

**Collection of Abstracts for Panel Presenters**

**When Sovereignty is at Stake: Politics of Scale, Migration and Substate Nationalism**

*Professor Óscar García Agustín, Aalborg University*

Substate nationalism has tended to challenge nation state sovereignty through claims of independence and by expanding its regional influence in the European Union. Whilst nation states consider the control of borders as essential to preserve their sovereignty, substate nationalism differs from this position since they do not agree with the existing delimitation of nation states and do not pose the control of borders. Thus, it is not surprising that the politics of migration affecting borders and integration within regions clash with the politics of the nation states, both in terms of the territorial congruence of ethno-cultural borders and of social coherence. This scenario becomes even more complicated when the notion of sovereignty itself is at stake and substate nationalists oppose national-popular sovereignty with national state sovereignty. This opposition implies the redefinition of the entire political community (who is the people and who is the nation) in opposition to the nation state, including the question of migration.

The self-declaration of independence of Catalonia in 2017, only two years after the ‘refugee crisis’ in Europe, is an interesting case in which the Catalan government attempted to become independent from the Spanish one. The tension between the Spanish and Catalan governments reflects both different versions of sovereignty and migration policies. The aim of this paper is to show how different ‘sovereignties’ are attached to political positions on migration at different scales. Here, scales are not limited to the nation and the region but refers to the city as well. The opposition between state and substate nationalist parties can explain the divergent migration policies, beyond the differences between left and right. Besides, the city allows for the elaboration of ‘shared sovereignty’ as an alternative political space for migration policies and practices.

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**Revisiting Britain in the 1950s and 1960s: An underexplored time of migration?**

*Dr Aled Singleton*

*Research Fellow, Geography Department, Swansea University*

This paper discusses an under-explored period of population movement from Britain’s history. Although we know that millions of people moved between the mid-1950s and mid-1970s[[1]](#footnote-1) we have little detailed understanding of precise geographies. I argue that this period deserves more attention through my own research alongside geographical, historical, and political perspectives.

Pooley and Turnbull outline the challenge of studying historic movements[[2]](#footnote-2); most significantly data was only collected from the 1961 Census onwards. Limited statistics illustrate broad moves to suburban and rural locations from the bigger cities[[3]](#footnote-3), but the best tools to explore this period include analysing parish records, referencing contemporary sociological studies as Jon Lawrence achieved in 2019[[4]](#footnote-4), or to gather biographical accounts as I did through walking interviews and public events. From my work I met over twenty older residents in a settlement on the edge of Newport in south Wales. A common thread was how people moved distances of under 20 miles to this location as the steel industry was revitalised. As the 1960s and 1970s unfolded the motorway network was extended, many new homes were built, and Newport town centre was significantly developed. Historian Martin Johnes writes that the M4 motorway in south Wales ‘made it possible to live in one place but work some distance away’[[5]](#footnote-5). In a similar way the motorway allowed people to easily stay in touch with family, but also live very different lifestyles and aspirations in their own homes.

The aim of this paper is to explain that these migrations were important as they allow us to understand the attitudes of our contemporary ageing society. For example, there is an argument that these moves allowed people to chance their social status and become what David Goodhart calls ‘anywheres’ rather than ‘somewheres’[[6]](#footnote-6).

**The Limit of the ‘Nation of Sanctuary’: the case of the detention camp in Penally, Wales**

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**Keywords:** Sanctuary, Hospitality, Sovereignty, Politics of Scale, Wales

In response to the so-called European ‘refugee crisis’ in 2015, the Welsh Government committed that Wales should become the world’s first *Nation of Sanctuary* by building a ‘culture of welcome and hospitality’ for refugees and asylum seekers. This was the first-time a (devolved) state government adopted the *City of Sanctuary* movement’s phrase to frame their discursive responses to asylum in that manner, as the sanctuary movement has traditionally been grounded in a local grassroots background of urban origins (Squire 2011). Moreover, this national framing is also interesting given that Wales does not have sovereign responsibility for UK borders. This raises then questions on political imaginaries of hospitality, national identity, and sovereignty at a new territorial level.

This article analyses how (self-) imaginaries of Wales as a ‘welcoming nation’ conflicted with the exclusionary asylum regime in the UK. Drawing on a discourse analysis of media statements and official documents from the Welsh government, local politicians, and migrant activists, it examines the public and political debates that accompanied the emergence and closure of a camp housing asylum seekers in former military barracks in Penally during the Covid-19 pandemic. The article argues that the reactions of the Welsh Government and local politicians to the Home Office’s decision to use the camp for housing asylum seekers constitute a form of national identity formation that is discursively *othering* (Bernhardt 2022, forthcoming) not the arriving migrants but instead the British sovereign state vis-à-vis the politics of asylum. Examining these political conflicts over who holds the sovereign ‘right to host’, it is argued, assists in exploring the ways in which emerging political spaces are being understood and created. Overall, the article develops a theoretical and empirical engagement with the question of how the political strive for separatism and (national) independence effects attitudes towards the exclusionary politics of asylum- an issue that has been largely overlooked in the literature on migration.

Squire, V., 2011. From Community Cohesion to Mobile Solidarities: The City of Sanctuary Network and the Strangers into Citizens Campaign. *Political Studies*, 59, 290-307

Bernhardt, F. (2022) Othering the sovereign host- Welsh responses to the British politics of asylum and resettlement after the 2015 European refugee ‘crisis’. *Hospitality & Society***.** DOI: 10.1386/hosp\_00047\_1

**Shielding in Wales: National Identity and Everyday Experiences**

*Bethan Hier*

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This research will focus on the experiences of shielding in Wales during the first lockdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. People were advised to ‘shield’ by the British and Welsh Governments if they had compromised immune systems and were thus at higher risk of a severe reaction to the virus. Some people did not leave their homes for several months, so this research aims to shed light on how they felt about it in their daily lives and if it changed their relationship with the nation. This research will explore the experiences of the people who shielded/are shielding through the themes of national identity and everyday experiences and will analyse responses from a questionnaire that Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales ran between May and October 2020. This questionnaire was conducted during the shielding period and covered four topics: daily life, health and wellbeing, government and information and the future. This research will also include semi-structured interviews with people who shielded. The interviewees will be asked to bring some items to their interview that remind them of their time spent shielding, which will help to avoid direct and invasive questions about topics that are potentially emotionally distressing. This research is ongoing and thus has no findings to speak of here, but it may have some preliminary findings by the time the conference is held.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, shielding, Wales, national identity, everyday experiences, devolution

**450 years of circumnavigations. How around the world mobilities shaped the World as a political space?**

*Professor Clarisse Didelon-Loiseau*

*University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne*

Circumnavigations are a particular type of mobility. They involve moving at the world scale, but also, around the world, i.e., returning to the point of departure by sailing around the earth. Those travel fascinated the general public since the first chaotic and deadly circumnavigations of Magellan (1519) and Loaisa (1525). But circumnavigations are not only the work of great explorers. The protagonists are numerous, issued of varied geographical and social origin, and their motivations are just as varied. Financed by States, private companies, or personal savings, carried out by sailboat, plane, on foot, on horseback, on motorbike, in a submarine or by train; carried out in groups, in pairs or alone, with or without pets; the circumnavigations contribute to the drawing of an emerging world space, notably by the political dimension they almost always embody. Based on exploratory work, this presentation analyses more than a hundred “remarkable” circumnavigations carried out between 1519 (Magellan) and 1969 (Golden Globe Challenge). It will show how circumnavigations are not only part of the major stages of globalisation but also contribute to the emergence of a geographical and political space relevant on a global scale in which individuals play a leading role.

**European migration policy and the reconfiguration of West African regional borders**

*Kossigari Djolar*

*PhD student at the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne*

The European Union (EU) is heavily involved in actions to promote regional integration in West Africa and appears to be a central actor in the contemporary reconfiguration of borders in this region.  As a technical and financial partner of the two major regional institutions, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the EU is involved in numerous programs and projects aimed at facilitating regional trade. These initiatives seek to support the integration of peoples who are already visible and dynamic through informal exchanges and cultural mixing. Additionally, they aim to strengthen institutional integration by modulating them to the rhythm of popular initiatives already in place. This is achieved by modeling EU frameworks which have shown successful integration of regional socioeconomic and political development.  However, the EU's actions are contradictory. They aim to facilitate exchanges within the intra-community space through support for regional development actions with a fixing potential, i.e., to maintain the population in the region through economic development. On the other hand, these actions actively curb mobility outside regional borders that could fuel migratory movements towards Europe. The highly selective configuration of these policies is based on a differential inclusion of spaces and actors.  The objective of this paper is to highlight the contradictions within these EU interventions in policies promoting the movement of people and in West Africa by drawing on data from fieldwork conducted in Togo and Burkina Faso as part of a thesis.

**The Colombian internally displaced people:**

**How urban environment bring responses to the weakening of their identity.**

*Félix Gueguen*

*Phd Student at the University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. Member of the Migration reading group Swansea-Sorbonne.*

Colombia is one of the countries with the most internally displaced people. Out of a total population of approximately 57 million inhabitants, more than 8 millions are considered victims of the armed conflict. This armed conflict, which has now lasted more than 50 years, has produced population movements from rural areas to cities, where large cities appears to be the last refuge for these uprooted rural populations (Levron, De Geoffroy, 2010). The arrival in the city, in large metropolises like Bogota, for generally rural populations, then poses different challenges, of urban integration, of the development, or not, of a certain urban identity or urbanity (Gervais-Lambony, 2001). The consequences of forced displacement, of uprooting from the place of origin, weaken individual identities, both because of the loss of geo-symbolic landmarks (Bonnemaison, 1981 ; Di Méo, 2002) of the place of origin, but also because of the trauma produced by the experience of violence (Fassin, Rechtman, 2007). In addition, forced migrations implies the deterioration of living conditions, thereby increasing the vulnerability of victim populations. Finally, migrating in its own country, in the face of violence perpetrated by other citizens belonging to armed groups, but also sometimes by the State itself (police, military forces) can also weaken the identity of the victims, by creating feelings of loss of rights (Agier, 2000; Pécaut, 2000), or of questioning their status as Colombian citizens. In this context, my phd research is about the logics and practices of those victims who lives in the center of Bogota. The main objectif is to understand if the urban environment can create a new identity, and serve as news subjectives references to a population which has generally rural origins. The aims of this work is to understand which social, spatial and political factors favor or not the development of a certain form of urbanity among these populations and how local geographical particularities determine it.

**Keywords:** Victims of Colombian armed conflict; urbanity; vulnerable population; weakening identities; Bogota.

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**Student Migration as a Political Issue in Sudan.**

**The case of the International University of Africa (Khartoum)**

*Khadija Medani,*

*PhD student at the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne*

The International University of Africa (IUA) is an Islamic university in Khartoum that offers courses in Islamic and modern sciences. It was inaugurated in 1991, one year after the coup d'état of General Omar al-Bashir. Its opening was the result of regional cooperation between the Sudanese government and six Arab states. A headquarters agreement designates Sudan as the host country of the institution and the government of Khartoum offers a piece of land in the south of the capital.

The agreement also stipulates that the university will not be able to accommodate more than 30% Sudanese students, its main purpose being the reception and training of foreign students. In 2019/2020, the number of foreign students is 16,000, the majority of whom are from sub-Saharan Africa. The UIA is thus part of the network of Islamic universities in the Arab world, tools of the policy of influence of Arab countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Although officially transnational and independent, the university, sponsored by Omar al-Bashir, has been largely instrumentalised by his regime. Since its creation, the evolution of the UIA has been dependent on the of Sudanese national politics. Student migration to Sudan has become a political and diplomatic political and diplomatic leverage for al-Bashir's government.

**National Affects: The Everyday Atmospheres of Being Political**

*Dr Angharad Closs Stephens*

*Senior Lecturer at Swansea University*

***Short description***

How do ideas about ‘us and them’ take form in such ordinary spaces, in ways that are both deeply felt and hardly noticeable? Through a focus on the affective dimensions of being together, this book examines new approaches, questions and sites in the study of nationalism and global politics. Writing against the heightened atmospheres of identity, nationality and territory, this book ploughs novels, performance works and academic theories from Politics and Geography in search for alternative understandings of what it means to be with others and to act politically.

***Longer description***

Identity is widely acknowledged to be a felt experience, yet questions of atmosphere, mood and public sentiments are rarely made central to understanding the global politics of nationalism. This book asks what difference it makes when we address national identity as principally an affective force? ***National Affects*** traces how ideas about ‘us and them’ take form in ordinary spaces, in ways that are both deeply felt and hardly noticeable, in studies of global events that range from the London 2012 Olympic Games to responses to acts of terror, the European refugee crisis and ‘Brexit’.

In this timely intervention, Angharad Closs Stephens addresses the affective dimensions of being together to open new angles in the study of nationalism and global politics. She asks how the nation is felt in everyday life, as well as differently experienced, and investigates different forms of enacting being together to generate new insights in the study of national identity. *National Affects* draws on academic theories in the study of Politics, International Relations and Human Geography, as well as stories, performance works and novels, to establish a new tone of critical enquiry. Informed by longstanding critical interrogations of the politics of ‘us and them’, this book argues that these ideas are not as stable as they are often made to seem.

Drawing on a combination of artistic and academic interventions, this book offers a refreshing approach to conceptualising the politics of nationalism, identity and citizenship. In its focus on everyday atmospheres, it identifies new registers for intervening politically. Overall, *National Affects* outlines other ways of imagining and practising being political together, beyond the excusionary politics of nationalism.

This book will be of interest to students of Geography, Politics, International Relations, Migration Studies and Sociology.

**Sensing Wales: Conflicting identities and belonging of young ethnic minority people in Wales.**

*Jami Abramson*

*ESRC PhD Candidate (Swansea University)*

*Human Geography*

According to Welsh Government data, 4.9% of the population in Wales do not describe themselves as White-British[[7]](#footnote-7). Behind this statistic, there is a diversity of ethnicities, cultures, and migratory experiences. Despite this, the heterogeneity of ethnic minority individuals is often overlooked by educational, cultural and media discourses which often assume a one-dimensional and homogenised view, using the umbrella term ‘BAME’. In particular, many young people are choosing to reject singular and homogenised categories such as ‘BAME[[8]](#footnote-8)’, as their identifications often exceed bounded, well-established political categories such as identity and citizenship. Even so, such processes of categorisation are still sensed and experienced by these young people, often resulting in social exclusion, racism and discrimination[[9]](#footnote-9). Following ‘Black Lives Matter’ (BLM) protests in recent years, young people are actively calling for greater race equality in Wales. As a result, Welsh Government have proposed their vision for “an anti-racist Wales by 2030[[10]](#footnote-10)”. In this context, I would present alternative approaches to challenge bounded conceptualisations of identity and citizenship, needed to positively represent the multiple experiences of ethnic minority young people growing up in Wales. Deleuze and Guattari’s metaphorical concept of Rhizome offers multiple entry points to understand ethnic minority young people’s identifications as hybrid, multiple and an assemblage of changeable elements[[11]](#footnote-11). In addition, I would share my intended methodological approach, participatory action research (PAR), utilising creative visual methods. Overall, I feel that my presentation will engage with questions of how migrants experience, navigate, and assemble political space. This opportunity could also offer me the platform to introduce my ideas and project to a wider audience, hopefully receiving early feedback in the first year of my PhD study.

**Keywords:** Belonging; Ethnic Minority; Rhizome; Participatory Action Research; Visual Methods.

**Bridging disciplines, people, and places: what role for creative methodologies?**

*Professor Pierluigi Musarò*

*Professor of Sociology at the Department of Sociology and Business Law*

*University of Bologna, Italy*

This talk examines the challenges of carrying out inter and trans disciplinary action research within a global pandemic as part of artistic and NGO-academic partnership. Drawing on four EU projects – *Welcoming Spaces' in Europe*,which explores the link between the revitalisation of shrinking areas in the EU and the integration of migrants; *Perceptions*, which focuses on the narratives and the myths that are circulating about the EU in countries abroad; *#ClimateOfChange*, which examines the multifaceted nexus between migration and climate-change; and *Atlas of Transitions*, which promotes intercultural encounter and cohabitation through culture and performing arts – the paper aims at exploring the use of creative methodologies for research and dissemination in mobility and justice studies.

Participatory visual ethnographies, climate diaries, graphic novels, bottom-up mappings, collective performances, are only some examples of our approach to explore the complexity of mobility justice and to open new paths for collective action, reframing the narratives and the spaces where diversity is usually confined. The talk reflects on these methodologies as collective processes aimed at including the subjects studied and intervening in contexts of social injustice and exclusion, enhancing social relations, and supporting a critical reflection by the participants.

**Pierluigi Musarò**is Professor of Sociology at the Department of Sociology and Business Law, University of Bologna, Italy. He is Honorary Professor at Melbourne University, and Research Fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Science, and at the Institute for Public Knowledge-New York University. He is actually Principal Investigator of several European projects (Horizon 2020, DEAR, Jean Monnet), and author of books and papers in the field of media and migration, borders, and human rights, performing arts and active citizenship. He is President of the NGO YODA ([www.gruppoyoda.org)](http://www.gruppoyoda.org)) and founding Director of IT.A.CÀ\_migrants and travellers: Festival of Responsible Tourism ([www.festivalitaca.net)](http://www.festivalitaca.net)).

**Fragmented language in migration: expressing displacements after Fukushima disaster**

*Professor Sergei Shubin, Swansea University*

This presentation explores alternative possibilities of writing international migration. It focuses on the experiences of trauma, afflictions, anxiety in forced displacements set off in 2011 by the Fukushima disaster in Japan. Exposure to the unspeakable and unrepresentable alterity, such as the encounter with Fukushima disaster, contests the authority of the writer and creates an opening that does not fit into words. The paper draws on the recent reflections on the Fukushima disaster in Japanese poetry by Wagō Ryōichi and Henmi Yō to consider how existing accounts of forced migrations can be released from their conventional meanings. First, it borrows ideas from Maurice Blanchot to explore an encounter with death and language that pushes beyond its limit in the aftermath of the Fukushima disaster. Fukushima poetry suspends meaning and refuses the possibility of a complete, totalising work. Second, the paper considers the language that preserves distance with death through passivity and self-withdrawal. The language of the Fukushima poems prevents direct communication with death, speaks to it without saying or signifying it. Third, it follows the traces of “fragmentary” writing on Fukushima, which allows trauma and attempting to recuperate them through knowledge. Poetry can voice the wounds of migrants unsettled by displacement and allows silences and traumas to speak for themselves. It concludes with conceptual reflections on how we can write ruptures, afflictions, and misfortunes in migration without the thought of fully grasping them in language.

**Practices of welcome for refugees and asylum seekers in rural Wales: expressions of mobility, rurality and belonging**

*Sarah Foster*

*PhD Student Swansea University*

My PhD research focuses on practices of welcome with/for refugees and asylum seekers in rural areas of Wales. These often centre on activities such as cooking, walking, crafts, events and outings. Using creative methods, and drawing on literature of language, mobilities and rurality, the research explores how people with very different experiences and histories of migration and of language, and very different senses of familiarity with being in rural Wales, encounter each other through these practices. It considers the significance of these interactions in shaping and mobilising narratives of migration, welcome and belonging. Studies of welcome have often focussed on the city; this study shifts the focus to a rural setting.

Viewing language as a social practice, as understood by Pennycook, Simpson, and others, I’m interested in how communicative repertoires, which include both spoken and unspoken language, are assembled in improvised and creative ways, shifting away from the dominance of English language as a fixed entity - and its use as a measure of belonging and citizenship.

This presentation focuses on thinking through how to organise and write about the material produced and themes emerging from two main case studies, particularly in light of the close interplay between the research practices and the activities being researched, and the roles of activist and researcher.

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