German Studies towards the Millennium

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This is the second volume of selected papers from an annual meeting of the Conference of University Teachers of German in Great Britain and Ireland; in this case, the meeting at the University of Keele in 1999. Its sixteen contributions illustrate the range and the interdisciplinary character of research conducted in the field of German studies, combining literary criticism with social and political analysis, cultural and media studies, as well as systemic and applied linguistic analyses. In terms of literature, the volume confirms the increasing popularity of the twentieth century among British Germanists, and also attests to the methodological pluralism that the discipline enjoys. The articles are generally well written and edited and, with an average length of 17 pages, sufficiently extended and concise enough to whet the reader's appetite and encourage further exploration of the literature in the respective fields of research.

The first contribution, by **Marianne Howarth** (Nottingham Trent), gives an insight into one of the 'small skirmishes on the edges of the battlefield of the Cold War', namely the GDR's attempts to establish and promote an industrial-cum-political representation in Britain below the level of and – before 1972, in place of – diplomatic representation in the form of an embassy. The two main institutions concerned were ostensibly private limited companies that were in fact attached to GDR government institutions: the trade office *KfA* [*Kammer für Außenhandel*] *Ltd.,* and the travel information office *Berolina Travel Ltd*. Their special character as quasi-political representations was a consequence of the non-recognition policy pursued by Britain in conjunction with other NATO-countries prior to the conclusion of the *Grundlagenvertrag* between the FRG and GDR. Whilst the Foreign

Office (spurred on by West German and US intelligence sources) insisted on maintaining the official Cold War line of restrained hostility towards the GDR throughout the 1950s, several private companies directly engaged in trade with the GDR, individual British MPs and, increasingly, the Board of Trade as well the then opposition parties (Labour and the Liberals) argued in favour of establishing economic relations with East Germany, which culminated in a trade agreement concluded in 1959. *KFA Ltd* and *Berolina Travel* were set up in the wake of this agreement. Given the multitude of contrasting and even conflicting interests on the British side, the GDR representations succeeded for some time in conveying an image of 'putting forward a common-sense and apparently ideology-free view' in supporting everyday business interests, especially after they had enlisted the help of a London PR company. Still, they had to tread carefully so as not to fall foul of the FO's ban on the use of GDR flags or emblems – violation of such rules could result in the revocation or refusal of visas. On the other hand, East Berlin's desire to exert a tight control on personnel and even to adjudicate on the venue of offices in London led to a series of organisational setbacks that marred the operation of *Berolina Travel*. Co-operation of *KfA* and *Berolina* with British sympathisers in organisations such as the *Deutsch-Britische Gesellschaft* also proved to be of limited value, as these seldom reached beyond 'their own steadily declining circle of the already converted'. The period between the 'normalisation' of relationships and the mid-1980s is treated by Howarth only in general terms as a 'two-tier' system, with an upper tier of diplomatic relationships (where the GDR embassy, which also integrated the work of the *KfA Ltd*, sought to present itself as an 'uncontroversial actor on the London diplomatic scene') and a second, ideologically more controversial tier, where *Berolina Travel* attempted to engage in debates with Euro-Communist tendencies and with the Western peace movement. According to Howarth, the latter cause provided single most important factor 'capable of engendering (...) sympathy abroad for the GDR position'. It would be fascinating to read as detailed and colourful an account of these years as the one given here of the Cold War era.

The contribution by **Mechthild M. Matheja-Theaker** (University of the West of England) on 'The Collapse of the Welfare State: Women and Poverty' presents an account of poverty in Federal Republic since 1945, paying particular attention to the post-*Wende* period and women's position within low-income groups. Matheja-Theaker refers to a wealth of recent

literature and statistical evidence that shows an alarming increase in poverty in the new and the old *Länder*. Her wide-ranging discussion situates this so-called 'new poverty' in the context of earlier forms of poverty, and outlines the social and economic policies that have been put in place to deal with the problem by Federal governments since 1945. She examines, too, the way in which the calculations of the minimum income that would allow a person to live a 'life in dignity' ('menschenwürdiges Leben') have been subjected to successive downward revisions as different models have been adopted. These considerations provide the framework for a brief discussion of women and poverty. Matheja-Theaker's own substantive contribution to this debate is the argument that women are currently more likely than men to be the victims of poverty, and are likely to remain in this position because of social structures that perpetuate gendered inequalities in income and continue to place the burden of child-rearing with women. Not only are young women thus likely to suffer the effects of poverty; career breaks, giving up work altogether, or going back to work on a part-time basis also bring disadvantages in terms of pension provision. The article ends with a prediction that poverty will once again have to become a political priority.

Jean Marc Trouille (Bradford) gives an overview of the development and present state of cultural relations between France and Germany, which provides a useful foil to a study of Anglo-German relationships in this area. Ever since the Elysée Treaty of 1963, cultural co-operation has been given top priority status at highest government level. In fact, as Trouille points out, the first post-war cultural agreement dates back to 1954, and it was followed by more detailed agreements in 1986, 1997 and 1998. As a consequence, four high-profile bi-national bodies were set up: the Franco-German Youth Office, the *Deutsch-Französischer Kulturrat* and the *Deutsch-Französisches Hochschulkolleg* as well as the joint cultural TV channel ARTE. In addition, there are hundreds of town twinning agreements, a large number of Goethe-Institutes and Instituts Français, and dozens of school and university partnerships. These include several integrated degree courses based at the universities of Saarbrücken/Metz and Bordeaux/Stuttgart, and the project of a Franco-German virtual university and a Franco-German Academy. Despite this impressive range of institutions and projects, and the governmental commitment to support and further develop them, one phenomenon, which will not be unfamiliar to British Germanists, mars the picture, namely

a dwindling interest in learning German and French at school in the respective 'other' country. Only 23.4% or French secondary pupils learn German, while 23.6.% of German pupils learn French. The percentage of students taking the 'other' language as the first foreign language has falled especially alramingly: 33% of French pupils leaned German as a first foreign language in 1945, compared with fewer than 10% today. This decline in the teaching and learning of the partner nation's language, together with the persistence of 'deeply rooted fears' about German hegemonic ambitions in parts of the French media and an apparent loss of interest in French culture on the part of the Germans (in comparison with the fascination of France during the 1950s and 60s) lead Trouille to warn us of a 'long-term risk of cultural alienation' between both nations, despite the awareness of political and business elites that there is no alternative to further co-operation and integration. If the warning signs are so clear to see even in France, it is obvious that the initiatives launched by the CUTG and partner organisations in the field of Modern Languages in Britain for the promotion of foreign language learning do not come a minute too soon.

Over the past century, German external minority policy has been through three distinct phases, as **Stefan Wolff** (Bath) shows in his overview article. After the defeat in World War I, the loss of territories resulting from the Versailles and St. Germain Treaties left substantial groups of German-speaking population outside the borders of Germany and Austria. After 1919, the situation of these minorities within their new 'host states' became a factor in German foreign policy strategy aiming at the revision of borders in the east and relief from reparation payments to the Western powers (which implied official recognition of the Western territory losses, as concluded in the Locarno Treaty). Thus, the covert financial support for Alsatian particularist propaganda, for instance, was less aimed at actively encouraging a concrete separatist movement in Alsace than to 'weaken French resistance against desired border changes in the "German East"', whilst the existence of German minorities in Czechoslovakia and Poland was used as a major factor in the justification and preparation of future border changes. Wolff stresses the continuity of this two-pronged approach from the Weimar Republic to Nazi Germany, 'distinguished only by the intensity and means with which this aim was pursued'. The second phase – from the end of World War II up to 1989 – was characterised, as far as West Germany was

concerned, by the domination of *Westintegrationspolitik* during the first 20 years and the normalisation of diplomatic relationships with the Eastern European states in the course of *Ostpolitik*. Both policies were based on a *de facto* recognition of the territorial consequences of World War II and implied a cautious treatment of the German minority issue with regard to Warsaw Pact countries. The main strategy consisted in facilitating the emigration of German minority members financially, which effected a gradual rise in emigration figures from 64,000 over the years 1955-59 to 78,000 in 1987 alone. This situation changed radically with the break-up of the Eastern bloc. Avoiding the usual immigration metaphors of *flood* or *deluge*, Wolff soberly records a 'vast increase' in 1989 and 1990 with more than 370,000 immigrants per year. In response, the Federal government reacted by restricting immigration through various legal changes and encouraging the integration of ethnic Germans into the societies of their host-states. Despite some setbacks due to administrative and financial mismanagement, this policy helped to bring down the immigration numbers to below 100,000 by 1999. The election victory of the SPD and the Greens of 1998 has ultimately changed little, apart from a greater focus on self-help projects, especially in Russia and Poland, and a general scaling-down of financial commitments (governed by the need for budget consolidation in Germany). Wolff ends on the positive note that over the past three decades a 'successful external minority policy' has gradually been put in place 'that does not treat minorities as objects of further-reaching policy goals, but makes them one of the beneficiaries of a co-operative rather than confrontational foreign policy'.

Rachel Palfreyman (Nottingham) turns her attention to Edgar Reitz's *Heimat*, offering a bold and highly stimulating discussion of the problematic status of the film's realism. *Heimat* has frequently been seen as an aesthetically conservative film that promotes a nostalgic view of German history and an uncritically positive German identity. Palfreyman takes issue with such readings, arguing that the notion of realism is aesthetically and politically inadequate for assessing Reitz's portrayal of German history. Any sense of mimetic illusionism in *Heimat* is contested and ultimately subverted by the quotation of oral testimonies and the use of amateur actors, or, as Palfreyman puts it: 'the film's "authenticity" [interferes] with its realism' (p. 80). The argument crystallises around an episode from Episode 5, 'Auf und davon und zurück', in which a baby born just as war is

declared is named Sieghild. The woman playing the mother in that scene is the adult Sieghild herself, who thus performs the role of her mother in her own oral history. Using Derrida's notion of 'iterability' – the capacity of any utterance to be endlessly repeated and recontextualised – Palfreyman shows how any 'authentic' utterance can be 'grafted onto another [syntagmatic] chain, given another context' (p. 85). The ultimate effect of this strategy is to disrupt practices of spectatorship that rely on the oppositions of inside/outside, real/textual, history/fiction. Palfreyman is well aware of the potential ethical and political pitfalls inherent in such a deconstructive reading, though, and concludes by pleading for a mode of historiography that acknowledges the inseparability of history and narrative, and reflects on 'the effects of histories and fictions colliding and overlapping in a contested boundary' (p. 87). In so doing, she implicitly links *Heimat* to the theoretical work of, for example, Hayden White or Lionel Gossman, who have been arguing along similar lines since the late 1960s, as well as to the 'historiographic metafiction' that Linda Hutcheon sees as the dominant mode of postmodernist writing.

In '"Auschwitz und kein Ende": The Recent Controversies Surrounding Martin Walser', **Stuart Parkes** (Sunderland) provides a brief expository account of the debate triggered by Walser's speech *Erfahrungen beim Verfassen einer Sonntagsrede*, before returning to the text itself and comparing it with some of the author's earlier pronouncements on similar issues. Parkes subjects the rhetoric of both Walser's speech and the invectives of his detractors to scrutiny, periodically awarding approbation or admonishment: Ignatz Bubis was right to castigate Walser's decision not to believe reports of right-wing activity in the new *Länder*; Walser is guilty of instrumentalising the Holocaust, but Moshe Zuckermann is right to point this out; Walser is correct to reject historical determinism, but wrong to talk of the 'Banalität des Guten'; it would be wrong to become sceptical about the continuing concern with National Socialism, and so on. The value of Parkes's approach lies in its fair-mindedness and its sensitivity to rhetoric, especially where the latter serves to obfuscate rather than clarify the issues at stake. Walser's essay touches on so many intersecting debates, however, that the spatial limitations of a book chapter offer no scope to establish a sufficiently broad context and position both Walser and oneself within it. Parkes's value judgements thus often appear absolute, *a priori*, and decontextualised, a feeling exacerbated by the claim that Auschwitz poses a 'universal challenge […] to our common humanity'.

More lengthy treatment of the affair would be highly desirable. Few UK scholars are as well equipped for the task as Parkes himself.

'Romantic Relapse?' by **Ingo Cornils** (Leeds) is part of a longer project on the political and cultural impact of the German Student Movement. The first half of the piece presents a lengthy review of recent critical approaches to the literature about the Student Movement, while the latter half introduces Cornils's own views. Cornils undertakes to rescue the literature about 1968 from what he sees as unjust neglect and a tendency among literary critics to denigrate the texts concerned on the grounds of their aesthetic conservatism. He does this by isolating the 'essentially romantic quality' of works such as Uwe Timm's *Heißer Sommer*, Peter Moser's *Was wir wollten, was wir wurden* and Hermann Kinder's *Der Schleiftrog*. Like the second generation German Romantics of the early nineteenth century, he argues, the '68ers' rapidly experienced a conservative backlash which forced them to resituate their dreams of an egalitarian society within the realm of literature. The concept of romance allows Cornils to argue for both the aesthetic quality and the political usefulness of the texts in question. He implies that the accessibility of the novels, far from signalling aesthetic banality, actually allows them to re-create authentically the breakthrough in consciousness experienced by the '68ers'. They perpetuate cultural memory of the student era as it was experienced by the participants, acting as a corrective to historiographical accounts. Politically, Cornils argues, the novels are potentially subversive because the narrated events are romanticised in a way that encourages the reader to wish for similar experiences. These arguments beg many questions. In formal terms, it is not clear how the reader's desire for 'similar experiences' is incited and manipulated. Furthermore, this reader is itself an untheorised entity. It is not clear whether it is empirical, implied, or ideal, nor is the possibility of differing responses to the texts by different readerships addressed. (Women, for example, might find the gender assumptions of Schneider's *Lenz* rather less that utopian.) And even if readers do react in the way Cornils predicts, political action is not a self-evident or necessary consequence of desire; readers as well as writers can retreat into fiction. This being said, the notion of romance clearly facilitates a timely re-evaluation of the aesthetics and politics of the literature of the Student Movement. It will be interesting to see how Cornils develops the link between text, reader-response, and ideology in the course of his future research.

Joseph Roth's contributions to the Viennese newspaper *Der Neue Tag* form the subject of a chapter by **Ian Foster** (Salford). As well as addressing the nature and content of Roth's prolific journalistic output (some 158 pieces in little more than a year), Foster also situates *Der Neue Tag* in the context of the post-Habsburg Austrian press, offers a nuanced account of Roth's often equivocal political stance, and highlights some of the methodological problems inherent in analysing the journalistic work of writers whose most significant work is literary. He is particularly concerned to problematise the term *feuilleton*. The feuilleton, Foster argues, is not only not fully applicable to Roth's journalism for *Der Neue Tag*, but is accorded too privileged a status by literary critics when assessing the work of journalists. This results in a neglect of the feuilleton's position and function within the overall structure of information contained in a given newspaper. Rather than isolating Roth's feuilleton-like pieces and regarding them as a polished prose cycle, Foster examines them in the twofold context of the immediate socio-political events of 1919-1920 and the format and page-layout of *Der Neue Tag* itself. In so doing, he restores a sense of the writer's engagement with the issues of the day, which can all too easily be obliterated once newspaper articles are reissued in book form and migrate from the discourse of 'journalism' to the discourse of 'literature'. Rather than representing 'subjective' opinion that is sharply demarcated from 'objective' news, Roth's feuilleton-like pieces for *Der Neue Tag* can be seen as playing a much more complex role, mediating between high and low culture, news events and cultural consciousness. Foster argues persuasively that cultural history can throw light on elements of Roth's journalism that are neglected by literary criticism.

In an examination of 'The Lives of Stephan Hermlin in the GDR', **Peter Davies** (Edinburgh) puts forward an approach to autobiography that brackets the question of truth and concentrates instead on the institutional determinants and performative function of GDR (auto)biographical writing. Hermlin's case is particularly interesting from this perspective, because empirical research has shown that his widely praised autobiographical text *Abendlicht* extensively mythologises the verifiable data of his life. In the first part of his article, Davies argues that the categories 'truth' and 'falsehood' are meaningless when assessing Hermlin's life, because 'Hermlin' is little more than a fictional figure who is constructed by and performed within the limited discursive possibilities offered by the GDR public sphere. Conflicts about the truth of falsehood of his biography are thus

displaced disagreements over the stories that can be told about German history and the role within it of the committed intellectual. In the second part of the article, Davies examines Hermlin's status as a 'late-bourgeois' writer and his relationship to the collective. His subtle and sophisticated reading of *Abendlicht* culminates in the assertion that

> the movement of historical time is forcibly given the same dialectical patterning as the narrator's personal time, so that a work which is ostensibly about the mutually agreeable resolution of the party's relationship with its intellectuals actually simply absorbs history into the development of the narrator's self and the justification of his life's work (p. 152).

Davies argues earlier that *Abendlicht* takes up, in modified form, the Marxist-Leninist biographical masterplot of the bourgeois intellectual who abandons his background and finds his way to the communist party. The implication of his analysis seems to be that the conflict between the intellectual and the collective is played out within *Abendlicht* itself: in the very act of inserting himself into a more or less preordained social role and narrative schema, Hermlin turns the tables on the GDR by subsuming history beneath his own individual biography.

The former GDR also forms the subject of an article by **Tania Nause** (Bradford), who reads Thomas Brussig's scurrilous novel *Helden wie wir* from the perspective of cultural memory. Drawing on Jan Assmann's typology of memory, she argues that while the GDR is still present in everyday living memory, it will at some point either recede into oblivion or continue in the form of cultural memory, which, following Assmann, Nause defines as the accumulated knowledge of a society that shapes its identity and manifests itself in repeatable words, images, and various forms of social action. Nause attributes the explosion of autobiographical literature in post-*Wende* East Germany to a fear of oblivion, a desire to preserve a historical and biographical period that is now definitively over. She is perhaps over-keen to stress the continuities between Brussig's first-person narrative and other forms of explicitly autobiographical writing, hastily rejecting Lejeune's pragmatic definition of the autobiographical pact where an exploration of how different genres function in post-*Wende* writing might have yielded interesting insights. But her discussion of *Helden wie wir* is sensible, humorously decorous when discussing the masturbatory excesses of Brussig's hero, and, most of all, suggests an approach to the text that goes beyond the rituals of genre classification (is it a *Bildngsroman*? a *Schelmenroman*? a *Zeitroman*? and

so on). Her wide-ranging and leisurely reading persuades us that this text deserves to be taken seriously as a work that preserves, through its satire, the reality of quotidian GDR life and the structures of repression and socialisation operative within it. As an 'invitation to remember and learn about the GDR' (p. 171), it promises to ensure that the GDR is remembered beyond living memory.

Gertrud Reershemius (Aston) presents a fascinating case-study of language change in Ostfriesland; i.e. code-switching in conversations between speakers of an East Frisian variety of Low German (which has Frisian as a substratum). She bases her analysis on new typological models of language change that differentiate between various relationships of the languages involved, ranging from an almost 'di-glossic' division of labour between them (*differentiation*) over *integration* and *convergence* to almost complete *fusion*. Her analysis of a piece of transcribed everyday conversation demonstrates that spoken Low German has *integrated* many lexical items, with varying degrees of phonological adaptation, and shows aspects of *convergence* as regards syntactic structures (i.e. Standard High German sentence structures are 'realised' by a Low German construction that would not be really idiomatic in 'pure' dialect). She attaches the greatest significance, however, to the 'wholesale adaptation' of High German discourse markers (e.g. particles, conjunctions, tags etc.) in place of Low German ones, which indicates a 'subconscious non-separation' of the two respective language systems, i.e. a high degree of *fusion*. This result leads Reershemius to the conclusion that 'Low German is in the process of language change towards the dominant contact language, namely Standard German'. It would be interesting to see how these systemic findings tally with the language awareness or consciousness of the speakers themselves, with their own assessment of 'how much' and what kind of Low German they still speak.

Geraldine Horan (Birmingham) and **Christian Fandrych** (King's College London) provide a *Werkstattbericht* about the 'Multi-Media Language and Culture Course' designed to prepare students of German for their year abroad, which has been pioneered at King's College, London in co-operation with the Martin Luther University, Halle/Wittenberg. The course has several innovative aspects, i.e. e-mail partnerships and video-conferencing between the members of parallel courses at both institutions as well as the extensive use of

the internet to access, assimilate and critique text types that are characteristic of the respective German and British academic cultures (e.g. essays vs. *Referate*). The results are very encouraging: initial misgivings about potential confusion between 'interactive' virtual and face-to-face communication proved unfounded; indeed, the multi-media environment seems to provide a unique opportunity to 'sensitise students to different forms of academic texts' in the British and German cultures, of which they had been previously unaware. The integration of e-mail partnerships into the course helped to include a great amount of student-student feedback so as not to overburden the learning process with too much explicit tutor-intervention. However, as the authors stress repeatedly, this does not mean less work for the tutors; in fact the organisation of video-conferencing sessions and e-mail partnerships requires an enormous amount of preparation and continuous monitoring to ensure didactic success. Without this input, difficulties in time management, lack of reciprocity between e-mail partners and demotivation for learners unfamiliar with internet procedures may present substantial problems. It is important to bear in mind that the KCL course was offered on a voluntary basis to a year's cohort of 23 students. It would thus seem necessary, as the authors promise, to test the course further with more student cohorts before considering its implementation as a standard credit-bearing or even obligatory module.

Winifred V. Davies (Wales – Aberystwyth) examines a rather different aspect of pedagogical practice, namely the way in which secondary pupils in two German *Länder* are taught about dialectal variation and standard German. Davies presents a lucidly argued sociolinguistic critique of three central assumptions underpinning this area of the curriculum in Baden-Württemberg and Rheinland-Pflaz: the notion that dialect is a problem; that mutual intelligibility can be secured only by the use of standard German; and that the appropriateness model is less prescriptive than the correctness model. In all these areas, Davies finds an unwillingness on the part of educationalists responsible for drawing up the curriculum and on the part of some dialect linguists to deal with issues such as social status and the role of standard and dialectal variants of German in establishing and perpetuating power relations and economic inequality. So – to take just one of Davies's many examples – the notion that communicative success involves nothing more than the transmission of a message using a standard code is shown to be profoundly inadequate,

since it takes no account of extra-linguistic aspects of communication, which may have far more to do with 'cultural capital' and social position than with linguistic competence. It is a general tendency to disguise social judgements as linguistic ones that forms the ultimate target of Davies's critique. She suggests that current policies and practices serve to obscure social inequalities by reinforcing the hegemony of the standard variety, and concludes with a plea for a more critical and ultimately more politicised approach to dialect within the secondary curriculum. By her own admission, though, such change will be difficult to implement: her own research has shown that language awareness among German teachers in *Realschulen* is by no means adequate to the task.

Chris Hall's (Leicester/Tampere) article on the effectiveness of CALL in German Grammar teaching points out a massive gap in CALL research, and provides the first attempt to fill it by *evaluating* CALL materials in actual use. After giving an overview of evaluation studies dealing with short-term effects (e.g. publications by the TELL consortium), he proceeds to present the results of a study conducted at Leicester University, where a self-developed DOS-based CALL package based on the Langenscheidt teaching book *Eindrücke-Einblicke* was tested on first-year student cohorts from 1995 to 1999. Out of a total of 182 first year students during these years, Hall chose 103, whose language learning background and interests were sufficiently similar; 47 of these attended the CALL module, 56 did not. Based on a comparison between the respective average A-level scores at entry, i.e. 6.88 points (CALL) versus 7.10 (non-CALL) points, and the results of a written exam test conducted at the end o the first year (53.8% versus 49.1%), he concludes that the CALL group had 'overtaken the non-CALL group by the end of the year'. Hall goes on to analyse errors made by both groups in four grammar areas well-known to learners and teachers of German: *passive constructions*, *relative clauses*, *adjective endings* and *weak noun declension*. In each of these fields except for the last one, Hall counts more correct uses and a higher average use for the CALL-group than for the non-CALL group, with *passive constructions* showing the largest difference (60.1% versus 46.3% correct uses). He interprets this as 'evidence of a longer term beneficial effect of CALL exercises in addition to the short-term effect which has been reported elsewhere'. This result is in itself impressive, given the dearth of evaluation studies. It would be easy to criticise the analysis on statistical grounds; for instance, Hall admits that the differentiation between

genuine syntactic errors (counted), errors of verb morphology (not counted) and concomitant errors (not counted) is difficult. The percentage results thus have to be regarded with some caution, and the author readily acknowledges that 'a single study like this cannot be regarded as conclusive'. It is clear that the discussion of such results can only really begin once further studies are available: we look forward to future contributions on these issues at CUTG and FGLS meetings and their publication.

Peter Hohenhaus (Bradford) analyses an 'overlooked type of word-formation', namely dummy-compounds built from a lexical element mentioned earlier in the context as the first constituent plus a largely desemanticised lexeme such as *-thing* or *-sache* (e.g. *diese Titelblatt-Sache*) as the compound head. Unfortunately for a volume on *German Studies*, the vast majority of his examples are English ones: German examples serve mainly for comparative purposes. Furthermore, the main addressees of this article seem to be general linguists, with whom he has a bone to pick for having 'overlooked' this type of nonce word-formation. However, the generalist and comparative perspective does provide interesting insights into differences between the ways these formations are used in the two languages. Hohenhaus first discusses 'primary' dummy-compounds such as *thing, business, bit* or *-Sache, -Geschichte,* which are largely similar in that the compound heads have 'an abstract and extremely open sense close to that of the pronouns *it* or *something'*. They are usually interchangeable (e.g. *diese Titelblatt-Geschichte* as an alternative to ....-*Sache*), and the compounds take an obligatory definite determiner. The only inter-language contrast he notes is the existence of a competing construction in German *Das mit + dative object .....*, which does not have an exact equivalent in English. Among 'secondary', i.e. more specialised dummy-compounds, he distinguishes between derogatory ones, i.e. X(noun) + *stuff, nonsense, rubbish* or *-Kram, -Quatsch, -Mist* (plus the usual four-letter suspects), which again are largely similar in both languages, and personal deixis compounds, some of which are also derogatory, e.g. *Versicherungsmensch, -kerl, -typ, -tante* or *-fritze*. Here, he notes that in English it is possible to use a proper name as the first constituent, with the full compound having the same referent (e.g. that *Dempsey chap, character, guy* = Mr Dempsey), which, he claims, does not exist in German; thus a *Kohlmann* is someone who works for Mr. Kohl, not Mr. Kohl himself. However, this need not be necessarily so: it is, for instance, imaginable that during an election campaign derogatory compounds such as

dieser Schröder-/Stoiber-Heini are being used, if not in a public interview, then at least at the respective *Stammtischrunden*. However, given the lack of empirical data, such hypotheses are speculative. As Hohenhaus himself states, such questions can best be addressed by using 'the methods of corpus linguistics'.

Nils Langer (Bristol) presents results of an extensive study of the auxiliary verb *tun*, which was particularly widespread in the Early New High German period and still exists in most modern German dialects in a way similar to its English cognate, i.e. auxiliary *do*. His hypothesis is that 'contrary to the prevalent opinion in the research literature, auxiliary *tun* is in fact not polyfunctional but without function and that it is this lack of grammatical specificity that enables it to occur in a large and divergent variety of distributions in German'. In particular, his criticism focuses on some formulations in the research literature that describe *tun* as a 'polyfunctional grammatical marker'. Against this he insists on the distinction of the mere 'ability' of a given lexical element to carry a certain feature (such as mood, aspect, or tense) in a grammatical sentence, and its function as a *marker* that always signals the feature in question. The auxiliary *tun* does indeed have the ability to carry – as Langer's survey of various corpora of Modern German dialects shows – grammatical features such as subjunctive, present and past tense, durative and habitual aspect as well as focus. Langer's point is that this ubiquity of use should not be interpreted as evidence of *tun* being a polyfunctional marker but rather a 'semantically vacuous' dummy auxiliary that 'can be inserted in the auxiliary position without adding a semantic interpretation'. Given the impressive amount of evidence of the multi-purpose utilisation of *tun* in modern dialects, the point seems well-proven for contemporary German, and as regards the historical aspects (West Germanic and Early New High German) Langer announces two forthcoming publications.

A suggestion for the organisation of future volumes would be to group papers more closely together on thematic grounds, rather than just following the three broad CUTG 'strands'. Reershemius, Winifred Davies and Langer, for example, all fall within the area of dialect linguistics, Reershemius and Winifred Davies especially raising corresponding issues (sociolinguistic aspects of dialect and standard varieties). Horan/Fandrych and Hall could be grouped together, as both address didactic problems of ITC-based applications in DaF-

teaching. One other point concerns the formatting of tables, which are frequently split at page boundaries, making them, in some cases, almost unusable. These minor points aside, the very scope of this volume should ensure its interest to a wide cross-section of Germanists. The intention of the CUTG series to present a broad-based overview of work currently being undertaken in the UK is certainly realised here.