



CSG SIXTH FORM MASTERCLASSES



AUTUMN 2023 PROGRAMME

CSG SIXTH FORM MASTERCLASSES

No exams.

No grades.

Just interesting speakers and stimulating discussions.

- Masterclasses are extra-curricular lessons delivered by teachers from CSG or visiting experts in various fields.
- Each masterclass will either provide an introduction to a subject which is not taught at A Level – or explore a new aspect of a subject you are familiar with - taking you beyond the confines of the A Level syllabus.
- Most sessions should be accessible and of interest to students who study the subject in question, as well as those who do not. We hope that a student who is studying sciences would still be interested in poetry and music, and a student of the arts would be interested in scientific questions.
- Hopefully attendance will encourage students to read further and perhaps inspire some to pursue a subject at university.
- Aim to arrive at S5 (Sixth Form Hall) soon after 3.30pm – usually there will be tea, coffee and biscuits – the session will begin at about 3.40pm and finish by 5pm at the latest - **but watch out for occasional exceptions.**

Unfortunately, due to government cuts to the funding of state education since 2010 (and particularly of post-16 state education), it is with regret that we feel we have to make a charge for certain extra-curricular opportunities such as these.

- **Attendance is free for students on bursaries or free school meals.**
- For students who are not on free school meals or a bursary the cost is £10 for a 'season ticket' to attend as many masterclasses as you like in one term – so if you come to all 10 that is only £1 per session!
- Parents/guardians will be sent an invitation to pay through ParentPay by email.

Parents and friends are welcome to attend masterclasses - one off tickets for a session are £10 (this will be used to subsidise the participation of students from less well off backgrounds in the residential trip at the end of the year - see back cover) - please email jstubbings@csg.school to register your interest.

We hope that you will find something of interest in these masterclasses - and that you enjoy them as much as we enjoy preparing and delivering them.

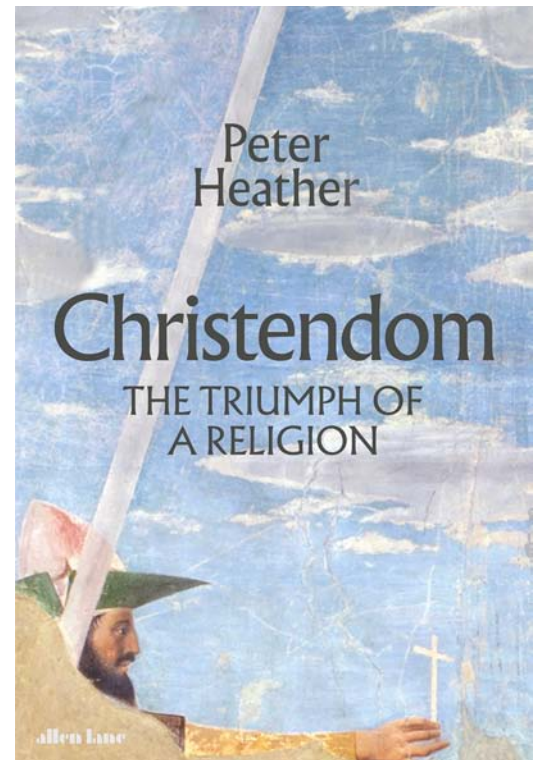
Jon Stubbings

CSG Masterclass Programme Co-ordinator

CHRISTENDOM - HOW CHRISTIANITY CONQUERED THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND ALL OF EUROPE

WITH PETER HEATHER

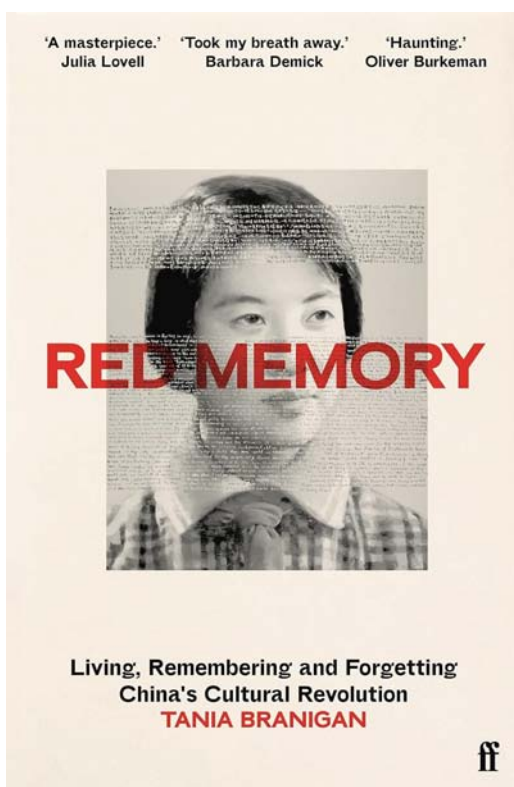
The religion we now call Christianity - the world's largest - began as a small Jewish sect centred around the teachings of a holy man called Jesus in the Roman province of Judaea. His early followers, many of whom were persecuted and killed by the Romans as they began to spread the message throughout the Empire, could not have imagined that within 300 years their beliefs would overwhelm the paganism of Rome, and convert the Emperor Constantine in the process. Christianity survived the collapse of the Western Roman Empire; almost a thousand years later, all of Europe was controlled by Christian rulers, dominating almost every aspect of culture and society. But, as renowned Historian of Late Antiquity Peter Heather will show in this masterclass, there was nothing inevitable about Christendom's rise to Europe-wide dominance.



Thursday 19th October - 3.30pm - S5

RED MEMORY - REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING CHINA'S CULTURAL REVOLUTION

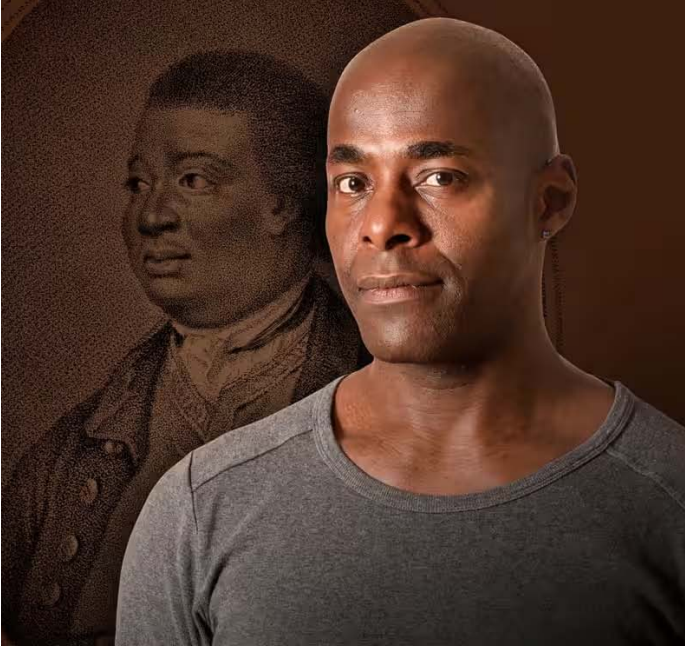
WITH TANIA BRANIGAN



Over fifty years after the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s a scar runs through the heart of Chinese society, and through the souls of its citizens. While stationed in Beijing for the *Guardian*, Tania Branigan came to realise that this brutal and turbulent decade continues to shape China to this day, yet official suppression and personal trauma have conspired to create national amnesia. In this masterclass, as in her new book *Red Memory*, she will explore the stories of those who are driven to confront the era and the official attitude of the Chinese Communist Party to this chapter of the nation's history. What happens to a society when you can no longer trust those closest to you? What happens to the present when the past is buried, exploited or redrawn? And how do you live with yourself when the worst is over?

Thursday 2nd November - 3.30pm - S5

THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF IGNATIUS SANCHO - AN 'AFRICAN MAN OF LETTERS' IN 18TH CENTURY LONDON WITH PATERSON JOSEPH AND JOANNA BROWN

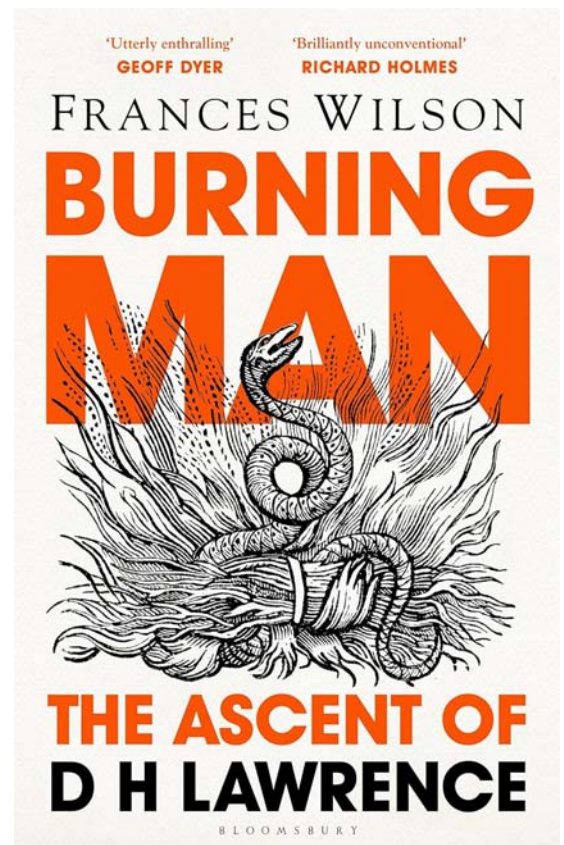


In this masterclass actor and author Paterson Joseph will talk about the extraordinary 18th Century writer, composer and businessman Ignatius Sancho - from his birth on a slave ship - to becoming a respected 'African Man of Letters' in literary London and the first black British man to vote in an election. Paterson will speak about his personal admiration for Sancho, having written (and performed) a play and a novel (*The Secret Diaries of Charles Ignatius Sancho*) about Sancho's life. In this special talk he will be joined by Joanna Brown (who writes for children as J.T. Williams), author of a new series of books featuring Sancho's daughter (*The Lizzie and Belle Mysteries*) - and together they will show why Sancho deserves to be much more widely known.

Thursday 9th November - 3.30pm - S5

BURNING MAN - THE LIFE AND WORK OF D.H. LAWRENCE WITH FRANCES WILSON

In this masterclass renowned biographer Frances Wilson will explore the life and work of the novelist, critic and poet D.H. Lawrence. Now mostly known for the sexually explicit language and subject matter of his once banned novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Lawrence is no longer censored, but in some ways he is still on trial - increasingly unfashionable and viewed with suspicion by a younger generation of readers with very different sensitivities. Come along to find out more about a complex, courageous and often comic fugitive, who travelled around the world in search of his own utopia while writing novels that are still worth reading today.



Thursday 16th November - 3.30pm - S5

RENAISSANCE WOMEN WITH SARAH DUNANT

Sarah Dunant is a cultural commentator, award-winning thriller writer, author of five novels set in Renaissance Italy and host of a monthly BBC podcast 'When Greeks Flew Kites'. In this illustrated talk she will explore the lives of women in the Renaissance period through the art and fashion they both inspired and patronised. Through the stories of exemplary figures such as Isabella d'Este we will learn about politics, religion, art and attitudes towards sex and gender in society at this fascinating time and place in history.



Monday 20th November - 3.30pm - S5

A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO GOETHE - THE 'GERMAN SHAKESPEARE' WITH JON STUBBINGS

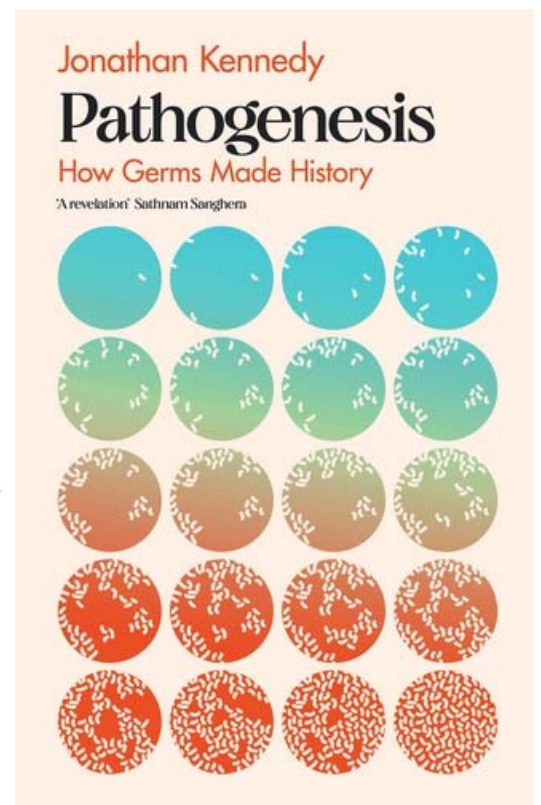
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was a poet, playwright, novelist, scientist, statesman, theatre director, and critic; widely regarded as the greatest writer in the German language (the 'German Shakespeare'), his influence on German literature, music and culture is enormous. Despite describing himself as a citizen of the world, Goethe is less well known in the English speaking world than he should be, with many people not even knowing how to pronounce his name! Come to this masterclass to find out how he harmonised Enlightenment and Romantic impulses in his thought and writing - from the novel that set the radical youth of Europe alight in the 1770s, to his lyric poetry and the epic re-telling of the Faust legend which took the second half of his long life to complete.



Thursday 23rd November - 3.30pm - S5

PATHOGENESIS – HOW GERMS MADE HISTORY WITH JONATHAN KENNEDY

The latest science reveals that infectious diseases are not just something that happens to us, but a fundamental part of who we are. Indeed, the only reason humans don't lay eggs is that a virus long ago inserted itself into our DNA, and there are as many bacteria in your body as there are human cells. Jonathan Kennedy teaches Politics and Global Health at Queen Mary University London. In this talk he will argue that germs have shaped humanity at every stage, from the first success of Homo sapiens over the equally intelligent Neanderthals to the fall of Rome and the rise of Islam.



Monday 27th November - 3.30pm - S5

THE ETHICS OF EMPIRE – A DISCUSSION WITH NIGEL BIGGAR AND TOMIWA OWOLADE



Oxford professor of Theology and Ethics Nigel Biggar's new book *Colonialism - A Moral Reckoning* was literally cancelled by Bloomsbury Books (citing fears of unfavourable 'public feeling') - and it is fair to say that his stated attempt to explore the historiography and ethics of the British Empire in a balanced way has generated some controversy since it was finally published this year by a different publisher. Although by no means unsympathetic to some of Biggar's core contentions about the overreach of the current orthodoxies in activist academia, Tomiwa Owolade (author of *This is Not America*) was nonetheless critical of some aspects of Biggar's book in his review for *The New Statesman*. In this masterclass Nigel and Tomiwa will model a civil, thoughtful exchange of views on what has become an incendiary topic.

Thursday 30th November - 3.30pm - S5

'BARBENHEIMER' – WHAT *BARBIE* AND *OPPENHEIMER* REVEAL ABOUT MODERN SEXUAL POLITICS WITH ALEXANDER BEINER

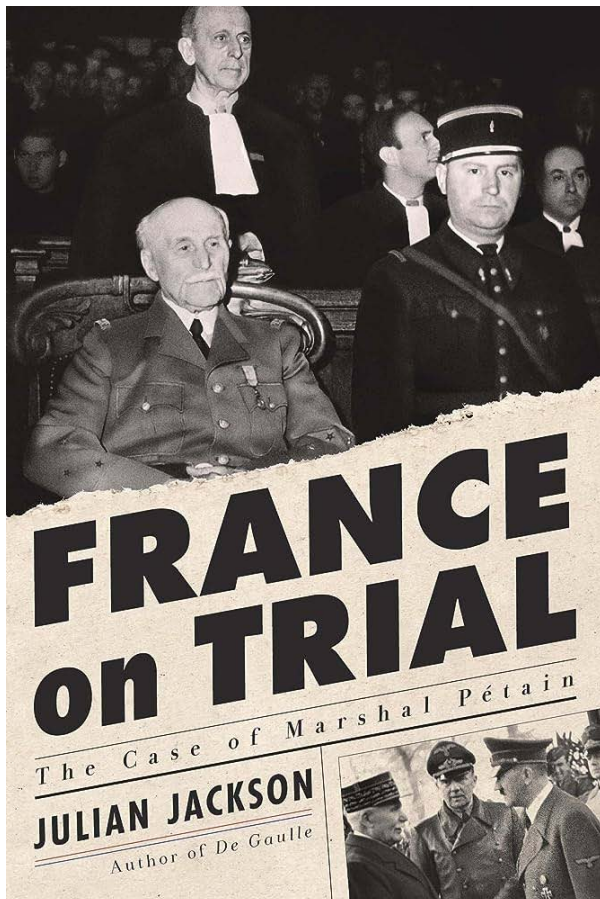
As Barbie and Oppenheimer ended their cinematic runs, they left behind one of the strangest memes of recent times: Barbenheimer. It may well be a coincidence that two very popular films were released in the same week in the Summer of 2023 - but beyond their popularity, what really drove the meme and created such a powerful cultural moment? In this masterclass, cultural commentator, co-founder of the Rebel Wisdom YouTube channel and Substack author Alexander Beiner will employ a reading of the two films to explore Metamodern Feminism, Hollywood presentations of masculinity, and what all of this tells us about prevailing attitudes towards sex and gender in the 2020s.



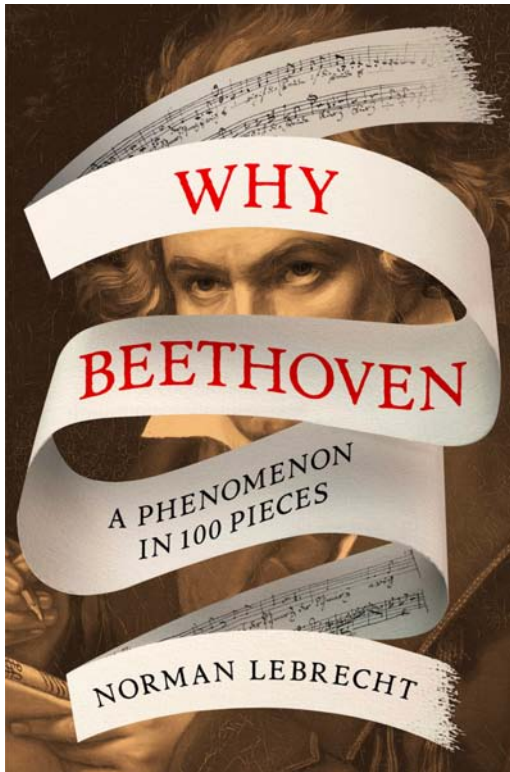
Monday 4th December - 3.30pm - S5

FRANCE ON TRIAL – THE AFTERMATH OF WWII WITH JULIAN JACKSON

Julian Jackson is Emeritus Professor of Modern French History at Queen Mary University London and the author of many books about France before, during, and after the national trauma of World War Two. In this masterclass he will tell the story of Marshal Pétain - the great French Hero of World War One who led the collaborationist Vichy Government after the fall of France in 1940, but who was subsequently charged with treason - using his three week treason trial in 1945 as a lens through which to examine the central political and moral crisis of twentieth-century French history: the defeat of 1940, the signing of the armistice and Vichy's policy of collaboration.



Thursday 7th December - 3.30pm - S5



WHY BEETHOVEN? WITH NORMAN LEBRECHT

In this masterclass, world renowned classical music journalist and author Norman Lebrecht will talk about the life, work and cultural significance of the composer Ludwig van Beethoven. He will bring the controversial, unruly, rude and revolutionary composer to life through some of the 100 pieces that feature in his new book 'Why Beethoven', giving a sense of how Beethoven overcame the affliction of deafness to create some of the most enduring music ever written, and why that music is still very much worth listening to today.

ADVANCE NOTICE:

HISTORY OF IDEAS/MASTERCLASSES RESIDENTIAL TRIP TO EASTERN GERMANY IN SUMMER 2024

A five day historical and cultural trip to Eastern Germany (staying in Leipzig and Weimar) is currently being planned for the end of the Summer term in 2024. It will be of particular interest to students of Music, Art, History of Art, History, Politics, Philosophy and Theology - but will be open to all Sixth Formers - both Year 12 and 13. If more than 25 students would like to come then priority will be given to people who attend the History of Ideas enrichment. A letter will go out soon with more information about itinerary, costs and dates etc.

