Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations (CAGCR)
Annual Report for the Academic Year 2007-2008
Introduction

Vermittlung – mediation, communication between cultures – is the essence of a Centre that has devoted itself to the study of cultural relations. The measure of its work derives from this objective. In our case this means generating meaningful interaction between the Anglophone and Germanophone cultures.

The last academic year at the Centre was marked by a successful first year of our MA in Anglo-German Cultural Relations, a high profile international conference, seminar series, a research colloquium and guest lectures, with the Language and Linguistics section taking the thematic lead. In 2008/09 it will be the turn of the Section “Cultural Transfers and Drama” to set the main thematic agenda. This rotating system ensures intellectual diversity and provides clearly defined thematic foci, generating a genuinely productive research and social environment. This dynamism is reflected by the fact that the proceedings of the first two Centre conferences will appear in book form in the course of 2009/10, and with leading publishers.

This Centre, with its unique profile, including its own MA programme, crucially depends on its continuing success in attracting external sponsorship. A major fundraising initiative was launched in 2008/09 and it is hoped that it will bear fruit in the years to come. It is gratifying for us all to see that in a relatively short amount of time, this Centre has won public recognition in Britain and Germany alike as a truly special forum for innovative interdisciplinary research as well as an institution dedicated to the education of future leaders in Anglo-German cultural relations.

Professor Rüdiger Görner
Director of the CAGCR
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.sllf.qmul.ac.uk/research/anglogerman/

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 (see item 11); and provide high quality postgraduate teaching through the Centre’s MA Programme on Anglo-German Cultural Relations (see item 10).

The CAGCR’s Director is Professor Rüdiger Görner, with Dr Angus Nicholls as Acting Director from 2008-9. Dr Sibylle Erle is Junior Research Fellow and Dr Susanne Frane runs the CAGCR Writer in Residence Programme. The Centre’s research activities are divided into the following four sections of research interest, each of which are convened by a 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)

Within any given academic year, one of these sections functions as the principal area of research interest for the CAGCR. The principal area of research interest for 2007-8 was Language and Linguistics; in 2008-9, the principal area of research will be Cultural Transfers and Drama.
2. New Chair of the CAGCR Advisory Board, Mr. Lambert Courth

At the Centre’s Annual Advisory Board Meeting held on 12 May 2008, Professor Görner was delighted to introduce the new Chairman of the CAGCR Advisory Board, Mr. Lambert Courth. Having been CEO of Bayer in the UK and Ireland, Mr. Courth is a key stakeholder in the practical dimensions of the Anglo-German Cultural Relations, and it is this experience and expertise which he brings to the CAGCR Advisory Board. We thank him heartily for his commitment to the cause.

3. Principal Area of Research for 2007-8: Language and Linguistics

Anglo-German Linguistic Relations Lecture Series and Edited Volume

Under the convenorship of Dr. Falco Pfalzgraf, the linguistic dimensions of Anglo-German Cultural Relations were the Centre’s focus area for the academic years 2006-7 and 2007-8. During these two years of intensive work and research facilitation, the Linguistics section organised a series of eight lectures and one major international conference, resulting in the publication of two edited volumes.

During 2007-8, contributions to the Linguistics lecture series included:

- Csaba Földes (Professor of German at the University of Pannonia, Veszprém / Hungary), “Das Verhältnis des Deutschen zum Englischen: Aspekte von Dominanz- und Kontaktdruck. Betrachtungen aus östmitteleuropäischer Perspektive” (funded by the Hungarian Cultural Centre).
- Gerald Newton (Director of the University of Sheffield Centre for Luxembourg Studies and Professor of German at Sheffield University), “The English Influence on Luxembourgish.”
- Melanie Schröter (Lecturer at the University of Reading), “The Thatcher-Merkel Comparison in the British and German Press.”

All papers from this lecture series will be published in late 2008/early 2009 in an edited volume generously subsidised by the Austrian Ministry for Education, Science and Culture.

International Conference and Book Publication on Anglo-German Linguistic Relations

A two-day international conference on “Anglo-German Linguistic Relations,” with speakers from seven countries/three continents and organised by Falco Pfalzgraf and Professor Felicity Rash, was held in November 2007 at Queen Mary, University of London.
Queen Mary. The 17 papers covered a wide variety of topics of relevance to the relationship between the English and German languages and their associated literatures and cultures. As a direct result of this conference, an edited volume (part of the Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik) will be published in late 2008/early 2009. This volume will present a rich and unique view of Anglo-German linguistic, cultural and literary contacts from the seventeenth century to the present day.

4. Collaboration with the German Historical Institute in 2007-8: Images of History Research Seminar and International Conference

The academic year 2007-8 saw a new phase of fruitful collaboration with the German Historical Institute in London (GHI) under its Director, Professor Andreas Gestrich. This collaboration initially took the form of a joint GHI and CAGCR research seminar on the theme of Images of History (Geschichtsbilder). Literary Constructions of Historical Worlds in Britain and Germany After 1900. Bringing together historians and literary scholars, these seminars focused on the ways in which literary texts depict historical events, periods, personalities and localities. Some of the texts analysed ranged from Lytton Strachey’s Eminent Victorians, through Virginia Woolf’s Orlando and Richarda Huch’s Wallenstein, to Robert Graves’ I Claudius and Daniel Kehlmann’s Die Vermessung der Welt (Measuring the World). This research seminar has prepared the way for an international conference – Literary Constructions of Historical Worlds in Britain and Germany Since 1750 – to be held jointly at the GHI and at Queen Mary on 25-27 September 2008. Keynote speakers will include Professor David Gordon Blackbourn (Harvard), who will speak on Writing the History of Landscapes: Reflections on the German Case, and Professor Wolfram Pyta (Stuttgart), who will address the topic of The Effects of Literary Representations of the First World War upon Ideas of Order in Germany during the Early 1930s. A publication arising from the conference is expected to appear in 2009-10.

5. Theodor Fontane Collection on Anglo-German Cultural Relations

On 13 December 2007, the Theodor Fontane Collection for Anglo-German Relations, a special library collection which concentrates on the history and current development of Anglo-German Cultural Relations, was presented to Queen Mary by the German Charge d’Affairs, Mr Eckhard Lübke, on behalf of the German Embassy. Dr Patricia Howe, a recently retired member of Queen Mary’s Department of German and Honorary Research Fellow of the College, was also awarded a Theodor Fontane Fellowship of the Land Brandenburg on this occasion. This award was in recognition of Dr Howe’s outstanding contribution to Fontane scholarship in teaching and research. The CAGCR very much appreciates the ongoing support of the German Embassy in London.
6. Book launch of Ilija Trojanow’s The Collector of Worlds

On 4 June 2008, the German Embassy’s Chargé d’Affaires, Dr. Eckhard Lübkemeier, welcomed the celebrated German-language author Ilija Trojanow to the embassy for the launch of the English translation of his German bestseller, The Collector of Worlds (Der Weltensammler, Hanser, 2006). Trojanow’s novel is a fictional account of the life of the British Orientalist and explorer Sir Richard Francis Burton (1821-1890). The event was jointly organised with the English publisher, Faber and Faber, and supported by New Books in German. Professor Rüdiger Görner, Director of the CAGCR, hosted the event. The German edition of The Collector of Worlds has won numerous literature prizes, including the prestigious Leipzig Book Prize in 2006.

7. Writer in Residence Programme

Established in 2005, the CAGCR’s Writer-in-Residence Programme showcases recent developments in contemporary German, Austrian and Swiss literature. This initiative is financed by the Deutscher Literaturfonds, and administered by the German Department’s German Academic Exchange Service Lektorin, Dr Susanne Frane. The CAGCR hosts writers whose work is representative of critically acclaimed contemporary literature in German and enables visiting authors to reside at Queen Mary for short periods (approximately ten weeks). The writer in residence for autumn 2007 was Angelika Overath, who read from her novel Nahe Tage (Wallstein-Verlag, 2005).

The writer in residence for winter 2008 will be Björn Kern, whose most recent novel is Der Erlöser (Beck, 2007); in spring 2009 the writer in residence will be Angela Krauß, whose most recent work is Wie weiter (Suhrkamp, 2006).
8. Joint Research Colloquium with Queen Mary’s School of English and Drama: Anglo-German Poetologies

During the 2007-8 academic year, the CAGCR held its first joint research colloquium with Queen Mary’s School of English and Drama. The colloquium – entitled Anglo-German Poetologies – focused on the intense level of cross-pollination between theories of literature and theories of life that took place within both Britain and Germany around 1800, during the period generically described by the term “Romantic.” The colloquium was convened by Professor Rüdiger Görner and Dr Angus Nicholls (CAGCR), and Professor Paul Hamilton and Dr Matt ffytche (English and Drama). The seminar was attended by graduate students and staff in the Schools of Modern Languages and English and Drama at Queen Mary, and is seen as a contribution to the research training of Queen Mary postgraduates.

Papers delivered included:

- Paul Hamilton, Novalis, Coleridge and the Romantic Life of the Self
- Angus Nicholls, How to be German by being English: Shakespeare in the Early Poetics of Herder and Goethe
- Matt ffytche, Poetry and Polarity: Coleridge, Schelling and the Gaps in Nature
- Michael Kooy (Warwick), Romantic Political Theology: Coleridge, Novalis, and Adam Müller
- Rüdiger Görner, On the Early Schiller’s Encounter with Adam Ferguson.

This colloquium will continue in 2008-9, jointly convened by Dr Angus Nicholls and Professor Paul Hamilton.

9. New Exchange Agreement with the Europa Universität Viadrina, Frankfurt an der Oder

In 2007-8, the German Department and the CAGCR established a new Erasmus Teaching and MA Level Student Exchange Agreement with the Europa Universität Viadrina (Frankfurt an der Oder). Located on the Polish-German border, the Europa Universität Viadrina is ideally positioned to be a leader in the field of cross-cultural dialogue, and this exchange agreement is designed to further this aim, particularly in relation to the CAGCR's MA in Anglo-German Cultural Relations (see section 10). In the spring of 2008, Dr Angus Nicholls opened this new agreement by teaching a course on The Science of Literature: The Origins of Literary Studies in Germany and Great Britain between 1850 and 1900 to BA and MA students at the Europa Universität Viadrina.
10. First Year of Teaching in the MA in Anglo-German Cultural Relations

The 2007-8 academic year saw the first cohort of students complete their studies in the Centre’s Masters programme in Anglo-German Cultural Relations. Three full-time students completed the course in its first year, with one student taking the course part-time, to complete in 2008-9. The MA programme offers a combination of a core course on the “Theory and Practice of Anglo-German Cultural Transfers,” combined with optional modules on subjects such as: “In Pursuit of Prejudice: Mutual Perceptions of Identity”, “Thinking Translation”, “Anglo-German Travel Writing”, and “Anglo-German Aesthetics.” A unique feature of the MA programme is the practical component of the core course, in which students are taught by key stakeholders in Anglo-German relations from the print and electronic media, the Foreign Office, the British Council, the Goethe Institut, and the German Academic Exchange Service. Enrolments for the 2008-9 academic year are healthy.

11. Volume 1 of ANGERMION, Yearbook for Anglo-German Cultural Relations

The Centre’s Yearbook for Anglo-German Cultural Transfers, ANGERMION, will be published for the first time by Walter de Gruyter (Berlin and New York) in November 2008, under the combined editorship of Professor Görner, Dr Nicholls, and Dr Michael Kooy from Warwick University. The first issue offers insights into many historical and aesthetic dimensions of Anglo-German Cultural Relations, with essays on themes such as: German travel literature on the Celtic regions of the British Isles during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; German influences on Victorian Biblical scholarship; the image of Thomas Carlyle in Germany; and the reception of British poetry in the German Democratic Republic. The review section of the Yearbook also sees Queen Mary’s Professor Paul Hamilton summarising and assessing the recent academic controversy concerning Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s alleged translation of Goethe’s Faust.
In the Embrace of the Swan (Den Schwan Umarmen): Anglo-German Mythologies in Literature, the Visual Arts and Cultural Theory, eds. Rüdiger Görner and Angus Nicholls

Arising from the Centre's research colloquium held in 2006-7 and a subsequent international conference organised by the Centre and held at Queen Mary in April 2007, this volume focuses on the reception and conceptualisation of myth in the English and German speaking worlds, as well as on the role played by mythologies in Anglo-German cultural relations. The volume will appear in the series “Spectrum Literaturwissenschaft” (Walter de Gruyter, Berlin and New York) in 2009.

The Academic Year Ahead: 2008-9

2008-9 is set to be a year of growth and consolidation for the CAGCR. Existing initiatives, such as the MA Programme in Anglo-German Cultural Relations, the Research Colloquium on Anglo-German Poetologies and the publication of ANGERMION, will continue into 2008-9. The lead section for 2008-9, and under the direction of Dr Robert Gillett, the Cultural Transfers and Drama section of the CAGCR will be holding a series of lectures and workshops, ranging from a lecture on the German media scheduled for January 2009, to lectures and workshops on English and German Women Dramatists, scheduled for the spring of 2009. A special highlight in the Centre’s calendar for early 2009 will be the CAGCR’s Handel Charity Concert, kindly sponsored by Bosch UK and to be held in St. John’s Smith Square, London, on 26 March 2009.

Enquiries Concerning the CAGCR can be directed to:
Dr Angus Nicholls
Acting Director
Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations
Queen Mary, University of London
Mile End Road, London E1 4NS
Tel: +44 (0) 207 882 2683
Fax: +44 (0) 208 980 5400
email: a.j.nicholls@qmul.ac.uk