

In 2010 the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies is celebrating its first 30 years. As part of the celebration we are organising a number of events. I would like to bring one of these to your special attention. It will mark the opening of the new academic year. On behalf of SALIS and Dr Aileen Pearson-Evans, Head of School, I would like to invite you to participate in a seminar.

**On Monday, 13th September, 4.30pm,  
Seminar Room, top floor, INVENT Centre**

**Professor Bernhard Giesen (University of Konstanz)  
will speak on**

**"Inbetweenness and Ambivalence - Towards New Horizons in Understanding  
Social Reality"**

Professor Giesen's focus is on challenges to identity thinking that emerge from new conditions of global interconnectivity. Traditionally, both in politics and in academic research, we are used to treating social reality as constituted by distinctions, e.g. of class and gender. Social groups are seen and see themselves as having a collective identity. This identity sets boundaries: you are either "in" or "out".

Due to current conditions of global interconnectivity, however, which arise from factors such as economic interdependence, [tele-]communicative interrelations and direct interpersonal relationships in multicultural societies, this kind of thinking is increasingly perceived as problematic. It is held to foster fear of otherness, leading to breakdowns in social cohesion.

The presentation will be followed by coffee and a questions and answers session with discussion. The event will be rounded off by a wine reception which is kindly hosted by the Goethe-Institut, Dublin.

Professor Giesen is no stranger to DCU. In 2000 he gave the keynote public lecture during the SALIS "Cultural Trauma and National Identity" conference; in 2002 SALIS launched its Cross-Currents in German Studies series with a symposium on his work on collective identity ("Identities under Construction"). He holds the Chair of Macro sociology at the University of Konstanz, Germany and is a key partner in that university's cluster of excellence: "Cultural Foundations of Integration". Apart from his work on collective identities he has numerous publications on other topics. Noteworthy books include his "Intellectuals and the Nation", "Triumph and Trauma" and "Religion and Politics: Cultural Perspectives".

His latest book will be published next month: "Zwischenlagen, Das Ausserordentliche als Grund sozialer Wirklichkeit" (Inbetweenness - The Extraordinary as the Foundation of Social Reality), Velbrueck, October 2010. His presentation at DCU will serve to introduce us to it.

I hope some of you will be able to come along despite the pressures of pre-semester preparations. You are most welcome. For planning purposes we would be very grateful if you could let the SALIS School Secretary, Caroline Whitston, know of your intention of attending. [ [Caroline.Whitston@dcu.ie](mailto:Caroline.Whitston@dcu.ie)]

Please, if you get a chance, bring this to the attention of colleagues, research students and postgraduates in other faculties and institutions. Thank you very much in advance.

Kind regards,  
Martin Sauter, SALIS