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Gesellschaft für Anglophone Postkoloniale Studien / Association for Anglophone Postcolonial Studies (GAPS)

Protokoll der ordentlichen Mitgliederversammlung vom 15. Mai 2015 im Audimax, Englisch Seminar der WWU Münster

Die erste Vorsitzende Katja Sarkowsky eröffnet die Mitgliederversammlung um 15:40 Uhr.

TOP 1: FESTSTELLUNG DER BESCHLUSSFÄHIGKEIT DER MITGLIEDERVERSAMMLUNG

Die erste Vorsitzende stellt fest, dass alle Mitglieder satzungsgemäß zur Mitgliederversammlung eingeladen wurden. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt sind 42 Mitglieder anwesend. Nach § 7.6 der Satzung ist die Beschlussfähigkeit der Gesellschaft gegeben, wenn ein Viertel der Mitglieder anwesend ist. Da dies nicht der Fall ist, beschließt die Versammlung einstimmig und satzungsgemäß ihre Beschlussfähigkeit.

TOP 2: FESTLEGUNG DER ENDGÜLTIGEN TAGESORDNUNG

Die erste Vorsitzende bittet darum, den Tagesordnungspunkt 6 „Finanzplan“ zu präzisieren: Damit gibt es drei Unterpunkte: 6.1 Kassenbericht, 6.2 Diskussion und Abstimmung des Finanzplans und 6.3 Abstimmung über Bildung freier Rücklagen.

Es gibt keine weiteren Meldungen. Die neue Tagesordnung wird einstimmig von den Mitgliedern angenommen.

TOP 3: PROTOKOLL DER MITGLIEDERVERSAMMLUNG VOM 30. MAI 2014 (BERLIN), VERÖFFENTLICHT IN *ACOLIT* 71 (SEPTEMBER 2014), S. 7-14. <[HTTP://WWW.G-A-P-S.DE/ACOLIT/ACOLIT71-GESAMTTEXT.PDF](http://www.g-a-p-s.de/acolit/acolit71-gesamttext.pdf)>

Das Protokoll der letzten Mitgliederversammlung vom 30. Mai 2014 (Werkstatt der Kulturen, Berlin) wird einstimmig angenommen.

In diesem Zusammenhang stellt ein Mitglied die Frage, was sich bezogen auf die Verleihung der Ehrendoktorwürde für Edward Snowden getan hat (eine Initiative, die bei der letzten Mitgliederversammlung von Gesa Mackenthun thematisiert wurde). Die erste Vorsitzende führt aus, dass der Vorstand planmäßig einen Unterstützungsbrief geschrieben hat. Das Schreiben sei angekommen, das Verfahren läuft aber noch. Weitere Informationen werden an die Mitglieder weitergegeben, sowie sich etwas Neues entwickelt.

TOP 4: MITTEILUNGEN DES VORSTANDES

Die erste Vorsitzende informiert die Mitglieder, dass das Mitglied Laura Bulger verstorben ist. Die Mitglieder gedenken ihr mit einer Schweigeminute.

Des Weiteren begrüßt der Vorstand die 23 Mitglieder, die seit der letzten Mitgliederversammlung eingetreten sind. Es gab 10 Austritte. Die Zahl der Mitglieder wächst also stetig an. Insgesamt hat der Verein 326 Mitglieder.

Zudem erläutert die erste Vorsitzende den Mitgliedern die Tätigkeiten des Vorstandes im Rahmen der Namensänderung der Gesellschaft von GNEL/ASNEL in GAPS. Der neue Name wurde beim Amtsgericht Frankfurt am Main eingetragen. Hanna Straß stellt das neue Logo des Vereins vor, das nach einer Online-Abstimmung mit großer Mehrheit von den Mitgliedern gewählt wurde. Außerdem wurden Flyer und die Webseite überarbeitet. Es wurden auch verschiedene Domains gekauft, so ist die GAPS-Webseite unter folgenden Adressen abrufbar: <<http://www.g-a-p-s.de>>, <<http://www.g-a-p-s.at>>, <<http://www.g-a-p-s.ch>>, <<http://www.g-a-p-s.eu>> und <<http://www.g-a-p-s.net>>. Die Seite steht nur noch in englischer Sprache zur Verfügung und die Navigation wurde verbessert. Zudem sollte die GAPS-MAP unstrukturiert werden. Dies kann nur über eine Umstellung auf ein Content Management System (CMS) geschehen, eine entsprechende Umprogrammierung der Seite müsste vorgenommen werden. Gegebenenfalls ist dieses Vorhaben über Studentische Hilfskräfte umsetzbar. Es gibt weder Fragen noch Einwände.

Kylie Crane informiert die Mitglieder, dass die GAPS-Facebook-Seite 290 ‚Likes‘ hat. Sie stellt Call for Papers, Informationen zu anderen Konferenzen und weitere GAPS-affine Themen online.

Der zweite Vorsitzende Lars Eckstein führt aus, dass bezogen auf die Veröffentlichung der ASNEL-Papers seit der Rodopi-Verlagsübernahme durch Brill noch weitere Aspekte geklärt werden müssen. Dazu wurde eine Vertreterin des Verlages, Christa Stevens, zur Mitgliederversammlung eingeladen. Die Vertreterin versichert den Mitgliedern, dass die Publikationen weitergeführt werden. So ist der Konferenzband aus Bern gerade in die Produktion gegangen. Die Bände werden weiterhin als Hardcover publiziert; ältere Bände bleiben im Druck. Weitere Angelegenheiten, wie ein Open-Access der Beiträge, werden noch mit Brill diskutiert. Der zweite Vorsitzende bedankt sich und die Verlagsvertreterin verlässt die Mitgliederversammlung.

TOP 5: ENTGEGENNAHME UND GENEHMIGUNG DES GESCHÄFTS- UND KASSENBERICHTS 2014/2015

Die Schatzmeisterin Caroline Kögler stellt die Bilanz und die Gewinn- und Verlustrechnung zum 31. Dezember 2014 vor. Dazu wird den Mitgliedern eine Übersicht ausgehändigt. Sie erläutert die einzelnen Posten kurz. Im letzten Jahr wurden insgesamt 1000€ abgebaut. Die Mitglieder haben die Möglichkeit Fragen zu stellen, jedoch gibt es keine Nachfragen.

Daraufhin stellt die Schatzmeisterin eine Zwischenbilanz zum 31. März 2015 vor und erläutert die geplanten Ausgaben für das laufende Jahr. Auch dazu wird den Mitgliedern eine Übersicht ausgehändigt.

TOP 6: FINANZPLAN

6.1 KASSENBERICHT [NEU]

Die Schatzmeisterin stellt den Kassenbericht für das laufende Geschäftsjahr vor.

6.2 DISKUSSION UND ABSTIMMUNG DES FINANZPLANS [NEU]

Einer der vorgeschlagenen Posten ist ein im Vergleich zum Vorjahr reduziertes Budget für das ursprünglich für Februar 2015 geplante Symposium „Naming the Future“; dieses war mangels einer genügenden Zahl von Einreichungen ausgefallen, ein Alternativkonzept für ein an die Jahrestagung 2016 angegliedertes Format liegt vor. Der zweite Vorsitzende erläutert die Vorgeschichte des geplanten Symposiums. Grundsätzlich stellt sich nun die Frage, ob die Mitgliederversammlung ein alternatives Format für wichtig erachtet und wenn ja, wie viel Geld dafür zur Verfügung gestellt werden soll.

Es folgt eine rege Diskussion über Format und Budget. Der zweite Vorsitzende stellt fest, dass die finanzielle Diskussion sehr stark mit der inhaltlichen verbunden ist. Daraufhin beantragt die erste Vorsitzende, den TOP 13.1 vorzuziehen.

13.1 SYMPOSIUM ‚NAMING THE FUTURE‘ [VORGEZOGEN]

Die eventuelle Umwidmung des geplanten Symposiums in ein der Jahrestagung 2016 angegliedertes Workshopformat wird sowohl was das Format selbst als auch was die Finanzierung angeht sehr kontrovers diskutiert, insbesondere auch mit Blick auf die Verhältnismäßigkeit zu anderen Posten (Summer School, Postgraduiertenforum, Dissertationspreis, Zuschüsse in Nicht-DFG-Jahren).

Die erste Vorsitzende stellt schließlich den Geschäftsordnungsantrag, dass nun über den weitestgehenden Vorschlag, den vorgelegten Finanzplan, der €4.000 für das Symposium beinhaltet, abgestimmt werden möge. Mit 11 Ja-Stimmen und 25-Nein-Stimmen wird dieser Vorschlag abgelehnt. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt sind 36 Mitglieder anwesend.

Der zweite Vorsitzende teilt mit, dass das Organisationsteam des Symposiums „Naming the Future“ den Antrag stellt, das Symposium komplett zu streichen. Mit 29 Ja-Stimmen und 2 Stimmenthaltungen wird der Antrag angenommen. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt sind 31 Mitglieder anwesend.

Rückkehr zum TOP 6.2

6.2 DISKUSSION UND ABSTIMMUNG DES FINANZPLANS [FORTSETZUNG]

Daraufhin wird diskutiert, ob und wie nach dem Wegfall der 4000€ andere Posten erhöht werden sollten. Abgestimmt wird nur für 2015 und 2016, die Berechnungen für die Folgejahre sind nur Projektionen.

Diskutiert werden die Förderung des Postgraduiertenforums, eine Erhöhung des Darlehens an die Summer-School-Organisationsteams und die eventuelle Verschiebung der Lesungszuschüsse ausschließlich auf Nicht-DFG-Jahre.

Der zweite Vorsitzende bringt zudem den Vorschlag ein, der Summer School ein höheres Darlehen zu gewähren, da die Fördergelder meist sehr spät kommen und ein höheres Darlehen den Organisationsteams mehr Planungssicherheit gäbe. Zudem wird die Idee, die Gelder für eine Autorenlesung von den DFG-finanzierten Jahren allein auf die nicht von der DFG finanzierten Jahre zu verschieben, von den Mitgliedern kritisch kommentiert, da es einen Anreiz geben soll, mehrere Lesungen zu jeder Jahrestagung durchzuführen.

Die erste Vorsitzende schlägt vor, schrittweise über die einzelnen Posten für 2015/16, über die diskutiert wurde, abzustimmen. Mit 34 Ja-Stimmen und einer Stimmenenthaltung wird der Vorschlag, die Summer School mit 1000€ und einem Darlehen von 1500€ zu fördern, angenommen. Der Vorschlag, die geplanten 500€ für das Graduiertenforum zu streichen, wird mit 35-Nein-Stimmen einstimmig abgelehnt. Der Vorschlag, die geplanten Gelder für die Autorenlesung nur in Jahren zu nutzen, die nicht von der DFG finanziert sind (also 2000€ in nicht DFG-finanzierten Jahren anstelle von 1000€ jährlichen Zuschusses), wird mit 7-Ja-Stimmen, 15-Nein-Stimmen und 13 Stimmenthaltungen abgelehnt. Der Vorschlag, die Travel Bursaries nicht mehr zu finanzieren, wird einstimmig abgelehnt. Zuletzt wird der gesamte Finanzierungsplan für 2015/16 einstimmig angenommen. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt sind 35 Mitglieder anwesend.

6.3 ABSTIMMUNG ÜBER BILDUNG FREIER RÜCKLAGEN [NEU]

Die Möglichkeit der Bildung freier Rücklagen wird ohne Gegenstimme bestätigt.

TOP 7: BERICHT DER KASSENPRÜFER

In Vertretung der Kassenprüfer liest Frank Schulze-Engler deren Bericht vor. Alle Zahlen sind korrekt, die Buchungsvorgänge sind allesamt nachvollziehbar. Es gibt keinerlei Beanstandung. Frank Schulze-Engler schlägt daraufhin die Entlastung des Vorstandes vor.

TOP 8: ENTLASTUNG SES VORSTANDES

Mit 29 Ja-Stimmen und 6 Stimmenthaltungen wird der Vorstand entlastet. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt sind 35 Mitglieder anwesend.

TOP 9: NEUWAHL VON VORSTAND UND BEIRAT

Frank Schulze-Engler schlägt Mark Stein als Wahlvorstand vor. Der Vorschlag erfährt allgemeine Zustimmung.

Als erste Vorsitzende wird Katja Sarkowsky vorgeschlagen, als zweite Vorsitzende Annika McPherson, und als Schatzmeisterin wird Caroline Kögler nominiert. Alle drei Kandidatinnen stellen sich kurz vor. Laut Satzung kann die Mitgliederversammlung einen Beirat einrichten. Dies wird auch in diesem Jahr wieder befürwortet. Es wird ein Beirat aus 3 Mitgliedern gewünscht. Hanna Straß,

Anne Löber, Timo Müller und Elena Furlanetto werden vorgeschlagen. Die Nominierten stellen sich auch hier kurz vor (da Anne Löber nicht anwesend ist, wird ihr Profil von Hanna Straß verlesen).

Daraufhin wird die geheime Wahl durchgeführt. Der Vorstand (1. und 2. Vorsitz, Schatzmeister/in) wird in drei separaten Wahlgängen bestimmt, die Wahl des Beirats in einem Wahlgang zusammengefasst.

Mit 32 Ja-Stimmen, 1 Nein-Stimme und 1 Stimmenenthaltung wird Katja Sarkowsky als erste Vorsitzende wiedergewählt. Mit 30 Ja-Stimmen, 2 Nein-Stimmen und 2 Stimmenenthaltungen wird Annika McPherson als zweite Vorsitzende gewählt. Einstimmig wird die Schatzmeisterin Caroline Kögler in ihrem Amt bestätigt. Alle drei Kandidatinnen nehmen die Wahl an.

In den Beirat werden Hanna Straß mit 31 Stimmen, Timo Müller mit 26 Stimmen und Elena Furlanetto mit 19 Stimmen gewählt. Auf Anne Löber entfallen 17 Stimmen. Es haben insgesamt 34 Mitglieder an der Wahl teilgenommen.

Nach Neuwahl der Vorstands und Beirats führt – der bisherigen Praxis entsprechend – der alte Vorstand die Sitzung zu Ende.

TOP 10: WAHL DER KASSENPRÜFER

Als Kassenprüfer werden Jörg Heinke und Tobias Schlosser vorgeschlagen. Dieser Vorschlag wird von den Mitgliedern in einer Wahl durch Handzeichen einstimmig angenommen. Jörg Heinke hatte im Vorfeld seine Bereitschaft erklärt, Tobias Schlosser erklärt dies vor Ort. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt sind 33 Mitglieder anwesend.

TOP 11: WAHL DER JURY ZUR VERGABE DES DISSERTATIONSPREISES 2016

Die erste Vorsitzende teilt mit, dass die bisherige Jury nicht mehr zur Verfügung steht und bedankt sich bei allen Mitgliedern der Jury für die erbrachte Leistung. Für die neue Jury werden Christian Mair (Freiburg), Cecile Sandten (Chemnitz) und Frank Schulze-Engler (Frankfurt) nominiert. Die Mitgliederversammlung stimmt über diesen Vorschlag ab und bestätigt ihn einstimmig. Frank Schulze-Engler erklärt seine Bereitschaft zur Juryarbeit, Christian Mair und Cecile Sandten hatten dies für den Fall ihrer Wahl bereits im Vorfeld bestätigt.

TOP 12: WAHL DER JURY ZUR VERGABE DES FÖRDERPREISES (2016, 2017)

Der Vorstand bedankt sich bei der bisherigen Jury für die geleistete Arbeit. Peter Marsden (Aachen) und Dagmar Deuber (Münster) stehen erneut für die Juryarbeit zur Verfügung. Michael Meyer scheidet aus der Jury aus. Für ihn wird Kylie Crane (Mainz/Germersheim) nominiert. Die Jury wird einstimmig gewählt.

TOP 13: GAPS-TAGUNGEN

13.1 SYMPOSIUM ‚NAMING THE FUTURE‘ [wurde vorgezogen]

13.2 JAHRESTAGUNG 2016

Annika McPherson stellt einen Vorschlag für die nächste GAPS-Jahrestagung vor, die in Augsburg stattfinden und das Thema „The Postcolonial and the Material“

fokussieren wird. Die Jahrestagung wird vom 5. bis 7. Mai 2016 stattfinden. Als Keynote-Sprecher konnten bereits Shoba Ghosh und Bhekizizwe Peterson gewonnen werden. Annika McPherson erklärt zudem, dass sich potentielle Leiterinnen und Leiter des Teaching-Workshops bei ihr melden können. Außerdem freut sie sich über jedes Feedback und jeden Input. Die Mitgliederversammlung bestätigt ohne Gegenstimme den Vorschlag, die Jahrestagung 2016 in Augsburg abzuhalten.

13.3 JAHRESTAGUNG 2017

Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp erklärt sich bereit, die Tagung 2017 in Bonn auszurichten. Der Vorschlag wird einhellig begrüßt. Das Bonner Team freut sich über thematische Anregungen und wird auf der Jahrestagung 2016 das Konzept vorstellen.

TOP 14: JAHRBÜCHER

14.1 AUSSTEHENDE JAHRBÜCHER

Die erste Vorsitzende teilt den Mitgliedern mit, dass das Jahrbuch aus Bern in Produktion ist, Chemnitz kurz vor der Abgabe steht und in Potsdam die Arbeit an dem Jahrbuch bereits begonnen hat. Der Band aus Bayreuth wird voraussichtlich in diesem Jahr in die Produktion gehen.

14.2 MANDAT FÜR DEN VORSTAND ZUR NACHVERHANDLUNG MIT BRILL

Lars Eckstein und Katja Sarkowsky berichten von ihrem Gespräch mit Fred van der Zee; wie bereits von Christa Stevens mitgeteilt wurde (TOP 4), wird die Publikation der Bände absehbar wie gehabt weitergeführt werden. Möglicherweise steht mittelfristig eine Anpassung des Peer Review-Verfahrens an, das aber jetzt bereits als ‚double-blind‘ vorgenommen wird und auch weiterhin vorgenommen werden soll. Die Auswahl der Peer Reviewer soll, so der Wunsch von Vorstand und Mitgliedern, auch weiterhin von den jeweiligen BandherausgeberInnen vorgenommen werden. Das *technical editing* möchte Brill vorerst ebenfalls wie gehabt weiterlaufen lassen. Die Korrespondenz findet dabei zwischen BeiträgerInnen und HerausgeberInnen und zwischen den HerausgeberInnen und dem *technical editor* statt. Die Mitgliederversammlung erteilt der 1. Vorsitzenden das Mandat, in der Vergangenheit aufgetretene Probleme im Bearbeitungsprozess mit dem *technical editor* direkt zu besprechen.

Auf Bitten von Lars Eckstein und Mark Stein werden die Mitglieder um ein Meinungsbild zum Thema Open Access gebeten; die gegenwärtigen Bedingungen bei Brill diesbezüglich sind restriktiv und teuer. Mit großer Mehrheit bekunden die Mitglieder dies als eine Priorität, nicht zuletzt, um auch dem politischen Anspruch der GAPS-Mitglieder an ihre wissenschaftliche Praxis Rechnung tragen zu können. Der Vorstand wird absehbar das entsprechende Gespräch mit den HerausgeberInnen der Cross/Cultures Series und mit Brill suchen; ggf. müssen andere Publikationsformate oder -orte eruiert werden.

Zuletzt wird diskutiert, wie die Reihe nach der Namensänderung von GNEL/ASNEL in GAPS zu benennen sei. Der Vorschlag, die Reihe GAPS/ASNEL zu

nennen, und dabei die laufende Nummerierung der Bände beizubehalten, findet einstimmige Zustimmung.

TOP 15: SUMMER SCHOOL 2015

Das Team der Summer School 2015, die vom 7. bis 11. September 2015 in Augsburg das Thema „Border Stories: Narratives of Peace, Conflict and Communication in the 20th and 21st Centuries“ bearbeiten wird, stellt sich vor. An den Universitäten sollen Werbung für die Veranstaltung gemacht und Anstrengungen unternommen werden, die Summer School in die jeweiligen Studiengänge zu implementieren.

TOP 16: NACHWUCHSFORUM ‚POSTCOLONIAL NARRATIONS‘

Elena Furlanetto stellt das diesjährige Graduiertenforum vor, das vom 8. bis 10. Oktober an der Universität Duisburg-Essen zu dem Thema „Empire and Neurosis“ stattfinden wird.

TOP 17: VERSCHIEDENES

Albert Rau informiert darüber, dass die Internetseite www.education-kanada.de zeitweise nicht abrufbar ist, da sie gerade aktualisiert wird. Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp macht auf die Sektion „Cosmopolitan/Global/Planetary Fictions: The Uses and Abuses of Comparative Approaches“ auf dem Anglistentag 2016 in Hamburg aufmerksam, für welche der CfP bereits zirkuliert und GAPS-Mitglieder zu Einreichungen aufgefordert werden.

Die erste Vorsitzende bedankt sich herzlich bei den ausscheidenden Mitgliedern des Vorstandes bzw. Beirates – Lars Eckstein, Kylie Crane und Kathy-Ann Tan – und schließt die Mitgliederversammlung um 19:20 Uhr.

Gezeichnet:

Prof. Dr. Katja Sarkowsky (1. Vorsitzende)

Tobias Schlosser (Protokollant)

GAPS Graduate Award (formerly ASNEL Graduate Award)

Purpose of the Graduate Award:

Each year, the Gesellschaft für Anglophone Postkoloniale Studien/ Association for Anglophone Postcolonial Studies (GAPS, formerly ASNEL) confers the GAPS Graduate Award for young academics. The aim is to honor outstanding theses (undergraduate and master's theses as well as state examination theses) on Anglophone postcolonial literatures and cultures as well as on the varieties of English submitted to universities and colleges in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. Theses that were submitted outside of these countries are eligible for consideration if written by a student member of GAPS. The award winners are chosen by a three-person jury composed of university instructors. The Graduate Award for young academics was first conferred in 2008.

Who can nominate candidates?

Thesis advisors who are GAPS members are entitled to nominate candidates. Eligible for proposal for the Graduate Award to be conferred for 2016 are works submitted in connection with examination procedures that were completed between January 1, 2015, and January 1, 2016. The deadline for submission is January 15, 2016.

How does the nomination process work?

Nominations are to be sent to the GAPS Board of Directors, which then forwards them to the jury. For its work, the jury requires the examination thesis and report both in electronic form (CD or email attachment) and as a hard copy. Please send nominations to:

Gesellschaft für Anglophone Postkoloniale Studien
Attn: Prof. Dr. Katja Sarkowsky
Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster
Johannisstr. 12-20
D-48143 Münster, Germany
seksarkowsky@wwu.de

What is the award's endowment, and where is it presented?

The GAPS Graduate Award is endowed as follows:

- € 500 prize
- Payment of travel expenses (second-class train travel) and one night's hotel accommodation for attending the award presentation at the GAPS annual conference as well as the fees for the conference
- Free GAPS membership (including yearbook) for two years

- Payment of conference fees by GAPS for two additional GAPS annual conferences
- Opportunity to publish the thesis on the GAPS website

In addition to the Graduate Award, two **recognition awards** are conferred. These are endowed as follows:

- € 50 book voucher
- Payment of travel expenses (second-class train travel) and one night's hotel accommodation for attending the award presentation at the GAPS annual conference as well as the fees for the conference
- Free GAPS membership (including yearbook) for two years
- Payment of conference fees by GAPS for one additional GAPS annual conference

The GAPS Graduate Award and the two recognition awards will be presented in connection with the GAPS annual conference at the University of Augsburg, May 5-7, 2016.

GAPS Dissertation Award

The GAPS (formerly ASNEL) Dissertation Award is granted every two years and recognizes an outstanding doctoral thesis that advances and expands in an exceptional manner analytical and/or theoretical approaches to Anglophone literatures around the world, to the study of the varieties of the English, or to other post-colonial cultural forms, practices, and media.

The award is endowed with € 2,000 and can be allocated to several doctoral theses. The prize will be awarded for the second time at the annual convention of GAPS in May 2016. In addition to the monetary prize, the award covers expenses for travelling to the conference (via train, economy class), hotel accommodation for the night of the award ceremony, and the conference fee for the annual GAPS conference.

Who can nominate candidates for the award?

Doctoral advisors who are members of GAPS can nominate candidates for the award. Submissions by the candidates themselves are also possible, provided that they are themselves members of GAPS. Eligible for submission are excellent dissertations in the field of Anglophone postcolonial studies that were completed in the years 2014 and 2015 (the crucial date is that of the last doctoral examination).

The deadline for nominations is December 1, 2015. Dissertation projects completed between December 1 and December 31, 2015 can be nominated belatedly until January 4, 2016 by submitting all necessary documents.

How does the nomination process work?

Nominations should be addressed to the GAPS executive board who will transfer them to the respective jury-members. A nomination includes:

- a copy of the doctoral thesis and a copy of the Ph.D. certificate or a confirmation of the completion of the doctoral examinations from the dean's office,
- an academic c.v. of the nominee together with a list of publications,
- the advisors' reports,
- a short summary of the doctoral thesis in English (1,000 words).

All documents should be submitted in electronic form (CD or email attachment) as well as in printed form after October 1st, 2015 to

Gesellschaft für Anglophone Postkoloniale Studien

Attn: Prof. Dr. Katja Sarkowsky

Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster

Johannisstr. 12-20

D-48143 Münster, Germany

seksarkowsky@wwu.de

Call for Papers

“The Postcolonial and the Material “

Gesellschaft für Anglophone Postkoloniale Studien (GAPS)

Annual Conference, University of Augsburg, May 5-7, 2016

Confirmed Keynote Speakers:

Shoba Venkatesh Ghosh (University of Mumbai)

Bhekizizwe Peterson (University of the Witwatersrand)

For its 2016 conference, GAPS invites panels and individual papers addressing the relationship between the ‘postcolonial’ and the ‘material’ in anglophone literary studies, cultural studies, media studies and linguistics as well as from transdisciplinary perspectives. Drawing from and exceeding the notion of the material in material culture studies, the conference aims to discuss the functions and significance of objects and things in relation to the processes of producing, constructing, collecting and representing them in literature, media, and other cultural contexts.

For example, fieldwork, collections, and their subsequent displays have played a highly problematic role in colonial settings, and their legacies as well as continuous practices of cultural appropriation remain highly contentious. More generally, colonial patterns of representation often refer to material objects and use strategies of objectification in the construction of Otherness, while both the persistence and attempts at re-signification of such representations continue to play an important role in current debates surrounding the postcolonial. Similarly, anthropologists’ and archaeologists’ interests in the material objects of cultures have been problematized in different ways across a wide range of post-independence and contemporary anglophone writing and critique. Objects and things can thus be analyzed across a variety of literatures and other media as signifiers not only of cultural heritage, belonging, community formation, and identity, but also as symbols of social exclusion and marginalization or cultural exoticization.

The material past and unequal material conditions of the present have furthermore played an important role in a variety of postcolonial theoretical and critical contexts, especially in relation to Marxism. Material culture in the widest sense also informs many debates on globalization, consumption, commodity exchange, and commodification. Questions surrounding the publication/production and market distribution of literature and film in connection to practices of critical reception also continue to influence what is discussed as postcolonial, which in turn is increasingly challenged through various forms of online dissemination of cultural material and criticism, thus frequently shifting the problem of availability to questions surrounding the digital divide and open access. Finally, cognitive

approaches seem to necessitate a re-thinking of the relation between the material and immaterial aspects, e.g. of language, thought, and ideas.

Based on these notions of the role and function of the material in relation to the postcolonial, possible contributions can address, but are not limited to, the following issues:

- Mercantilism and material (post-)colonial histories, politics, and modernities
- Colonial patterns, neo-colonial continuities, postcolonial and decolonial contestations of material representations
- The material and symbolic representation of culture through objects and artefacts in anglophone fiction, film, and music
- The materiality of subject/object relations in processes of cultural Othering
- Cultural appropriation in literature, film, photography, as well as in the music and fashion industries
- The materiality of postcolonial urban and rural settings: cityscapes, landscapes, architecture, monuments, memorials, or the built environment in fiction and visual culture
- Theorizing the material in postcolonial contexts: the influences of Marx, Lévi-Strauss, Merleau-Ponty, Bourdieu, Latour
- Indigenous conceptions of materiality
- Materiality, the body, and practices: embodiment, sensoriality, incorporation, adornment, enactment, abjection, agency, and performance
- Revisiting *The Social Life of Things* (ed. Arjun Appadurai) thirty years after: notions of commoditization, commodity fetishism, consumption, and global cultural flows in postcolonial contexts
- Rethinking the boundaries between the material and the immaterial: trans-disciplinary dialogues on cognitive approaches within anglophone post-colonial studies from linguistic, cultural, and literary perspectives

Please send **abstracts (300-500 words) of individual papers or panels of three papers** together with a bio-brief to gaps2016@phil.uni-augsburg.de. Abstracts will be evaluated from **December 1, 2015**, until **January 10, 2016**. Notifications of acceptance will be sent out by February 15, 2016.

Work in progress in anglophone postcolonial studies – including M.A./M.Ed., PhD and Postdoc projects as well as ongoing research projects in general – can be presented in the “Under Construction” section of the conference, for which poster presentations are also welcome. Please submit **abstracts for project presentations (250 words)** indicating your chosen format (paper or poster) to gaps2016@phil.uni-augsburg.de by **March 1, 2016**.

The organizers aim to supplement the limited number of travel bursaries that are available for part-time, limited contract or currently unemployed speakers as well as for presenting postgraduate and PhD students from countries of the global South who are, or become, members of GAPS. If you wish to apply for a travel bursary, please indicate so via e-mail to gaps2016@phil.uni-augsburg.de by **March 1, 2016**.

The conference will also feature a **Teachers' Workshop** as well as **author readings**. Further information will be made available on the conference homepage:

<http://www.uni-augsburg.de/gaps2016>

Empire & Neurosis **3rd Postgraduate Forum “Postcolonial Narrations”** **October 8-10, 2015, University of Duisburg-Essen** **(Campus Essen)**

Over the last two years, the Graduate Forum “Postcolonial Narration” has created an extensive network of masters, doctoral, and postdoctoral students who engage with Postcolonial literatures and cultures in their research. The Forum has addressed topical issues in the field of Postcolonial Studies such as “Postcolonial Narratives and Notions of the Global” (Göttingen 2013) and “New Comparative Approaches in a Globalized World” (Frankfurt 2014). The third edition of the Forum, to be held at the University of Duisburg-Essen in October 2015, hopes to continue and strengthen this successful format and will tackle the theme of “Empire & Neurosis”. After the opening remarks by Prof. Patricia Plummer, Chair of the Postcolonial Studies Department at Duisburg-Essen, the Forum will open with Prof. Miriam Strube’s keynote, by the title “The Trauma of Empire: Screening Suffering and Everyday Oppression”. In addition to the research-oriented panels, the Forum offers valuable career coaching sessions. This year’s Forum includes a roundtable on publication opportunities and strategies (with Prof. Nicole Maruo-Schroeder from the University of Koblenz-Landau, Prof. Barbara Buchenau, and Prof. Josef Raab, both from the University of Duisburg-Essen) and an exchange with a senior scholar (Dr. Verena Laschinger, University of Erfurt) who will discuss academic career planning and issues of work-life balance with the Forum participants. As part of the cultural program, we have invited artist and choreographer Sandra Chatterjee to present one of her dance performances.

This year’s topic – “Empire & Neurosis” – proposes to investigate the range of ‘neuroses’ that are generated by or connected with colonial or imperial experiences, but transcend any strictly clinical meaning of ‘neurosis’ and expand into philosophical, literary, and metaphorical implications of the term. In his seminal work *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) Frantz Fanon explores the psychological consequences of imperialism by analyzing the phobic or “neurotic reactions” of the Antillean people to French colonialism and demands to “investigate the extent to which the conclusions of Freud or of Adler can be applied to the effort to understand the man of color’s view of the world” (Fanon 109). Especially the Lacanian understanding of neurosis seems to epitomize the postcolonial condition in so far as it stages the reappearance of the repressed “in loco where it was repressed” (Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book III* 104-105). Although the analysis of the damaging consequences of imperialism continues to be of importance for understanding any form of empire, in conceptualizing neurosis as a structure of communication and existence the Lacanian perspective asks us to consider imperialism not so much as a (curable) disease but as an intricate (social) system.

Whether as an individual or as a social phenomenon, neuroses suppress a particular experience and thus represent an “incapacity to confront this secretly preserved part of reality” (Lacan 45). Particularly the repression of memory and amnesia manage the rupture of any undesirable experience in a neurotic state. In the case of Britain, for example, Paul Gilroy diagnosed a pathological neurosis “that seeks first to minimize the extent of the Empire, then to deny or justify its brutal character, and finally, to present the British themselves as the ultimate tragic victims of their extraordinary imperial successes” (Gilroy 103). This “post-imperial melancholia” – and Gayatri Spivak’s “retrospective hallucination” (Spivak 275) – may produce various neurotic states. In this wider sense, then, neurosis functions as a tool to describe the individual experiences of colonized and colonizer while the concept also invites questions about the political, social, economic, and cultural practices of establishing, maintaining, or rationalizing empires past and present.

The “Postcolonial Narrations” Forum 2015 invites papers from different disciplines and reflections on various types of texts. The panel “Music and the Postcolonial Condition” – which includes papers by Tobias Schlosser (Chemnitz University of Technology), Anne Loeber (Goethe University Frankfurt), and Jarula M. I. Wegner (Goethe University Frankfurt) – investigates the triangulation of music, neurosis, and the postcolonial. In “Paper Empires: Race, Ethnicity and the Compulsion to Document in the Gilded Age,” Jasper Verlinden (John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies, Berlin) focuses on forms of documentations that accompanied late nineteenth-century industrialization and urbanization processes in the United States. Rania Gaafar (Karlsruhe University of Art and Design) addresses postcolonial cinema in “Reenactments of Disruption: Visual Archives and ‘Inappropriate/d’ Images of Otherness in Postcolonial Film Art”. Our call for comparative approaches that put Anglophone postcolonial literature and culture into dialogue with cultural production in other languages has been answered by Giulia Imbriaco (University of Naples “L’Orientale”), who compares American and Russian texts in “Rhetorics of Transgression: A Comparison of the Post-modern AvantGarde Movements in New York and Moscow”. Postcolonial approaches to American literature and culture feature prominently: Angelo Monaco (University of Pisa) uses the fiction of Jhumpa Lahiri to tackle the question of assimilation into the American background in “Yearning for Accommodation and Racial Melancholia in the Narrative of Jhumpa Lahiri”. Papers by Aleksandra Musiał (University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland) and Robin Frischkorn (University of Duisburg-Essen) explore the Vietnam War as trauma. The post-war experience is also the focus of Sneharika Roy’s (American University of Paris) “What’s Postcoloniality Got to Do with it? Classical, Modern, and Postcolonial Perspectives on the Post-War Expatriate Experience and Imperial Neurosis”. In the concluding panel, “The Empire Writes Back and Forth: Resisting Established Readings of Texts and Contexts,” Helena Esser (University of Duisburg-Essen), Zohra Hassan (University of Duisburg-Essen), and Laura Zander (Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich) propose their visions for the future of postcolonial

studies, integrate new genres in its field of action, and attempt to re-assess its trajectory.

“Postcolonial Narrations” Chair and Vice-Chair

Elena Furlanetto (University Duisburg-Essen)

Laura Zander (LMU Munich)

Organizing Committee Essen, “Empire & Neurosis” 2015:

Elena Furlanetto

Dr. Dietmar Meinel

Lioba Schreyer

For more information on the Forum visit our blog

<https://postcolonialnarrations.wordpress.com/>

Conference Reports



“Ideology in Postcolonial Texts and Contexts” 26th Annual GAPS Conference Münster, 14 - 16 May 2015

It was a bit posh meeting in a Schloss. Yet the pressure was on this year’s hosts, the English department of the Westfälische Wilhelms University of Münster, after Potsdam’s efforts the previous year, in the outhouses of the neues Palais. The weather was also a bit on the nice side for spending the public holiday long weekend indoors, but the organisers, Katja Sarkowsky, Mark Stein and their team, made us feel warmly welcome. They also practiced a little strategic propaganda, insinuating we were especially privileged to see the usually grey Münster in the sun, and the technique certainly helped boost numbers for the excellent guided city tours. The 26th annual conference, and the first under the banner of the new name GAPS, was also the first in which the host university’s entire English Department was involved. The chosen topic, “Ideology in Postcolonial Texts and Contexts”, was thus explored from the various angles of Book Studies, TEFL, Linguistics, Variation Linguistics, and American and British Studies. The three-day programme also included the Association’s Annual General Meeting, a teaching workshop, and an impressive number of PhD student presentations. Conference tourism, then, is certainly not for the faint-hearted or sluggish of mind.

The historical and international intersectionality of postcolonial ideology was highlighted right from the conference’s opening, with Mark Stein’s example of the “Rhodes Must Go” activism at the University of Cape Town. This Welcome Address also set the scene for the day’s regional focus on Sub-Saharan Africa, book-ended by Beth le Roux’s keynote lecture on South African crime fiction and the evening reading by guest of honour, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o. Le Roux’s analysis of apartheid-era censorship of popular crime fiction highlighted the importance of understanding the aesthetic as caught up in politics and ideology, of which for le Roux, issues of justice and morality are significant for writers and critics. In her examples of often seemingly arbitrary censorship, persecution, and exile of South African writers, she demonstrated how politics and ideology are not only abstract, but can be a part of everyday lived reality, often enacted or enforced even on the body. This part of her discussion came to frame my understanding of and response to the conference’s theme of postcolonial ideology. Perhaps I was influenced by last year’s topic of justice (Potsdam 2014), but for me it seems ever more important for postcolonialists to not only observe and describe the trends and patterns in our field’s fiction and theory, but to also be bold enough to take a stand. While it is not too difficult to identify and deconstruct the harms of social and cultural norms (laws and policies as well as informal practices) on the indi-

genous, minorities, women, children, the marginalised and under-represented, as academics we are altogether less willing to take a moral stance: while the writer claims “this is wrong” or “this is unfair”, the critic retreats into the safety of fiction’s dissimulating strategies. I was very much looking forward to engaging with the ethics and responsibilities of postcolonial scholarship over the next three days.

Thursday closed in the beautiful rounded room of the Schloss Aula, with a pick-me-up from an up-beat Pete Marsden presenting the Graduate Ceremony Award and giving us a pep-talk on the health and vivacity of GAPS. Frank Schulze-Engler was uncharacteristically a little tongue tied introducing his literary hero, Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo, whose presence is, indeed, daunting. It would be hard to think of another writer who has made a greater impact on both postcolonial fiction and theory than Ngũgĩ, and I think we all had high expectations of his reading and discussion. Instead of weighty words of wisdom, we were treated to a performance, from a trickster figure who encompassed in storytelling life, theory, and literature. Through reading from and adding digressions to his memoirs, he demonstrated how story creates connectedness of time and place. In one example, a visit from the previous week in Germany joined with a memory from his early childhood in Kenya. For Ngũgĩ, life is narrative, a timely reminder for us scholars to keep the primary text and its motivations firmly at the centre of our academic *raison d’être*.

After Africa’s day on Thursday, Canada took up the baton on Friday, with a keynote lecture by Mavis Reimer and lunchtime reading by Larissa Lai. Although Reimer’s paper was billed as the TEFL keynote, her presentation was relevant not only to future teachers but also demonstrated significant knowledge of book studies and postcolonial literary and cultural studies. It was an excellent example of how to handle a large corpus of writing with attention to both close and distant reading. Her work on Canadian Young-Adult fiction examined the representation of the child and the construction of the nation through analysis of child homelessness. The topic was highly relevant to our rethinking of the parameters and content of the postcolonial domain, which was reflected in the broad range of questions and animated discussion that followed her talk. Many of us came away from the session with a list of new novels to read from her extensive collection.

The highlight of the parallel sessions, which were all dense and admirably put together by the organising team, was the tea breaks in between, when there was time to discuss the papers and hear about those we unfortunately missed. The true sign of a successful conference might best be measured by the amount of tea and coffee consumed and the general hubbub of the break room. It was good to see so many Münster English Department students in attendance, and for many it was their first conference experience. It is also a credit to GAPS that so many members came along without giving presentations, a show of support and collegial friendship often sadly missing today as the workloads and pressure on academics continue to increase. Many of the newcomers and imports, including from the UK, Ireland, Cyprus, Czech Republic, India, Nigeria and the USA, didn’t need to sound quite so surprised when expressing their delight at finding such an active

and interesting postcolonial studies group in Germany. By its very nature, postcolonial studies is a discipline that fosters building bridges, even more so than Eurovision, and Münster again proved the need for an international group such as GAPS outside of the US and UK “centres” of English and postcolonial literary studies.

I have now attended the last three GNEL/GAPS conferences and one post-graduate conference. Clearly the association is interested in exploring cutting-edge, current and important global debates, as evident in the conference themes; “Re-Inventing the Postcolonial” (Chemnitz 2013), “Postcolonial Justice” (Potsdam 2014), and this year’s critique of ideology. A non-conformist bent is also implied in the upside-down “A” of the new GAPS logo, an inversion that would, in my opinion, suit a little more subversion. While I left this conference feeling well supported and encouraged by my peers, I would have liked to see more vigorous debate, even contestation and argument. Within the safety and security of the association’s conviviality, the annual conference is exactly the right place to go out on a limb and experiment with more out-there ideas. This year’s theme offered an opportunity to tackle head-on some difficult contradictions and impasses that lie at the heart of postcolonial ideology, methodology, and practice. Perhaps next year we’ll throw away our scripts, roll up our sleeves, and get down to the business of arguing those gaps.

Melissa Kennedy (Vienna)



**“Ideology in Postcolonial Texts and Contexts”
26th Annual GAPS Conference
Münster, 14 - 16 May 2015**

On a sunny Thursday in the middle of May scholars from all over the world came together in Münster, a small town in the northwest of Germany especially known for the plenitude of bicycles roaming its streets, to enjoy a three day conference on the topic of “Ideology in Postcolonial Texts and Contexts.” When the participants arrived at the university castle that morning and walked into the foyer, they were met with familiar and soon to be familiar faces full of excitement. In her function as head of department of the English Seminar at the University of Münster and president of GAPS, Katja Sarkowsky opened the 26th GAPS conference with introductory words and a warm welcome. Interdisciplinarity and working together were the underlying conference themes – from the organization, in which all seven chairs of the English Seminar in Münster got involved, to the many discussions in panels as well as the following speeches and readings.

This disciplinary breadth was reflected in the invited keynote speakers from book studies, Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), linguistics as well

as literary and cultural studies. The first keynote address came from book studies, a discipline that has only begun to engage with the postcolonial realm in more recent times. Beth le Roux from the University of Pretoria discussed the censorship of crime fiction in South Africa during apartheid and afterwards. As crime novels have political significance because of the way they depict (and thus define) crime, they are particularly interesting to look at in terms of censorship in the context of apartheid, when crimes were committed by the government. What was banned in South Africa, however, did not follow any coherent system for a long time but was rather based exclusively on covers and titles. Publishing firms often reacted by making use of this to generate more attention towards their books on an international scale. Le Roux argued that crime fiction should not be dismissed as trivial, especially because this popular genre of mass-market works helps to break down ideologies, social hierarchies and ambiguities, and she reminded her listeners that the ideologies of aesthetics are also always political.

In the opening TEFL keynote on Saturday morning, Mavis Reimer, Professor at the University of Winnipeg presented her current work on homelessness in recent Canadian Young Adult fiction. Contrary to the classic narrative structure that sees a protagonist leave home, have an adventurous journey and then return to a safe environment, the subjects of the recent YA texts that Reimer is analyzing often remain unsettled at the end of the narratives. Identifying certain recurring themes in these texts, Reimer reads these as allegories in the context of the nation state and globalization. Talking about her corpus of award-winning texts provided another link to ideology – as awards recognize texts that present patterns and projects particularly valued by a society – and an inspiring insight into her methodology and material selection.

Lionel Wee's linguistics keynote was to close the official part of the second conference day. Wee talked about insecurities surrounding Singlish (Singaporean English) and Singaporeans' desire for standard British (or sometimes American) English pronunciation – something he referred to as a "postcolonial hangover." Especially in situations involving public language performance a deep concern for correctness as well as worries about perceptions of Singlish as incorrect remain a widespread issue in Singapore. In order to overcome an evaluative discourse in which Singlish will always be juxtaposed with a standard variety regarded as being of higher prestige, Wee explained that it is important to generate self-confidence in an accent like Singlish. The high amount of discussion questions from the audience following Wee's talk is enough to "double confirm" the inspiring effect of his keynote.

Laura Chrisman from the University of Washington at Seattle took a reflection on co-editing the reader *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory* with Patrick Williams as a starting point for her literary and cultural studies keynote. She then went on to consider the opening up of the field and particularly the uses of postcolonial theories within and outside of literary studies with a special focus on the theoretical work of Frantz Fanon. So what lies in store for the future? Chrisman criticized the trend towards transnationalism, especially when it is assumed to be in binary opposition to nationalism. As a term, she argues, it is no more useful

than third space, and scholarship needs to move beyond it. Another challenge facing academics is the complicity in structures of capitalism and commodification within universities and the literary market.

Speaking of the production and creativity side of literature, special guests who were eagerly awaited at the conference were celebrated authors Larissa Lai (University of Calgary, Canada) and Ngūgĩ wa Thiong'o. Showing how creative writing and scholarship can be combined, they both shared their thoughts, ideas and personal experiences in the form of readings, as well as in a lecture or as part of a panel. In her talk, Lai outlined some of the issues that arise by identifying as Asian and indigenous, and the problems of citizenship. Wa Thiong'o's discussion of his texts also dealt with the connection between stories and identity. They thus provided a perspective on the power of literature to challenge ideologies of language, identity and perception, and they raised important questions about the role of writing and literature in changing societies.

Besides the keynotes and readings, conference participants were free to choose from a wide array of talks within five simultaneous panel discussions, grouped under a unifying umbrella topic and dealing with ideology, from narration to politics and even photography and board games. The first day of the conference also showcased two panels in which PhD projects were presented to give young scholars a chance to get feedback from their peers and more established scholars. Overall, the discussions in all of the panels were as fruitful as the after-speech discussions between the speakers and the audience. While the majority of the questions were aimed at the topic being presented, some questions were more general and dealt with postcolonial studies in a bigger scheme of things and even questioned the relationships between academics in the field, addressing a kind of animosity that would sometimes be expressed towards what the other was doing. All was done in a friendly manner, with lighthearted laughs here and there. The exchange of thoughts and ideas continued outside the lecture hall into the conference's coffee breaks and throughout the social program. Particularly noteworthy was the conference dinner in the castle garden and the ensuing conference party which brought together participants in a more relaxed setting until late into the night. Those new to Münster also had a chance to discover the city and its famous sculpture projects, either on foot or in true Münster style by bike.

One of the highlights of this year's GAPS conference was the Teachers' Workshop. Amos Paran, Senior Lecturer at the University of London, and Thorsten Merse, TEFL research assistant at Münster University, led a successful workshop with a lot of hands-on material and interesting activities for the roughly 20 participants. Paran's and Merse's aim was to open up opportunities and ways of ideology in postcolonial texts and contexts in the classroom. The idea is challenging: How should teachers go about teaching such a complex topic to young students? Paran and Merse focused on Indians in England, which is also part of the *Abitur* curriculum in Germany. The goal was to find new ways of teaching this topic that would lessen the dominance of the expert, the teacher, and not diminish the learner. The participants were asked to take part in a "gallery walk," which entailed walking around the room and looking at the texts that were taped onto the

walls. In the end, everyone should stand next to the text that they related to the most and discuss it with others who made the same choice. Paran and Merse also drew attention to interesting alternative media by introducing graphic novels, web quests and the method of silent viewing. Overall, the methods presented were manifold and enlightening, and both presenters did an excellent job in showcasing them. The success of the workshop can only be emphasized by the fact that all participants were unanimously in favor of skipping the coffee break for the workshop – and we all know how much teachers love coffee!

The roundtable discussion on Saturday afternoon provided a final opportunity for interdisciplinary exchange. Here, Susanne Reichl, Abhijit Gupta, Michael Freedden as well as keynote speakers Chrisman and Wee gave a brief statement on the topic of ideology in their respective discipline before engaging in a highly interesting discussion with the audience. Chrisman elaborated on the idea of literature as bearer and critic of ideology as well as the importance of a discussion about ideology in literature. Then, Wee highlighted ideologies behind language policies, which may even go beyond nation politics. Reichl connected the idea of ideology with teaching practices, emphasizing that there is an ideology behind standardized tests and school curricula, but that often teachers are unaware of it or feel it does not apply to them. Subsequently, Gupta gave an insight into ideology in book studies, which tends to center on the history of the book in the West while neglecting the rest of the world. Finally, Michael Freedden opted to lay out seven popular misconceptions about ideology. For example, he claimed that many think ideology is dispensable while it is, on the contrary, ubiquitous, or that ideology is always a deliberate and conscious manipulation. In the subsequent discussion, many ideas and issues were raised. Notably, one member of the audience drew attention to a critique of the term ‘postcolonial,’ sparking a multitude of responses from the panelists and the audience. This led to probably the most memorable statement by Freedden, criticizing the affix ‘post-’ (especially in context of ‘post-ideology’) as “one of the laziest words,” concluding that “people need to find proper names for the disciplines they are engaging in.”

Overall, the three-day conference provided a great opportunity for scholars, young and more established alike, to come together and exchange their ideas, raise questions for discussions to come, and pay homage to the study field of postcolonialism, whether one was working within the field of literature, linguistics, TEFL or book studies. Interdisciplinarity was certainly the key to unlocking various aspects of postcolonialism at this conference and participants were able to cross boundaries of academic interests and not only peek into current research projects scholars are still working on but also get a glimpse of different approaches applied to similar topics.

Lena Böse, Migle Mockeviciute, Henrike Reintjes, Jacqueline Schnieber (Münster)



Reflections (in lieu of notes) on Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o in Münster

The great Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o came to speak to us in Münster but he didn’t have anything to say. We took no notes from his address. There were no pithy phrases or must-record wisdoms to write down and incorporate into our teaching and research work. To be sure, he told some wonderful stories and read from his memoirs. That was entertaining. In a question-and-answer session after the readings, the moderator, Frank Schulze-Engler, managed to put three questions to Ngũgĩ about African literature and language, and he asked Ngũgĩ to talk about his latest book, *Globalectics: Theory and the Politics of Knowing*. A few questions came from the floor and we heard a few more stories. All of this was enjoyable, overall, but not what we expected. It was not a didactic experience.

This is exaggeration, perhaps. He *did* have some good turns of phrase; he *did* say something worthwhile about colonialism, capitalism, globalisation, I now seem to remember, but I can’t recall what exactly. And as I’d put my notebook back into my bag halfway through his talk, not having written down anything, resigned at that point to disengagement from writing, I now look at a blank page where there should have been notes and I ask myself: “What did I learn from Ngũgĩ?”

If this was a common experience of GAPS’ members who attended the same event – chatting with people afterwards seemed to affirm this assumption – consider this diatribe an attempt to salvage the Ngũgĩ experience from the wreck of failed expectations. The following is corny but appropriate: I think the fault, dear Brutus, was not in our speaker, but in ourselves.

I very nearly learned nothing from Ngũgĩ in Münster because I positioned him as I position all speakers at an academic conference. To be fair to the organisers, the session was advertised as “Reading and Discussion: Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong’o,” but Ngũgĩ was nevertheless framed by me as a writer/scholar/intellectual who would properly stand behind the podium, read from his written text, and demand nothing more of me than that I sit quietly, take notes, and respond at the appropriate time, i.e., at the end of the address, with a learned question or comment. But Ngũgĩ refused to conform to these erstwhile parameters of established behaviour for speakers at a conference. What’s more, he refused to allow me to remain a contentedly passive receiver of his wisdoms. If we reflect on what he did, we will see that he continually sought to disrupt the speaker/listener, active/passive, producer/consumer dichotomies we expect of such fora. His talk took on all of the characteristics of oral storytelling. His text was, at once, performed and a *demonstration of the performative* that we so often read about in written form but rarely experience aurally, visually, ‘live’, in postcolonial studies. I refuse to accept this as essentialising Ngũgĩ as ‘African storyteller’ because I also acknowledge the multiplicity of his textual practice, which encompasses novels, plays, essays and lectures, in various languages and formats. Clearly, this makes Ngũgĩ more than just an oral storyteller. What I am interested in considering here is the nature of oral

storytelling, generally, with specific reference to aspects of Ngũgĩ presentation at the GAPS conference in Münster.

Ngũgĩ's address began even before he arrived at the podium. He held up two packets of throat lozenges (or some such), positioning them on either side of his neck, to indicate he had a sore throat, thus asking us to excuse his weak voice. He did not need to say a word. He was communicating by acting out. At various other moments during his talk he engaged in mime and play acting. Several times, he showed us the open palm of his hand to help us visualise the spatial arrangements of the compound he grew up in, his thumb representing his father's hut and four upright fingers representing the huts of his father's four wives. He explained that stories were told and family communal life occurred in the flat, open space between the huts. It was a beautiful, memorable image. We could say that Ngũgĩ's most treasured childhood memories are contained in the palm of his hand. We saw 77-years-old Ngugi peel off his jacket and jog on the spot to show he was warming up for his task. He re-arranged seating on the stage, at the suggestion of Schulze-Engler, to maintain eye-contact with his audience. He acted out a lesson in naming and perspective, moving between two different locations on stage to demonstrate his refusal to walk in someone else's footsteps, to refuse to maintain the named position ('James Ngugi') the coloniser had designated for him. Ngũgĩ reminded us of the somatic experience of oral storytelling.

What about those curious moments when he diverted from the main storyline to explain the meaning of certain words? He did this with "slate" and "moat". It was curious because he might have guessed we had an advanced enough knowledge of the language to know what a slate and a moat were. (Dammit! He wasted three minutes of my time as a listener, twice, explaining the meaning of a word I understood.) What was going on here? Again, the fault was ours. We forgot that Ngũgĩ was in oral storytelling mode. Ngũgĩ stopped his story first at "slate" and specifically asked us if we knew what it was. Some of us nodded, maybe some of us made guttural sounds in the affirmative, but Ngũgĩ did not hear us say "Yes, we know what a slate is." The same lack of response came with "moat" a little later.

We are reminded of two things about oral storytelling, performed as Ngũgĩ knows it. First, the storyteller *must* have his/her audience follow the story. He/She will not continue if something is not understood or misunderstood. An explanatory digression is required. Ngũgĩ is duty-bound to engage us in his narrative and he strategically tests our engagement ("Are you still with me?") by inserting questions at *unexpected* moments. These are not questions which function as rhetoric. In oral storytelling modus they demand answers, sometimes even discussion and debate. When we did not respond as required to his specific question, what choice did he have other than to divert to explanation? He needed to be certain we were in the loop of his story. Second, oral storytelling performance is not one-way discourse; it demands interaction. The English poet and scholar James Fenton tells of a poetry festival he went to where an 'American' poet accused an 'African' poet (his adjectives are no more specific than that) of stealing the limelight from conventional, read-from-the-page poets by singing and playing

musical instruments (9). As Fenton reports it, the American accused the African of getting the audience into a mood that prejudiced them against the type of poetry that he, the American, had to offer. The African is reported to have responded thus:

You American poets [...], and you European poets, you think you are very important, whereas I am an African, and I don't think I am important at all. When I go into a village and begin to tell a story, the first thing the audience will do is interrupt me. They will ask questions about the story I am telling, and if I do not work hard, they will take over the story and tell it among themselves. I have to work to get the story back from them. (Fenton 9)

Ngũgĩ was working hard, inviting us to participate in the story, not wanting to maintain sole proprietorship of it. As Ngũgĩ himself writes in an essay: "Performance involves performer *and* audience, in orature this often being a *participatory* audience" ("Notes towards" 7, my emphasis). The genre of oral storytelling burdens us as 'listeners' to partake of the story. We make the story, too, in the moment of its telling.

Actually, there were multiple instances of interaction in Münster. Ngũgĩ asked other Gikuyu speakers in the audience to embellish his story about the moat, as he searched for a way to describe the stakes or stocks or sharpened sticks that might be inserted in a trench (instead of water) to prevent escape from a building it surrounds. He sought out a speaker of Gaelic Irish in order for a name to be correctly pronounced. And he continually sought affirmation or clarification from others who'd shown him around Münster during the day as to names, places, histories and spectacles of the locality. The story he had to tell, then, as it looped back in on itself and extended haphazardly forward – like an out-of-shape coil spring viewed from side on – was not one Ngũgĩ could have foretold the destiny of before he started to pull and push and prod it, and it was a story that became embedded in its particular place and time: Münster, Thursday, 14 May 2015. It can never be shaped again.

There is another story Ngũgĩ tells, this one embedded in a preface to the English edition of his novel *Matigari* (1987). Matigari is a revolutionary figure who seeks justice in a land ruled by corruption and misery. Ngũgĩ explains in the preface that just a few months after the novel was first published in Gikuyu in 1986, "intelligence reports had it that peasants in Central Kenya were whispering and talking about a man called Matigari who was roaming the whole country making demands about truth and justice" (viii). Police ordered Matigari's immediate arrest. It took them a while to realise he was a fictional character. They ordered the 'arrest' of the book instead, raiding Kenya's bookshops to seize every copy of the novel (viii).

I approached Ngũgĩ afterwards at the reception downstairs to ask him about this story. I was keen to hear from the horse's mouth, as it were, whether it was apocryphal paratext, meant to be read as embellishment to (and in the same frame of mind as) the fictional story that followed, or whether the events as reported had really occurred. He assured me the police search for Matigari was a "true" story.

But he emphasised twice in a brief conversation that it was the power of the rumours about Matigari – the word-of-mouth stories that people told of his heroic deeds – that most frightened the authorities. Not Matigari himself but the stories of what he might do, the hope he gave people, posed the biggest threat to Kenya’s powerbrokers. In other words, the *orally-performed* stories of Matigari, having been shared among the people, having taken on a life of their own, became the most transformative, the most powerful.

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Geoff Rodoreda (Stuttgart)



12th GAPS Summer School

“Border Stories: Narratives of Peace, Conflict & Communication in the 20th and 21st Centuries”

The 12th GAPS Summer School „Border Stories: Narratives of Peace, Conflict & Communication in the 20th and 21st Centuries“ took place at Augsburg University between 7 and 11 September 2015. The program for these five days was exemplarily well-structured; the time slots were well-managed and created an overall program that was balanced, dialogic across the various points of the program, and well-structured in terms of time management: while maintaining the dense stimulation characteristic for summer schools, there were neither “overkills” nor “lulls” anywhere in the program.

On the first two days, four of the six seminar sessions took place, as well as one keynote lecture (Timo Müller) and two presentations by Henry Beissel (one reading, one keynote lecture). Wednesday was more of a transitional day, featuring another reading by Henry Beissel, as well as an interactive multimedia session on Afrofuturism that was open to everyone; Dorothea Smartt’s reading took place in the evening. The last two days featured the final two seminar sessions as well as the two workshop sessions, as well as three keynote lectures by Mita Banerjee, Katja Sarkowsky, and Hubert Zapf, and the plenary & closing

session. I offered one of the workshops and attended every other program point except the seminar sessions.

Timo Müller's keynote lecture of Monday started us off discussing the road as a border concept, giving a first tangible example of "border stories" that also introduced various theoretical concepts that would be referenced by participants throughout the summer school.

The reading of the first day consisted of the performance of an epic poem, performed by the author Henry Beissel assisted by Sarah Nowotny and Alanna Ebigbo. There was time to discuss the poem at length on Tuesday after the keynote lecture held by Beissel, which added some useful insight to contextualize the poem. On Wednesday, Beissel held another reading with a vastly different poem about his youth during and after the Second World War in Germany, which was particularly personal and thought-inspiring, and is now difficult to respond to in evaluative terms.

This part of the program was followed by an interactive multimedia session held by Annika McPherson and Johann Pundt, which gave an imaginative overview of the history of Afrofuturism, and main critiques thereof. This session experimented with various interactive and intermedia formats and was characterized by lively discussion.

This evening held what was for me one of the absolute highlights of the summer school, the reading by Dorothea Smartt. Preceded by one of the richest and most knowledgeable introductions that I have ever heard (McPherson), the reading spanned across three volumes of poetry and also included unpublished material; to summarize, it was brilliant, and I feel privileged to have been introduced to this author.

The last two days held three notable academic keynotes by Mita Banerjee, Hubert Zapf and Katja Sarkowsky. Banerjee gave a fascinating talk about under-researched atomic tests in the Philippines and showed how these tests were legitimated by a creation of racialized borders in scientific reasoning; Zapf discussed how the emerging field of ecocriticism allowed a discussion of discursive borders as a potentially productive (rather than oppressive) notion; Sarkowsky discussed how the "Native American" meta-autobiography skillfully used the boundaries of genre to create new forms of thinkable memory. All of these talks were highly stimulating, and it was also rewarding to see how the preceding seminars, workshop sessions (including the Afrofuturism session) and discussions outside of these formats had helped shape the questions and reactions of the Q & A.

Each day of the summer school culminated in informal meetings of participants and (on the last two days) organized dinners that were part of the program. On these occasions, but also during the breaks etc, the good and friendly spirit of the summer school became particularly obvious. People mixed and had discussions, some discussions even spanned several days. The organizing team, especially Senta Sanders, Heike Schwarz and Beate Greisel, were present at all points, helped with all problems over and beyond normal academic hospitality, and generally created an atmosphere that was friendly, inspiring, open-minded, and rewarding.

I have already noticed during some academic chores that I needed to do right after the summer school that the perspectives encountered there were immensely helpful to me (especially the keynotes by Banerjee and Sarkowsky), and I have also met quite a number of people during the summer school that I'd love to stay in touch with. From my perspective, the summer school was a great success, I am glad I could be part of it, and I tip my hat to the organizers who have made it all happen.

Sonja Schillings (Gießen)



AfroEuropeans: Black Cultures and Identities in Europe

*Culturas e Identidades Negras en Europa / Cultures et Identités
Noires en Europe*

AfroEuropeans investigated the curious and varied cultural, vernacular and linguistic subtleties that propel geographic and regional belonging across modern European nation states, yet took the time to equally and powerfully unfold them. The fifth biennial conference – AfroEuropeans: Black Cultures and Identities in Europe / *Culturas e Identidades Negras en Europa / Cultures et Identités Noires en Europe* – took place on September 16-19, 2015 at the WWU Münster. This year's conference sought to reflect on the social spaces and cultural practices pertinent to people of color within Europe and to offer new perspectives on the emerging field of AfroEuropean Studies. Vice Rector Stephan Ludwig welcomed conference participants by acknowledging the importance of working across disciplines. Seasoned members of the conference such as Marta Sofía López Rodríguez, (one of the original founding members), and Sharmilla Beezmohun, convener of the 2013 London conference, offered a sense of ease and familiarity to the conference atmosphere; while the voices of rising young scholars such as Matti Traußneck (U Marburg), Vanessa Thompson (U Frankfurt) and Emily Ngubia Kessé (HU Berlin) shone through with an assertive elegance. Dedicated to exploring the “contemporary and historical overlaps between Africa and Europe,” the conference combined unique formats, such as the fishbowl discussion (which followed the traditional dynamics of a roundtable discussion but provided two empty seats that any audience member could fill, at any given time) that, as conference host Mark Stein stated in his opening remarks – “encourage[d] dialogue, exchange and growth.”

In what can only be described as necessary literary interventions in the way modern European nation-states are conceptualized, the conference fostered a space in which black voices were newly inscribed and centered. Conference panels such as “AfroEuropean Cities and Space” and “A Question of Genre? Afroeuro-

pean Encounters in Contemporary Black British Fiction,” positioned black literature as an important segue into discussions of issues on race, *placement*, and space. Between noteworthy presentations such as Elisabeth Bekers’ (U Brussels) paper “Addressing Britain’s Historical Amnesia in British Neo-Slave narratives” and Eva Rask Knudsen’s (U Copenhagen) take on Afropolitanism in her “Between Coming and Going: On Home and Belonging in Sefi Atta’s *A Bit of Difference*,” the conference offered bold and innovative contributions to discussions on diaspora and demographic/cultural mobility.

FRSL British novelist Diran Adebayo, author of *Some Kind of Black* (1996), contributed a heart-rendering reading from his newest memoir. He also problematized the current state of British print culture for authors of color, writing within and between the political hope for a post-racial future and the rampant but short-lived diversity initiatives demonstrative of a post-“multiculturalism critique” age. While this illuminated the hope and failures of British print culture, German historian and author of *Kinder der Befreiung. Transatlantische Erfahrungen und Perspektiven Schwarzer Deutscher der Nachkriegsgeneration* (Unrast 2015), Marion Kraft, noted the absence of Afro-German fiction; an observation which speaks profoundly to the current state of German print literature. Therefore, in what joined theory with practice, these candid and poignant discussions between academics, political activists, students and artists contributed to a space wherein #BlackLivesMatter[ed]. As artist and spoken word artist Philipp Khabo Koepsell boldly stated, the dialogue is necessary because “we keep you [academics] relevant.”

Presenter Emily Ngubia Kuria and author of the recent publication *ingeschrieben: Zeichen setzen gegen Rassismus an deutschen Hochschulen* (Worten & Meer; 2015) promoted the development and practice of counter narratives for people who do not see themselves represented in the curricula, academic disciplines or in department faculty. The Mainz student group People of Color (POC) Hochschule utilized the “safer space” of the roundtable discussion “Why Isn’t My Professor Black?” to voice their concern about the unwillingness of their university to offer them university space for their student group. The importance of creating “safer spaces” was mentioned in her opening keynote address by the political activist Jamie Schearer, from the Initiative of Black People in Germany (ISD, Berlin), where she noted that no space is neutral of hierarchal power, so negotiating safer spaces within and across the political realms of European nation-states is a necessary political act. The conference also provided exhibition space for Robbie Aitken’s *Black History* installation (2014) and set the stage for acclaimed British writer Bernardine Evaristo to launch the creation of the first-ever British Centre for Black and Asian Writing – strategic moves that create spaces for the often unrecognized histories of black Germans and contributed to the pre-fabrics of what will be Afro-European Studies.

Over the four-day conference, an array of essays, readings, performances, including the screening of Nancy Mac Granaky-Quaye’s 2009 film *REAL LIFE: Deutschland*, were shared. The conference concluded with a reading by Dutch poet Mustafa Stitou, and proposed yet another unique discussion format: the fishbowl. This spontaneous exchange between panelists and audience indeed challenged the

hierarchical design that is common in most conference settings. However, it was the conference's positionality of motherhood – as both political act (in the form of mothering) and as an active approach to literature and society, that added yet another defining point to the conference. In her presentation “Race and Adoption: Parenting as Micro-Activism (or, the White Parent’s Responsibility),” Sabrina Brancato (U Bayreuth) admitted to crossing out words, gluing whole pages together, and even rewriting paragraphs in her children’s books to guarantee the empowerment of her children. Authors and mothers including Eleonore Wiedenroth-Coulibaly, Cassandra Ellerbe-Dueck, Modupe Laja also stressed the importance of teaching empowerment while raising children of color. Their initiative to view motherhood as a political space determined by political action – a tradition which goes back to the early feminist mothers such as Alice Walker and Audre Lorde (who famously referred to herself as a black feminist, lesbian, poet, *mother*, warrior), re-positioned womanism as an effective strategy to combat racism. With over 170 registered participants, the conference welcomed presentations from a wealth of different disciplines, which will deserve the closer attention of Postcolonial Studies in Germany; yet its prowess lay in its deliberate fusion of political activism, oral and performative art forms with and within European academia.

Courtney Moffett-Bateau (Duisburg Essen)



**“Empires and Revolutions: R. B. Cunninghame Graham
and Other Scottish Writers on Globalisation and
Democracy (c. 1850–1950)”,
Annual Conference of the Association for Scottish Literary
Studies (ASLS), Stirling, 3–5 July 2015**

The close ‘No’ vote at the Scottish Independence Referendum in 2014, and the almost clean sweep by the Scottish National Party at the recent British General Election, are symptoms of a tectonic shift in the Scottish political scene, but it was a shift that was a long time in the making. The recent annual conference of The Association of Scottish Literary Studies held in Stirling, Scotland, between the 3rd and 5th of July 2015, entitled: ‘Empires and Revolutions: R. B. Cunninghame Graham and Other Scottish Writers on Globalisation and Democracy (c. 1850–1950)’ was thus a very timely focus around a much neglected, but key figure – a pioneer of the early socialist and nationalist movements in Britain and Scotland in

the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Robert Bontine Cunninghame Graham (1852-1936) was a Scottish aristocrat and Argentinian gaucho, the first socialist member of the British Parliament, and founder of the first Labour Party (The Scottish Parliamentary Labour Party) with Keir Hardie in 1888, and later he was the first President of the Scottish National Party. In a paper given at the conference, Professor Cedric Watts described him thus: "a plethora of paradoxes. A romantic and a cynic; an idealist and a sceptic; a Don Quixote and a Hamlet; a nationalist and an internationalist; a socialist and a conservative; a revolutionary and a gradualist; a nobleman and a cowboy; a South American cattle-rancher and horse-trader who was also 'the uncrowned King of Scotland'; a dandy and a convict; a Justice of the Peace who headed a riot; an anti-racist and an anti-Semite; an atheist and a defender of Jesuits."

It was against the background of this extraordinarily prolific, diverse, and courageous life that the ASLS conference was set, eliciting an equally diverse response from the international contributors from Germany, the United States, Italy, and Spain, as well as from England and Scotland.

The keynote speech entitled "The Local and the Global: Understanding the Multiple Contexts of Cunninghame Graham" was delivered by Professor John M. MacKenzie who latterly occupied the chair of Imperial History at Lancaster University, a sometime controversial writer on British imperialism who has edited the series 'Studies in Imperialism' since 1984. Professor MacKenzie's multiple contexts covered geographical and environmental, historical and cultural, social and financial, political and literary aspects, and he considered the British Empire as the vital context through which Cunninghame Graham could best be understood. The historian Lachlan Munro, and John C. McIntyre, a lecturer in Latin American and Scottish Literature, both complemented Professor MacKenzie's presentation with papers on Cunninghame Graham's attacks on imperialism and racist attitudes, particularly his egregious and sardonic "The Imperial Kailyard: Being a Bitter Satire on English Colonisation", and "Bloody Niggers," and, his sketch-tales of the abuses and the baleful effects of 'White-skinned barbarians.'

The Saturday session began with presentations by Cedric Watts, and Laurence Davies, the co-authors of the excellent *Cunninghame Graham: A Critical Biography* (1979). Laurence Davies selected the theme of millenarianism as a recurring theme in Cunninghame Graham's South American works, while Professor Watts chose his undaunted defence of the underdog, in the shape of the social underdog, underdog nations such as Poland, Scotland and Ireland, ethnic peoples, the underrated artist, such as Joseph Conrad, whose writings he championed, misunderstood individuals, the heroic failure, and subjects particularly close to Cunninghame Graham's heart – the position of women in Victorian society, and the plight of suffering animals.

The next session dwelt specifically with Cunninghame Graham's Argentinian experiences, with a very poignant presentation by Professor Jennifer Hayward from Ohio on native mourning rituals and the display of dead children, entitled: "'Looking at Nothing With Her Eyes Wide Open': Robert Cunninghame Graham and the Argentinian *Angelito*", while Dr. Richard Niland, author of *Conrad and*

History (2010), analysed 19th-century Argentinian literature in Cunninghame Graham's writings.

Other Scottish writers and their imperial experiences occupied the next session with Professor Joseph Farrell's look at the parallel lives of Cunninghame Graham and Robert Louis Stevenson, close contemporaries and world-travellers, although they never met. Jessica Homberg-Schramm from the Philosophy Faculty of the University of Cologne presented a paper on the 19th-century Scottish world-traveller John Francis Campbell and his studies on the impact of European emigration on native populations, and this was followed by Professor Pilar Somacarrera of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid's analysis of the writer John Buchan's contribution to Canadian multiculturalism.

Professor Jochen Petzold of the University of Regensburg presented a paper on the anti-slavery discourse in the stories of R. M. Ballantyne, followed by the gender historian Lindy Moore's paper entitled "A Scottish writer's search for space to expose and oppose racism, imperialism, and religious intolerance 1880-1914".

The second day was concluded by a paper from the Berlin-based writer Nadja Ben Khelifa who returned to Cunninghame Graham and Scotland as sources for a global social movement, while the Dundee poet Dorothy Lawrenson proposed that the war ballads of the poet, songwriter, and academic Hamish Henderson were models for Scottish internationalism.

The third and final day commenced with Arianna Introna's paper on the novelist and poetess Violet Jacobs, while Dr. Michael Morris discussed Scotland's collective amnesia over its role in the Caribbean slave trade.

The conference concluded with a round-table discussion featuring the writer Jenni Calder, the writer and broadcaster Billy Kay, and the documentary filmmaker Les Wilson, all agreeing on the difficulty of bringing Cunninghame Graham and many of the issues discussed to public attention through the indifference, and sometimes opposition of the British mainstream media.

Lachlan Munro (London)

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