



WRITING, THE STATE AND THE RISE OF NEO-NATIONALISM

HISTORICAL CONTEXTS & CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS

An international, interdisciplinary conference
to explore writing and the nation

SATURDAY, 30 JUNE, 2018

Boston University, 43 Harrington Gardens
London, SW7 4JU

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

In January 1868, John William De Forest took to the pages of *The Nation* with a call that would resound over the next century and a half: the writing of the “Great American Novel.” In so doing, he asserted both the shaping force of the nation on the arts, and the importance of the arts for the national imaginary. On the sesquicentennial of De Forest’s essay, this interdisciplinary conference explores the intersections of writing and the nation.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: DYLAN AND THE PRESIDENTS

1:05–1:50 | Boston Room

Daniel Karlin

Daniel Karlin is Winterstoke Professor of English Literature at the University of Bristol. He has previously held appointments at the University of Sheffield, at Boston University, and at University College London. He has published widely on Victorian literature, especially the poetry of Robert Browning; other interests include Walt Whitman, Henry James, Rudyard Kipling, and Marcel Proust. He has admired Bob Dylan since first encountering his songs in the 1970s, and nominated him for the Nobel Prize a decade before he was awarded it in 2016.

Professor Karlin's most recent book is *The Figure of the Singer* (Oxford University Press, 2013), which concludes with a chapter on Dylan. His next book, *Street Songs*, will be published by OUP later this year.

REGISTRATION

8:00 to 9:00 | Boston Room

PANEL 1A: THE FORMS THE NATION CANNOT FIT

9:00 to 10:15 | Boston Room

Chair: Dannelle Gutarra Cordero (Princeton University)

1. Blake, Whitman and the Limits of Prophecy
Linda Freedman (University College London)
2. Copyright, Collaboration and (Trans)National Character:
G.P.R. James and Maunsell B. Fields' *Adrian; or, The Clouds of the Mind* (1852)
Katie McGettigan (Royal Holloway, University of London)
3. "Black Ghosts": Martin R. Delany's Revolutionary Paratexts
Rob Turner (University of Exeter)

PANEL 1B: NATIONALISM AND CONTEMPORARY POLITICS

9:00 to 10:15 | Prince Consort Room

Chair: Andy Charlton (Boston University–London)

1. Apostles of Alienation: George Orwell and Nationalist Psychology
Sarah Gibbs (University College London)
2. Rhetorics of Instrumental Nationalism: Scotland, Nationalism and the Left
Daniel Guy Brown (Syracuse University)
3. The Nostalgia of Empire: Neo-Ottomanism, Euro-skepticism, and Desecularized Nationalism in Contemporary Turkey
Martin Noel (Ecole des Hautes etudes en Sciences Sociales / Institut Catholique de Paris)

PANEL TWO

PANEL 2A: NEW VIEWS OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY NATIONALISM

10:25 to 11:40 | Boston Room

Chair: John Regan (Boston University)

1. Ina Seidel and the Nation of the Spirit
Rose Simpson (Aberystwyth University)
2. The Great Russian Writer and Greater Russia: The Definition of the Russian Nation in Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Non-Fiction
Elisa Kriza (University of Bamberg)
3. A Great Wall of Russia: Dystopian Dreams of Motherland
Maria Kharitonova (Independent scholar)

PANEL 2B: NATIONALISM IN TRANSOCEANIC LITERARY CONTEXTS

10:25 to 11:40 | Prince Consort Room

Chair: Sarah Gibbs (University College London)

1. "Exceptional" or "Exceptionalist?": A Comparative Analysis of Conflict between the Individual and the Nation-State as depicted by Herman Melville and Feodor Dostoyevsky
Elena Akroyd (University of Kent)
2. Paleo-Nationalism: Rhetorical Patterns and Argumentative Strategies in Nineteenth-Century British and American Writing about Literature and the Nation
Tim Sommer (University of Heidelberg)
3. Neuro-national Memory: Post-9/11 Masculinity and the Nation-State in Alexie's *Flight* and Kunzru's *Gods Without Men*
Matthew Mild (University of Keele)

BREAK

LUNCH

11:40 to 1:05 | Surrounding Restaurants

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: DYLAN AND THE PRESIDENTS

1:05 to 1:50 | Boston Room

Daniel Karlin (University of Bristol)

PANEL 3A: NEW WORLD NATIONALISM

2:05 to 3:20 | Boston Room

Chair: Aleks Sierz (Boston University–London)

1. Nation and Race in the Historical Juncture of the Haitian Revolution
Dannelle Gutarra Cordero (Princeton University)
2. Diagnosing the American Dream: Trouble in the Vibrations of *The Great Gatsby*
Peter Wakefield (Emory University)
3. Is Conrad's *Nostromo* the "Great American Novel"?
Gene M. Moore (University of Amsterdam)

PANEL 3B: NATIONALISM IN THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY AND BEYOND

2:05 to 3:20 | Prince Consort Room

Chair: Matthew Mild (University of Keele)

1. Renewing Nationhood through Opera
Krisztina Lajosi-Moore (University of Amsterdam)
2. "I am Almost Glad not to Know Any Law for the Winds": Thoreau's Resistance to National Weather Discourse
Adam Sweeting (Boston University)
3. Learning from the Southern Unionist: Rejecting Neo-Nationalism for a Bigger Idea
Kelley Kent (Independent scholar)

TEA & COFFEE BREAK

3:20 to 3:50 | Common Room

PANEL 4A: NATIONALISM AND THE CONTEMPORARY MOMENT

3:50 to 5:25 | Boston Room

Chair: Peter Wakefield (Emory University)

1. Offensive Fallback: Negotiating State in the Writings of The Invisible Committee
Theierry Tremblay (University of Malta) & Rémi Astruc (Université Paris-Seine)
2. “But the Albion sails on course”: Latent Nationalism in 21st-Century Song Lyrics
Sina Schuhmaier (University of Mannheim)
3. Temporal Anxiety and Nationalism in the Modern Era
Leihua Weng (Sarah Lawrence College)

PANEL 4B: WHO RULES THE WORLD? – (RE-)CONTEXTUALISING THE STATE IN CONTEMPORARY FICTION

3:50 to 5:25 | Prince Consort Room

Chair: Annika Gonnermann (University of Mannheim)

1. Sovereignty, Network Power and the Decline of the State in Contemporary Dystopian Fiction
Annika Gonnermann (University of Mannheim)
2. The Nation State and Global Economy in Amitav Ghosh’s Ibis Trilogy
Lisa Schwander (University of Mannheim)
3. A Transparent Nation: the Power of Technological Progress in Contemporary Dystopian Fiction on Screen
Laura Winter (University of Mannheim)
4. States of the Future: Nationhood and Belonging in Contemporary Science Fiction Narratives
Annika Elstermann (University of Heidelberg)

HOUSING INFO

Conference participants who have not yet arranged local housing are encouraged to look at the several recommendations in the following document: <http://bit.ly/writingandthestatehousing>.

This conference is organized by Christopher K. Coffman and E. Thomas Finan, faculty members of the College of General Studies at Boston University. It has been made possible by the support of The Center for Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning at the College of General Studies and of Boston University–London. The organizers would like to extend special thanks to Morgan Bailas-Ferry, Alison Campbell, Donna Connor, Alisa Harris, William Kiernan, Claudia Micheli, Natalie McKnight, Katy Segrove, Megan Sullivan, and Caroline Walker.

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