

Brexit and Anglo-German Relations Post 1990

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Anti-German Sentiment in Brexit Negotiations

'A single European currency was first proposed by the Nazi Reichsbank to Hitler [...] Now it is EU policy'.

- Sir Peter Tapsell

George Jones, 'Euro was Nazi idea, says Tory veteran' *The Telegraph* [online]. 23 May 2001. [cited 3 August 2022].

Brexit and Imperialist Ideals

Within Tapsell's quote we see a series of dangerous ideas emerging in British discourse concerning Brexit:

- How quickly Nazism, Germanness and world domination are connected, suggesting German identity is synonymous with the Third Reich
- An 'insatiable appetite for Nazi folklore and German bashing' which has become a flawed justification for British scepticism towards the EU
- How anti-German sentiment has once again become a part of the narrative of British sovereignty and its bygone dreams of imperial glory
- the ideal of British sovereignty has become inexplicably tied to isolationism and the rejection of the 'alien' or Other.

Matussek, Matthias, 'Beethoven, Claudia Schiffer, Willi Brandt? No, the British are only interested in Germany when it involves Nazis' *The Guardian* [online]. 23 May 2006. [cited 3 August 2022].

Travis D. Boyce and Winsome M. Chunn, *Historicizing Fear: Ignorance, Vilification and Othering*, (Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 2019).

Hannah Furness, 'Britain has 'remorseless obsession' with Nazi Germany, former British Museum director says' *The Telegraph* [online]. 29 May 2016. [cited 3 August 2022].

Banksy, 'Brexit Mural', online image, Gallery Monkey, 13 June 2020. [cited 3 August 2022] Available from: <https://www.gallerymonkey.com/Brexit-mural-by-Banksy-Art-Print>



Europhobia and the Effect on Modern Foreign Language Learning in Britain



The distorted perception of foreign cultures is inextricably linked to students' motivation for studying a foreign language. This can be seen in the striking decline of German language learning across the past few decades, which coincides with mounting Euroscepticism that has intensified since the 1990s.

The United Kingdom's unwillingness to learn languages is 'indexical of Europhobia'
- Ursula Lanvers

German at Leeds Today

Despite the emerging anti-German sentiment and Europhobia that has occurred in the years surrounding Brexit, the German Department has honoured its commitment to celebrating the diversity of German culture in modern times.



Staff from the School of Languages, Cultures and Societies, 'German at Leeds', <<https://www.facebook.com/GermanatLeeds/>>

[Accessed 3 August 2022]

This is evident in the course's exploration of migrant identities within Germany in addition to its celebration of queer and black literatures, such as the teaching of Olivia Wenzel's *1000 Serpentine Angst* in the first year of undergraduate education.

Moreover, the diversity of texts emphasises the department's dedication to preventing a one-dimensional and outdated image of contemporary German culture through exploring the richness of German identity. In this way, the German at Leeds develops a criticality within students towards the significance of political tensions in the portrayal of foreign cultures, stressing the need to remain vigilant in the face of caricatured images of foreign nations.

Lanvers, Ursula, 'Brexit as Linguistic Symptom of Britain Retreating into its Shell? Brexit Induced Politicization of Language Learning' *The Modern Language Journal*, 2, (2018), 778-796, p. 785.
Michael Kelly, *Languages after Brexit: How the UK Speaks to the World*, (Cham: Springer International Publishing AG, 2017), p.1.

Thomas Williams, 'Mobilizing the Past: Germany and the Second World War in Debates on Brexit', *Revue Lisa*, 12, (2021), 304-320.

Reality Check Team, 'Brexit: What are the UK and EU doing to prepare for no deal?', online image, *BBC News*, 13 December 2020. [cited 3 August 2022] Available from: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-46064836>

Benjamin Irritant, *The Misfortuneteller* (London: Shorditch Street Art Tour, 2022).