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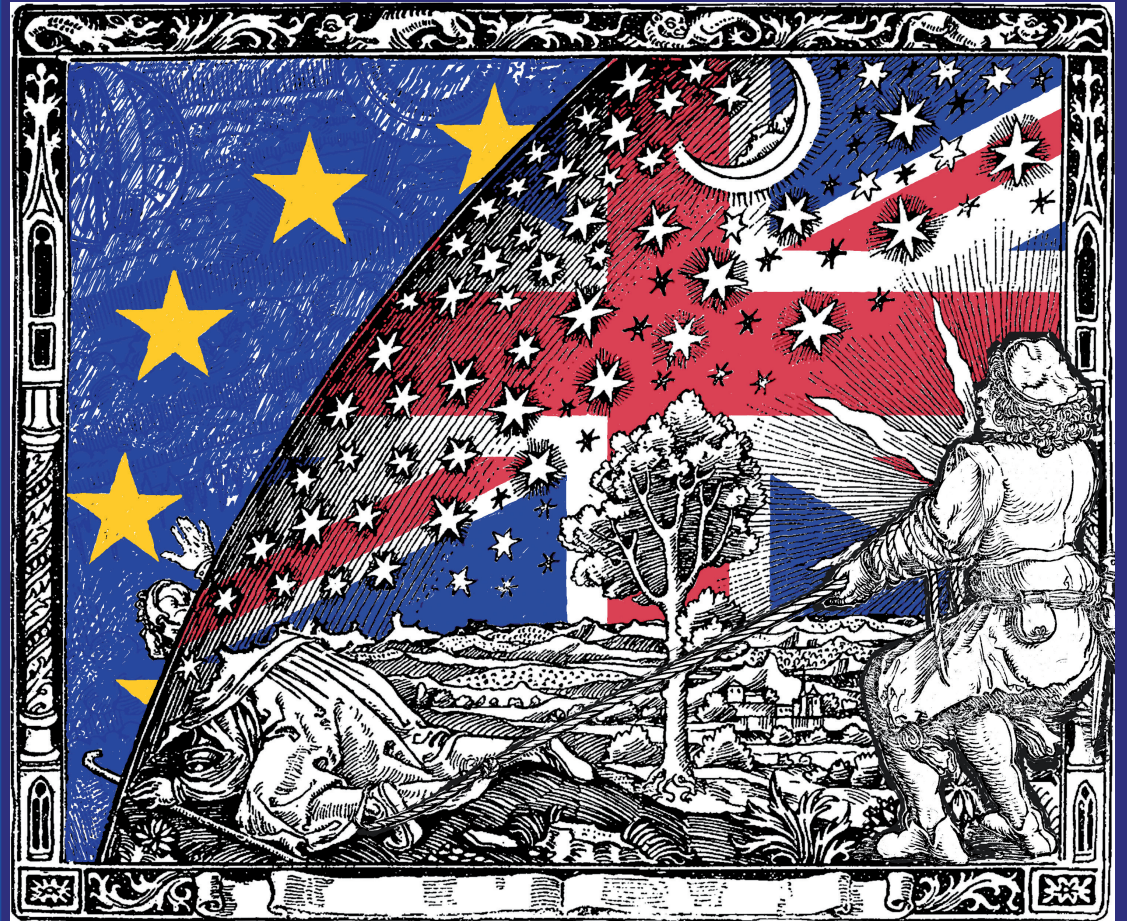


Freiwillige Akademische
Gesellschaft Basel

SAUTE
Swiss Association of University Teachers of English

m MAX GELDNER
STIFTUNG

**Department of
English**



2019 SAUTE Conference
Brexit and Beyond: Nation and Identity

May 3 & 4 2019, University of Basel, Department of English

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Programme

**Friday,
May 3 2019**

09:00	REGISTRATION (Lecture Hall)	
09:30	WELCOME (Lecture Hall)	
10:00	KEYNOTE 1 (Lecture Hall) Christine Berberich, University of Portsmouth, GB Brexit and the Migrant Experience – a Personalised Account Chair: Ina Habermann	
11:00	COFFEE	
	Section 1A Writing Travel / Travel Writing (Lecture Hall) Chair: Ina Habermann	Section 1B Writing Brexit: Ali Smith (Room 11) Chair: Daniela Keller
11:30	Jérémie Magnin The Importance of Being 'A.C.': Visitors' Books and National Ideology in the Swiss Alps	Merle Tönnies / Dennis Henneböhl Negotiating Images of (Un-) Belonging and (Divided) Communities: Ali Smith's 'Seasonal Quartet' as a Counter-Narrative to Brexit
12:00	Anne-Claire Michoux To have Brexit, one needs Britain: What one Romantic Woman Writer thought on the Issue	Harald Pittel Dreams, Death, Desire: Ali Smith's 'Coming-of-Age' in the Age of Brexit
12:30	Marijke Denger Instrumentalising (In)Dependence: Empire, Nation and Identity in Nineteenth-Century British Travel Writing and the Pro-Brexit Campaign	
13:00	LUNCH	

Programme

**Friday,
May 3 2019**

	Section 2A The BrexLit Phenomenon (Lecture Hall) Chair: Melanie Küng	Section 2B Identity / Politics (Room 11) Chair: Ina Habermann
15:00	Sara Alessio From Politics to Literature: <i>Reading</i> Brexit	Jenni Riihimäki Analysis of the representation of the UK as a member of the EU in the debates of the British House of Commons from 1975 to 2011
15:30	Victoria Allen <i>Long Road from Jarrow:</i> Stuart Maconie's writing as a contribution to cultural myths and memories in the context of Brexit- negotiating-Britain	Nora Wenzl 'We might be a small island but we punch above our weight' – National identities as constructed in British parliamentary debates about Brexit
16:00	Michelle Witen <i>Alice in Brexitland</i> and Other Tales: The Story of Brexit in Children's Literature	Ray Kinsella / Maurice Kinsella Austerity and Autonomy: Existential Crisis in the EU
16:30	Coffee break	
17:00	KEYNOTE 2 (Lecture Hall) Shelley Fisher-Fishkin, Stanford University, USA Nostalgia for a Fictive Past: Nation and Identity in a Post- Trump, Post-Brexit World Chair: Philipp Schweighauser	
19:00	CONFERENCE DINNER	

Programme

**Saturday,
May 4 2019**

09:00	KEYNOTE 3 (Lecture Hall) Maurice Fitzpatrick Fractured Identities: How Brexit is Unravelling an Agreed Ireland Chair: Ina Habermann	
10:00	COFFEE	
	Section 3A Native American Identities (Lecture Hall) Chair: Michelle Witen	Section 3B Constructions of Otherness (Room: 11) Chair: Daniela Keller
10:30	Sämi Ludwig When Local Indians Negotiate with the Global Other: The First British Empire and the History of Changing 'Fathers' on the Great Lakes	Paola Giorgis IN OTHER WORDS: How Words (re)produce Otherness – and how such construction can be problematized
11:00	Cécile Heim '(Non)Domestic (In) Dependent Nations': Unsettling the U.S. Settler State in Linda Hogan's <i>Mean Spirit</i>	Matthias D. Berger 2016 and All That: Medievalism and Exceptionalism in Brexit Britain
11:30	SAUTE Annual General Meeting	
13:00	LUNCH	

Programme

**Saturday,
May 4 2019**

14:30	KEYNOTE 4 (Lecture Hall) Jo Angouri, University of Warwick, GB <i>'We owe it to history'</i> – GR/BRexit discourses and beyond Chair: Joelle Loew	
	Section 4A Nation and Film (Lecture Hall) Chair: Michelle Witen	Section 4B Staging Englishness (Room: 11) Chair: Ina Habermann
15:30	Barbara Straumann Long Live the Queen! Cinematic Representations of Queen Victoria as a National Icon Then and Now	Margaret Tudeau-Clayton The Portrait of an Englishman in Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice
16:00	Ian Goode The cultural topography of rural cinema-going in the post-war Highlands and Islands of Scotland	
16:30	COFFEE and FAREWELL	

2019 SAUTE Conference

Brexit and Beyond: Nation and Identity

General Outline

Debates about national identity have received new currency in recent years in a context of demonstrations of national self-assertion, which has resulted for example in the Brexit decision in Britain, in significant changes in American international policies, and the introduction of authoritarian measures in some member states of the European Union. In response to the ongoing Brexit negotiations and the impact of Trumpism, this conference addresses the developments outlined above and the cultural discourses surrounding them. As regards Brexit, we argue that many attempts at explaining the Leave victory and current British Euroscepticism focus quite narrowly on economic, legal and political factors, underestimating more 'fuzzy' phenomena such as cultural myths, narratives and images which circulate in literature, travel writing, visual arts and other media, influencing people on a visceral level, sometimes against their better

judgement. During our conference, we will examine the construction and negotiation of cultural identities in language, literature, political discourse and the media with a focus on cultural memory and the cultural imaginary as well as stereotyping, mythmaking, people's shared fictions and the impact of the resulting policies on people's lives. We believe that the study of literature and language can make an important contribution to our understanding of current political developments, and to a critique of jingoistic populism.

2019 SAUTE Conference

Organisation and Administration

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Teachers of English SAUTE
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Max Geldner-Stiftung, Basel
Englisches Seminar,
Universität Basel

Venue:

The conference takes place at
the University of Basel's De-
partment of English (Nadelberg
6, Basel). Panels and keynote
sessions will take place in
the Grosser Hörsaal (great
lecture hall) on the ground
floor and in Room 11, directly
above it on the 1st floor.

Registration and coffee breaks
will take place in the court-
yard; lunches will take place
at the University's Mensa
(Bernoullistrasse 14-16, Basel)
and vouchers with further
information have been includ-
ed in your conference pack.

Keynote Speakers



Prof. Shelley Fisher Fishkin
Professor of English,
Stanford University, USA

Shelley Fisher Fishkin is a leading authority in American Studies; in her highly acclaimed work she has addressed issues of transnationalism, of the relationship between fact and fiction, and of the importance of literary and cultural narratives for the

construction of cultural memory and the cultural imaginary, most recently in her book *Writing America. Literary Landmarks from Walden Pond to Wounded Knee* (Rutgers UP, 2015). She will talk to us about the implications of the transnational turn.



Dr. Jo Angouri
Reader in Applied Linguistics,
University of Warwick, GB

Jo Angouri is a member of the Centre for Applied Linguistics at Warwick. She is the author of *Culture, Discourse and the Workplace* (Routledge 2018) and has also published on 'Brexit'. She will approach the conference topic from the perspective

of Critical Discourse Analysis and address discourses of cultural heritage in times of crisis.



Dr. Christine Berberich
Senior Lecturer in English
Literature, University of
Portsmouth, GB

Christine Berberich, whose field is English Literature and Cultural Studies, will speak to us about the conflicted nature of debates about English identity. She is currently working on the politics of the 'home tour' and has in recent years co-edited a number

of important collections about affective landscapes and English identity.



Maurice Fitzpatrick, Poynter
Fellow at Yale University,
Lecturer, Journalist and
Filmmaker, Germany

Maurice Fitzpatrick is the author (and co-producer) of *The Boys of St Columb's* (2009 documentary film, 2010 book) and writer/director of documentaries on Brian Friel's play, *Translations*, (2013) and *In the Name of Peace: John Hume in America*

(documentary film and book, 2017). He will talk about the impact of Brexit on Ireland.

From Politics to Literature: *Reading* Brexit

Sara
Alessio

After more than two years since the 2016 referendum, Britain is still a 'divided country'. On one hand, demonstrations and petitions calling for a second referendum are incessantly carried out; on the other hand, respect for 'the people's vote' has been repeatedly demanded. Both sides are driven by the same urge: restoring/realising a certain vision of the country. It is at these visions of the country that the campaigners have winked, playing with people's feelings, fears, desires, and exploiting British cultural myths. As Robert Eaglestone outlines, describing Brexit as an «event in culture»,¹ cultural beliefs, real or imaginary, have been fundamental in the campaign, shaping people's perception of Britain and of its relationship with the EU to obtain people's *affective* support.

Visions of the country (and therefore identity issues), myth-making, manipulation of the historical account, distortion of facts in the 'post-truth era', are not surprisingly at the core of many political analyses focusing

on the Brexit campaign. But, and maybe less obviously, these are also central themes in the literature of the last decades, especially in the so-called 'state-of-the-nation-novels', and even more in those among them that could be defying 'condition-of-England-novels'. These novels usually seek to depict contemporary British (or English) society, challenging nostalgic and exclusive conceptions of national identity, and dealing with the most pressing issues: inequality, racism, the divide between the country and the city, the clash between ordinary people and the elites, the fragility of the United Kingdom itself. Among these, there are the three novels on which this paper will be focusing: *England, England* (1998) by Julian Barnes; *Speak for England* (2005) by James Hawes, published before the Brexit referendum; and *Perfidious Albion* (2018) by Sam Byers, a dystopian satire published after the vote. Despite being published long before the referendum, both Barnes'

From Politics to Literature: *Reading Brexit*

**Sara
Alessio**

and Hawes' novels have been recognised as Brexit fictions, not only for their early imaginative representation of a Britain's exit from the EU, but also for the identity issues they tackle in the course of the narrative — pointing at stereotypes, myths and distortions deeply rooted in British national narratives, at the exploitation of cultural images, at the act of manipulating (history, facts, events), at British nostalgic attitude towards its past. Published two years after the referendum (and twenty years after Barnes' novel), *Perfidious Albion* brings back the themes above, blending them with explicit references to the referendum campaign and with contemporary fears about privacy and technological advance. The future the novel depicts is one dominated by hatred, suspicion, and deception, in which the rifts the referendum has disclosed seem to be more profound than ever. The analysis of these three novels will give us the opportunity to grasp the cultural imaginary and the mechanisms

at play in the political campaign, to unfold causes and consequences of Brexit and open the debate on a fundamental question: is Byers' dystopia the future awaiting the British?

¹ Eaglestone, R., «Introduction», in Eaglestone, R.(ed.), *Brexit and Literature. Critical and Cultural Responses*, Oxon & NY, Routledge, 2018, p.1

Sara Alessio is an Italian PhD student in *Cultural and Literary Studies* at the University of Bologna Alma Mater Studiorum. After her bachelor's degree in Sassari and an Erasmus experience in Bulgaria, she decided to move to Bologna, where she graduated in *Postcolonial, Comparative and Modern Literatures* with a dissertation on the development of the concept of Englishness in Julian Barnes' *oeuvre*. She is editorial assistant for the journal *Scrittura Migranti* and currently working on the connections between Brexit and contemporary fiction. In her research, links together three of her major interests: politics, national identity and literature.

Abstract

***Long Road from Jarrow.* A reading of Stuart Maconie's writing as a contribution to cultural myths and memories in the context of Brexit-negotiating-Britain**

Victoria Allen

In the travelogue, *Long Road from Jarrow: A journey through Britain then and now* (2017) journalist and cultural critic, Stuart Maconie, retraces the steps of the iconic 1936 Jarrow Crusade from the North-East down to London. In this paper, I illustrate how Maconie's writing and walking is a form of remembering that narrates the Jarrow March as a British myth. To do this, I draw on Roland Barthes' understanding of the concept of myth, further discussing the Jarrow March's current importance in terms of Jan and Aleida Assmann's understanding of cultural memory. This paper focuses on Stuart Maconie's reference to Brexit in his socio-political commentary of the present, tracing what cultural myths and memories are reactivated in *Long Road from Jarrow*. Furthermore, by combining this reading and remembering of the Jarrow March with the representation of the North East as a region, which cast a majority-vote to leave

the EU in the media discourse of Brexit-negotiating-Britain, this paper highlights how cultural myths plotted along cultural topographies and memories have reactivated internal fault lines of Britain.

Maconie aligns himself in the literary social-documentary tradition by historically contextualising his account referencing J. B. Priestley's travelogue, *An English Journey* (1934), and George Orwell's socio-political documentation, *Road to Wigan Pier* (1937). Travelling from the north to the south of England he describes his encounters and impressions of the "roaring arterial highways and silent lanes, candlelit cathedrals and angry men in bad pubs" (2017). In this context, I discuss Maconie's understanding of Brexit as a social and cultural concept by analysing the narrative function this has in his descriptions of the current condition of the country. I use Maconie's account to focus on the representation of the North East of England, the starting

***Long Road
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negotiating
-Britain***

**Victoria
Allen**

point of the Jarrow March and of his travel-narrative, in the media discourse of Brexit. In particular, I look at Peter Rushton's media analysis which explains why, following the 2016 referendum, the City of Sunderland, situated ca. 8 miles (13 km) from Jarrow, became labelled "Brexit City" and how this is linked to contemporary crisis of class and identity conceptualised in the UK's historical industrial heartlands. In so doing, I link the north-eastern steel worker's 1936 protest march, which helped to manifest the myth of the once working-class, industrial North East of England to the North East of today, which is characterised as a region still affected by post-industrial decline.

Victoria Allen is a doctoral researcher at the Christian-Albrechts-Universität, Kiel Germany. She is currently completing her PhD in Media and Cultural Studies on the representations of Northernness articulated in industrial Myths and Memories produced in Tyne- and Wearside popular culture. Victoria studied English Literature and Culture and Gender Studies at the University of Basel, Switzerland and obtained her MA in Modern and Contemporary Studies from the University of Newcastle, England. Her research interests are in the area of semiotic and narrative analysis, cultural-policy and critical theory which she applies to teaching the subjects of popular music and football fan culture.

Abstracts

2016 and All That: Medievalism and Exceptionalism in Brexit Britain

Matthias D. Berger

Since the turn of the century, national exceptionalism narratives underpinned by medieval history have staged a comeback in numerous European countries. Such discursive use of the Middle Ages — so-called ‘medievalism’ — often operates at the interface of politics and culture. In Britain, Eurosceptics increasingly make the Middle Ages speak to present-day concerns of national identity. National medievalism thus played a notable role in preparing the ground for the 2016 Brexit vote. The vote itself and the subsequent Brexit process have been accompanied by medievalist imagery in political propaganda, newspaper coverage, op-eds, online fora and social media, with Leavers in particular insisting on the obligating nature of constitutional ‘precedents’ in the deep past. Many of these medievalisms transport notions of an insular exceptionalism rooted in the earliest ‘English nation’ and stress — often to breaking point — the relevance

of medieval versions of self-determination and statehood for the present-day polity.

This paper explores a set of emotive Brexiteer medievalisms that appeal to a past which makes strong demands on the present. Some of these interventions amount to little more than historically flavoured jingoism, such as the litany of British military, legal and political finest hours recited at a 2017 public event by European Research Group leader Jacob Rees-Mogg. More subtle examples include hard-Brexit frontman Boris Johnson’s tapping into a medievalising trend in contemporary discourses of international relations and national sovereignty when he claimed that there was a danger of Britain going “from a member state to a vassal state” of the EU. Conservative Member of the European Parliament Daniel Hannan in turn offered, already in 2013, a master narrative of ‘Anglo-sphere’ exceptionalism in his book-length polemic *How We*

**2016 and All
That:
Medievalism
and Excep-
tionalism
in Brexit
Britain**

**Matthias D.
Berger**

Invented Freedom & Why It Matters. Reactivating discredited Whig history, he traces a 'unique continuity' of constitutionally guaranteed freedom back to the Anglo-Saxons. These examples throw into relief the symbolic attractiveness, but also the practical difficulty, of making a medievalist case for a transhistorical Britishness conceived in opposition to the European mainland. For in lionising overwhelmingly *English* history – to the point of eclipsing all but the most recent histories of the other members of the UK – such insular Euroscepticism displays a significant overlap with an English nationalism that potentially threatens British cohesion.

Matthias D. Berger has studied English and German languages and literatures with a focus on medieval English literature and culture in Bern (Switzerland) and Aberdeen (UK). He is currently a PhD Candidate in the Department of English at the University of Bern and a member of the Graduate School of the Humanities at the Walter Benjamin Kolleg. He is writing his comparative dissertation on contemporary cultural, social and political invocations of the Middle Ages in negotiations of national identity in Britain and Switzerland. He has recently published an article on the commemorative performance of 'authentic' nationhood on the battlefields of Hastings and Morgarten in *Studies in Medievalism*.

Abstracts

Instrumentalising (In)Dependence: Empire, Nation and Identity in Nineteenth-Century British Travel Writing and the Pro-Brexit Campaign

Marijke Denger

This paper analyses the negotiation of national identity in selected examples of nineteenth-century British travel writing and several speeches associated with the pro-Brexit campaign. Specifically, the paper compares the literary construction of British exceptionalism during the heyday of Empire to the rhetorical strategies of national self-assertion employed by Vote Leave campaigners in the run-up to and aftermath of 23 June 2016. Thus, the paper argues for the urgency of investigating how (supposedly) historical discourses of Britishness are politically and culturally appropriated today.

To begin my paper, I will engage with selected passages of two acclaimed pieces of colonial travel writing: Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles' *History of Java* (1817) and Isabella Bird's *The Golden Chersonese* (1883). Drawing on Elleke Boehmer's concept of colonialist discourse, I argue that these works testify to the significance of literary texts in supporting the devel-

opment of a notion of national exceptionalism throughout the nineteenth century. By analysing the texts' representation of the relations between the British and their so-called 'Others', I will establish that the concept of dependence plays a crucial role in different imaginaries of what it entails to be British.

In the second part of my paper, I turn to several pro-Brexit speeches, and argue that their representation of Britain's collective identity goes hand in hand with an "imperially nostalgic nationalism" (Mondal), which simultaneously replicates and reverses the discourses that once framed Britain's global hegemony. For example, in his first post-Brexit referendum speech to the European Parliament, Nigel Farage interwove his triumphant tirade against the EU with a plea for his country to be allowed to become "an independent, self-governing, normal nation", fit "to go off and pursue [its] global ambitions". The latter part of this statement hints at a revival

Instrumentalising (In)Dependence: Empire, Nation and Identity in Nineteenth- Century British Travel Writing and the Pro-Brexit Campaign

**Marijke
Denger**

of Britain's prominence on the world stage; implicitly, Farage conjoins the country's future with its imperial past and, by linking Britain's "global ambitions" to its decision to leave the European Union, creates his own take on the nation's (self-perceived) exceptionalism. By contrast, the first part of the statement casts Britain in the role of a country struggling to free itself from foreign rule. In my paper, I will place this and other examples of pro-Brexit rhetoric in the theoretical framework of what Homi Bhabha defines as "the social antagonism of the colonial relation". Thus, I will explore how the concept of (in)dependence becomes a tool for disassociating Britishness from the very Empire that is at the heart of a nostalgic reimagining of national identity, and for resurrecting the division that once defined the British in relation to their overseas Empire within the nation itself. Ultimately, I argue that it is this creation of new categories of Others, critical of a Britishness

that has supposedly been reasserted, that is one of the Leave victory's most poignant effects.

Marijke Denger holds a Ph.D. (2016) in English Literature from the University of Bern. Her most recent publication is *Caring for Community: Towards a New Ethics of Responsibility in Contemporary Postcolonial Novels* (Routledge, 2019). Her research interests include Anglophone and Dutch colonial literatures, postcolonial theory and comparative imperialisms. Marijke is currently funded by an SNSF Early Postdoc.Mobility Fellowship and pursuing research at the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies, Leiden, and the University of Oxford. Her 'Habilitation' project is concerned with *Empire in the East Indies: Literature, Geopolitics and Imperial Awareness in British Malaya and the Dutch East Indies, c. 1780-1930*.

Abstracts

IN OTHER WORDS.

How Words (re)Produce Otherness – and How such Construction can be Problematicized

Paola Giorgis

In political debates and in the social media we are witnessing an unprecedented resurgence of the re-construction of dichotomic representations and divisive narratives on individuals, groups and social facts – with the major consequence that hate speech often converts into hate crime (Müller & Schwarz 2018). I assume that such ideological polarization results in a deliberate construction of Otherness, a process of categorization which can easily fall into the stereotyping of cultural features as static and homogeneous traits of some groups, and in the targeting of such groups ('the Others') as the direct responsible of complex phenomena and processes - e.g., global migrations, the increase of general impoverishment, the cutback of social welfare, etc.

However, the contraposition 'us' versus 'them', takes another, apparently lighter, turn too. Two Italian linguists, Giuseppe Antonelli and Luca Serianni, have analysed the Newspeak of Italian contemporary political debate devising some recurring

strategies such as the use of localisms, dialects, swearwords and even errors, employed with the purpose to show the public opinion that the politicians do not belong to an élite, but that they are ordinary people speaking the colloquial language of ordinary people (in Minardi 2018). By no means solely Italian phenomena, the new populisms, the resurgence of nationalisms and even of fascism seem to play on a double register of contraposition, both within (the in-group: 'the people' versus 'the élite') and without (the out-group: 'us, the locals' versus 'them, the others').

Many historical and literary examples show how far words can be used and manipulated to create specific narratives which have the power to shape individual and collective representations and interpretations of reality. In my presentation, I will then discuss how words and language contribute to the (re) production of Otherness drawing from past and contemporary examples, and relying on both literary and linguistic sources,

IN OTHER WORDS. How Words (re)Produce Otherness – and How such Construction can be Problema- tized

**Paola
Giorgis**

such as Klemperer, Orwell, Eco, Srikanth, Maillat & Oswald, who, from different perspectives and with different intents, have discussed how manipulation is enacted through language.

Yet, I believe that critical analysis is not enough. I will therefore also propose an example of how we can help younger generations problematize and contrast the construction of such rhetorical strategies. I will present an actual activity made with my students in an English Language classroom in Italy to show how a critical approach to the foreign language allowed them to develop a meta-linguistic awareness of how far linguistic and cultural features and conceptualizations are situated and constructed. I will then conclude my presentation introducing an on-going project which vindicates a specific critical mandate for Foreign Language Education. Being one of the most prominent experiences of the encounter with Otherness, an-other language can problematize meanings, roles, and attributions which are

usually taken-for-granted, thus offering new perspectives on both the self and the others.

Paola Giorgis teaches English Language, Literature and Visual arts in Italian high schools and holds a PhD in Anthropology of Education and Intercultural Education. Her research on foreign language and Foreign Language Education integrates theoretical references, practices and research to show how languages inform individual and collective identities and representations, and how they can both serve processes of manipulation and domination, as well as those of empowerment and emancipation. She has published two monographs (most recently *Meeting Foreignness. Foreign Language and Foreign Language Education as Cultural and Intercultural Experiences* [Rowan & Littlefield, 2018]), several articles, and chapters in collective works. She is co-founder and member of *wom.an.ed*, and is affiliated to several international associations of Linguistics and Intercultural Studies.

Abstracts

The cultural topography of rural cinema-going in the post-war Highlands and Islands of Scotland

Ian Goode

This paper offers a historical view of cinema-going from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland in the northern half of Britain. The Highlands and Islands Film Guild was formed in 1946 to deliver mobile film shows to areas that did not enjoy access to cinema. This was a non-commercial cinema intended to improve facilities and combat the long-standing depopulation of rural communities during the post-war period before the arrival of television. It provided many young people with their first experience of film and the shows were personified by the operators who travelled to their community audiences to exhibit film programmes in spaces not explicitly designed for this purpose - such as army huts, village halls, school halls and hydro-electric camps.

This paper draws on research undertaken for the Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project: *The Major Minor Cinema: The Highlands and Islands Film*

Guild (1946-71) by a team of academics from the Universities of Glasgow and Stirling. The project has followed a research methodology that has combined archival, oral history and creative writing.

Findings reveal that the geography and topography of the Highlands and Islands has informed the way that contributors experienced the film shows and remember them. Examples include the importance of the journeys undertaken by operators, audiences and films to reach the locations of the shows and the effect of the landscape and climate on these quests. Similarly, the exhibition spaces themselves were not, like urban cinemas, insulated from the physical environment where they appeared, but permeated by it. These features of this cinema were part of its popular appeal and the narratives of its recollection.

This imbrication of cultural topography and rural, non-theatrical cinema-going experi-

The cultural topography of rural cinema-going in the post-war Highlands and Islands of Scotland

Ian Goode

ence is only beginning to be recognised by the expanding geography of cinema histories, perhaps because this was a small, peripheral cinema that had no institutional equivalent in the rest of the UK. It was, arguably, both a partial solution to, yet also part of the Highland problem. As audiences dwindled this popular institution cannily endured through numerous struggles with its funders Scottish Education Department in Edinburgh. The cultural and historical resonance of this institution is confirmed by the Screen Machine that performs the same functions technologically updated for today's communities. The continuity of this cultural service on a non-commercial basis for the communities of the Highlands and Islands informs enduring debates about Scottish exceptionalism and Scotland's identity.

Dr. Ian Goode is Lecturer in Film and Television Studies in the School of Culture and Creative Arts at the University of Glasgow and Principal Investigator of the AHRC funded *The Major Minor Cinema: The Highlands and Islands Film Guild (1946-71)*.

Abstracts

**“[Non]Domestic [In] Dependent Nations”:
Unsettling the U.S. Settler State in
Linda Hogan’s
*Mean Spirit***

**Cécile
Heim**

The territory now called the United States contains more than 560 federally recognized sovereign nations within the larger settler nation. These Indigenous nations have been given the status of “domestic dependent nations” after a trilogy of Supreme Court decisions in the early nineteenth century called the Marshall Trilogy. The legal status of these nations is constantly scrutinized and renegotiated as they not only point to the imperialism of the United States but also powerfully question the legitimacy of the settler state.

My central argument is that the legal justice system of the United States, while ostensibly democratic and egalitarian socio-political structures guaranteeing justice to all citizens, is, in fact, acting as a national fiction and apparatus perpetuating the subjection and colonization of Indigenous peoples. As explained by Indigenous scholars such as Dakota author and activist Vine Deloria or Lumbee lawyer Robert A.

Williams, the violence of these systems arises from their consolidation in modernity when any non-white, non-male, non-Christian person was not considered a full citizen of the state and where the legitimacy of colonies (and their derived nation-states) are based on the dehumanization, subjection, and elimination of peoples indigenous to the colonized land. The contemporary consequences of these origins are evident in the precariousness and disenfranchisement they provoke; for example, in the heightened violence against Indigenous peoples or the continual land theft for economic profit. This is why the current notions of law and justice need reimagining from a decolonized and Indigenous perspective.

One such perspective is offered in *Mean Spirit*, the 1990 novel by Chickasaw author Linda Hogan. In this novel about the 1920 Osage Reign of Terror, she denaturalizes and delegitimizes settler colonialism by unsettling the relation be-

**“[Non]Domestic [In] Dependent Nations”:
Unsettling the U.S. Settler State in
Linda Hogan’s *Mean Spirit***

Cécile Heim

tween signifier and signified. She does this by combining two literary techniques: firstly, by using elaborate figurative language pertaining to her characters and the land which destabilizes straight forward processes of meaning-making and, secondly, she practices what Tonawanda Seneca scholar Mishuana Goeman calls (re)mapping. While these two techniques are not unique to Linda Hogan’s writing, the way she uses them to unsettle meaning instead of solidifying it, is innovative and instructive for the dismantling of settler law and states as well as for the shift from “nation” and “nationalism” to “nationhood” and “peoplehood.”

Cécile Heim is a doctoral candidate at the University of Lausanne in Switzerland. Her PhD project focuses on re-imaginings of law, violence, and justice in Indigenous fiction and her research interests are Indigenous studies, decolonial studies, feminist theory, critical legal studies, and critical ethnic studies. She is the author of “Neoliberal Violence: Colonial Legacies and Imperialist Strategies of the Contemporary Western Adventure” published in the *Journal of Popular Culture*. She has also presented at international conferences, such as the annual meetings of the National Popular Culture and American Culture Association, the North-eastern Modern Language Association, the Critical Ethnic Studies Association, and the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association.

Abstracts

Austerity and Au- tonomy: Existential Crisis in the EU

**Ray
Kinsella &
Maurice
Kinsella**

In this paper we engage with a set of the fundamental issues impacting the European Union (EU) today in a manner that integrates a philosophical dimension – reflecting on issues such as austerity, autonomy and ‘existential crisis’ – into the wider political and economic narrative.

The central argument which we advance is this: Brexit is one of a wider set of ‘crises’ that reflect a broader and deeper dichotomy between centralist hegemonistic forces and national identity. The failure of the EU to acknowledge, much less critique this process has contributed to a deeper ‘existential crisis’ that continues to metastasize across a wider set of issues: from migration to militarization and from economic inequality to a rejection of the legitimacy of mainstream political orthodoxy (Populism), most recently on the streets of Paris. From this perspective, Brexit – for all of the political miscalculations and divisions within the UK – is less the epicentre of crisis

than an expression of a deeper malaise within the wider EU.

The expectation that Austerity would lead to the restoration of political stability across the EU has not materialised while the migration crisis has exacerbated anti-EU sentiment contributing to tectonic political shifts in EU member nations, including Germany, France, and Italy. The concept of an ‘existential crisis’ expresses the distinctiveness and the gravity of the inflection point at which the EU currently stands. It is no small thing for Germany—the political and economic powerhouse of the EU—to find itself in a catharsis that threatens its long-established political consensus or for the United Kingdom to be on the point of a chaotic departure from the EU.

The concept of existential crisis is intrinsically antagonistic. It serves more than just a descriptive function. The term conveys that we are speaking of something that is fundamentally critical—calling into question the EU and its deepest aspirations.

Austerity and Au- tonomy: Existential Crisis in the EU

**Ray
Kinsella &
Maurice
Kinsella**

As a 'crisis', it evokes a period of intense difficulty precipitated and perpetuated by a diverse set of events—both within and beyond the EU's borders. The EU's crisis is 'existential' not simply because of the scale and scope of the events underpinning it, but because these events raise concerns that strike at the heart of the EU's place in the world, its identity and its sense of purpose.

'Crisis' is not necessarily an inherently negative experience, and should not be dismissed as an undesirable aberration. When attentively internalised, it can provoke catharsis, whereby an opportunity and impetus to change can present itself. Before this can occur, the EU must first believe that such change is both necessary and attainable. While challenging, the lived experience of existential crisis can produce considerable positive consequences and can certainly be more constructive than existential apathy. Indifference breeds stagnation, a disassociation from the necessity for

reflective critique, and a lack of concern for change and the possibilities it can bring. Conversely, crisis— whose most profound symptom lies in the question 'Who am I?'— pulls us towards a questioning stance, a first step in moving beyond the EU's perpetual 'crossroads.'

Professor Ray Kinsella began his career as an economist in the Central Bank of Ireland before being appointed Professor of Financial Services at the University of Ulster, UK and subsequently to the Faculty of the Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business in Dublin, Ireland.

Dr. Maurice Kinsella received his PhD from the School of Philosophy at University College Dublin where he was the recipient of a Government of Ireland Research Scholarship in Philosophy. He lectures in philosophy and professional ethics and has published widely on the subject of autonomy.

Abstracts

When Local Indians Negotiate with the Global Other: The First British Empire and the History of Changing “Fathers” on the Great Lakes

Sämi Ludwig

My study of Robert Rogers' *PONTEACH; or, the Savages of America* (1766), the earliest play written in English by an American on an American topic, exposed me to the complex experience of the Indians on the Great Lakes of that period. Major Rogers, a popular military hero, leader of the Rangers and a newspaper favorite of the French-and-Indian War, had taken Detroit from the French in 1760, met Pontiac, first smoked the calumet with the great Ottawa “emperor,” then fought him during the Indian Uprising of 1763, and again drank brandy with him at the peace conference under Sir William Johnson at Oswego in 1766. All of this was part of what Patrick White labels the “middle ground.” Subjected to extensive migration, warfare, culture shock, and the redefinition of their identity in mixed villages, the local Indians west of the Appalachians were exposed to European imperialist schemes first through the arrival of Indian refugees from the east, then of

Canadian Frenchmen with *On-ontio*, their French governor and “Father,” followed by British colonialists, first as traders and then as rulers, and finally American settlers claiming their land. All the time the indigenous Indians adapted their cultures, negotiating their survival in acts of cultural and biological miscegenation and intermingling in ever-changing alliances. My paper will point out the hopelessly complex issue of mapping the politics of this territory and discuss the shifting identities both assumed by and imposed upon its original inhabitants in the early period of European settlement, focusing on the imperial moment between the English victory in North America, when the Western part of the British Empire was at its largest, and the arrival of American independence—with frequent reference to the treatment of these issues in *PONTEACH* and in the shifting views of old and contemporary historiographers.

When Local Indians Negotiate with the Global Other: The First British Empire and the History of Changing “Fathers” on the Great Lakes

**Sämi
Ludwig**

Sämi Ludwig is a *professeur des universités* at the UHA Mulhouse in the Alsace (France). He received his education at the University of Berne (Switzerland) and has published in *REAL*, *Amerika Studien*, *Mosaic*, the *Cambridge Companion to Toni Morrison*, *The African American Review*, and *The Journal for Asian American Studies*. In his Ph.D. thesis on intercultural communication in Maxine Hong Kingston and Ishmael Reed, called *CONCRETE LANGUAGE* (Peter Lang 1996, rpt. 2016), he outlines a theory about the metaphorical tracing of the intention constructions in the discourse of the other. His second book is on the convergences of American Realism and pragmatist theory. *Cognitive Realism: The Pragmatist Paradigm in American Literary Realism* was published by Wisconsin UP (2002). Together with Rocío Davis (Pamplona) he edits *Contributions to Asian American Literary Studies*.

His third monograph, a study of Major Robert Rogers' play *PONTEACH* (1766), is forthcoming with Wisconsin. In addition to intercultural issues and questions of cognitive and pragmatist approaches to literature, he is also interested in the big picture of literary history, in colonial American culture, and occasionally even tries to understand poetry.

Abstracts

The Importance of Being "A.C.": Visitors' Books and National Ideology in the Swiss Alps

Jérémie Magnin

In 1857, in a desire to bring together the mountaineers of Great Britain, the Alpine Club was founded. Alpine clubs in other countries soon followed, such as the Österreichischer Alpenverein (Austrian Alpine Association) in 1862, the Schweizer Alpenclub (Swiss Alpine Club) and the Club Alpino Italiano (the Italian Alpine Club) in 1863, the Deutscher Alpenverein (German Alpine Association) in 1869 (which would merge with the Austrian Alpine Association in 1874) and the Club Alpin Français (French Alpine Club) in 1874.¹ While members of these different clubs joined for their love of mountains, the ideology, social makeup and origins of each club vary from one country to another. In the Alpine Club, membership was based on a "climbing or literary qualification,"² whereas alpine clubs on the continent accepted membership based on a fee. Looking at visitors' books in mountain hotels from the second half of the nineteenth century,

my paper will underline how belonging to the Alpine Club influenced these guests' uses of the visitors' book and what it said about climbing and national ideology. The British mountaineers' entries could be as short as signing their names, writing a few sentences or occasionally taking more than one page to write about their ascents, but most of them include the two initials "A.C." for Alpine Club. These two letters represent on their own a number of values and characteristics that the British mountaineers were particularly proud of, as they believed that it made them stand out from other guests. By comparing inscriptions signed "A.C." with entries by members from other clubs and travellers without a club, I will ask how Swiss visitors' books helped construct British identity, and whether, as historians have claimed, the creation of mountaineering clubs, and the development of climbing more generally, exacerbated differences between European nations.

The Importance of Being “A.C.”: Visitors’ Books and National Ideology in the Swiss Alps

**Jérémie
Magnin**

Jérémie Magnin is a doctoral student under the supervision of Professor Patrick Vincent at the University of Neuchâtel. His research is part of the FNS-funded “Swiss Guest-book Project” and focuses on hotel visitors’ books in Switzerland in the nineteenth century and their use in relation to British travellers and the rise of tourism. Balanced between English studies and Historical studies, the thesis is co-supervised by Professor Kevin James, a history professor and visitors’ book specialist from the University of Guelph, Canada. Prior to joining the English Studies Department at the University of Neuchâtel, Jérémie Magnin obtained his Master of Advanced Studies in Secondary and Higher Education in English and History from the HEP-BEJUNE, as well as his Master of Arts and Bachelor of Arts from the University of Neuchâtel

¹Tait Keller, *Apostles of the Alps: Mountaineering and Nation building in Germany and Austria, 1860-1939* (Chapel Hill : The University of North Carolina Press, 2016), p. 10.

²Paul Hansen, *The Summits of Modern Man: Mountaineering after the Enlightenment* (Cambridge Mass. : Harvard University Press, 2013), p. 193.

Abstracts

To have Brexit, one needs Britain: What one Romantic Woman Writer thought on the Issue

**Anne-Claire
Michoux**

Brexit has revived debates over the unity of Britain and Britishness, a question that is present at every stage of British history. One such period was the 1801 Act of Union which gave birth to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the conjunction 'and' uncomfortably revealing, as critic Ina Ferris observes, that 'Ireland stands within the union but outside the unity'.¹ Members of the Anglo-Irish Protestant Ascendancy, political representatives, and actively involved in Scottish Enlightenment networks, the Edgeworth family represents a fascinating example of how one circle conceived 'Britain' and worked towards its establishment. Even though Robert Lovell Edgeworth personally believed in the benefits of the Union for Ireland, he, as MP for St Johnstown, voted against the Union in 1800, because the majority of his constituents were against it. The Edgeworths were nevertheless in favour of the Union, always attentive to the difficulties and controversies of such a political decision, in

particular for the Irish population. This paper will explore how the Anglo-Irish author Maria Edgeworth articulated in her fiction the tensions surrounding Ireland's inclusion in the United Kingdom. She was particularly sensitive to the fact that it was a two-way endeavour, the English holding longstanding prejudices against the Irish, while the Irish remained suspicious of the idea of English 'rule'. The Irish were indeed 'the most familiar of strangers'², and a single act of Parliament could not erase centuries of oppression. How then to create a sense of Britishness? Taking *The Absentee* (1809) and *Ormond* (1817) as case studies, this paper will examine how Edgeworth attempted to resolve the issue, addressing both English and Irish audiences. Edgeworth sought to establish a British readership. This paper argues that, while Edgeworth was committed to the construction of a shared Britishness, her fiction reveals it is matter of constant negotiation. It is never a foreclosed business. One point this paper will briefly consider

To have Brexit, one needs Britain: What one Romantic Woman Writer thought on the Issue

**Anne-Claire
Michoux**

is Edgeworth's dramatization of a Britain in construction within a European perspective. This is mostly effected through the intellectual exchanges her fiction as well as her private life support.³ Even as she attempts to shape the outline of unified Britain, Edgeworth, in *The Absentee* and *Ormond*, does so with an eye to its presence within Europe.

Anne-Claire Michoux is a doctoral assistant at the University of Neuchâtel working on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century fiction. Her thesis project examines the construction of British national identity in women's writing of the Romantic period, focusing on Jane Austen, Frances Burney, and Maria Edgeworth. Her research interests include the novel, drama, and visual culture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. She has recently contributed a chapter entitled "'To be a true citizen of Highbury": Language and National Identity in Jane Austen's *Emma* (1816)', in *Fashioning England and the English: Literature, Nation, Gender*, eds. Rahel Orgis and Matthias Heim (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018) and co-authored an article with Dr Katrin Rupp, published in *SPELL* 2018.

¹Ina Ferris, *The Romantic National Tale and the Question of Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 1.

²David Simpson, *Romanticism and the Question of the Stranger* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 215.

³Having to leave Paris in 1803 under Napoleon's orders, the Edgeworths experienced a forced Brexit, to which French intellectuals objected. The National Library of Ireland holds a number of unpublished letters and documents that record RLE's attempts to reverse Napoleon's decision, including a letter of support signed by leading French intellectuals and prominent government officials such as Jean-Baptiste-Antoine Suard and Jean-Antoine Gallois.

Abstracts

Dreams, Death, Desire: Ali Smith's 'Coming- of-Age' in the Age of Brexit

**Harald
Pittel**

A typical Brexit narrative tries to make sense of the 2016 referendum in terms of a rebellion of the old against the young, the conservative and provincial majority of an ageing population thwarting the younger generations' hopes for a more culturally diverse, solidaric and migration-friendly society.¹ This happens (or is said to happen) in times when population ageing has become a common phenomenon (not only) in Western societies, making contemporary fiction writers on the one hand, and social/cultural gerontologists on the other, question and reconsider established concepts and popular assumptions around the advancement in years.² A better understanding of the real and imagined crises in the days of "post-truth" would certainly benefit from more susceptible forms of social analysis, but also from a more critical assessment of such taken-for-granted categories as "old age" and "youth." It is interesting to see Ali

Smith, in her celebrated post-referendum novels *Autumn* (2016) and *Winter* (2017), tackle the new cultural and political landscape in a way that goes together with complex reflections around the myths and realities of ageing.³ In her earlier work (especially *There But For The*, 2011), Smith had considered several topical age-related aspects in everyday experience, such as generational gaps, dementia, and care. However, it is in her latest work, her projected *Seasonal Quartet*, that social divisions in Britain and wider contradictions of the present are more decidedly interpreted in the context of ageing, seen both as social construct and natural condition. As can be inferred from characters such as Daniel Gluck in *Autumn* or Sophia Cleves in *Winter*, old age is reinterpreted by Smith in terms of a residue of connectivity or a withdrawal thereof. Many cultural forms that situate old people in a position that is at odds with larger so-

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**Harald
Pittel**

ciety come to reflect broader concerns around individuality and collective consciousness, migration and notions of security, national identity and cultural memory. This paper will argue that it is from a newly found vision of advanced age that Smith, now writing in her fifties, not only reconsiders the very idea of humanity, but also makes this refined idea subservient to post-liberal emancipatory politics.

Harald Pittel is a post-doctoral research associate at the University of Potsdam. He was a visiting scholar at the University of Delhi (2018-2019). His doctoral thesis was titled "Romance and Irony – Oscar Wilde and the Political". His areas of interests include political affect studies, comparative film studies, genre theories and materialist theories of culture.

¹See, for example, Chuka Umunna. "When you see how different generations voted in the Brexit referendum, you realise how important it is to change perspectives". *The Independent*, 25 June 2018. <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/politics-generation-uk-brexit-labour-conservatives-young-vote-a8416271.html> (last accessed 12 Jan 2019).

²See Carmen Concilio, ed. (2018). *Imagining Ageing. Representations of Age and Ageing in Anglophone Literatures*. Bielefeld: transcript. See also Julia Twigg and Wendy Martin, eds. (2015). *Routledge Handbook of Cultural Gerontology*. London: Routledge.

³An important precursor in this respect is Simone de Beauvoir (1970). *The Coming of Age*. Trans. Patrick O'Brian. New York: Norton.

Abstracts

Analysis of the representation of the UK as a member of the EU in the debates of the British House of Commons from 1975 to 2011

Jenni Riihimäki

In political discourse, the UK has been represented as being “at the heart of Europe” (Musolff 2017) and as a “power that matters” (Gibbins 2014). According to Wallace (2017), the dominant narrative of national identity in the UK includes stories of “exceptional history” and “success” in terms of national survival. However, there have also been competing representations of the UK that challenge the narrative of a strong Britain in Europe: in British parliamentary discourse, the UK has also been represented as insecure of its role in the EU and as an isolated member state (Riihimäki 2019). In my paper, I analyse five parliamentary debates of the British House of Commons on the EU, one from each decade the UK has been a member of it. The focus is on how Members of Parliament that are for or against more integration differ in how they represent the EU and the UK as a member of it, and what type of diachron-

ic changes there are in how the speakers argue for or against the Union by making use of these representations. The approach adopted in the analysis is that of critical discourse analysis (CDA). I pay special attention to national deixis, which is characteristic of *banal nationalism* (Billig 1995). In particular, the use of first- and third-person plural pronouns are focused on, as they are an important part of the construction of in-groups and out-groups (Wodak 2011).

In line with the results of an earlier study (Riihimäki 2019), the speakers of the party in government tend to represent the UK as a leader, while the speakers in opposition often represent the country as being isolated in the EU. A closer analysis of the five debates suggests that the speakers that are for more integration or support the EU membership are concerned that the UK will be left behind, while the speakers that oppose the EU membership argue that the EU

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is “anti-British” and against *our* traditions. However, both groups separate the UK from the EU in their speeches and talk about the EU as an out-group. Those arguing against more integration represent the Union as something that slowly creeps into every aspect of the British way of life, and pro-EU speakers, instead of talking about cooperation in the EU, often focus on how the other member states see the UK. Especially when debating major issues concerning the EU, such as the Treaty of Lisbon, the pro-EU speakers are concerned that, despite being a powerful nation, the UK might lose its international role if it expresses reluctance to accept new developments in the EU.

Jenni Riihimäki is a doctoral researcher at the Faculty of Information Technology and Communication Sciences at Tampere University, Finland, and a member of DEMLANG research consortium of Tampere University and the University of Helsinki. Her research interests include, among others, discourse analysis and corpus linguistics, and especially political discourse. She has taken part in compiling different types of textual corpora, one of which is the *Small Corpus of Political Speeches (SCPS)*.

Abstracts

Long Live the Queen! Cinematic Representations of Queen Victoria as a National Icon Then and Now

Barbara Straumann

Films about queens tend to convey cultural concerns, political interests and attitudes prevalent at the time of their production. Using the genre of the historical biopic, they often use the respective sovereign in order to present national narratives. A crucial element in the queen's construction as a national icon can be the performance of her two bodies – her body politic and her individual body natural – by a particular film star signifying national celebrity and identity.

The first two films about Queen Victoria to be made in Britain – *Victoria the Great* (1937) and *Sixty Glorious Years* (aka *Queen of Destiny*) (1938) – were created during the rise of Fascism in Europe. Both directed by Henry Wilcox, the two films established the stardom of the leading lady Anna Neagle, one of only very few film stars 'produced' in Britain at the time, who became a British icon or, according to a *Picturegoer* review from 1951, "as much a part of Britain as

Dover's white cliffs." While endowing Neagle with "the status of a sort of monarch of the British cinema" (Sarah Street), Wilcox's two films can simultaneously be seen to reflect on Britain's geopolitical role, especially in the European context of the time. This is particularly evident in the treatment of Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. Played by the gay Jewish-Austrian actor Anton Walbrook (aka Adolf Anton Wilhelm Wohlbrück), the Prince Consort is constructed as a 'good' German, characterised not only by his keen interest in the arts and science but also by his cosmopolitanism and the peace project underpinning his plans to marry the royal children off to the European aristocracy.

Victoria and Abdul (2017), the most recent feature film about Queen Victoria, directed by Stephen Frears, offers a very different national narrative. At first glance, the film seems to foreground a personal story about the intense

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friendship between the elderly queen and a young Indian Muslim, namely her personal attendant and confidant Abdul Karim, played by Bollywood star Ali Fazal. The Empress of India, embodied by Judi Dench, often regarded as one of Britain's foremost 'national treasures', displays a remarkable lack of awareness of the violence perpetrated by the British on the Indian subcontinent. Yet, while imperialism occupies a "shadowy presence" (Edward Said), the film can be read as the expression of an "imperialist nostalgia" (Renato Rosaldo) in the context of the Brexit referendum. This is particularly palpable in the film's reconstruction of material objects, evoking the 'glorious past' of the British Empire (even while this includes artefacts literally destroyed by the British). By discussing the films by Wilcox and Frears alongside one another, I will explore the use of Queen Victoria as a national icon on the cinematic screen and, in

so doing, trace the different national narratives and identities constructed in the volatile political climate of the 1930s and the current Brexit crisis.

Barbara Straumann is Assistant Professor with tenure track at the English Department of the University of Zurich. Her current research areas include the long nineteenth century, gender, film, economic criticism, debt studies, celebrity culture, feminine political sovereignty and issues of seriality. She is the author of *Figurations of Exile in Hitchcock and Nabokov* (Edinburgh University Press, 2008) and *Female Performers in British and American Fiction* (De Gruyter, 2018) as well as the co-author of *Die Diva: Eine Geschichte der Bewunderung* (Schirmer/Mosel 2002). Her current research project is entitled "IOU: Debt in the Victorian Novel".

Abstracts

Negotiating Images of (Un-)Belong- ing and (Divided) Commu- nities: Ali Smith's ,Seasonal Quartet' as a Counter- Narrative to Brexit

**Merle
Tönnies
& Dennis
Hennebühl**

The paper will analyse Ali Smith's 'Quartet' to clarify how it responds to the Brexit discussion and the wider issues involved in it on a more indirect, often metaphorical level – especially compared with many other frequently cited instances of 'Brexit'.¹ The novels moreover mix images of division and exclusion with more hopeful hints of recovery and potential unity – if not with regard to the whole of the 'divided kingdom', then at least possibly for smaller (imagined) communities within it. Thus, they can function as counter-narratives challenging dominant narratives and cultural myths that are part of the discourse about Brexit and contributed to the Leave victory.

Nature and human creativity are two recurrent sources of resilience in the two novels, as are communal spaces and close interpersonal relationships, often across conventional barriers of age, class and sexuality. These leitmotifs are set up to undercut rep-

resentations of fences, hate speech and normative power throughout the texts, and Smith repeatedly takes up and reworks established images of Englishness (like the 'green and pleasant land' and peaceful village life) in this process. In addition, the parallels between the leitmotifs also intertwine the novels themselves, despite their different plot and characters, and the web of connections is extended still further by the frequent use of intertextuality and intermediality. This creates significant resources of cohesion which undercut divisive tendencies.

Through this approach, Smith's novels also act as counter-narratives to the currently prevalent feeling of nostalgia that seems to function as a means of national self-assertion in Britain. Building on Jean-François Lyotard, one could argue for the existence of a 'master narrative of nostalgia' contributing to and shaping the Brexit discourse. In the novels, nostalgia features

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both on the level of individual characters and with regard to British society as a whole. By combining individual 'micronarratives' from the perspective of different characters or in the form of flashbacks, the 'Quartet' offers a fragmented but at the same time more differentiated view of the past. The novels thus challenge the contemporary 'master narrative of nostalgia' and hint at a potential new understanding of 'imagined community' which might accommodate diversity and look to the future instead of the past.

Merle Tönnies is professor of English literature and British Cultural Studies at the University of Paderborn. Among her key research areas are British drama and theatre from the 19th to the 21st century as well as questions of space and British identities. She is co-editor of the series 'anglistik & englischunterricht' (Winter Verlag), and further publications include *(En-) Gendering a Popular Theatrical Genre. The Roles of Women in Nineteenth-Century British Melodrama* (2014) and the co-edited volume *Spatial Representations of British Identities* (2012, with Heike Buschmann).

Dennis Henneböhl is a PhD student in the field of English literature and British Cultural Studies at the University of Paderborn. The focus of his PhD thesis is on nostalgia in contemporary British culture and society. His other main research area is British popular culture, and he currently teaches in the area of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

¹Kristian Shaw, "Brexlit", in Robert Eaglestone (ed.), *Brexit and Literature. Critical and Cultural Responses*, London and New York: Routledge, 2018, 15-30.

Abstracts

The Portrait of an Englishman in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*

**Margaret
Tudeau-
Clayton**

The focus of this paper is the second scene in Shakespeare's comedy *The Merchant of Venice* (1596) in which the heroine Portia and her maid Nerissa mockingly run through the nationally differentiated characters of her various suitors. Usually passed over as light (feminine) comic relief, this scene, I argue, carries critical freight with respect to the idea of national character, especially the idea of a 'true' or 'proper' Englishman, which bears on the ideological motives of 'Brexit' driven above all by an idea of England and Englishness. The relevant historical contexts are, first, the cultural genre of the 'theatre' as exemplified by 'Theatre de tous les peuples et nations de la terre' (c.1576), a collection of watercolour portraits done by the Flemish artist Lucas d'Heere towards the end of a stay in England; second, the gallery of national types (now lost) commissioned by Admiral Lord Clinton for a house in London (c.1572) and

viewed by Elizabeth according to Karel Van Mander in his biography of d'Heere (1604). Like the portrait of an Englishman in Shakespeare's 'theatre-gallery' D'Heere's portrait of an Englishman, as described by Van Mander, is an instance of a recurring cultural figure, or meme, mobilised by non-elite, more and less radical protestants to produce an exclusionary definition of the 'true' or 'proper' Englishman. Tellingly described by Portia as a 'proper man's picture', the Shakespearean instance engages with this ideological use of the meme as well as more generally with the idea of national character. His 'theatre-gallery' thus provides a critical frame at once to the drama of culturally mediated national and religious differences that follows, and the violence towards strangers from continental Europe attendant on an exclusionary definition of the 'true' English in post-reformation England.

**The Portrait
of an Eng-
lishman in
Shakespeare's
*The Merchant
of Venice***

**Margaret
Tudeau-
Clayton**

Margaret Tudeau-Clayton holds a B.A. and Ph.D. in English Literature from King's College, Cambridge. She taught at the Universities of Geneva, Lausanne and Zürich before being appointed Professor of English literature at the University of Neuchâtel in 2006. She is author of *Jonson, Shakespeare and early modern Virgil* (1998; repr. pbk 2006), and numerous articles on English Renaissance literature, especially on Shakespeare and on translation. She has also published work on female authors, notably Austen and Woolf. She has co-edited four collections of essays: the first, with Martin Warner, *Addressing Frank Kermode* (1991); the second, with Philippa Berry, *Textures of Renaissance Knowledge* (2003); the third, with Willy Maley, *This England, that Shakespeare* (2010) and the fourth, with Martin Hilpert, *The Challenge of Change* (2018). A monograph, *Shakespeare's Englishes: against Englishness*, is to be published by Cambridge University Press in 2019.

Abstracts

“We might be a small island but we punch above our weight” - National identities as constructed in British parliamentary debates about Brexit

Nora Wenzl

The UK's decision to leave the European Union caused a stir in both British and international politics. While superficially, topics relating to the economy and immigration dominated the debates before the referendum, closer examination shows that these issues are interlaced with questions of British identity. Crucially, different constructions of a national identity lead to different courses of action appearing to be in the national self-interest (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). Political actors can thus strategically use different identity constructions to mobilize the population to act in accordance with their political vision.

Seeing as identities are frequently renegotiated in moments of historical impact for a nation (Risse, 2010), this paper examines discursive identity constructions during the United Kingdom EU membership referendum 2016. Drawing on the Discourse Historical Approach to Critical Discourse Studies (Reisigl &

Wodak, 1988/2001), this paper illustrates how political actors strategically construct different visions of national or supranational identities to support their arguments for or against the EU. To this purpose, a corpus-assisted critical discourse study of Hansard transcripts of parliamentary proceedings in the House of Commons between May 7th 2015 and June 15th 2016 was undertaken.

This paper focuses specifically on a sub-corpus of utterances by Conservative politicians, as the Conservative party under David Cameron had no official stance on EU membership and allowed MPs to campaign for both sides. Corpus linguistic methods such as the examination of frequency and keyword lists show that certain linguistic features were used particularly often by Conservative speakers in comparison to speakers from other parties: These include the use of the first-person plural pronoun 'we', the adjective 'British', as well as

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Nora Wenzl

appeals to ‘the people’. This is in line with Billig’s (1995) observation that national identities are often subtly reinforced by politicians via the strategic use of pronouns and determiners, as well as by more explicit references to the nation, for the creation of in- and out-groups. Despite what one might expect, comparison of identity constructions between the Remain and Leave side has shown that both draw on very similar cultural narratives when constructing Britishness. Thus, while the Leave side’s construction of Britishness was in line with their goal to convince the population to vote against EU membership, the Remain side undermined their own argumentation by interlacing it with subtle Euroscepticism. This study thus suggests that the Remain side was unsuccessful partly because they failed to construe British identity in a way that made it seem advisable for the country to stay in the EU.

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