



#3 Introducing one of our keynote speakers...

We might have had a little bit of an extended hiatus in the regular posting of our blog posts in the BARS 2019 series, but we are absolutely delighted to introduce Professor Diego Saglia to you in our third blog post.

Diego Saglia is Professor of English at the University of Parma, Italy. His research centres on Romantic-period literature and culture, particularly on questions linked to exoticism and otherness, identity, transcultural contacts and exchanges, and performance. He is the author of *Poetic Castles in Spain: British Romanticism and Figurations of Iberia* (2000), and co-editor of *British Romanticism and Italian Literature: Translating, Reviewing, Rewriting* (with Laura Bandiera, 2005); *Byron and Italy* (with Alan Rawes, 2017); and *Spain in British Romanticism 1800-1840* (with Ian Haywood, 2018). He is a member of the advisory committee of the Byron Museum in Ravenna and of the steering group of 'ERA – European Romanticisms in Association'. His monograph *European Literatures in Britain, 1815-1832: Romantic Translations* is forthcoming from Cambridge University Press (2019).

We also asked Diego a couple of questions about what he was most looking forward to at the conference, and what interests him most about the theme, 'Romantic Facts and Fantasies'.

What part of the BARS 2019 conference are you most looking forward to and why?

"Besides (obviously) the sessions and plenaries - I particularly look forward to the moments of socialization – they are always great at BARS conferences, as they provide wonderful opportunities for meeting old friends and colleagues (and also new ones, of course) from the four corners of the world in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere; these moments are great for catching up but also often turn into springboards for future collaborations. It is in these moments, too, that you get an idea of what is going on in the world of Romantic studies – new trends, buzzwords, names to watch, and so on."



What interests you most about the conference's theme 'Romantic Facts and Fantasies'?

"I am especially interested in the invitation by the organizers to "develop a collective understanding of how Romantic 'fact' and 'fantasy' work together and against one another" – that is, I think, to reflect on the idea that what is a conflict is also a collaboration. I find this suggestion, and the emphasis on ambivalent cultural constructs, particularly stimulating. I am sure it will inspire speakers to come up with original ways of inflecting this nexus and, therefore, reinforcing our continuous process of redrawing and reconceiving the Romantic age.

In this respect, the conference topic fits perfectly – almost uncannily so! – both with the underlying arguments of my latest book *European Literatures in Britain, 1815-1832: Romantic Translations* (Cambridge UP 2019); with my participation in the "REVE – Dreaming

Romantic Europe” Project (led by Nicola Watson and Catriona Seth) and its focus on objects from the Romantic period (see <http://www.euromanticism.org/virtual-exhibition/>); while, last but not least, the topic speaks directly to my collaboration with the Byron Museum in Ravenna (due to open in late 2019), a place in which facts and fiction coalesce uninterruptedly, so that the main challenge is precisely how to make the Byronic obsession with this nexus to become significant again – and in suitably contemporary ways – for future visitors.”

Our next blog post will be out in the end of March and we will be focussing on the venue for our conference. In the meantime, keep an eye on those emails as the Organising Committee are soon to be communicating decisions about proposals! Also, registration for the conference, booking accommodation, and signing up for excursions, will also soon be live. More information about accommodation, trips, and travel can be found at:

<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/conference/fac-arts/english/romantic-studies/index.aspx>

Also, updates will be posted via our Twitter, @bars2019, and Facebook page, BARS 2019 Nottingham.