

I have published in the field of early modern European intellectual history, including but not limited to: the history of philosophy; the history of science; the history of medicine; the history of scholarship; the political thought of church-state relations; the impact of post-Reformation confessionalisation on intellectual culture; and the history of universities. My first monograph, *Ancient Wisdom in the Age of the New Science* (c. 700pp, Cambridge, 2015), offers an exhaustive, revisionist account of the role played by historicisations of ancient philosophy, theology and religion in seventeenth-century intellectual change. As well as offering extensive new readings of the reception of a large range of both Greek and oriental texts, I use my findings to make interventions in wider historiographical debates about the development of the self-consciously ‘new’ natural philosophy, and to those concerning the emergence of a so-called ‘early enlightenment’. My upcoming research plans continue and broaden my focus on early modern European intellectual history. They consist of two monographs (items [i] and [ii] below), an edited collection (item [iii]), and a series of articles in the history of philosophy (item [iv]).

[i] A large-scale monograph provisionally entitled *An Age of Erudition: a New Model of English Intellectual Change, c. 1580–1750*. Since the nineteenth century, accounts of English intellectual and religious change in this period have fixated on the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and have foregrounded the role of outsiders: political liberals (putative ‘Erasmians’ or ‘latitudinarians’) and philosophical rationalists, the two forces supposedly coming together as part of a ‘crise de la conscience européenne’. My monograph will argue that both this chronology and the concomitant reduction of intellectual activity to (mostly domestic) politics and philosophy should be replaced by a focus on institutions and long-term international changes. Specifically, I will argue that the key change, which occurred gradually from the late sixteenth century, was the replacement of a theological method that favoured philosophical reasoning with one that favoured philological and historical-contextual scholarship. Crucially, this was effected not by ‘radicals’ or ‘outsiders’, but within the institutional mainstream: from the early seventeenth century, English universities invested in pioneering forms of late humanism, transforming theological method by incorporating the historicist attitude to early Christianity, to its Judaic background, and to the text of the Bible that had been developed in continental philology.

Recent scholarship has taught us much about how the leading lights of late humanist scholarship – scholars like Joseph Scaliger, Isaac Casaubon, and John Selden – transformed the historical understanding of Judaism and Christianity. But we know virtually nothing about the dissemination of their ideas at an institutional level. This is despite the fact that huge amounts of relevant evidence survive, much of it in manuscript: student notebooks, lecture notes, annotated textbooks, etc. Studying the institutional dissemination of such ideas also permits a novel integration of the history of scholarship with the history of philosophy: it is a key part of my thesis that far from witnessing the rise of an ‘age of reason’, the central component of intellectual change in the long-seventeenth century was an almost anti-rationalist turn away from philosophy as a propaedeutic to theology, towards philological erudition. Among many examples, we might cite the theological tuition offered in Restoration Cambridge by Joseph Beaumont, preserved in ninety volumes of almost entirely unexplored

manuscripts. The uniqueness of the English case can only be examined by cross-European comparison with similar institutional shifts towards a more historical theological method: e.g. the anti-scholastic 'positive theology' developed in the Spanish Netherlands and France, the oriental scholarship promoted in Rome under Urban VIII, and the flourishing of philological biblical criticism in Leiden and then in Utrecht in the Dutch Republic. I have already begun to examine the relevant archival collections across Britain and the USA: in the next year, I will also travel to Europe to consult the largely unexplored correspondence of English scholars and divines with those on the continent (e.g. in the correspondence of Sibrandus Lubbertus in Leeuwarden).