Emblems of Nationhood: Britishness 1707-1901 (St. Andrews, 10-12 Aug 12)

University of St Andrews, Aug 10–12, 2012
Deadline: Mar 1, 2012

Kristin Lindfield-Ott

'Emblems of Nationhood: Britishness 1707-1901', 10-12th August 2012, University of St Andrews

National identity is a central point of enquiry that is repeatedly called upon in contemporary social and political rhetoric. Our conference, 'Emblems of Nationhood, 1707–1901', will address the roots of this theme by discussing depictions of Britain and Britishness in literature, philosophy, and art between the Act of Union in 1707 and the death of Queen Victoria in 1901. Over the course of this multidisciplinary conference, we aim to explore how expressions of nationalism have moulded both critical perspectives on national identity and their creative products.

Discussing emblems of nationhood in 2012 is a fitting way to mark the twentieth anniversary of Linda Colley's seminal account of Britishness, Britons: Forging the Nation, and coincides with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Several broad questions could potentially be explored in the course of the conference: What did Britishness mean in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and how was it represented and perceived? To what extent is nationalism tied with military events and empire building? How "British" was Britain before the launch of the Empire? How did concepts of nationalism enter the public consciousness, both within the British Isles and abroad? What is the impact of artistic and cultural depictions of Britain and Britishness in domestic and international contexts? How can these historical ideas of Britishness enhance our contemporary understanding of the concepts of nationalism and national identity?

Alongside panel sessions and a roundtable discussion on national identity in the period, public expressions of nationhood will also be represented: we are planning an exhibition of pictorial representations of Britishness in the form of cartoons, banknotes, war-landscapes, et cetera, as well as an evening of patriotic entertainment from the period.

Suggested topics for papers might include, but are not limited to:

•Britannia and definitions of Britishness

•Liberty and Empire

•Four nations, archipelago and Britishness

•The Auld Alliance

•British history and histories of Britain

•Foreign and British taste

•Mother-nation and Commonwealth

•The Gothic revival, Gothic novels, and the ancient Gothic constitution

•Foreign perceptions of Britain and Britishness

•National anthems

•Expressions of Britishness in applied arts, satirical prints and cartoons

•The Great Exhibition of 1851

•The iconography of British institutions

•Positive and negative forms of national identity

We seek 250-word proposals for 20-minute papers from postgraduates and established scholars from across the Arts and Humanities. The deadline for submission is 1st March 2012. Please email submissions to EmblemsOfNationhood@gmail.com. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the conference organisers, Dr Kristin Lindfield-Ott (mko4@st-andrews.ac.uk) and Jennifer Whitty (jw836@st-andrews.ac.uk).

http://www-ah.st-andrews.ac.uk/Emblems_of_Nationhood/Home.html

Reference:

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