

Séminaire d'équipe

POPULAR CULTURE, POLITICS AND IDENTITY IN BRITAIN

23 novembre – 15h00-17h00 – L 201

Cécile Beaufils (Sorbonne Université)

(also available online)

“Brexit Literature: crisis writing in the UK”

“I’m tired of the news,” she says. “I’m tired of the way it makes things spectacular that aren’t, and deals so simplistically with what’s truly appalling. I’m tired of the vitriol. I’m tired of the anger.”

Such are the words uttered by the main character’s mother in Ali Smith’s novel *Autumn*—one of the first post-Brexit novels published in the UK, to address the vote directly. Much of the post-2016 general fiction releases of the UK bear the mark of the successive crises hitting the country: first the divisive vote of 2016, and then the beginning of the COVID epidemic in early 2020. These two crises, I will argue, have deeply impacted British fiction-writing and the publishing industry in general, in unexpected ways. I will therefore examine, through major recent novels (Ali Smith’s seasonal quartet, *Middle England* by Jonathan Coe, *The Cockroach* by Ian McEwan, and *All Among the Barley* by Melissa Harrison, among others) and recent publishing trends, the manifestations of a national crisis.



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