

German Life and Letters

‘Virtual Number’

Introduction

To mark the on-line publication of the complete back-numbers of *GLL*, the Editors have put together this ‘Virtual Number’ of past articles. The journal is now into its eighth decade, and the first eight articles in this number have been selected from the first issue of the first year of each of those decades. This selection is followed by more recent pieces in the form of the four articles most frequently accessed online during the course of 2007.

German Life and Letters first appeared in October 1936, at what the opening Preface declared to be ‘an auspicious moment when, after years of tension, the relations between England and Germany are definitely improving’. The Preface went on to describe the new journal’s central concern as one of engagement with ‘German culture in its widest aspects: its history, literature, religion, music, art; with German life in general’. Twelve more issues of the journal were to appear in the 1930s until, with the outbreak of war, the October 1939 issue announced that *GLL* was now forced to ‘suffer temporary eclipse’ in the wake of ‘the bankruptcy of the high hopes with which it was started just over three years ago’. As evidence of the journal’s objective presentation of German topics over its three-year history, the closure announcement proudly pointed out that the *Völkischer Beobachter* had described it as ‘a journal which no self-respecting German could read’, and signed off with the hope that *GLL*’s contributors might ‘soon find a more congenial task in presenting a saner Germany of to-morrow’. Eight years were to elapse before that hope could be realised when Volume 1, Number 1 of the ‘New Series’ – with which our present volume sequence began – was launched in October 1947. (The journal was to retain its October start-date for volumes through to 1992, when it moved to a calendar-year sequence; the last volume using the old pattern (44) incorporated an extraordinary fifth number – a special ‘Women’s Studies’ issue – in order to get into step.)

The present ‘Virtual Number’ opens with survey pieces from the first pre-war and the first post-war numbers, which cast fascinating light on perceptions of German politics and German literature respectively in those years. For the six subsequent decades we have selected pieces which give a sense of the range of themes and approaches that have characterised the journal from the 1950s to the 2000s. Inevitably, our decision to limit our choice arbitrarily to articles appearing in the first January of each decade has meant that some areas of ‘German culture in its widest aspects’ have not been able to feature in this first section. This is, for instance, the case with German film, which has long been one of *GLL*’s staples. Happily, this particular omission is made up for in the current ‘top four’ articles that are featured in section two.

Contents

1. Eight Decades of GLL

- October 1936: G.P. Gooch, 'German Foreign Policy since the War'
October 1947: Hugo F. Garten, 'Main Trends in German Literature Today'
January 1950: Leonard Forster, 'G.R. Weckherlin in England'
January 1960: R. Hinton-Thomas, 'Fugal Principles in German Baroque Poetry'
January 1970: Elizabeth Boa, 'Günter Grass and the German Gremlin'
January 1980: Lesley Sharpe, '*Der Verbrecher aus verlorener Ehre*: An Early Exercise in Schillerian Psychology'
January 1990: Martin Durrell: 'German Noun Inflections: Synchrony and Diachrony'
January 2000: Beverley Driver Eddy, 'Testament and Trauma in Herta Müller's *Herztier*'

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2. Most-accessed Articles in 2007

- October 2006: Christopher Clark, 'Transculturation, *Transe* Sexuality and Turkish Germany: Kutluğ Ataman's *Lola und Bilidikid*'
April 2006: Anne Fuchs, 'From "Vergangenheitsbewältigung" to Generational Memory Contests in Günter Grass, Monika Maron and Uwe Timm'
April 2006: Daniela Berghahn, 'Post-1990 Screen Memories: How East and West German Cinema Remembers the Third Reich and the Holocaust'
January 2001: William Collins Donahue, 'Bernhard Schlink's *Der Vorleser* and the Moral Limits of Holocaust Fiction'