

Veranstalterin	Dr. Julia Boll
Thema	Brexit, Nostalgia, and Utopia
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar II [ENG-6, ENG-6a, ENG-12, AA7, AA10, LAA9, LAA12, IAA21, IAA23, IAA24, IAA25, AA-MA01, AA-MA02, AA-MA04]
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-549
Zeit	Di 14-16
Raum	Ü35-01016
Beginn	05 April 2022

The 2016 Brexit Referendum and Britain's recent departure from the European Union have provoked a range of responses and raised questions about national identity and community. Taking our cue from Svetlana Boym, who understands nostalgia as an idealisation of the past and investment in a utopian future, we will analyse representations of the collective memory and imagination of a country committed to an indeterminate and intangible past.

We will engage with artistic and fictional approaches to understand which part imagined narratives play in shaping Britain's current cultural and political landscape, but also consider cultural-historical writing and journalism. Starting out with A.L. Kennedy's view on the run-up to the 2016 referendum, we will discuss James Graham's drama film *Brexit: The Uncivil War* (2019), then go back in time with David Greig's seminal 1994 play *Europe* and the celebrated state-of-the-nation play from 2009, Jez Butterworth's *Jerusalem* and its investigation of "Merrie England" and auto-stereotyping. We will examine the nostalgic imagery of the "village green" and "Deep England" as conjured up by the opening ceremony for the 2012 London Olympics, the reality TV programme *The Great British Bake Off* (2010-), and the recent reboot of the television show *All Creatures Great and Small* (2021-). We will review imperial nostalgia and heritage in TV series such as *Downton Abbey* (2010-15) and evaluate contemporary music and performance artists' take on the Brexit Referendum. Sarah Moss's 2018 novel *Ghost Wall* explores the preoccupation with a foundation myth, and we will look at excerpts from Robert MacFarlane's *Landmarks* (2015) and *Underland* (2019) as an example of recent nature and travel writing that demonstrates a wistful yearning for old places and historical landscapes. Ali Smith's first instalment of her seasonal quartet, *Autumn* (2017) invites us to meditate on a possible future.



The LNER (= London and North Eastern Railway) Class A3 4472 *Flying Scotsman* Pacific steam locomotive, built in 1923, offering "heritage trips" (here through the Surrey hills).
© National Railway Museum, 2021

Reading List:

Some primary and secondary reading will be made available via OpenOlat. Students are asked to obtain the following:

- Butterworth, Jez. *Jerusalem*. 2009. Any edition (mine is the 2009 Nick Hern Books, which is also available for e-readers).
- Greig, David. *Europe*. 1994. Any edition (mine is included in the 2002 Methuen/Bloomsbury collection *Plays: 1*, which is also available for e-readers and via SUB Hamburg).
- Moss, Sarah. *Ghost Wall*. 2018. Granta (also available for e-readers).
- Smith, Ali. *Autumn*. 2017. Penguin (also available for e-readers).

Please make sure you have access to/have a chance to view:

- Fellowes, Julian, creator. *Downton Abbey*. Series 1. Carnival Films for ITV, 2010.
→ available on Netflix
- Graham, James, dir. *Brexit: The Uncivil War*. House Productions, 2019.
→ available on Amazon Prime

Studienleistung: regular and active participation (also in teamwork), detailed knowledge of assigned texts/material, preparation of discussion questions and discussion leading, preparation of short audio clips.

Prüfungsleistung:

Studienleistung (see above)

- + annotated bibliography on 7 critical texts
- + term paper

Note: If you use an e-reader, make sure you know how to navigate quickly and expertly within the text, how to mark passages (and find them again), how to make annotations, and how to quote properly from an eBook. I advise against working on smartphones for scholarly purposes.

Note: Registered students who fail to show up for the first session will automatically be set "inactive" on Stine, so that another student may take up their place.