

Scotland in Europe Conference VI

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Abstracts

**Institute of English Studies
University of Warsaw**

Keynote Lectures

Carla Sassi

University of Verona, Italy

Re-thinking Scotland, Re-thinking Europe. Reflections for a Time of Hope and Loss

We live in an era of converging crises – geopolitical upheaval, rapid technological advancement (outpacing our ability to harness or defend against it), environmental collapse, and the most profound crisis of democracy since World War II. The changes unfolding today are of such scale and urgency that to dwell on the fate of a small stateless nation might be seen by some as an ivory-tower indulgence – a retreat into the parochial just when humanists are called to confront the crises remaking our world. For others, this is a time of loss, mourning and even nostalgia for a past that by now seems irretrievable.

In my lecture, I aim to move beyond these perspectives by rethinking Scottish literature not as a fixed category, but as an ongoing, contested dialogue about identity and belonging – a temporary snapshot of an endless conversation with, and across, other European nations. By calling for a paradigmatic shift in how we conceive both Europe and Scotland, I will argue – *spes contra spem* – that there remains room for positive change. And even if there does not, we still have a duty to strive for it to the fullest extent possible. To do so, I will focus on concepts and strategies that are very much at the heart of 20th-century Scottish literature – first and foremost the idea of critical citizenship as a transformative approach to civic participation that goes beyond passive obedience or conventional civic duties to question power structures, challenge injustices, and enact collective change.

Magdalena Charzyńska-Wójcik

Jah Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland / Nanovic Institute for European Studies,
University of Notre Dame, IN, USA

In the Spotlight: David Nairne's Lost-and-Found Manuscript and an Even More Thrilling Discovery

In 1700 a book was published anonymously with an English translation of the Psalms from the Vulgate. For (early) modern English-speaking Catholics this was the only alternative to the Psalter contained in the Douay-Rheims Bible. And it retained that status for the next two centuries. Notwithstanding, it has been curiously neglected in scholarly literature, suggesting both a niche character of the publication and its relative insignificance.

An investigation into the publication reveals that the translation was made in Saint Germain at the exiled court of the Stuarts, and one of the translators – David Nairne, a Scot – was among King James II's closest confidantes. More interestingly still, David Nairne kept a diary, which

records the existence of a manuscript copy of the Psalms made specifically for Queen Mary of Modena. Hoping for its fortuitous survival past the vicissitudes of the French Revolution, I resolved to find it. And I did. Instead of satiating my appetite, however, the discovery of the royal manuscript with a pre-print redaction of the translation inspired me to look for more copies of what – in the meantime – proved to be an extremely appreciated Psalm version in secret highland seminaries in Scotland. Another manuscript copy of the Psalms from Saint Germain awaited discovery among the manuscripts of exilic English Poor Clares. Where was it written? What redaction of the translation did it contain? How did it make it into a cloistered library?

These and other questions will be addressed during my talk, proving beyond a shadow of doubt that the translation co-authored by a Scottish expatriate was the opposite of niche and insignificant. It was a cherished text that bears witness to the exilic textual communities, their material culture, and intertextualities, while also shedding light on areas as different as transnational political intrigue and the exigencies of personal faith in the Psalter.

Presentations

Gillian Beattie-Smith

The Open University, UK

On “Europe”: Naomi Mitchison

This paper discusses the social, political, and cultural experience of Naomi Mitchison illustrated in her writing about Europe of the 1930s and 1940s.

Naomi Mitchison was born into, and lived, a privileged life. Her family had a notable ancestry, and she was a member of the wealthy, intellectual Scottish élite. She was an advocate of far-left politics and, although she was not a member of the Communist Party, she was a member of the Labour Party, for whom she stood as candidate for the constituency of the Scottish Universities.

Mitchison was a prolific writer. She joined the London branch of PEN in 1931. PEN had been founded in 1921 as a network for Poets, Essayists, Novelists whose aims were to promote internationalism, cooperation, peace, and ideas. She became an active member of Scottish PEN after moving to Argyll in 1938.

The paper examines “Europe”, a short story, recently published in James Purdon (2023) *Naomi Mitchison: A Writer in Time*, in which Mitchison fictionalises her experience of attending the PEN congress held in Zurich in 1947. The story considers war-time experiences and lives, post war. It reveals social and political perspectives affected by war.

The paper will draw on evidence of her personal experience narrated in *Vienna Diary 1934*, and in *Among You Taking Notes: The Wartime Diary of Naomi Mitchison, 1939-1945*. It will go on to show how she uses personal experience as evidence to illustrate her political philosophy, in such as *A Moral Basis for Politics* (1938).

Feride Çopraşık and Nagihan Ceyhan

Başkent University, Ankara, Turkey/Gendarmerie and Coast Guard Academy, Ankara, Turkey

The Little Snake in Translation: Gender, Power, and Cultural Mediation in a Postcolonial Context

This paper explores the Turkish adaptation of A.L. Kennedy's *The Little Snake* through the lens of feminist postcolonial theory, with a focus on how culturally unique references are interpreted across various languages and ideological contexts. By integrating Gayatri Spivak's concepts regarding the subaltern and her emphasis on responsible translation with Sherry Simon's feminist perspective on the dynamics of translation and gendered language, this research investigates whether the Turkish rendition maintains the complex, rebellious voice of the female lead or dilutes it through domestication. The focus of the analysis is on how the translator navigates the politically charged symbols within the fable, namely poverty, conflict, exile, and empathy, and whether these symbols are repressed by gendered silences or allowed to sustain their unsettling influence. This research utilizes detailed textual examination alongside feminist critical discourse analysis to investigate the influence of translation on individual identity, narrative power, and the prominence of underrepresented voices. The findings reveal that certain methods are effective in retaining the ethical and affective characteristics of the original, whereas others might diminish its resistance to patriarchal and imperial ideologies. In the end, this study advocates a feminist translation framework that resists the act of appropriation, honors diversity, and focuses on the narrative rights of women who are often marginalized.

Anastasiia Fediakova

Charles University, Prague

A Cup of Cullen Skink: Scotland and Food Blogs

Modern food blogs are hardly ever a collection of recipes, a list of ingredients and steps to follow are preceded by childhood memories, detailed descriptions of the origin of the dish, and even excerpts from dictionaries breaking down the name of one meal or the other. Although food writing is not always synonymous to literary writing and does not necessarily provide readers with a narrative and a plot, it is nevertheless capable of telling a larger story. With that in mind, having selected a few blogs as primary sources (e.g. Scottish Scrان, The Pesky Vegan, The Wee Larder, etc.), this paper is an attempt to look at Scotland through the lens of Scottish food blogs. Personal struggles of the authors overlapped with historical references (for instance, the invention of marmalade in Dundee in 1700) and regional differences, all meticulously documented in the blogs, may present an unexpected portrayal of contemporary Scotland when it comes to both gender roles as well as nationality aspect (who is the cook and where (and for whom) do they cook?) alongside with balancing between the modern and traditional. While reading (and eating) through Scottish recipes, matters of

hybridity, authenticity, and diaspora cannot be avoided either: the meals are constantly re-invented and shared also by those who have no ties to the country of their origin. The same goes for stereotypes which pop up even if authors simply go through the recipe of a chocolate tiffin. Finally, while the corpus itself consists of food blogs, secondary sources are less experimental and among others include works by Ronald Ranta, Atsuko Ichijo (*Food, National Identity and Nationalism*, 2022), and Paul Ariès (*A Political History of Food*, 2023).

Katarzyna Gmerek

The Adam Mickiewicz University Library in Poznań, Poland

The Importance of a St Petersburg Public Library Manuscript Among 19th-Century Polish Literary Works on the Last Stuarts

The popularity of Ossian and Walter Scott in 19th-century Poland seems to be well documented. There are also travel journals and letters by Poles who visited Scotland as leisure travel or emigrated to the country. The story of the last Stuarts, with the marriage of James Edward Stuart to Maria Clementina Sobieska, would be a good starting point to study Polish-Scottish relations, but it was relatively unknown in Poland at that time, even in the writings of Poles who lived in Scotland. One can only encounter occasional publications on the subject, not all of them very accurate.

However, my most intriguing find was the long essay by Karol Szajnocha from 1854 about the 1719 escape of Maria Clementina Sobieska from Innsbruck to her Stuart fiancée who lived in Italy, with the help of Charles Wogan. Szajnocha who was one of the most important Polish 19th-century historians, used MSS from the Ossoliński Library in Lwów/Lviv, copied by someone from authentic 1719 letters at that time in the St. Petersburg Public Library, (previously from Poland). The very story of the travelling MSS seemed to be interesting, but apart from this, the essay based on these seemed to serve as an inspiration to other 19th-century Polish writers. There were but a few publications that did not seem to be based on this source. The second part of the 19th century saw two major dramas with the last Stuarts as a subject staged in Polish theatres and some literary works based on uncertain sources. The paper is an attempt to analyse the situation.

Clément Guézais

Université d'Artois, France

Promises from the Past: Charlemagne and the Franco-Scottish Alliance

Although it emerged in the 19th century, the notion of a “Carolingian Renaissance” was not a brand new idea. At the end of the Middle Ages, against a backdrop of internal crises and constant conflict with England, French chroniclers and propagandists had already used the

figure of Charlemagne to reassert the legitimacy and grandeur of a kingdom and a crown in peril. Even before the start of the Hundred Years' War, France had formed military alliances with other kingdoms that shared the same animosity towards England. The Franco-Scottish alliance, initiated at the very end of the 13th century, gradually came to be affiliated with Charlemagne. His reign, perceived as a golden age, was associated with both a glorious past and the hope of restoration. When he married Mary Stuart in 1558, Henry II could claim to be part of an eight-hundred-year-old tradition. Although anachronistic and devoid of historical substance, Charlemagne's alleged involvement in the French-Scottish relationship is an intriguing question. How and why would an 8th century king of the Franks become the father of the Auld Alliance? What influence would such an emblematic figure wield in the context of a bipartite alliance? This case study allows us to perceive the importance of the past as a central tool in the shaping of national imaginations, but also – in a rather unusual way – the ability of foreign powers to work together in order to set up common historical and cultural bedrocks as well as a shared political compass.

Theo van Heijnsbergen

University of Glasgow, Scotland

“Some Like it Not”: Seventeenth-Century Non-Gaelic Scottish Literature

Seventeenth-century Scottish literature in Scots/English has often been shunned by scholars specialising in the preceding period. Interest from that perspective often stops c.1603; post-1603, traditionally only Ayton and Drummond were humoured into the canon mainly because of their convergence with an established, Anglo-centred literary discourse. Meanwhile, students of *eighteenth-century* Scottish literature often only scan this seventeenth-century literature for antecedents of the Vernacular Revival (Ramsay, Fergusson, Burns).

A situation has thus arisen in which the seventeenth century has come to be seen as a ‘cultural desert’, with religious and ‘unionist v. nationalist’ concerns pre-emptively removing literary endeavour from sight. The usual exceptions to this that critics turn to are the (often conveniently un-datable) ballads and writing in Gaelic.

But much *other* seventeenth-century Scottish literary writing, both in Latin and in Scots/English, lies critically untouched. However, the literary landscape of contemporary Europe can lend much of that presently scattered writing a cultural identity, releasing it from the above-mentioned constraints. We then begin to see, in addition to writing that anticipates the eighteenth-century vernacular revival, an eclectic, outward-looking corpus that engages with European genres and priorities. My paper will be a first attempt at outlining that corpus (focussing mainly on Scots/English rather than Latin writing); place it within a wider Scottish cultural context by providing short case studies; identify critical problems; and suggest ways forward that reflect both seventeenth-century socio-cultural reality and present-day political concerns about Scotland's place in Europe.

Robert Irvine

University of Edinburgh, Scotland

Understanding Allan Ramsay's Scotland: a Model from Central Europe

This paper proposes that we might understand the construction of 'cultural' nationality in post-1707 Scotland as following a similar process to that described in the nineteenth-century Austro-Hungarian Empire by Pieter M. Judson in *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (2016). It will borrow from this book two propositions: first, that a claim to nationality in a multi-national empire, rather than necessarily constituting a *challenge* to imperial authority, can instead articulate a demand for *recognition* by that authority; and second, that this claim to recognition from a distant *centre* is typically the tactic of a group in a struggle with a *local* elite. I will argue that the literary project of Allan Ramsay (1686–1758) follows this pattern: the formulation of a literary 'Scots' language makes Scottish difference recognisable within the British public sphere, as a means of resisting the cultural hegemony of the Scottish Presbyterian church. My example will be Ramsay's first published work, *Christ's Kirk on the Green* in two cantos, and then in three cantos, both of 1718.

Barry Keane

Institute of English Studies, University of Warsaw, Poland

Tom Hubbard's Anthems of Europe

Written in 2019, Tom Hubbard's poetry collection, *Not My Circus, Not my Monkey* can be read as a voyant anticipation of a Scotland set wholly adrift by Brexit. As this paper will endeavour to show, the sophistication of Hubbard's poems, so deeply engaged as they are in the European traditions of art, music and literature, serve as a cultural marker to what has been wrested from the grasp of the Scottish nation.

Monika Kocot

University of Łódź, Poland

"The Silence at the Heart of Everything": Alan Spence's Sonnet Practice

Alan Spence, the Scottish master of the haiku, has recently managed to make the transition from haiku to sonnets. In his view, the clarity and spareness of the one translates very well into the other: "Like the haiku, my sonnets are trying to catch something innately spiritual. Whereas the haiku are all about catching the moment, the physical detail that carries a kind of

charge (Eliot's 'objective correlative'), the sonnet allows more space, can admit the abstract." The other major theme in Spence's sonnets is an affirmation of the musicality of the sonnet form, which in turn aims to reflect both the "musicality" of everyday speech and the music of daily existence, the "music of what happens" as John Cage would have it.

The paper will offer a comparative reading of five poems—two pairs of sonnets and one sonnet-prelude. Two sonnets ("What Happens" and "Music") form a "diptych" and explore the theme of musicality. The other two ("Meditation" and "Neti Neti"), very different from each other in terms of using the rhyming patterns, are on spiritual practice. Given that the poet is drawn towards the sonnet's innate musicality, the emphasis will be placed on the dynamic link between the sonnets' message and, as Spence puts it, their "infinitely flexible and variable form."

Aniela Korzeniowska

Institute of English Studies, University of Warsaw, Poland

**The Search for One's Polish Heritage as Presented by Scottish Writers
Martin Stepek in *For There Is Hope* (2012) and Catherine Czerkawska in
The Last Lancer (2023)**

The first large Polish émigré population to settle in Scotland were primarily members of the Polish Armed Forces who had been stationed there during World War II and for various reasons, mainly political, decided not to return to their homeland after the conflict ended. Many married Scottish girls, had children and tried to make the most of what life had to offer them, very often not talking about their wartime experiences or the highly traumatic times before they finally saw peace in a foreign land.

The issue I wish to address here is how the offspring of those Polish émigrés, usually when already adults themselves, suddenly realise how important it is to them to find out more about their Polish heritage, about where their parents originally came from, and to get to know more about the Polish members of their family whom they never had the opportunity to meet; also to learn more about their father's first-hand experiences brought about by the horrors of war. This will be illustrated through the lens of Glasgow-based Martin Stepek as presented in his epic poem *For There Is Hope* (2012) and Scottish writer Catherine Czerkawska's results of her lifetime research into the history of her father's family and the search for her grandfather as presented in her intimate and very moving story *The Last Lancer* (2023).

Mark Lazarowicz

Faculty of Advocates, Edinburgh, Scotland

The Prospects for a Second Referendum on Scottish Independence

In a referendum in 2014, Scotland voted against independence from the UK, with just over 55% voting ‘No’ to independence. Since then, opinion polls have continued to show support for independence as being in the range of 45-50%. However, support for the established political parties in Scotland, on both the ‘pro’ and ‘anti’ independence sides has fluctuated wildly. The new Reform party, is showing support in Scotland of up to 20%, only a little lower than its support in the UK as a whole. Meanwhile, since the 2014 referendum, the UK Supreme Court has ruled (in 2022) that the Scottish Parliament has no power to hold a referendum on Scottish independence, even if only on a consultative basis.

This paper will survey the changing levels of support for Scottish independence since 2014, and the current levels of support for the various political parties in Scotland. It will examine how voting support has fluctuated between the political parties, and what the possible consequences of those levels of support will be for the Scottish Parliament elections in 2026, and the possible government that might be formed thereafter. The paper will also explain the constitutional requirements that would have to be met for a further referendum on Scottish independence to be held, and consider whether there is any prospect of those being fulfilled by a future Scottish Parliament.

Dominika Lewandowska-Rodak

Institute of English Studies, University of Warsaw, Poland

The Natural City: on the 21st-Century Scottish Urban Novel, Based on Selected Works by Jenni Fagan and Denise Mina

This paper discusses Scottish post-devolution urban fiction as conceptualising the city as a natural space and environment, and thus bridging the culture/nature divide. The notion of the city as an ecosystem is well established in urban studies, through such critical frameworks as human ecology, introduced by the Chicago School, Abel Wolman’s vision of the metabolism of cities, and urban political ecology, which views cities as “second nature.” In the context of Scottish writing, this has also been an enduring and prominent perspective, with Alasdair Gray’s *Lanark* – in many ways a landmark of and a turning point for the country’s 20th-century literature and culture, but also the Scottish urban novel – portraying Glasgow as an inherently natural entity. Such a conceptualisation of the urban, I argue, is carried into the 21st century, where literary depictions of Scottish cities continue to recognise the architectural and geological materiality of the urban space as a natural site of self-formation and self-inquiry, fundamentally linked with the cultural and linguistic sense of selfhood. By exploring Jenni Fagan’s *Luckenbooth* and Denise Mina’s Glasgow novels, this paper seeks to shed light on and examine the varied literary negotiations of this organic link between the physical form of

the city and national and cultural identity as two sites subject to analogous dynamics and processes, as well as discuss its implications and significance for the place of the urban novel within the broader context of Scottish post-devolution writing.

Wojciech Lewandowski

Department of Political Theory and Political Thought, Faculty of Political Science and International Relations, University of Warsaw, Poland

Capitalism, Colonialism, and Independence: Scottish-English Relations in the 2014 British Horror *White Settlers*

Horror productions, regardless of the medium, often serve as a channel to express and domesticate individual or social anxieties. Popularity of the genre increases in times of uncertainty when the known environment is rapidly changing and the result of such a transformation is difficult to foresee. For Scottish and English societies, the implications of the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum might have been a fulfilment of the long-desired change or the beginning of dissent into a long period of social and political instability. Therefore, the appearance of horror stories inspired by difficult Scottish-English relations in the moment of crisis was expected.

The 2014 British house invasion movie *White Settlers* (a.k.a. *The Blood Lands*), directed by Simeon Halligan, has even been branded as the “Scottish referendum horror movie”. It tells the story of a couple of well-to-do Londoners who decide to buy a house in Scotland, previously repossessed by a bank after the death of its owner. During the first night there they are attacked by a group of masked men seemingly interested in reclaiming the house and the land from the English colonisers. The aim of the paper is to look at the narrative presented in the *White Settlers* as a reflection of the colonisation of Scotland by English settlers and of the reactions it provoked. The historical, social and political context will be crucial for such an interpretation. Regardless of Scottish-English relations the movie also points to a more general mechanism of capitalist economy that enables the colonisation of the poor by a wealthy elite, sometimes provoking a violent response by the dispossessed.

Lorna McBean

Independent scholar, UK

The Seventeenth Century: A ‘Swiss Cheese Moment’ in Scottish Literary Histories?

Peter Burke, in his study of the history of ignorance, highlights a relational phenomenon: ‘new knowledge has led to increasing awareness of past ignorance - ignorance of the history

of the working-class, of the peasants, of women and still more recently, of the environment.’ (p.245). This paper considers this phenomenon alongside the extant corpus of seventeenth-century literature in Scots and Anglo-Scots. In Scottish literary histories, the century presents what Ernst Gombrich may have referred to as ‘a Swiss cheese moment’: periodisation in histories of Scottish literature overshadows its corpus with essentialist narratives rather than spotlighting pluralism. Recent scholarship has started to remedy this historiographical negligence by identifying literatures and languages of that century and addressing its connections to contemporary European literary practices. In doing so, the burgeoning field of seventeenth-century Scottish literatures is beginning to discover known unknowns and manufacturers of ignorance. In her study of proto-colonial literature, Kirsten Sandrock notes that ‘the century after 1603 was quite the worst in Scottish history, with constitutional conflict, intellectual intolerance, sectarian violence and witch-hunts.’ (p.232). Outwith literary studies, real-life data sets such as Julian Goodare’s *The Survey of Scottish Witchcraft Database* make experiences of these unknowns more knowable. Grassroots arts and personal memoir represent lives less known, e.g. Jess Smith’s *The Way of the Wanderers: The Story of Travellers in Scotland* narrates the human experience of James VI/I’s social policy. This paper uses sources from the archives, the academy, and the arts to increase awareness of Scotland’s seventeenth century for its scholars today.

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Michał Mazurkiewicz

Jan Kochanowski University, Kielce, Poland

Alistair Findlay and the Poetics of Scottish Football

Many authors have been interested in, or even obsessed with, sport, as symbolic meanings have been attached to sporting rivalry for a long time. Research into football literature has recently become increasingly important.

In Scotland, football is not just a sport, but a cultural phenomenon that permeates various aspects of life. This paper aims to present one of Scotland’s most notable sports writers, Alistair Findlay. A poet and former Hibernian FC player, Findlay emphasises that football is central to both human and Scottish popular culture. He has made an important contribution to

the intersection of poetry and football in Scotland. This paper examines Findlay's poetic endeavours in the context of Scottish football, focusing on his role in elevating the sport's narrative through verse.

Findlay explores the multifaceted nature of the sport. Using vivid imagery and candid narratives, he captures the emotional highs and lows experienced by fans and players alike, offering readers an intimate portrayal of football's role in shaping personal and collective identities. Furthermore, through his editorial work and original compositions, Findlay has provided a platform for poets exploring the intricate relationship between football and Scottish identity.

This study is based largely on historical sources, such as poetry volumes and academic and press articles. It also required becoming familiar with numerous publications devoted to the historical presence of sport in literature.

Petra Johana Poncarová

Charles University, Prague

The Czech Lands, Slovakia, and Poland in Twentieth-Century Radical Gaelic Magazines

In the twentieth century, the development of Scottish Gaelic literature was influenced by several radical magazines, often centred around the powerful figure of a founding editor. Examples include the group of periodicals established by Ruairidh Erskine of Mar in the 1900s

–1930s, and the quarterly *Gairm* (1952–2002), founded by poet and scholar Derick Thomson and author and producer Finlay J. MacDonald. These periodicals promoted a forward-looking vision of new Gaelic writing, supported Scottish political independence, and were keen to follow political and cultural developments on the European Continent. The paper will focus on content concerning the Czech Lands, Slovakia, and Poland, including articles about the history and politics of the region, travelogues, and translations of the works of local writers into Gaelic. Drawing on previously untranslated material, the paper will explore the connections fostered by the magazines between Scotland and the Gaelic movement and these Slavic countries.

Anett Schäffer

University of Miskolc, Hungary

“Parasites, prisoners and playthings”: The Portrayal of Women and the Victorian Era in Alasdair Gray’s *Poor Things* and Its 2023 Film Adaptation

Alasdair Gray’s *Poor Things* (1992) tells a story about female power and sexuality in a time when women were confined by strict social norms. The character of Bella Baxter, a young

woman who does not care about the restraints of high society, religious doctrines or manners in general, embodies both masculine desires and fears. Can she survive the realities of life in the Victorian era? Can she become a perfect “angel in the house” or is she doomed to be a “fallen woman”? How do men treat her and women in general? These are some of the questions Gray’s intricate novel centres around. Reviews and studies often point out that the novel and its film adaptation, in which the scientist Godwin Baxter creates Bella by replacing a dead adult woman’s brain with that of her unborn baby, contain several references to a classic Gothic novel, Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*. The 2023 film adaptation of the novel received public and critical acclaim, but there are significant differences between the novel and the film, one of them being the setting (Glasgow versus London). The novel and the film also differ in how the main character faces the challenges the Victorian era held for women, which aspects of Victorian society they highlight and which themes of *Frankenstein* they reinterpret. My paper aims to analyse how Victorian society and gender norms are depicted in the novel and its film adaptation, while pointing out their connections to Gothic traditions.

Maxim Shadurski

University of Siedlce, Poland

Edinburgh in Fiction: Cultural Dualities and Political Imaginings of a European Capital

This paper explores the literary representation of Edinburgh as a city marked by cultural, linguistic, religious, and political dualities, with a view to examining how these tensions inform and reflect Scotland’s historical and contemporary position in Europe. Drawing on literary texts from the eighteenth century to the present – including Tobias Smollett, James Hogg, Walter Scott, Muriel Spark, Irvine Welsh, and Ian Rankin – the paper traces the evolving image of Edinburgh as a city at the heart of British unionism and Scottish identity. From Smollett’s exploration of regional hospitality and cultural negotiation, through Hogg’s and Spark’s meditations on Calvinist ethics and ideological determinism, to Welsh’s and Rankin’s portrayals of urban decay and political disillusionment, these fictions articulate competing visions of belonging, authority, and futurity.

Foregrounding the city’s role as the site of the world’s first English Literature department and its later recognition as UNESCO’s first City of Literature, the paper considers Edinburgh not just as a symbolic capital, but as a literary construct that both resists and reshapes narratives of union, nationalism, and European identity. The analysis draws on personal experience of living and studying in the city in the lead-up to the 2014 referendum, highlighting how literary narratives resonate with and refract lived political realities. In doing so, the paper situates Edinburgh’s fictional afterlives within broader debates on Scotland’s cultural agency and its uncertain place in post-Brexit Europe.

Craig Smith

Adam Smith Global Foundation

Adam Smith and the European Enlightenment: Tracing the Continental Roots of a Global Legacy

Adam Smith (1723-1790), born in Kirkcaldy, Scotland, is famous as the father of economics and a leading figure in the Scottish Enlightenment. Smith was deeply shaped by ideas drawn from the wider European Enlightenment, and in turn his ideas shaped European thinking about the emerging discipline of economics. Smith was born in the town of Kirkcaldy and educated at the University of Glasgow. Both of these locations had strong historic links with the European continent. These links were both economic, through trade, and cultural, through the universities and schools. In this paper, we explore the European influences that shaped his early education and the development of his ideas. Using recent research on Smith's library, the paper examines how Smith drew on material from European authors to support the arguments of both of his great books: *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and *The Wealth of Nations*.

Adrianna Stańczak

University of Warsaw, Poland

Folklore and Fairytales in the Northeast Scots Translation of *Jane Eyre*

Jane Eyre is filled with references to folklore and fairytales: of Scottish, British, as well as European origins. They play a significant role in the novel, in creating the background of the story, as well as the heroine's own identity. Similarly, folk tales are often considered an important part of Scottish identity or linked to the atmosphere or landscape of Scotland. Folklore and fairytales are also strongly connected to the gothic and horror genres, whose elements define *Jane Eyre* as a novel and Jane Eyre as a heroine.

The Northeast Scots translation of the novel, *Jean Eyre*, by Sheena Blackhall and Sheila Templeton, is sure to bring these similarities between Charlotte Brontë's work and Scottishness into focus. This seems significant also in conjunction with the novel's other themes, centred around justice and oppression, which are core subjects in Scottish literature and history. Therefore, the Scots translation has the potential to bring these themes forth and in a new way, and highlight the links between them and the novel's folk and fairy elements. It seems also to present Scots readers with a version of a classic work, which we can presume touches on subjects that are familiar and important to them, in a version that can feel closer and more 'theirs' – all the while heavily leaning on storytelling traditions deeply rooted both in their native Scotland and in Europe.

Krystyna Szumelukowa

Scottish-Polish Book Club Zielony Balonik

And Yet the Books

Encounters between Scotland and Poland have walked alongside each other across the centuries and continue to walk alongside in the present. In more recent times the Scottish Polish Book Club was formed in 2006 and named *Zielony Balonik* with much affection.

The book club emerged out of a desire by a diverse group of friends, with both or either British/Scottish and Polish heritage, to read contemporary Polish literature predominantly in the English language. Advantage was taken of the increased availability of translations and the opportunity of comparison with the original Polish language. Our diversity covers academia, education, the arts, town planning and local government, the law and politics.

The name *Zielony Balonik* was chosen not only to embrace the legacy of the well-known cabaret in Kraków in the early 1900s but also to represent free floating ideas expressed in literature beyond boundaries and increasingly being made more accessible with modern communications technology. So the future can also walk alongside the past and the present in many different formats and places or non-places, as long as there is a love of literature, respect for the freedom of expression and a belief in its power to make a difference, whether local or global.

The presentation will be an opportunity to share our experience over the last 20 years or so and explore the ways in which the concept of *Zielony Balonik* can outreach further in links between Scotland and Poland.

Izabela Szymańska

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R. L. Stevenson's Books for Young Readers in Poland – A Reconnaissance

This paper will present a fragment of my recent research on the reception and popularity of R.L. Stevenson's works for the widely understood young audience, including teenagers. The titles explored are: *Treasure Island* (1883), *A Child's Garden of Verses* (1885), *Kidnapped* (1886), *The Black Arrow* (1888), *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889), *The Wrong Box* (1889, with Lloyd Osbourne), *Catriona* (1893) and *St Ives* (1897). The analysis of their publication history in Poland and patterns of retranslating and reediting against a background of diachronic changes in the target culture will reconstruct the popularity of the author across time from the late 19th century up to now.