



GLADSTONE'S LIBRARY



At the Gladstone's Library hub we invite proposals for 15-20-minute individual papers or panel proposals on the topic of events as moments of change.

In studies of the nineteenth century, events are frequently centred in analyses and presented as moments of transformation. The event of Queen Victoria's coronation and reign is described as framing the period, shaping both it and its people both in Britain and beyond. Today fields of study, academic departments, institutions, societies, and associations across the world are dedicated to the study of 'the Victorian Period' and 'the Victorians'. Within this, events such as the passing of the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, the Irish Potato Famine, the expansion of print culture, the invention of the telegraph, the extension of railway lines, the Crimean War, the cholera epidemic of 1854, the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, the American Civil War, the Bulgarian massacres, the Jack the Ripper murders, the discovery of bacteria, and the Boer War (to name but a few) are described as points of change, development, and shift.

We are living in a time that will likely be discussed by future critics as a point of change. Over the last decade we have witnessed and lived through what could be described as life- and world-changing events, such as Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ukraine War, the death of Queen Elizabeth II and coronation of King Charles III, the invention and rapid development of AI, and the ever-developing climate emergency.

At this conference we will ask, to what extent does living through these experiences change our perspective of similar moments in history, and of this tendency in historical analysis? What is it like to live through these events? How are these experiences and the change they cause recorded? Do they cause as much change as we have assumed? What are the repercussions of viewing a century and its people in terms of particular points on a timeline? Who do these spotlights benefit, and who do they forget and obscure? Does this kind of a reading assume continual progress, development, and improvement and overlook reversions, regressions, and deterioration? What Western understandings of time underpin these readings, and how might they be challenged by a more multicultural approach? Are some events truly period-defining with easily traced effects and consequences?