

Call for Papers:

SAUTE Biennial Conference 2015 – University of Geneva

24-25 April 2015

ECONOMIES OF ENGLISH

- **combined with CUSO Doctoral Workshop: The Changing Value of English Studies 26 April 2015**

Conference organizers: Dr Martin Leer, Dr Erzsi Kukorelly, Prof. Genoveva Puskas

DESCRIPTION:

As the world still reels from the financial crisis of 2007-8, it seems timely to reflect on the connections between money and value embedded in all our discourses about economy, language and literature. Marxists and neoliberals have classically theorized this as reflecting the mechanisms of capitalism and the market. More recently, however, the literary theorist Marc Shell has seen the invention of coinage as underlying the whole of Western philosophy, while the anthropologist David Graeber has proposed that all of the great religions and political ideologies are responses to the moral confusion of money. These are concerns that go to the heart of English studies, both because English is the global language of money, and because the discipline and its language rest on a goldmine of unexamined economic metaphors: from literary debts to loanwords, from redemption to counterfeit and queer, from currency to exchange, from the economy of syntax to the economy of poetic expression.

The organizers welcome proposals for papers or panels covering all aspects of the conference theme: from linguistics, literature and cultural studies; from all historical periods, including especially those before the invention of economics in the eighteenth century; from medieval numismatics to the rhetoric of financial derivatives; from debt in the novels of Dickens to Anne Carson's theory of poetry as the *Economy of the Unlost*; from the pragmatics of metaphor to "economizing with the truth"; from economics vs. ecology to the economics of gender; from the politics of funding for the teaching of English as a second language to the politics of funding for English departments in universities.

Whether you think money is base or superstructure, a penny for your thoughts!

Abstracts should be about 500 words.

Deadline for proposals: 16 January 2015

Keynotes (confirmed):

Professor Marc Shell, Harvard University;

Professor John Joseph, University of Edinburgh

Professor Laura Brown, Cornell University

Professor Stefan Collini, University of Cambridge

Marc Shell, Irving Babbitt Professor of Comparative Literature at Harvard University, is the doyen of the theoretical study of literature and money, beginning with *The Economy of Literature* (1978), continuing through *Money, Language and Thought* (1982) and other publications to *Wampum and the Origin of American Money* (2013). He has also published on the connection between different currencies and different languages in *Children of the Earth: Literature, Politics and Nationhood* and in disability studies *Polio and Its Aftermath* (2005), *Stutter* (2006).

John Joseph, Professor of Linguistics and Head of Linguistics and English Language, University of Edinburgh, is perhaps mainly known for his monumental and highly acclaimed biography of *Saussure* (2012), but has also published, among others, *Language and Politics* (2006) and *Language and Identity* (2010).

Laura Brown, John Wendell Anderson Chair of English Literature and Deputy Provost, Cornell University, is an expert on the eighteenth century and the author of *Ends of Empire: Women and Ideology in Early Eighteenth Century English Literature* (1993), *Fables of Modernity: Literature and Culture in the English Eighteenth Century* (2001), *Homeless Dogs and Melancholy Apes: Humans and Other Animals in the Modern Literary Imagination* (2010).

Stefan Collini, Professor of English, University of Cambridge, is perhaps best known for his polemics against the total monetization of British Universities, collected in *What Are Universities For?* (2012), but he has published very substantially in nineteenth and twentieth century literature and intellectual history: *Absent Minds: Intellectuals in Britain* (2006), *Common Reading: Critics, Historians, Publics* (2008), *That's Offensive! Criticism, Identity, Respect* (2011).