



UCL

# Mary Douglas Memorial Lecture

## The Politicization of Consumption: The World of Goods Revisited

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Wednesday 23 May 2018  
6pm

Archaeology Lecture Theatre,  
UCL Anthropology,  
14 Taviton Street,  
London WC1H 0BW

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**Caroline Humphrey**

Emeritus Professor of Social Anthropology  
University of Cambridge

Mary Douglas with Baron Isherwood famously argued that the desire for goods is not an individual psychological urge. Rather, it is part of a social way of life, expressing identities, signaling esteem, and indeed 'making culture.' This lecture takes up this insight to explore the implications of the politicization of consumption, especially of goods traded internationally. Political attitudes often outweigh the conventional criteria of price and quality, and result in decisions not to purchase (e.g. boycotts) as well as preferences. In uncertain times and across hostile borders trade goods are not only politicized markers but can also be symbolically provocative agents, capable, for example as viral memes on the Internet, of incitement to new identities and relations. The lecture will focus on goods in the Russia - China - Ukraine trade nexus, and will comment on the relevance of this case for broader contemporary issues, from ethical consumption to trade standards to Brexit.



Register at: <https://mary-douglas-memorial-lecture-2018.eventbrite.co.uk>

The annual lecture, in memory of Dame Mary Douglas (1921-2007), is sponsored by the Royal Anthropological Institute, the School of Anthropology & Museum Ethnography at the University of Oxford, and the Department of Anthropology at UCL.