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**Reports from
The Berlin Conference
on
Resources for Scholarship
in English Studies
in Europe
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Resources for English Studies: Introduction

The following reports were prepared for a conference held at the Humboldt University in Berlin in September, 1998. There more than a dozen Eastern European scholars presented summaries of the state of resources available in their respective countries. The reports are much more varied than was expected, but a few focal points are clear: inadequate libraries, inadequate office equipment and space, and salaries, often as not, insufficient to support a minimal household, let alone allow the purchase of foreign books or periodicals. In some countries the situation has deteriorated further: at the time of writing, the university teachers in Romania are being warned that their salaries cannot be paid out from September on.

For the reader in the West some of these reports may seem strangely uninformative, here and there downright innocent: few scholars say outright how pitiful their monthly salaries are: few of them mention that they lack the resources taken for granted in the West, such as getting the postage and fax costs of professional correspondence paid for by the university, not to speak of telephone calls. Recently a German colleague complained that he had offered a run of a scholarly journal to Eastern libraries, generously suggesting that all they had to do was pay the packing and postage. He complained that his offer was not even honoured by a reply. One of the aims of this publication is to point out that the individual scholar would have to take over these costs, and that this might amount to more than that scholar earns in a month. The reader in the West may be unaware that air mail postage might well cost the equivalent of a loaf of bread. The salary differential in some cases approaches a ratio of a hundred to one!

In other words, we need to read between the lines of these reports, adding information the significance of which their compilers could not know. Many a scholar in the West is not yet aware that some of the paperbacks he has relegated to the rubbish bin in the West would be precious commodities for teachers as well as students in another part of Europe. It is significant that the ESSE journal *EJES* (*European*

Journal of English Studies) has not been seen by most of the scholars who represent their national societies on the ESSE Board: the subscription rates are prohibitive. It is also important to know that books sent to libraries occasionally land on the black market, or will not be catalogued for two years, whereas a book sent to a teacher can be lent out to students immediately, and is more likely to be returned and lent out again.

It was not the primary aim of the Berlin conference to find immediate solutions to the problems of resourcing for scholarship. But our discussions made clear that face-to-face contacts are of the essence. For instance, many a scholar in France or Germany has books to dispose of, but does not know where to send them. Personal contacts also make the exchange of scholarly journals possible. Stacks of them gather dust in the West, whereas many libraries in the East receive no scholarly journal published in the West except for *The Messenger*. Face-to-face contacts also make possible a departmental exchange of journals (in the East often as not to be had for the cost of the postage stamp) and can thread the needle of joint East-East as well as East-West research projects, which are in our discipline as yet as good as unknown.

What the ESSE-furnished contacts have thus far failed to bring about is an exchange of ideas about human rather than material resources. In the East the number of contact hours with students tends to be very high: whereas a student in the West may have 10 to 15 hours in a class or seminar each week, the number is often double that in the East. This difference not only reflects fundamental differences in the concept of higher education, but also means a strain on human resources which could be relieved. The national reports in the following pages, in other words, are only part of the story: what we need to follow up are not only the complaints and suggestions touched on, but also the blank spaces which increased contact has begun to reveal.

Helmut Bonheim
July, 1999

BULGARIA

In this country English Studies at university level are offered by at least five state universities (Sofia, Veliko Turnovo, Plovdiv, Shoumen and Blagoevgrad) and one private institution (the New Bulgarian University) which can be grouped in three generations: first, the University of Sofia where English Studies as a degree subject marked their 70th anniversary this year, second, Veliko Turnovo which has also developed its own character and traditions, and third, the most recent departments of English. The situation with respect to resources, and especially teaching staff and libraries, is different in the various institutions and there seems to be a correlation between age and the availability and quality of the resources. As far as grants for research and travel abroad and participation in international projects are concerned, the opportunities are more or less equal.

The situation has improved considerably over the past 5-10 years with respect to the availability of books, periodicals, audio and video materials, computers (including e-mail and Internet) and photocopying facilities. This is almost exclusively due to aid from abroad. The British Council has been particularly generous and helpful, establishing a number of resource centres in the country, some of them functioning primarily as departmental libraries. Similarly, USIA and Fulbright scholars have made a valuable contribution in the field of American Studies. The help we have received from ESSE through its Books-for-Eastern-Europe Projects should also be mentioned. Even more important are the opportunities for contacts and exchange of information through ESSE, including information regarding resources, and possibilities to travel and work at libraries in other ESSE member countries. One can hardly overestimate the difference made to the quality and manner of teaching and the assistance to research provided by the new departmental libraries. These libraries have a qualified professional staff and an annual budget for the supply of new books and materials and English departments can order new titles according to their needs and interests. One dreads to think of the day when the British Council may decide to stop supporting the resource centres.

The situation with respect to human resources is deteriorating. It is becoming increasingly difficult to attract capable young people into teaching not only in schools, but in universities as well. One important reason for this is the low pay (a lecturer at Sofia University receives a monthly salary of 68-130 Euros, depending on rank). Lecturers are forced to teach in more than one institution, or do less qualified additional jobs to make ends meet. This leaves them little time and energy for research. We have also suffered from the brain drain. A minor compensation for the latter is the fact that some former colleagues and students of ours working at present abroad have proved helpful in improving our links with the rest of the world.

One problem has been the isolation of the country in the past and the need to break into the world of international scholarship. There has been some improvement in this respect, as may be indicated by the following statistics about the scholarly output of the Sofia University English Studies Department. Out of a total of 138 publications last year, 44% appeared abroad. With respect to the presentation of papers at conferences the figures are even better: 60% of a total of 112 conference papers were delivered abroad. This seems to be a pronounced tendency of late and there are signs that it will persist with the rising quality of the scholarly journals, publishers and international forums where Bulgarian contributions are to be found.

We feel that ESSE has an important role to play in helping make East European scholarship more visible. We are glad that Bulgaria features reasonably well in recent issues of *The Messenger*. At this stage, however, East European scholarship is, to put it mildly, largely underrepresented in the ESSE-inspired *Annotated Bibliography for English Studies* on CD-ROM. The situation can easily be remedied with more initiative on the part of editors and of national representatives and contributors. Likewise, my Bulgarian colleagues have yet to find their way into the *European Journal of English Studies*. On the other hand, we look forward to the completion of another ESSE project, the European History of English Studies, which will draw attention to the achievements of the various national traditions.

The main problem of resourcing in Bulgaria is the shortage of funds. One initiative to improve the situation to some extent at the University of Sofia was the establishment of the Foundation for English and American Academic Studies, an independent body which generates income through various services offered to the general public and which also seeks sponsors and donations to support academic pursuits.

In conclusion we could say that resourcing for English Studies in Bulgaria has on the whole improved during recent years, although a lot remains to be desired,

especially in the case of some of the newly established English departments; there is, moreover, a general feeling of uncertainty. We have a lot to learn about tapping the various internationally available resources and programmes and about becoming involved in more international projects. Above all, we need to show more initiative and persistence in the new conditions, something particularly difficult for the older and middle generations.

Christo Stamenov
University of Sofia

CROATIA

Neither scholarship nor teaching in the Department of English of Zagreb University are in a desperate state: the supply of fundamental literature and periodicals has enjoyed a reasonable continuity since the fifties, both under the previous and the present political systems, and members of staff have had opportunities to do postgraduate work in Britain and the USA. The situation in the three departments founded in and after the fifties, however, including Zadar, Osijek (in the seventies) and in Rijeka (1996) is more problematic. The following comments refer only to the University of Zagreb.

Among the difficulties we face (space, teacher-student ratio, international student exchange, lack of access to the Phare Programme, etc.), it is uncertain financing that deserves particular comment. Not that we have been deprived of funds. They arrive, but unevenly and in unpredictable amounts. The effects of this seemingly perennial problem include an irregular supply of periodicals and books for the library and an uneven rhythm of staff recruitment.

Our University is a comparatively loose group of Faculties, not a centralised institution where the Rector and governing bodies exercise important financial influence on the Faculties. These are in direct communication with the Ministry of Science for most of their financial requirements (for periodicals and books as well as new posts). The funds allocated for these and other areas have varied considerably

throughout the years (under both political systems). Sometimes we have had reasonable explanations, sometimes they have bordered on metaphysics. This situation we must register as *vis maior*: ministerial reasons tend to override the pleas of Deans of Faculties.

Once the means have been allocated to the Faculty of Philosophy (consisting of over thirty Departments and representing a more complicated system than do other Faculties), funds have to be divided among the Departments. Here the power game is played again in the sense that an influential department head will urge particular needs.

Planning books and periodicals acquisitions under such circumstances is difficult and dismaying, food for (academic) fatalism. The result is a lack of coordination in ordering, unnecessary duplicate orders, gaps in the collection. The budget of the National and University Library is also unpredictable, so that here, too, coordination fails and we are unable to save on less used periodicals. Thus a graduate student or university teacher looking for an article in e.g. *LINGUA*, of which we may stock ten years *in continuo*, will find a gap some time around 1982; the same goes for other periodicals and important books published in the 'lean' years.

Unreliable budgets also affect the recruiting rhythm of new staff. When a staff member retired or resigned in the 60's or 70's, the post was advertised and we looked for a qualified younger person. Not that there were no political games to play, like convincing the

nomenclatura that the chosen person was politically correct; this often meant different things for different apparatchiks. But this idyll ended in the early 80's with the economic crises: obtaining a new post was a *via crucis*. At first the new Croatian State was promising in its employment policy, but the war broke out and new academic jobs were frozen. After more than a decade of few or no posts at all, we now have about ten professors in the Department and only a single assistant and a single *Docent*.

I must end on a more optimistic note. The Ministry of Science has recently adopted a new policy according to which it will finance

the postgraduate studies of promising 'novices' working on agreed projects who may eventually be engaged as assistants. But the results of this approach will not be felt for six or more years. In the meantime we have to cope with more and more undergraduates each year. Logically, departments need to be informed well in advance about the coming budgets for books and jobs. But with the present socio-economic and political situation, this seems to be too much to ask.

Damir Kalogjera
University of Zagreb

THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Let us begin with a brief description of the university budgets in Communist times:

—according to the Soviet model, universities were regarded as teaching institutions while research was to be done in the Academy of Sciences;

—university budgets did not support links with the 'West', i.e. there was little money for foreign travel or the acquisition of books (thus, for example, the English Department at Brno was allowed to buy only one book a year from the West).

The re-establishment of a democratic government has not brought an immediate change in the system of funding higher education.

There is a tendency to try to imitate the British and the American system of funding, with a larger share of the budgets being supported from private sources. This does not work, however, because there are no rich families, no rich university graduates to support their alma mater.

No decision has been reached on how to divide money among the universities. At present the number of students is the most

important factor, but that is not supposed to grow by more than five per cent a year. The quality of teaching staff does not count.

A new three-year Ph.D programme cannot work properly because most of the candidates are external students. Candidates have to have jobs outside the university because an internal Ph.D student is paid about 100 Euros a month, the guaranteed minimum wage.

In the spring of 1997 the government had to make severe cuts in spending, which meant freezing salaries in the universities and restrictions in many areas, including less money for travel inside the country and no money for foreign travel, less paper for copying and printing, etc.

Research projects can be supported by new agencies: the governmental agency, ministerial agencies, and so on. Many of the larger projects, however, are supported for one year only. On the other hand, some departments are linked to EU projects and can work on joint research projects with other European universities.

English department libraries still have to rely on the help of the British Council.

Josef Hladký
University of Brno

ESTONIA

English studies are pursued at three Estonian Universities: the University of Tartu, Tallinn University of Educational Sciences and the Estonian Institute of Humanities. Courses lead to the Diploma for Teachers of English, an MA in Interpretation Studies as well as to BA, MA and PhD degrees in English Language and Literature.

Right now English Philology is trying to regain its footing. In the Soviet years the subject was regarded as suspect and doctorates were awarded only in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Thus the subject has had to rebuild its higher degree programmes and revise its curricula to meet the demands of an open society. There are also disputes with departments of Estonian philology over the relevance of research into foreign philologies in Estonia and the division between the humanities and the sciences.

Each of these departments has limited but electronically catalogued library holdings, which generally satisfy the requirements of the curricula, providing dictionaries, language textbooks and reference books for literary and cultural studies and linguistics, although with something of an emphasis on ELT. On the other hand, the Baltic Center for North American Studies and the Estonian Centre for British Studies at Tartu, which offers subsidiary degrees in these fields, maintain a satisfactory stock of the relevant literatures, whereas the Institute of Humanities excels in Shakespeare and in works of fiction. The department libraries have been growing thanks to grants and donations from the British Council, the USIS, the Soros foundation (Open Estonia Foundation), a Tempus programme and private donors.

But departmental libraries try to satisfy the needs connected with teaching rather than with research. We need to develop networks with other libraries so as to make better use of scanty resources. In larger institutions little priority is given to linguistics and literature, and English does not appear on the lists of the priorities to which extra sums are allocated. The university libraries, too, cannot subscribe to more than a few periodicals. Indeed, most periodicals arrive at random in single copies, not on a regular subscription basis, nor are funds available for inspection copies or for inter-library loans. A lecturer earns on average

about US \$400, an associate professor, \$600. The student's monthly budget is nearer to \$150, all of these ranging below the national median income. Personal acquisitions are therefore highly problematic. Department libraries do their best to stock the basic texts, but since we cannot require our students to buy textbooks, often only a single copy is available for a whole class and instructors use their own books and photocopies made abroad, being obliged to resort to the lecture-and-note-taking method of teaching.

Lecturers use computers to prepare course materials and also in their research, students use them to prepare their written assignments, essays and term papers. Both lecturers and students have become used to e-mail and try to exploit the Internet text archives and other available materials. Both students and lecturers are making an increasing use of computers, and the administrative staff uses them in the preparation of lectures and for keeping track of student progress. However, there is practically no departmental budget for these purposes.

All institutions engage in research activities, like contributing to journals (although a very small country has few opportunities for publication) and, despite the scarcity of funds to cover conference fees and travel, we do organise and attend conferences.

These activities are also hampered by heavy teaching loads. Then too, since there is a dearth of language teachers in schools, our departments traditionally maintain a primarily pedagogical orientation, a fact which also leads our conferences to include papers on methodological aspects. In recent years we have seen a growing emphasis on cultural and intercultural studies.

In sum, the libraries of English departments at Estonian universities meet the requirements of undergraduate teaching, although with difficulty, but research in English Studies is hampered by the lack of scholarly literature as well as of computer facilities and funds to meet the costs of attending professional conferences.

*Lumme Erilt, Estonian Institute of Humanities
Raili Põldsaar, University of Tartu*

LATVIA

Since Latvia regained its independence in 1991, we have had to face a number of problems concerning research in the Humanities, primarily because we lack a solid academic environment. The chief problem is one of human resources.

Clearly, a proper academic environment is formed slowly: it takes decades rather than years to build. Ours has been destroyed rather than encouraged. The 50-year Soviet regime not only hindered a natural development of the Humanities in Latvia: it destroyed what was there. Most pre-World War II academics were exiled either to the West during the period 'when time [was] broke and no proportion kept', or exported eastwards. Thus the most recent surveys of world literature that we have in Latvian were done in the mid-1930s. Later generations had to make do with translations from the Russian, with books written in Moscow or Leningrad. Only in these places could any solid research be done, and it was all written in Russian, including doctoral theses.

Since many young researchers chose to pursue an academic career in Russia rather than return home, cities like Moscow developed strong and interesting academic environments. Those scholars who did come back were alone and without research facilities, and they had no freedom to develop. Exceptions occurred in Latvia in a few branches of science, like Mathematics, but not in the Humanities: there research possibilities were deliberately restricted. I experienced such restrictions myself in the late 1970s when I returned from Moscow and argued that a Foreign Literature Study Centre should be founded in Riga at the Academy of Sciences. By tradition this had been where research was pursued, rather than in the universities. But the proposal was suppressed.

We still have no strong and well-motivated academic environment. This lack manifests itself in the almost total absence of academic (as opposed to political) discussion. It is significant that Latvia seems to be one of the few European countries without a National Library building. The institution as such does exist once more; but it is presently housed in a building taken over for the purpose, which is much too small. It is also greatly in need of repair: thousands of books lie about tied in parcels; trained staff are so miserably paid

that they leave. There is not enough room in the library for those who hope to read there, yet students are not allowed to borrow books. A good project for erecting a suitable building has been proposed, but the authorities cannot be persuaded to give it the necessary priority.

Like the National Library, the library of Latvia University also has inadequate premises, although it has very good librarians. English studies has profited from some generous donations on the part of the British Council, but these do not allow serious research in the near future. To pursue research we need regular and protracted periods of work in countries which have 'normal' libraries, and for this purpose stipends from the British Council, and the Fulbright and TEMPUS programmes have helped. But for various reasons the possibilities have not always been well exploited—for instance, a person with a family cannot simply go off and stay abroad for a semester or a year.

Since we cannot afford to buy the texts we need, we try to produce anthologies for our students. However, copyright restrictions on contemporary literature have made the creation of such anthologies just as impossible as ordering these texts abroad. The number of potential readers is too small to justify investing in the production of a journal for teaching and research. Where we had academic restrictions before, it is the economy and the market that restrict us now.

Students tend to hold jobs while studying (and thus often miss classes), but as a result they do have some money to buy their own books, books that our libraries often lack. Electronic media are also used, but ordering books from abroad is too expensive both for students and academics. Nor is it usual for staff to have their own offices where we can advise students or do our own work.

What we need, then, if we are going to do true academic research, is not within our power to create at present. We cannot re-establish the habits of true academic research until our society achieves a certain degree of material wealth. As King Lear puts it, 'Nothing will come of nothing'.

*Sigma Ankrava
Riga University*

MACEDONIA

The role of departmental vs. university libraries

The role of the English Department Library at the University of Skopje is primarily to supply students and teachers with basic textbooks and relevant theoretical and critical literature for courses. Out of the total number of books (18,883), about half are being used and about 30% in constant use are damaged, due to the small number of copies and some 770 users.

Undergraduate students have difficulties in finding relevant literature for their seminar papers, in part because the library catalogue has not yet been computerised and there are no subject catalogues. Thus resources and facilities for scholarship and research work are extremely limited. The Departmental library is not yet connected to the University and National Library in Skopje, which also stocks books and periodicals on English Studies and has a computerised catalogue for books and periodicals received after 1989. For lack of information very few students or specialists in English Studies make use of this library and those few who have tried found little in it for their scholarly work. But the University and National Library has been working on a project to connect all public and specialised libraries in Macedonia within one system and has started offering its users internet and inter-library loan services.

Breaking into the world of international scholarship

I believe many scholars in what are commonly designated as the countries of East Europe feel rather claustrophobic about their scholarly work. I partly agree with the statement that 'most scholarly work is published locally' (and thank God for that), but would add that opportunities for international dissemination are limited. The only way to have a paper published abroad is if the organiser of an international conference in which you have participated (which does not happen often) manages to publish the proceedings. Something should be done to promote and support the dissemination of international scholarship in our part of the world and I suppose that *The European Journal of English Studies* is making, or could make, an effort in that direction since there are two specialists from Eastern Europe on its Editorial Advisory Board.

Stipends for study abroad

Funds should be made available for scholarly and research work for postgraduate students, PhD. candidates, young staff members and also more experienced academics who are working to update programmes and teaching methods. It should be noted that my country has only recently begun to have access to PHARE or ERASMUS/SOCRATES funds.

Ljubica Janešlieva
University of Skopje

POLAND

The following reflections concentrate not so much on the material resources, which remain scarce (but slowly improving) in Poland, but on human resources, which constitute a more serious problem.

In 1989, with the change of the political and economic system in Poland, we had about 2,000 teachers of Russian and about 200 teachers in all in the fields of English, German and French. At the time, the only solution seemed to be the foundation of Teacher Training Colleges all over Poland, each offering three-year programmes of study, with a view to the rapid training of increasing numbers of teachers of foreign languages. At present, when I observe the consequences of this expansion, with the establishment of a great number of public and private colleges, serious doubts arise as to its real 'blessings'. On the one hand, many of the colleges prepare good teachers, and the knowledge of foreign languages has improved since 1989. On the other hand, new problems have arisen.

Some universities give the graduates of colleges the opportunity to become extra-mural MA students. However, despite our efforts to provide them with sensible curricula, the degrees they obtain are not comparable to those gained by our regular students. At the same time, most of the material resources (e.g. from the British Council) go to the teacher training colleges and not to the universities. I think this is a serious mistake, especially in view of the fact that the college graduates as often as not fail to go into teaching, but prefer better-paid and more prestigious jobs. This holds good especially in the larger towns and cities.

Is the quality of education, then, not being diluted for the sake of quantity? And in the light of scarce resources, should the colleges continue to absorb available resources in the form of salaries, books and so on, of which the universities are badly in need? Then too, the university teachers, because of their low salaries, are forced to take on more teaching hours, either at their own university or at teacher training colleges in the vicinity. Thus manpower is drained off into the teaching and the administrative sectors (for instance, in supervising the colleges). Thus, in spite of the

slowly improving resources of our libraries and growing coordination between the libraries of English departments all over Poland, less and less time is available for research. This fact has serious consequences not only for the development of individual academics but also for university teaching which is closely linked with and dependant on research.

What are the possible solutions to this vicious circle? The number of training colleges ought not to expand any further. Ideally, only the best of them should continue, especially in view of the fact that more and more students are being admitted to universities. We realise that in a democratic society it is difficult to proceed in this direction. Local communities are naturally very proud of their colleges and will of course try to protect them.

Nevertheless, more resources need to be directed to the improvement of resources in the universities, so that university teachers are enabled to concentrate more on research and on inspiring teaching, rather than having to supplement their meagre salaries by work elsewhere. Also desirable is a reduction in the number of contact hours required of each student, for instance in the field of language instruction, especially in view of the completely changed circumstances, such as self-access centres, foreign contacts and so forth. Reforms of this kind are currently taking place here at the University of Warsaw. Then too, good scholarship and inspiring teaching should be promoted so that the best teachers stay in the job, while the weaker ones move into other (and better-paid!) positions. At present, unfortunately, this, too, is an idealistic view. In any case, university teaching must be made more attractive, if not financially, at least by providing more time for research, as is done in Western countries.

On the other hand, the situation in English departments is not altogether gloomy, for we have few problems in finding new candidates for university posts and are pleased to have many enthusiastic graduate students enrolling in our doctoral studies programmes.

Grażyna Bystydzieńska
University of Warsaw

ROMANIA

In the last decade or so before the demise of the communist regime in Romania, the idea of organising national or international conferences, particularly in a field like British and American studies, or of taking part in conferences abroad, was not viewed with favour. In the first place, Anglo-Saxon culture, ideology and tradition were regarded with suspicion, as possible sources of 'reactionary' ideas, i.e. ideas that might 'corrupt' minds and undermine the communist system and discourse. Second, a conference meant that too many people would be coming together and would surely discuss not only professional matters, but also political ones—even if indirectly (which was unthinkable for the same reasons). Apart from making it more difficult to keep up with changes in approaches to teaching literature, linguistics, and language, the absence of exchanges between professionals with common goals and preoccupations contributed to their feeling of isolation and insecurity.

Things are different now: newly founded associations of high school or university English teachers organise regional, national or international conferences, which are viewed as an effective means of resourcing for scholarship. One such conference is that on 'British, Irish and American Studies', which has been organised for the past eight years by the Department of English at the University of Timișoara. The conference is international; each year it is attended by an increasing number of academics not only from English-speaking countries, but also from neighbouring countries and from as far away as Puerto Rico or Azerbaijan. The benefits to participants are multifold.

Papers are presented on British, Irish and American writers, culture and language. They emphasise the importance of research and stress the interdependence of the various fields of knowledge. The background to texts and studies is explored, providing participants with a greater awareness of their assumptions and aims and enabling them to see relationships among approaches or understand that certain approaches are incompatible with others. The papers are of interest from a theoretical point of view, because they deal with fundamental concepts such as

postmodern identity, new local or world mentalities, the margin and the centre, multicultural education, democracy, monarchy, etc.; they are also of practical interest because some of them analyse in depth literary and non-literary texts by classical or, more often, contemporary writers, samples of literature produced in the Commonwealth, gender issues, the way in which language is used to express or interpret real intentions in particular situations, language structure, language varieties, dialects in the Anglo-Saxon world, the way in which English is taught at different levels, and so on.

The conference is also an occasion for participants to meet, listen and talk to contemporary writers or literary critics from Great Britain or the USA: they give readings from their works or introduce the audience to their latest findings. Over the years, the Timișoara conference can boast of having among its guests literary critics and professors like Valentine Cunningham, Terence Brown (who discussed in detail the concept of nation), Stephen Tapscott (translation theory and practice), Paul Armstrong (the Joyce expert), British writers like Hugo Hamilton and Patrick McGrath—to mention only some names that spring to mind.

The Timișoara conference also includes round-tables on subjects introduced into the curriculum recently, both at home and abroad, whose borders are not clearly defined, like 'British/American Cultural Studies'; these are vast inter-, trans-, and super-disciplinary fields, covering all the major aspects of British and American civilisation, which cannot be neglected when dealing with English language and literature. Participants have discussed the best ways of teaching these subjects, which enjoy increasing popularity among students. On the whole, the conference is a free exchange of information, and, last but not least, it is a means of establishing relationships—participants make professional contacts, which are important, and make friends. Romanian scholars get rid of any inferiority complexes that they might have had, on seeing that, in spite of the long years when they were starved of professional information, they are able to catch up fast

and their contributions are in no way less valuable than those of their peers abroad; foreign scholars manage to get rid of the distorted images and stereotyped views of Romania, implanted in their minds by the mass media.

Perhaps one of the greatest payoffs is that conferences like this bring together people who are interested in innovation, and show them that, even if in their home departments

they may still be isolated, they are not alone in the wider community of scholarship. Horizontal networking of this sort empowers those who favour change. Finally, such conferences are events that demonstrate that it is cultural kinship that ensures the cohesion of European identity.

Hortensia Pârlog
University of Timișoara

RUSSIA

We should start by noting that departmental libraries practically do not exist—with rare exceptions, such as the national centres founded and supported by the respective countries (I know of some American and of one Austrian centres in provincial institutes). Departmental libraries I know of in Moscow consist of only a handful of books, a couple of shelves at most, the books collected by way of donation in many years. The choice of books is very accidental.

Such 'libraries' are usually in the charge of a secretary or 'just standing' in the Department Room. Very often donated books are kept at home by members of staff, otherwise very soon nobody will remember where they have come from and how they disappeared. So the major problem is where to keep departmental libraries and in whose custody. No extra staff will be allowed, especially at the present time when, with a reform of education in view and with a constant shortage of money, we are expecting further serious cuts in jobs.

Consequently, very often, we have to lend our own books to students, if not books then photocopies made from these books. This is a general situation with books published in the West. Not a single university library even in Moscow and St. Petersburg can boast of a regular supply of new accessions to its collection. At times we university teachers have been allowed by the university library to suggest orders from book catalogues. Still rarer are the occasions when the wanted books actually arrived.

Students may use two or three big state libraries: the State Russian Library (formerly named after Lenin and still known as the

Leninka), the State Library of Foreign Languages, and the State Library of History. Some ten years ago they were fairly good but at present they are so badly supplied that a researcher may hope to find no more than ten percent of the titles she seeks, if not less. Neither periodicals nor new annotated editions of the university press type are to be found. To make things worse, Leninka is always overcrowded: students have to queue for an hour or more to get in; there is no free access to the shelves and ordered books take two to three hours to arrive.

In the provinces where they have no money for Russian papers and journals, it is unthinkable to spend \$15 on a book.

We do not get scholarly journals from the West, or very few of them. I personally have to use the opportunity of the occasional visit abroad to look through issues of journals in my fields of interest. There are several important scholarly journals published here, some of which are available in the libraries thanks to the annual Soros donation for subscriptions. The best known and most highly reputed is *The Problems of Literature*. In recent years it has paid more attention to the teaching of literature, though mostly to the teaching of Russian literature. Then there is the publication which I edit, *Anglistika*. But the print-run is very small—between 100-200 copies. There is a special section, 'Studies in the Classroom', which provides materials for teaching English literature, but it can be used in a very limited number of institutions.

All in all, the present position is bleak, and the outlook no better.

Igor Shaitanov
University of Moscow

UKRAINE

Until 1991, when Ukraine turned from a republic of the USSR into a sovereign state, it had enjoyed an effective organisation of support for English Studies. This encompassed a network of educational and research institutions and informal centres of English studies in Kiev, Kharkov, Odessa and Lvov. We also had a system of training highly qualified scholars in English linguistics and literature through postgraduate and doctoral studies, and could supply a limited number of libraries with western literature. Scholars with doctorates in Russia and elsewhere could order a few books of Western imprint each year through the USSR Academy of Sciences in Moscow.

Fundamental changes occurred in the following seven years, many of them not to the benefit of students. Whereas the West enjoyed fantastic progress (this is the only proper assessment of an observer behind the boundary which marks the former Iron Curtain) in facilities for scholars, Ukraine, like the other states of the CIS, lost the resourcing for scholarship it had once had. Easy access to book collections in Moscow and Leningrad ended. The system for providing professors with scholarly materials from the West ceased to function. Interlibrary exchanges with Russia died out. New books and journals, especially of western and Russian imprint, became rare.

Aside from this dearth of sources of modern scholarship there is the lack of access to modern means of communication. Communication with Western colleagues and institutions is sluggish, its frequent disruptions irritating. This state of things is no result of anyone's ill-will: in a poverty-stricken state, the resourcing of scholarship in English cannot be different from that of national education and science at large.

But it would distort reality to paint this picture only in dark colours. New universities have been created which train English teachers and researchers, and new informal centres of English studies have developed, such as Cherkassy, Ivano-Frankovsk, Lutsk and Zaporozhye. The former ideological bias no longer oppresses us. Researchers are free in the choice of problems to be tackled and the

approach to be used. Western countries, especially Britain and the USA, are doing much to help Ukrainian scholars, and we are highly appreciative of their efforts. We have highly qualified specialists, but the resourcing for their academic and scholarly activities is grossly inadequate.

A clearer idea of the reality of academic life may be conveyed by listing a few relevant facts about my own university. With more than 3000 students, the Kiev State Linguistic University is the major higher educational institution in the country which trains foreign language teachers, translators and interpreters. About 1800 of our students specialise in English. Aside from refresher courses for teachers at schools and universities, we offer postgraduate studies up to and including the doctorate and degrees in Germanic and English linguistics as well as in Foreign Language Teaching.

Despite this volume of work, the restrictions are considerable: for instance, research and teaching staff cannot use the university fax or e-mail, office phones cannot be used by the staff to make long-distance calls, be it within the country or abroad, and professional correspondence is done at our personal expense. We have no Internet facilities. The University authorities are aware of these deficiencies, but meagre as well as irregular state financing make it difficult enough to pay salaries, let alone scholarships for students and postgraduates. The professorial salary is now 150 Euros a month and the average monthly scholarship for a student about 10 Euros.

It is hard to see a way forward. There can be no rich universities in a poor country. Apart from outside help, much needed and much appreciated, universities nowadays look for ways to earn money themselves. For instance, almost half of the students pay for tuition, and on a limited scale university scholars participate in research projects. National and international professional organisations (such as ESSE) could and should initiate such projects and pursue ways to support them, a direction currently under discussion by the Ukrainian Society of English Studies (USSE). We intend to launch

a two-year project aimed at updating the teaching of theoretical topics in linguistics and literature. We would envisage changes in university curricula, updating both content and methods, removing vestiges of communist ideology and recommending guidelines for university teachers. It would be good to mount a broad-scale discussion of relevant problems at a national conference and in the press. We hope to obtain support

from our Ministry of Education as well as institutions like the British Council and the USIS. Joint efforts on the part of university scholars and interested organisations might help alleviate the drastic deficiencies in current resourcing for scholarship.

Georgiy Pocheptsov
University of Kiev

YUGOSLAVIA

Present-day Yugoslavia has English departments in six cities. The Belgrade department is one of the oldest in South-Eastern Europe; it was founded before World War Two and has from the very beginning acted as an independent unit. (Many European departments of English were originally branches of other departments.) Until the mid-eighties, this department had a regular supply of essential books and journals and its staff enjoyed opportunities to pursue postgraduate work in Britain and the United States.

The other five departments came into existence within the last four decades: Novi Sad and Pristina in the early sixties, Nis in the early seventies, Miksic in the early nineties, and Kragjevac last year. The Novi Sad department soon met the scholarship and resourcing standards of the Belgrade department. The other three departments, however, have continued to suffer from a great shortage not only of books and journals but also of qualified teaching staff. The Montenegrin Ministry of Education has been spending large sums of money (that could be used to obtain books and supplies) to fly teachers from Belgrade and Novi Sad.

During the last decade, things grew dramatically worse, even in Belgrade and Novi Sad. The acquisition of journals has been completely discontinued and few books are purchased. There is no regular supply of paper and cartridges for the few printers and copying machines, which had been purchased at a moment when the Ministry of Science and Technology had a spurt of interest in 'modernisation'. No funds are available for study abroad; the university is short of money and the country is not eligible for funding

through any of the international schemes. The American Embassy and the British Council have discontinued the good practice of annually sending one or two teachers to each department. The salaries of the teaching assistants are very low, so that they have to seek additional employment (in private language schools) and have little time to work on their dissertations. The student/teacher ratio is outrageously inadequate, largely because enrolments in English departments (though selective) are much higher than in the other departments of the faculty, and ratios are computed for the faculty as a whole.

Nevertheless, we do have two things which help us not only to survive but to thrive: good teaching assistants, good graduate students and good friends in departments of English and linguistics abroad. At the beginning of the decade, the Novi Sad Department of English had the Leiden Department of English as its TEMPUS partner. When we were cut off from the scheme, the partnership continued on an individual basis: joint papers, visiting lecturers and, most importantly, help in getting off-prints and copies of articles essential for work on dissertations. Four years ago, several young European linguists started a Summer School in Generative Grammar, which has since then provided scholarships for Novi Sad teaching assistants and graduate students of the Novi Sad Department (three scholarships for three weeks each year). The summer school helped us make bonds with graduate students from the Linguistics Department of the University of Vienna, making study trips to Vienna possible. Three months ago we asked the Helsinki English Corpus people for help and were presented with a diskette containing the desired data.

I wish I could end on this optimistic note. But recent developments prevent me from doing so. In June, the Serbian parliament brought in a new university law, according to which the deans are appointed by the government and have plenipotential power to run the faculties. The newly appointed dean of the Belgrade Faculty of Philology is a member of the Radical Party and is introducing radical changes, which affect the English Department specifically: it is to lose its independence and be made part of a Department of Germanic Studies. Some outstanding professors, some of them in English Studies, are in danger of losing their posts.

The new law was presented as being in accordance with international practice: 'all over the world universities are governed by their founders; since the State is the founder of

our universities, they have to be governed by it.' To make the general public aware of actual practice 'all over the world', we wanted to publish a collection of short statements on the state of the art in other European departments of English. To that end we asked the representatives of individual countries in ESSE to provide us with answers to the following questions: (1) Is your department a unit of the Faculty of Arts / Philology / Philosophy or else part of another organisational unit of that Faculty? (2) Who appoints and dismisses professors? (3) Who appoints your deans? (4) How are decisions in your faculty made?

Olga Miseska Tomić
University of Novi Sad

Please note that a brief version of the report presented at the conference by Natalia Torkut on the Laboratory for Renaissance Studies at the Zaporizhyya State University, Ukraine was published in The Messenger VII/2, pp. 84-85. We apologise for the fact that space does not permit its reproduction here.

SUMMARY REPORT

The participants in the conference, some twenty in all, agreed that their central concern was for resources to support scholarship and research. This concern was taken to involve books, periodicals, communications and travel—that is, the means of cooperating with similarly interested colleagues in the rest of Europe.

Human resources are also of interest, however, including the provision of guest professors, staff exchanges, privileges for scholars, such as admission to libraries, accommodation to make a library visit to the UK feasible, scholarships for outstanding students and international exchange programmes such as Socrates/Erasmus.

The difficult question of human and political resources also arose, especially with reference to the policy of the Serbian government, which was arrogating to itself the appointment of university heads and deans, as well as threatening university staff with the abrogation of tenure and demands for statements of loyalty to the present regime.

The conference was opened with the distribution of a two-page questionnaire, which members of the group agreed to fill out overnight. Twelve returned them the next day and the results, which turned out to be too varied to summarise here, were reported on and discussed.

The discussion then focused on the seven or eight papers which had been submitted by the deadline of 14th August and made available in edited form. The other participants, who had brought their texts with them to Berlin, were at a disadvantage, for time did not allow each of them to give a half hour presentation. In the course of the following sessions, the participants voiced a rich variety of suggestions for improving the provision of resources. In part needs and problems were discussed to which solutions are not yet in sight, and which call for organisational mechanisms yet to be established. Some of the ideas ventilated at the Berlin meeting are listed below, sorted into two groups: those which seem most viable and those which some of the participants thought might be put in practice now, but which would not, on further reflection, be expected to come about by themselves:

A. Proposals which the ESSE Board and the Executive could decide and put into effect:

1. Raise the value of the four ESSE research bursaries. [*This proposal was put to the ESSE Board and approved for the 1999 bursaries.*]
2. Bring representatives of Eastern and Western universities together to forge SOCRATES programmes scheduled to commence in the autumn of 1999. [*With the help of our colleague from Turin, conference participants were brought together in the gaps between sessions, application forms were copied and agreement reached on a number of applications.*]
3. Make known through the organs of ESSE (at conferences as well as via our newsletter and our Web-Page) what resources are available on the Web. [*The regular listings of such resources in The Messenger are being organised for future publication on the ESSE Web-site.*]
4. Sample copies of the ESSE scholarly journal, *The European Journal of English Studies (EJES)*, should be made available to Eastern European universities. [*Various suggestions are being pursued in this respect.*]

B. Proposals requiring further concerted action.

Discussants also advanced a number of other proposals which seemed viable enough, but which cannot be expected to evolve without further concerted action. The mere listing of them here should remind us of the limited radius of action available to a purely voluntary society such as ESSE. For ESSE has no salaried workers, no offices, no permanent *frappe de force*, in some sectors lacks the resources needed to take effective action—in other words, must postpone laudable projects requiring a degree of organisational energy and persistence. Here are some examples, listed to illustrate the energy of the Berlin conference, but viable only if and when ESSE or some other corporate body with offices and competent staff is able to take them on:

1. Make better use of *The European English Messenger* to place notices about where books are available which are needed for research or to ask where a book needed for a project could be obtained.
 2. Advertise research projects which other scholars or institutions might join.
 3. Advertise and make special holdings available.
 4. Exchange information about workshops and summer school programmes (usually on a limited topic in which local staff have specialised) already running both East and West, which can provide extra income both to a department and to the scholars who organise and teach in the summer school. Summer schools can also provide language courses, refresher courses in literature or linguistics, etc.
 5. Bring scholars with common research interests together for the purposes of collaboration.
 6. Identify scholars with similar interests who can exchange offprints, etc.
 7. While avoiding the paternalistic relationship that the term might suggest, arrange an 'adopt-a-project' system, in which better-funded western departments and individuals provide materials (bibliographical information, offprints, copies...) to other scholars and departments.
 8. Organise an exchange of periodicals, conference volumes and yearbooks between universities in Eastern Europe.
4. Appeal to the British Council to consider the special needs of English Departments in Eastern Europe. The position was voiced that language teaching materials and text books are not needed as they once were and that the felt needs now lie elsewhere, namely in up-to-date serious scholarship on current issues in literature, literary theory and linguistics. The conference asked, without a dissenting vote, that the ESSE Chairman approach the British Council with a request to consider a change of policy.
 5. It was argued (see point B.4. above) that summer school programmes (workshops in linguistics or refresher courses in English literature) can provide supplementary income. The student fees can subsidise both staff salaries and make funds available for research. A scholar who has organised such programmes will be asked to offer *The Messenger* a description of such a project, including financial details.

The number of not immediately viable projects must not cloud our perception that the Berlin Conference was an invigorating and fruitful experience: any number of items of business was transacted which could not have happened without the face-to-face meetings and group reactions. Some ideas were exchanged which lay close to the hearts of the participants, others were freshly generated on the spot as a result of an intense, round-the-clock exchange of views and information, largely between scholars who had never met, some of whom had never been in the West, and were surprised that our common interests allowed them to make friendships as well as professional contacts, contacts which promise to be not merely of a transient nature.

C. Other proposals deserving further consideration:

1. A voucher system for member societies was proposed, to allow the ordering of articles in scholarly periodicals and the immediate delivery of such articles by e-mail.
2. Even the less well-endowed departments could evolve a system for the regular exchange of their conference volumes and yearbooks.
3. Look for subsidised college housing in the UK for scholars using libraries in the summer.

A heartfelt vote of thanks is due to our sponsors: **The German Academic Exchange Service**, the **Fritz Thyssen Foundation** and the **Stifterverband der deutschen Wissenschaft**, as well as to our generous host, **Professor Jürgen Schlaeger**, Director of the Großbritannien-Zentrum of the Humboldt-Universität Berlin, and his most efficient, kind and indefatigable members of staff.

*Helmut Bonheim
Cologne, 11 September, 1998
Revised, 30 July, 1999*

THE BERLIN CONFERENCE ON RESOURCES
FOR SCHOLARSHIP

Grossbritannien-Zentrum, Humboldt-Universität

(3-4 September, 1998)

Organised by:

Helmut Bonheim, University of Cologne (President, ESSE)
Jürgen Schlaeger, British Studies Centre, Humboldt University

Reports by:

Sigma Ankrava, Riga University, Latvia
Grażyna Bystydzieńska, University of Warsaw, Poland
Lumme Erilt, Estonian Institute of Humanities, Estonia
Josef Hladký, University of Brno, Czech Republic
Ljubica Janešlieva, University of Skopje, Macedonia
Damir Kalogjera, University of Zagreb, Croatia
Hortensia Pârlog, University of Timișoara, Romania
Georgiy Pocheptsov, University of Kiev, Ukraine
Igor Shaitanov, University of Moscow, Russia
Christo Stamenov, University of Sofia, Bulgaria
Olga Miseska Tomič, University of Novi Sad, Yugoslavia
Natalia Torkut, Zaporizhya State University, Ukraine

Other Participants:

Irma Maknevičiene, Dept of English, Vytautas Magnus
University, Lithuania
Members of the Board and Executive of ESSE
Martin A. Kayman, University of Coimbra (Editor, *The
European English Messenger*)

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