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WELCOME

It was the 'decade of excess'. But the prism of history shows there's more to the 80s than shoulder pads, *Dynasty* and the Right to Buy...

Looking back is a look at now

It is remarkable how rapidly the present becomes the past: how something seemingly recent is suddenly "history".

We find ourselves looking back at the 1980s in a series of essays commissioned to support our *Back to the future: 1979–1989* programme, which takes a fresh look at that defining decade.

Through the eyes of academics, researchers, professional writers and our staff, we examine a period which so clearly shaped our modern world – culturally, musically, politically and socially.

You can see it in the ubiquity of earphones that the Walkman initiated, in the response to AIDS, and in the tensions that develop between supposedly friendly nations – all of these topics are covered within these pages.

The writing, throughout, is bold and arresting, by turns amusing and poignant.

In keeping with the decade, the 80s essays have been reproduced in a style akin to that icon of graphic design and long-form journalism, *The New Yorker*.

Aside from the 80s, you will find other eye-catching pieces, from a sample of the 14,000 photos in the stunning MacKinnon Collection, to a look at the evocative film, *Her Century*.

Enjoy this righteous issue.

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WE WANT YOUR VIEWS



Seattle-based choral group Byrd International Singers view a mediaeval music book before performing at the 2019 Fringe

We are about to go out for public consultation on our draft strategy for 2020–2025, which will take us up to our centenary.


While we are confident in our direction of travel, we would like as many people as possible to have a say in how your National Library will best serve you in the

coming years. The strategy will set out how we plan to broaden our horizons, reach new audiences, shape our digital services to suit your needs, and take the national collections to locations beyond Edinburgh and Glasgow.

While retaining our reputation as a sanctuary for study and research, we also have plans to redevelop our

George IV Bridge building into a more welcoming and invigorating place for people to visit – tailored for audiences of all ages and interests.

The consultation begins on 2 December and will run until 27 January, 2020. Let us know what you think.

 **Complete the submission via our website (it should only take five minutes).**

Email us at strategy@nls.uk or write to us at Strategy 2020–2025, National Library of Scotland, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1EW.

Pop into one of our drop-in sessions, between 3pm and 7pm, on the following dates:

Wednesday 11 December, Kelvin Hall, Glasgow.

Tuesday 14 January, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh.

Entries now open for prestigious bookbinding award



The Elizabeth Soutar Bookbinding Competition is once again calling for entries, and in keeping with this 80s edition of Discover, entrants are asked to 'take a trip back to the 80s' with their submissions.


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Mrs Elizabeth A Clark (formerly Soutar), of Moray, sponsored the competition from 1993 until her death in 2008. It has continued since then with support from the Magnus and Janet Soutar Fund.

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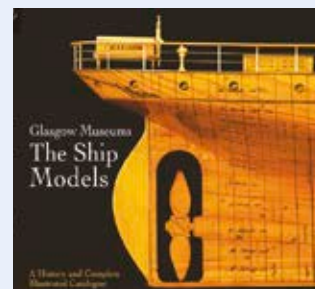
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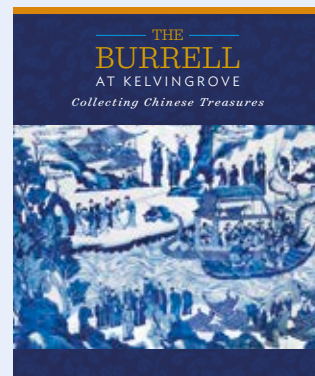
Emily Malcolm and Michael R Harrison
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Yupin Chung
Published by Glasgow Museums
ISBN 978 1 908638 32 8;
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BACK TO THE FUTURE

Graeme Hawley, Head of General Collections, discusses our essays looking back on a decade of monumental change at home and abroad

Since May this year, the Library has been looking at the 1980s with *Back to the future: 1979-1989*. As curator of the multimedia and multi-platform retrospective, early questions that I had to answer were: why start in 1979, why the 1980s, and why now?

The answer to the first question is just over 6,000 words and is given in the second-longest of the long reads on our 1980s website.

In part a review of Christian Caryl's 2013 book *Strange Rebels: 1979 and the Birth of the 21st Century*, the essay looks at five significant events from that year: the election of Margaret Thatcher, the Iranian Revolution, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pope John Paul II's visit to Poland, and Deng Xiaoping's economic reform in China. The case is made that these events set the scene not just for the decade that followed, but for the last 40 years.

Of course, 1989 was also a year of significant events: the Tiananmen Square massacre, the fall of the Berlin Wall, revolutions in Czechoslovakia and Romania, and the invention of the World Wide Web.

These two years bookend a decade of profound geopolitical, social and technological change. The 1980s is therefore a densely rich period to study, suitably distant to allow us to see things afresh, suitably close to benefit from the accounts of living witnesses.

Our website features tender eyewitness accounts of events such as women's activism in Northern Ireland, the Velvet Revolution, the Berlin Wall's fall, and an extremely moving essay by Kate Adie on Tiananmen Square.

The 80s was also a decade that still shapes the world today. Now is a very

good time to familiarise ourselves with what happened in our recent past. Essays on the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, the Antarctic ozone hole, and Section 28 have all felt particularly relevant since we started the retrospective in May.

Now is also a good time to ask ourselves: "What on earth is going on?" And among the Library's 2.9 million publications that we collected during the 80s (an astonishing fact in itself) there is a book published in 1980 that possibly contains the answer: Alvin Toffler's *The Third Wave*. Focus of the longest of the long reads, this book looks at the bigger shifts that impacted on us: accelerative change, an historic increase in social and political complexity, and the friction that occurs as industrial society is replaced by something else. That it was published at the start of the radical changes of the 1980s and foretold much of the 40 years since is testament to Toffler's skills as a futurologist.

There are 60 essays that span the decade: technology, popular culture, synth pop, fashion, Mrs Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, Cold War politics,

horror, protest and the Right to Buy are all common themes.

Back to the future: 1979-1989 has been an opportunity to invite people to look again at the 80s. But it has also been an opportunity to demonstrate the vastness of our collections.

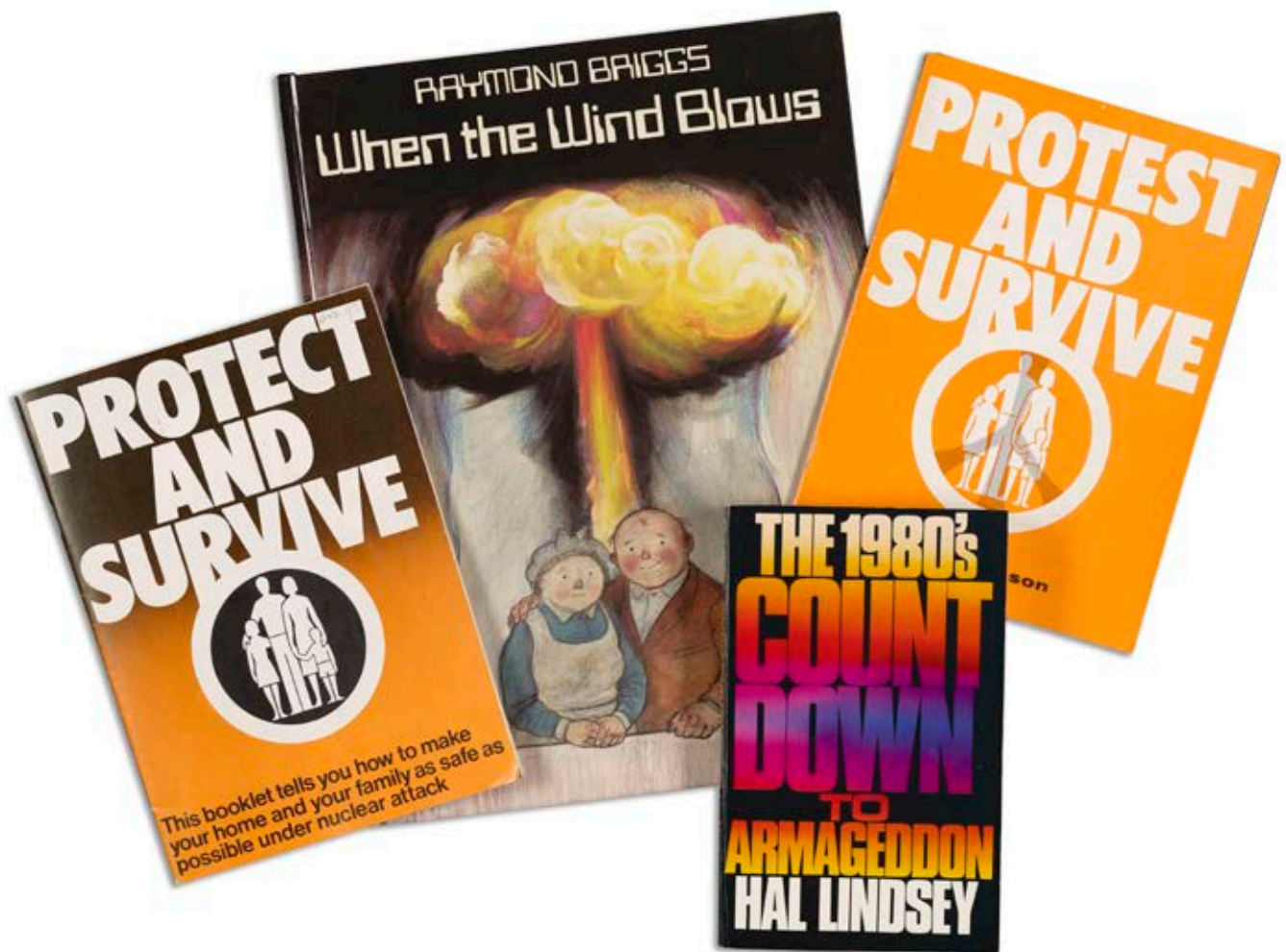
That required a new approach, with long reads online linking to suggestions for further reading, and to digital resources that Library members can access from home.

Here are just some of our favourite reflections on the fascinating decade...



STATE FUNERALS IN THE 1980S

As the threat of nuclear war loomed large, the Funeral March ushered in a changing of the guard. The Library's Graeme Hawley was a fascinated child



My first exposure to human death that I remember, I think, was the assassination of President Anwar Sadat of Egypt in 1981. I was seven.

I don't remember anything about the death of John Lennon the year before, or my parents referring to it, although I do remember Jimmy Carter losing the US presidential election a month before and feeling sorry for him.

I used to come home from school for lunch and would watch the news with my mum. I remember seeing the airfield tarmac, some crouching and fast-moving gunmen, and probably the voice of Sandy Gall explaining that President Sadat had been assassinated. As I recall, they didn't

show his actual dead body on the news. I went back to school after lunch and told the other kids that Anwar Sadat had died, but they'd never heard of him.

THE STATE FUNERAL OF LEONID BREZHNEV IN 1982

I'm almost certain that the first corpse I ever saw therefore was the fifth Leader of the Soviet Union (if you count Malenkov), Leonid Brezhnev. I was eight years old. I watched his funeral on the television and was astonished by it and by the total lack of effort to conceal his deadness. I didn't realise that a dead person could be so deliberately visible.

At age eight, I knew nothing of the

Soviet Union other than to fear it. By that age I had accepted as a simple fact that I would one day be annihilated by this estranged entity, and that even our ice skaters weren't safe from them.

The year before Brezhnev's funeral I had witnessed, along with two billion others, a tremendous state occasion in the form of the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer. State occasions were supposed to be colourful affairs. But despite my total lack of knowledge about state-run societies and the events in the forest of Ekaterinburg in 1918, I instantly knew upon watching the state funeral of Brezhnev that this was a country that would never have a royal

wedding. And I think that was so because of a complete absence of anyone that I saw on the television who might take the role of a bride. Growing up in a country with a female head of state and a female head of government, it was, albeit no doubt subconsciously at the age of eight, properly odd to see a balcony of men only at such a massive state occasion. Where on earth was the queen?

My memory of Brezhnev's funeral is quite limited. I recall it as a predominantly charcoal grey affair with lots of red flags and large photographs of the dead leader. I can also recall Brezhnev's large waxy face, and the sense of seriousness amongst all those assembled in massed rank. But I mostly remember it for Chopin's Piano Sonata No.2 in B-flat minor, more popularly known as the 'funeral march'.

Children in the late 70s and early 80s always seemed to be mumbling the funeral march. It was convenient shorthand for conveying dread or threat, and was in regular use as I recall. I had no idea that it was in fact a piano sonata by Chopin, nor indeed how the piece progressed beyond the 11 melancholy notes to which we would perform a crude military step. But as I watched Brezhnev's coffin work its way through the mourners, I heard for the first time how the piece develops, with a triumphant section leading then to a rather exquisite little melody.

I'm more familiar now with this as a piano work, but back then even the Red Army Band managed to convey the hidden beauty within the piece. Growing up in an English village, nothing about Brezhnev's funeral ought to have felt familiar, and yet the soundtrack to it felt like life in the West Riding of Yorkshire at Whitsuntide.

That's as much as I recall, but the impression it left on me was significant. It was the first time that I had seen the Soviet Union at work. Far from the nightmare-inducing alien lifeform that I had imagined they must be in order to want to kill me and my family to death with nuclear bombs, or invade our house and make us be something we didn't want to be, they seemed rather organised, tuneful, and capable of being sad too.

THE STATE FUNERAL OF TITO IN 1980

I've been fascinated by state funerals ever since. At eight, I came late to the party; if I had been a more attentive six-year-old I would have been able to tune in to the state funeral of Josip Broz Tito, President of Yugoslavia. Taking place on 8 May, 1980, it is regarded as one of the largest

state funerals ever, and there's a reason for this: Tito was a co-founder and the first Secretary General of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). This group of countries accounted for most of the rest of the world who were not party to NATO or the Warsaw Pact, and NAM countries were therefore not only important to each other, but to the two superpower blocs as well. Tito's funeral was a gathering everyone wanted to be at.

The list of attendees at Tito's funeral reads like a Who's Who of world politics at the time: Saddam Hussein (Iraq), King Hussein of Jordan, Kim Il-Sung (North Korea), Eric Honecker (East Germany), Helmut Schmidt (West Germany), Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq (Pakistan), Nicolae Ceausescu (Romania), Leonid Brezhnev (USSR), President Hafez Assad (Syria), Hua Guofeng (China), Hosni Mubarak (Egypt), Indira Gandhi (India), Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe), future French president Francois Mitterand, Margaret Thatcher, Jim Callaghan, and Prince Philip (home team), and US President Jimmy Carter's mother (Jimmy Carter stayed away because he did not want to bump into Brezhnev).

In addition to these were scores of foreign ministers and other leaders of organisations and paramilitary



Yuri Andropov died in 1984

organisations including Yasser Arafat (Palestinian Liberation Organisation), and Billy McKee (provisional Irish Republican Army). In 1980, quite a gathering.

With 83 per cent of United Nations member states represented in one way or another, what becomes more interesting isn't so much who attended this funeral as who didn't. To the best of my knowledge, 21 countries were not officially represented at Tito's funeral. I

can't think of any obvious reason why there was no one from the Dominican Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Djibouti, Malawi, Bhutan, or Laos, other than that they perhaps felt too little a connection to the event to make arrangements at short notice, or that they knew that one of their neighbours would pass on their best wishes.

Suriname (in the throes of a military coup), Chad (engaged in a post-civil war power struggle), Papua New Guinea (whose prime minister had just lost a vote of no confidence), Guatemala (civil war), El Salvador (civil war), and Honduras (elections) all presumably had other more pressing matters to attend to.

As far as I am aware, President Jawara of the Gambia also did not attend, although he may well have had reason to stay at home in May 1980 because when he attended the Royal wedding the year after, a Marxist coup temporarily toppled him from power.

South Africa was not officially represented, presumably as a result of international hostility towards the country's system of Apartheid, but the African National Congress was there, as well as the South West African People's Organisation from Namibia, and the Polisario Front from Western Sahara, while official representatives were not. Chile and Paraguay, whose right-wing leaders may well have found themselves without anyone to sit next to, were also not officially represented.

Saudi Arabia did not send official representation, I'm guessing on account of Iranian attendance; Israel did not send representation, I imagine because of the presence of a number of hostile nations and individuals (not least Arafat) and general feelings towards Tito's politics; and South Korea stayed away, I am assuming, because North Korea went. I may well be wrong.

A notable absence at Tito's funeral was Fidel Castro. Both men had been, by all accounts, good personal friends and had much in common politically. But in 1979, with Castro hosting the 6th NAM summit in Havana, their relationship had deteriorated as a result of a significant departure from each other on basic principles. Whereas Castro was keen to see NAM adopt a sympathetic leaning towards Moscow, Tito maintained that non-alignment should mean precisely that. Having been friends for years, this rupture was significant enough to keep Castro away, sending his foreign minister instead.

FUNERAL DIPLOMACY

The list of foreign dignitaries at

Brezhnev's funeral reads a little like the B team in comparison. For Western nations still engaged in a precariously balanced and weaponised Cold War, attending this occasion was a political hot potato. The United Kingdom scaled down from the 1980 gathering to Francis Pym (Foreign Secretary) and Ambassador Sir Ian Sutherland. The United States scaled up (I think), from the President's mother in 1980, to Vice President George Bush. China sent their foreign minister. It's worth remembering that Sino-Soviet relations during this period were at least as complex, if not more so, than US-Soviet relations. Discuss.

Despite these calculated and loaded choices, there were still considerable numbers of A-list heads of state to do the occasion justice, including leaders of the Eastern Bloc countries, President Mohammed Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India, and Colonel Gaddafi of Libya. Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau of Canada attended with his son, Justin, who would have been three years older than me at the time. Also in attendance on this occasion was Fidel Castro.

Just like an invitation to any social occasion, there is a maze of issues to navigate when it comes to attending a state funeral: did you like the person; will it trigger an international incident if you go; will it trigger an international incident if you don't go; will there be people there that you really don't want to talk to; will there be someone that you can sit next to and involve yourself with until you can leave quietly; can someone else go instead; what excuse or reason do you give for not attending?

Such is the complexity of issues around state funerals, there is even a name for the art form: the working funeral, or funeral diplomacy. They are obviously places to do business, or to observe others doing business. How sincere were the greetings? Who seemed relaxed? Who arrived early or stayed late? You can form, enhance, or repair relationships by attending. You can even make a point by not attending.

AFTER BREZHNEV

Following the death of Brezhnev, the world got extra practice in Soviet funeral attendance, with Brezhnev's successor, Yuri Andropov dying in 1984, two years after taking office, and his successor, Konstantin Chernenko dying after only nine months in office. In a CIA memo dated 28 March, 1985 (available on the eResource *Cold War Intelligence*, one of the National Library of Scotland's many subscriptions), you can read the



Jimmy Carter and Leonid Brezhnev sign the SALT II nuclear treaty

● You can form, enhance or repair relationships by attending. You can even make a point by not attending ●

CIA's assessment of Fidel Castro's latest decision not to attend a funeral: "Castro's decision not to attend the funeral of Soviet General Secretary Konstantin Chernenko on 13 March apparently was intended to underscore his continued dissatisfaction with several elements of Soviet policy... Castro evidently concluded that a symbolic rebuke to the Soviets would be more beneficial for Cuban interests than any favour he could curry by attending the funeral. The fact that he passed up the opportunity to meet Gorbachev... suggests he is pessimistic that relations can be improved in the near term."

The obituary for Brezhnev in *The Times* for 12 November, 1982, page 6 (available on *The Times Digital Archive*, another one of our subscriptions), gives a full page to discussing his life and importance. Although regarded as a 'safe pair of hands', the domestic stability that he oversaw also coincided with economic stagnation. International relations improved, but stopped short of breaking much by way of new ground. Concerns about improving relations between

China and the US cast a considerable shadow over these key relationships. The tightening of control over Eastern Europe and expansion of Soviet military might between 1964 and 1982 seem to be significant features of his rule.

A strategic and military miscalculation in 1979 with the invasion of Afghanistan meant that at the time of his death, he was leaving under a considerable cloud. But in a 2013 poll by the Levada Center, Brezhnev scored highest in a popularity vote of Soviet leaders, six points ahead of Stalin. Perhaps there is nostalgia not so much for him, but for a time when the Soviet brand was so strong. Achieving military parity with the United States came at a huge price, but in terms of the psyche of the USSR (or perhaps more specifically, Russia and pro-Russian republics of the USSR), perhaps it was a price worth paying.

Brezhnev was the second-longest-serving leader of the USSR and was in office during a period of incredible geopolitical change when the modus operandi of the Cold War superpowers were perfected. As a personality, he seems less remarkable in contrast to those that came before him, or the (Western) media-friendly Gorbachev who followed. The image that I tend to think of is of his dead waxy face in 1982, but it belies a far more interesting character I suspect, and one that I think might be due for reappraisal.

I saw the funerals of both Andropov and Chernenko on the television in 1984 and 1985 but I don't have any very strong memories of them. But there was a state funeral in 1984 that I do remember seeing very well, and that was the funeral of Indira Gandhi. I remember quite clearly

that it was a Saturday because we were all watching teatime television when her son, Rajiv Gandhi, split her skull open with a thick wooden pole whilst she lay on an open pyre so as to release her soul from the body. It couldn't have been more culturally different to funerals in this country, although open pyres had been introduced to the Western world the year before courtesy of the final scenes in *Return of the Jedi*, in which Darth Vader is returned to the spirit of Anakin Skywalker via an open pyre on the forest moon of Endor.

For the funeral of Indira Gandhi, who had been assassinated by two of her own bodyguards, the United States sent Vice President George Bush again. Margaret Thatcher and Princess Anne represented the United Kingdom, Yasser Arafat attended, as did President Zia-ul-Haq, which was a surprise given the serious tensions between India and Pakistan at that time. Mrs Thatcher's attendance only three weeks after she herself had survived an assassination attempt in the Brighton hotel bombing was testament, amongst other things, to the close personal relationship between the two world leaders in spite of their difference of opinions on free markets. Fidel Castro did not turn up, again, which seemed to genuinely surprise people given his warm friendship with Gandhi.

1989 AND THE END OF AN ERA

There are circumstances under which state funerals do not typically take place: reasons might include execution, exile, relative insignificance, exiting office under a cloud, and length of absence from office prior to death. They are usually the preserve of leaders or figures who die in office, and those types of leaders are usually democratically elected leaders who are assassinated (like Indira Gandhi), or life-term political or religious leaders or monarchs who die, typically through illness, while in that role (like leaders of the Soviet Union, or popes). There are also significant funerals for people who occupy a unique place in the national psyche but who otherwise may not formally qualify (in this country, see: Duke of Wellington, Winston Churchill, Princess Diana).

Whereas large funerals of notable people command personal choices and draw upon the personal relationships that people had with the deceased, state funerals are corporate by comparison. Attendance by someone is required, unless you want to send a message by staying away. What can be additionally interesting is when individuals become

part of the funeral furniture. I was interested enough in this to try to chart the attendance of leaders at state funerals in the 80s on a spreadsheet, but apart from the difficulty in establishing attendance, guests too often became the deposited or deceased to see any patterns emerging (Zia-ul-Haq died in 1988).

The decade ended with two significant funerals. In 1989, Hirohito, the Emperor of Japan, died after a reign of 62 years. He was the longest-reigning monarch in the world at that time. His funeral was a huge occasion, steeped in protocol, ceremony, and ritual (the *Annual Obituary* for 1989, available in our main reading room, notes that Hirohito's funeral was accompanied by the actual ceremonial suicides of two elderly gentlemen). It was one of the largest state funerals ever, for a person whose rule had spanned one of the most transformative periods in history, but caused considerable consternation in the West because of the role of Imperial Japan in the Second World War. George Bush, always the bridesmaid at these affairs, finally got to represent the United States as President. Japan in 1989 was an ally, and a vital economic sparring partner. Not unlike the funeral of Tito at the start of the decade, everyone was there for this gathering in Tokyo.

Also in 1989 was the funeral of Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini. Not only was this probably the largest state funeral ever, it is also still amongst the largest gatherings of human beings in history, with approximately 10 million people in attendance. Few of those attendees, however, were foreign dignitaries, such was the pariah nation status of Iran at that time, and it does not feel like a state funeral to me in the way that most other state funerals do. It was different in every possible way.

Since the 1980s, state funerals have continued to serve their important, sombre, and peculiar purpose. They continue to throw up the kind of diplomatic headaches that many leaders could do without. Occasionally there are people who, for a variety of reasons, command such widespread international and popular admiration and respect – even if there have been historical differences – that attending their funeral seems to be not just a duty but an honour (see: Nelson Mandela, Pope John Paul II,

Princess Diana). Margaret Thatcher's funeral at St Paul's Cathedral in 2013 feels fairly unique in that domestic reaction did not match international reaction quite as these moments usually do, and is evidence of the polarising effect she has even now on British society. It stopped short of a state funeral, but nonetheless attracted the unusual presence of Queen Elizabeth II.

In fairness to Fidel Castro, non-attendance at international funerals, even though he may have personally wished to attend, was perhaps a method of survival. Famously the target of hundreds of assassination attempts, attending a funeral (typically at short notice and with the secret services of dozens of other nations presumably present) was a high-risk move. In 2016, it was the rest of the world's turn to say goodbye, leading to hand-wringing of epic proportions. The United Kingdom was officially represented in Havana by Alan Duncan, Minister of State for Europe and the Americas.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

You will find hundreds of entries in our catalogue by searching for any of these terms: 'Brezhnev', 'Tito', 'Fidel Castro', 'Indira Gandhi', or 'Non-Aligned Movement'.

Registered readers in Scotland can access some excellent eResources from home by going to the eResources page of our *Digital Resources* section. *Cold War Intelligence* contains a lot of original source material relating to some of the themes in this essay. The *Brill Journals Collection* features a number of interesting journal titles in the International Relations section. *Sage Journals* has a large section within Social Sciences and Humanities called *Politics and International Relations* which has dozens of journal titles of interest. *SpringerLink journals and ebook collection* has a huge number of resources within the Political Science and International Relations section of relevance to the political topics covered in this essay. There is a journal title on the *Oxford Journals Online* resource called *Diplomatic History* which is well worth exploring with the search terms suggested above.

● Also in 1989 was the funeral of Ayatollah Khomeini. It is still amongst the largest gatherings of human beings in history... approximately 10 million in attendance ●