

Annual Conference of the  
**German Studies Association of Ireland (GSAI)**  
Maynooth University  
26-27 November 2021

***Blending in interkulturellen Kontexten***

<b>Friday, 26 November 2021</b> <b>Venue: Online, Microsoft Teams</b>	
<b>2.30pm</b>	Opening by Dr Thomas Nader (Austrian Ambassador to Ireland) & Mr Robert Henneberg (Head of Culture and Communications, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany)
<b>2.45pm - 3.45pm</b>	<u>Chair:</u> Dr Cordula Böcking (Maynooth University)  <b>Paper 1: Leeking – an international blog project</b>  Ms Judith Eberharter, Leeds University  <b>Paper 2: Telecollaboration for Intercultural Learning – German native speaker speech vs lingua franca interactions</b>  Mr Mario Beppato, Maynooth University
<b>3.45pm – 4.00pm</b>	Break
<b>4.00pm – 5.00pm</b>	<u>Chair:</u> Dr Clive W. Earls (Maynooth University)  <b><i>Blending in interkulturellen Kontexten</i></b>  Prof (Emeritus) Arnd Witte
<b>5.00pm – 6.00pm</b>	Drinks Reception and Launch of <i>Germanistik in Ireland</i>

**Saturday, 27 November 2021**  
**Venue: Online, Microsoft Teams**

<p><b>9.30am – 10.30am</b></p>	<p><u>Chair:</u> Dr Britta Jung (Maynooth University)</p> <p><b>Paper 1: Biography through Technology: Teaching (re)design and self-development in the Pandemic 2020-21</b></p> <p>Dr Claire Reilly, University College Cork Prof Maik Arnold, University of Applied Sciences Dresden</p> <p><b>Paper 2: New Project – Promoting German Studies in Ireland</b></p> <p>Prof Gisela Holfter, University of Limerick Dr Marieke Krajenbrink, University of Limerick Dr Joseph Twist, University College Dublin Dr Michaela Schrage-Früh, NUI Galway</p>
<p><b>10.30am - 11.00am</b></p>	<p>Break</p>
<p><b>11.00am – 12.45pm</b></p>	<p><b>GSAI AGM</b></p>
<p><b>1.00pm - 2.00pm</b></p>	<p>Lunch</p>
<p><b>2.00pm - 3.15pm</b></p>	<p><u>Chair:</u> Dr Linda Shortt (Maynooth University)</p> <p><b>Paper 1: Blended Lives - The Bividual of Heinrich von Kleist</b></p> <p>Dr Rachel MagShamhráin, University College Cork</p> <p><b>Paper 2: Tanz als Möglichkeitsform des Schreibens über Erinnerungsräume: Katja Petrowskajas <i>Vielleicht Esther</i> und Anna Burns' <i>Milkman</i></b></p> <p>Dr Sabine Egger, Mary Immaculate College University of Limerick</p> <p><u>Close</u></p>

To register please visit: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/german-studies-association-of-ireland-annual-conference-2021-tickets-208601070417>

## CONTRIBUTIONS

### Judith Eberhart

#### **Leeking – an international blog project**

This talk will explore how an international blog can be used as an authentic teaching method (Herrington & Kervin, 2007) that reaches beyond the classroom by outlining a project established in 2016 that was designed to build connections between continents – Leeking, an international project between the University of Leeds and the Peking University in China. The project created a platform for German students based in each institution to submit German language blog posts that shared ideas, experiences and interests. The initiative encouraged students to comment on the entries of their peers, and the students in both institutions were assessed on their entries. Feedback was generally positive, with students appreciating the format, the freedom to choose the topic they wrote about, and the international character of the blog. During this talk I will present example blog posts to show the kinds of topics that students chose to write about, and discuss some of the benefits and disadvantages in hosting an international blog between China and the UK. Ultimately, I argue that blogs open new possibilities for developing applied language skills and help creating a feeling of an international German studies community, which is especially relevant in the current context of the Covid-19 outbreak, and the increasing digitisation of the classroom.

<https://leekingblog.wordpress.com>

Herrington, J & Kervin, L 2007, 'Authentic learning supported by technology: 10 suggestions and cases of integration in classrooms', *Educational Media International*, 44(3), 219-236.

**Judith Eberharter MA** studied applied Linguistics in Salzburg and Rome. After an internship at the Ovidius University in Constanta/ Romania Ms Eberharter returned to Innsbruck where she worked several years with NGOs teaching German as a Second Language and literacy classes, focusing especially on the development of materials for adult learning. In 2016 she joined the University of Leeds as OeAD-Lektorin. In this position she organised and hosted several events like the Austrian Shorts, the writeAUT literature competition and the poetry slam Leeds-Hull. In 2020 she was rewarded the full fellowship of the Higher Education Academy and since September she is the permanent lecturer for German language and Austrian culture at the University of Leeds.

## **Sabine Egger**

### **Tanz als Möglichkeitsform des Schreibens über Erinnerungsräume: Katja Petrowskajas *Vielleicht Esther* und Anna Burns' *Milkman***

Katja Petrowskajas autobiographische Erzählung *Vielleicht Esther* (2014) und der Roman der nordirischen Autorin Anna Burns, *Milkman* (2018), der 2020 auf Deutsch erschien, entwerfen eine zeitgenössische Ästhetik des Tanzes. In beiden Texten fungiert Tanz als Topos und Möglichkeitsform des Schreibens über gemeinsame Erinnerungs- und Erfahrungsräume. Dabei, so meine These, werden bestehende kulturelle, politische und zeitliche Grenzlinien und Gedächtnisorte durch die tänzerische Bewegung des erzählenden Ichs, anderer Figuren und des Erzählmodus transformiert. Es entsteht ein „transkultureller Erinnerungsraum“ (Erll) bzw. ‚Erfahrungsraum‘. Die Bewegungen erzeugen selbstreferentielle tänzerische ‚Wirklichkeiten‘, deren paradoxe Struktur zugleich dazu führt, dass sie über sich hinaus auf Kontexte und Kontingenzen verweisen, die für ihr Verständnis wichtig sind (Brandstetter). Gefragt werden soll nach der Funktion verschiedener Formen von Bewegung und Korporalität/Leiblichkeit für die Entstehung von Erinnerungs- und Erfahrungsräumen.

**Sabine Egger, Dr. phil. (HU Berlin), MA Germanistik, Anglistik und VWL (Köln);** lehrt am Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick und ist Co-Direktorin des Irish Centre for Transnational Studies. Neuere Publikationen umfassen *Sarmatien - Germania Slavica - Mitteleuropa. Vom Grenzland im Osten über Johannes Bobrowskis Utopie zur Ästhetik des Grenzraums*, hg. mit S. Hajduk and B. C. Jung. Göttingen: V & R, 2021; *Dance and Modernism in Irish and German Literature and Culture. Connections in Motion*, hg. mit C. Foley and M. Harper. Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2019.

## **Dr Rachel MagShamhráin**

### **Blended Lives: The Bividual of Heinrich von Kleist**

The murder-suicide of Heinrich von Kleist and Henriette Vogel (at least his second choice in this undertaking; he had hoped to tempt his cousin Marie into a pact) attempted to make of the singularity of his death a joint but not equal experience, while simultaneously reenforcing the tragic and ingenious singularity of his life (in this, he liked to compare himself to Jesus and Socrates). It reiterates a pattern of bividuality already being conceived in his early communications to his betrothed, Wilhelmine von Zenge (“wenn beide, Mann u. Frau, für einander thun, was sie ihrer Natur nach vermögen, wer verliert von

beiden am meisten, wenn Einer zuerst stirbt?“) and in his essay on the formulation of thoughts while speaking in which an imagined, silent female interlocutor - Mirabeau's maid is the model - helps to give birth to his ideas by looking as though she might at any moment interrupt (“es liegt ein sichtbarer Quell der Begeisterung für denjenigen, der spricht, in einem menschlichen Antlitz, das ihm gegenübersteht.”). Two heads, two bodies, one thinking-speaking entity. Its artistic formulation is perhaps at its clearest in his *Penthesilea* where she, the Amazon-queen-warrior, quite literally incorporates her beloved by an accidental act of cannibalism, and, upon bividuating, takes her own life (and his digested life a second time).

If suicide is to be understood as the ultimate assertion of the autonomy of the I and of the I's sovereignty over the self at the very moment of its self-annihilation, murder-suicide (or more kindly, the suicide pact) involves, in its apparent annihilation of the distinction between subject and other, something else, but nothing so generous as a merging of identities. What emerges rather, I argue, is a hybrid figure, the author (and his corpus) as monstrous bidual whose disrespect for those foundational grammatical boundaries, paves the way for a culture of incorporation that keeps the Kleist-corpse alive to this day.

**Dr Rachel MagShamhráin** lectures in the Department of German, UCC.

### **Dr Maik Arnold & Dr Claire O'Reilly**

#### **Biography through Technology: Teaching (re)design and self-development in the Pandemic 2020-21**

In 2020-21, against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, universities around the globe had to find pedagogical solutions amidst lockdowns and campus closures to ensure the continuity of existing programmes. For students whose mobility plans (Erasmus+) had been derailed, a new module was designed to bring some of the foreign language and intercultural learning benefits inherent in the year abroad into the student's virtual learning space. To this end, two authors, from Ireland (University College Cork) and Germany (University of Applied Sciences Dresden), created a Virtual Exchange [VE\*] whose primary focus was life-writing and biography; students were tasked with the remit of conducting interviews in the FL to capture and interpret the lives of their peers on WordPress or an e-portfolio platform. Applying a mixed-method approach (including anonymous written feedback, oral plenary group discussion and written reflection of the project itself), this paper will present and discuss the learning outcomes in this VE. It will be seen that language progression was an outcome as hoped, but what was striking was the self-confidence and growth in personal and cultural learning arising from the German-

Irish dyads. It will be argued that life writing, with a focus on biographical methods and exchange, therefore not only increased motivation and confidence to use the German the students had, but that self-development and increased (cultural and self) awareness was a significant finding from the project. Finally, based on a reflection of this project, we will discuss changes being made to a second iteration of this module in 2021-2022. Research presented in this paper is supported by the Reflective Practitioner approach (in particular Schön, 1983) and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) paradigm, which is widely understood as a systematic and methodologically supported reflection of one's own teaching.

\*Virtual Exchange (VE), also known as Online Intercultural Exchange (OIE), or for many years simply as telecollaboration, involves internet-mediated intercultural engagement between classes in geographically distant locations or cultural contexts under the guidance of expert facilitators or educators (cf. Guth, Helm & O'Dowd 2014; Nishio, Fujikake & Osawa 2020). With over 20 years practice in Higher Education, VE is well recognised as one of the most significant online pedagogical strategies for developing Foreign Language (FL) communication skills and intercultural awareness (Curtindale, Krylova & Minyurova 2020; O'Dowd & Dooly 2020; O'Dowd & O'Rourke 2019).

### **Works Cited**

- Curtindale, L. M., Krylova, S. G., & Minyurova, S. A. (2020). Interdependent intercultural task as a tool for developing intercultural awareness through Collaborative Online International Learning in Global Leadership. *Journal of Virtual Exchange*, 3 (SI-IVEC2019), 81–92. Doi: 10.21827/jve.3.35803.
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- O'Dowd, R., & O'Rourke, B. (2019). New developments in virtual exchange for foreign language education. *Language Learning & Technology*, 23(3), 1-7.
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**Dr Maik Arnold** is Professor for Non-Profit-Management and Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Transfer at University of Applied Science Dresden. He has published widely in the areas of Management Education and Learning, Intercultural Communication and Competence, Digital Education and Change Management and Qualitative Empirical Research. He has held several posts at home and abroad including in Bochum, Oxford and New Delhi. He is a member of board of the International Association of Social Work Management (INAS e.V.), representative of the German Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Network and Trainer for Cross-Cultural Competence and Systemic Coach.

**Dr Claire O'Reilly** is Lecturer in German at University College Cork. She has a BA (Law and European Studies) from the University of Limerick and has studied at the University of Education, Karlsruhe, Friedrich Schiller University of Jena (Prof. Dr Jürgen Bolten) and the University of Regensburg (Prof. Dr Alexander Thomas), where she also undertook postdoctoral research in 2001-2002 (in "Austauschforschung" funded by the RIA and DAAD). She came to University College Cork in 2005 from Chemnitz University of Technology where she held a position as Assistant Professor (*Juniorprofessur*) in Intercultural Training and International Relations from 2002. She has published in the areas of Irish-German relations and selected biographies, Intercultural Communication, and more recently on Virtual Exchange. Claire has acted as a referee for peer reviewed journals such as Study Abroad Research (SAR), Info DaF, the Journal of Virtual Exchange, and for monographs (Manchester University Press; Peter Lang, Oxford, and others). She was co-chair of the German Studies Association of Ireland (2014-2016), and has been Programme Coordinator of the BComm International (German) in UCC since 2005.

**Prof Gisela Holfter, University of Limerick**

**Dr Marieke Krajenbrink, University of Limerick**

**Dr Joseph Twist, University College Dublin**

**Dr Michaela Schrage-Früh, NUI Galway**

**"New Project – Promoting German Studies in Ireland"**

This paper will present the project "Promoting German Studies in Ireland - Exploring the past, enhancing the current position, and working towards 250 years of German Studies in Ireland".

## Arnd Witte

### ***Blending* und Integration im ganzheitlichen interkulturellen Fremdsprachenlernen: Mentale Räume und leibliche Erfahrung**

Das kognitive Konzept des *Blending* operiert mit der Konzeption autonomer Individuen und (mindestens) vier distinkten konzeptuellen Räumen, die sich im Erkenntnisprozess gegenseitig durchdringen und miteinander auf der kognitiv-sprachlichen Ebene verschmelzen. Diese rein kognitionszentrierte Sichtweise vernachlässigt die somatische Nische der Leibgebundenheit allen menschlichen Verstehens und Handelns, d.h. die präreflexive Vorformung kognitiver und handlungsbezogener Prozesse durch den sinnlichen, spürenden und atmosphärisch-resonanten Leib, der als vorbewusster Vermittler der materiellen und soziokulturellen Welt fungiert. Durch die präreflexiven Einschwingungsprozesse im zwischenleiblichen Umgang mit Anderen und Anderem wird von Kindheit an ein habituelles und soziokulturell eingebettetes Leibgedächtnis handelnd erschaffen, in dem praktische Leibeserfahrungen sedimentiert werden. Dieses vorbewusste Leibgedächtnis beinhaltet ein generatives Vermögen spontanen Wahrnehmens, Verhaltens, Handelns und Fühlens im praktischen Lebensvollzug, gerade auch in durch Unsicherheit geprägten interkulturellen Situationen. Man spürt unmittelbar, dass einem etwas ‚gegen den Strich‘ geht oder ‚auf den Magen schlägt‘, *bevor* man seine Interaktions- oder Handlungsintention verbalisieren kann. Das Konzept des Leibes und Leibgedächtnisses befreit die Kognition und Kompetenz aus der traditionellen Verortung im Kopf und definieren sie als emergierend in Prozessen des wechselseitigen Einschwingens von Kognition, Leib und soziokultureller Umgebung. Insofern ist das kognitionsorientierte Konzept der interkulturellen Kompetenz um eine affektiv-handlungsorientierte und performativ-situationale Komponente zu ergänzen, die die Möglichkeit präreflexiver Leibeserfahrungen und impliziten Wissens einschließt.

**Arnd Witte** war bis 2021 ordentlicher Professor für *Modern Languages* an der *Maynooth University*. Vor Beginn seiner Dozentenlaufbahn am *St. Patricks College* Maynooth arbeitete er als DAAD-Lektor in England und Nigeria sowie als *Assistant Lecturer* am UCD. Sein Forschungsinteresse gilt interkulturellen Aspekten des Fremdsprachenunterrichts, insbesondere dem Konzept der Interkulturellen Kompetenz; in diesem Feld hat er umfassend publiziert.