



gesellschaft für anglophone postkoloniale studien
association for anglophone postcolonial studies

JOHANNES GUTENBERG
UNIVERSITÄT MAINZ



Call for Papers

Annual GAPS Conference 2018

Nationalism and the Postcolonial

10 – 12 May, 2018

Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany

Nationalism is an ambivalent phenomenon. Until recently, it appeared to be a relic of the past in the Western hemisphere, where it was associated with the emergence of the modern nation states in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but was also regarded as instrumental in colonial and imperialist endeavours (Colley, 2005). After the demise of traditional colonisation and in the context of an assumed globalisation, however, it signalled to many more liberal-minded thinkers a form of backwardness in a world that, for many, had become 'transnational'.

The picture is strikingly different for formerly colonised countries. In them and for them, nationalism frequently features significantly in processes of decolonisation (Hodgkin 1957; Chrisman 2004). Indeed, the celebration of postcolonial achievements in politics, the arts and literature very often assumes a decidedly nationalist flavour, though often with very different connotations than those associated with the Western world's post-eighteenth-century nationalisms. At the same time, old colonial attitudes flare up again in contexts such as the United States of America's search for their position in the twenty-first century or Britain's self-assessment after the initiation of Brexit. In the latter context, nationalisms from the so-called Celtic fringe begin to play a role again in debates about devolution and independence.

All this signals the importance of reassessing nationalism in colonial discourses, in processes of decolonisation and in the supposedly transnational world of globalisation. Symbolic forms in art, literature, but also practices of everyday life are used for the expression of nationalist ideas and therefore provide manifold examples for analyses that might ascertain whether nationalism is generally problematic, sometimes strategically useful, prone to subversion, or perhaps even inescapable.

The conference invites contributions from Literary and Cultural Studies, but also related disciplines such as Political Science, History and Art History, Music, Media Studies, Linguistics, etc.

Possible areas of inquiry include:

- Nationalism in postcolonial literature, the arts, music, and popular culture
- The language(s) of nationalism in postcolonial contexts
- The histories of nationalism in postcolonial environments
- Nationalism and postcolonial cultural and political identities
- Pan-Africanism, Pan-Asianism, Socialism, Communism, Fascism, etc. and their relation to nationalism
- Figureheads of postcolonial nationalism
- Nationalism and/vs. globalisation
- Contradictions within postcolonial nationalisms
- Indigenous nationalisms

Abstract submission and participation:

Please submit abstracts (300-400 words) of individual papers or suggested panels of three papers together with a biographical note by **December 31, 2017**.

Work in progress in Anglophone Postcolonial Studies – including MA/MEd, PhD and postdoctoral projects as well as ongoing research projects in general – can be presented in the “Under Construction” section of the conference, for which poster presentations are also welcome. Please submit abstracts for project presentations (250 words) indicating your chosen format (paper or poster) by March 1, 2018.

For special requirements, please contact the organisation team:

Rainer Emig, Sandra Dinter, Wolfgang Funk (all Department of English and Linguistics, Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany)

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