

Professor Dr. Klaus Peter Müller (Curriculum Vitae)

Klaus Peter Müller studied English, Romance languages, philosophy, and educational science at Düsseldorf University and finished with the 'Staatsexamen' in 1979. In 1983, he got his PhD (*summa cum laude*) in English, Romance languages and philosophy from the University of Bonn. His PhD thesis on James Joyce's concept of the epiphany was accepted for publication by Hanser, München, but as they would have taken three years to get it out, he had it published in the series *Literaturwissenschaft, Theorie und Geschichte* by Lang in 1984. He got a postdoctoral degree in English from the University of Düsseldorf in 1995 (*Venia legendi* for 'Englische Philologie'). The book connected with this, *Wertstrukturen und Wertewandel im englischen Drama der Gegenwart*, an analysis of contemporary British plays, was published in 2000 in the book series *Contemporary Drama in English*.

He was employed at, did research, and taught students in the English Department of Düsseldorf University from 1980 to 1994, then at the University of Chemnitz until 1998. During that time, he also stood in for the Professor of English in the English Department of Humboldt University Berlin in 1995-6 and for the Professor of British Studies in the English Department of Dresden University from 1996-7. In 1998 he took up a permanent position in the English Department of the University of Stuttgart. In 2001 he was offered the Professorship of British Studies and Translation Studies at the Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz, a post he accepted in 2002 and held until the end of September 2017, when he retired and stopped teaching, but has continued with his research.

Müller's **research areas**, which also always influenced his **teaching**, have been **literature** (with a particular focus on English, Scottish, Irish, Canadian, and Caribbean literatures), **cultural and media studies**, **translation studies**, and their links with **narration**, **cognition**, and **epistemology**. Media are known as the essential means of communication. At the same time, and even more importantly, they are the only way in which human beings have access to, understand, describe, and make sense of the world. Each language offers a peculiar approach to the world. So does each medium. James Joyce was well aware of this and used his epiphanies to point out this temporary awareness and validity of truth, which always depends on contexts. Müller has investigated this understanding and creation of reality not only in Joyce's work but also that of, e.g., William Shakespeare, Margaret Atwood, Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, many other playwrights and novelists as well as in film, documentaries, and history writing. History and historical knowledge are essential for providing the necessary contexts which define a) what is accepted as true in a society and b) the meanings of words. Müller thus shares the older Wittgenstein's pragmatic understanding of language, and his main teaching objectives have been to make students aware of and understand these enormous dimensions of language, its functions, intricate links with other media, and its unique relevance in human life. Language still is and has always been the most important medium.

When his predecessor, Professor Horst Drescher, could not continue his work on the *Scottish Studies International* book series (<https://anglistik.fb06.uni-mainz.de/scottish-studies-centre/scottish-studies-international/> and <https://www.peterlang.com/view/serial/SCS>), Müller took over. In 2011, he also continued and renewed Drescher's *Scottish Studies Newsletter* with his colleagues Lothar Görke and Ron Walker (<https://anglistik.fb06.uni-mainz.de/scottish-studies-centre/scottish-studies-newsletter/>). Many publications have been produced with this particular focus on Scotland, including a book in the MUSE = *Mainz University Studies in English* book series (<http://wvttrier.de/top/Beschreibungen/MUSE.html>), of which Müller was one of the editors. Scotland has an intriguingly rich, very diversified literature, an extensive philosophical tradition far beyond the renowned Scottish Enlightenment, and it is today at the forefront of new thinking about the best forms of organising contemporary society with humane living and working conditions. Discussions about Scottish independence include these traditions and raise vital questions about national as well as individual freedom, independence, autonomy, and justice.

The most recent publication, Müller's edition of *Scotland and Arbroath 1320 – 2020. 700 Years of Fighting for Freedom, Sovereignty, and Independence*, Frankfurt 2020 (<https://www.peterlang.com/view/title/70935>), gives insights into the long, arduous, and perennial struggle for these values in key periods of human history: the Middle Ages, the Early Modern Age, the Reformation, the English Revolution, the Enlightenment, Romanticism, the Industrial Revolution, and the 19th to 21st centuries. The claim of the 1320 Declaration of Arbroath that the people are in power is used as a starting point for investigating the evolution of democracy. Experts from diverse fields of knowledge, namely medieval, political, social, literary, media, and cultural studies, the law, art, film, philosophy, define what freedom, sovereignty, independence and the people meant in these various epochs and what value they have in our own time. Müller's introduction points out what has been achieved so far by humanity and what the current threats to freedom, independence, democracy, and justice are. His analysis of John Milton's and the Levellers' concepts of freedom, sovereignty, and independence in the 1640s reveals the relevance of their ideas for our own time and the world we live in today.

Müller was involved in enhancing **English**, i.e. **Anglistik**, the subject of studying literatures in English and the English language, by connecting it with cultural studies. In this context, Barbara Korte and he edited *Unity in Diversity Revisited? British Literature and Culture in the 1990s* (Tübingen: Narr 1998), which included their joint contribution "Unity in Diversity Revisited: Complex Paradoxes Beyond Post-/Modernism". He then joined Barbara Korte and Josef Schmied in producing *Einführung in die Anglistik* (Stuttgart / Weimar: Metzler 1997, second enlarged edition 2004), an introduction to the whole subject of studies (acknowledging the existence of several English languages and confirming the important role of cultural studies in *Anglistik*).

Modernity in literatures and cultures has been another relevant research and teaching area. Müller shares the opinion of Ulrich Beck and others that we live in the '*Zweite Moderne*', the second modern age, which is why he often connects this topic with investigations in **history writing** and the **creation of identities**, such as in "Initiations into a Canadian Identity? Contexts of Canadian 'Stories of Initiation'", *anglistik & englischunterricht* 33, 1987, 67 – 86; "A 'Serious' City Comedy: Fe-/Male History and Value-Judgments in Caryl Churchill's *Serious Money*", *Modern Drama* 1990, 347 – 362; "Ein Lebenswerk über die Paradoxie menschlicher Geschichte(n): Samuel Beckett's Drama", in: Müller (ed.), *Englisches Theater der Gegenwart. Geschichte(n) und Strukturen*, Tübingen: Narr 1993, 479 – 520; "Recasting the World on Stage: The Freedom of Creating New Centres and Meanings in Contemporary Theatre", in: Bernard Reitz (ed.), *Centres and Margins*, Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag 1995, 9 – 29; "Modern Dickens? Postmodern Ackroyd? A Comparison of *Little Dorrit* and *The Great Fire of London*", in: Walter Göbel / Stephan Kohl / Hubert Zapf (eds.), *Modernisierung und Literatur. Festschrift für Hans Ulrich Seeber zum 60. Geburtstag*, Tübingen: Narr 2000, 291 – 311; "Fakt und Fiktion im historischen Kriminalroman: Die Nell-Bray-Romane von Gillian Linscott und die Fernsehserie 'Inspector Jericho'", in: Barbara Korte / Sylvia Paetschek (Hrsg.), *Geschichte und Kriminalroman. Beiträge aus den Kulturwissenschaften*, Köln: Böhlau 2009, 77-93.

Müller was also actively involved in the creation of the new research and studies course *Literaturübersetzen*, **Literary Translation**, at Düsseldorf University, beginning in 1990. An exemplary text from this period is "Übersetzerausbildung – Übersetzerwissen: Facetten einer 'Einführung in den Studiengang Literaturübersetzen'", in: Herwig Friedl / Albert-Reiner Glaap / Müller (eds.), *Literaturübersetzen: Englisch. Entwürfe, Erkenntnisse, Erfahrungen*, Tübingen: Narr 1992 (*Transfer. Düsseldorfer Materialien zur Literaturübersetzung* 4), 159 – 199. He later expanded this research topic to **Transferring and Translating Media**, including literary and cultural translations; transferring literature, (auto-)biography etc. to film or TV; synchronisation, e.g. in "Transferring Culture in Translations – Modern and Postmodern Options", *TTR – Traduction, Terminologie, Rédaction. Études sur le texte et ses transformations* VIII, 1, 1995, 65 – 83; "Optional and Obligatory Alternatives in Teaching Literary Translation Within the Hermeneutic Contexts of Literary Practice", in: Albrecht Neubert / Gregory M. Shreve / Klaus Gommlich (eds.), *Basic Issues in Translation Studies. Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Translation Studies, Leipzig 1991*, Kent 1996, 369 – 381 (*Kent Forum on Translation Studies* II); "Translating the Canadian Short Story into German", in: Luise von Flotow / Reingard M. Nischik (eds.), *Charting the Institutions and Influences of Cultural Transfer: Canadian Writing in German Translation, 1967 – 2000*, Ottawa: Ottawa Univ. Press 2007, 53-78.

Since its conception in 2006, Müller was a member of the Mainz University research group *Medien* (media) and its later focus on *Medienkonvergenz* (media convergence), which involved

professors from different faculties and disciplines beyond the evident ones, thus including law and business, and had its own publication series *Medienkonvergenz*, published by de Gruyter in Berlin.

When the digital revolution began, Müller was intrigued by the huge potential of the new media for research and teaching. He, therefore, began to investigate these new possibilities on his own as well as in cooperation with the English Department of Tübingen University. When he saw that the political and educational authorities would use these new means mainly for reducing expenses and cutting jobs, he ended his publications on this particular focus but, of course, continued to use the new media in research and with his students.

In addition to these research and teaching activities, Müller took an active part in several **administrative and representative functions**, especially as chair of the English Department, permanent member in the faculty council (*Fachbereichsrat*), and from 2005 to 2015 as the faculty's senator, i.e. their representative in the University Senate. He organised three international conferences, where speakers were selected not by means of a call for papers but through Müller's knowledge of the contributors' publications and their quality. The first conference in 2005 was on Scotland's history and identity reflected in different media, especially literature, their translations, but also in museums, cinemas, and theatres. Its results were published in *Scotland's Cultural Identity and Standing*, Trier 2013 (*MUSE – Mainz University Studies in English* 18), edited by Müller, Bernhard Reitz and Sigrid Rieuwertz.

This was followed by an international meeting on British film in 2010, 'British Film 2000 – 2010: Crossing Borders, Transferring Cultures', with a special focus on the various borders that had been crossed: borders between different media, but also geographic, political and national borders, generic, epistemological, cultural borders etc. One report on this conference appeared in the *British Journal of Cinema and Television* 7, 3, 2010, 486-491, available at <https://www.eupublishing.com/doi/abs/10.3366/jbctv.2010.0109>, another in *Scope: An Online Journal of Film and Television Studies* 19, 2011, 2-7, available at <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/scope/documents/2011/february-2011/conf-rep-feb11.pdf>. Both reveal the extent of Müller's perspectives, his efforts to connect them with each other, and highlight links that are too often neglected. Cultural studies thus were related with media studies, media convergence was an essential topic, film business and financing were discussed, and translation was linked with cultural transfer and its problems presented by an expert of and practitioner in film dubbing.

The 2014 conference dealt with the most important event for the UK in that year, the Scottish referendum on independence, and was published with the conference title in *Scotland 2014 and Beyond – Coming of Age and Loss of Innocence?*, Frankfurt 2015 (*Scottish Studies International* 39). Müller's 2020 publication reveals that neither Scotland nor the UK, nor in fact Europe, the world, or human beings in general have come of age, become free, independent, self-determined,

equitable, or simply more humane. As long as this is the case, he will continue his analyses of human behaviour and reality constructions in media. Another publication on the evolution of human endeavours to enhance freedom, democracy and justice is being prepared.