

# Brexit and its avatars

## New nationalisms and the multilingual challenge for Europe

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# Outline

- Brexit and its avatars
- Languages and the new nationalisms
- The multilingual challenge

# Brexit and its avatars

- A personal view
  - June 2016 – a bolt from the blue
  - November 2016 – the trump of doom
- Silence of the lambs
  - May 2017 – Macron and the sweet relief
- The Disunited Kingdom
  - Leavers/Brexiteers/Brexiters (52%) versus Remainers/Remoaners (48%)
  - Avatars in US (Red/Blue)
  - Divisions on similar lines in other countries

# New nationalisms

- Revival of exclusionary nationalisms
  - Against globalisation/globalism
  - Nationalist elites and *laissés pour compte*
  - Exacerbated identity, bubbles and rabbit holes
  - (Social) media, ideology and the dark side of the moon
- Nationalism against nations
  - Zero sum game (win-lose)
  - Limit perspectives (fear and loathing)
  - Reduce cooperation (suspicion and resentment)

# Languages and the new nationalisms

- Language as field of struggle
  - Communication as weapon in information strategy
  - Linguistic identity as fortress (Shibboleth)
  - Language in culture wars
- Language as object of struggle
  - Construction/defence of national language
  - Other languages as threats/risks, question of trust

# Languages after Brexit

- <http://www.springer.com/gb/book/9783319651682>

# The multilingual challenge

- Multilingualism in the national interest
  - Economic growth
  - Social inclusion
  - Personal development
- Multilingualism in the international interest
  - War and peace
  - Scientific research and innovation
  - Cultural exchange, educational cooperation

# Beyond the Zero sum game

- Aspire to win-win
- Attenuate the effects of exclusionary nationalism
  - Widen horizons (openness and discovery)
  - Promote communication (dialogue and empathy)
  - Increase cooperation (working together)



# • Discussion

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