



POLITEIA

Academic Values and Cultural Traditions Threatened by ‘A New Normal’, says Cambridge Academic in new Politeia publication

Publication: Immediate

Over the last 18 months, much of Britain’s cultural and academic establishment has begun to press for radical change to how we think about culture and the past.

Leading figures in the media, the universities and in public life advocate

- Removing statues that have stood in streets and squares for decades or centuries
- Changing the history taught in schools
- ‘Decolonizing the curriculum at university

Politeia’s next publication, *The Battle for Britain’s Cultural Identity. Against the New Normal*, attacks such demands. The author, Cambridge philosopher and fellow of Trinity College, John Marenbon, argues that: -

- the long held British attitude towards statues, as a generally ignored and vague backdrop, is a way of living at ease with our long history and should not be sacrificed.
- the National Curriculum as it now stands offers enormous flexibility to teachers, while insisting that they teach the framework of British history that pupils need to understand in order fully to be British citizens.
- there are straightforward reasons for university curricula to emphasize their own national culture and its wider setting, while making it possible for specialists to study every sort of civilization.

The demand to decolonize is a move to politicize university study and, as such, a grave threat to academic aims and values.

Commenting on the publication, Dr Sheila Lawlor, Politeia’s founder and Research Director, herself an historian, says:

‘The people of this country care deeply about their traditions, their identity, their culture and their history, an important part of which has been accommodating and adapting to change. They know that every era has had its strengths and weaknesses. But it is not for people today to invent a past based on distortion and the political platitudes of the moment.’

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. *The Battle for Britain's Cultural Identity – Against the New Normal* by John Marenbon will be published by Politeia, 42 Berkeley Square, London, W1J 5AW.
2. **Professor John Marenbon** is a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge and the British Academy and Honorary Professor of Medieval Philosophy in Cambridge. His publications include *Pagans and Philosophers: The Problem of Paganism from Augustine to Leibniz* and *Medieval Philosophy. A Very Short Introduction*. For Politeia he has written *Intangible Assets: Funding Research in the Arts and Humanities* (2018), co-published with New Direction.
3. Established in 1995, Politeia is an independent, non-partisan think-tank providing a forum to discuss economic, constitutional and social policy with a particular focus on the role of the state in people's lives.