

Centre for Anglo-German
Cultural Relations (CAGCR)
Annual Report for the Academic
Year 2008-2009



www.qmul.ac.uk/cagcr

Introduction

'Culture' is defined by 'relations' of various kinds, those between past and present, tradition and innovation, development and stagnation, creative activities of all kinds and critical reflection upon where we are today and where we intend to go in the future. There is social and multicultural interaction that shapes today's culture(s), not to speak of the media generated discourses that determine the agendas of cultural activity. Our Centre offers a distinct focus on the interrelation between the Anglophone and German-speaking worlds, its historical development and present profile.

Being part of a genuinely supportive academic environment at Queen Mary, University of London, with its Humanities and Social Sciences Sector and Graduate School, its Arts Faculty with its School of Languages, Linguistics and Film, not to mention its department of German, the Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations – now in its fourth year of existence – has continued to engage in cross-disciplinary projects and to organise a whole range of workshops, seminars and publications; once again, it has benefited from a successful Writer in Residence scheme and remains responsible for an increasingly successful, and still unique, MA programme in Anglo-German Cultural Relations.

All of these activities would not be possible without the support that we receive from our external partners, and I would like to extend my special gratitude to the following organisations for effective cooperation and sponsorship (in alphabetical order): the Austrian Cultural Forum (London), Bosch UK, the Deutscher Literaturfonds (Darmstadt), the German

Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the German Embassy (London), the German Historical Institute (London), the Goethe Institute (London), the Stifterverband deutsche Wissenschaft (Essen), as well as all members of the Centre's Advisory Board with its chairman, Mr Lambert Courth, the Centre's section convenors and, most notably, Dr Angus Nicholls for his exemplary work as Acting Director during my period as Head of the School of Languages, Linguistics and Film. Special thanks are also due to Walter de Gruyter (Berlin/New York) – the publisher of our Yearbook *ANGERMION* – a publication which we were able to launch in December 2008 with a special lecture given by Dame Antonia S. Byatt in the Residence of the German Embassy in Belgravia (see item 7 below).

As an academic institution with a particular mission to generate and facilitate dialogue between our respective cultures, the Centre is particularly mindful of what it can do in terms of impact and outreach. One landmark event in this connection was the celebration of the Handel year with Bosch UK and its own chamber orchestra (see item 8). We are deeply grateful to Bosch UK for sponsoring this truly symbolic event which resulted in an MA studentship for the Centre.

The Centre was particularly honoured when, in January 2009, Alfred Brendel, the internationally acclaimed pianist and writer who represents the fecundity of cultural relations more than anyone else, accepted an invitation to become its Patron. We all feel privileged and inspired by this very special association.

Professor Rüdiger Görner
Director of the CAGCR

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* (see item 7); provide high quality postgraduate teaching through the Centre's MA Programme on Anglo-German Cultural Relations (see item 6).

The CAGCR's Director is Professor Rüdiger Görner, Dr Angus Nicholls is Acting Director and Convenor of the MA Programme in Anglo-German Cultural Relations, while Dr Susanne Frane runs 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 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 2008-9 was Cultural Transfers and Drama; in 2009-10 the principal area of research is Literature.

2. Principal Area of Research for 2008-9: Cultural Transfers and Drama

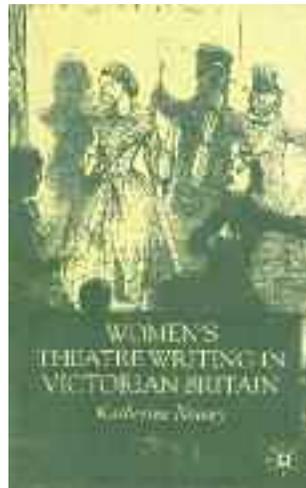
Two successful events were organised by Dr. Robert Gillett, the convenor of the Cultural Transfers and Drama section of the CAGCR, during the 2008-9 academic session:

- In January 2009 the CAGCR made one of its first forays into the fields of popular culture and media studies when Professor Jürgen Grimm from the University of Vienna presented a public lecture entitled 'British Edutainment – a Model for Europe? Results of an Empirical Study of Super Nanny TV in England, Germany and Austria'. This event was sponsored by the Austrian Cultural Forum (London).
- In May 2009, the focus on issues relating to gender continued with a Postgraduate and Staff Workshop on the Theme of 'Invisible Women: English and German Women Playwrights'. At this event, Professors Susanne Kord (University College, London) and Kate Newey (University of Birmingham) led staff and postgraduate students through an examination of the ways in which the works of women playwrights have often been excluded from the canonical repertoires of both national literatures, while also looking at scholarly methods of questioning and rewriting hegemonic literary histories. Both speakers have made significant scholarly contributions to this field: Susanne Kord is the author of *'Ein Blick hinter die Kulissen'. Deutschsprachige Dramatikerinnen des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts'* ('A Look Behind the Scences'. *Female German Language Dramatists of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, 1992); Kate Newey is the author of *Women's Theatre Writing in Victorian Britain* (2005).

3. Continuation of the Joint Research Colloquium with Queen Mary's School of English and Drama: Anglo-German Poetologies

Founded in 2007-8, this research colloquium – co-organised by Professor Paul Hamilton of Queen Mary's School of English and Drama, Professor Rüdiger Görner and Dr Angus Nicholls – continued in 2008-9. The lectures in this series, which were attended by postgraduate students from the German and English Departments at Queen Mary as part of their research training, included:

- Dr Angus Nicholls (CAGCR) 'Anglo-German Orientalism? The Influence of Sir William Jones on Johann Wolfgang Goethe's *West-östlicher Divan*'
- Dr Alexander Regier (King's College, Cambridge) 'Hamann's Faith in Hume'
- Dr John Guthrie (Cambridge) 'Schiller, the German Shakespeare?'



- Dr Maike Oergel (Nottingham) 'The Poetics of Historicity: Connections between the Literary Theories of *Sturm und Drang*, *Klassik*, and *Romantik*'

4. Joint Workshop with Queen Mary's Department of History on *Being Human: Historical Knowledge and the Creation of Human Nature* by Roger Smith

Roger Smith is one of the most internationally renowned British theorists of the human sciences, a scholar whose writings – somewhat unusually within an Anglophone context – bring the German hermeneutical tradition into confrontation with the British and French traditions of positivism. The work of Roger Smith was the subject of a workshop held in November 2008, co-organised by Dr Angus Nicholls of the CAGCR, Dr Rhodri Hayward of Queen Mary's History Department, and the new Director of Queen Mary's Centre for the History of Emotions, Dr Thomas Dixon. On this occasion Roger Smith came to Queen Mary to speak about his book to an audience of staff and postgraduate students from a variety of academic disciplines, while Nicholls, Hayward and Dixon presented their own views on Smith's ideas about *Being Human*.



Being Human, by Roger Smith

5. 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). It is administered by the German Department's DAAD Lektorin, Dr Susanne Frane. 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 CAGCR writers in residence for 2008-9 were Björn Kern and Angela Krauß. Kern read from his recent futuristic novel *Der Erlöser AG* (2007) – which has created some controversy in Germany – at a public event chaired by Rebecca Morrison from *New Books in German*. On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, Angela Krauß read from her novel *Wie weiter* (2006) and discussed her new collection of poems *Ich muß mein Herz üben* (2009) in a workshop organised by Dr Astrid Köhler.



Björn Kern. Photo by Suskia

In 2009-10, two writers in residence will be visiting Queen Mary: the critically acclaimed novelist Matthias Politycki and the young novelist and song-writer Jan Böttcher. Politycki will read from his recently published work *Jenseitsnovelle* (2009) at Queen Mary and will also present his work jointly with the translator Anthea Bell at a literary salon of the publishing company *Peirene*. Politycki will also give a workshop at a postgraduate event celebrating the launch of the CAGCR's new postgraduate online journal for Anglo-German Relations *eTransfers*. Böttcher, whose novel *Nachglühen* (2008) on the post-unification period will complement the previous anniversary events on the Fall of the Wall, will join the Writer in Residence Programme for the rest of the semester.



Angela Krauß during her stay in London

6. Second Year of Teaching in the MA in Anglo-German Cultural Relations

At the time of writing this report, the dissertations written by the second cohort of students to be enrolled in Queen Mary's unique MA Programme in Anglo-German Cultural Relations are being examined. This year's dissertations included:

- A comparative analysis of the Booker Prize and the *Deutscher Buchpreis* based on archival research undertaken in Britain and Germany (Mathieu Honnefelder);
- A critical examination of British writing on the former German Democratic Republic, with a particular focus on the writings of the renowned journalist and academic Timothy Garton Ash (Jamie Searle);
- And a case-study of the German-Welsh writer Kate Bosse-Griffiths, who fled Germany during the period of National Socialism, settling in Wales and becoming a successful novelist and journalist writing predominantly in Welsh. This dissertation was written by a native of Wales, Gwennan Higham, who conducted research into sources in Welsh, German and English. Dr Simon Brooks, School of Welsh, University of Cardiff, kindly acted as an external co-supervisor and co-examiner of this dissertation.

7. Launch of the first issue of *ANGERMION*, Yearbook for Anglo-German Cultural Relations (2008) by Dame Antonia S. Byatt in the German Embassy, London

One of the true highlights in the CAGCR's calendar for 2008-9 took place on 3 December 2008, with the launch of the inaugural volume of the Centre's Yearbook, *ANGERMION*, co-edited by Professor Rüdiger Görner and Dr Angus Nicholls of the CAGCR, and by Dr Michael John Kooy of Warwick University. On this important occasion, an audience in the German Embassy was privileged to hear one of the preeminent British novelists of her generation – Dame Antonia S. Byatt – share her thoughts concerning the influence exerted by Thomas Mann upon her own literary development and production. The CAGCR heartily thanks the publishers Walter



ANGERMION,
volume 1 (2008)



Professor Rüdiger Görner, Dame Antonia S. Byatt and His Excellency Georg Boomgaarden, the German Ambassador to the United Kingdom

De Gruyter (Berlin and New York) for their on-going support for *ANGERMION*; the Culture Department of the German Embassy and His Excellency Georg Boomgaarden, the German Ambassador to the United Kingdom, for kindly hosting this event; and last but

certainly not least Dame Antonia S. Byatt for offering us her thoughts and insights concerning Thomas Mann.

8. Bosch Charity Concert Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of Georg Friedrich Handel's Death

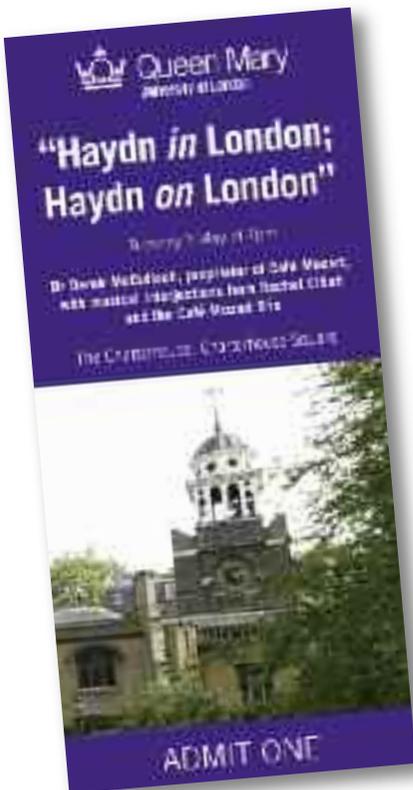
On 26 March 2009, a concert celebrating the life and works of Georg Friedrich Handel was held in the baroque splendour of St John's Church at Smith Square, London. After being greeted by Robert Meier, Managing Director of Robert Bosch UK Ltd, and Professor Rüdiger Görner, the audience were treated to a selection of works by Handel and Edvard Grieg, performed by the Bosch Chamber Orchestra, which visited London especially for this event. After the concert, a reception was held in the Ambassador's Residence of the German Embassy, London. While the primary purpose of this event was to celebrate the music of Handel, it also served to raise funds for a scholarship for students studying in the CAGCR's MA Programme in Anglo-German Cultural Relations. This scholarship, generously funded by Robert Bosch UK Ltd, has this year been awarded to Mr Thomas Fletcher, who is currently among the new group of students taking the MA in 2009-10. It was fitting that on this occasion two students who studied for the MA in 2008-9 – Mr Matthieu Honnefelder and Ms. Jamie Searle – were provided with an opportunity to speak about the CAGCR's MA programme before an audience in the German Embassy.



Mr Matthieu Honnefelder and Ms. Jamie Searle (students in the CAGCR's MA Programme), accompanied by His Excellency Georg Boomgaarden and Professor Rüdiger Görner

9. Haydn in London; Haydn on London

On 5 May 2009, to mark the bicentenary of Haydn's death in 1809, Dr Derek McCulloch, Proprietor of Café Mozart, revealed to an audience assembled at the Charterhouse (Charterhouse Square), the composer's perceptions of life in England in the 1790s, with musical interjections from Rachel Elliott (soprano) and the Café Mozart Trio. This event was sponsored by The Austrian Cultural Forum (London).



10. The Year Ahead: 2009-10

The coming academic year promises to be a most fruitful one for the CAGCR: the Centre's MA Programme has recruited a strong new cohort of students, and will this year be welcoming its first two Erasmus exchange students from the Europa Universität Viadrina (Frankfurt an der Oder); in December the second volume of *ANGERMION* will be launched by the eminent German poet Durs Grünbein at an event to be sponsored by Lufthansa and held in the German Lutheran Church in Whitechapel, while Dr. Astrid Köhler will be organising a symposium on the theme of *London in German Literature*; the second half of 2010 will see the launch of a new online refereed postgraduate journal for Anglo-German Cultural Relations, *eTransfers*, to be jointly edited by Dr Angus Nicholls and Dr Susanne Frane and postgraduate students from the CAGCR and from the Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture at the University of Gießen in Germany; September 2010 will see an important AHRC-funded conference on *English and German Nationalist and Anti-Semitic Discourse* being held at Queen Mary, organised by Professor Felicity Rash and Dr Stefan Baumgarten; this will be followed by a conference on *Wolfgang Hildesheimer and England*, organised by Professor Rüdiger Görner and one of our research students, Isabel Wagner. And finally for the Autumn of 2010 the CAGCR is planning a series of events in collaboration with London's Globe Theatre under the provocative title of 'Shakespeare is German'.

Notes

Notes





Queen Mary
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