

In memory of Agnès ALEXANDRE-COLLIER



THE BRITISH CONSERVATIVE PARTY AT A CROSSROADS

An international, interdisciplinary and inter-university conference

6–7 November 2025
University of Tours, France

Amphitheatre C – 1st floor - 3 rue des Tanneurs

PROGRAMME

Thursday 6 November 2025

08:30: Welcome and registration

09:00: Words of welcome – Erick FALC'HER-POYROUX, Co-director of ICD (UR 6297)



Erick FALC'HER-POYROUX
Co-director of ICD
(UR 6297)



The interdisciplinary research unit **ICD**
EA 6297 was born in 2012 with the merger of
four groups belonging to the Letters, Languages,
Human Sciences sector and grouping colleagues
from two faculties (Letters and Languages, and

Arts and Human Sciences), and the new entity
allows the collaboration of academics working in
the following departments: English, German,
Spanish and Portuguese, Italian, Latin, French
and comparative literature, performing arts,
musicology and philosophy. Chronologically, its
field of research starts with the ancient world and
extends all the way to the 21st century.
Geographically, it includes Europe, the
Mediterranean, Africa and the Americas.

Skills and know-how

- cultural history of the ancient (Greek and Roman), modern and contemporary worlds (in a French-, English-, German-, Spanish- and Italian-speaking context)
- literature and the analysis of discourse (press, politics, philosophy)
- analysis of musical, iconographic and filmic discourses
- Gender studies and studies pertaining to identity

The 2024-2028 program: "Individual and Collective" structured around three axes:

- Axis 1: "Inclusion of the Individual and/or the Collective in the Political and Social Space"
- Axis 2: "Circulation of Literary, Cultural, and Artistic Knowledge and Practices"
- Axis 3: "Gender, Minorities, and Collectives; Environmental Humanities"

Without renouncing specialized research relevant to a particular university discipline (Languages, Literature, Arts, Philosophy...), the team encourages cross-disciplinary studies. Each of the axis demonstrates convergences in their issues and their implementation, while also presenting opportunities for collaboration. Team members can thus freely participate in several axis.

ICD organizes between 4 and 8 international conferences and 10 to 12 study days each year in Tours, and participates in the organization of other scientific events at French and foreign universities.

We are delighted to welcome today our four partners for the research project "Liberalism and Conservatism at a Crossroads" launched in 2022 by AGORA (Cergy Paris Université) and ICD (Université de Tours)

<https://icd.univ-tours.fr/>



On 24 August 2025, Agnès Alexandre-Collier passed away, leaving behind a deeply grieving academic community. Professor of British Studies at the University of Burgundy, she was a scholar of rare intellectual rigour, but also a kind and generous colleague, an inspiring teacher, and faithful friend.

After all the tributes already paid to Agnès since the end of August, each testifying to her importance, it is difficult today to find new words. Every one of us could recall a memory, a conversation, or a shared moment with her. Agnès had that unique gift of making everyone feel that they mattered, of bringing out the best in others simply through her presence. All the adjectives and superlatives have already been used to describe her, but perhaps the truest are also the simplest: Agnès was a precious person, a beautiful soul.

A graduate of the Institut d'Études Politiques in Grenoble, holder of the French national teaching qualification ('agrégation') in English, and holder of a doctorate in political science from Sciences Po Paris and St Antony's College, Oxford, Agnès very early found her calling: to understand, analyse, and transmit the complexities of British political life. Her doctoral thesis on Euroscepticism within the British Conservative Party (1992–1997) prefigured the major themes of her prolific work: conservatism, Europe, party transformations, and the rise of populism.

Her publications are far too numerous to list here. It is enough to say that Agnès made a profound and lasting impact on the field of English studies. Her many contributions to international journals and collective volumes bear witness to her sharp intelligence, her commitment to collaboration, and her constant desire to build bridges between scholars, institutions, and disciplines. Tireless in her work, she managed multiple projects and responsibilities at once (within the French National University Council, as head of the doctoral school, and many others) without ever neglecting her friendships or professional relationships. Through this dedication, she built a remarkable career, recognised and respected by her peers in France and abroad. She sometimes said, with conviction, that she had "nothing left to prove," yet she continued to work with the same intensity – no doubt because research, for her, was a passion and a vital driving force.

Between 2018 and 2020, she returned to the England she loved so dearly, during a CNRS research secondment at the Maison Française d'Oxford. That period was, for her, one of fulfilment and harmony, when the scholar and the woman came fully together. She led a seminar there on Brexit, populism, and the traditional parties, while sharing with her family the quiet charm of Oxford life.

Despite her distinguished career, Agnès remained deeply humble. This genuine modesty, combined with her humanity, made every encounter with her both stimulating and soothing. For us, she was by turns a mentor, a friend, a loyal and attentive collaborator – often all three at once.

Agnès was loved and admired by her students, who remember her as a teacher both demanding and kind, clear, and wonderfully engaging. She knew how to give each student the confidence to think, to write, to debate, and to take part in intellectual life.

Agnès should have been with us today. She was an active member of our team working on the seminar "Liberalism and Conservatism at a Crossroads", and she contributed greatly to the preparation of this conference. This project, devoted to the British Conservative Party – a subject for which she was a renowned and passionate specialist – was particularly close to her heart. This is why we wish to dedicate this conference to our dear Agnès, as a token of our affection and gratitude.

Agnès Alexandre-Collier will remain in our hearts as a scholar of international standing, a bridge-builder between cultures, and, above all, a profoundly humane person. Her passing leaves an immense void, but her laughter, her generosity, and her light will continue to accompany all those who had the privilege of knowing her.

Thursday 6 November 2025

09:15: Opening Session

Chair: Catherine Marshall, Cergy Paris Université, France

Keynote Speaker: Emily JONES, University of Manchester

Impressions of Disraeli: Myths and the Making of Conservative Traditions



Biography:

"I arrived at the University of Manchester in 2018, having previously worked at Columbia University, the University of Cambridge, and the University of Oxford. My DPhil was fully funded by the AHRC and was published as *Edmund Burke and the Invention of Modern Conservatism, 1830-1914: An Intellectual History* (OUP, 2017; pb 2019), which won the Longmans-History Today prize and was a *Financial Times* 'Book of the Year'. I am a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and the Higher Education Academy.

I have written and reviewed for the *Financial Times*, the *New Statesman*, and *History Today*, and provided various radio commentary, including for BBC Radio 4, ABC Australia, and ORF Austria.

My second book, *The Disraeli Myth: The Making of a Conservative Tradition*, is in press and forthcoming with Princeton University Press.

Research interests

My principal research interests are in the intellectual and political history of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Britain. My current work analyses the development of ideas about conservatism as an intellectual and political tradition, and the creative and constructive role of history (and historical analysis, mythmaking included) in British politics.

My first book, *Edmund Burke and the Invention of Modern Conservatism, 1830-1914: An Intellectual History*, examined the posthumous career of Edmund Burke (1730-97) in Britain – i.e. his transformation from Whig politician to 'founder of conservatism'. This was not simply the story of the formative period in which Burke became a canonical political thinker, but the process by which a distinctive intellectual and political tradition – 'Burkean conservatism' – was constructed, established, and widely circulated by 1914. The book therefore covers a wide range of topics from constitutional politics and higher thought, to conceptions of national character, publishing history, and the ways in which Burke was both taught and read. It was a *Talking Politics* and *Financial Times* 2017 'summer read', and was named a 'best book of 2017' by the *Financial Times* and *History Today*. In July 2018 the book won the Longman-History Today Prize.

More recent work has explored further aspects of Conservative and Unionist political thought in Britain, c. 1880-1950, and the history of constitutionalism (popular, political, and in higher thought) in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The first fruits of this research were published, Open Access, in the April 2019 issue of the *English Historical Review*: 'Constructive Constitutionalism in Conservative and Unionist Political Thought, c.1885-1914', and I uncovered the origins of the adoption of the terms 'left' and 'right' in Britain in *Cosmopolitan Conservatism* (2021).

My second book, *The Disraeli Myth: The Making of a Conservative Tradition*, will provide an authoritative account of the historic uses and abuses of Benjamin Disraeli and the highly significant construction of a socially minded brand of Conservatism following his death in 1881. The book draws on sources encompassing the full range of the political spectrum, popular and intellectual culture, the creation of scholarly disciplines--including English Literature and socio-economic history--at the turn of the twentieth century, opening questions as to the role of history, and mythmaking, in British politics up to the present day."

Pic: <https://massolit.io/lecturers/2539>

Text: <https://research.manchester.ac.uk/en/persons/emily.jones>

Thursday 6 November 2025

10:30: Session 1 - Change and continuity

Chair: Nathalie Champroux, Université de Tours, France

Edmund Neill, Northeastern University, London, United Kingdom

Conservative Government Through a Thatcherite Lens: 2010-24

The period of 2010-24 Conservative government was characterized by significant discontinuities and important shifts in policy. Part of the reason for this was an increasingly rapid turnover of premiers, and indeed an unprecedented number of external 'shocks' - notably the 2007-8 financial crash, Brexit, and the COVID pandemic - which significantly affected domestic governments' freedom of action.

But nevertheless, Conservative politicians retained a significant ability to shape events, with the austerity of David Cameron and George Osborne being followed by the caution of Theresa May, the high spending populism of Boris Johnson, the reckless tax-cutting 'mini-budget' of Liz Truss, and the attempts to restore 'normalcy' of Rishi Sunak.

This paper argues that an illuminating way of understanding these shifts is to view them as different attempts by Conservatives to come to terms with their Thatcherite past - not least because Conservative politicians themselves often consciously referred back to Thatcher's government. For Conservatives, in other words, Thatcher's combination of neo-liberal economics, social conservatism, and strident nationalism often remained attractive. However, since circumstances had significantly changed since the 1980s - with social norms becoming more liberal, mass immigration an increasingly important political phenomenon, and the environment increasingly key, Conservatives necessarily had to update this vision.

Thus for example David Cameron's approach to conservatism pointedly broke with some Thatcherite norms - since he insisted that 'we do think there is such a thing as society' in 2005, pledged to lead 'the greenest government ever', and passed gay marriage in 2013. But Cameron also (particularly after the financial crash and Eurozone crisis) pursued a conventional Thatcherite policy of reducing government debt, cutting welfare benefits, and stressing the importance of the private sector. By contrast, Boris Johnson broke with Thatcherism by advocating 'levelling up' by increasing government spending, and by being relatively relaxed about immigration - whilst also channeling Thatcherite populism by advocating Brexit and in showing scepticism of traditional institutions that thwarted his government. And finally Liz Truss claimed to be following Thatcherite norms by enacting sweeping tax cuts and an assault on the central state, whilst ignoring Margaret Thatcher's determination to balance the budget in the early 1980s, even at the cost of *raising* taxes.

The paper will conclude by considering the degree to which Brexit represented the effective ending of the Thatcherite programme - since increasingly post-Brexit politicians had to choose between anti-immigrant nationalism and a Singapore-style 'liberalization' of the economy that implied more immigrants, not fewer. In this context it will also examine the attempts of conservative intellectuals' such as Jesse Norman and Philip Blond to devise post-Thatcherite solutions that go beyond neo-liberalism and a large centralized state to try and revitalize civil society institutions - arguing that such attempts have become increasingly hard to make popular in view of ascendancy of strident nationalist populism (as represented by recent 'National Conservatism' conferences.) Overall, therefore, the paper will reflect on the degree to which Conservative governments between 2010 and 2024 attempted to use Thatcherite solutions, and assess their success in doing so.

Biography:

Edmund Neill is Associate Professor in Modern History (Northeastern University, London). He is the author of *Michael Oakeshott* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2010) and *Conservatism* (Polity, 2021). He has published extensively on modern British history and the history of political thought for journals such as the *Journal of the Philosophy of History*, *Political Studies Review*, *History of European Ideas*, *Revue Francaise de Civilisation Britannique*, and *Twentieth Century British History* amongst others.

Thursday 6 November 2025

10:30: Session 1 - Change and continuity

Chair: Nathalie Champroux, Université de Tours, France

Anne Cousson, Université de Poitiers, France

The Conservative Party and the New British Bill of Rights: ideological evolutions and political priorities

In 1998, the newly elected Labour government passed the Human Rights Act, despite the resistance of Conservative opponents. Repealing this law became part of the Conservative electoral manifesto in 2005 only, a repeal that was accompanied by the proposal to create a "homegrown" bill to defend rights and liberties in the UK, as opposed to a legal framework built around the European Convention of Human Rights. This proposal appeared under different forms in the next manifestoes, until it disappeared in the 2024 manifesto.

The evolutions of the proposals for this "New British Bill of Rights" are evidence to the ideological shifts in the party, as well as the power struggles and personal priorities between party members. Indeed, human rights are not only a legal concept with constitutional consequences, they are also expressions of values and identity. On a national level, the frequent redefinition of their meaning and content has allowed politicians to position themselves in terms of relationship to history, penal policy and immigration or European integration.

Debates about the repeal of the Human Rights Act and its replacement were numerous in Parliament, providing the researcher with a vast corpus of speeches and parliamentary reports that trace the development of the frames used to defend the bills. This paper will focus on proposals for a British Bill of Rights from the beginning of the Coalition, in 2010, to the last bill introduced by Dominic Raab in 2021. I will focus on analysing the parliamentary debates records in order to identify the types of arguments used by Conservative MPs. The analysis will compare them to the official party positions as set out in manifestos and a variety of speeches outside of Parliament.

The discourse analysis shows that, although the frames used are fairly stable, the domination of some themes change. Indeed, whole, before Brexit, the Eurosceptic frame was prevalent, the post-Brexit period marked a shift towards more populist discourse, in particular linking human rights protection to issues of immigration. The discourse around human rights is therefore a good barometer of wider shifts in Conservative Party ideology.

Biography:

Anne Cousson is Associate Professor in British Studies at the Université de Poitiers, in France. She specialises in the study of the political aspects of human rights, with a focus on parliamentary discourse in the UK. Her latest article was published in the *Revue Française de Civilisation Britannique* and focused on issues of human rights and devolution in Covid-19 regulations.

Thursday 6 November 2025

10:30: Session 1 - Change and continuity

Chair: Nathalie Champroux, Université de Tours, France

David Jeffery, University of Liverpool, United Kingdom

The conservatism of Kemi Badenoch

Since becoming the MP for Saffron Walden, Kemi Badenoch has not been backward in putting forward her views. This paper explores Badenoch's conservatism by examining her political philosophy, policy positions, and rhetorical style within the broader context of the Conservative Party's evolving post-Brexit ideological identity. As a politician who champions free markets, individual responsibility, and a robust defence of British cultural identity, Badenoch's ideology aligns with the party's historical traditions while also reflecting post-Brexit conservatism's shift toward cultural and national sovereignty.

This paper will analyze Badenoch's approach to key policy issues, including the economy, public services, government intervention, 'wokeism', and international relations, situating her within the intellectual lineage of British conservatism. It will also consider how her stance on 'woke' politics and institutional reform positions her as both a continuation of and a challenge to recent Conservative leadership trends. Through an assessment of her speeches—encompassing her time as a backbench MP, a cabinet minister, a leadership contender, and as leader of the Conservative Party—this paper will argue that Badenoch represents a fusion of Thatcherite economic liberalism and a culturally assertive conservatism.

The paper will conclude with a comparison of Badenoch's ideological positions in relation to her erstwhile rival for the Tory crown, Robert Jenrick, and the main threat to her party from the right: Nigel Farage.

Biography:

"I joined the Department of Politics in September 2017, having finished my ESRC-funded PhD thesis at Queen Mary University of London. My most recent book is 'Whatever Happened To Tory Liverpool?', which can be purchased from Liverpool University Press, or accessed for free as an ebook, [here](#).

Beyond Liverpool's political history I have also published widely on British party politics, specifically with regard to the voting behaviour and motivations of MPs in both the Conservative and Labour parties. My other research interests include political campaigning, the role of localised identities and their electoral salience, electoral patterns, and British politics more broadly. I am quantitatively trained and have had statistical work published in a range of leading journals such as BJPIR and JCMS.

I am a regular commentator on British politics, for both domestic and international audiences."

Text: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/people/david-jeffery>

Thursday 6 November 2025

13:00: Session 2 - Populisms

Chair: Stéphane Porion, Université de Tours, France

Alma-Pierre Bonnet, Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3, France

From Brexit to the 'culture wars': towards an anatomy of populist discourse within the British Conservative Party (2006-2024)

Through an interdisciplinary approach combining narratology, cognitive linguistics and political discourse analysis, this paper examines the emergence and growing influence of a populist discourse within the British Conservative Party, and how it has been narrated by Conservative leaders over the past few decades.

While the rise of this populist current, which is the result - among other things - of a new voting system in the choice of party leader, predates Brexit, the decision to leave the European Union nonetheless opened Pandora's box and served as a sounding board. Indeed, the abundant literature on Brexit sees this event as the populist expression of a cultural revolution on which Conservative leaders have surfed to present the harshness of the Brexit negotiations as the epic struggle of the (pure) British people against European technocratic authoritarianism, and the following violence of the political debate in British society as a necessity to get rid of what they portrayed as the "enemy within". In the wake of Brexit, this rhetorical crusade is now being expressed through the notion of "culture wars", which, in effect, seems to have entrenched a populist-inspired communications strategy among the Conservatives, now in opposition.

Through a critical analysis of the Conservative leaders' narratives at the party's annual conference (2006-2024), this presentation shows how populist discourse has permeated the heart of one of the oldest and most-established governing parties in the Western world. As such, our proposal falls within the "The party and the rise of populism and the radical right" theme of the conference as it explores what is, arguably, a new orientation in the overall communication of the party.

Biography:

Alma-Pierre Bonnet is a Senior Lecturer in British studies at Jean Moulin Lyon 3 University, France. His research interests centre around political communication and political strategy. His current research focuses on the use of storytelling and narratives in political discourse, in particular through the use of critical narrative analysis. He recently published a collective book on the culture wars in the UK with Routledge (co-editor: Raphaële Kilty).

Thursday 6 November 2025

13:00: Session 2 - Populisms

Chair: Stéphane Porion, Université de Tours, France

Rod Dacombe, King's College, London, United Kingdom

Conspiracy theories in contemporary Conservative politics in the UK

Recent years have seen the emergence of a literature which explores the role of conspiracy theories in populist politics. Much of this work focuses on the significance of conspiracist narratives in populist movements as, for example, devices used to frame political problems, justify direct action, or as an electoral strategy intended to mobilise coalitions of support amongst voters. However, this literature has largely seen conspiracy theories as outside of the scope of mainstream conservative political parties, instead confining its analysis to populist movements, or to 'insurgent' politicians who have achieved mainstream success. This paper aims to correct this omission. In it I suggest that it would be a mistake to exclude conspiracy theories from established conservative politics in this way, arguing that recent years have seen the emergence of conspiracist themes into the political foreground and in particular, into the discourse adopted by the Conservative Party in the UK.

Drawing on case studies of the Conservative Party and Reform UK since 2019, I suggest that, although conspiracy theories are far from mainstream, they are important in developing a full explanation of the recent trajectory of the Conservative Party. I present an analysis of Parliamentary debates, speeches and official material to show that during this period, while conspiracy theories have been consistently used by Reform UK, they are also increasingly forming a part of Conservative Party discourse. At the same time, I draw on a UK-wide survey of conspiracy belief to suggest that such discourse is more likely to appeal to Reform voters than Conservative Party supporters and is, in any event, unlikely to form the basis of a successful electoral strategy in the UK.

Biography:

Rod Dacombe is a Reader in Politics and head of the Department of Political Economy. Formerly, Rod was Vice-Dean (Education) in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Public Policy and co-convenor of the Participatory and Deliberative Democracy Specialist Group of the Political Studies Association.

He has expertise on democratic theory, particularly participatory and deliberative democracy, and digital democracy. His first book, *Rethinking Civic Participation in Theory and Practice* (Palgrave), was published in 2018. He also wrote "Digital Technology and Democratic Theory" for the issue of *Perspectives on Politics* published in 2022.

Throughout 2021, Rod worked at the University of Oxford on a new project on conspiracy theories and democratic participation as a Fellow of Keble College. This work provided the first systematic treatment of the importance of conspiracy theories to democratic theory: *Conspiracy Belief Among the UK Public and the Role of Alternative Media*, Bobby Duffy & Rod Dacombe, The Policy Institute, Report, 2023.

Rod has acted as an academic advisor to the Scottish government and the Danish Ministry for Social Affairs, and is a regular commentator on these issues in the media. He has been awarded research funding from organisations including the Economic and Social Research Council, The Leverhulme Trust, the Scottish government, the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Higher Education Funding Council for England and Wales.

From <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/people/rod-dacombe>

Thursday 6 November 2025

14:15: Session 3 - Identity

Chair: Karine Tournier-Sol, Université de Toulon, France

Nicholas Startin, John Cabot University, Rome, Italy

Brexit as fact or fiction? The Conservative Party and declining Generation Z Support

Despite the Conservative Party's historic, electoral adaptability in the post-war period, recent UK general and local elections have revealed a growing generational divide in the party's support with markedly higher levels of support among older cohorts. In an era where the terms dealignment and realignment have become increasingly salient this raises serious questions about the future of the Conservative Party in electoral terms. Drawing on existing literature regarding youth political engagement and party identification, as well as electoral data and public opinion surveys, the paper begins by analysing the evolution of support for the Conservatives among Generation Z (Gen Z) voters over the last 20 years since the election of David Cameron as leader of the party in 2005. It examines causes and explanations for the decline in support for the Conservatives among this cohort.

The paper then switches its attention more specifically to Brexit and its impact as a pivotal issue in shaping Gen Z's political attitudes towards the Conservative Party. Here, almost a decade on from the 2016 referendum on UK membership, it draws partly on a mixed methods survey, focusing on 16-and-17-year-old Sixth Form students' perceptions of the UK's relationship with the EU. The survey was recently conducted by the author in two demographically contrasting English Secondary schools.

The paper argues that the Conservative Party's association with both the decision to hold a referendum and its subsequent outcome in favour of Brexit, combined with its stop-start management of the process in securing a post-Brexit deal with the EU, has been a significant factor in the last decade in contributing to its alienation among the Gen Z cohort. With those Gen Z voters attracted to social liberalism and value issues increasingly showing support for the Greens and the Liberal Democrats, and those facing economic precarity and potentially concerned by identity politics, increasingly attracted to Reform UK, the long-term future of the Conservative Party has never looked so uncertain as it seeks to restore its position as the dominant force in the UK party politics.

Biography:

Dr Nicholas Startin research focuses primarily on Euroscepticism and more recently the UK's relationship with the EU. He also researches the Radical Right in Europe including the French Rassemblement National (RN). He is both a former Chair of the University Association of Contemporary European Studies (UACES) and Head of Politics, Languages and International Relations (POLIS) at the University of Bath. He is currently an Associate Professor in International Relations at John Cabot University in Rome.

Thursday 6 November 2025

14:15: Session 3 - Identity

Chair: Karine Tournier-Sol, Université de Toulon, France

Stéphane Revillet, Université de Bourgogne, France

Rishi Sunak's 'war on woke' during PMQs

Every Conservative Prime Minister and MP uses PMQs as a platform for communication and promotion of their views and (ideological) principles. PMQs are the most attended and watched parliamentary event of the week. It is also the one moment when parliamentary disorder is most tolerated, allowing members to express in a most dramatised way almost any and all views and opinions. One of the striking features of Sunak's speeches during PMQs as Prime Minister were his verbal attacks on political correctness, trans identity and cancel culture. The introduction of this rhetoric into Conservative parliamentary speeches officially institutionalised the so-called Johnsonian 'war on the woke' in Conservative parliamentary discourse. These rhetorical elements are not new to the Conservative speeches, but their intensity and recurrence is during PMQs.

However, neither Sunak nor the Conservative MPs use the term woke / wokeism at the dispatch box; instead they use a diffuse language full of concepts and terms that are not precisely defined but function more like symbols and signals. They are even careful not to question the social progress they claim to have initiated (with gay rights and same-sex marriage), thereby tempering Sunak's anti-woke position with a reminder of the party's (socially) liberal principles, suggesting that social progress has gone too far and has turned into something detrimental, even harmful, to society. For Sunak and the Conservative MPs wokeism is not just an abstract principle that needs to be fought, but it is embodied by their political arch-enemy: The Labour party and as such can be attacked *ad hominem*.

Sunak combines anti-woke rhetoric with anti-Labour rhetoric. The real target is Labour and its "lefty woke culture", which looks more like an avatar of anti-socialism than anything new. The same rhetorical mechanisms are at work, with the same expected effects: political polarisation and oversimplification of the message.

This paper attempts to define what Rishi Sunak calls 'woke culture' through his speeches during PMQs (during his premiership), and to place its meaning in a broader context of years of party conservatism. After this attempt at definition, this study will focus on the purpose (political strategy) and effects of such rhetoric (proving that polarisation through symbolisation is the aim of such language). Finally, a final part will be devoted to an analysis of the ideological turn that the Conservative Party has taken with such a rhetorical strategy.

Biography:

Stéphane Revillet is a Senior Lecturer in Contemporary British Civilization and Legal English at the University of Burgundy Europe, and a member of the TIL research laboratory. His research falls within the field of British parliamentary studies, focusing in particular on the Conservative Party and issues related to political leadership. He is especially interested in Prime Minister's Question Time sessions, which he analyses both in their discursive dimension and in their socio-political and anthropological implications.

Thursday 6 November 2025

14:15: Session 3 - Identity

Chair: Karine Tournier-Sol, Université de Toulon, France

Rima Saini, School of Law at Middlesex University, United Kingdom

Post-racial politics and the 'Brown Tory'

This paper will provide an analysis of the incongruity between rising ethnic diversity on the one hand, and fascistic discourse & policymaking on the other hand, in the senior echelons of the UK Conservative party in recent years. The (surprising) ethnic diversity of the Conservative leadership candidates in the 2022 party leadership contest was discussed at length in the mainstream media, with many speculating whether a more progressive politics apropos of racialised and marginalised minority groups would ensue with their first ethnic minority leader. However, the cohort proved to be perhaps the most right-wing of the senior party leadership at the time, particularly with regard to their stances on race and border control.

This paper will first discuss the wider context to broader ethnic minority political conservatism in the UK, specifically (i) the colonial & postcolonial history of ethnic minority (particularly South Asian) middle class formation, (ii) the track record of the Conservative party in relation to racial inclusion, and (iii) the rise of post-racial politics. It will then argue that the supplanting of 'antiracism' with neoliberal approaches to managing immigration and immigrant communities such as 'multiculturalism' has, over many decades of Tory (and Labour party) rule, reduced complex, structural issues of racial inequity to ones of (conflicting) identity and culture. This has allowed a 'model minority' conservative political ethnic minority elite, to flourish able and willing to legitimise and perpetuate state sanctioned racism. We could thus consider ethnic minority political conservatism to be an embedded, deliberate and successful function of the racial, capitalist state that facilitates its reproduction and both hinders and problematises anti-racist action, legitimisation and identification.

Senior politicians including former UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, former Home Secretary Suella Braverman, and current Conservative Party leader Kemi Badenoch will be discussed to illustrate the aforementioned phenomena, focusing on their political discourse and parliamentary record relating to key issues including immigration and inequality but also drawing on their personal histories and ethnic heritage. Similar trends in the US will also be mentioned, where ideological purity amongst some Republican congressional candidates such as Bobby Jindal, Nikki Haley and Vivek Ramaswamy has trumped their racial background to secure fairly widespread conservative popularity. Whether such nominal ethnic diversity will remain a cornerstone of the Conservative party under Badenoch and what it might mean for future electoral success in the context of domestic socio-political turmoil, hyper-diversity and European/global fascisms will form the final discussion point.

Biography:

Rima Saini is Senior Lecturer and co-Chair of Ethics in the School of Law at Middlesex University. Her recent publications include contributions to *Race and Class*, *Politics and Gender*, *South Asian Diaspora*, *Cultural Sociology*, *Politics*, and *Sociology*. Her monograph '*Politics, Belonging and Identity Across the British South Asian Middle Classes: Between Privilege and Prejudice*' was published in 2024 (Palgrave MacMillan).

Friday 7 November 2025

08:30: Welcome and registration

09:00: Opening Session

Chair: Catherine Marshall, Cergy Paris Université, France

Keynote Speaker: Tim BALE, Queen Mary University of London

The Conservative Party in an era of two-bloc politics



Biography:

Tim Bale is Professor of Politics in the Department of Politics and International Relations. He graduated first from Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge and then did a Masters degree at Northwestern University in the USA. Following a few years spent working in finance for the NHS (the UK's National Health Service), he returned to academia to do a PhD at the Department of Politics at Sheffield University. After Sheffield, he taught politics at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand and then at Sussex University back in the UK until 2012.

In 2008 he won the Political Studies Association's Bernard Crick Prize for Outstanding Teaching. In 2011 he received the W.J.M. Mackenzie prize for his book *The Conservative Party from Thatcher to Cameron*, the second edition of which was published in late 2016. Other books he has written or co-written in recent years include *The Conservatives since 1945: the Drivers of Party Change*, *Five Year Mission. The Labour Party under Ed Miliband* and *Footsoldiers: Political Party Membership in the 21st Century*, the research for which was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and generated the website <http://esrcpartymembersproject.org>.

Tim helped write three books published in 2021: [*The Modern British Party System*](#); [*The British General Election of 2019*](#), and [*Riding the Populist Wave: Europe's Mainstream Right in Crisis*](#). In 2023 he published [*The Conservative Party after Brexit: Turmoil and Transformation*](#).

Tim's media work includes writing for UK and overseas newspapers, and he appears fairly often on national and international radio and television to talk about politics. Even more often (for good or ill) he tweets using the handle [@ProfTimBale](#). You can find his non-academic writing collected on his blog - proftimbale.com - and his academic writing (mostly journal articles, not all of which are necessarily behind a paywall!) by going to [Google Scholar](#).

Pic and Text: <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/politics/staff/profiles/baletim.html>

Friday 7 November 2025

10:15: Session 4 - Factionalism

Chair: Stéphane Porion, Université de Tours, France

Virgile Lorenzoni, Université d'Aix Marseille, France

From the conservative vanguard to a strategic and ideological crossroads: Thatcher-era think tanks and their relationship with the contemporary Conservative Party

Even though what could arguably be described as one of the world's first think tanks, the Fabian Society, is known for its association with the Labour Party, research has shown that the British Conservative Party has time and again relied on an ecosystem composed of a wide variety of conservative think tanks. Examples range from Ashridge College, created in 1929 to train the party's elites and rejuvenate conservative thought [Berthezène 2015], to relatively new bodies like the Centre for Social Justice or Policy Exchange, whose mission was to modernize the Conservative Party under David Cameron, and which continue to try and have an influence on conservative policymakers [Pautz 2018].

One of the most documented instances of think tanks playing a key role in exercising a lasting impact on the Conservative Party is to be found in the crusade for economic freedom pioneered in the 1950s by the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) and prolonged in the 1970s and 1980s by the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS) and the Adam Smith Institute (ASI) [Cockett 1994]. They worked to pave the way for the gradual conversion of the party to neoliberal ideas and thereby participated in the shaping of what became known as Thatcherism, although the difficulty of accurately measuring the magnitude of their impact has been underlined in the literature [Denham and Garnett 1998].

Almost fifty years after what Richard Cockett called "the heroic age" of think tanks, however, the rise of right-wing populism, the increasing salience of cultural issues and the emergence of new dividing lines between "globalists" and "nationalists" have accelerated the crumbling of the old Thatcherite coalition and a partial rejection of its neoliberal legacy on the right, pulling the Conservative Party in different and sometimes contradictory directions. This paper contends that this might have a non-negligible impact on the organisations which were part and parcel of the "conservative revolution" of the 1970s-1980s. Indeed, they are now facing considerable challenges that could potentially endanger the privileged relationship they managed to maintain with the Tory Party, which may not be as receptive to their output as it was until recently.

Through a study of recent publications of the IEA, the CPS and the ASI, as well as interviews with members of these think tanks, we shall try to determine their ideological and strategic perspectives as they struggle to wage the war of ideas in as troubled a political context as the one that witnessed their emergence. From developing a remnant strategy in hope of keeping the neoliberal flame alive to entering the fray as cultural warriors, we shall observe how these organisations, which have come to embody a particular iteration of conservative ideology, manage to adapt to what Anthony Seldon and Stuart Ball called "the Janus faces of conservatism," in other words its ever-changing nature.

Biography:

Virgile Lorenzoni holds a PhD in Anglophone Studies and is a member of the Laboratoire d'Études et de Recherche sur le Monde Anglophone (UR 853) at Aix-Marseille Université. His research focuses on British and American conservative think tanks, their history, their interactions, and the place they occupy in their respective political systems. His broader research interests include the study of conservatism as an ideology.

Friday 7 November 2025

10:15: Session 4 - Factionalism

Chair: Stéphane Porion, Université de Tours, France

Axel Bercq, Université de Toulon, France

Conservative intra-party groups and party renewal after the 2024 General Election

Chaotic, confused, divided, fractious and leaderless are adjectives that have been used by voters who switched from the Conservative Party to another party in the 2024 General Election, according to a post-election poll conducted by Lord Ashcroft.¹ Since coming back to power in 2010, the Conservative Party has been characterised by the emergence of dissenting intra-party groups that have undermined the party's unity and organisational stability, from the 81 rebels who pushed Cameron to organise the Brexit referendum, to the *Hard-Brexiteers* of the ERG who contributed to May's ousting, and the *Five Families* whose name is reminiscent of mafia organisations. These groups, which for the most part were created after the Referendum, have contributed to the erosion of the party's image. While voters were most concerned by issues such as health policy and the economy,² the culture warriors of the *Common Sense Group* and the net zero detractors of the *Net Zero Scrutiny Group* focused on toxic issues out of step with voters' concerns. The result of the 2024 General Election attested to this gap between the Conservatives and voters, with a substantial share of 2019 Conservative voters having defected to another party in 2024.³

The first objective of this paper is to determine what remains of these different groups in the much reduced post-General Election PCP. The analysis of these groups, based on their ideological and organisational characteristics will enable one to create a map of Conservative intra-party groups and evaluate the party's prospects for adaptability and ideological renewal with these available resources. Drawing on the inventory of the party's intra-party groups and ideological resources, the paper will use Boucek's theory of the three faces of factionalism (cooperative, competitive, destructive)⁴ to explore the roles that intra-party groups could play in helping the party to reinvent itself and achieve electoral victory again. Much has been said about the destructive potential of factionalism, especially in the last years of the Conservative Party's rule. However, Boucek argues that by facilitating intra-party competition, cooperative factionalism can foster consensus building and help to aggregate separate electoral groups, a key challenge at a time when the electorate and the party system are becoming increasingly fragmented, and at a moment when the Conservative Party finds itself at an electoral crossroads. When handled correctly, Boucek argues that competitive factionalism can also be a source of increased performance in policy-making. This paper will seek to find out whether Boucek's theory can be applied to the intra-party groups existing in the current PCP. The last part of the paper will compare the current situation to past situations in an effort to examine the party's opportunities for regeneration, focusing on past Conservative intra-party groups, such as the *One-Nation Group*, and their effect on party revitalisation.

Biography:

Axel Bercq is a PhD student from the University of Toulon working under the supervision of Professor Karine Tournier-Sol for a thesis entitled "Factionnalisme et jeux d'influence au sein du parti conservateur britannique dans la période pré-et post-Brexit". He presented a paper entitled "Party fragments? The Conservatives after the 2016 Referendum" at the international conference on the 2024 General Election held at the Sorbonne Nouvelle University in early 2025.

¹ Lord Ashcroft Polls, "Losing it: The Conservative Party and the 2024 general election", 30 September 2024, <<https://lordashcroftpolls.com/2024/09/losing-it-the-conservative-party-and-the-2024-general-election/>>

² YouGov, "The most important issues facing the country", 17 March 2025, <<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/society/trackers/the-most-important-issues-facing-the-country?period=1yr>>

³ Prosser, Christopher, "Fragmentation revisited: the UK General Election of 2024", *West European Politics* (2024), pp. 1-13.

⁴ Boucek, Françoise, "Rethinking Factionalism: Typologies, Intra-Party Dynamics and Three Faces of Factionalism", *Party Politics* 15 (2009), pp. 455-485.

Friday 7 November 2025

11:30: Session 5 - Regions and territories

Chair: Laurence Harris, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, France

Fiona Simpkins, Université Lumière Lyon 2, France

'Taking back control': Conservative unionism in Scotland after Brexit

The introduction of devolution to Scotland in the late 1990s could have been expected to modify if not renew Conservative unionism, yet the expression of a more traditional Anglo-British view of the Union by senior Conservative figures in recent years suggests that the nature of Conservative unionism was by no means transformed by devolution. On the contrary, the inconsistencies in successive Conservative governments' attitudes to post-devolution Scotland and management of territorial governance tend to indicate that the party still hasn't come to terms with devolution. In fact, it has been openly criticized by new Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch and former Prime Minister Boris Johnson. Badenoch has also been keen to stress her opposition to the Gender Reform (Scotland) Bill and role in the veto issued by the UK government on a bill which a majority of MSPs had voted for in Holyrood. This followed a number of occasions since 2016 during which the Sewel Convention was overturned and brought to a head the "muscular unionism" displayed by the party in the last few years. Indeed, the aftermath of Brexit has seen many powers in devolved areas returned to London rather than Edinburgh as well as increasing intervention from the UK government in Scotland, affecting policy-making in various devolved matters such as transport and infrastructure, recycling or gender policy. Revealingly, while admitting in an interview on the BBC Scotland Sunday Show in October 2024 that the UK Union was voluntary, Badenoch was unable to articulate a mechanism by which Scotland could leave the Union if it wanted to.

A closer study of Conservative unionist discourse and territorial policies after June 2016 suggests a return to a narrowly Anglo-British view of the Union which has considerably eroded the scope of devolution in Scotland. Notwithstanding the Conservatives' resistance to the SNP's renewed calls for a second independence referendum, the aftermath of the 2016 referendum on Britain's membership of the EU saw a clear change of tone and attitudes towards devolution and intergovernmental relations which this paper wishes to examine. It will seek to study the current brand of unionism displayed by recent Conservative leaders in light of traditional Conservative ideological tenets and conceptions of unionism.

Biography:

Fiona Simpkins is Senior Lecturer of British Politics and Contemporary History at the Université Lumière Lyon 2 (France). She is affiliated with Triangle UMR 5206 Research Centre. Her first research interest focusses on devolution in the United Kingdom, with particular attention to parliamentary systems, center-periphery relations, territoriality and decentralization, political autonomy and constitutional debate in Scotland, intra-British nationalisms, unionism and independence. She thus published "Conservative Unionism v. Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill: Killing Two Birds with One Stone?", in Bonnet, Alma-Pierre et Raphaële, Kilty, *Towards a Very British Version of the "culture Wars": Populism, Social Fractures and Political Communication*, Routledge, 2024, and "Labour in a "Cold Climate": Devolution, Unionism and the Scottish Labour Party", in *Textes & Contextes*, in 2023.

Friday 7 November 2025

11:30: Session 5 - Regions and territories

Chair: Laurence Harris, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, France

Alan Convery, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Representing the Red Wall: Conservative MPs' Views and Representational Styles

There has been a great deal of academic and journalistic interest in the idea of the 'Red Wall'. The term was coined by the political analyst James Kangasooriam to describe a group of seats long held by the Labour Party whose demographic profile (and proportion of Leave supporters) suggested they might be vulnerable to a challenge from the Conservatives. It has since become a catch-all term for those seats, a set of ideas, and an imagined part of England that has felt economically 'left behind' and overlooked by a political class of graduate social and economic liberals. This paper focuses on the seats in the north of England gained by the Conservatives from Labour in 2019. Although the Conservatives lost these 'Red Wall' seats to Labour in 2024, their profile still prompts important questions about the future of UK politics and the wider strategic dilemmas for Kemi Badenoch about the rise of Reform.

While much academic analysis has focused on Red Wall voters, we seek instead to shed light on the Conservative political elites who represented these areas. This paper focuses on the ideology, motivations and representational styles of the new Conservative MPs who represented Red Wall seats in the 2019-2024 Parliament. Based on interviews with 8 Red Wall Conservative MPs, it examines how they adapted to Westminster and how they viewed the future of conservatism. There are many assumptions about these MPs' views but they have rarely been tested empirically. We wanted to ask them a series of questions about their economic and ideological views to ascertain whether they represented a new set of ideas on the right or simply reheated Thatcherism with Brexit and social conservatism.

We detected four key themes in our conversations with these MPs: the importance of a sense of place; their perception of the vital influence of Boris Johnson on their success and their constituents' willingness to listen to the Conservatives; perceived neglect of their constituencies under Labour; and the importance for them of being seen to achieve tangible local improvements.

These themes pose broader questions about the incoherence of the governance of England and what it means to be English and British. We also link our analysis to wider discussions about the role of the modern MP as social worker, chamber of commerce, and finder of local public funds. Finally, we examine the implications of the 2019-2024 Red Wall contingent for the future of the Conservative Party in opposition. In the wider context of the rise of Reform, there are big strategic questions for the party about how important it is to win these seats back.

Biography:

Alan Convery is Senior Lecturer in Politics at the University of Edinburgh. His research focuses on UK and Scottish politics and conservatism and the Conservative Party. He is the author of *The Territorial Conservative Party: Devolution and Party Change in Scotland and Wales* (MUP 2016). He was Deputy Editor (2015-2018) and Lead Editor (2018-2021) of the *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*. His new edited textbook, *UK Politics*, has just been published (Sage 2025).

Friday 7 November 2025

13:30: Session 6 - Policies

Chair: Nathalie A. Champroux, Université de Tours, France

Thibaud Harrois, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, France

From 'liberal conservatism' to 'conservative realism': the Conservative Party's approach to foreign and defence policy

This paper examines the UK Conservative Party's evolving approach to foreign and defence policy between 2010 and 2025, focusing on its shift from multilateralism to a sovereignty-centred strategy. Using a neoclassical realist framework, it analyses how Conservative ideology, leadership dynamics, and domestic political pressures have shaped this transition. While traditionally committed to strong international alliances, the party has increasingly prioritised national sovereignty, global flexibility, and bilateral (or minilateral) partnerships over institutionalised multilateralism.

Three key case studies illustrate this shift in Conservative thinking: (1) the party's evolving stance on European security cooperation, from initial pragmatism under David Cameron to post-Brexit scepticism and resistance to EU-led defence initiatives; (2) the embrace of AUKUS as a symbol of 'Global Britain,' reflecting a preference for strategic realignment with the Anglosphere over European integration; and (3) the response to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, where the Conservative Party's rhetoric in government emphasised the UK's leadership within NATO and bilateral military aid over collective European decision-making, reinforcing its commitment to national sovereignty in security matters. Since moving into opposition in July 2024, the party has cautiously criticised the Labour government's approach to European defence cooperation, arguing that deeper engagement with EU security structures should not undermine national autonomy. This opposition stance suggests that the Conservative Party's sovereignty-first approach has become a key ideological marker, even as it adapts to new political realities.

By examining party manifestos, parliamentary debates, and leadership speeches, this study evaluates whether Conservative foreign and defence policy follows a consistent ideological trajectory or adapts to shifting geopolitical circumstances. It argues that while sovereignty has become a defining theme, Conservative foreign policy remains shaped by a mix of ideological convictions, short-term calculations, and leadership-driven strategic choices.

Biography:

Thibaud Harrois is a Senior Lecturer in British Politics at the Université Sorbonne Nouvelle (Paris). His research focuses on British foreign and security policy, the UK and European security, and the UK's relationship with the EU and its Member States in the post-Brexit context.

Friday 7 November 2025

13:30: Session 6 - Policies

Chair: Nathalie A. Champroux, Université de Tours, France

Lucie de Carvalho, Université de Lille, France

The Energy Policy of the Conservatives over their Last Five Years in Power

From New Labour's momentous implementation of the 2008 Climate Change Act to Cameron's pledge to head "the greenest government ever", then topped by May's historic legacy 2022 Net-Zero Policy, one may look at the 2008-2022 period as an optimistic spell of "ecological alignment" in British politics as the three mainstream parties coalesced around their commitment to hastening the pace of ecological modernisation through systemic decarbonisation.

Over the past four years however, the trajectory of the ecological transition on the international and national scene has grown increasingly chaotic, hampered by geopolitical instability, shifting economic fortunes and the enduring lack of sustainable technological alternatives. For Britain the Russian invasion of Ukraine undoubtedly saw further cracks surface in the veneer of the national consensus on the need to address the climate emergency, thereby putting the future of May's Net-Zero plan on very fragile grounds.

The energy sector plays a pivotal role in the Net-Zero Plan, and has thus been at the forefront of policy adjustments to meet its ambitions. In terms of policy objectives, the British energy policy has been defined by three distinct goals - dubbed the energy trilemma - namely to (a) supply security, (b) affordability, and (c) ecological sustainability.

Using a public policy and instrument analysis approach, this presentation will focus on the energy policy choices formulated by the Johnson, Truss, and Sunak governments to address this three-pronged set of strategic ambitions. Our purpose will be first to assess the extent to which these policies introduced a new hierarchy within these three goals by markedly favouring security over sustainability. Secondly, the analysis will demonstrate that these governments' repeated U-turns on key energy policy ambitions (eg. fossil fuels exploration, shale gas, renewables and housing adaptation, among many examples) point to a clear implementation gap over Net-Zero, symptomatic of the rising clout of two competing factions within the conservative fold. Such polarisation over policy priorities affected not only policy goals but policy instruments as well. This analysis will trace the Conservatives' policy goals and instruments to their ideological orientations, offering to reflect upon the way the Conservatives have approached energy as a new public service and the role of government as a service provider/warrantor since Johnson governments.

Finally and more broadly, the presentation will posit that such a lack of a clear roadmap can be traced back to internal party divisions regarding the very nature of the energy transition, and the ideological understanding of the concept of energy sustainability, as the Net-Zero plan actually hid different visions of the climate object, which has been de facto dissociated from the environment/nature construct within contemporary conservative thought.

Biography:

Lucie de Carvalho is a Senior Lecturer in British Studies at the University of Lille. Her research interests lie in contemporary climate and energy policies in Britain, particularly from a governance perspective. She recently published a book on British nuclear power policies, *Nuclear Power Policies in Britain: the Quandaries of Neoliberalism* which was released by Anthem Press in 2022.

Friday 7 November 2025

13:30: Session 6 - Policies

Chair: Nathalie A. Champroux, Université de Tours, France

Laurence Harris, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, France

Where is the alternative? Reconstructing an economic vision after the 2024 electoral defeat

In 1983, Margaret Thatcher's address to the Conservative Party conference distilled the principles that would define the party's economic philosophy for a generation: privatisation, deregulation, market competition, and the moral values associated with low taxation. These ideas, long incubated in think-tank networks since the mid-1970s and strengthened by Reaganite market liberalism, became the foundation of a political project that recast taxation not simply as fiscal policy but as a moral and cultural symbol of freedom, self-reliance, and economic competence. Five decades later, the Conservative Party faces a new moment of reckoning. The landslide electoral defeat of 2024, after fourteen years in power, has exposed the fragility of its economic narrative amid a cost-of-living crisis, record-high tax burdens, and declining public trust in Conservative stewardship.

This paper examines twelve Conservative Party manifestos, from 1979 to 2024, to trace the evolution of the party's tax narratives – the ways in which taxation has been framed as both a policy tool and a moral statement. Using semi-automated text analysis combined with qualitative reading, the study identifies six enduring narrative frames. Each narrative links a moral claim to a causal logic while recasting the taxpayer as a heroic figure. Despite its adaptability, this moral framework may have reached a form of discursive saturation.

By 2024, the once-persuasive story of "low taxes as virtue" had lost credibility in a high-tax, low-growth economy. The 2022 "mini-budget" under Liz Truss brought to the surface a rupture between ideological conviction and fiscal reality, applying the Thatcherite template without economic or institutional legitimacy and triggering market panic. In its aftermath, Rishi Sunak's cautious fiscalism failed to restore coherence, while Kemi Badenoch's 2025 conference pledge to abolish stamp duty may be seen as representing an attempt to reconstruct a moral language of aspiration and fairness within the same depleted frame.

By combining discourse analysis with narrative political economy, this study finds that the Conservative Party's tax rhetoric remains a central feature of its economic identity – resilient, but increasingly tested by the changing fiscal and social landscape. According to recent analysis by the Institute for Fiscal Studies, the current tax burden in the UK is at its highest level in decades, reflecting structural pressures on public finances as much as policy choice. At this juncture, the party stands at a crossroads: caught between the symbolic power of its historic tax narrative and the practical constraints of fiscal reality. On the eve of the 2025 Budget, however, tax remains a fundamental issue in British political life and a key determinant of electoral fortunes.

Biography:

Laurence Harris is a Senior Lecturer in British Studies at Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, where she co-directs the Master's programme in International Business Negotiation. Her research focuses on economic discourse and the history of British finance. She contributed to the creation of the Sorbonne Alliance project "Finance and Society", led by Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and ESCP Business School.

Friday 7 November 2025

15:15: Round Table

David Jeffery

and the CONSERVATISM STUDIES Group, Political Studies Association, London, United Kingdom

"We study conservatism.

The group aims to encourage the creation and dissemination of high quality research in the study of conservatism, conservatives and centre-right politics, e.g. conservative politics, parties, leaders, ideologies, media and organisations.

We are a specialist group at the Political Studies Association (PSA), an international scholarly society in the United Kingdom.

The group aims to create a sense of identity and common purpose among those interested in a part of the political spectrum that has attracted far less scholarly interest than its obvious electoral and philosophical importance merits.

The group aims to take a supportive approach in order to encourage engagement with conservatism studies across the many levels of academic development. We aim to promote pluralism, balance, diversity and equality.

If you would like to join the group and be added to our mailing list, please contact **the convenors.**"

Text: <https://www.psa.ac.uk/specialist-groups/conservatism-studies>

Dr David Jeffery

Co-convenor

University of Liverpool

djeffery@liverpool.ac.uk

Dr Antony Mullen

Co-convenor

University of Exeter

a.mullen@exeter.ac.uk

Dr Sam Blaxland

Co-convenor

UCL

s.blaxland@ucl.ac.uk

Dr Marija Taflaga

Australian National University

marija.taflaga@anu.edu.au

Dr Christopher Fear

University of Hull

c.fear@hull.ac.uk

Group Email (general enquiries)

conservatism.group@psa.ac.uk

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ALEXANDRE-COLLIER Agnès †, Professor in British Studies, TIL, Université de Bourgogne Europe
CHAMPROUX Nathalie A., Professor in British Studies, ICD, Université de Tours
HARRIS Laurence, Associate Professor in British Studies, CREW, Sorbonne Nouvelle
MARSHALL Catherine, Professor in British Studies, AGORA, Cergy Paris Université
PORION Stéphane, Associate Professor in British Studies, ICD, Université de Tours
RÉVILLET Stéphane, Associate Professor in British Studies, TIL, Université de Bourgogne Europe
TOURNIER-SOL Karine, Professor in British Studies, BABEL, Université de Toulon

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