



Conference Report 20th Annual GNEL/ASNEL Conference, Postcolonial Translocations

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Newsletter Summer 2009

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EDITORIAL

Greetings to all EACLALS members, a warm welcome to new members and especially to new committee members who have arrived in the last few months: your enthusiasm and interest in expanding the constituency and activities of EACLALS are greatly appreciated.

This is the first newsletter since the current executive committee was elected at the EACLALS Triennial Conference 'Try Freedom' held in Venice in Easter, 2008. There has been a long delay in making contact with members since the last newsletter was sent by the outgoing committee, but this has been a time of change and readjustment for all of us: myself (Chair), Elleke Boehmer (Secretary), Daria Tunca (Treasurer) and Annalisa Oboe (advisor and Conference Committee). This newsletter provides an update of the changes and plans for EACLALS decided upon

by the executive committee at meetings held in different locations over this time. This is, most notably, the expansion of the organisation's structure with new committees and posts: a Postgraduate Committee; two European Relations Officers; a Constitution Committee; an expanded Conference Committee (consisting of an organizing group based in Turkey along with the EACLALS conference group); a Publications Committee; and a Communications Committee (consisting of the editors of this newsletter and an email bulletin provider). It is especially pleasing that long-term members of EACLALS (such as Gerhard Stilz and Dieter Riemenschneider) have been willing to join these committees along with younger members who bring with them new energies and expertise. Although the new structure has taken some time to become embedded, we anticipate that it will increase membership, provide a communication flow to members, and expand affiliations with other organisations and societies. This special issue of the newsletter contains biographical statements and photos of all the new committee members, including the recently elected executive committee.

Other news items and recent developments include:

- ACLALS Triennial Conference being held in Cyprus in 2010;
- EACLALS Triennial Conference being held in Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey in 2011. (Further details will be available shortly);
- Explorations for affiliations with other organisations and societies like ESSE and PSA;
- New subscription and fee structure which is available on the EACLALS website; we are seeking ways of streamlining subscriptions from 2010;
- Plans to redesign the EACLALS logo.

As is clear from the new postgraduate committee, the European Relations posts (aiming to develop affiliations with other associations and organisations and attract new individual members) and the revised subscription structure, we are launching a recruitment drive in order to build up the

membership of EACLALS. Below are listed some of the new benefits for members. We hope that these will enable you to encourage your friends and colleagues to join EACLALS:

- Opportunity to attend and participate in the EACLALS Triennial Conference;
- Reduced rates on subscriptions to affiliated organisations such as the Postcolonial Studies Association;
- Specially reduced membership rate for Eastern European and Turkish members;
- Reduced membership if in combination with subscription to *Kunapipi*;
- Optional journal subscriptions at reduced rates of up to five postcolonial journals;
- Regular email bulletins with information on conferences, colloquia, recent publications, calls for papers (conferences and special issues of journals), and relevant news items;
- Two issues of the EACLALS newsletter per annum.

I have enjoyed meeting many of you at various conferences in the last year: at Chotro II in Teigadh, Gujarat, India, at the PSA conference at Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland and the ASNEL/GNEL conference in Münster, Germany, and I look forward to further such gatherings and especially to working with you all over the next two years.

On behalf of the executive committee, I would like to thank the outgoing committee of EACLALS (Geoff Davis, Benedicte Ledent and Marc Delrez) for their continued support over this transitional period, all those who made contributions such as conference reports, and the editors of this newsletter for agreeing to take on this role. For all news items for the EACLALS newsletter, please write to our new news editors, Dobrota Pucherova and Vincent van Bever Donker, on eaclalsnews@gmail.com. For notices for email bulletins to members, please write to eaclalsbulletin@gmail.com.

Happy summer days to one and all
Janet Wilson (Chair)

BIOGRAPHIES OF EACLALS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Janet Wilson (Chair EACLALS; Conference and Constitution committees) is Professor of English and Postcolonial Studies at the University of Northampton, UK. Her research interests are in the white settler society, diasporic writing, Maori and Pakeha writing of New Zealand/Aotearoa and contemporary New Zealand and Australian cinema. She has published *Fleur Adcock* (2007) and edited *Global Fissures; Postcolonial Fusions* (2006), *The Gorse Blooms Pale; The Southland Stories of Dan Davin* (2007). A co-edited volume, *Rerouting the Postcolonial: New Essays for the New Millennium*, is currently in press. She is editor of the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*.

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Elleke Boehmer (Secretary EACLALS) has published four widely praised novels, *Screens again the Sky* (short-listed David Higham Prize, 1990), *An Immaculate Figure* (1993), *Bloodlines* (short-listed Sanlam Prize, 2000), and *Nile Baby* (2008), as well as short stories and memoir sketches. Internationally known for her research in international writing and postcolonial theory, she is the author of the world best-seller *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature: Migrant Metaphors* (1995, 2005), the monographs *Empire, the National and the Postcolonial, 1890-1920* (2002) and *Stories of Women* (2005), and of *Nelson Mandela* (2008). She has also produced the acclaimed edition of Robert Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys* (2004). Elleke Boehmer is the Professor of World Literature in English at the University of Oxford.

Email: elleke.boehmer@ell.ox.ac.uk



Daria Tunca (Treasurer, EACLALS) works in the English Department of the University of Liège (Belgium). Her main areas of research are African literature and stylistics. In 2008, she completed a doctoral dissertation entitled "Style beyond Borders: Language in Recent Nigerian Fiction", focusing on the works of three Nigerian writers of the diaspora – Gbenga Agbenugba, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Ben Okri – from a perspective including elements of stylistics, sociolinguistics and literary criticism. She has published articles in international journals, including one on New Zealand author Janet Frame. She edits an online bibliography of works by and about Ben Okri (<http://www.L3.ulg.ac.be/okri>), maintains a website on Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (<http://www.L3.ulg.ac.be/adichie>), and is currently editing an essay collection on British-Caribbean writer Caryl Phillips with Bénédicte Ledent.

Email: dtunca@ulg.ac.be



Annalisa Oboe (Advisor; Conference Committee) is Professor of English and Postcolonial Literature at the University of Padua, Italy. She works on British colonial and twentieth-century literature, postcolonial cultures, South African and Black Atlantic literatures, and Australian Indigenous writing. Her publications include *Recharting the Black Atlantic: Modern Cultures, Local Communities, Global Connections* (Routledge, 2008); *Approaching Sea Changes: Metamorphoses and Migrations across the Atlantic* (Unipress, 2005); *Mongrel Signatures. Reflections on the Work of Mudrooroo* (Rodopi, 2003); and *Fiction, History and Nation in South Africa* (Supernova, 1994). She has edited the Italian edition of Olive Schreiner's short stories, *1899* (Feltrinelli, 1991) and Athol Fugard's Port Elizabeth plays as *Trilogia della famiglia* (Supernova,



1999).

Email: A.oboe@fastwebnet.it

Stella Borg Barthet (Public Relations Officer for Southern Europe) is Senior Lecturer in the Department of English at the University of Malta, where she teaches courses in postcolonial literature and theory, and in 18th and 19th century English and American fiction. She has published a number of papers and book chapters, mostly on Australian and African writing. She was the convenor of the EACLALS conference in March 2005 and is currently editing the selected proceedings, to be published shortly by Rodopi as two volumes, *Shared Waters: Soundings in Postcolonial Literatures* and *A Sea For Encounters: Essays Towards a Postcolonial Commonwealth*. In 2005, she served as adjudicator for the Commonwealth Writers' Prize. Her current research interests include Anglo-Arabic and Afro-American writing.

Email: Stella.borg-barthet@um.edu.mt



Vera Alexander (Public Relations Officer for Northern Europe) is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Aarhus (Denmark), having previously taught at the universities of Freiburg i. Br. and Saarbrücken (Germany). After reading English, German and Italian at the universities of Cologne, Freiburg, and Norwich, she obtained an MA in Postcolonial Studies from the University of Kent at Canterbury and completed a PhD in English at Saarland University. She is the author of *Transcultural Representations of Migration and Education in South Asian Anglophone Novels*, has coedited a book on Romanticism, and has published a number of articles on Indian, Australian, African and Canadian authors. Her research and teaching interests include postcolonial South Asian writing, Canadian literature, life writing, children's writing, diasporic literatures, European and



Transatlantic modernisms, intertextuality and intermedial representations of music. Currently she is working on a project titled 'Gardens in Anglophone Imperial Literature' financed by the Carlsberg Foundation. Other ongoing research projects deal with border negotiations between postcolonial and indigenous studies and the aesthetics of terrorism and fundamentalism. As this newsletter goes to press, she will be taking up a position as postdoctoral fellow at the University of Copenhagen as of August 2009.

Email: engval@hum.au.dk

Isil Bas (Chair, Conference Organising Committee)

is Associate Professor of English Language and Literature in the Department of Western Languages and Literatures, Bogaziçi University, Istanbul, where she is co-founder and coordinator of the Critical and Cultural Studies Graduate Program. Her research interests include critical and cultural theory, drama, gender studies, and narratology. As a member of the executive committee of the Women's Library and Information Center in Turkey, she has promoted the voices of unheard women writers. She has published widely on postmodernism and contemporary writers, and on the politics of identity and its relation to history and narration. She co-edited *Challenging the Boundaries* with Donald Freeman (Amsterdam/New York, NY: Rodopi, 2007) and is writing a book titled *Post-Porn Modernism: Desire, Death and Violence in Contemporary Culture*. She has served on the executive boards of several NGO's, including the Turkish Crescent, appointed by the President of the Turkish Republic.

Email: Isil@boun.edu.tr



Atilla Silkü (Conference Committee)

is a professor of American Literature at Ege University, İzmir, Turkey, where he received his doctorate in 1991 for his dissertation on a comparative study of Edgar Allen Poe and Ralph



Waldo Emerson. His research areas are the 19th Century Studies, Anglo-American Poetry, Postcolonial Studies, Multiculturalism, Women's Writing and Slave Narratives. Dr. Silkü has taught American Poetry, American Drama, Modern English Poetry, US Government and Politics. He has published articles on Emerson, Poe, Louise Erdrich, Robert Lowell, Gertrude Bonnin, Mari Sandoz, and two books on William Carlos Williams and contemporary Asian-American poetry. He is also a member of ASAT (The American Studies Association of Turkey), EAAS (The European Association for American Studies), PALA (The Poetics and Linguistics Association), IDEA (The English Language and Literature Research Association of Turkey), ESSE (The European Society for the Study of English), PSA (The Postcolonial Studies Association), and EACLALS (The European Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies).

Email: Atilla.silkku@ege.edu.tr

Rezzan Kocaöner Silkü (Conference Committee)

is an associate professor of English Literature at Ege University, İzmir, Turkey, where she received her PhD in 1996 for her dissertation on Doris Lessing's novels. Her teaching and research areas range from Victorian Fiction to Postcolonial Studies. She has published on George Eliot, Doris Lessing, Virginia Woolf, Joseph Conrad, Chinua Achebe, Arundhati Roy, Flora Nwapa, Caryl Phillips and she is the author of *Industrialization, Modernity and the Woman Question* (Ege University Press, 2004). She is also a member of PSA (The Postcolonial Studies Association), EACLALS, PALA (The Poetics and Linguistics Association), The Kipling Society, ASAT (The American Studies Association of Turkey), EAAS (The European Association for American Studies), The Gaskell Society, IDEA (The English Language and Literature Research Association of Turkey), and ESSE (The European Society for the Study of English).

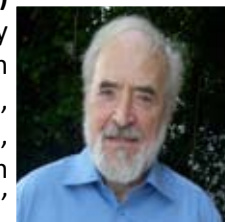
Email: Rezzan.silkku@ege.edu.tr



Gerhard Stilz (Conference Committee)

is Professor of English, University of Tübingen, Germany. His research interests include English, Irish, Indian, Australian, New Zealand, Canadian, and comparative topics. A pioneer in promoting 'Commonwealth Literature' in Germany (and a co-founder of ASNEL), he helped to establish the recognition of 'New English Literatures' in German universities and schools. Since 1991, he has served on the editorial board of the (previously East German) ZAA quarterly journal and the 'ZAA Monograph Series'. Between 1993-1996, Gerhard Stilz was Chair of 'Gesellschaft für Australienstudien'. He convened the 1999 EACLALS/ASNEL conference at Tübingen and has served as EACLALS President (1999-2002). His recently edited books are: *Colonies, Missions, Cultures* (2001); *Missions of Interdependence* (2002); *Territorial Terrors* (2007). At present he is working on a new introduction to South Asian literatures in English.

Email: Gerhard.stilz@uni-tuebingen.de



Dieter Riemenschneider (Constitution Committee)

taught Commonwealth literature at Frankfurt University (1971-99) where in 1993 he set up the research/teaching centre "New Literatures and Cultures in English". His main research areas are Indian, African, Australian Aboriginal and New Zealand / Aotearoan Māori literature and culture. Among his recent publications are a survey of Indian English literature in Germany (2006), the monograph *The Reception of the Indian Novel in English* (2005), essays on Māori Biculturalism / Glocality (2002), Māori Poetry (2004), Theatre (2004) and Film (2007). He edited *Postcolonial Theory: The Emergence of a Critical Discourse: A Selected and Annotated Bibliography* (2006) and *Reise nach Indien: Kulturkompass fürs Handgepäck [Journey to India: A Culture Compass for Your Hand]*



Luggage] (2008). His bilingual (English/German) Aotearoa/New Zealand poetry anthology *Wildes Licht (Wild Light)* will be released in New Zealand and Germany in March 2010. Email: riemenkemp@internet.co.nz

Ole Birk Laursen (Postgraduate Committee) is a PhD student in the English Department at The Open University, Milton Keynes, UK. His doctoral research focuses on contemporary black and Asian British women's life writing. He is also the database assistant on the AHRC-funded project 'Making Britain: South Asian Visions of Home and Abroad, 1870-1950'. Email: O.b.laursen@open.ac.uk



Birte Heidemann (Postgraduate Committee) currently works on her dissertation on literary and visual representations of Northern Ireland by using a postcolonial approach. Her research interests are in postcolonial literatures and theories, Northern Irish literature, and film studies. As a research assistant in the Department of English at Chemnitz Technical University, Germany, she teaches English literatures with a special focus on New English Literatures as well as on Northern Irish literature and film. Email: Birte.heidemann@phil.tu-chemnitz.de



Vincent van Bever Donker (Communications Committee), a recent Mandela Rhodes scholar, currently holds a Commonwealth scholarship to read for a D.Phil. in the English faculty at Oxford University. His thesis concerns ethics in postcolonial literature and theory, focusing on the work of Amitav Ghosh,



Chimamanda Adichie and Caryl Phillips. His research interests are in postcolonial literatures, critical theory, and the interactions between literature and philosophy. Email: eaclalsnews@gmail.com, vincent.van-bever-donker@wadh.ox.ac.uk

Dobrota Pucherova (Communications Committee) recently defended her D.Phil thesis on dissident desire, hospitality and friendship in Southern African writing between 1960-2005 in the English Faculty at Oxford University. Her articles on gendered imagination in Black Consciousness poetry and on friendship in recent South African fiction are forthcoming in *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* and *Journal of Southern African Studies* this year. In May this year, she organized the international symposium "Dambudzo Marechera: A Celebration" in Oxford. Her research interests are in African literature and audio-visual media. She has also written radio programmes on African literature in her home country, Slovakia. Email: eaclalsnews@gmail.com, dobrotapucherova@hotmail.com



THE 15TH TRIENNIAL ACLALS CONFERENCE JUNE 6 – 11, 2010 NICOSIA, CYPRUS "STROKES ACROSS CULTURES"

The thematic title "Strokes Across Cultures" invites differing interpretations and contains multiple possibilities for examining the languages, literatures and other cultural texts through which the legacy of the Commonwealth might be viewed and critically interrogated through disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary dialogues. The questions raised may include the following: What is the contribution of the Commonwealth to the World or the World to the Commonwealth and how has it changed over

time and under the impact of globalization? What sorts of ethics and politics or 'wealth' can we imagine for the (Un) common? How have circumstances of coercion, violence, imposition, or of affective intensity shaped our cultures in moments of encounter and reciprocal exchange? What kinds of disruption have these exchanges achieved upon conventional and assumed norms, expectations, patterns, topographies, and divisions into separate cultural units and nations? Is there a community in our (un)commonality or has the term Commonwealth outlived its usefulness? Can we envisage a stroke as a blow or caress, as the force of a fortuitous encounter, as a performative moment in a contact zone, as a site of exchange between cultures, or as a threshold which both engenders opposites and mediates between them?

Applicants are invited to engage with the above questions within the framework of Commonwealth languages, literary, critical and other cultural texts. The following subheadings indicate trajectories of exploration:

- The commonwealth as figure of discourse; cultural articulations of the common/uncommon; ethics and politics of (un)commonwealth thought.
- Conflict, counterpoint, coexistence and collusion in commonwealth literatures and languages (englishes and vernacular languages).
- (Un)translatability of languages and cultures in geopolitics and geopoetics
- Cross-cultural depictions of specific political, regional, cultural, linguistic conflicts.
- Chance encounters across cultures, Cross-cultural circulation of affect and affective disposition; friendship.
- Formation of new communities across cultures, circulation and counter-circulation of capital, investments, media, cultures of resistance.
- Re-imagined communities through the twin lenses of oppression and desire.
- Transgressive sexualities / shifting sexual borders.

- Motherlands, Stepmotherlands, Otherlands and Oedipal desire as passage.
- The colonial moment as trauma and the post-colonial as both perpetuation and attempted recovery.
- The 'shock of the new', aesthetics and violence, formal experimentation and its political implications.

Abstracts of maximum 300 words for papers of 20 minutes duration, and maximum 400 words for three-paper panels (with the names of the panelists) which engage with these and other relevant questions along with a short bio not exceeding 100 words should be submitted to info@cyprusconferences.org by **31 August 2009**.

See also conference website <http://www.cyprusconferences.org/aclals2010/>

**EACLALS TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE
26 - 30 APRIL 2011
BOGAZICI (BOSPHORUS) UNIVERSITY,
ISTANBUL, TURKEY
"UNDER CONSTRUCTION: GATEWAYS AND
WALLS"**

This conference will examine the state of postcolonial studies using the metaphors of (re)building, of transition and change, of process and construction, to reflect the social, and political crises and dilemmas of the contemporary moment which urgently need addressing.

The theme 'Under Construction' also reflects the conference location in Istanbul, a city that straddles East and West, Europe and Asia; but which historically has also been a gateway between north and south, between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, between 'wild Scythia' and the 'civilised' Roman Empire, between orthodox Russia and the Byzantine metropolis of Constantinople.

Possible sub-themes include:

Interactions between the Orient and the 'Other'

- revisiting Edward Said's Orientalism

Interdisciplinarity and Postcolonial Studies

- the post-postcolonial?
- disciplines as gateways and walls

Nation-states and Nationalisms

- national gateways and walls

Geopolitics of East and West

- revisiting empires and colonies

History and Memory

- after Gallipoli

Bosphorus Interfaces under four winds

- North-South/East-West ambiguities and interferences
- myths of 'wilderness' and 'civilisation'

Minority Subjects and Communities

- debating the 'Other' inside

Transnational Travelling and Travellers

- diasporas, exile and migration as crossings

Postcolonial Cosmopolitanism

- the neo-liberal subject and globalisation:
- constructing utopias, newness

Morality as boundary and marker

- ethics under reconstruction

Reconstructing the Sacred

- religions as gateways and barriers

Gender as threshold and border

- geographies of gender ; trans/gendering the subject

Decolonising Nature

- ecocriticism and environmental change

A full CFP will be available by September 2009.

**CALLS FOR PAPERS / CONFERENCE
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

"Multimedia Research and Documentation of Oral Genres
in Africa: The Step Forward"

December 17-19, 2009, Leiden University, The
Netherlands.

Contact: Jan Jansen at jansenj@fsw.leidenuniv.nl
<http://www.hum.leiden.edu/research/africanliteratures/africaloralliteratures.jsp>

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ICLA/AILC CONGRESS, SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA, 15-21
August 2010

"Insular Literatures: Postcolonial Perspectives"

University of French Polynesia, Tahiti

Convenors: Sylvie Andre and Marc Maufort

Contact: sh.andre@mail.pf

More information: <http://www.icla2010.org>

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"After Writing Back: Present and future perspectives in
Postcolonial Studies"

University of Bergamo, Italy, 13-15 October 2009

Contact: flaminia.nicora@unibg.it

www.unibg.it/AWBconference09

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"The Postcolonial Human"

A Conference at the Institute for Colonial and Postcolonial
Studies, University of Leeds, Thursday 24 – Friday 25
September, 2009

Leeds Humanities Research Institute

Contact: alan.ramon.ward@gmail.com

www.leeds.ac.uk/icps/

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"What Postcolonial Theory Doesn't Say"

A conference at the University of York, UK, 3-5 July 2010,
in partnership
with the University of Leeds and Manchester Metropolitan
University

Postcolonial Studies is firmly ensconced in the Anglophone metropolitan academy: the field has its own specialised journals, academic posts, postgraduate courses, and dedicated divisions within learned bodies. But how well have these configurations travelled to other locations, institutions and disciplines? What topics, questions and approaches remain unexplored? And what's 'theoretical'?

about postcolonial theory anyway?

Deadline: 20-minute paper proposals or panel proposals consisting of three papers, together with a brief bio, to be sent to yorkpoco@gmail.com by October 1, 2009.

For more information, contact: Ziad Elmarsafy at ze500@york.ac.uk

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“Trauma, Memory, and Narrative in the Contemporary South African Novel”

University of Vienna, Austria, 8-11 April 2010

This conference is part of a three-year project entitled “Trauma, Memory, and Narrative in the Contemporary South Africa Novel” started on 1 July 2008 at University of Vienna. Bringing together novelists from South Africa, specialists of trauma theory and literary studies, narratologists, and postcolonial and post-structuralist theorists, the conference will analyze the contemporary South African novel with emphasis on modern trauma theory, narratology, and postcolonial studies. Its aim is to elucidate the relationship between traumatic and narrative memory, the aesthetics of trauma in fiction, questions of language and representation and the relationship between narratology and trauma theory in a postcolonial/post-structuralist context.

Confirmed Speakers include Derek Attridge (University of York), David Attwell (University of York), Elleke Boehmer (University of Oxford), Geoffrey Davis (RWTH Aachen University), Don Foster (University of Cape Town), Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (University of Cape Town), Yazir Henry (University of Michigan), Mandla Langa (Johannesburg), Ruth Leys (Johns Hopkins University), Sindiwe Magona (Cape Town), Susan Mann (Cape Town), Achille Mbembe (University of the Witwatersrand), Sarah Nuttall (University of the Witwatersrand), Chris Van der Merwe (University of Cape Town), and Anne Whitehead (University of Newcastle)

Website: <http://anglistik.univie.ac.at/research-projects/sanovel/saconference/>

Contact: ewald.mengel@univie.ac.at, michela.borzaga@univie.ac.at; karin.orantes@univie.ac.at

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Interdisciplinary AiM Symposium on the Realities and Representations of Reconciliation in Africa
Centre of African Studies (CAS), University of Edinburgh
and the Africa in Motion (AiM) Film Festival
Saturday 24th October 2009, Edinburgh
www.africa-in-motion.org.uk

At Africa in Motion 2009 we plan to incorporate a number of screenings and events that confront issues of trauma, conflict and reconciliation. This symposium aims to foster discussion and understanding of old and new research dealing with the various realities and representations of reconciliation in Africa. A number of recent films, novels and other forms of art have dared to represent in varying ways the traumas of conflict and war of the postcolonial African states and the attempts of reconciliation commissions towards peace, truth, justice and forgiveness. We want to touch on the problems and challenges facing artistic representations of these complex topics as well as the different contexts and consequences of it in Africa and in its Diaspora.

Deadline for abstracts: 1 August 2009

Symposium organisers: Lizelle Bisschoff, Stefanie Van de Peer and Clare Rossouw at symposium@africa-in-motion.org.uk

BOOKS PUBLISHED

Darlene Clark Hine, Trica Danielle Keaton, and Stephen Small, (eds.) *Black Europe and the African Diaspora* (University of Illinois Press, 2009) <http://www.press.uillinois.edu/books/catalog/23kdb4ec9780252034671.html>

The presence of Blacks in a number of European societies has drawn increasing interest from scholars, policymakers, and the general public. This interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary collection penetrates the multifaceted Black presence in Europe, and, in so doing, complicates the notions of race, belonging, desire, and identities assumed and presumed in revealing portraits of Black experiences in a European context. In focusing on contemporary intellectual currents and themes, the contributors theorize and re-imagine a range of historical and contemporary issues related to the broader questions of blackness, diaspora, hegemony, transnationalism, and “Black Europe” itself as lived and perceived realities.

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Lindiwe Dovey, *African Film and Literature: Adapting Violence to the Screen* (Columbia University Press, April 2009)

Analyzing a range of South African and francophone West African films inspired by African and non-African literature, Lindiwe Dovey identifies a specific trend in contemporary African filmmaking – one in which filmmakers are using the embodied audiovisual medium of film to offer a critique of physical and psychological violence. Against a detailed history of the medium’s savage introduction and exploitation by colonial powers in these two very different African contexts, Dovey examines the complex ways in which African filmmakers are preserving, mediating, and critiquing their own cultures while seeking a united vision of the future. More than merely representing socio-cultural realities in Africa, these films engage with issues of colonialism and postcolonialism, “updating” both the history and the literature they adapt to address contemporary audiences in Africa and elsewhere. Through this deliberate and radical re-historicization of texts and realities, Dovey argues that African filmmakers have developed a method of filmmaking that is altogether distinct from European and American forms of adaptation.

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Eleanor Ty and Christl Verduyn (eds.), *Asian Canadian Writing Beyond Autoethnography* (Wilfrid Laurier U. Press, 2008), ISBN13: 978-1-55458-023-1

Asian Canadian Writing Beyond Autoethnography explores some of the latest developments in the literary and cultural practices of Canadians of Asian heritage. While earlier work by ethnic, multicultural, or minority writers in Canada was often concerned with immigration, the moment of arrival, issues of assimilation, and conflicts between generations, literary and cultural production in the new millennium no longer focuses solely on the conflict between the Old World and the New or the clashes between culture of origin and adopted culture. Contributors include: Eleanor Ty, Christl Verduyn, Smaro Kamboureli, Paul Lai, Kristina Kyser, Larissa Lai, Pilar Cuder-Dominguez, Joanne Saul, Christine Kim, Ming Tiampo, Tara Lee, Eva Karpinski, Mariam Pirbhai, Christine Lorre.

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Elleke Boehmer, Robert Eaglestone and Katy Iddiols (eds.), *J.M Coetzee in Context and Theory* (Continuum, March 2009), ISBN13: 978-0826498830

This work draws on a wide range of theoretical ideas and approaches to illuminate Coetzee's texts including: deconstruction and the 'school of singularity', ethics and power, gender studies, queer theory, issues surrounding the body and animal rights. It also contextualises Coetzee's work in relation to his literary influences, colonial and post-colonial history, the Holocaust and colonial genocides, the 'politics' and meaning of the Nobel prize in South Africa and Coetzee's very public move from South Africa to Australia. Including a major unpublished essay by leading South African novelist André Brink, this book offers the most up-to-date study of Coetzee's work currently available.

*

Annalisa Oboe, and A. Scacchi (eds.), *Recharting the Black Atlantic: Modern Cultures, Local Communities, Global Connections* (Routledge Research in Atlantic Studies, 2008).

ISBN: 978-0-415-96111

This volume stems from a research project called "Sea Changes: Bodies, Practices and Discourses around the atlantic" and is the expression of an international community of scholars that started to gather at the University of Padua in October 2004, to engage in a complex and polysemic dialogue on questions of identity, social memory, literary and artistic expression, and global/local tensions in a circumatlantic perspective. In the book the Atlantic is a heuristic tool, a discursive space which is crisscrossed and traveled in ways that speak of exchanges among the cultures that define its borders, or of modes in which the cultures of Europe, Africa and the Americas respond to one another, collide or converge. This viewpoint has the advantage of allowing the tensions between the local/national and the global/transnational to come into sharper focus.

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Annalisa Oboe, Claudia Gualtieri, and Roger Bromley (eds.), *Working and Writing for Tomorrow: Essays in Honour of Itala Vivan* (Nottingham: CCCP, 2008), ISBN: 9781905510177.

The rationale behind this book is provided by the Saidian notion of the intellectual as a cultural interpreter, a political activist, and a traveller through place and time. As the title suggests, we believe that being an academic today entails working in the ethical/political field of education and writing (intended as producing and disseminating knowledge) with the sense of being in the world—of being 'wordly'—and having a project for tomorrow in mind: a future of dialogic encounters, critical awareness, and mutual understanding. The volume is offered as a festschrift on the occasion of Itala Vivan's retirement from her position as Professor of English Literature and Post-colonial and Cultural Studies at the University of Milan.

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Peter McDonald, *The Literature Police: Apartheid Censorship and Its Cultural Consequences* (Oxford University Press, 2009), ISBN: 978-0199283347

For reasons that were neither obvious nor historically inevitable, the apartheid censors were not only the agents of the white minority government's repressive anxieties about the medium of print. They were also officially-certified guardians of the literary. This book is centrally about the often unpredictable cultural consequences of this paradoxical situation. Peter D. McDonald brings to light a wealth of new evidence - from the once secret archives of the censorship bureaucracy, from the records of resistance publishers and writers' groups both in the country and abroad - and uses extensive oral testimony. The Literature Police affords a unique perspective on one of the most anachronistic, exploitative, and racist modern states of the post-war era, and on some of the many forms of cultural resistance it inspired. It also raises urgent questions about how we understand the category of the literary in today's globalized, intercultural world.

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Suman Gupta, *Globalization and Literature* (Polity, 2009), ISBN: 9780745640235

This book presents a state-of-the-art overview of the relationship between globalization studies and literature and literary studies, and the bearing that they have on each other. It engages with the manner in which globalization is thematized in literary works, examines the relationship between globalization theory and literary theory, and discusses the impact of globalization processes on the production and reception of literary texts. Suman Gupta argues that, while literature has registered globalization processes in relevant ways, there has been a missed articulation between globalization studies and literary studies. Examples are given of some of the ways in which this slippage is now being addressed and may be taken forward.

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D.C.R.A. Goonetilleke (ed.), *Joseph Conrad: Heart of Darkness* (Broadview Press, 2nd edn 1999, reprinted 2007) ISBN 1-55111-307-4

This edition includes a reliable text, an introduction and explanatory notes as well as a fascinating variety of contemporary documents and photographs that help to set this extraordinary work in the context of the period from which it emerged.

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D.C.R.A. Goonetilleke, *Sri Lankan English Literature and the Sri Lankan People 1917-2003* (Colombo: Vijitha Yapa Publications, 2nd edn. with a new Appendix: 'Leonard Woolf's Divided Mind: the case of The Village in the Jungle', 2007). ISBN 955-8095-90-7.

This book is a one-volume literary history of Sri Lanka's literature in English from the beginnings to the present. It is also a cultural, social and political history. It examines issues of postcolonial literature in general.

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Gyssels, Kathleen and Ledent, Bénédicte (Eds.) *The Caribbean Writer as Warrior of the Imaginary - L'Ecrivain caribéen, guerrier de l'imaginaire*. (Rodopi, 2008)

This bilingual collection illustrates the concept of the 'Warrior of the Imaginary', as defined by Patrick Chamoiseau, in a multi-faceted corpus of texts. Francophone contributions explore the role of the Caribbean writer in works by Chamoiseau, Édouard Glissant, Daniel Maximin, and Joseph Zobel. Essays in English focus not only on familiar writers (Dionne Brand, Edwidge Danticat, Wilson Harris, Jamaica Kincaid, Caryl Phillips, Derek Walcott) but also on less widely studied voices (Robert Antoni, Albert Helman). Other contributions deal with such 'fighting areas' as Afro-Brazilian music, film, and Mutabaruka's militant poetry. The whole testifies to a surprisingly coherent imaginary, one that goes beyond the 'balkanization' of the Caribbean archipelago.

CALLS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Wadabagei: A Journal of the Caribbean and its Diasporas is inviting scholarly articles for possible publication in forthcoming issues.

Interested authors, please contact the journal editor, Holger Henke (York College, CUNY), at hhenke@verizon.net, or the appropriate regional associate editor:

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The Literary Encyclopaedia at www.litencyc.com is looking for qualified writers to enhance its coverage of postcolonial literatures written in English (this would include, but is not limited to, 'cosmopolitan' – i.e. Black British, Asian British, other postcolonial British & American – postcolonial writing, South-East Asian writing, New Zealand and Australian writing, Pacific writing, Caribbean writing,

Native American, Chicano/Latina writing, Canadian writing etc.). We also welcome additions to our current database, aiming to expand our coverage to include Middle Eastern/ Arab/Muslim writing which has been either published or translated in English. All offers of contributions will be sent to our relevant area editors and approved by them if there is no current commission for the proposed entry. Please check our database before offering to contribute on a specific writer/ work/ topic, to make sure that it has not yet been covered. If the writer/ work you are looking for is not listed, we shall include it in the database.

The Literary Encyclopedia has been published since October 2000, and is a collaborative project of very considerable size. The Literary Encyclopedia has the eventual aim of providing literary scholars and students in the English-speaking world with a reliable and comprehensive reference work on all literary and cultural history throughout time and throughout the world, and of maintaining this resource as a collectively owned venture.

Dr. Cristina Sandru

Assistant Editor

The Literary Encyclopedia at <http://www.LitEncyc.com>
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CONFERENCE REPORTS

"Giving a Voice to the Voiceless": A Report on "Chotro-2: Nomadic Communities in the Post-Colonial World: Culture-Expression-Rights", 4 – 7 January 2009, Adivasi Academy, Tejgadh, Gujarat, India

"Chotro" means "a place where villagers gather", "a public platform", "a centre for dispute resolution" and "a place for announcing news". Therefore, Chotro-2 has aimed to "bring together" writers, artists and scholars from all over the world, to explore the artistic expression of the nomadic peoples, and their experience of becoming disinherited

and dispossessed due to historical, legal, political, linguistic or cultural processes.

And this is exactly what we had during the next three most intense and inspiring days, due to the conference venue at 'Adivasi Academy', a very special place where you can really have "chotro" in terms of spirituality, work, inspiration and creativity. Founded by the initiator of the conference, Ganesh Devy, with the aim of educating and, thus, empowering the Adivasi communities, the academy is situated in Tejgadh, a tribal village in Gujarat, Western India.

The papers covered a wide range of thematic approaches as the speakers came from various fields of study and nations, but had one and the same intention that corresponds to the overall idea of Chotro: giving a voice to the voiceless. Yet, there were also critical voices that raised an important question that is inevitable to ask yourself when discussing tribal culture, history, language and literature: Who can speak as 'other'? Are we allowed to do so? In papers on Nomadic communities in India, Africa, or the Caribbean, on Nigerian society with special regard to the Igbo tribes, on marginalised communities, as for instance in Kenya and Zimbabwe, Aboriginal peoples in Australia and New Zealand, or on slum-dwellers, it became clear that new concepts such as transculturality are far-fetched and only work on a theoretical level. The notion of the postcolonial is more relevant than ever and the struggle of the dispossessed to come to terms with what has been taken from them by the colonisers is still an on-going process.

Chotro is not only about presenting and publishing academic works. Ganesh Devy and his Bhasha team pursue



Conference Chotro II. Welcome to Tejgadh

a political vision in preserving language, culture, space, and environment of the Adivasi. It is this holistic concept that was taken up by Prof. Suhrud Tridip of the Adivasi Academy at Tejgadh, who gave a lecture on "The Ashram in Mahatma Gandhi's Imagination". Altogether, Chotro also focuses on the Gandhian ideas of work, spirituality and political empowerment.

Thus, it is the political dimension that makes Chotro such an important gathering on a global scale. Because of this, its conferences cannot be understood as separate events, but rather as a process that has to be carried on. And indeed, Chotro-1 and 2 were only the beginning. There are more conferences to come: Chotro-3 will be held in the highest museum of the world, the 'Lahaul & Spiti Tribal Museum', at Keylong, in the Himalayas, in September 2010. Chotro-4 will be held in Kenya, Africa and thus literally carry its message across borders, boundaries, and spaces.

Birte Heidemann
(Chemnitz Technical University, Germany)

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"Re-Imagining Identity: New Directions in Postcolonial Studies": A Report on the Inaugural PSA Conference, May 6 – 8 2009, Waterford Institute of Technology, Republic of Ireland

As its title already implies, this conference can, in many respects, be considered as a signpost paving the way for new directions in postcolonial studies. Being the inaugural conference of the Postcolonial Studies Association, it basically put into practice what the PSA intends to develop, which is the bringing together of scholars working on postcolonial topics in any discipline or language and thus creating an interdisciplinary forum for information exchange, networking opportunities or research collaborations.

In a way, this has already been achieved by its first



Conference co-organiser, Professor Geoff Davies, Chair of ACLALS (centre) with other delegates

conference, which was held at the Waterford Institute of Technology, a campus university that proved to be the perfect venue for three intense and inspiring days. In fact, it was a meeting place for scholars from such diverse places as Australia and Canada, Germany and Hawaii, India and South Africa, or the UK and the US. The speakers did not only come from different nations, but also from various fields of study and, thus, the issues discussed in the papers displayed a variety of scholarly interests and methodological approaches.

The conference thematically focused on a broad re-consideration of the cultural, political, theoretical and practical re-imaginings of the concept of 'identity'. The participants had also set out to find answers to a question which although complex, is inevitable within the scope of such a gathering on a global scale: What is the future of postcolonialism as a discipline? Due to the conference's commitment to an interdisciplinary approach, the wide range of presentations shed light on the need to re-imagine identity from different perspectives. Hence, in such diverse papers as those on gendered and sexual identities, feminism, African novelists, indigenous/aboriginal identity and memory, Dalit voices in India, postcolonial cinema, photography and music, globalised literatures, contested spaces, threatened identities, re-imaging of linguistic identity, postcolonial 'Francophone' identity as well as on schooling, just to mention a few among the rich range of the conference's key issues, the idea of following new directions in postcolonial studies was all the more underlined.

The opening plenary address on "Post-colonial Futures: Globalization and Alternative Modernities" was given by Bill Ashcroft. It can be regarded as an ideal opening to a conference that aimed both to explore current understandings of 'identity' in a multicultural, globalised and conflicted world and to encourage disciplinary self-reflexivity. In addition to the lecture, Ashcroft's latest publication, *Caliban's Voice: The Transformation of English in Post-Colonial Literatures*, was launched and very well received. In his brilliant keynote lecture on "Edward Said



Conference Co-organiser and Director of the Adivasi Academy, Professor Ganesh Devy

& Ireland”, Declan Kiberd provided the audience with a remarkable knowledge on Said which he constantly linked with an original and expanded view on Irish literature and culture. The third keynote speaker, Neil Lazarus, introduced the participants to “World Literature and Combined and Uneven Development: Towards a Reconstruction of Literary Studies”. He, thus, once again, put his finger on an issue that determined the conference’s agenda.

As this conference attracted such a great number of participants, the programme was extensive with 4 to 5 parallel panels. Unfortunately, the conference organisers were not yet able to say whether a selection of the papers held is going to be published, though it would be most valuable to read through the proceedings in order to be able to catch up with the papers one had missed. Nevertheless, it was in many respects a perfectly organised conference, in terms of hospitality, accommodation, and technical facilities. At this point, we would very much like to thank the organising committee, chaired by Christine O’Dowd-Smyth, and everyone involved for contributing to this warm and welcoming atmosphere we all experienced in Waterford.

Birte Heidemann
(Chemnitz Technical University, Germany)

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Conference Report:

**“Dambudzo Marechera: A Celebration”, 15-17 May 2009,
Trinity College, Oxford**

Dambudzo Marechera is now firmly established as one of Africa’s canonical writers, whose stylistic innovation and intellectual anarchism changed forever the landscape of African writing. Twenty-two years after his death, his life and work continue to inspire critical studies, biographies, plays and films, and draw a mass following in his home country, Zimbabwe. His prize-winning debut novella, *The House of Hunger* has been continually in print since 1978, with a new edition being reissued this year. Yet, Marechera has been practically unknown in Oxford, where his writing

first emerged after his expulsion in 1976. It therefore seemed natural to hold a Marechera symposium in Oxford, not in the sense of “claiming him back”, but as a way of acknowledging his contribution to postcolonial African writing in the light of Oxford’s significant and growing commitment to making postcolonial literature a part of the English curriculum.

The 3-day symposium, which was made possible by the generous sponsorship of Oxford University’s John Fell Fund, *The Journal of Southern African Studies*, The Chevening Trust, *Wasafiri*, and *African Writing*, extended the meaning of an academic conference to include artistic and personal contributions to much acclaim and enthusiasm from over 70 participants. Co-organized by postgraduate student Dobrota Pucherova and Prof. Elleke Boehmer of the English Faculty, with the encouragement of The Dambudzo Marechera Trust, the symposium had a double aim: 1) to recuperate the memory of Marechera at Oxford, and 2) to find new ways to discuss Marechera’s subversive and iconoclastic writing that is known for resisting containment inside the academy, creating new meanings and paradigms. The symposium suggested that the singularity of Marechera’s engagement with language demands an active, inventive, performative response in order to make sense of his complex vision. In encouraging creative approaches to his writing, it aimed to find new ways to frame and develop discourse and create a common language between the academia and the arts.

The inter-disciplinary vision of the symposium received an overwhelming response from across Britain and all over the world, with delegates arriving from as far as Australia, Canada, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Barbados, and South Africa. Other countries represented were Germany, Holland, Turkey, Slovakia, Croatia, China, Rwanda, Nigeria and Ghana. The academic papers presented offered a number of new and revised critical approaches to and interpretations of Marechera’s work, including a thorough-going discussion of his alleged misanthropy/misogyny; a treatment of Marechera’s famed and disturbing political

ambiguity as performance; several discussions by Zimbabwean scholars of Marechera as iconoclastic model today, whose reputation exceeds what is known about his work; a re-assessment of the political meanings of his textual innovations; and a discussion of Marechera’s prophetic vision and its continued relevance to the current political situation in Zimbabwe.

Even though not all the creative project proposals eventually came to realization due to financial or logistical constraints, art contributions to the symposium included an ambitious theatre production of two of Marechera’s plays, a stage adaptation of Marechera’s fiction and poetry, 5 paintings, 2 experimental short films based on Marechera’s poetry, a short story, a sculpture performance, and a poetry performance by Comrade Fatso, one of Zimbabwe’s most acclaimed poets. Personal reminiscences included Flora Veit-Wild’s moving presentation of previously unseen photographs and postcards, Robert Fraser’s performance of Marechera’s stutter that provoked ripples of laughter, and James Currey’s unforgettable accounts of the trials of publishing Marechera. A *Wasafiri*-sponsored round-table, chaired by Robert Fraser, discussed the relevance of Marechera’s oppositional view of the writer to the new circumstances in Africa and elsewhere. Programme included a double book-launch of the Pearsons re-edition of *The House of Hunger* and *Harare North* (Jonathan Cape, 2009) by the Zimbabwean exile and Marechera inspiree Brian Chikwava, a memory walk of Oxford including New College, and a dance party with a Zimbabwean band, Chimanimani.

The symposium brought together an unusually varied mix of people—critics, publishers, artists, film-makers, writers, actors students, personal friends of Marechera, his students, and people who had met him only briefly—testifying to the powerful appeal of Marechera’s personality and intellect and creating a very special atmosphere where mutual exchange of stories and ideas thrived. This is perhaps best expressed by a German undergraduate student’s thank-you email for “a conference in which

everyone was respected". Marechera was not claimed by any of the groups, but became a boundary-breaking point, bringing together people with very different backgrounds and objectives.

The buzz created by the symposium has fuelled Pearsons' decision to reprint *Black Sunlight* and *Mindblast*, two of Marechera's out-of-print books, and the forthcoming establishment of a Marechera archive in Rhodes House Library in Oxford. Proceedings from the symposium, including visual contributions, will be published in book format. Efforts are under way to seek a parallel publication in Britain, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Dobrota Pucherova
(Trinity College, Oxford)

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Conference Report

20th Annual GNEL/ASNEL: Postcolonial Translocations, Münster, 21-24 May 2009

Reflections on change and a search for strategies of reorientation were among the shared concerns that brought postcolonialists from the German-speaking countries and beyond to Münster, where this year's GNEL/ASNEL Conference, titled "Postcolonial Translocations", was held from 21-24 May.

To confront the challenges that come with a change of place in geographic terms is of course a key concern of Postcolonial Studies, as was demonstrated by a great number of presentations dealing with migration, exile, diaspora, cultural and linguistic cross-currents, border-shifting, and constructions of home. The epistemological consequences of translocation for both individuals and communities formed a varied field of investigation mapped by three distinguished keynote presentations. Spatial aspects of translocation were the focus of Edward Soja's keynote, titled 'Postcolonial Spaces and the Struggle over Geography'. Ien Ang from the University of Western Sydney in a keynote titled 'Intercultural Dialogue without Guarantees' investigated

the contradictory discourses of unity and diversity at work in the current search for a cosmopolitan multiculturalism. Diana Brydon (U of Manitoba), in a keynote titled "'Difficult Forms of Knowing": Enquiry, Injury and Translocated Relations of Postcolonial Responsibility', submitted a critique of postcolonial discourse that pointed out many areas requiring further work, notably the question of best practice in furthering an open and equal dialogue between postcolonial and indigenous studies and a continuous reconceptualisation of postcolonial agency in relation to the very real, material demands for cross-cultural exchange and awareness-raising. (The Bhasha Adivasi project in India that formed the subject of Geoffrey Davis's presentation can be seen as one such form of outreach.)

Aspects of translocation debated extensively in the panels included translation, the creative potential of multilingual conditions, cosmopolitanism, belonging, memory and trauma, experiences of transgression and violence, transnationalism and globalisation, as well as case studies of specific cityscapes. With most analyses focussing on novels, poetry and plays as well as life-writing, aesthetic translocation was traced even in such seemingly unlikely places as spam e-mails, photoblogs and 'coffee table books', with the necessarily translocal cyberspace emerging as a fruitful area of research into the interlocking powers of the imagination and commerce.

But this year's GNEL/ASNEL moreover provided the impetus to combine investigations of space with a reorientation in time. Founded in 1989, the association celebrated its 20-year anniversary, and this landmark presented the opportunity for a rethinking of the status quo of the discipline and interrogating the directions in which postcolonial studies is moving as it is increasingly becoming 'established' – without becoming part of the establishment. Originally one of the few academic societies in Germany to admit student members, GNEL/ASNEL looks back at a history of progress and constructive expansion, as founding members Geoffrey V. Davis, Peter Marsden, Dieter Riemenschneider and Gerhard Stolz asserted in their

comments and retrospectives; at the same time, current restructurings of university curricula pose new threats to the consolidation of the field.

Given the changes regarding the place and status of Postcolonial Studies, 'institutionalisation' became one of the conference buzz-words, occupying a round-table debate featuring Ien Ang, Nilufer Bharucha (U of Mumbai and Münster), Pilar Cuder-Dominguez (U of Huelva), Geoffrey V. Davis (RWTH Aachen), Abioseh M. Porter (Drexel U), Wumi Raji (U of Ile Ife) and Janet Wilson (U of Northampton), chaired by the outgoing GNEL/ASNEL President, Frank Schulze-Engler (U of Frankfurt/Main).

In a related vein, a round-table on interdisciplinarity explored both the theory and practice of border negotiations between Postcolonial Studies and such diverse neighbouring disciplines as German, History, Art History, Japanese, Visual, Medieval, Middle Eastern and Slavonic/Baltic Studies. The discussion confirmed a trend also indicated by several papers, namely that European postcolonialism is on the move to look beyond Anglo- and Francophone contemporary studies in coming to terms with long-term consequences of colonialism and in situating past and present transcultural work.

The GNEL/ASNEL spirit of embracing the necessary dislocation of work in progress was documented in two "Under Construction" Sessions as well as Poster Sessions designed to enable researchers at all stages of their careers to invite feedback on ongoing projects.

Extracurricular performances such as the "s/w remix" theatre performance (dir. Barbara Kemmler) and readings by Samir El-Youssef (Palestine), Bernardine Evaristo (UK), Tomáš Zmeškal (Czech Republic) and Sridhar Rajeswaran (India) were both well-attended and received, though it was felt by some GNEL/ASNEL veterans that more room for encounters with creative writers would be desirable.

While members from the German-speaking world continue to dominate the association, international exchange is forthcoming, furthered by a new Travel Bursary

supporting conference participation of researchers from abroad. Another new GNEL/ASNEL initiative intended to facilitate networking among members was the "GNEL Map" project launched this May (see www.gnel.de).

Thanks to convenor Mark Stein, President of GNEL/ASNEL, and his indefatigable team, "Postcolonial Translocations" was a constructive and significant step towards addressing central aspects of postcolonialism. The next conference, "Contested Communities: Communication – Narration – Imagination", will be held at the University of Bayreuth in May 2010.

Vera Alexander
(Aarhus University, Denmark)