will to integration: its 'attempt to shore up what Ford saw as the fragmentation of a culture by turning to a semimythologized vision of cultural cohesion'.²⁹

Ford, whose pseudonymous 'Declaration of Faith' in February included the avowal that he was a 'sentimental old-fashioned Tory' entirely satisfied with the existing House of Lords, would not have endorsed Hobson's radical reform agenda (*ER* IV [Feb. 1910] 544). Even so, his 'Declaration of Faith' does seem to refer obliquely to Hobson's essay on 'Social Parasitism', which had appeared the previous month. Ford claims that 'I should like to see legislation

introduced which would press hard upon, which would exterminate, all the purely parasitic classes' and that 'I think I should even be inclined to confiscate all profits made by investments after a reasonable interest had been paid' (545-6). This echoes the language and thinking of Hobson's essay, which had seconded Lloyd George in arguing that unearned increment should be disposed of by the state. Like Tietjens in *Some Do Not . . .*, whose 'High Toryism' is practically equivalent to 'the extreme Radicalism of the extreme Left of the Left', Ford's 'Declaration of Faith' cuts across traditional political boundaries, seeming to adopt part of Hobson's position while rejecting his program as a whole.³⁰ The wording of the article suggests that, at the very least, Ford had unconsciously absorbed the terms of Hobson's polemic, framing Ford and Hobson fleetingly as improbable ideological bedfellows.

In spite of this incidental correspondence, it seems clear that Ford published Hobson's collectivist theses only under protest. Nonetheless, I want to close by suggesting a point of intersection between the ideology of New Liberalism and Ford's own political sensibility. In his editorial for December 1909, 'The Passing of the Great Figure', Ford reflected on the gap separating the Victorians from the moderns. 'In the Victorian Era', he writes, 'an official altruism reigned as the unquestioned standard whether of the religious or of the agnostic – a sentimental altruism embracing all humanity, all races, all types' (*ER* IV [Dec. 1909] 104). Ford evoked a similar theme in his April 1909 editorial, 'Blue Water and the Thin Red Line', which criticized the pro-Empire demagoguery of Joseph Chamberlain. Chamberlain, Ford says, 'gave us the Boer War which swept away, as if with one breath, nearly all traces of Victorian culture', deposing 'the Great Figure, and the Great Figure's hold upon popular imagination', and replacing them with xenophobic populism: 'Damn the foreigner!' is Chamberlain's alleged catchcry (*ER* II [Apr. 1909] 141). Two years later, in his memoir *Ancient Lights*, Ford stated that as a result of the Boer War 'principles had died out of politics', and this remark may be taken as a gloss on his criticism of Chamberlain as a demagogue.³¹ In each of these statements, the Victorian era – and particularly the Victorian public sphere – is characterized by a certain quality of idealism, the consensus of 'sentimental altruism', the agency of 'principles' in politics, the absence of vulgar demagoguery.

The public idealism that Ford misses from post-Victorian England was especially associated with the Liberal tradition. Ford

says as much in his May 1909 editorial, 'Little States and Great Nations', which links the shift marked by the Boer War to the Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, formalised in April 1909. 'What the Boer War so efficiently began', he writes, 'the Balkan settlement has consummately ended' (*ER* II [May 1909] 358). Ford's point is that the failure of the Great Powers to uphold the Treaty of Berlin against Austria-Hungary's expansion, allowing smaller nations to be bartered as geopolitical pawns, was a betrayal of England's nineteenth-century role as beacon of liberty:

For, from the time of Napoleon until, let us say, 1870, England was *la grande nation*. It was the nation of Reform Bills, of Constitutional freedom, of Humanitarian ideals; it was the land that sent Byron to Greece, it was the land that gave hospitality to Mazzini, to Cavour, to Garibaldi – and even to Louis Napoleon; it was the champion of oppressed nationalities. (358)

Ford's references to Reform Bills, and to Mazzini, Cavour and Garibaldi, the heroes of Italian unification, suggest that what he has in mind is the Gladstonian Liberal tradition, which was associated with the righteous fostering of democracy at home and abroad. He may have been thinking of such high watermarks of Liberal sentiment as Gladstone's 1862 speech on Italian affairs, in which he deplored Austria's imperial presence in Italy, and Garibaldi's triumphant reception in London two years later. This link to the tradition of Liberal idealism is made still more explicit in his editorial for July 1909, 'Splendid Isolations', in which Ford wrote:

For Liberalism to be effective there must be behind it a certain glow of humanitarian faith, a certain visionary quality, an absolute incapacity to temporise. So that when we remember the late Mr. Gladstone's splendid and rhetorical handling of the Balkan question we feel bitterly ashamed of Sir Edward Grey's. (*ER* II [July 1909] 763)

By failing to defend the cause of constitutional democracy in Persia and Turkey, and of national sovereignty in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the foreign secretary Edward Grey had departed from what Ford called the 'blind, but fine, following of a sentimental tradition' (764). These expressions of nostalgia for sentimentalism, idealism and altruism in political discourse seem to link the Victorian atmosphere of great figures specifically to a Liberal tradition, one characterized by the *agency* of ideals in a mass democracy and personified, as Ford suggests, by the great Liberal premier William Gladstone. Gladstone's

passionate rhetorical defence of clearly defined ideals, such as Reform at home and national sovereignty in Italy and Bulgaria, had confirmed idealistic oratory – what Ford calls ‘splendid rhetoric’ – as a core component of Liberalism, whereas contemporary politics was conducted in a comparatively prosaic and uninspiring idiom (or so Ford thought).³²

Ford was likewise disappointed by the tone of the debate over Lloyd George’s redistributive ‘People’s Budget’, which was blocked in the House of Lords in 1909. In his editorial for January 1910, the month of the ensuing general election, he described this conflict as ‘a class war simply and solely for money’, in which each party had betrayed its traditional ideals. ‘On the [Liberal] side’, Ford complained:

there is little or no talk of liberty or of any of the higher things, on the other side there is no talk at all of the old traditions or of the finer things. [...] About neither party is there a breath of principle or a sign that either has any real comprehension of its traditional significance. (*ER* IV [Jan. 1910] 329-30)

In short, Ford concludes gloomily, ‘With a Press sinking daily to an even lower level, with two dominant parties sinking always to lower levels of appeal, there seems to remain no scintilla of hope for anything not purely materialistic in the concerns of the State’ (338-9). As in his other laments for the sentimentalism and principle of the Victorian public sphere, Ford sees contemporary politics as suffering from a dearth of ideals, an expulsion of the ‘higher things’ from political discourse.

Robert Green has suggested that ‘the prevailing direction of Ford’s work of this period was towards the past, towards an aristocratic but doomed conservatism’, and Andrzej Gasiorek argues cogently that the *Parade’s End* tetralogy examines and ultimately rejects the possibility of a Tory Radicalism with its roots in the eighteenth century.³³ However, in 1909 Ford’s nostalgia also seems to have had a more immediate object in the Victorian era, the age of altruism and sentiment, and the prime political manifestation of this age seems to have been not conservatism but the Gladstonian Liberal tradition. It was the Gladstonian vocabulary of high political idealism, which Gladstone had deployed against the Ottoman oppression of Bulgaria in the 1870s, that Ford found lacking in Sir Edward Grey’s more reserved handling of the Balkan question.

Interestingly, this same January 1910 editorial also contains an appreciative allusion to Brailsford and Nevinson. Having opened the piece by asking 'Could anything be more depressing than the present state of public affairs?', Ford goes on to deplore the government policy of force-feeding suffragette hunger strikers, and notes that one of London's Liberal daily newspapers 'has recently lost its three most attractive writers, disgusted by its policy with regard to the actions and aspirations of women who desire the Suffrage' (333). I don't know who the third journalist was, but two of these attractive writers were almost certainly Brailsford and Nevinson, both of whom resigned from the *Daily News* in October 1909 over its failure to condemn the force-feeding of prisoners.³⁴ Nevinson was once described by St. Loe Strachey as a modern day knight errant, and Ford doubtless appreciated this principled act of resigning in protest as an example of political idealism, in the grand Liberal tradition.³⁵

What I want finally to suggest is that Ford's overt concern with the agency of ideals and sentiment in politics does align him, in an unexpected way, with New Liberalism. In spite of their penchant for abstruse theorizing, Hobson, Hobhouse and their comrades did not abandon the idealism and humanism of the Liberal tradition; these were, rather, explicit elements in their ideology. Brailsford, in a 1947 memoir of Hobson, put it succinctly: 'the ideals that move us are also facts among the visible and measurable realities'.³⁶ Hobhouse, similarly, wrote in 1907 that 'the people are prepared to move if intelligible and inspiring ideals are set before them'.³⁷ Or, as he put it in his 1911 manifesto *Liberalism*, 'Great changes are not caused by ideas alone; but they are not effected without ideas. The passions of men must be aroused if the frost of custom is to be broken or the chains of authority burst'.³⁸ *Liberalism* also acknowledged the importance of Gladstone's rhetorical legacy:

Gladstone was a moral rather than an intellectual force. He raised the whole level of public life. By habitually calling upon what was best in men, he deepened the sense of public responsibility and paved the way, half unconsciously, for the fuller exercise of the social conscience.³⁹

For New Liberalism, moral forces were necessary in politics because a healthy state requires the participation of its constituent members. Unlike, say, Fabian socialism, New Liberalism insisted on the conscious participation of each individual in the pursuit of the common good, and the idealism of a Gladstone was salutary as a

means of raising the tone of public life and awakening the social conscience of the people. (The degree to which the state might act coercively where such awakening did not occur is one of the more troubling aspects of New Liberal ideology.⁴⁰) Quite apart from its high-minded concern with justice, New Liberalism also advanced a pragmatic argument for idealism in politics, maintaining that without ideals the *polis* is inert. This is not far from Ford's lament for the 'higher things', and the 'certain glow of humanitarian faith' without which Liberalism is ineffective. Although Ford might have been sceptical of the jargon of New Liberalism and its militant collectivism, this new incarnation of Liberalism nonetheless echoed his own concern about the decline of ideals in the public sphere.

We still read the *English Review* – and rightly so – because of the astonishing calibre of its literary roster, and especially for the future titans of an embryonic modernism who wrote there. If Ford had not been able to attract and select contributions from the rising generation of Pound, Lawrence, Lewis and Forster; if he had not been in a position to combine their names with those of late-Victorian luminaries like Hardy and James, protomodernist craftsmen like Conrad and, of course, himself, Edwardian doyens like Bennett, Galsworthy, Hudson and Wells, notable up-and-comers like Walter de la Mare and Edward Thomas, and the Russian trinity of Chekhov, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy in original translations; if he had not amassed this crop of literary talent, the *English Review* would not be the rich and fascinating source that it is. Recent scholarship, however, has reminded us of the social and political context in which this aesthetic achievement was embedded, and with which it was literally bound together in the fifteen numbers of Ford's *English Review*. While the review's political content – sometimes musty, sometimes topical – may not in itself command an enduring interest, close attention to the tropes and currents that traverse this content can help to situate the review more concretely in the complex public culture of its day, as well as yielding new perspectives on Ford's own political outlook. J. A. Hobson's essay on 'The Task of Realism' suggests that the *English Review* appealed to the period's nostalgic longing for holism, as opposed to the modern phenomena of specialization and the fragmentation of the public sphere. This may be why Hobson was attracted to periodicals like the *New Age* and the *English Review* which combined social commentary with aesthetic concerns. The New Liberal connection, moreover, suggests an interesting perspective on

Ford's own political writings. Ford's nostalgia for the politics of sentiment and ideals can easily be written off as whimsical or amateurish, but the corresponding New Liberal doctrine of ideals in public culture precludes such a dismissive attitude, qualifying the apparent eccentricity of Ford's beliefs by situating them in a context of comparable views. Perhaps the most urgent observation that can be gleaned from a close reading of the review's political content, however, is the extent to which a periodical is a polyphonic, if not a cacophonous artifact. The best approach to such a farrago is perhaps not as a coherent political intervention susceptible of classification, but rather as an archeological record of interrelated tropes and discourses, a microcosm of the complex public culture in which it takes part.

NOTES

- 1 Ralph Hermann Ruedy, for example, gives an excellent but necessarily synoptic overview of the review's political and social commentary. Ruedy, 'Ford Madox Ford and the *English Review*', PhD thesis, Duke University, 1976. Paul Peppis's interesting discussion is an example of a political reading of the review that focuses on Ford's editorials and the review's literary content rather than analysing its political essays. Peppis, *Literature, Politics, and the English Avant-Garde: Nation and Empire, 1901-1918*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- 2 An important figure in the movement, J. A. Hobson, later offered this reflection on the origin of its name: 'The term "New Liberalism" was adopted by [Herbert] Samuel and others as rightly descriptive of its aims. That "New" Liberalism differed from the old in that it envisaged more clearly the need for important economic reforms, aiming to give a positive significance to the "equality" which figured in the democratic triad of liberty, equality, fraternity.' *Confessions of an Economic Heretic*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1938, p. 51.
- 3 Ann Barr Snitow, *Ford Madox Ford and the Voice of Uncertainty*, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984, p. 236.
- 4 Ruedy, 'Ford Madox Ford and the *English Review*', p. 104; Frank MacShane, 'The *English Review*', *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 60 (1961), 317. Eric Homberger, 'Ford's *English Review*: Englishness and Its Discontents', *Agenda* 27:4-28:1 (1989-1990), 61-6 (p. 64).
- 5 Michael Freeden offers 1886 as a tentative start date. *The New Liberalism: An Ideology of Social Reform*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1978, p. 2.
- 6 Freeden writes that 'The concern of liberals with problems of social reform was of course part of a general movement of progressive thought that had existed as an undercurrent in the first half of the nineteenth century and gradually swelled to become a dominant factor in social thought towards the end of the Victorian era'. *The New Liberalism*, p. 5.

- 7 L. T. Hobhouse, *Liberalism and Other Writings*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 35. As Hobhouse acknowledges elsewhere in this monograph, his organicism closely resembles that of the Idealist philosopher T. H. Green, although Freeden questions the extent to which Green was a direct influence on New Liberal ideology (*The New Liberalism*, pp. 16-17).
- 8 Hobhouse, *Liberalism*, p. 61.
- 9 Quoted in Freeden, *The New Liberalism*, p. 34.
- 10 Peppis, *Literature, Politics, and the English Avant-Garde*, p. 26.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 29.
- 12 Freeden, *The New Liberalism*, p. 195.
- 13 On Hobhouse's antipathy for the Liberal Imperialists, see Stefan Collini, *Liberalism and Sociology: L. T. Hobhouse and Political Argument in England 1880-1914*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979, pp. 83-4.
- 14 Peppis, *Literature, Politics, and the English Avant-Garde*, p. 26.
- 15 Freeden, *The New Liberalism*, p. 9.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 4. Hobson recalls the attendance of Nevinson and Brailsford in Hobson, *Confessions*, p. 82.
- 17 H. W. Nevinson, *Fire of Life*, London: James Nisbet, 1935, p. 214.
- 18 Nevinson published 'Notes on the Balkans, with a Table' in December 1908 and 'Women's Vote and Men' in November 1909; Brailsford published 'The Counter-Revolution in Turkey' in May 1909, "The Hush in Europe" in July 1909 and 'The Control of Foreign Affairs: A Proposal' in December 1909.
- 19 Freeden, *The New Liberalism*, p. 257. Hobson recalls Gooch's presence at the meetings in Hobson, *Confessions*, p. 95.
- 20 'The Task of Realism' (Oct. 1909) became 'The Task of Reconstruction' and 'The Extension of Liberalism' (Nov. 1909) became 'The Equality of Opportunity' in the book.
- 21 On the Soskice arrangement and the various other projects to finance the review see Arthur Mizener, *The Saddest Story: A Biography of Ford Madox Ford*, London: The Bodley Head, 1972 – henceforth 'Mizener'; pp. 186-8; and Max Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, 2 vols, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, vol. I, pp. 252, 293-4.
- 22 See Nora Tomlinson's chapter, "An Old Man Mad About Writing" but Hopeless with Money: Ford Madox Ford and the Finances of the *English Review* in this volume.
- 23 Ruedy, 'Ford Madox Ford and the *English Review*', p. 95.
- 24 Ford to Elsie Hueffer, no date [1909]; and Ford to Elsie Hueffer, June 1909: Ford Madox Ford Collection, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Carl A. Kroch Library, Cornell University Library. Quoted with the kind permission of Cornell University, and Michael Schmidt. The undated letter was written while Ford was harassed with 'finding capital' for the review, which suggests a time-frame after or shortly before the money ran out in April 1909.
- 25 Ford to David Soskice, 8 June 1909, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Carl A. Kroch Library. Quoted with the kind permission of Cornell University, and Michael Schmidt.
- 26 On *The Tribune*, where Hobhouse and Brailsford were among the chief writers, see Barry Hollingsworth, 'Benckendorff's 'Bête Noire': *The Tribune* and Russian Internal Affairs 1906-1908', in *Poetry, Prose and Public Opinion: Essays*

- Presented in Memory of Dr. N. E. Andreyev*, ed. William Harrison and Avril Pyman, Avebury: Aldershot, 1987.
- 27 David Soskice to Ford, 13 August 1909, Ford Archive, Cornell University Library.
 - 28 Ford, 'The Critical Attitude: Women's Suffrage – the Circulating Libraries – the Drama – Fine Arts, Etc.', *ER* IV (Jan. 1910), 333. This allusion is discussed below.
 - 29 Mark S. Morrisson, *The Public Face of Modernism: Little Magazines, Audiences, and Reception, 1905-1920*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001, p. 48.
 - 30 Ford, *Parade's End*, New York: Penguin Books, 2001, p. 79.
 - 31 *Ancient Lights*, London: Chapman & Hall, 1911.
 - 32 Patrick Joyce argues that the tone of nineteenth-century Liberalism was an essential element of its political identity. Gladstone's oratory, he writes, 'involved feeling the faith, but also feeling reason as itself a form of faith: [...] the tenets of Gladstonian Liberalism involved the rationality of free and informed public discussion, and this was expressed in the serious and didactic nature of Liberal rhetoric'. Patrick Joyce, *Democratic Subjects: The Self and the Social in Nineteenth-Century England*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 100.
 - 33 Robert Green, *Ford Madox Ford: Prose and Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 27; Andrzej Gasiorek, 'The Politics of Cultural Nostalgia: History and Tradition in Ford's *Parade's End*', *Literature and History*, 11: 2 (2002).
 - 34 H. N. Brailsford, 'Nevinson, Henry Woodd (1856-1941)', rev. Sinéad Agnew, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Oct 2009 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35206, accessed 2 Dec 2009]. Nevinson and Brailsford were well-known supporters of women's suffrage, and were also both married to suffragists. Jane Brailsford contributed a story to the *English Review* in September 1909 under her maiden name of Malloch.
 - 35 Nevinson, *Fire of Life*, p. 241.
 - 36 H. N. Brailsford, 'The Life-Work of J. A. Hobson', in *L. T. Hobhouse Memorial Trust Lectures*, London: 1947, p. 11.
 - 37 L. T. Hobhouse, 'The Career of Fabianism' (1907), quoted in Collini, *Liberalism and Sociology*, p. 93.
 - 38 Hobhouse, *Liberalism*, p. 24.
 - 39 *Ibid.*, p. 51.
 - 40 For a discussion of some potentially illiberal implications of L. T. Hobhouse's social vision, see Collini, *Liberalism and Sociology*, pp. 124-6, 139.