Salon II: 'Europa and Britannia'

Transcription

Dr Lisa Skogh: Hello, you are listening to the V&A Podcast series What was Europe? A New Salon. In this series of four conversations, we bring together 27 experts to discuss the geographical and social-historical landscape of Europe from 1600-1815, reflecting on its intercultural exchanges and ephemerality and making connections to the Europe we know today.

Prof Bill Sherman: I'm Bill Sherman, Head of Research here at the Victoria and Albert Museum. And I'm thrilled to welcome you to tonight's salon, the second in a series marking the opening of the V&A's spectacular new galleries devoted to art, science, design and culture in Europe from 1600 to 1815. The series is called 'What was Europe?' and it sets out to put the very idea of Europe into historical perspective, and under some kind of critical pressure, although Europe seems to be doing a pretty good job of that on its own at the moment but we'll help it along.

It's in fact 'A Salon within a Salon', a series of conversations from the special room in the V&A's galleries devoted to the European enlightenment and its intellectual culture. Here, there's less emphasis on looking at the many artefacts from the adjacent galleries and more focus on thinking and talking, even resting and were we allowed to do it drinking, which is one of the defining features of a salon. Sadly we have to defer that pleasure. We'll have a drink after but pretend that we've got one.

So we're sitting in a large wooden globe, commissioned from the art collective "Los Carpinteros", a globe that will represent the intellectual ideals and host the social activities associated with the great Salons that were in some ways the engine rooms of the Enlightenment. Now, here in this Cuban-made orb, among more than 1,100 objects from across Europe, in London's great museum of Art and Design, we'll inaugurate the V&A's newest set of galleries with a Salon discussing the past of Europe, at a time when that concept is arguably more contested than it's ever been. But before we begin, we'll have a few words of introduction from both of my co-hosts: Simon Shaffer, Professor of History

and Philosophy of Science at Cambridge and Dr Lisa Skogh, Research Fellow here at the V&A and the recipient of the British Academy's Rising Star Engagement Award, that's funding this fascinating series of conversations. So over to Simon.

Professor Simon Schaffer: Hi, welcome everyone and thanks for coming. So, as Bill and Lisa have already said, this is the second in a series of four Salons around debates and issues that seem to be salient about the European predicament in the 17th and long 18th centuries, and of course our conversations will be haunted by and may well address, or so I hope, the contemporary and future predicaments of Europe itself.

We're sitting, as Bill has said, in a Cuban-made wooden globe but we're sitting far beneath another art object, another installation, put into the corner of the British Galleries in 2001 by the great British artist Cornelia Parker. The work is called "Breathless", and it consists of a large number of silver-coated musical instruments from brass bands, which were deliberately crushed on Cornelia's orders by the pneumatic engines of Tower Bridge. One... as she says, one set of Victorian objects being destroyed by another.

It seems to me that the iconography and significance of those objects, far above us – so far above us that we can't see them, they're now surrounded by the Clore Study Space – is something that actually, I think, brings some of the themes that I imagine you'll want to raise to a very particular focus; questions of identity and porosity and classification.

It would be banal, so I'll get it in first, to point out that the very quality of the label "British" is always already defined in terms of its contrast classes of which no doubt "Europe" is one of the most significant. Is that thought symmetrical? Is it the case that Europe, the Bull, is always to be defined in terms of the British contrast class? I doubt it. So *Britannia and Europa* stand in a really intriguing set of relations. "Fog in the Channel", "Europe Cut Off", as the mythical headline once put it. (*Laughter*)

Two more thoughts before we start. One is, although as Bill says our conversations are not directly and always focused on the more than 1,000

objects on gallery, the provocation and opportunity that having a significant number of curators in the house with us and having this rich set of objects and images to think with and think about must not be ignored in our conversation. It seems to me that one of the golden threads of the Salon is precisely the relationship between our own work and concerns, and what these materials and objects, techniques and commodities might offer. And that for a second reason, which is that it's blindingly obvious that the commodity culture of the 17th and 18th century raises absolutely fundamental questions about what it is to be European, what it is to be British, where the scope and the boundaries – the theme of our previous Salon – are to be drawn.

We had our wrists slapped after the last Salon, both by some of its members and by people who – astonishingly – reviewed the Podcast. And why was that? Because we said too little, if anything, about religion. I'm not saying "We've got to mention God" (*laughter*), but the themes of confession and religious identity and their materialisation, especially in the first eight to ten rooms in the Europe Gallery and to an extent beyond, I think absolutely raise the question of what it is to be British, what is it to be European, and what the relations are between them.

And then finally it's not just – and we have experts enough here with us to speak to these issues and I hope they will – it's not just a question of that kind of politico-geographical taxonomy. God knows, in the case of *Britannia* in the 17th and 18th centuries, as many of you know much, much better than I, we are not talking about a natural kind at all in terms of the archipelagic politics and culture of these islands, nor *a fortiori* in the case of Europe. Another reason why our collective wrists have been slapped more than somewhat, is because the eastern and south-eastern borders of European space are simultaneously evident and invisible, strangely, in these galleries and in some of the conversations that we had last time. I've said enough, there's more than enough matter there to get exercised about. Don't get too hot under the collar and thank you very much, once again.

Dr Lisa Skogh: Thank you Simon. I would like to mention that this series is sponsored by the British Academy. Thank you Christine Trieu for being here from the British Academy, and we would like to thank them for their generous

support. And especially British Academy Fellows Lisbet Rausing, who could not be here today and Simon Schaffer, sitting next to me and who together with Evelyn Welch kindly have endorsed this project. And we would also to extend our thanks to our colleagues at the V&A, for providing us this spectacular space for these historic yet contemporary conversations.

Our first speaker today is Hannah Williams. Dr Hannah Williams is a Leverhulme Early Career Research Fellow at Queen Mary University of London, at the School of History. Before, she worked for five years at St John's College at University of Oxford. She gained her BA from the University of Sydney and subsequently her MA and PhD from the Courtauld Institute of Art. She is an art historian specialising in the visual and material culture of 18th century France. She has published and presented widely on subjects including portraiture and self-portraiture, religious art and the history of art institutions, for example the Royal Academy and the Louvre, social networks of artists in Paris and artists' material possessions. Her first book "Academie Royale: A History in Portraits" from 2015 explored the official and unofficial relationships of artists in this pre-eminent institution. And she is currently writing her second book on art and religion in 18th century Paris. Hannah.

Dr Hannah Williams: Thanks very much. So in our last Salon, for those of you who will remember, we were asked a very direct question and that is 'Where was Europe?' And this time, we've got a slightly more declarative statement 'Europa and Britannia'. But I think, when I was looking at these two things side by side, *Europa and Britannia*, I thought really there was an implicit question here and that is, to what extent was Britain part of Europe? Now that obviously is a very important question now, as the introductory speakers have said. This is kind of under this looming spectre of Brexit, and if we rephrase this question in the present tense it becomes even more potent I think, to what extent is Britain part of Europe?

And as I was thinking about this, it led me inevitably to other questions which I thought I would start with. I was thinking, well if we replace *Britannia* here with another country, if instead of Britain we say *Europa and Spain* or *Europa and Italy*, *Europe and Germany*, there's not that same kind of potency that there is to the question *Europa and Britannia*, because there isn't that

geographical division which we've talked about a lot in the last Salon. So I suppose the question, the first question is really does this geographic division, this physical separation of Britain and Europe map onto a comparable cultural division? Is there a cultural channel between Britain and the continent? And then I thought, well what would Britain be without Europe? If it's so separate, what could Britain be without Europe? What other narratives, cultural, historical, can Britain fit with, if it's not fitting with European narratives? So then, in what ways has Europe shaped Britain, in what ways is Britain European? And a slightly trickier flipping of that question, in what ways has Britain shaped Europe? What is it about Europe that has traces of Britain? Where do we find Britain in Europe?

So I'm not going to answer any of these questions, but I am going to offer some (*laughter*)... but I will offer some examples from my own field of art history that might help us think some of these things through. And my co-presenters are going to be speaking a little more from the perspective of Britain so I feel as a scholar of France, it's my responsibility here to speak from, and maybe a little bit for, Europe.

So I'm going to start with a provocative, I hope it's provocative, opening gambit, in true Paris Salon style. And that is that this entire question, this whole relationship between *Europa and Britannia*, matters an awful lot more to *Britannia* than it does to *Europa*. I think, certainly in our history, I would say *Europeaners* like me look back across the channel far less frequently than our *Britainist* colleagues. And I think, apart from a kind of snobbishness, there are some real reasons why this is the case.

And the first reason is the French Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture was founded in 1648. It's not the first European academy – there was, you know, this Roman Italian tradition – but it's the institution that turns Paris by the 18th century into the capital of the European art world. The British Royal Academy, meanwhile, isn't founded until 1768, 120 years later; meaning that Britain has a much younger high art industry for this period that we're looking at. And there's a tendency, therefore, to kind of look to France as a model, and that's something that we see in the galleries. Here in this room, over here the Blue Room, the dominance of France is so present. Another thing is the Grand Tour.

Another thing that keeps this direction, this gaze, going in one direction from Britain to Europe, is this convention of normally young men finishing their education by travelling to Italy. And this is such a key part of British cultural formation, but it's again something that has kept or in the period kept the British oriented to Europe.

But of course, it's not always one way. It's not a singular, unidirectional gaze. There are important ways in which Britain did draw the attention of Europe. And again from my own area, thinking about how this can be seen, there are artists who come to England, the first artistic European immigrants. Really important people like Zoffany, Angelica Kauffmann, Liotard, Jean-Baptiste Van Loo who are making the London art world their zone, at least for a time. And they're doing this... there are specific reasons why they're choosing London over Paris. There are differences between the London and Paris art world. And while Paris may have been the cultural capital, London always is the commercial capital. There's a way that you can trade in art in London that you can't in Paris.

Another thing that's bringing the gaze back to England, I think, is the person who's right behind me, Voltaire, who spent some time here in the 1720s. And his "Letters on the English Nation", an interesting text for us to think about when we're considering Franco-British relations, because they're kind of counter to what you would think a Frenchman might say about Britain. They're full of praise, albeit an attempt subversively to critique his own government. Commerce again is a really important selling point for Voltaire; commerce is how the English are more free than the French. And this is an abiding impression you get from reading Voltaire's letters, that England is just more modern than France. It feels more modern, and this modernity comes from the liberty that the English have that the French don't. An economic liberty, a social liberty and crucially for Voltaire, a religious liberty. So you see I am going to talk about religion, not just because it's key for Voltaire.

Here's his famous quip in the Letters: "An Englishman, being a free man, goes to heaven by whatever path he chooses." So I think liberty and modernity and religion bring me to my final point, which is that sitting here at this corner of these galleries, where the 17th century turns into the 18th century, we're occupying a globe, as everyone has said, symbolising the Enlightenment and

the triumph of reason. And as a result we're also sort of occupying, spatially, a grand narrative in which science and reason creates a turning point on the path to modernity – down that way. But there's one thing that doesn't really fit this narrative, well there are several things that don't fit but one of them is religion – this crucial but often neglected, as we apparently neglected last time, feature of 18th century life. Happily, it's not neglected here in the new galleries. We have ecclesiastical objects, 18th century objects, just next door and we have Picart's Book of Religious Ceremonies, just outside our globe.

So I mention religion in part because I think 18th century-ists should talk about religion more, but in part because apart from language, it's one of the fundamental differences between Protestant Britain and mostly Catholic Europe. And I think hovering at the intersection, there's a very interesting group – another group of immigrants, namely the Huguenots – that we could talk about a little bit. A place where France becomes part of Britain socially and of course materially, so much in the V&A... There are so many traces in British industries, metalwork, clock making, silk weaving. And we find these traces in the British galleries.

And I was walking through the British galleries earlier today and I was thinking, "The British galleries feel extremely European". And I came back downstairs and I walked through these galleries and I thought, "You really have to look hard to find traces of Britain in the European." There are, mostly toward the end of the 18th century, but you really have to look for them whereas in the British galleries, Europe is everywhere. Britain is Europe. So I think maybe... to come back to my contentious earlier point, maybe I was right: maybe Europe does matter more to Britain than Britain does to Europe. And I think it certainly matters more as Europe, than it does on its own.

And I'll just leave you with, just to come back to of my earlier questions, before passing over to my next co-presenter. Does Britain make sense without Europe? And where can we find these traces of how these two things, this continent and this nation, have shaped each other? Thank you.

Dr Lisa Skogh: Thank you so much Hannah. Now I'd like to introduce our second speaker, Doctor Spike Sweeting. He's a Tutor here at the Victoria and

Albert Museum and Royal College of Art History of Design postgraduate programme. His work focuses on the construction of markets in early modern Britain, both as physical entities made up of buildings and goods and as conceptual categories used to explain social life. His other interests include the material and bureaucratic cultures of taxation, insurance, corruption and pensions. He is currently writing a book about the impact of Adam Smith and his associates on the late 18th century port of London. He received his BA from UCL, his MA from the V&A/RCA programme, and his PhD was awarded from the History Department at the University of Warwick. Spike.

Dr Spike Sweeting: Thank you very much. So I'm going to talk about international trade and Britain's relationship with Europe, through commodities primarily. And I think it's worth pointing out from the outset that this form of communication with Europe is rather different to the networks that my colleague just brought up. Those being migration, the Huguenots being the great example of that but also I think it's worth pointing out the House of Orange, as well, was another great import for Britain in this period. (*Laughter*). Also warfare; Britain's engagement in continental warfare was flagged up at our last Salon and I think that's another key engagement that Britain has with Europe, especially after the Nine Years' War. And also the Grand Tour as well, this great cultural engagement.

And I think what's worth pointing out about international trade is that it's a far more sustained relationship and conversation with Europe, and that's for a very good reason. International trade for merchants is essentially a question of trust, and this means getting large numbers of factors and co-merchants in ports around Europe. And these people send back a lot of commercial and political news to one another. There's a huge commerce in letters and information in early modern Europe. And it's quite important to see this is quite polycentric as well; that actually this "either or" relationship, Britain and Europe, it can be decentred quite easily by looking at these. And I think it's worth adding that it's not just merchants that engage in this. The Navigation Acts ensured that probably many, many thousands more British sailors had an experience of Europe than the numbers of gentlemen that went on the Grand Tour. Now their experiences were no doubt very different, but I think it's worth saying that

large numbers of the population did see Europe as a result of international commerce.

So what we're going to do is we're going to imagine that the European galleries here are a warehouse on the Thames, and the catalogue that we are going to create around that – or the catalogue that I'm going to describe – is drawn from a set of customs records called the "Ledgers of Import and Export". Now these are very interesting manuscript volumes, which essentially delineate all of the goods that entered and left Britain and their countries of origin and destination. And they are huge, huge lists essentially, and I'm going to kind of talk you through those in the next few minutes.

What's interesting about them, particularly, is they don't list the exact bills that the customers would have been using; they don't list the amount or the quantity of goods. What they do is they give them a price. And these are worked out on a yearly basis, and I'm going to look at the year 1700, as that's the mid-point of our discussion of the galleries themselves. But what's interesting about this price – and I think this talks to political formation and state formation – is that giving all of these goods a price allowed the Treasury to get a fairly easy handle on what trade meant, and this was especially important for the English Treasury. They got to see how much value was being exported from the country to other countries, and how much was being imported, in a single figure. And this whole idea of the balance of trade was hugely important, and hopefully we'll come back and discuss more of that as the Salon progresses.

What I think is worth flagging up as well is that in 1700 "other countries" involved Ireland and Scotland as well. Britain did not exist as a single fiscal entity. The Acts of Union in 1707 obviously brought Scotland into Britain, and in a sense created Great Britain. But also we've got to remember that Ireland only became part of this Union in 1800, so relatively late in our period.

Okay, so what do the Ledgers of Import and Export tell us about this commodity trade? Well first of all, they tell us that Europe – and I'm using that to include Turkey and Russia in fact – was Britain's single largest trading partner. They account for 60 per cent of all imports. The East and West Indies by contrast, so each of them contribute about 13 per cent. North America and the rest of the

British Isles, only 6 per cent and Africa, which is the label that they use for everything else 1 per cent. So by far and away, Europe represents the largest trading partner of England.

So within that, we can break that down by the different countries. So Germany, Spain and Holland represented 50 per cent of that, by far and away the majority came from only three countries. After that we have Italy, Turkey, Portugal and Sweden contributing another 35 per cent. And then the final 15 per cent is made up by a denomination called "The East Country" which essentially is Poland, France, the Canaries, Flanders, Denmark and Norway, Venice and Madeira, they contribute the final 15 per cent.

And I think what's really interesting about this ranking is that France comes in tenth. This fashion capital comes in very, very low. (*Laughter*) And there's a good reason for that. Essentially, 1700 perhaps distorts the picture that happened before. Britain really does turn away from France as a major trading partner, as a result of the Nine Years' War; and this is essentially due to a really, really punitive tax on wine. (*Laughter*) And the great beneficiaries of that were of course Spain, Italy, who produce wine but also the Canaries and Madeira and of course British distillers and brewers, were the major beneficiaries of that.

But France is not alone in having its export profile made up of one key staple commodity. And when we look at the import ledgers, we can see that there's about four kind of key trading zones. First we have the Baltic which is made up primarily of forest products so wood, timber, pitch, tar and a lot of Swedish iron. Next we have Spain and Portugal, wine but also olive oil, not for eating – mostly used in the woollen industry, Britain's key export commodity. Then we have Italy and Turkey, this kind of southern Mediterranean area which produced not just wine and fruit but also a lot of high quality fibres and silks. And then finally we have Holland, Flanders and Germany, a lot, a lot, a lot of linen. If we were to recreate the British galleries using the export ledgers, it would essentially be a lot of planks of wood and a lot of linen. (*Laughter*)

And in a sense, these go from the more primary products to the more sophisticated economies. And I'll come onto that, because where do the British, sorry the European galleries fit into this? Well in a sense, the quite rarefied

products that we see around us here, would be the kinds of things that came into cosmopolitan London. Now London's really interesting, it takes 84 per cent of all of the European trade. So the vast majority comes into London and a lot of this are these staple goods that I've been talking about. However London also gets a lot more small parcels of goods and those include niche materials so things like jet, small parcels of jet, or chemicals or dye stuffs or exotic woods, they're coming into London.

The second thing that they get is a lot more cultural goods. We see in the ledgers a lot more books, a lot more maps, a lot more prints and a lot more musical instruments coming into London than the out ports or the other British ports. Fine textiles, a lot more of those are coming into London, expensive silks, brocades, things like that. And finally, we see a lot of quite odd, unique materials, art objects. So we see in the registers, "6 Italian statues" or another interesting one is a model of the temple of Jerusalem that came in from Turkey. (*Laughter*) An interesting thing; one wonders what it was made of. It was taxed at one pound, if that helps anybody. (*Laughter*)

Okay, so why London? London is, of course, the largest single consumer economy in the UK, and has a diversity of goods and services that are going to require these kind of specialist materials. Secondly, London is the home of the chartered companies who organise so much overseas trade, but in particular the East Indie trade and the Turkish trade. They monopolise both of those, so only goods from those regions are going to come into London. And thirdly and I think this is an important point, London re-exports a far greater proportion of colonial and tropical commodities, and uses that as collateral. So they are taking goods from the East and West Indies – sugar, cotton, tea – and re-exporting that to other countries, primarily Holland, Flanders and Germany. So the more sophisticated consumer economies are getting into that more global and imperial trade in this period.

So by way of conclusion, I'm just going to throw out a few words that would describe this kind of conflux. And I think calculable is an interesting one; it's very uneven, the trade between Britain and Europe. It's fluid. It's instrumentalisable by the state, it's used as an economic weapon. It's largely cosmopolitan. And it's increasingly colonial. Now these are all anachronisms in

a sense, and I guess the question that I want to kind of pose the room is, does that map onto people's thinking about trade? And I think it's really interesting that when people discourse trade in the period, they think of Britain and France. Now that seems to not be something that the figures are showing up so much, and I will leave it with that, that pondering question.

Dr Lisa Skogh: Thank you so much Spike. That was very interesting. Our third speaker this evening is Dr Danielle Thom. She is an Assistant Curator here at the Victoria and Albert Museum and she's also a BBC and an AHRC New Generation Thinker. Her PhD thesis was on the role of satirical print culture in developing the public sphere in the 18th century, here in London. More recently, she has been looking at the relationship between sculpture and prints, particularly erotic prints. Her current project is a monograph on the sculptor Joseph Nollekens. And Danielle received her BA from the University of Oxford, her MA from the University of Birmingham and her PhD from University College London. Danielle.

Dr Danielle Thom: When I first started thinking about the topic of this Salon, the relationship between Britain and Europe, I'm afraid that the first image that sprang into my mind was Gillray's very well-known print of an anthropomorphic map of England with George III's face on it, defecating on France. (*Laughter*) It doesn't bode well, does it? I'm sorry to get so *cloacal* so quickly. Incidentally just echoing what Spike said about the House of Orange, George III is perhaps an excellent example of Europe in Britain. A German, fundamentally German, king who by the time of his reign has managed to reinvent the House of Hannover as fundamentally English and respectably bourgeois. I digress.

From the British point of view which is very much how I will be addressing this question, the relationship to Europe and with Europe is a bit like that between God and the Devil; it's antagonistic but it's essential. You can't have one without the other. Culturally, economically, militarily it's in flux throughout the century, but it's always there. And I do rather agree with Hannah in that this relationship is rather more important to Britain than it is to the rest of Europe at large. From the British point of view Europe is "other", but Europe is not seen a holistic geographical or cultural entity. From the point of view of satirical

prints of the popular press, Europe is effectively France and Italy, it's a kind of cultural shorthand for Europe as a whole. And other regions, other nations are referenced really only when they become topical, in a time of war or political intrigue or what have you.

So from this British perspective, the relationship with Europe is governed by a number of dichotomies, some of which are fairly reductive. Britain is Protestant, liberal, stable, authentic, rational, masculine. Europe is Catholic, repressive, chaotic, duplicitous, superstitious, feminine. And this series of dichotomies doesn't just map onto, shall we say, conceptual or abstract characteristics; it boils down to actual commodities and cultural activities. In Britain you go to the theatre; in Europe you go to the Opera. In Britain you eat beef and you drink beer; in Europe you drink wine and starve on frogs legs. The British average individual is *John Bull*; he's chubby and prosperous and plainly dressed and straightforwardly spoken. The average European, and I'm using air quotes here, is the figure of the French or Italian *Macaroni*; he's overdressed, he's skinny, he's flirtatious but has no kind of intellectual backbone. These slightly insulting (*laughter*) comparisons are the staple material of as I've said satirical prints, ballads, broadsides and polemical articles in the lower reaches of the British press. They're in some respects a bit like an 18th century Daily Mail, except conceptually they're much more sophisticated (*laughter*) – which wouldn't be hard.

But really, British critiques of this signectically for Europe – for France and Italy – betray more about British internal concerns than they do about British views of Europe at large. For example when you read John Brown's 1757 polemical pamphlet, an estimate of the manners and principles of the times, really he goes on and on at length about French luxury, European decadence, but his concern is British strength, British masculinity. Are these pernicious European influences sapping at the core of what it means to be British? These texts, these images that say "no" to European customs and "no" to European commodities, they're fighting a battle in a sense because in reality when you look at what British people are consuming, buying, looking at, engaging in, it's European. They're smuggling in French silks, perceived to be superior to Huguenot London-made silks. They're smuggling in French Claret and other wines. You're buying your art from Italy; you're adopting French card games. Despite what

the popular press is saying, there is this kind of tension inherent in British attitudes towards Europe, in that people are going, "Well the French, we don't like them. The Italians, well *tch!*" but at the same time they're quite happy to adopt their commodities and their cultural habits.

But this brings me on to the topic of class, which is something we haven't really brought up yet. But I think it's quite essential that as is the case today, the elite, the wealthy of different nations in some ways have much more in common with one another than they do with their, if you like, fellow countrymen lower down the economic ladder. These prints and ballads that I'm talking about are pitched largely at a kind of... well at *John Bull* effectively, the sort of artisan to petty bourgeois shopkeeper merchant skilled labourer. Although they are bought by the elite, they aren't necessarily the intended audience. But the people who are buying smuggled silks or going to the opera, who are going on the Grand Tour, who are corresponding in French with their fellow intellectuals around Europe, are the elite, and this is something that is paralleled today. If you look up the Davos Meeting for example, it's an international meeting of the global superrich; it's not really something that you break down by national character or national constituency. I mean we refer to the *lingua franca* for a very good reason. People were literally addressing one another and writing to one another in French in this period; it was the language of the elite. And again we refer to the Republic of Letters, this idea of an international community of intellectual elites that transcends national divisions and national borders.

There are a couple of slightly tangential ideas I want to wrap up with. One is thinking about the English Channel. It's simultaneously a defensive space and a site of invasion. It's a protection, it's a buffer but it's also a threat, from the British point of view. And indeed visually, it's a trope that comes up very often in prints, particularly at times at war. Many prints imagine a kind of, you know, bumbling but loyal, hearted British militia on one side of the Channel peering across at the, you know, pernicious and scurrilous French on the other side. But isn't it interesting that in Britain, it has been and still is referred to as "The English Channel". That's terribly possessive, don't you think? (*Laughter*) In France, it's "La Manche", *The Sleeve*. It doesn't quite have the same territorial ring to it. It's probably a lot nicer. So does the Channel divide or unite? As a space, what is its function, what is its influence?

The other point I wanted to pose if you like, is thinking about national allegories. Figures like *John Bull – Britannia and Europa*, which have brought us here today. *Marianne,* towards the end of the century. *Nick Frog* who interestingly doesn't start off as a Frenchman, he's Dutch. The frogs' legs attribute was not always a French one. Who are they? And the question I want to pose to wrap up is, can these national characters if you like, these allegorical figures, offer us a way in to understanding the relationship between Britain and Europe? Or do they lead us down a slightly, a stray path, in terms of getting us to perpetuate the same reductive stereotypes that they were used to put forward in the first place?

Professor Simon Schaffer: Thank you very much, that was splendid. So the floor is open. There's an enormous amount to think about – we only have an hour. (*Laughter*) Hannah's point about a symmetry, that we will surely come back to, that Britannia clearly is implicated far more in Europe than Europe is with respect to its views or her views of the island. Spike's thoughts, I think, which are really important for us and will come back next month and the month after in force, about a very striking contrast between fashion and trade, that seems to me to be extremely important. And also the power of "The Great Wen" of London; that this is really a conversation about the *metropol* and about cosmopolitanism. That sits extremely well with the point that Danielle made so persuasively, that Europe is an attribute of a certain kind of class elite. It's Lord Chesterfield. It's not Gilbert Wide, even. Right? So there's something, there's a lot for us to explore.

I'd love it if experts here would speak about the relation and the contrast between refuge and trade. Partly because that's so pressing now and partly because it is pressing right through the 17th and 18th century, in all sorts of ways that Spike and others raise, not just the Huguenot case but many others that are rather obvious. Philosemitism is I think a really significant theme for us. The reason the model of the temple of Jerusalem was imported into London was because it provided matter for a long series of lectures at Jonathan's Coffeehouse from 1700 onwards, which both Isaac Newton and William Whiston attended with great enthusiasm and published on. So the taste of the

English elite, there's no accounting for taste. (*Laughter*) Anyway, the floor is open.

Dr Tessa Murdoch: I'd like to pick up on Hannah's point about Academies.

Professor Simon Schaffer: Say your name.

Dr Tessa Murdoch: Tessa Murdoch, V&A. And making this distinction between the appointment of, establishment of the French Academy in 1648 and the Royal Academy in 1768, 120 years later. And to just focus in on how we got to the Royal Academy foundation here in London, and to look at successive waves of European artists who came and settled in London and set up smaller academies. So Sir Godfrey Kneller, particularly Louis Chéron and John Vanderbank in the 1720s, the beginnings of the St Martin's Lane Academy. And then the focus on St Martin's Lane as a kind of centre of continental artistic endeavour, Slaughter's Coffeehouse and so on. But the likes of Louis-François Roubiliac, would be the most talented sculptor to be working in London in the 18th century. And then little drawing schools run by the likes of Gravelot, who taught Gainsborough and Grignon and so on.

And the way in which that sort of gradual infiltration by foreigner teaching talent, I believe developed a whole generation of craftsmen who had the confidence having had the opportunity to draw from the live model, probably in the evening, at the St Martin's Lane Academy, to produce those exquisite gold chaste watch cases, for example, drawing on the huge wealth of continental print culture, citing classical literature, you know, contemporary fables and so on, and hugely enriching the elite pockets of the gentry in London.

Dr Felicia Gottmann: I... oh sorry Felicia Gottmann, Dundee. There's one thing that I think would be worthwhile bearing in mind, as we've disentangled the notion that Britain has stereotypically of Europe as being pretty much a sort of crude shorthand for France and Italy at the time. I think then as now, we need to disentangle very much the notion that Britain has of itself, which all the stereotypes that you get then and now about what wonderful Britishness is, is Englishness – it's not Britishness. And that is I think very important to bear in mind. Now the anti-European sentiment and the sentiment of exceptionalism

is an English sentiment, it's not a British sentiment. Ireland is as cut off as Britain – or let's say England to be honest – and it has never ceased to perceive itself as European, as does Scotland still, to a large extent. I can't speak for Wales, as much. (*Laughter*) But I think that is something that whilst we discuss this whole topic of Britannia, we ought to be aware of very much.

Ms Joanna Norman: And I think also – sorry Joanna Norman, V&A – that what you're saying Felicia links very much to something that you said Spike, about Scotland and Ireland being other countries at the date that you're looking at. And of course the fact is that Scotland certainly, most of its trade with Europe wasn't going anywhere near London because it was... Scotland had its own relationships, particularly through the east coast to Scandinavia, the Baltic, the Low Countries and France, and in many ways, certainly still in the 17th century, would have perceived itself much more akin to continental Europe than in relation to England.

Dr Danielle Thom: And in fact I can pick up on that – it's Danielle Thom again. Certainly until the middle of the 18th century, lingering into the 1770s and 80s, the English antipathy to Scotland and Scottishness maps in many ways onto its antipathy to France. If France is perhaps too sophisticated – Scotland or the sort of stereotypical caricature Scot is not sophisticated enough. The sort of sawny Scot caricature who doesn't know how to use a bathroom when he comes to London. This is another Gillray, I'm afraid. (*Laughter*) But there is certainly an element of England defining itself against Scotland as an "other" as much as it does against France.

Dr Elaine Tierney: Elaine Tierney, University of Manchester. Just to pick up on that, but isn't the point there also religion? You see, I'm bringing religion in. (*Laughter*) Thinking parts of Scotland, Ireland are predominantly Catholic. So I think that's kind of, definitely another issue with thinking of this definition, which I think is a really important one, of what do we actually mean by "Britain" over this period? You know, for the first hundred years, well we're looking at 107 years, there isn't Britain. You know, I tell students off for calling things "Britain" before 1707. We can maybe talk about the British Isles, but

what we're really talking about here is three kingdoms, you know and that's been, you know, the most interesting historiographical development in how people write about the 17th and 18th century.

Dr Kirsty Rolfe: And I think also – sorry, Kirsty Rolfe from Queen Mary. I think there's also the question of have stereotypes been sort of slippery through time? And that whilst kind of keeping some of the... some of the characteristics can sort of I don't know, kind of stay not stable, but kind of have a continuity to them, the sort of way in which they're framed like has a lot of different factors affecting it. So I'm thinking particularly... I mean we've had a lot of talk about France and Italy and I just want to talk about the Dutch for a bit because I work a little bit earlier. And so the stereotypes that the Dutch are big drunkards and they eat a lot of butter, is that sometimes... they're really awful. They're these huge, fat, kind of butter-guzzling dreadful people. But sometimes it's a lot more kind of when, you know, the Dutch are on our side and we're not in the middle of one the Anglo-Dutch wars, there's this sort of "Yes they enjoy drinking, we enjoy drinking. We all like butter" – there's this kind of (*laughter*) way in which it's... These stereotypes are still there but they're kind of being activated differently and that's something I think is quite interesting.

Professor Bill Sherman: I want to question this idea that there isn't really a Britain because in some ways one of the things that our title are Latinised and Greekised, *Britannia and Europa* title, there are searches for lineages and (*unclear*) points of origin, one of which is Brutus as a founding figure. I think that's quite an important legacy. Particularly coming out of the 16th century and into the 17th it leaves its mark everywhere in this country, particularly in this city. And then also, I think the other one of course, just to bring a figure who I've worked on a lot John Dee and bring Wales in, yay. He talked all the time about not an English monarchy but a British monarchy. And for him there was a very, very strong attempt to create an indigenous empire, which would become the famous empire over which the sun would never set. And so that germ is already there before this period that we're studying here begins, and I think that's quite important in the 16th century.

Now to flip it on its side – or even turn it completely upside down – Dee is famous maybe above all for having the period's most famous library, the largest library in Elizabethan England. There's almost nothing English about Dee's library; it is an almost entirely European library. It's got 22 languages in it and it has I think – I can't remember, it's been twenty some years since I did this calculation, but about one per cent of the books are in English. Likewise, all of the great libraries – this is something I wanted to come back to with Spike about import and export – you know, it is a huge trade in books but England does not really figure at the beginning of the period in a significant way in the foundation of what would be seen as a great or essential collection. And I think that's an interesting thing to note from the start. Does that change within this period, I ask? I don't know when it does. To what extent does London become one of the essential sites of book production and export, and when does that happen? I'm very curious to hear.

Dr Lynn Hulse: Lynne Hulse. I'd like to pick up on that point as well Bill, in terms of music. I mean if you look at the type of music that's being performed in late Elizabethan England it's the Italian madrigal, you've got Nicholas Yonge's translation of Musica Transalpina, an anthology of Italian madrigals Englished. A number of collectors – think of Sir Charles Cavendish and Sir William Cavendish's musical library – is primarily continental prints or continental-influenced prints. I'd also like to bring in the satellite courts in the early Jacobean period because I think that's very interesting, to see the contrast in musical terms between that and the Elizabethan court.

If you take somebody like Prince Henry whose musical establishment is created in 1610, there you have an establishment, a 13-man band, which is very different from the main royal music where you've got consorts with single groups of instruments, so you've got a viola consort or a violin consort. Prince Henry is very much looking to Italy. You've got a 13-man band that's very much a group of singer-lutenists who are performing a variety of mixed vocal and instrumental settings, which are focusing on plucked instruments looking to the Italian baroque practice rather than the English practice. Prince Henry's musician is Angelo Notari. Notari is publishing Prime Musiche Nuove in 1613 which again speaks to Prince Henry's Italian taste.

Likewise musicians are looking to France. If you look at lute music, between 1600 and 1630 we're bringing over French styles, the *style brisé*. So that prior to 1600 and into the early 17th century, you've got the vocal entabulations, you've got the more serious music, the *pavans*, the *fantasias* of John Dowland and his contemporaries. But that shifts then towards the *almands*, the *courants*, the lighter dance styles, in this new style of French music. And by the 1620s, you've got French musicians playing at the court, Jacques Gaultier perhaps being the most famous of the French lutenists.

Professor Simon Schaffer: So I just thought I'd ask in the light of that, is this in the end – I mean this is an issue that we've raised already. Is this a story about courtly elites, and their shifts in taste and culture? There are clearly... all three of our initial speakers raised this question in different ways. There are questions of bulk trade and luxury trade to think about very, very seriously. Right? Partly because I want the British galleries to be completely replaced by a display of linen and wood. (*Laughter*) And partly because I think that the issue of class that's been raised is presumably fundamental, not just in the last instance but right through the story.

The complementary aspect to that, which lots of you have enormous expertise on – great experience of thinking about – is this fundamental issue that constantly comes up in these conversations which is the necessity of 'the other'. What's so fascinating about the story of Prince Henry's band and the radical transformations – I mean really rapid cultural transformations – in something like musical taste, is that one sees almost simultaneously an absolute assertion of the virtue of indigeneity. And as in John Dee, if you're not Welsh you're really not British. And he is, after all, employed by a Tudor. And yet on the other hand, this is the moment of massive cultural appropriation of anything that isn't British by British cultural elites. Both of those processes happening simultaneously. Do they depend on each other? That seems an interesting question.

Dr Joanna Marschner: Joanna Marschener. I'm sort of following on both Bill and Simon's thought but talking from a kind of courtly perspective. I find it really interesting that you get a sort of surge of interest, a flurry of publications exhorting, on both the Glorious Revolution and then the Hanoverian Succession, which look right back to King Alfred. And start using, you know, these great British heroes, you know, the kind of sort of the great promoters of British freedoms, of government systems which are seen as being something which do enshrine those liberties which become so precious to the British nation from the Commonwealth to an extent onwards. And it's very interesting, seeing that little sort of flurry of things about Spelman, around the succession of William and Mary and then a second little one with the publication of Asser's Life of Alfred before the Hanoverian Succession.

For these European monarchs coming in, saying we'll have you here but this is... these are the models we are setting up for you. Interestingly then when the... it's interesting to see then that sort of series of families who come in and look then for the evidence within their collections, within those royal collections, to see, you know, what celebration of Englishness to an extent – and your colleague was quite right here, saying that it is possibly very much an English story at this point – and they can't find the lines of kings and they can't find the great celebrations but they *do try*. And I find that very interesting, is they're having to re-orientate themselves from their great European networks, they're exhorted to look for something else. It's not necessarily there and it is an ambition which is set up by an intellectual elite, by the Addisons and by... oh who else is...? You have got writers, you have the coffeehouses, you have the universities, making this ambition, not necessarily the small band of aristocratic elite in this country.

Dr John Chu: Can I join Simon here, John Chu. Can I join Simon in putting a bit of pressure on this association of English cosmopolitan, British cosmopolitanism, with these intellectual and aristocratically taught courtly elites. Because Spike sort of alluded to another kind of cosmopolitanism; so an international trade cosmopolitanism and a cultural trust. And I wonder where that maybe is the link with these galleries, the British galleries and the European galleries, and whether there is a cultural manifestation of that trust.

So showing yourself to be a trustworthy international trader somehow has a material luxury connection. Because I've been working on Thomas Gainsborough's early conversation pieces, which were often painted for city traders so people working in the city of London.

And the cosmopolitanism of those pictures is often associated with a kind of upward mobility. So if you have a (*unclear*)-esque pose for your conversation piece that's seen as an... as a Carolina trader. That's seen as being oh I want to be more... I want to be like, you know, someone in the West End rather than someone in the City of London. Of if you had a Ruisdale landscape in the background, that's you somehow you wanting to be closer to the Suffolk landscape or you wanting to be sort of sophisticated like a (*unclear*) in a, you know, in an aristocrat's art collection. But I wonder whether, because I think it's more to do with if you can show yourself to be competent in that courtly world but also competent in international forms of art. You know, if you can show yourself to be a fluent Dutch speaker, a fluent French speaker, all those things.... you know, is there... I guess the question to the Salon is whether there are other kinds of material luxury manifestations of that particular kind of cosmopolitanism, aside from the aristocratic or the courtly, or intellectual.

Miss Sarah Grant: Sarah Grant, V&A. And I think it would be a remiss not to mention *Anglomania* at some stage in our discussion of *Europa and Britannia*, because although I think Hannah and Danielle rightly said that for the most part it's to do with Britain and thinking about itself as removed from Europe and a lot of the kind of the gaze is going in one direction so to speak, I think we have to think about some of the things that Europe drew also from Britain. And *Anglomania* is one of the most obvious of those things, which is obviously embraced by courtly elites, in particular in the aristocracy, seen in France but also in Germany and other countries as well to some extent, in fashion and other forms of sort of popular currency that my research looks at. The kind of Franco-English exchange between the two courts towards the late 18th century, and I think what's really fascinating is that we assume that the French were completely oblivious to the English and not particularly interested in them. And if you look at for example, French satirical prints of the English – and Danielle described beautifully the English satirical prints of the French – they see the

English as sort of backward simpletons, they're often shown as deformed, and they kind of plod along in these sort of sad miserable lives. (*Laughter*) And yet towards the end of the 18th century, what is so interesting is that more and more of the French court and French courtiers started crossing the Channel, started travelling throughout Britain, started visiting its country houses, and you start having country house guides published in French as well.

What's amazing is Louis XVI spoke English, and his favourite book was David Hume's History of England which Marie Antoinette also read. And then prominent members of Marie Antoinette's court also travelled to England, like the Princess de Lamballe and the Duchesse de Polignac, in 1787 and had a sort of an almost alternate English sort of circle, society as well. And this sort of, the kind of the way it's played out is then that there are more French buying English prints towards the 18th century than there are English people buying French prints despite, the fact that French engravers were originally sort of thought to be superior. And the English *mezzotint* is also key in this as well; this is something that the English bring.

And I think it's also maybe a credit to the French, because they manage to take English inventions and make them French. So *Toile de Jouy,* which you know, a lot of people have heard of and which we have here in the gallery just down there, was actually originally an Irish invention. They perfected copper-plate printing in Ireland and then a new... and not a lot of people outside sort of textile specialists have heard of *Old Forge* or *Bromley Hall* printworks – but most people have heard of *Toile de Jouy* and I think that's probably credit to the French for adopting something, pirating something and making it their own.

But so yes, I think it would be remiss not to think about women, as well. Because English women were famous throughout Europe for having what was perceived to be a greater sort of public independence, more liberties, greater freedom. And again that's why, you know, people sought sanctuary in England, during the Revolution as well the French courtiers came over to England. It was synonymous with liberty. English gardens, as well. So I'm just trying to kind of wave the flag for Britain here. (*Laughter*)

Dr Danielle Thom: Can I very quickly interject, only because it pertains directly to what you were saying about *Anglomania*. Just a small point which is, it's interesting that some of the biggest continental proponents of *Anglomania* – people like the Duc d'Orleans, Catherine the Great – very much vest their *Anglomania* in the person of Charles James Fox, who is held up as this beacon of English liberty. And what I think is interesting is that in England, a substantial segment of the population if the popular press is to be believed see him as a dangerous radical. So what he stands for in Europe is very different to how he is perceived at home and that sense of what liberty is, what English liberty or British liberty is, is perceived in different ways, depending on your national standpoint.

Dr Felicia Gottmann: The basic narrative that we're kind of bouncing back and forwards with is this narrative of the binary, so Britain defines itself against Europe and yet it is Europe. And in a way that's not surprising. They're not contradictory, as long as you're within the binary. If you look at Germany and France, they will define themselves against each other; at the same time they will define themselves together as Europe. So I think where the problem would start, or the alternative narrative lies – and that's very much the kind of UKIP narrative you have now – that what makes Britain or England rather, different is that there is a way out of the binary, and that way out is empire.

The global narrative that suddenly Britain doesn't have to see itself as part of Europe or as against Europe, but Britain is special because Britain has – I was just forced to reread Niall Ferguson's "Empire" because I'm supposed to be teaching it tomorrow (*laughter*) – but it is the greatest empire the world has ever seen. Now if you have that narrative, then suddenly the Channel becomes vast, because you don't need Europe anymore for your self-definition because you're special and you're different and you can break out of the binary. And that is why you have the Britain galleries, quite possibly, separate from the Europe galleries, because suddenly Britain isn't part of Europe anymore. And I think if we want to understand the relationship between Britain and Europe, we have

to look at this crucial period in the 18th century, in which Britain suddenly breaks out and defines itself differently.

UNKNOWN: But even when you define yourself by empires, you still... it has to start in Rome. This narrative has to begin in Europe, Britain's self-narrative. So it might move out but it has to... it has its origins in Italy.

Dr Felicia Gottmann: And in the end, in practice the British Empire wasn't ever this lone-standing kind of world encompassing empire on its own. In practice, on the ground they were constantly looking over their shoulder at the Dutch and at the French and all these other empires there, and on the ground they were much more concerned with what was happening across the Channel. So in practice, that wasn't necessarily the case. But in the mind of the great British, or rather the small English, stereotype, you suddenly are something bigger, something separate and something aloof. And I think that the mindset and the practice are quite separate.

Professor Simon Schaffer: wanted to ask if folk think that the maritime then plays a role in that, thinking back to the Eastern trade and Baltic timber and so on. There's clearly, I mean to talk of the UKIP narrative in a way is precisely to talk of the coastal, of the maritime, of the naval, in its darkest possible way. (*Laughter*) And it seems to me there is something specific there, Spike drew our attention to what I take to be a fantastically important demographic fact in class terms, which is that there are Grand Tours and there are British sailors in every port, or else there were British sailors blockading every port (*laughter*), during the Second Hundred Years' War. Spike, say something about that.

Dr Spike Sweeting: I'll jump in on that. So the last I heard, it was about two per cent of the adult male population is a sailor at this point, probably half of which are going to be working in Europe or in European trade routes. Of course the East Indie and West Indie trade grows exponentially in the 18th century, so that takes up more manpower. I think it's interesting to reflect again back on

the customs ledgers and what they tell us about how the world is conceptualised, because I think this speaks to Felicia's point really brilliantly. The key distinction they make is between the plantations i.e. the West Indies and America, and the rest of the world. That is the key distinction that's made, because those are English dependencies – soon to be British dependencies – in 1700.

Now the rest of the world has some interesting geographic units (*laughter*) as well. And this is particularly interesting and massively distorted, by the customs and the maritime trade in particular. So Africa is one unit, so is Guernsey (*laughter*) – obviously. Europe is put in with the East Indies because it's not a plantation. Germany exists, a hundred, two hundred years before unification, because it's simply too complicated to work out otherwise. Austria does not exist because obviously it can't have an export trade, maritime, and won't be picked up by the customs. And of course Greece doesn't exist, because that's part of the Ottoman Empire. So I mean the idea that we can extract Europe from this is very difficult. You can extract colonial empire though.

Dr Kirsty Rolfe: And is what you're extracting from that in terms of thinking about networks, you're kind of extracting way stations partly in that, you know, maybe things are being exported from Austria but they're going through Germany so they end up in the ledgers as German. So maybe that's like another layer that we've got to think about when thinking about like how Europe is, or the world indeed is conceptualised at these London receiving ports, as that it's a network with several stages to it, I guess.

Dr Spike Sweeting: Well absolutely. I mean, you know, where are all the Swiss watches? Well they're German watches apparently or from Holland. (*Laughter*)

Dr Tessa Murdoch: Or they're made by Huguenots. (*Laughter*) They were intended to be made in Paris and they were probably being traded from Geneva, so that is an absolute demonstration of the Huguenot diaspora and

networks. And actually I just wanted to focus in if I may, on a remarkable acquisition which the V&A has just landed with the help of the Art Fund and others, dedicated funds like the Hugh Phillips Bequest, God rest his soul. This is a beautiful mantle clock that was ordered by Frederick Prince of Wales in 1736. And it was sitting in Masterpiece Fair last summer – and I recognised it because 35 years ago I transcribed the bill for it. It was ordered through a Huguenot jeweller, Peter (*Unclear*). The movement and the dial were made by Charles Clay. The most expensive item of this mantle clock is the beautiful blue and white enamelled dial with the signs of the zodiac. Looking back at British history, Frederick, Prince of Wales caught up in Prussia, in Germany, it's mirroring the wonderful astronomical clock made for Henry VIII at Hampton Court Palace. It's in a French ormolu case and we know that because the jeweller charges commission of two pounds on the eleven pounds of the cost of the case.

Actually I'll share with you. It went to the Art Fund, you know, to be looked at and scrutinised by the experts and I happened to wait... it was sort of pantomime time here at the V&A. The experts came out and they said, "Ta-ta-ta. That's not a French case. That's an English case, the dealer was lying," it may say that in the bill. However I went back to the archives and the evidence is that Charles, Lord Baltimore, a friend of the Prince of Wales, a gentleman of the bedchamber, goes off to Paris on a shopping spree in 1735-1736 and he comes back with, you know, the odd Rembrandt, all the master paintings, and the French clock. Eleven guineas, it's the same clock. So we know that it definitely came from France, vide experts at the Art Fund with all due respect. (*Laughter*) And what a remarkable thing. So what do we do with it? Do we show it in the British galleries or do we show it in the French galleries – I mean the Europe galleries, sorry. A Freudian slip. (*Laughter*) Right, my vote is for the British galleries.

Dr Michael Bycroft: Michael Bycroft. I was going to say, I *wanted* to say, something which I thought Felicia was going to say but she didn't, which was that the discussion so far has been about the Europe and Britain boundary however you want to define Britain, whether or not they're alike or different or connected or not. But another kind of approach is to consider whether that is

the best binary, I mean is that the most salient way of dividing up Europe in this period? I mean other people... there are other ways of dividing it up. There's, for example, northwest Protestant Europe on the one hand and the rest of Europe on the other hand. A few people have mentioned the Dutch, is there a natural affinity between the Dutch and the English? Is the English Channel more like a kind of crucible for change and innovation rather than being a barrier between the Dutch and the English?

I think that's reasonably clear in the history of science. At least in Thomas Sprat's History of the Royal Society of London, there's a nice passage where he gives all the reasons why London is such a wonderful place to have a Royal Society of London, a society dedicated to science. And then he showed us that many of the same properties are true of the Dutch also, and he has a real struggle to work out why it is that it should be in London rather than in Amsterdam or in Leiden perhaps, that new science should flourish. So I wonder whether that is possibly a more illuminating dividing line in Europe. Possibly it's not more illuminating but worth thinking about.

Dr Kirsty Rolfe: And that there's a sort of – sorry to harp on, Dutch people again. But thinking back to what Felicia and others have been saying about empire, the sort of distances involved in empire where you are kind of, you're out in the East Indies but like Felicia said, you're looking over your shoulder for what the Dutch are up to. And the distances and the time taken to cross that means that like, over in the East Indies, you might be like knocking seven bells out of the Dutch and they you; and back at home everyone's writing pamphlets about how wonderful the Dutch are and that there is this national affinity. So I guess that's again a complication for that idea that you might... that that changes over time and that changes over space as well.

Dr Elaine Tierney: Actually we're talking about all these kind of fluid strategic geographies, because it's certainly there in Spike's account of the customs and it's there in what you just said. It's also there in something we've not really touched on, which is happening an awful lot in the 17th and 18th century: war. So what do we make of, you know, the change in allies? It's very

interesting you brought in the moment of 1688 when William of Orange comes over to be King, here. You could present that as, you know, he's come to liberate Protestant England. It could also, as Jonathan Israel has argued, be argued as the last point at which someone takes the English throne by force – a foreign prince. So what do we think about where does war, how does alliance, how does the, I suppose the kind of hard history fit into what we're talking about? I know we're all being very nice, gentle cultural historians, sorry Spike. (*Laughter*) But let's bring war in.

Dr Kirsty Rolfe: Well there's lots of British people... like certainly during the Thirty Years' War which is what I work on, there's a lot of British men serving in the Dutch army and certainly a lot of Scottish people particularly, serving in the Bohemian Army and in the Swedish Army. Like these are very kind of cosmopolitan fighting forces.

Dr Elaine Tierney: Actually if you look at the English ordnance, the kind of crack artillery experts in English ordinance are Dutch, Danish and Swedish – they're not English. Including Martin Beckmann, who is one of the leading artillery explosive specialists in the ordnance, while the English are at war with the Dutch... (*laughter*) So you know, it's one of those interesting, interesting tensions shall we say, during the late 17th century.

Dr Lynn Hulse: Yes, I think we can throw in the English Civil War into the mix here as well, because a number of English aristocracy are being exiled on the continent. We need to only think of somebody like William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, who is setting up his household in Antwerp in Rubenshuis. It's very much a Salon because there literature, the arts, music is being discussed. And we've got a combination of English musical tastes, English artistic, English literary tastes, being combined with what's going on in northern Europe.

Professor Simon Schaffer: What's striking about that – I mean I'm very glad that we have got to the Civil War, towards the end of the Salon (*laughter*) – is that you cannot parse the Civil Wars in the islands here, of the mid-17th century

in terms of an insistence on a certain kind of British identity, as opposed to an insistence on porosity and openness to Europe. All sides in all the Civil Wars in the British Islands in the middle of the 17th century used both strategies simultaneously. One only has to compare, let's say, John Milton's propaganda on behalf of the republic, which is the most internationalist political project of the mid-1600s, absolutely goes back precisely to Michael's point. It's absolutely an assertion of the identity of interest, culture and politics between the republic and north western Protestant Europe, including Bremen and Prussia and Brandenburg and the Netherlands and Sweden, against central and south eastern Europe. That's his vision. That is not Prince Rupert of the Rhine's vision, of what's just been happening.

So I think if the single most sanguinary set of political and economic disruptions of the three kingdoms in the middle of the 1600s can't *at all* be understood in terms of the binary, probably, and here I am at one with Michael, that's not the binary we should be using for this conjuncture. We're running out of time. Are there folk who have not said a word?

Dr Tina Asmussen: Tina Asmussen from Berlin. And the point with war is really interesting, and what it is in war memorials in popular culture and also in academic discourses. And I'd like to shift now for a moment from Britain to Switzerland, and exactly in the case of Eurosceptics there are interesting similarities. Because Switzerland is also imagined as an island within the continent, and Britain as an island next to the continent. And last year, we had two war memorials; the Battle of Morgarten of 1515 and the Battle of Marignano. And these memorials lead to a really interesting debate between academics and politicians. And there was a clash of two historiographies, one of the 19th century of the beginnings of national history. And they said these memorials... they were talking about *(unclear),* these male peasant soldiers and it led to the cornerstone of Swiss exceptionalism, of yeah, Swiss unity and Swissness. And on the other hand, academics stressed the entanglement of Switzerland and the, with yeah... and yeah, we've begun national boundaries.

And it's really interesting when hearing the discussion and also listening to the Podcast, that we all stressed the Enlightened Salons, the well-educated women, well-educated men, the cosmopolitanism. And but on the other hand, we have the popular discourse and with this strong 19th century sometimes, yeah, but also the political discourse of 19th century national history. And I wonder what kind of narrative do we (*unclear*), we are reproducing now when we're making a Europe gallery, when we're making a house for European history in Brussels? Yeah, that's...

Professor Simon Schaffer: Thank you very much. So before we repair to the sculpture gallery, appropriately enough, let's make some time for summaries and responses from our three splendid speakers. Hannah?

Dr Hannah Williams: Yeah, thank you. This has been a really fascinating discussion. I think there are sort of three things that have struck me. The first is from what Tessa was saying about this clock and where to put the clock and should it be in the British galleries or should it be in the European galleries? Well the European galleries, the British galleries sorry, are so full of European objects in all the... you'd read the wall text and every name of every maker feels like it's an Italian or a French person. And I wonder if this separation of the British and the European galleries on the one hand is a kind of *mise en valeur*, that Britain seems more important, but in another way it also feels a little marginalised maybe.

The second thing in this issue is definitions and how we are defining Europe in this dichotomy of *Europa and Britannia* and Britain, how we are defining Britain. And what came from that, for me, was thinking about the role of Scotland in this, and maybe Scotland is a bit more important than we have allowed it to be. It certainly was at the time, it probably felt more connected to Europe than it did to Britain, at least for some of the time with issues of succession and so on. And maybe now, it's probably the most important nation – country of this nation, or whatever – in terms of the question of Brexit.

And then finally, this dichotomy of *Europa and Britannia* that sets up this kind of "them and us". And you know, we said at the beginning, or I said at the beginning, that it seems like it's more important "them and us" for Britain, and why... where does this come from? Where does this need to assert "them and us" come from, and is it a kind of fear and is it an attempt to declare a distinction before rejection can occur? And I think I'll leave it there. (*Laughter*)

Professor Simon Schaffer: Spike.

Dr Spike Sweeting: In terms of summing up, I think I'm going to just talk about what all this tax money got spent on from the customs, (*laughter*) by way of just concluding a few things; primarily it got spent on debt servicing and the Navy. So I think this question of fiscal union and banking, and this is... and it was known at the time as the "Dutch Finance", the national debt. Absolutely crucial to think about. The Navy is the primary part of Britain's military power. It's not the standing army; you can hire Europeans to fight one another. The Navy is what they put all that money into. And necessarily, that gives I think the British a slightly different connection to Europe than these landed powers who are pumping money into their armies.

Finally, the other thing that it's spent on is food, a lot of food for sailors. And I'm a bit sorry that we didn't have a bigger discussion about how food plays into these national identities. But I've got a sneaking suspicion that if we were to really think of a truly European food it would be pickles, in this period. (*Laughter*) Pickled herrings, probably. But an awful lot of that is a result of kind of maritime trade in this period. So just to leave you on that.

Dr Danielle Thom: I want to sum up on a slightly more elevated note than the one on which I began. (*Laughter*) No more toilet humour. It's a big of a tangent but I've been thinking about the Stuart Court in exile in Rome; that is to say the kind of parallel British monarchy, if you like, that is descended from the exiled James II and the Old Pretender and the Young Pretender. Because in a way their existence sums up a lot of the dichotomies we've been discussing and

they are the catalyst for a lot of the dichotomies we've been discussing; they are the catalyst for a war within the British Isles. It's curious because their status – their *raison d'etre,* if I can be French for a minute – comes from their claim to the British throne, but at the same time they embody all of those characteristics that are, in popular parlance, reviled within Britain. They are Catholics, they are decadent; they are perceived as absolutist tyrants trying to reintroduce kind of Catholic despotism to these free British Isles. And I think it's very interesting that their continued existence and towards the end of the century their irrelevance, says something about the progress of relations between Britain and the continent in this period.

Professor Simon Schaffer: Thank you very much. I just had a couple of concluding remarks, before handing over to Lisa who's going to tell us what we do next. One is, obviously, questions of definition and language have been very much a theme here. And there's, it seems to me, a really profound question about lingua franca, about *linguae francae*, in this period. Bill reminded us of the importance of the Celtic in the imaginary; that clearly plays an absolutely huge role in the characterisation of the British, however so described. So the extraordinary weakening of Celtic languages over the two centuries that are our concern. At the beginning of our period the Celtic languages are massive; and in 1800 in some parts of the archipelago they're still massive – but mainly not. And that's a really important kind of shift, as English in a certain sense emerges as a literary language.

Franco Moretti's masterpiece the "Atlas of the 19th Century Novel" has a great deal to tell us about this. Because right at the end of our period, Britain i.e. southern Scotland is of course the main exporter of fictional literature to the rest of Europe by far, because of one economic agent – Walter Scott. And his chapter on these matters, Moretti's chapter on these matters, which I highly commend if you haven't seen it, it's called "How Britain became an Island", which is a very, very interesting way of calibrating that process. That the British – even the elites – stop reading French novels, and they start reading Scottish ones. That's just an example.

Two more... two less elevated thoughts. One is that I learnt a lot, I mean I now understand the difference between "Rule Britannia" and the national anthem. The national anthem – this is presumably unique in European nation states – is essentially a ferocious attack on one of the nations that makes up the state of which this is the national anthem. The Scots are, after all, the target of "God Save the Queen"; that seems very, very important in the light of one of the things that been said here. Whereas "Rule Britannia" is about slavery, and by implication it seems to me, about Catholicism. So the contrast there is very, very interesting; why "Rule Britannia" is not the national anthem and so on.

And that, of course, reminds one of the function of the Royal Family. Britain has not been ruled by anyone from England since the October of 1066. (*Laughter*) And we've had this Salon in an institution which offers us up a much better dichotomy than *Britannia and Europa* – which is *Victoria and Albert*.

Dr Lisa Skogh: Thank you Simon. If I may quote Hannah – I thought it was brilliant – how actually European the British galleries are, and I think maybe we have to invite some of the politicians here to come and have a look at our British galleries, one day. Well thank you all and especially Hannah Williams, Spike Sweeting and Danielle Thom for giving their.... (*applause*) And the next Salon, which takes place in a couple of weeks, February 10th, is on the topic of 'Europe Through non-European Eyes'. And with us for that event we have Daniella (*Unclear*), we have Anna Grasskamp and we have Jose, who is sitting here with us, Jose Ramon Marcaida. Thank you all very much.

Thank you for listening to What was Europe? A New Salon. We would also like to thank the British Academy for generously supporting this new Salon series. In the next Salon our journey into the past continues with the third of our four conversations about early modern Europe. And this time through non-European Eyes. We hope to see you then.