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Introduction

Since its inception in 2005, the Centre for Anglo-German Relations has come to play an increasingly important role in the ways in which the German past and the German present are depicted in British cultural and intellectual life. Some of this work goes on behind the scenes, while other aspects are more obviously visible. In the former category, I would place the occasion when BBC Television contacted me in my role as the Centre’s Acting Director in search of someone to speak about German Christmas Stollen on the Great British Bake Off. My colleague, Dr Astrid Köhler, then delivered an admirable performance on this programme leading up to Christmas in 2013, explaining the cultural history of Stollen to a national British audience. That audience are now better informed: they learned that Stollen as we know and love it today only came into being once, in 1491, the Roman Catholic Church lifted a decree according to which milk and butter could not be used during the period of advent. This is important mediating work, giving the British public a more detailed view of German cultural history, and choosing to illuminate aspects of German culture that may have been obscured by weightier themes in the history of Anglo-German cultural relations, such as the Second World War, or by more prominent cultural forms, such as the cinema. Earlier in 2013, those two themes had indeed been the focus of our Centre: in the highly illuminating conversation between Professor Rüdiger Görner and Volker Schlöndorff concerning the great film director’s career (which was the 2013 ANGERMION LECTURE, held at the Residence of the German Embassy), and in an event focusing on Stephen Spender’s efforts in reconstructing German universities and libraries following the Second World War, organised by Dr Lara Feigel from King’s College London, Queen Mary’s Dr Elaine Morley and involving Stephen Spender’s son, Matthew. Those weightier themes in the history of Anglo-German cultural relations – namely the two World Wars – do require periodic examinations and re-examinations. Historical events such as the onset of the Great War are of such complexity, and our views about them are so often influenced by the cultural moment in which we are situated, that understanding them becomes something akin to an unending responsibility. No more important anniversary has occurred in the short history of the Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations than that of 2014, and this is because this anniversary demanded sensitive and differentiated interpretation on a number of levels. The British Museum was aware of this need, and has delivered an exhibition – Germany: Memories of a Nation – that attests to the complexity of the in some ways highly contingent cultural construction that is ‘Germany’.
Rather than focusing only on the Great War in its anniversary year, the Museum decided to tell a more complicated story, which provides a richer context not only for the consideration of conflicts, but also of cultural phenomena such as, for example, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, or the VW Käfer, to name just two German icons. It was therefore a great honour to have Neil MacGregor delivering the Centre’s ANGRMION LECTURE in January 2014, providing an audience at Queen Mary with a preview of the Museum’s exhibition. The Centre has played a key role in shaping the programme of events to supplement this exhibition, with Professor Rüdiger Görner chairing a session on Anglo-German Relations at the Museum in October 2014, and myself featuring in an event on German Literature from Goethe to Grimm later this month. Further to this, in August 2014, an international conference – Perspectives on the ‘Great’ War – was held at Queen Mary, co-organised by the Centre’s then-Acting Deputy Director, Dr Falco Pfalzgraf, and involving leading scholars from all over the world, including, perhaps most notably, Professor Christopher Clark, author of The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914.

Looking back on all of this in January 2015 – after having eaten some Stollen over Christmas! – these are just some of the key events that have taken place in our Centre during the last two academic years, and which stand out in retrospect. For a good deal of the first of these two years (2012-13), I was on research leave as an Alexander von Humboldt Fellow at the University of Stuttgart and at the German Literary Archive in Marbach, and I have since assumed the Chair of Comparative Literature at Queen Mary. Following a well-earned period of leave after having served as Head of the School of Languages, Linguistics and Film, Professor Rüdiger Görner, the Centre’s Founding Director, has now returned to his role as the Centre’s Director, and we welcome him back to this role!

London, January 2015
Dr Angus Nicholls
Chair of the Department of Comparative Literature, QMUL
(Formerly Acting Director of the Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations)
The Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations at Queen Mary University of London, was founded in December 2005

1. Aims and Structure of the CAGCR
The Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations at Queen Mary University of London was founded in December 2005. The Centre is housed in the Department of German within the School of Languages, Linguistics and Film. The Centre’s website can be found at: www.qmul.ac.uk/cagcr

The CAGCR aims to: facilitate research on Anglo-German cultural relations with special reference to the fields of literature, language, intellectual history and comparative cultural practice; disseminate said research through colloquia, international conferences, and the CAGCR Yearbook *ANGERMION*; and provide high quality postgraduate teaching through the Centre’s MA Programme on Anglo-German Cultural Relations.

The CAGCR’s Director is Professor Rüdiger Görner; Dr Martina Deny and Martin Rebhan have been running the CAGCR’s Writer-in-residence Programme. The Centre’s research activities are divided into the following four sections of research interest, each of which is convened by at least one staff member in the Department of German at Queen Mary:

- Literature (Dr Astrid Köhler)
- Language and Linguistics (Dr Falco Pfalzgraf)
- Intellectual History (Dr Angus Nicholls)
- Cultural Transfers and Drama (Dr Robert Gillett)

2. *ANGERMION*, Yearbook for Anglo-German Cultural Relations

With Volker Schlöndorff’s visit, the CAGCR was privileged in welcoming one of the great post-1945 German film producers. In his fascinating *ANGERMION* LECTURE, Schlöndorff paid tribute to the transfer *triangulaire* by means of film between Germany, France and Britain. This was particularly appropriate for this lecture as it was held on 22 January 2013 in the German Embassy in London and therefore coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and France.
Schlöndorff spoke movingly about the motif of childhood in film, his filmic rendering of Robert Musil’s novella *Törless*, as well as his crucial involvement in transforming the film studios in Babelsberg after 1992. His stimulating lecture culminated in an advocacy for “multiple identities” as the make-up of any truly human existence. It was followed by a lively discussion session with engaging participation of the audience.

2.2 ANGERMION LECTURE 2014, and Launch of vol. 6: Lecture by Neil MacGregor, Director of the British Museum, on 27 January 2014 at Queen Mary University of London

This year’s lecture was given by the Director of the British Museum, Neil MacGregor, on the subject of “Wrestling with the Past: Exhibiting German History”. Basing his lecture on a wide range of images from the British Museum’s...
and its famous Bauhaus movement to Buchenwald, thereby pointing to the key problem in the narrative of recent German history: How did the land of Dichter and Denker, the land of music, the land of design and innovation, produce the Shoah? Rather than answering this impossible question directly, MacGregor showed how post-war German culture has attempted to come to terms with this past. Whereas British culture has tended to produce narratives of success, victory and progress, often eliding some of the darker aspects of its colonial history, German culture has tried to make sense of its own diffuse and fractured narratives through increasingly complex and multi-layered artworks. MacGregor showed that this was already the case with respect to the Great War, and became increasingly so after 1945. A single object – Ernst Barlach’s bronze sculpture of an angel entitled Der Schwebende (1927), created for Güstrow cathedral to commemorate the fallen of the Great War, and based on the features of Käthe Kollwitz – was shown by MacGregor to reveal some of the complexities of recent German history. Destroyed by the National Socialists in 1941 on account of its so-called ‘Slavic’ features and its purported lack of heroism, a plaster cast of the sculpture was secretly retained, and two copies (one housed in Cologne, the other in the original location of Güstrow) allowed
the sculpture to become the common cultural inheritance of the two Germanies after the Second World War. As time progressed, this single object accumulated meaning from the historical circumstances that surrounded it, and its Güstrow version is now on display in the British Museum until January 2015. This lecture was one of the most meaningful and successful events in the history of the Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations.

3. Writer-in-residence Programme
Established in 2005, the CAGCR Writer-in-residence Programme showcases recent developments in contemporary German literature. This initiative is financed by the Deutscher Literaturfonds and on a regular basis by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). The CAGCR hosts writers whose work is representative of contemporary literature in German and enables visiting authors to reside at Queen Mary for periods of approximately ten
weeks. The programme was first organised by Dr Susanne Frane, then followed by Dr Martina Deny, and currently overseen by Martin Rebhan MA, all DAAD Lektors in the Department of German.

The Centre’s Writers-in-residence 2012/13 and 2013/14 were:

- Kristof Magnusson (Writer-in-residence Autumn 2013)
- Gregor Sander (Writer-in-residence Spring and Autumn 2013)
- Sudabeh Mohafez (Writer-in-residence Winter 2012 / Spring 2013)

All our writers actively took part in a number of events at Queen Mary’s Mile End Campus:

- On 25 February 2013, Sudabeh Mohafez gave a public reading. This was organised in co-operation with the German Academic Exchange Service DAAD.

- On 14 October 2013, Gregor Sander and Kristof Magnusson both gave a public reading. This was also organised in co-operation with the German Academic Exchange Service DAAD.

- On 25 November 2013, Kristof Magnusson engaged in a series of translation workshops with final year students of German, the results of which were presented in a bilingual reading towards the end of his residence here. This event was organised in co-operation with the CAGCR Literature Section.

- On 25 November 2013, Kristof Magnusson participated in a public reading and discussion on issues of translation. This event took place in co-operation with the German Academic Exchange Service DAAD.
4. The Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache at Queen Mary University of London

The Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache (GfdS), Germany’s most important government-sponsored language society, has been housed at the CAGCR since its UK branch was opened in March 2010, in the presence of Queen Mary’s Principal, Professor Simon Gaskell, and the then-German Ambassador to the UK Georg Boomgaarden. The chair of GfdS UK/London branch is Dr Falco Pfalzgraf.

The GfdS is a politically independent association for the study, cultivation, and promotion of the German language. Its aim is to deepen the public understanding of the German language, and to make its function visible in a global context. In order to achieve this, the GfdS organises up to two linguistics-related lectures per year. These lectures are always in German, and open to the general public.

• On 16 November 2012, Dr Birte Arendt and Dr Jana Kiesendahl from Greifswald University gave a lecture entitled “‘Sprache’ ohne Artikel. Das geht gar nicht! - Form, Funktion und Wirkung von sprachkritischen Äußerungen in Kommentarforen”. The lecture covered criticism concerning language use in the comment sections of online platforms such as YouTube and journalistic websites such as bild.de, as uttered by lay linguists.

• On 29 November 2013, Dr Winifred Davies, Lecturer in German Linguistics at the University of Aberystwyth, gave a lecture entitled “Die Rolle von Mythen bei der Produktion sprachlicher Normen”. The event was mainly attended by QMUL German alumni but also by current students, staff, and members of the general public. This highly informative lecture dealt with the role of myths when it comes to the production of linguistics norms. After the door of the university building had closed, our lively discussion was continued in a local pub.

The CAGCR Language and Linguistics Section will continue organising the GfdS lectures in the future.
1945-1950. Having won the war, the challenge for the Allies was now to “win the peace” by re-educating the German population and instituting democracy. Literature, film, theatre, and the press were seen as key channels through which this could be achieved. However, this “official” narrative of cultural transfer was not as straightforward as the occupying authorities had imagined: Feigel argued that while writers such as Stephen Spender and W.H. Auden, and filmmakers such as Billy Wilder and Alberto Cavalcanti, were sent to Germany to further the occupiers’ objectives, they often began to question the validity of this mission, or to subvert it in their cultural outputs.

On 1 March 2013, we welcomed Birgit Vanderbeke to the Centre, an author whose prize winning novel *Das Muschelessen* (1990) had just come out in English translation: *The Mussel Feast*, published by the London-based Peirene Press. The reading was bilingual, with the German passages read by the author herself and the English translations read by Dr Katerina Somers and Dr Elaine Morley. It was followed by lively discussion centred around questions of translation, not least because half the audience had read the book in German, the other half in English. We were delighted to welcome students coming from as far afield as the University of Southampton and to see them engaging in fruitful exchanges with QMUL students.

5. CAGCR Literature Section

On 10 October 2012, the acclaimed author Angela Krauß, who had been our Writer-in-residence in 2009, returned for a short visit. Back in 2009, she had just published a collection of poems entitled “Ich muß mein Herz üben”, and she discussed these texts in an afternoon workshop with a wide audience. This time, we asked her to address herself particularly to our first year students in German and in Comparative Literature and to give them an insight into her creative process. Under the title “Das im Leben verborgene Gedicht” (“The Poem Hidden in Our Daily Lives”) she revealed to the students (and teachers) what she called a process of discovery rather than invention.

On the 6 of February 2013, Dr Lara Feigel (King’s College, London) gave a lecture entitled “Beyond Enemy Lines: British Writers in Germany 1945-1949”.

In 1945 Britain, America, Russia and France sent occupation armies to reconstruct the country they had just defeated, Germany. The British and Americans (but not the Soviet or French) troops incorporated writers and filmmakers (including former Germans). In this research seminar, Lara Feigel probed the possible cross-fertilisation of Anglo-American and German cultural life during the immediate post-war period, 1945-1950.
On 14 March 2013, the CAGCR Literature section organised the following event in co-operation with King’s College London:

Dr Lara Feigel (KCL), Dr Elaine Morley (QMUL), and Matthew Spender: “Stephen Spender in Germany, 1945.”

In 1945, Stephen Spender spent six months in Germany helping reconstruct universities and libraries. His mission was partly political (he wanted to mediate between German and British culture at a time when the British government thought the Germans were incapable of cultural renewal), partly literary (he was keen to experience the extraordinary landscape of ruined Germany first hand) and partly personal (he wanted to make contact with Ernst Robert Curtius, his mentor from before the war). The trips resulted in his Rhineland Journal, published in Horizon, and in European Witness (1946), one of the first and still one of the most eloquent accounts of the German landscape, society and culture in the immediate post-war period. Lara Feigel (co-editor of the New Selected Journals of Stephen Spender), Elaine Morley (Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations at QMUL) and Matthew Spender (the poet’s son, who has recently uncovered new material on Spender’s time in Germany in the National Archives) discussed Spender, European Witness and German reconstruction.

On 20 March 2013, invited jointly by the students’ German Society and the literature section of the CAGCR, journalist Marcus Ferrar spoke to us about his autobiographical book: A Foot in Both Camps; A German Past for Better and for Worse. Being the son of a German mother and a British father, and having worked as a Reuters journalist in East Berlin during the era of the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall, he gave fascinating insights into his life experiences and assessed Germany’s and Britain’s current roles in the European Union.

As part of his DAAD-funded residence in Birmingham, German writer Klaus Böldl came to visit the Centre on 8 October 2013 to give a bilingual reading from his novel Der nächtliche Lehrer (The Nocturnal Teacher). Main subjects of the discussion between audience and author afterwards were problems of literary translation and Böldl’s place in a European literary tradition. The event was co-organised and moderated by Dr Claudia Gremler, Senior Lecturer at Aston University.

On 28 February 2014, former QMUL student and Guardian Journalist Philip Oltermann came to discuss his acclaimed book Keeping Up with the Germans. This was organised by the Centre’s Literature
well-established disciplines as historical-comparative linguistics, language typology etc. In his presentation, Professor Leuschner surveyed some topical issues in contrastive linguistics and discussed original research which has recently advanced our understanding of the relationship of German with its Germanic sister languages, especially English, or is likely to do so in the near future. Particular attention was paid to approaches that in some way challenge the traditional synchronic focus on two language systems: by adding an historical dimension (including recent work on so-called ‘asynchronous’ grammaticalisation), by comparing three languages instead of two, or by comparing discourses in different languages rather than the languages themselves.

7. CAGCR Cultural Transfers and Drama Section

From 2 to 3 May 2013, the Interdisciplinary Conference “Money Matters – Transactions between Money and Literature” took place on Mile End Campus, France House Lounge.

This conference, organized jointly by Dr Annja Neumann and Marcela Pozarkova, brought together guests from other London Colleges, from other British Universities, and from outside the academy to discuss
alongside QMUL’s own scholars the topical issue of money in literature. The keynote was given by Professor Jochen Hörisch of the University of Mannheim, and the topics discussed covered the whole history of Western (and not only Western) literature from Oedipus to Yoko Tawada, with a special emphasis on Anglo-German topics. The conference, which was conducted in a particularly lively and convivial atmosphere, concluded with a discussion led by the banker and writer Richard Bassett, and left all the participants enriched, if not richer.

To mark the 20th anniversary of the death of award-winning Austrian writer Werner Schwab, the Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations organized a roundtable discussion on 9 May 2014, around the Just a Must Theatre Company’s English language premiere of *Endlich tot, endlich keine Luft mehr (Dead at Last, No More Air)*. Robert Gillett, in conversation with Berislav Juraic (producer), Vanda Butkovic (director), Meredith Oakes (translator), Diana Damian Martin (dramaturg) and Simon Donger (scenographer), explored the challenges and possibilities of presenting Austrian post-dramatic theatre to an English audience. The wide-ranging discussion benefitted greatly from the presence in the audience of people involved in previous productions by the company and by current cast members.

8. World War One International Conference “Perspectives on the ‘Great’ War / Rückblick auf den Ersten Weltkrieg”

From 1 to 4 August 2014 at Queen Mary University of London. Organised by Professor Felicity Rash and Dr Falco Pfalzgraf, in partnership with the CAGCR.

In August 2014 an international conference, Perspectives on the “Great” War, was held at Queen Mary University of London (QMUL). The four-day event was planned to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War on the hundredth anniversary of the first four fateful days, namely the 1st to the 4th of August. The conference was organized in association with the Open University, the German Department of University College London, the Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations (QMUL), the German Historical Institute (London) and the Leo Baeck Institute (London). It was further supported by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany (London) and the Institut Français (London).

The range of issues covered in the conference programme illustrates the interdisciplinary and international nature of First World War scholarship and bore testimony to the fact that the war was global and total. Some 140 delegates spoke on the following broad topics:
political and military history; colonial history; social and cultural history; religious history; medical science and technology; historiography; discourse analysis; legacy, memory; and 21st-century cultural reflexes. Within these areas, the programme was organized according to various perspectives, such as national and regional perspectives (with speakers from five continents); Jewish cultural and religious perspectives; the perspectives of occupied territories; gendered perspectives; and the perspectives of a number of individual artists, authors and film-makers. The key-note speakers were Professor Elza Adamowicz (QMUL), Professor Christopher Clark (Cambridge), Professor Jonathan Steinberg (Pennsylvania State), Professor Michael Epenhans (Institut für Militärgeschichte), Professor Sam Williamson (University of the South) and Professor Jay Winter (Yale).

The event proved to be an ideal forum for scholarly debate. The interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary nature of the programme brought colleagues together from the global pool of First World War scholarship and it is hoped that future collaborations will have been enabled. The first of these collaborations will take the form of an online publication of selected papers.

While the conference had a serious academic as well as commemorative purpose, delegates, non-speakers and non-speakers alike enjoyed the opportunity to meet like-minded people, who, while engaged in the study of one of the darkest periods of history, are determined to use what they learn in positive ways. Since the families of each delegate had been touched in some way by the events of 1914-1918 and its aftermath, the conference as a whole showed that the legacy of the First World War is still with us.

For details about the conference, please see the college’s permanent webpage: www.qmul.ac.uk/worldwarone/
2014-15 will see the 10th anniversary of our Centre. This will not only be an opportunity to take stock, but also to look towards expanding the Centre’s range of activities and strategic initiatives. Support from the Deutsche Literaturfonds in Darmstadt and the Goethe Institut London will enable us to invite a number of former Writers-in-residence to celebrate in May 2015 The Waves of Difference in contemporary German literature. We will be engaged in a fundraising initiative in support of studentships and bursaries for our unique MA in Anglo-German Cultural Relations.

In January 2015 Lord Stephen Green will take over the Chair of the Centre’s Advisory Board and present his book on The Reluctant Meister. How Germany’s Past is Shaping Europe’s Future with a public lecture at QMUL (t.b.c.). The 2015 ANGERMION LECTURE will be delivered by the Director of the Victoria & Albert Museum, Dr Martin Roth.

From 16 to 18 April 2015, the Intellectual History section of the Centre will hold an international conference on the Oxford-based German Sanskritist, Comparative Philologist and Theorist of Myth, Friedrich Max Müller: Friedrich Max Müller and the Role of Philology in Victorian Thought, co-organised by Professor John Davis and Dr Angus Nicholls. This event will be hosted by the German Historical Institute (London) and is sponsored by the German Historical Institute, the English Goethe Society, and the Modern Humanities Research Association (MHRA).

10. The CAGCR on the Internet
For further information, please have a look at our website www.qmul.ac.uk/cagcr
Also, you can now befriend the CAGCR on Facebook at http://facebook.com/anglogerman and you can follow us on Twitter at CAGCR_QMUL.
Anglo-German Cultural Relations

11. Publications on Anglo-German Cultural Relations by members of the Centre


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