



1999

MBS/MA British Studies

2019

The anniversary yearbook

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Letter from the Editor

Kelsey Haddorff



This year, we are celebrating 20 years of the MBS/MABS programme at the Centre for British Studies. While our theme is “20 Years in the Past, 20 Years in the Future”, this magazine primarily celebrates the past and present of the programme.

This magazine was started with a simple idea: a yearbook displaying the photos of every class since the programme’s inauguration. However, it has evolved into something more. Underneath this cover, you will find numerous articles from our journalists which I hope you will find both enlightening and entertaining.

The goal of this magazine is not just to serve as a supplement to the event itself, but also to become a lasting keepsake of the event that you can take home with you.

Of course, the Programme and Exhibition teams will take centre stage on the day of the event, and I’m excited to see what they have planned. There will be something for every taste - from the musical performances and the earnest panel discussion to the interactive map and the photo exhibition showcasing the “Traces of Britishness in Berlin”. With everything they have planned, I doubt you’ll have much time to take a look at the pieces in this magazine during the event. But I urge you to give it a read afterwards, as well as listen to our podcast, which will feature some fascinating interviews with students.

As I reflect on everything leading up to this event, I find the most amazing aspect is that each and every member of my class has participated in some way. This is impressive, especially considering we are the largest MABS class in the history of the Centre. You might think that trying to plan an event from scratch with 39 people and almost no budget is a recipe for chaos, and in some ways, chaos it was. But with the help of our three Project Managers, who I need to thank for all of their incredibly hard work, we’ve managed to find a way to pull this all together.

Most importantly, having so many people in our class also meant having so much talent at our disposal: we have our very own musicians and actors, writers and photographers, filmmakers and artists. Moreover, so many enthusiastic people have contributed their creative ideas and their skills – leadership, organizational, and communicative – in order to make it possible. Working on this event has made me appreciate the diverse, talented, and devoted group of people the MABS programme attracts!

20 Years...

20 Classes

A celebration of 20 years of the British Studies programme wouldn't be complete without a look back at all of the classes throughout the years. Join us for a trip back in time complete with some of each year's most notable events in Britain!

1999



House of Lords Act 1999 removes most hereditary peers from the House of Lords.

2000



4 August 2000 - Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother celebrates her hundredth birthday.

2001



In the General Election on 7 June, Labour achieves a second landslide victory.

Parliament bids farewell to retiring member and former Conservative PM Edward Heath, and says hello to newcomer and future Conservative PM David Cameron.

2002



40 years after the first James Bond film was made, the twentieth film *Die Another Day* is released, the last to star Pierce Brosnan as 007.

Princess Margaret, the Queen's younger sister, dies aged 71.

2003



The novel *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* is released to the public.

President Vladimir Putin becomes the first Russian head of state to make a state visit to Britain since Tsar Alexander II in 1874.

2004



Great Britain participates in the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens winning a total of 9 gold, 9 silver and 12 bronze medals.

In September, Parliament is suspended after pro-hunt campaigners break into the House of Commons. Two months later, Parliament passes the Hunting Act 2004 banning fox hunting in England and Wales.

2005



Charles, The Prince of Wales, is married to his long time love Camilla Parker Bowles in a ceremony at the Windsor Guildhall.

Tony Blair leads the Labour party to a historic third term in government.

2006



Queen Elizabeth II celebrates her 80th birthday.

River Thames whale: juvenile female northern bottlenose whale is discovered swimming in the River Thames in London.

2007



Gordon Brown becomes the new Prime Minister after Tony Blair resigns, having served as Prime Minister for 10 years.

Alex Salmond becomes the first member of the Scottish National Party to hold the post of First Minister of Scotland in the Scottish Parliament.

2008



The financial crisis rocks the UK and Europe; in the UK Northern Rock Bank is nationalized amidst the crisis.

Team GB has a positive showing at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, winning 19 gold medals.

2009



Susan Boyle stuns the world with a breakout performance on *Britain's Got Talent*.

Matt Smith is named as the new Doctor Who, replacing David Tennant.

2010



The eruption of Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull results in planes across Europe being grounded, with Great Britain being hit amongst the hardest.

Elections result in a hung parliament, leading to a coalition between the Conservative party, led by David Cameron, and the Liberal Democrats.

2011



21 by Londoner Adele is released with chart-topping hits such as "Rolling in the Deep," "Set Fire to the Rain," and "Rumour Has It".

Marriage of Prince William and Catherine (Kate) Middleton in conjunction with a bank holiday. Students overjoyed by four-day weekend.

2012



A year of festivities: the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II results in commemorative events all around the Commonwealth and the Summer Olympics are held in London.

Signing of the Edinburgh Agreement, laying out terms of a Scottish Independence referendum.

2013



Parliament passes legislation legalizing same-sex marriage in England and Wales.

On 8 April, Margaret Thatcher dies aged 87.

2014



Scottish Independence Referendum is narrowly turned down. Scottish National Party membership tripled in two weeks after referendum.

Church of England takes steps to allow women bishops.

2015



Birth of Princess Charlotte, the second child of Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, and Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge.

Nadiya Hussain becomes the first non-white winner of *The Great British Bake-off*.

2016



The UK decides to leave the European Union as a result of the referendum held on 23 June.

David Cameron resigns and Theresa May, former Home Secretary, becomes the second female Prime Minister of the UK.

2017



Prince Philip, aged 96, announces he is retiring from making official appearances.

The devolved government in Northern Ireland collapses in January due to ongoing disagreements between the DUP and Sinn Féin.

2018



The wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle is held at St George's Chapel, Windsor, with an estimated global audience of 1.9 billion.

England reaches the semi-final of the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia.

Alumni Photos



Looking Back: 20 Years of MA British Studies

By Gesa Stedman

1999: the beginning of the first-ever year of the Master in British Studies. Excitement, panic, would it work out? It did. But by Christmas, everyone was exhausted by the sheer amount of teaching we had decided would be a good idea for the students and for us. What had looked great on paper was actually more than anyone could manage, so the first reform occurred very early on: we returned to a normal semester pattern, no extra teaching during the holidays, and reduced the requirements in terms of hours for everyone. 2000: a sudden decline in applicants made the next group tiny, and not very easy to handle. One was a Stalinist, one wanted to marry every female member of staff... 2001: relief. Lots of applicants, excellent students, a great year with many interesting careers to follow. Plain sailing ever after? Not quite. We wanted to reform the course as it developed, making it first of all less personalised and dependant on certain specific people teaching it, and then we adapted it to become more interdisciplinary and research-oriented, in addition to university-wide changes for all master's programmes. That took time and energy, but according to the students, made the MA a better programme. We also had to weather three challenges to close us or re-shape us. All three attempts were overcome, not least because our MA course and its by now great amount of excellent alumni convinced sceptics of the usefulness of having a Centre for British Studies and an MA British Studies, one of the most



Gesa Stedman, Professor of British Culture and Literature and Director of the Centre for British Studies.

international programmes the HU has to offer, and one with the largest number of graduates compared to its relatively small size. We are therefore confident that we will be able to weather all future attempts to make life difficult for us – be it Brexit, constant administrative reform, over-assessment as required by university regulations, or any other irksome outside disturbance. The reason we think we can pull it off again, with a new reform of the third semester pending to adapt it to advanced student skills, is the belief in our students. They challenge us every year, and the challenges are always new, due to the unpredictable combination of nationalities, first degrees, and personalities. It is a chance to be allowed to continue working like this, and a privilege which most other lecturers envy. The next 20 years are therefore welcome to come along – we will meet them head on, supported by our alumni and students!

First Connect for Prospective Students at the GBZ

By Nino Tevzadze & Evelina Bazaeva

Catherine Smith is one of the few representatives from the United Kingdom who has worked at the GBZ for 20 years and has witnessed the development of the Centre first hand. She remains the first contact for the students applying to the programme. Each year, the around 100 applications reaching the selection committee have to go through her.

The admission process might seem daunting and intimidating for any student embarking on a new academic journey. As all the deadlines are rapidly approaching and your anxiety is depriving you of sleep, Catherine is always there to help navigate you through this notorious "season of stress".

We've decided to conduct a small interview to learn about her unique experience of working at the Centre for British Studies from its inception.

1. What was the incentive behind your decision to move to Germany?

I needed to see something else of the world apart from the industrial town that I was brought up in. I could have gone to other European countries - I did, in fact, get offers from Iceland and France. I was (and still am) very interested in Europe, in its languages, cultures and history. At the time I was offered a job here, in the still-divided Berlin, and thought this place would be really cool to experience.

2. What is the most appealing aspect of being the part of the GBZ community?



Catherine Smith at the Centre for British Studies

The chance to get to know people from completely different cultures, and then realising how much we actually have in common.

3. Having worked at the Centre for 20 years, how has the Centre evolved over this period of time?

Radically. Changes take place every few years. It mostly has to do with the academic staff, due to the nature of limited contracts. It makes for a regular flood of new ideas. Technology has changed much as well, of course. Some of it for the best, some of it... not so much.

We have also moved offices from the very dusty and lonely Jägerstraße just around the corner to this present building which is much more pleasant to work in. The staff and students are brought closer together - but not too close!’ Despite the obstacles faced by the Centre as a whole due to decisions of those in power, we have managed not only to continue, but also to learn from these mishaps and make something good out of them. Now we have more students and colleagues/guests/networks attached to the Centre than ever before, as well as a graduate school.

4. Year 2018 has set the record in terms of the number of applicants. Was it particularly difficult to manage the application process?

It was obviously more challenging than in previous years, but it worked. Our worries were how to provide enough room in the classrooms and to make sure we have enough qualified people to manage the thesis supervisions later on.

5. How do you see the Centre 20 years from now?

I won’t be here! Obviously I would like to see it continue, building on what it already has, growing strong despite adversaries. The work is there and can be expanded upon. There is a lot of areas for growth - creativity, international relations, networking, research...

6. What are the funniest questions you have received from students throughout the years?

Where can I start ...

Right at the beginning one student couldn’t believe that I had actually come to Germany and was allowed to come here without getting married first.



Catherine with her daughter Cecilie at Buckingham Palace

One very emotionally-charged student often came to both Corinna and myself and told us he loved us on bended knee.

First day at lunchtime one year: we went to the mensa with the students and one of them remarked to me that I speak very good English. Thank you, I replied; that’s very kind of you. Then I smiled and told him that I am English. He looked very worried, stared repeatedly, said he didn’t believe it and insisted I was German.

Accommodation searches: One student couldn’t understand why she was getting ‘special offers’ from men when she wrote to people looking for a flat. I suggested to her to change her email address which included ‘xxx’ alongside her name.

One student suggested that we don’t do lessons on Monday morning, so that he could have time to do his washing.

Locked in his flat with his flatmate gone to London with the key to the flat, one student informed us by email of his case and that he couldn’t come to lessons because he was locked in. The case was proven by the fact that his fellow students kept him alive by sending pizzas up to the flat via the balcony.

Catching Up with Professor Eisenberg

By Buzz Stoner

Professor Christiane Eisenberg joined the faculty of the Centre for British Studies in 1998. Over the course of her career as a scholar at the Centre she has published a number of major works, and has served as the Director of the British Studies programme from 2008 to 2010 and 2013 to 2015. We decided to catch up with Prof. Eisenberg to see what she has been working on recently.

1. What is special about the Centre for British Studies as a workplace?

As a staff member I enjoy that the institute is 'small and beautiful' and has a team that works well together. A part of the staff has been with us for years, some of them from the very beginning. From this continuity comes the paradoxical effect that you can react quickly to changing circumstances, but also that you can experiment.

As a teacher, I always find the lessons in the master course a challenge, because the discussions, depending on the composition of the student body and the resulting group dynamics, are less predictable than, for example, in history seminars. This is sometimes exhausting, also because it makes it more difficult to complete the programmes, but also extremely stimulating. Another special feature is the possibility to observe the sometimes astonishing professional and personal development of individual students during the two years with us.

2. What are you currently working on?

I'm investigating a mental history issue. It deals with the time around 1700, when the Bank of England

and other institutions of British capitalism emerged and the framework of economic decision-making changed within a few years without people being able to name these changes precisely. The word "capitalism", which brings this new quality of economic activity to the term, did not emerge until the 19th century; until then everything was "commerce" or - if it went particularly well - "doux commerce". Therefore, my task is to reconstruct the modes of perception and action.



Christianne Eisenberg, Professor of British History and Society at GBZ

What I want to know is: Which new economic techniques, rules, expectations and attitudes developed during this crucial time? And what foundations were laid for later developments? The two fields of investigation that I relate to each other for this research are modern financial markets and sporting activities fostered as an entertainment culture.

3. Your most recent book "The Rise of Market Society in England, 1066-1800" is a serious tome covering almost 800 years of British history. How was the process of writing the book?

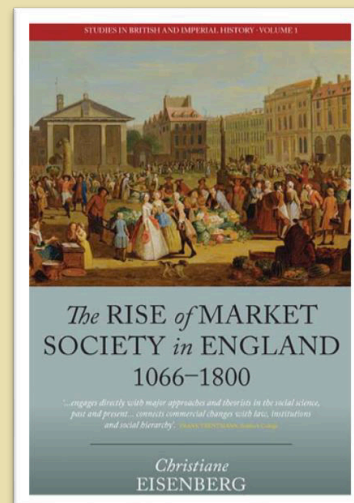
In many respects the book has grown out of teaching, as many students will have noticed, who I have bothered with this topic. This realization of Humboldt's ideal of the unity of research and teaching arose from the requirement that when I entered the GBZ I had to open up many areas of British history for myself. Although I had written a dissertation and also a habilitation thesis in this field of research, I simply had no idea of many of the topics I was now to teach. The seminars at the GBZ were therefore always my learning opportunity.

The focus on market, market relations and the market economy can also be explained by the fact that I wanted to approach the diverse group of MABS students, who come to us every year from all over the world with a very individual educational biography, with a topic that concerned them all. Because it is the international entanglement of markets of all kinds - education markets, labour markets, consumer markets - and the associated infrastructure of rights, means of transport and cultural transfers that has brought our students to Berlin. In the early years of the Master's course, students from Eastern Europe and China in particular demanded teaching courses on this field of research because their home countries were in a state of transformation. Many students showed interest in Britain not least

because it was a successful Western market economy.

4. Was covering such a large swath of British history difficult?

Yes and no. On the one hand, it is a challenge to look at 1000 years of British history, and as a young doctoral student I would never have even thought of starting such a project. On the other hand, I proceeded step by step, more precisely: as a historian of the 19th and 20th centuries, I worked my way into the early modern period and the Middle Ages. In addition, there is the built-in advantage of the historical profession that one accumulates knowledge with increasing professional experience, and then the need arises to sort it out in a meaningful way.



The Rise of Market Society in England, 1066-1800 by Christiane Eisenberg

5. What drew you to focus on British economic history? And specifically, what inspires your focus on the connections between sport and commerce?

Because of my education I am neither an economist nor an economic historian, in fact I am very opposed to the tendency of these disciplines towards schematic explanations or

even mathematical formulas. I am rather a social and cultural historian interested in the history of the economy and economics. And this also includes the question of which - possibly unsolvable - problems of modernity have led to the habit that models and formulas such as those used by the Economists have become necessary at all.

One of the answers is that some economic transactions - such as money flows or trade over long distances - are neither visible nor otherwise sensitively perceptible to the actors. This explains many people's habit of looking at the economy through the spectacles of sport. In this way, people have created a field for learning and experimentation.

Economists also know about these popular economics, but they regard them as unprofessional and smile at them. For me, as a social and cultural historian, observing this way of observation opens up a lifeworld approach to the study of the economy and the change of mentalities. The prerequisite for the productive use of this indirect method, however, is the willingness to understand not only the economy as historically variable, but also the sporting spectacles through which it is observed. Although the lenses have been repeatedly adjusted over time, those who improve their visual acuity in this way tend to forget that they have spectacles on their noses.

A Conversation With Professor Jürgen Schlaeger

By Tugba Baycan

Although retired, Professor Schlaeger still has a big presence here at the GBZ. We thought we'd ask him some questions to get to know him a bit better.

1. Where you are from, where do you live and what you like to do in your free time?

I was born during WW2 in a small town near Berlin where I lived and went to school until 1952 when I moved to West Germany to join my parents. I came to Berlin in 1995 as founding director of the Centre.

Insofar as 'free time' means time in which I could and can do what I like, I have spent most of it reading, thinking, writing and travelling. For people whose profession it is to teach and do research the separation between 'work' and 'free time' does not really make sense.

2. As I am quite impressed by your awe-inspiring and busy biography, I am curious about how you feel about your accomplishments?

It feels alright, although there are lots of things I wish I would have been able to spend more time on. But as the Romans used to say: "ars longa, vita brevis". Of course, in a long professional life there are bound to be insights and skills you acquire only after immersing yourself for many years in certain topics and questions. In so far, the old formula 'the older the wiser' still has some validity and, as a consequence, themes you dealt

with 20 or 30 years ago always tend to look slightly or significantly different in hindsight: this is only too natural and as such, not something to be regretted.

3. Do you prefer research or teaching? Why? How do you balance?

If the students you teach merely turn up because they have to, teaching is not very attractive, but if you have students who are lively, interesting and curious, teaching can be sheer pleasure and often very inspiring. So, it depends. Equally, there is research in which you engage because colleagues have asked you to join in and make the project they have designed more attractive or diverse to some funding organisation. Then, if this application is successful, you have to spend the following years doing it. In such a situation research can be a burden rather than a pleasure because it prevents you from doing other things you would love to do.

4. Could you please tell us about the book you are currently working on?

*The book I am working on at the moment will be called *Selves in Transit* and will deal with the transformation of 'writing the self' from the Renaissance to the present.*

5. Do you think that the importance of British cultural studies has grown in light of the UK's departure from the EU?

The Centre is not a Centre for British Cultural Studies but a Centre for British Studies – and this difference marks a significant shift in emphasis. However much

Brexit is to be regretted, it will not change the position of the Centre as an academic institution which is designed to teach and do multidisciplinary research on the UK as in many ways a unique place.

6. How do you view the UK-German relationship in the context of how this partnership affects students' understandings of the UK?

All along it has been our ambition to equip our students who we recruit from all over the world with all they need to understand how Britain and the British 'tick'. In that sense what we have been and are doing is good for both countries. After all it is the German taxpayer who pays for all this and it is valuable for Britain to have an academic institution that has turned out generations of students for 20 years now, students who have a deeper understanding of and attachment to what characterises Britain.

7. Looking back on your time as a student, are there any tips or suggestions you could give to current and future students regarding being a member of the MBS/MABS programme?

Einstein once said: "I am not particularly intelligent, I am, however, boundlessly curious." So, even if you consider your chances of becoming another Einstein to be slim, keep an open mind, never give up and remember: academic study is a long distance affair and requires the ability to defer gratification. Hard work in spite of the frustrations, deadlocks and burdensome journeys that accompany it will invariably pay off in due course.

The GBZ 10-Year Photo Challenge

Emre Altuntas

As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the MBS/MABS programme, and the incredible journey of the Centre, we wanted to also highlight those who have been with us since the first step. Here are some fun photos of our beloved faculty members taken over the past 20 years at the Centre.





OXFORD-BERLIN PARTNERSHIP



Since the signing of a memorandum of understanding for a strategic research partnership in 2017, the University of Oxford and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (together with the other 3 institutions within the Berlin University Alliance) have been making progress towards forging new forms of Anglo-German academic exchange. Within this collaborative framework, the Centre for British Studies has contributed its share to the establishment of connections with its Oxford colleagues. Thus, at the beginning of 2018, the Centre brought Oxford and HU researchers in social sciences and humanities together to explore various opportunities of prospective bilateral projects and funding programmes for academics and researchers.

March 2018 saw the Centre become an important venue for another major discussion as part of the Oxford-Berlin collaboration, resulting in the foundation of the Oxford-Berlin Literary Studies Network (initiated by Wadham College, Trinity College and the Centre for British Studies accordingly), as well as three future projects involving Oxford, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Freie Universität in 2019.

The Centre for British Studies also attracted doctoral students and postdocs to the first Oxford-Berlin Graduate Workshop in October 2019. A number of such bilateral meetings will be followed by the Lange Nacht der Wissenschaften in June 2019 – an exciting event titled as “All the World’s a Page: How to Travel the World with Literature” prepared by 15 PhD students from Oxford and Berlin and geared towards demonstrating the influence of cross-period transnational literary studies on diverse audiences.

In September 2018 the Centre for British Studies and The Oxford Centre for Research in the Humanities (TORCH) collaborated in holding an international conference inspired by the centenary celebrations of the end of the World War I titled “Writing Europe 1918- Writing Europe 2018”, which drew 30 researchers and academics from Germany, the UK, Russia, Norway, Italy and France to Berlin. Celebrated authors from Germany, UK, Russia and France were also invited to read from a classic text from their country dating back to the 20th century as well as their own work and

reflect on World War I, issues of war, identity and conflict

It was followed by a selection of papers presented by 17 academics covering a wide range of topics, countries and regions contextualizing World War I. The results of the conference are to be published in a special issue of an international journal.

Besides, the Centre and TORCH played an important role in organizing the first Oxford-Berlin Lecture Series in the Humanities and Social Sciences, with a large public panel debate consisting of all university presidents from Berlin and vice-chancellor Louise Richardson from Oxford. It was concluded that the unique form of the Oxford-Berlin collaboration went beyond Brexit, holding in store a variety of new projects between the institutions.

The autumn of 2020 is another remarkable date for the Oxford-Berlin partnership as Berlin will welcome an exhibition on Anglophone writers in Berlin to be shown at Literaturhaus Berlin and consequently at Oxford. The focal point of the exhibition will lie on the famous “Berlin” writer Christopher Isherwood, as well as lesser-known male and female writers.

The Oxford-Berlin partnership is a novel form of collaboration, encompassing a highly innovative and interdisciplinary approach to academic research and transcending national barriers. For this purpose, the Centre for British Studies will continue facilitating the Anglo-German dialogue and maintaining the unique form of academic alliance.

By Evelina Bazaeva

In Memoriam



© Christian Kruppa

Sir Nigel Broomfield KCMG

(1937-2018)

As a British ambassador to the GDR (1988-1990) and as ambassador to Germany (1993-1997), Sir Broomfield played a prominent role in the establishment of the Centre for British Studies in 1995.



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Gebhardt von Moltke

(1938-2019)

As a German ambassador in the UK (1997-1999), he strengthened the German-British partnership. He was a long-standing supporter and a frequent guest at the Centre.



© [Centre for British Studies](#)

Prof Dr em Ulrich Broich OBE

(1932-2017)

Prof Dr Ulrich Broich was the president of the Deutscher Anglistenverband (1982-1984) and later he held chairs for English literature in Bochum and Munich. He also contributed to the foundation of the Centre for British Studies.

QA



Picking the Mind of Martin Spieß

In this piece, DJ Wells, current student of the MABS programme and Project Manager of the Publication Team, sits down with Martin Spieß, graduate of the class of 2011, and Project Manager at the British Council.

Tell me about yourself

I was born and raised in Berlin and have developed a fascination for the UK during my first trip to London at the age of 11. After my A-levels I moved to Scotland for a year to work as a language assistant for German at a boarding school in St Andrews. I then returned to Berlin to study English and History. After that I decided to apply for the MBS. I now work for the British Council in Berlin as a Project Manager across the Education and Arts portfolios.

Which experiences at the GBZ have most motivated you to go and work for the British Council?

While I wouldn't be able to pinpoint isolated experiences, my time at the Centre as a whole as well as the internship at the National Museums Scotland has helped me realise that I wanted to work in UK-German cultural relations and has equipped me with the tools to do so.

What attracted you to the MBS Programme?

The interdisciplinary approach as well as the small size of the GBZ and the chance to live and work in the UK during the internship.

What's the most stressful situation you ever faced as a student here? How did you handle it?

To be honest, I don't recall any situation at the GBZ ever being stressful. The staff at the Centre have always made sure that we were informed of any deadlines etc. well in advance and would do everything they could to support us with any administrative hurdles. Studying at the GBZ felt like being in a nice little bubble compared to what I was used to from studying for my undergraduate degree at Humboldt.

The GBZ has a very interesting location here in Berlin, given that it's a course focused on British cultural studies conducted in English. How do you view the UK-German relationship in the context of how this partnership affects students' understandings of the UK?

Being a Berliner myself, I feel like there's no better place than Berlin to study Britain. You stumble over history on every corner here - a lot of which links the city to our European neighbours, including the UK. And it also makes a lot of sense to study a culture from the outside. It provides for a different perspective - especially when the place you're looking from has as many historic and cultural links with the UK as Germany does. The only other place in Europe I can think of which has a similar amount of strong links is probably France.

As we think about the programme's future, where do you see the GBZ in 20 years?

I still see the Centre based in Berlin, of course, with the same dedicated staff and a small cohort of students, but hopefully punching well above its weight within the university and outside. With the challenges that the changing relationship between Germany, the EU, and the UK is going to present, the GBZ is more well-placed than any other institute or department to act as a think-tank and consultant in all the areas that the team and students at the Centre cover: Culture, Law, History, Economics, Politics etc.

Looking back on your time as a student, are there any tips or suggestions you could give to current and future students regarding being a member of the MBS/MABS programme?

Enjoy it while it lasts! It's gonna be over much sooner than you think it will be. And also: Start gathering your reading and sources for your thesis early on - it makes all the difference. In fact, use your time in the UK during your internship for it. There's no better place than the horse's mouth.

"With the challenges that the changing relationship between Germany, the EU, and the UK is going to present, the GBZ is more well-placed than any other institute or department to act as a think-tank and consultant in all the areas that the team and students at the Centre cover..."



Alumni



Leonore Hinz.

MBS class 2016-2018.

She is from Germany.

She works in
marketing and editing
for Phase 6.

She lives in Berlin.

When I think about my journey at the GBZ, the first thoughts that come into my head are new friends, new perspectives and a broader world view. Through my time at the GBZ, especially due to the closeness we had in our group, I made friends from different parts of the world who I wouldn't want to miss in my life, even now. Because we had most of our seminars as a group, we were forced to get to know each other through many classroom discussions and group activities, and while that may have felt unusual at the time (coming from a BA at a German university where it was a lot looser and less class-like), it made for a feeling of closeness pretty early on. And after all, having chosen this course, we already shared a mutual interest in the United Kingdom.

The course and the things I learnt also enabled me to gain new perspectives. Not only did I begin to understand the complexities of global and European politics better by looking at them through "the British eye", but also by constantly discussing what issues, speaking from my German perspective, with non-European classmates gave me new food for thought on a daily basis. In that regard, I believe that I now perceive the world in a different light that is more integrative and less based on what I grew up to learn. I believe that this is the unique contribution the GBZ and its researchers continue to make to the broader field of cultural studies - offering a keyhole through which one can learn to understand the world in a different way.

Alumni



Marzena Currie (nee Przeczek).

MBS class 2002-2004.

She is from Poland.

She works as a Literary Scout for Children's Books in Eccles Fisher Associates.

She lives in London, UK.

I'm a GBZ alumni (2002-2004) and I "blame" the course for my move to the UK. I stayed in London following my internship and have been working in book publishing here ever since, with the last eleven years as a literary scout. Looking back at the classes I enjoyed the most, it all makes sense; I was very drawn to the literature and media side of the course, so publishing felt very natural to me. My first publishing work experience was with Bloomsbury, the publisher of HARRY POTTER, which made such a strong impact on me that I knew instantly that I wanted to work with children's books. My internship led to a job at a foreign rights agency (Andrew Nurnberg Associates) and then Laura Cecil Literary Agency, until I was head-hunted to work as a children's book scout at Anne-Louise Fisher Associates (now Eccles Fisher Associates). I settled down in the UK and have a family here, so this is home now. I'm still in touch with two of my old GBZ friends and I treasure those friendships.

GBZ has given me a lot more than a degree: the course provided truly interesting classes, fantastic lecturers, lovely classmates, and, above all, an incredible experience of studying in one of the coolest cities in the world, which I appreciate also for its cultural and social aspects, because alongside all the hard work, there was time to explore the city and to socialize. I still remember those amazing parties, including my own, on a roof terrace of the students' building where I lived! I'm already planning on encouraging my sons to apply (although they should probably complete their primary education first). It's fair to say that applying for a place at GBZ was one of the best decisions I've ever made.

Alumni



Elena Schmitz.

MBS class 2003-2005.

She is from Germany.

She works as the Head of Programmes for Literature Wales.

She lives in Cardiff, UK.

The essential UK work placement, which forms part of the Master in British Studies (MBS) course brought me to Cardiff in 2004. After two semesters studying in Berlin, I wanted to undertake my work placement in a cultural organization in Wales. At the time, there were no placements on offer in Wales and after some research, I approached the Arts Council of Wales. I applied for a placement, was interviewed (pre Skype, this meant a trip to Cardiff before the placement began) and was subsequently offered the opportunity to undertake a 3-month work placement with Wales Arts International, the international arm of the Arts Council of Wales. I had intended to stay for three months - I have now lived here for nearly 15 years. In fact, I never returned to live in Germany after my work placement ended and was lucky to be able to write my final MA thesis in Wales.

I have been working in the Welsh arts sector ever since and my work placement directly led my first job offer here, with Wales at the Venice Biennale of Art. I now work for Literature Wales, the national company for literature development in Wales, where I am Head of Programs. The Master in British Studies course therefore had a huge influence on my life and my career choice.

I hugely enjoyed studying in Berlin at the Centre for British Studies (GBZ). I was already a post-graduate student when I enrolled at the GBZ, having graduated with an MA degree in English Linguistics and Literature previously. So in some ways, the content of the course did not offer me a huge amount of additional insight into the UK's literature and cultural sector that hadn't been covered during my previous degree. However, it was the first time that

Elena Schmitz.

Continued.

I learned about the UK's legal system and also about business and economics. I also very much enjoyed the practical modules taught by a wide variety of guest lecturers.

Above all, what made the experience truly transformative was the international element and the opportunity of learning with a small group of students from around the world. I don't think I was able to appreciate at the time just how much this would contribute to shaping my future outlook and increased understanding of the benefits of intercultural learning.

Here we were, intensely learning together for a year in Berlin, making friends, exchanging cultures, food, sometimes sharing similar outlooks on life, but also encountering clashing worldviews and colliding politics, united by a passion for wanting to learn more about the UK. An odd course, and an oddity to study British Studies in Germany with people from all over the world.

And yet, the Master in British Studies course is now more needed than ever. At a time when the global political trend is towards more right-wing nationalism, I can't emphasize enough how important it is to have opportunities like the MBS, to learn with people from different backgrounds in a cosmopolitan city about a country with a complex history and relationship to Germany and Berlin.

I am very grateful that I had the opportunity to study at the GBZ and continue to be inspired by the work that they do. While the Brexit chaos and uncertainty in the UK continues, I only wish more people living here would have had the chance to take part in a course like the MBS.

Alumni



Joy Caban-Kandziora.

MBS class 2005-2007.

She is from the Philippines.

She works as a Case Officer in the Department of Home Affairs at the Australian Embassy.

She lives in Berlin

Prior to joining the Centre I was already working for a foreign diplomatic mission in Berlin. Despite being gainfully employed, there is an eagerness within me to pursue further studies and earn an additional degree in Germany, the country I chose as my new home. I believe that further education will enhance my career path and will open new opportunities. Hence, key decision has been made and I gave up my employment and joined the Centre full time in 2005.

At the initial stage of my studies, returning to a classroom set up after some time gave me a cultural shock. Contrary to the work routine I had been used to for the past 5 years, I had to adjust again of being a student, which entails heaps of homework, study, research and examinations.

On the other hand, I was excited about the course, the subjects that are being offered, the opportunity of an internship in the UK and being part of the Centre with students from different parts of the world.

The Centre's interdisciplinary method is definitely a hard work, but this method has built a foundation in strengthening my knowledge in the field of media and politics, and the training has prepared me to undertake tasks at my present work that includes extensive writing, factual research, interpretation of legislation and decision-making.

The placement, where I have spent 3 months at the House of Commons Office of Ben Bradshaw MP, was one of the most memorable experience being with the Centre as this gave me the opportunity for training in the world of politics, research and public service.

Joy Caban-Kandziora.

Continued.

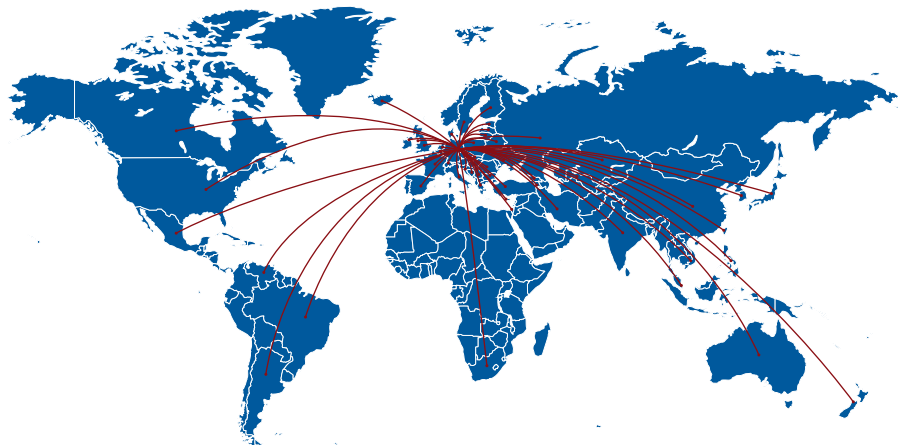
The daily office work, constituents in Exeter provided insights in understanding British politics.

Over 15 years have now passed since graduation, I could say that my further education at the Centre indeed opened doors for me. Directly after graduation, I got an immediate job at the UN World Food Programme, followed by my current employment at the Department of Home Affairs at the Australian Embassy.

I am grateful for the overall training and experience which the Centre has provided.

Where Are You From?

One of our favourite parts about studying at the Centre for British Studies is how incredibly international it is. Students here come from all around the world! In this map we show where the MBS/MA British Studies students have come from for the past 20 years, from the first students of the Centre until today.



1. Argentina	3	30. Kazakhstan	6
2. Armenia	2	31. Latvia	2
3. Australia	3	32. Lithuania	6
4. Belarus	9	33. Mexico	1
5. Belgium	1	34. Netherlands	2
6. Bosnia	4	35. New Zealand	1
7. Brazil	6	36. Philippines	1
8. Bulgaria	13	37. Poland	26
9. Canada	6	38. Romania	11
10. Czech Republic	3	39. Russia	63
11. China	31	40. Serbia and Montenegro	1
12. Colombia	1	41. Serbia	5
13. Croatia	4	42. Singapore	1
14. Cyprus	1	43. Slovakia	1
15. Denmark	1	44. South Africa	2
16. Estonia	1	45. South Korea	1
17. Finland	4	46. Spain	1
18. France	8	47. Sweden	2
29. Georgia	2	48. Switzerland	1
20. Germany	118	49. Taiwan	1
21. Greece	2	50. Turkey	18
22. Hungary	1	51. UK	16
23. Iceland	1	52. Ukraine	15
24. India	1	53. USA	15
25. Iran	10	54. Uzbekistan	1
26. Ireland	2	55. Venezuela	1
27. Israel	4	56. Vietnam	1
28. Italy	8	57. Yugoslavia	1
29. Japan	1		

My Time in Berlin

"From surviving a cold rainy winter to being scared to death by fireworks while walking on New Year's Eve, life in Berlin presented a great list of challenges for me, coming as I do from a rather small town in Pakistan."



Berlin is the only city where I have lived as an international student so far, so I cannot draw any comparisons; but I can say that student life here can be a great mix of difficulties and excitement.

In the very beginning, like many other students, I fell prey to the gruesome housing situation in this city. Finding accommodation

in Berlin can be a nightmare in the best of cases - and, judging by my experience at least, it's much more difficult for those students who don't speak German well. As a result, I had to change apartments three times in the last six months and live in a state of constant worry.

Culture shock was another challenge that made the first few

weeks quite overwhelming for me. Belonging to a Muslim country with an entirely different culture, I had a tough time adjusting to this dynamic city's way of life. I have constantly tried to introduce changes to my lifestyle, from what I eat to what I wear. From the education system to the transportation system, everything was new for me and I seemed to be engaged in a continuous process of learning.

My personal experience in Berlin has been life-changing. Though there were some bitter bits, some things about living in Berlin as a student made my life a bit easier.

One of the best things I have received as a student is the Semester ticket that allows me to get around Berlin using its great public transport system. When it comes to entertainment, a lot of cinemas and theatres offer student discounts on tickets, so you are guaranteed to have a good time outside the lectures.

The Centre for British Studies is meant to teach us about the UK; however, studying there also gave me a chance to meet people

from all over the world and learn more about their cultures.

Out of the many hurdles I had faced as a student back in my country, a major one was not having enough access to academic articles. As a student in Berlin I have access to numerous academic works, including books and articles, through the University's library and the VPN service.

Another great thing about Berlin is that managing living costs on one's own is not as hard as I initially pictured it to be. I was quite anxious about this part, especially given that in my own culture all family members manage their budget together. Even though Berlin is the capital city, food and shopping here are surprisingly inexpensive. Almost everything here is budget-friendly - which is exactly what every student is looking for!

By Aleena Farooq.

We know how to party!

Whether it's the annual Christmas bash or the first-of-its-kind Thanksgiving feast at the GBZ.

By Trisha Mandal

The months leading up to the dreaded Law-Politics oral exam proved to be quite eventful for us at the GBZ.



Thanksgiving: wine, dine and everything fine.

One of the great things about having people from all over the world as classmates is the diverse culture they bring along with them. Naturally, parties overflow with lip-smacking food of cuisines ranging from Thai to American. This was the obvious highlight of the Thanksgiving party organised by the 2018-20 batch in November 2018. Thai tea, dumplings, Turkish specialities, baked potatoes, cake, crumble—we had it all! We even managed to get our hands on the Thanksgiving-mandatory turkey and bread stuffing. The evening ended with everyone gathering in Room 001 and a round of “What am I thankful for this year?”.



Happy faces ft. gluhwein in mugs.

Equally enjoyable was last year's Christmas party. Corinna's famous gluhwein and Catherine's delightful Hot Toddies kept us all warm and merry; and probably gave many of us the nudge we needed to sing at the Karaoke! The music and dim lights made for a very ambient setting, and eventually people started joining the dance floor at the centre of the room. Christmas cheer is a real thing during this time at the GBZ!



What's brewing? (hint: wine+fruit)



Christmas karaoke, anyone?

Interview with a Current Student

By Trisha Mandal

1. What attracted you to the MBS/MABS Programme?

I was attracted to study at the Centre because the MABS is an interdisciplinary master programme which offers an opportunity to analyse Britain in a lot of aspects. Having to do a work placement in the UK was also an important factor that helped me decide.

2. What's your favourite thing about the GBZ?

The GBZ is a really friendly environment. Since I started the course, the lecturers and the staff have been really helpful and when I was not in class I always had some nice times with fellow MA students.

3. How do you feel about Brexit? How has it affected your studies?

Brexit, although I am not a big fan of it, has affected my studies deeply. As it is such an important and hot topic, I decided to focus my studies and write my MA thesis about Brexit. It was also a key factor in choosing where to do my work placement. I chose to do a work placement

Halil Cevik joined the Centre for British Studies in 2017, all the way from Turkey. He is currently enrolled in his last semester here, and is working on his Master thesis. We asked him a few questions about his time here.



at the office of Ben Bradshaw MP at the House of Commons in London, during a time when political tension in the UK was very high, both in and outside the Parliament. I feel very lucky to be a student of the GBZ as it provided me with such an invaluable work experience at the heart of British politics.

4. What's been your favourite class/subject so far?

I have enjoyed most of the classes, but as I am particularly interested in politics, mainly UK-EU relations and Brexit, I can say that the subjects Analysing British Politics and British International Relations were my favourites, along with the module Politics at the Centre and Politics beyond the Centre.

5. What advice would you give incoming students next year?

They should decide on what topic they wish to write a thesis early on. I believe making up your mind in time is really important, as you will be able to do enough research for such a big task.

Work Placement Journeys

Below: Lena Nüchter testing out virtual reality equipment at a Birmingham-Leipzig event exploring exchange opportunities, © Laura Peters Photography

Other page: Chiara Harrison Lambe at The Little Museum of Dublin

Beata Sarjehpeyma

A major highlight of the MA British Studies programme is the work placement which take place in the 3rd semester. For many students, the chance to live and work in the UK or Ireland was an attractive component of the programme. Erasmus provides scholarship funding for 2-6 months to help cover the cost of living. The Centre networked among their contacts to compile a Placement Provider list – in the fields of politics, culture, education, law, and media – from which students can apply.

Lena Nüchter recounts her work placement experience as a MA student. She wanted to branch out from her background, and thus applied to politics-focused work placements. She landed at the Birmingham City Council and the



International European Relations unit, who work with city partnerships. In partnership with the City of Frankfurt am Main, they held a German Christmas Market and needed Lena to translate and liaison between the cities. In addition, she helped with the nitty-gritty work of event planning. Although she decided to not go into full-time event planning, she currently teaches the Cultural Project Management course at the GBZ.

Chiara Lambe has fond memories of her work placement at The Little

Students are not limited to the Placement Provider list and are free to find their own arrangement. Evelina Bazaeva is in talks with the University of Leeds to work as a student assistant, with the possibility of lecturing. She studied Linguistics, with an interest in English Literature, Theoretical Grammar, and Theory of Translation. On her own accord, she sought out relevant departments in the UK's top universities. She stated: "I have always dreamt of becoming part of the UK's academic environment (even for 3 months only) and having this opportunity right at

hand feels surreal! Thanks to the GBZ, my dream is about to come true".

With the looming Brexit deadline, there are growing concerns about how it will affect work placements, especially Erasmus funding. However, the GBZ is optimistic about the future, since they have weathered storms in the past. The Centre will do its upmost to provide an experience to students comparable to their predecessors, even if the placements must take place elsewhere.

Museum of Dublin. As a native of Ireland, she was happy to return, after growing up in New York City, to see if Dublin was a good fit for the future. Working in a history museum was also a draw, since she was interested in the history of Dublin. Lambe adds, "I also thought that working in a 'little' museum would be good practice for working in a big museum!". The work environment was all-hands-on-deck, and included tasks such as running social media, copy-writing for an exhibition, and making a short film. After graduation, she hopes to return home and jump back into the museum world before pursuing a PhD in Art History. Another perk from her time abroad was meeting lovely new friends with whom she stays in contact.



What Are Our Graduates Doing?

Emre Altuntas

The Centre for British Studies is proud of having hosted more than 500 students since the MA British Studies course started in 1999.

Between 1999-2018, more than 400 students have completed the Master in British Studies and have been employed in a wide range of sectors. The largest proportion (29%) of the Alumni have found work in the public sector. Some of those have taken positions in national ministries in their mother countries or in embassies and several are working for EU agencies. Event management, communications, cultural relations,

education and higher education are the sectors that are of growing importance and attracting more of our graduates every year.

Around 26% of the Alumni have found work in the commercial sector, e.g. in consultancies, the financial sector, trade and manufacturing, sales, tourism, translations, marketing, and IT. Multinational corporations such as IBM, Google, Coca-Cola, KPMG, Tesco or Tarmac as well as medium-sized or smaller companies have employed our graduates.

Another field of employment is the cultural sector. Around 21% of the Alumni now work in media, and publishing, arts and performing arts and museums. Around 6% of our graduates are pursuing further studies, such as a second MA degree or a PhD.

In summary, most of our graduates have a first degree in English language and literature. Yet, the majority of graduates have found jobs in different fields. This indicates that our MA British Studies Programme with its interdisciplinary approach has provided an incentive for our students to acquire new skills so that they can work in different fields.

"We would like to see this as evidence that the M.B.S. has opened up new business prospects or widened academic interests."



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