The University of Bristol and the British Library are delighted to offer a fully-funded Arts and Humanities Research Council full-time or part-time PhD studentship (fees and living allowance) on the theme: The Michael Hamburger Archive: Mediating European Literature.

If successful, you will be expected to attend launch events in London on 21-22 September 2020 and begin your studentship on 1 October 2020. Your project will be co-supervised by Steffan Davies and Rebecca Kosick (University of Bristol) and Pardaad Chamsaz and Rachel Foss (British Library). You will spend time both in Bristol and at the British Library and will be part of a wider cohort of CDP funded students across the UK. Given the nature and extent of the material which is the focus of this project, you are likely to be based mainly at the British Library in London and to make frequent visits to Bristol.

The Research Project

Michael Hamburger was one of the foremost mediators of modern European – mainly German and Austrian – literature to readers in English. Born into a German family of Jewish descent, he came to the UK as a refugee in 1933. He became a poet, a literary critic, and the translator of a very broad range of writers, including Hölderlin, Goethe, Rilke, Celan, Brecht, Ernst Jandl, Hans Magnus Enzensberger and W. G. Sebald. Hamburger’s archive at the British Library, which thus far is uncatalogued, comprises 94 boxes of drafts of translations, poems and essays; correspondence with writers, publishers and friends; and diaries and personal reflections among many other documents. The CDP offers a unique opportunity, through research, cataloguing, and public engagement, to illuminate processes that have been at the core of Anglo-German cultural relations in the past three-quarters of a century: the translation of literature, and specifically poetry; the writing of feuilleton-style and heavier literary criticism; and reflection at length on translation and cultural transfer. The project will enhance the current emphasis on the transnational in German studies, and it speaks to an enduring academic and public interest in the relationship between Germany and the United Kingdom. Equally, the existence of such a full archive makes this an outstanding opportunity for Translation Studies research.

Alongside the PhD research, and integrally connected with it, the studentship will involve a significant contribution to the organisation and cataloguing of the archive, and to the evolving approaches to and understanding of translators’ archives in the Library. Applicants are invited to propose a PhD project that approaches the Michael Hamburger Archive from one or more of the following angles. These are areas in which close, sustained engagement with the archive will achieve research insights which cannot be developed otherwise, and where academic research will interconnect closely with practical work for the Library.

- **Hamburger as translator.** The archive offers rare access to drafts, which many translators discard after publication. This theme is likely to sit at the core of the project in combination with others. On its own it enables a fuller understanding of Hamburger’s approach to
translation and a chance to test his claims about translation in print. It raises potential questions not just about method but about Hamburger’s selection of material, and about the interaction of translation and literary criticism.

- **Developing a methodology for archive-based translation studies.** The Hamburger archive gives a rare chance to explore the translator’s archive as ‘a conceptual space that allows for a coherent examination of the translator’s work, self, and self-understanding’ (Constanza Guzmán 2016). The archive would allow comparison of the translator’s work on dead authors with translations where the author has been a part of the translation process (e.g. Hans Magnus Enzensberger, and others), providing new insights into translation as a process, not just a product. The project could also focus on the value and pitfalls of the archive-based approach, asking how the archive can enhance the process-oriented study of translation ‘as it happens’.

- **Connections between the creativity of a poet and that of a translator.** Asking how much common ground Hamburger’s drafts reveal here offers the chance, through the particularly multivalent lens of poetry, to reassess notions of creative authorship and originality in the context of translation. Furthermore, Hamburger suggested that his exile to England, at a young age, had determined not only his work as a translator, but his poetry too. His œuvre and archive invite questions about an exophonic poet who was drawn to translate other exophonic poets, notably Celan and Rilke.

- **A critical reappraisal of translation as cultural mediation.** Like Benjamin, and more recently Apter, Hamburger addressed the concept of ‘untranslatability’, commenting that some poetry ‘resisted translation’. He insisted on the ‘essential difficulty and paradox’ of Celan’s poetry, ‘which can be illumined, but not resolved, by scholarly research’. What does the archive reveal – in letters, as well as in notes and drafts – of Hamburger’s intentions as a cultural mediator, and what is the place of poetic ambiguity in such a project?

- **The (in)visible translator.** The archive offers a rare opportunity to retrace the tensions in Hamburger’s public profile: reversing Venuti’s claim that the translator is consigned to invisibility, Hamburger was a relatively well-known translator, but over time and as if by consequence, a less-known poet or scholar. Research under this strand would both strengthen the student’s work at the Library to publicise the Hamburger papers and be a means to reflect originally and in depth on ‘promoting’ a translator through the archive.

**Benefits and Opportunities**

The successful candidate will join the School of Modern Languages at the University of Bristol, which has a deep-rooted and forward-looking research culture, a vibrant, mutually supportive community of research students, post-doctoral researchers and established academics, and a track record in the successful supervision of collaborative PhDs. The Bristol Doctoral College (BDC), the central hub for postgraduate researchers, supports the development of PhD students across the University: its Personal and Professional Development programme, which is partly delivered online, locates students’ development in dialogue across disciplinary boundaries. You will also be part of the community of the Faculty of Arts, which has a dedicated Graduate Research Centre; BDC’s PGR Hub offers collaborative and social spaces in which to connect with fellow research students. You will have full access to the University’s support for student health and wellbeing, much of which can be accessed remotely.
At the British Library, you will become part of a vibrant cohort of collaborative doctoral researchers and benefit from staff-level access to BL collections, resources and training programmes, including the opportunity to participate in courses run by the in-house Digital Scholarship Team. You will also benefit from the dedicated programme of professional development and networking events delivered by the Library in tandem with the other museums, galleries and heritage organisations affiliated with the AHRC CDP scheme.

Through this scheme, you will have the opportunity to work behind the scenes of a major cultural institution. This is a unique opportunity to gain transferable research skills, for example by being integral from the very start of the cataloguing and conservation processes, by writing for different audiences in web guides or blogs such as the BL European Studies Blog, and by engaging the public through cultural events and study days.

Funding Notes

This doctoral training grant is funded through the AHRC’s Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) scheme, which offers doctoral studentships as part of a collaboration between a Higher Education Institution and an organisation in the museums, libraries, archives and heritage sector. The studentship is fully funded for 3 years and 9 months full-time or part-time equivalent, with the potential to be extended by a further 3 months to provide additional professional development opportunities. Overall, a minimum of 3 and up to 6 months of the total funded period will be spent on professional development.

Through the doctoral grant held by the University of Bristol, the student will receive a stipend at standard UKRI rates. For the academic year 2020-1 this will be £16,885, consisting of £15,285 basic stipend, a CDA maintenance payment of £600 and an additional allowance of £1,000 for CDP partner universities based outside of London. In addition, the British Library will provide a research allowance directly to the student for agreed research-related costs of up to £1,000 a year.

Eligibility

We are keen to encourage applications from a wide range of candidates with suitable qualifications and/or experience. Applicants should normally hold, or be working towards, a Master’s degree in a relevant discipline, or have equivalent experience; full details of the entry requirements are in the German PhD admissions statements. Relevant disciplines include, but are not limited to, German Studies, Translation Studies and Comparative Literature. Equivalent experience might include, but is not restricted to, a strong track record of employment in a library, museum, or heritage institution, or significant experience as a literary translator.

A very good reading knowledge of German is essential for this project; given the nature of the archive, degree-level knowledge of German language and literature is highly desirable. Applicants are invited to outline in their personal statement, however, any knowledge areas and skills which they would propose to develop further in the project’s early stages.

Applicants must satisfy the standard UKRI eligibility criteria. To be eligible for a full award, non-British nationals should normally have been resident in the UK for 3 years immediately prior to the date of the start of the course. EU students not resident in the UK for 3 years prior to 30 September 2020 may
be eligible for a fees-only award. Please see Annex B of the UKRI Training Grant Guidance to confirm eligibility before applying.

How to Apply

To apply for this studentship, you must submit an online application via the University of Bristol’s online application system by 5pm on Monday 1 June. Applications received after this date cannot be considered.

When completing the online application:

- On the front page, select ‘2020/2021’ as the year in which you intend to start studying and ‘Postgraduate Research’ as the type of study for which you are applying.
- Under ‘Programme Choice’, select ‘Faculty of Arts’, ‘German (PhD)’, and September 2020 as the start date.
- Under ‘Research Details’, enter ‘The Michael Hamburger Archive: Mediating European Literature’ in the first text box. Enter ‘Dr Steffan Davies’ and ‘Dr Rebecca Kosick’ in the ‘proposed supervisor’ boxes.
- Under ‘Funding’ select ‘Other’, write ‘AHRC CDP BL Hamburger’ in the free text box, and click the option to specify that this application is ‘in progress’.
- Upload a Personal Statement (500 words) to explain your reasons for applying. Please refer to your academic qualifications and interests, and provide details of your relevant language skills.
- Upload a Research Statement (1000 words) setting out how you will develop an original PhD project based on the Michael Hamburger Archive. You are encouraged to use the strands set out above as a starting-point.
- Please also upload academic transcripts and graduation certificates for any qualifications you hold (or are currently studying), and arrange for two references to be provided by the closing date.

Interviews are expected to be held in late June.

Informal Enquiries

If you are interested in applying, you are welcome to contact the following for an informal discussion about this opportunity in advance of submitting an application: Steffan Davies (steffan.davies@bristol.ac.uk), Rebecca Kosick (rebecca.kosick@bristol.ac.uk), Pardaad Chamsaz (pardaad.chamsaz@bl.uk) and Rachel Foss (Rachel.Foss@bl.uk).

For enquiries related to the application process, please contact the Faculty of Arts Postgraduate Research Admissions team (artf-pgadmissions@bristol.ac.uk).