

Rear-Guard Actions against an “Impoverishing Delusion”: Anmerkungen zur Situation der Auslandsgermanistik in den Americas

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Die vorangegangenen Beiträge sind auf Deutsch und auf Englisch verfasst worden. Demzufolge ist mein Kommentar gleichfalls bilingual. Dies scheint mir in einer Untersuchung zu unserem Metier als AuslandsgermanistInnen in den Americas die passende Lösung zu sein. Allerdings müssten auch Französisch, Portugiesisch und Spanisch verwendet werden, um die Lage der Dinge getreu zu schildern. Ansonsten lehne ich den makkaronisch-gemischten Stil ab. Im Übrigen betrachte ich diese Stellungnahmen als Anregung zum eigenen Nachdenken über die Grenzen und Wirkungsmöglichkeiten unserer Tätigkeiten in einer Welt, die vom technologischen bzw. marktbedingten Denken durchgehend gezeichnet ist. „In our time,“ konstatiert Mark Slouka beispielsweise, „orthodoxy is economic. Popular culture fetishizes it, our entertainers salaam to it [...], our artists are ranked by it and revered for it. There is no institution wholly apart. Everything submits; everything must, sooner or later, pay fealty to the market“ (33). Diese allgemeine Tendenz — nicht nur in den USA! — bezeichnet Slouka als eine „impoverishing delusion“ mit katastrophalen Folgen für den weiteren Bestand einer wohl funktionierenden Demokratie (33). Seine Einschätzung der herrschenden Gesellschaftstendenzen und Prognose für die beschränkte Wirksamkeit der *humanities* im Allgemeinen in einer geistlosen Zeit beschreiben die Rahmenbedingungen unserer Angelegenheiten genau. Slouka fordert uns auf, wie Goethe es vor fast 200 Jahren formuliert hatte, gegen eine „mittlere Kultur“ vorzugehen: „Junge Leute werden viel zu früh aufgeregt und dann im Zeitstrudel fortgerissen; Reichtum und Schnelligkeit ist was die Welt bewundert und wornach jeder strebt“ hat er am 6.

Juni 1825 an seinen Vertrauten Zelter geschrieben (2:339). *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose!*

Unser Fach ist nicht sehr alt. Doch hat es gelernt, auf jeweilige günstige bzw. ungünstige Rezeptionsbedingungen des breiteren Bildungspublikums, ob im 19. oder 20. Jahrhundert, stets produktiv zu reagieren. Ähnlich einer graphischen Darstellung ökonomischer Dynamik mit ihren Höhen und Tiefen haben die historischen Erfahrungen in unserem Fach auch Höhenflüge und Talfahrten aufzuweisen. Unsere gegenwärtige Epoche, die bereits vor einiger Zeit angefangen hat, stellt ungünstige Rahmenbedingungen für den Erfolg unserer disziplinären und transkulturellen Bemühungen. Kulturbanauserei, Desinteresse, Bigotrie und Xenophobie bedrängen uns fast von allen Seiten. Finanzielle Engpässe ermöglichen eine Beschneidung von „Luxuskonsumartikeln“ wie Fremdsprachen und den bildenden Künsten in Schule und Universität. Diese Rahmenbedingungen erstrecken sich weit über die Grenzen der Auslandsgermanistik hinaus und betreffen alle Geisteswissenschaften, ob Sprachpädagogik, Literaturwissenschaft oder Kulturkunde. *C'est la vie*. Damit müssen wir wohl leben, aber wir können versuchen, das Beste daraus zu machen. Die Auslandsgermanistik hat immer gegen den Strom schwimmen müssen. Momentan scheint aber die Gegenströmung verstärkt zu sein.

Wir leben nicht in einem Zeitalter, das Bildung, kultivierte Manieren und den rationalen Diskurs im offenen Gedankenaustausch schätzt. Das Übel ist transnational (vgl. Valentin und Ponti). Um unsere Zukunft zu sichern, brauchen wir eine allgemeine Mentalitätsänderung. Der Kreis der echt Engagierten wird klein bleiben. Um diesem Kreis eine

Besinnungs- und Konsolidisierungschance zu ermöglichen, sind *Rear-Guard Actions* — ein Nachhutgefecht — notwendig. Die drei vorangegangenen Beiträge bieten Überlegungen dazu.

Anette Guse entwirft eine klare und — trotz der Furcht vor weiter sinkenden Studentenzahlen — ermutigende Skizze zum Wandel der Germanistik in Kanada, die sich mit Hilfe von DAAD-geförderten German Studies-Konferenzen, Vortragsreihen und gesponsorten German Centres weiterentwickelt hat. DaF wird nicht übersehen. Kanada ist ein Land, das nur ein Zehntel der Einwohner von den USA hat und wo insgesamt an nur 44 Universitäten Deutsch gelehrt (21 000 Abnehmer!) wird, davon nur an 12 Unis mit Graduiertenprogramm (78 MA Studierende, 52 PhD KandidatenInnen im Jahr 2006). Die Bewerber für die wenigen ausgeschriebenen Lehrstellen kommen weitgehend aus dem Ausland (Europa und den USA). DaF findet über 35 000 AbnehmerInnen auf allen Bildungsebenen jedes Jahr.

Darüber hinaus zollt Guse den vielen Initiativen im Bereich europäischer Studien gebührenden Tribut. Diese EU-initiierte Orientierung könnte die eigenen interdisziplinären Bemühungen der German Studies durch interne und transinstitutionelle Zusammenarbeit produktiv fördern. Die Erweiterung der nationalen Perspektive durch transeuropäische und transatlantische Aspekte erweist sich bereits als nützlich. Wie fast überall muss mit Stellensperre oder gar Programmkürzungen gerechnet werden. Zwar stehen als Abwehrstrategien öffentliche Imagepflege und energische Werbung an der Tagesordnung, wie Guse bemerkt. Zudem appelliert sie an die längst erwiesene Kreativität der KollegInnen in Schule und Hochschule, um die Krise zu bewältigen. Das Ganze wird durch ein kritisches Selbstbewusstseinsmoment begleitet. Somit schätzt Guse die Reformversuche und strategischen Akzentverlagerungen nüchtern ein.

Ähnliche Erfahrungen macht Lynne Tatlock mit ihrem Blick auf die sich wandelnde Hochschullandschaft südlich der Staatsgrenze: "USA: German in the Changing Landscape of Postsecondary Education." And this is where I switch to English to mirror her language preference and the bilingualism of our profession.

Lynne Tatlock begins in mutedly optimistic fashion, listing the most important developments K–16. She even notes Russell Berman's rise to the presidency of the MLA in 2011, an ascendancy that harks back to the early days of the MLA when Germanists dominated its leadership. It should of-

fer hope, for Germanists comprise only 7.1% of the total MLA membership (graduate students scarcely 8%). But in her "distant" and "close" readings of trends, she soon lets us know that she, too, is concerned that we might not be able to reap the full benefit of all our hard work, pedagogical innovations, technological advances, and exhilarating intellectual turns over the same thirty years that Guse has noted for Canada. Tatlock (initially) holds up the new Europe and economic developments in the European Union as beacons of hope, which they indeed are for many of us engaged in preparing students for careers outside German Studies. Our students head off to Germany, Austria, and Switzerland every year, financed in large part by German and Austrian sources as well as the Fulbright Commission. We can take heart, she rightly argues, that German is taught in the US on the postsecondary level in every state and in all kinds of postsecondary institutions.

Tatlock provides some useful numbers and telling graphs: 580 programs in German at four-year colleges and universities, 319 of which offer the BA as the highest degree, 45 the MA, and 56 the PhD. German is the third most commonly taught foreign language in the USA. But a closer look at the data reveals weaknesses. Of the 1218 institutions responding to the MLA survey for fall 2006, 613 indicated no enrollment in upper-division courses. Only about a quarter of undergraduates in lower-division courses move on to upper-division courses. And as has been the tradition seemingly forever, PhD-granting programs are ranked according to the number of PhDs produced over a specified period of time. Between 1995 and 2006 graduate programs awarded 1,003 doctorates in German. Critical, however, is the number of German PhDs who are still in the field ten years out from degree conferral. How many of them are adjuncts, teaching at more than one institution, and laboring under unfavorable conditions? The latter is the disturbing trend. How many German positions were advertised in the *MLA Job Information List* in those same twelve years? Probably something like 4–5% of the total and the number is declining. An analysis of the MLA reports on the job lists over the years would, I suspect, indicate that more than twice as many "home-grown" PhDs were produced for a stagnant or declining job market. Assuming a generous average of 40 positions per year, I calculate 480 available positions in German for more than 1000 candidates. Of course, we are not restricted to hiring North American trained candidates. The outgoing MLA presi-

dent, Catherine Porter, recently addressed the nexus of economic malaise, hiring practices, and review criteria. Among other suggestions, she urges us to “rethink graduate education with the complex functions of general and liberal education in mind and with the same attention to learning outcomes that undergraduate programs require” (3). Our research institutions would, then, have to be as attentive to market conditions at the undergraduate and graduate levels as local and regional institutions. Yet, as Lynne Tatlock rightly notes: “it proves a hard sell at many institutions to re-focus and re-define the understanding of scholarship to include all of those creative activities that make it possible to pursue German Studies in the US.” We are often dependent upon the good will of administrators to tolerate under-enrolled courses. She and I clearly enjoy positions that are increasingly rare and precarious.

To attract students to our language, literature, and culture courses taught entirely in German is increasingly difficult because so many students double or triple major for career reasons. Yet to teach practically everything in English in order to attract sufficient numbers of students, satisfies the expectations of deans and provosts, and hopefully secures some of the contested and limited resources available, while paradoxically undermining our very existence as a separate academic unit. That is why Tatlock is correct in pointing to the success (or lack thereof) at the high school level as “the single most critical factor for the future of German Studies of any kind.” We rely increasingly on “home-grown” students to populate our classes. And, yes, the solution to the challenges we face will be solved locally. Much will depend on the teachers, much on the administrators, and much on graduate professors attuned to the ongoing transformations in higher education that should impact the way they professionalize graduate students. One model will not fit all institutions. Key to any success, nonetheless, is the teaching of German language in literature and culture departments, closer inter-institutional collaboration, and the development of new tenure criteria that do not focus solely on scholarly productivity of limited appeal. To be sure, we must retain room for traditional scholarship. Yet “minding the store” in graduate as well as undergraduate education requires further transformations in our own attitudes and not just within the general public. To change an academic culture that paradoxically undermines our very *raison d’être*, those of us at research I institutions must be more attentive to changing conditions on the ground. How many

professors engage heavily in theoretical and philosophical debates that are just as much at home in English, history, philosophy, and social studies departments and do so with the blessing of the administration, while ignoring problems endemic to German language and cultures? How much outreach to the schools—so vital to our continued existence—occurs at our elite institutions? (Large state universities are much more active in this regard.) Do we consider the downside of our critical turn for our rationale as separate administrative units? To what extent, then, are our endeavors more like rear-guard actions aimed at fending off inevitable demise without a rethinking of graduate education?

Mit ihrem Beitrag über die Germanistik in Lateinamerika wirft Karolin Moser einige erhellende und begrüßenswerte Streiflichter auf eine weniger bekannte Seite der Auslandsgermanistik in den Amerikas. Im Kern ihrer Ausführungen stehen die üblichen Fragen nach Studentenzahlen, Reformstrategien, finanziellen Nöten, geographischer und kultureller Distanz zum Studienobjekt und sogar nach den politischen Verhältnissen in einigen der südamerikanischen Länder. Die letzten beiden Aspekte stellen etwas Neues dar, insofern der Regierungswechsel in Kanada und den USA seit langem berechenbar ist. Außerdem bedeutet die historisch größere deutschsprachige Einwandererzahl in Nordamerika einen Vorsprung, denn die Präsenz bzw. das Fehlen großer Gruppen von *heritage speakers* spiegelt sich in der Entwicklung des Faches.

Demgemäß beginnt Moser mit einer historischen Skizze der deutschsprachigen Einwanderung nach Argentinien, ehe sie auf das Profil der argentinischen Germanistik (mit Seitenblicken auf Brasilien, Chile, Kuba, Mexiko) eingeht. Das Fach steht im Zeichen der Lehrer- und Übersetzerstudiengänge, autonomer sowie integrierter *Letras*-Fächer und der Sprachpädagogik bzw. -kurse. Moser hebt verständlicherweise einige geographische Schwerpunkte solcher Aktivitäten hervor (z.B. Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Mendoza). Insbesondere hebt sie die *Facultad de Lenguas* an der Universidad Nacional de Córdoba hervor, die mit ihren fünfjährigen strikten Studiengängen (dem DaF-Lehramt, der Übersetzerausbildung für Deutsch-Spanisch und der *Licenciatura*) einmalig landesweit dasteht. Für alle drei Fachrichtungen ist der Sprachunterricht obligatorisch. Wie repräsentativ die Universidad Nacional de Córdoba sein kann, bleibt unerörtert. Sie scheint eher eine erfreuliche Ausnahme zu sein. Jedenfalls ist Popu-

laritätsverlust des Deutschen sogar in Córdoba zu konstatieren. Brasilianisch-Portugiesisch wird wohl aus wirtschaftlichen Gründen immer gefragter, und sogar Italienisch findet zunehmend mehr Interessenten, die gedenken, in die elterliche bzw. großelterliche Heimat auch aus ökonomischen Gründen zurückzukehren. Nichtsdestoweniger erfreut sich die deutsche Sprache im Raum Córdoba der „fachbegleitenden Zusatzausbildung“, die vom DAAD stark gefördert wird. Es gibt, dies wird auch von Guse und Tatlock festgestellt, immer weniger Studienanfänger. Das ist besorgniserregend.

Alle drei Beiträgerinnen bieten eine Prognose für die Zukunft des Faches, das dem Schicksal eines Orchideenfaches wohl nicht entgehen kann. Was bleibt noch übrig zu sagen? Das „was bleibt?“ erinnert an Christa Wolf, aber auch an Frank Trommlers Analyse der großen Akzentverschiebungen im Fach German Studies seit vierzig Jahren (vgl. Trommler, “Future of German Studies” and “Updating German Studies”).

Now back to my native tongue. My stated purpose, other than commenting on the contributions, is to provide some ideas, as Reinhard Andress outlines in the introduction in this issue, of “how we might strengthen our ties and promote cooperation.” I draw on my own experiences over the years in reaching out and developing new ties to strengthen the visibility of German Studies beyond the normal network. I started doing it long before it became the thing to do.

Having begun my career as a “wannabe,” I am likely to end it as an “Europeanist.” To “want to be” like the native German speakers in the profession trained in the manner of “*InlandsgermanistInnen*” who held sway then would be an ill-advised stratum for success now. Claire Kramsch has helped us move away from an idealized concept of native-speaker competency. Business was conducted in German then; now normally in English in the wake of the cultural turn of the 1990s. The rationale for our existence has, of course, prompted us to use English to reach a larger audience and become integrated in broader discussions to which we have much to contribute. At least in part, our rationale has historically mirrored the changing parameters of higher education. In the wake of the Sputnik shock (and without being a heritage speaker), I could pursue German as a hobby and turn it into a marketable skill. In the Cold-War era, German skills were deemed to be a matter of national security. But Germanists were more interested in *Bildungsgut* than in political matters (even among and

despite the 68ers, who introduced a political and social dimension). My motivation was based on the quaint idea that familiarity with a second language would open up a parallel universe that would otherwise remain closed to me. I still think that the argument aimed at altering one’s inherited mentality is one of the strongest we can make because learning a new language changes the way we see the world.

German culture was just one of my interests. I suspected some universal value embedded in all cultures, even if externals made them look different. My choice of an eighteenth-century research focus cemented my comparative and interdisciplinary yearnings. That ultimately led to my collaboration with comparatists and *dixhuitièmistes*. Early on at Penn in the 1970s, I bore responsibility for the language program and TA training. The experience underscored the need to bridge the gap between language and literature colleagues, to acknowledge the vital role that language instruction plays in populating upper-division courses, and in appreciating cultural difference as an enriching encounter, not as relativizing.

In the early 1980s, I was asked to devise an intensive language and culture component for the Joseph H. Lauder Institute students at Penn who were pursuing a combined MBA and MA degree under most rigorous conditions. My colleagues advised me to stick to my literature research. But I found the challenge of making what I do comprehensible to future international business leaders far too attractive to resist. It was a very rewarding experience that lasted ten years and provided valuable opportunities for the professionalization of our students in Germanics. Later I accepted an opportunity to help restructure a traditional graduate program at Vanderbilt University, recasting it for the 21st century. As part of that effort, I introduced a *Selbstbesinnungsmoment* by offering a seminar on the history of Germanics: where have we come from, where are we headed? It was one of the first critically self-reflexive courses offered anywhere. Almost immediately I co-organized (with an historian) a year-long interdisciplinary faculty seminar on science and society, brought the first Distinguished Fulbright Scholar in the US to Vanderbilt (a political scientist) and DAAD professors (historians) to campus, and subsequently became active in an interdisciplinary research group focused on religion, culture, and society. I regularly teach comparative literature and interdisciplinary courses, and for ten years voluntarily offered a first-year writing course. These endeavors helped profile German

and promote recruitment of undergraduate students for German courses. Recently, I have even begun to make presentations in middle and high schools. I became involved in Vanderbilt University governance to help highlight German Studies at Vanderbilt, create new alliances far beyond the normal range of contact, and strengthen traditional ties. My university colleagues elected me Chair of the Faculty Senate, the first modern-language professor to serve in that capacity. Later I collaborated with the Center for the Americas at Vanderbilt as a member of a transcultural research team devoted to making Alexander von Humboldt's discoveries in the Americas available to an English-reading audience. We chose his description of Cuba as the first work for attention. All these activities help ground Germanics within the intellectual fabric of the University and in the minds of faculty and students.

From 2006–2009 I directed the Max Kade Center for European and German Studies at Vanderbilt, for which I raised substantial funding from the Max Kade Foundation. The newly expanded center allowed us to restructure the European Studies major by enhancing the cultural and language components in all languages, introducing a joint major with German, and laying the foundation for a graduate certificate in European Studies. Moreover, the Director of the Center for Latin American Studies (an anthropologist with an interest in Germany) agreed to serve on our advisory board, while I agreed to take on responsibility for transatlantic relations between Europe and South as well as North America. All this was natural as were the liaisons with colleagues in French, Italian, Russian, and Spanish. We all benefit from networking. Through these activities I sought to nurture new attitudes toward language/literature/culture studies in colleagues who normally have little contact with us in their own professional compartmentalization. Dialogue with colleagues in religious studies, political science, anthropology, education, and sociology as well as art history, music, and history proved most gratifying. Success in raising funds from the EU to organize outreach activities to schools and regional institutions advanced these new connections. Throughout my interest in German literature continued unabated.

Each of these endeavors was a creative response to external conditions. Each instance of intellectual refocusing can be considered “eine angemessene Therapie” aimed at preventing the “schleichenden Siechtum” of our profession (Höyng 92).

The remainder of my comments focuses on opportunities offered by the European Union to promote cooperation across academic units, disciplines, institutions, between town and gown, and between parts of the world. The EU's most visible presence in North America is the EU-US Atlantis Program of the Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) that has led to many joint transatlantic degrees and collaborative research initiatives. With 11 joint degree programs offered by institutions in the EU and 10 by American universities, the humanities rank 6th in popularity after business administration, engineering, and the natural sciences. In other words, 8% of the Master's and 6% of the PhD programs are in the humanities (cf. Yopp; Kuder and Obst).

In 1887 the sociologist Kurt Kautsky prophesied a linguistically unified future for Europe when he offered: “National languages will be increasingly confined to domestic use, and even there they will tend to be treated like an old piece of furniture, something that we will treat with veneration even though it has not much practical use” (36). We, of course, do not want to be perceived as being nigh useless. In representing our “wares” to the buying public, we can point to America's need to compete with Europe globally. EU language policy offers us a powerful argument.

The EU defines itself via its language and cultural diversity; sixty major languages are spoken within its 27 member states, 23 have been designated as official EU languages in which business is conducted. Additionally, the EU prizes the dignity of the human being (e.g. European Convention on Human Rights), the principle of subsidiarity (Maastricht Treaty of 1993), the mobility of its citizens across state lines and throughout its institutions of learning (Bologna Process of 2004), and aspires to a goal of all EU citizens being able to communicate in two languages other than their native tongue (“Action Plan 2004–2006” with its recommendation of 1+2 in educational language policy). The ultimate motivation driving these policies is to position an integrated Europe for global competition and to protect against the danger of a relapse into fascism and bigotry. In other words, the political is as important as the economic. Cultural and linguistic diversity is deemed to be an obligation to the welfare of the state as well as an acknowledgement of the value of heritage and human dignity. Drawing upon EU language policy, we can bolster our own arguments for continuing language and culture instruction in our home institutions.

Despite these laudable goals, an inherent danger lies in the tendency to gravitate toward a dominant *lingua franca* similar to Latin in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period, or French as the language of diplomacy and the educated elite in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A paradox, therefore, that has consequences for *Auslandsgermanistik*. For example, the DAAD supports an increasing number of activities conducted in English. There is a way out of this dilemma, however. To recognize it requires a shift in perspective (the kind Karolin Moser talks about) that leads us beyond the confines of *fachspezifische Debatten mit ihren Artikulationsvorschlägen, Methodendiskussionen und Theorieauswüchsen* (sorry, just came out that way).

Not long ago, the *New York Times* published a report of a hate crime in Dresden that contrasts mightily with the EU's aspirations for a just and culturally sensitive society. A twenty-eight year old German heritage speaker from Russia and a radical right-winger who had relocated to Saxony stabbed a young, pregnant, Islamic pharmacist, Marwa al-Sherbini, to death in a courtroom on July 1, 2009, as her case against him for *Persönlichkeitsbeleidigung* was being heard. Her murder gave rise to loud protest demonstrations in her native Egypt and elsewhere. Intriguing in the present context is the critical reflection that the reporter, Michael Kimmelman, appends to the narrative. How can one reconcile the brutal xenophobic act with the cultural context of Dresden, a gem of Germany's high culture and renown for its *Bildungskultur*? The disparity between the act and the ideals of high German culture is too crass. "What are the humanizing effects of culture?" Kimmelman asks unexpectedly and answers quite readily: "Apparently, there are none" (Kimmelman).

The hate crime in the midst of German high culture is a troubling example of the impotence of cultural edification in preventing fanatical bigotry. The murder of an Islamic pharmacist in a court of law (!) is a reminder of how fragile the edifice is. As purveyors of German culture, we dare not lose sight of the value of past cultural emphasis on human dignity for affecting student sensibilities for the good. We should seek to contribute something more than "just" the ability to communicate in German and about things German for economic or professional gain. We should seek to broaden students' horizons and help educate them to be productive and just citizens. What role can we play in a world fascinated by consumption and sensationalism? In other words, we should reflect anew on the

connection between the humanistic dimension of German Studies, our civic responsibilities as educators, and the potential for altering the mentality of our target groups in the Americas. What actions are worthy of emulation?

Kimmelman's answer to the role of the humanities is accompanied by a sigh, even as the contributors to this volume include a sigh in their clear-headed prognosis: "What we can [...] do [...] is accept that while the arts won't save us, we should save them anyway because the enemies of civilized society are always just outside the door" (Kimmelman). We need only replace "the arts" with German Studies and "the enemies of civilized society" with a world that establishes value according to possessions, wealth, the bottom line, and quantifiable outcomes in general. Such, for example, was the thrust of a major conference organized by the Einstein Forum in Berlin for early November 2009 to mark the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall. The conference focus was on "Falling Walls. Welche Mauern fallen als nächstes?" Remarkably, European and German Studies were nowhere to be found at this international gathering. It was all about "Anthropologie, Chemie, Energie, Ernährung, Geschichte, Immunologie, Ingenieurwissenschaft, Kommunikation, Kunstgeschichte, Mathematik, Medizin, Neurowissenschaft, Nuklearphysik, Paläontologie, Psychologie, Soziologie und Wirtschaft" (Falling-Walls-Conference). And that is my segue back to the European Union as a promising survival strategy, as "eine angemessene Therapie" (Höyng 92) or rear-guard action. The EU, however, is no panacea.

I have been in the profession long enough to see how our responses to challenges to the manner in which we mind our store have changed what we offer off the racks of our store. The store stocks different goods throughout our hemisphere. Here is a summary of my suggestions for meeting current challenges.

- First we must ask: How do we remain relevant in a changing world, one shaped by corporate globalism and, on the other side of the Atlantic, by the EU? We should think like a frontiersman caught between the known and the unknown as we contemplate the future of the traditional departmental structure. Even following the disastrous rejection of German language and culture after 1917, Germany (as part of Europe) remained a main source of American cultural identity. The Americas were historically marked by a frontier mentality. Encounters with things German, Austrian, and Swiss in

the Americas today can be framed in terms of redrawing the boundaries in the search for the new countries' quests for their own cultural identities and cultural universalism that can weld the disparate communities of immigrants together into a whole. We should consider transamerican developments, asking with Frank Trommler in the expanded context: "What do the national literatures of Europe offer to those who look for a reflection of their minority status, their identity in opposition to universalist claims?" (Trommler "Closing Remarks" 490). In his "Closing Remarks" to *German Studies in the United States*, Trommler recounts how a homogenous German-American identity evolved via dialectic interplay with the emigrants' country of origin, internal regional diversity within the homeland, and their religious confessions.

- At Vanderbilt University two graduate students have turned to these questions of identity formation. One has examined the Deutsches Theater in Buenos Aires in the 1930s–'60s; another is exploring the experience of displacement in the life and journalistic writings of Ernesto Volkering, an emigrant to Columbia. A third is interested in German intellectual and cultural influences in Brazil (esp. Borges). Obviously, to pursue such projects one has to be fluent in Spanish or Portuguese and in German. One student received a DAAD grant to work in the Iberoamerikanisches Institut and the Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin.
- We should take greater note of what is happening in the EU in terms of language, immigration, diversity, and identity policies. Why? Because it is a post-national enterprise, seeking to forge a new transnational identity that offers direction to our mission as *AuslandsgermanistInnen*. The EU is home to over 450 million people from diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. History, geography, and mobility greatly affect this diversity within individual member states and within transnational regions. The EU is not going away and is reconfiguring how its member states mind their language and culture stores (cf. "30 Projects"). We can profit from this *Umdenken* (cf. "Europeans and their Languages," a Special Eurobarometer based on fieldwork conducted November–December 2005).
- We should note how the EU invests its resources to advance its goals such as the Comenius, Erasmus and Atlantis programs.

Specifically regarding language instruction, the Linguanet offers rich resources (<http://www.linguanet-europa.org/plus/de/home.jsp>). The EU wants to compete for students, attracting them to be sure from the EU member states, but also globally.

- Moreover, the EU is dealing with a postcolonial situation. The once colonized are now "colonizing" the historical colonizers. The historic influx of Turks to Germany is paralleled by more recent migration of Africans to Southern Europe, of South Americans to the Iberian Peninsula, and of Eastern Europeans to Western Europe. All that movement is altering once dominant national mentalities and raising tensions (as in the hate crime noted above involving two émigrés or racial conflicts in France and Italy). The demographic movement affects the way German literature and culture is perceived internally. The development of German Studies in the Americas, by analogy, has infiltrated the thinking of our colleagues in Germany and Austria about what to teach and how to teach in *Germanistik*. Cultural exchange is a two-way street. We can and should augment our transatlantic collaborations with an inter-American pooling of resources and faculty-student exchanges. We can begin by organizing inter-American conferences and summer seminars to explore ways to promote our uniquely postcolonial, transnational perspectives. Do we need Austria, Germany, and Switzerland? Absolutely.
- The Bologna Process states clearly that higher education in the EU must be accessible to all member citizens and is seeking to advance competencies for the future (Bologna Experts Seminar). Despite the language diversity policies of then language and cultural diversity Commissioner Leonard Orban that advocates mother tongue plus two additional European languages (Orban), the tendency in practice is to teach more and more courses in a *lingua franca* (now increasingly English). This is true of universities designated as "European" as well as a number of national state universities that wish to attract students from the US and Asia. This gives rise to an internal tension, but we need to emphasize for our purposes the positive side of the 1+2 policy.
- Track similar developments in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. The Germans are following a policy of being good Europeans first, Germans second. To be sure, 2009 witnessed

considerable *Nabelschau* with the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. But the fall of the Wall brought about more than German reunification; it occasioned dynamic migration across the entire European Peninsula. We can emphasize how Germany is once again the center of European movement from East to West, West to East, North to South, and South to North.

- None of us is oblivious to the critical importance of the DAAD. Without its support and that of the Goethe Institute, we might have gone under already. But the DAAD is also charting a new course with an expanded focus on South America and transculturalism. And the activities of the Goethe Institute are being curtailed in order to expand in Asia, for example. The DAAD wants to remain relevant. While its policies include North and South America as well as Asia, and the Indian subcontinent, its thinking is increasingly shaped by developments in the EU and an integrated Europe. Luckily it still wants to support our efforts at maintaining awareness of German as a world language and of German culture as being useful beyond the language borders. The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft is similarly re-orienting itself to the previously underserved. Let us act on this lead by formally organizing ourselves hemispherically as well as transatlantically.
- Noteworthy for the altered thinking is the tactic adopted by the German Fulbright Commission. In recent years it has offered summer German Studies seminars for faculty conducted in English. Their topics are not traditional cultural ones, but fully in keeping with German Studies: Germany, the EU, and Transatlantic Relations, Science and Society.
- The Bologna Process will make it increasingly difficult for us to continue exchanging students in the accustomed manner. Its 3+2 model for the BA and MA does not provide the flexibility that currently exists for Germans to come to the Americas. That could prove problematic. Or it could nudge us toward cooperation among ourselves. But of course we can send our undergraduate students to them for summer courses *offered in German*. It is a great option for those who can afford it. We need to identify and secure dedicated funding to make the option available and attractive to students hard pressed to pursue multiple majors for professional and job-related reasons. The Max

Kade Foundation has demonstrated its willingness to invest in new ways. Too many summer programs, however, are conducted in English. Every German university seems to offer whole programs in English these days. We need to lobby the DAAD and the Fulbright Commission to work more closely with us, for their well-intentioned English strategies undermine our efforts back home.

We may be minding the store, as all the preceding contributions attest, but are we doing ourselves an injustice if we only promote what customers want by offering language training for specific professional needs or participating in critical debates in English in advanced courses? What can we do that is unique and valuable? I propose the following: (1) teach proficiency in German to give students a professional edge outside German Studies; (2) highlight the value of humanistic German Studies for educating competent, sensitive, high-minded citizens rather than preparing them for the job market; (3) emphasize the role of German culture in shaping the establishment of a new identity in the former European colonies in the Americas. Slouka has pointed out the misguidedness of the “impoverishing delusion” (33) of preparing students for the job market. Instead, we need to deal from our strength and prepare them for the market place of ideas, by helping them to cross borders, tear down walls of division, and become active citizens working toward long term gains for all. Pooling resources inter-institutionally would be a step in the right direction.

Moreover, we have to sell the value of the humanities in general without allowing our more general objectives to default to large English departments, comparative literature programs (where they still exist), and transdisciplinary centers. Again and again we hear that we live in an Age of Information. We should consider how the mass consumption of news (“facts”) or the crunching of numbers improves individual sensibilities or the general welfare of the state when no time or inclination remains for critical reflection. Information is of little value if we do not know how to decipher it or are unable to distinguish reliable facts from disinformation.

Part of what we can contribute is of a general nature. We can help train students of all ages to think for themselves, to think critically and in a nuanced manner by conceptualizing ideas outside their inherited linguistic-cultural box. Democracy does not function appropriately when the mass of

voters act like lemmings. It is scary to think that two thirds of college graduates in the US are unable to “read a text and draw rational inferences” (Slouka 37). He rightly sees in this the equivalent “of runaway inflation or soaring unemployment.” Hence, the success of our task has broad consequences for the quality of our socio-political lives, in Argentina, Canada, or the US. We cannot afford to allow the debate on the value of language, literature, and culture studies to be framed by those with no or little interest in a culture other than their own. We already combat cultural ignorance in what we do as purveyors of language, culture, and literature across the spectrum of our activities. We should consider repackaging what we do in terms of the EU and its aspirations for transnational collaboration through the forging of a new identity that transcends obstructing walls. Doing so hemispherically might even nurture more productive as well as culturally aware citizens.

What conclusions do I draw from these reflections on post-secondary education? The future of German, I am afraid, lies not in the traditional separate academic unit within the university. Promise for the future is in the new centers that are being created for the study of Europe, Latin America, etc., or in thematically oriented centers for the study of religion and culture, health-medicine-society and so forth. We need to be active in them and not allow political scientists, historians, and anthropologists alone to set the tone. We need to continue to counter the monolingual bias of certain disciplines and professions by demonstrating the added-value (*Mehrwert*) component of cultural literacy for society as a whole. If our elite graduate programs are satisfied with enhancing their academic reputations without concern for “growing” our students K-16 or for the broader public, we shorten our days. The innovations in German Studies of the past generation or so position us well to assume an expanded role as public intellectuals. Colleagues at many institutions of higher learning are already well networked with Women Studies, Film Studies, Global Studies, and Jewish Studies. Room for improvement exists if we add an EU or European Studies perspective to our endeavors.

In continuing our networking, we will have to insist on language skills as critical to preparing students both for the market and the polis. Culture, acculturation, trans- and multiculturalism are complex constructs whose definitions are still being debated. What do cross-cultural awareness or intercultural competence mean in terms of our future endeavors North and South, and not just East

and West (cf. Schulz and Tschirner)? Our task is not easy, for we often speak to colleagues and administrators who do not understand what we do and who unconsciously subscribe to “bottom-line,” corporate-model thinking. Learning a second language will remain a luxury in a monolingual, perhaps even xenophobic society. Like the fine arts, foreign languages and literatures (not taught in English) are deemed to be dispensable add-ons, disposable in an economic downturn. But if we frame our endeavors as intercultural German Studies, if we participate in a broader redefining of what quality means in a transnational world, we could improve our chances (cf. “Defining Quality”).

I end on a quite positive note. I am encouraged by the recent experience of having led a group of VIPs in educational policy from the Mid-South on a study tour to the EU in Brussels in late May 2009. None of the policy makers came with a language/culture background. All came away from the experience highly enthused and brimming over with ideas of how they might promote language and culture policies back home similar to those of the European Union and how they might fruitfully collaborate. The basis for discussions and presentations were position papers such as Orban’s “Integration, Expansion, Globalization: A new Multilingual Challenge for Europe” (2008) and the Eurobarometer report, “Europeans and their Languages” (Feb. 2006). The principal of one of the top 30 academic high schools in the country together with the superintendent of a medium-sized, small-town school district in East Tennessee immediately set about the task of designing a program to get their students abroad for a cultural and linguistic awakening. The Director of the Southern Regional Education Board in Atlanta GA, the Executive Director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, the Coordinator of Leadership and Evaluation for the Alabama State Department of Education, the Director of the Mississippi Center for Education Innovation, and the Assistant Commissioner for Teacher Education Initiatives in the Louisiana Governor’s Office are contemplating strategies on an even broader scale. The group has decided to form a consortium for educational planning across state lines and is completing a White Paper to promote awareness of language and cultural literacy K-16. This kind of border crossing emulates trans-European experiences since 1989/90.

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