



www.goethesociety.org

GOETHE NEWS AND NOTES

XXIX.1, Spring 2009

Burkhard Henke, Editor
Davidson College

FROM THE EDITOR

2008 proved to be a very successful year for the Goethe Society. We were able to increase our membership, had terrific panels at the MLA and elsewhere, published another notable volume of the *Yearbook*, saw submissions to our book series take off, and held our first international conference. You can read about these and other developments in the minutes of the business meeting and the conference report included below.

2009 promises to be another fine year for us. Our finances are sound and we have big plans. 2009 will also be an election year. At this time we are seeking nominations and self-nominations for four positions. Please see the invitation below.

This issue contains a number of announcements, among them a second call for syllabi (our online archive needs your contributions to be a useful teaching tool) and announcements of new books by our members. Please note especially the posthumous publication of Jill Anne Kowalik's work on mourning, edited by Gail Hart and others.

Last but not least, consider this newsletter a gentle reminder that dues

are payable in each calendar year. If you have not yet paid, please do so soon. The *Goethe Yearbook* is sent only once this obligation is met. We appreciate your continued support.

Burkhard Henke
Davidson College

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The New Face of Goethe. Lavater would be reveling in the latest physiognomic sensation. There are over 150 million Facebook members worldwide. That's 150 million people participating in the mutual construction, grooming, and interpretation of their virtual public/private physiognomies. Lavater had a stable of artists, some willing friends and a hungry public. His *Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe* were certainly ambitious for their time and could be seen as the eighteenth-century forerunner of Facebook. What better name for a social network predicated on the face as the interpretable, interpenetrative membrane between individual and culture?

Would it surprise you to know that at least half of the board of the Goethe Society can be found on Facebook? Each of us, individually, was drawn into the Facebook vortex. Did we succumb to the goading of an insistent relative praising the convenience of Facebook for sharing family photos and videos, for staying in touch? Were we tempted, like Faust, to recover lost youth by plunging into the medium of our students and children? Were we drawn by the collaborative voyeurism of visible lives instantly and repeatedly accessible across far flung spaces, a new *Freundschaftstempel*, a virtual *Musenhof*? Were we captured by the poetry of the “status update,” the new art of the *Gelegenheitsgedicht*, a runic haiku of our ephemeral and expressive moments. (I won’t name names, but some GSNA members are masters of the form!)

Goethe is also on Facebook. I’m serious. Facebook members can signal their allegiance and affection for cultural icons by becoming fans and friends of authors, institutions, brand name products, political causes, etc. (I’m a fan of okra, Dutch licorice, the Wagner Free Institute of Science, Jacques Demy, Gaston Bachelard, and Goethe, among other things.) When I became a fan of Goethe in December 2008, I joined a group of around 3,000. In the weeks since then, his worldwide Facebook fan base has grown exponentially to almost 10,000 and counting. Is that a lot? Let’s say it’s just starting to ripple across the face of the world. Some comparative numbers may be instructive (and amusing): Goethe is ahead of Stifter (22), Christa Wolf (122), Schiller (186), Jelinek (282), Heine (314), Tasso (372), Grass (419), Milton (1,451), Homer (1,581), Rilke (4,412), Thomas Mann

(4,626), and Walter Benjamin (4,712). He trails Freud (13,005), Dante (13,061), Brecht (15,954), Kafka (20,022), and Shakespeare (56,903). (Important note: Kafka is ahead of J. K. Rowling! That’s no small feat.) Klopstock has no friends. Poor Lavater. He has no friends either!

Fans of Goethe can leave their mark on his Facebook page. Many have written on his “wall”—this is where the physiognomy metaphor breaks down and gives way to that of graffiti. Hundreds of fans from across the world (China, Italy, France, Spain, Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, Bosnia, Argentina, Mexico, Japan, Singapore and more) have inscribed their multilingual effusions on Goethe’s wall. Is this what Goethe meant by world literature? *Faust* and *Werther* are most frequently referenced, but *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* and the *Divan* command their share of attention. Most striking is the role that Goethe’s face plays in negotiating between western culture and Islam, especially for Turkish fans in Turkey and abroad. As Senada Haralçiç writes: “super moslem unser Goethe!” Most of this is dilettantism in the highest degree as our past president Hans Vaaget would rightfully point out. But it’s hopeful too. It’s visual evidence that the face of the world bears Goethe’s trace, that Goethe continues to appeal to youthful readers who make him their own. Opportunities for reading persist.

What about the face of the Goethe Society? I wish I’d taken pictures at our Pittsburgh conference. We’re inter-generational and international. We’re vigorous and undaunted. We’re convinced of the vitality of Goethe’s oeuvre and energized in our pursuits. It’s time for the GSNA to present its face to the world. I’m sure we’ll have many fans

and friends, some of you among them. We'll certainly have more friends than Lavater. But maybe he deserves a page too. After all, he is the unacknowledged founder of Facebook.

Simon Richter
University of Pennsylvania

2009 ELECTIONS— CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Goethe Society of North America will be holding elections in the fall of 2009 and is open to nominations and self-nominations for the offices of Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, and two Directors-at-Large. Our current Vice President, Astrida Tantillo, will automatically succeed Simon Richter as President. She and the new officers will serve for three years, from 2010 through 2012.

We are particularly interested in receiving self-nominations for the position of Secretary-Treasurer since this position involves managing the GSNA finances and membership.

Nominations and self-nominations may be emailed to any member of the committee listed below by March 15, 2009.

Nominating Committee:

Gail Hart, University of California at Irvine, ghart@uci.edu (Chair);

Matt Erlin, Washington University in Saint Louis, merlin@artsci.wustl.edu;

Mary Helen Dupree, Georgetown University, mhd33@georgetown.edu.

GOETHE AND THE POSTCLASSICAL

Our first international conference, generously supported by the DAAD and co-sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh's German Department, the European Union Center, and the Program in Cultural Studies, took place Nov 6-9 on the campus of the University Pittsburgh. Simon Richter, Karin Schutjer, and Clark Muenzer organized a lively program that focused on the decade of 1805-1815 and explored the activities of Goethe and his contemporaries under the rubric of the "post classical." The two keynote speakers, Ulrich Gaier (Konstanz) and Robert J. Richards (University of Chicago), were both awarded honorary GSNA memberships. In addition to an opening panel of past presidents Benjamin Bennett, Jane Brown (Respondent), Ellis Dye, Meredith Lee (Moderator), and Dan Wilson, who celebrated the 200th anniversary of the publication of *Faust I*, more than 50 papers were presented. With the participation of more than 100 Goethe scholars, including 13 graduate student members of the GSNA (several of whom gave papers), all agreed that the event was a resounding success and the Board has decided to institutionalize it on a three-year cycle.

Representatives of the Goethe-Dictionary, Hamburg, as well as the Goethe-Museum Düsseldorf, also

attended. The majority of participants were from North American universities and colleges, but colleagues from Switzerland, Germany, Australia, Ireland, and the United Kingdom participated as well. Disciplines represented included German, history of science, philosophy, and musicology. The full conference program can be viewed on our web site.

The GSNA has a tradition of supporting and encouraging young scholars whose work falls into the Age of Goethe. In addition to enabling broad participation of graduate students and assistant professors in the conference, two workshops for six competitively selected students in the dissertation stage were conducted on the morning of Nov 9. Each of the students received a GSNA Gloria Flaherty Prize of \$250 and conference fee waiver. Each had submitted one or two chapters of their dissertations in advance, and on Sunday morning, groups of three students met for three hours with three experts in the relevant Goethe-era fields for detailed feedback. Reports about the experience from the participating students and scholars have been very positive.

Conference participants have been invited to revise and submit their papers in article form to the annual GSNA publication, the *Goethe Yearbook*. Along with Daniel Purdy, Clark Muenzer and Karin Schutjer are serving as special editors.

One of the thematic strengths of the conference was Goethe, philosophy, and science (especially Kant, Hegel, and Schelling). A number of participants, including Robert Richards (Chicago), Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert (DePaul), and

John H. Smith (Irvine), have established a working group that is planning a colloquium on the topic. This is a very promising development, especially since it crosses disciplinary lines. We hope to have an update on the project soon.

Clark Muenzer
University of Pittsburgh

FROM THE YEARBOOK EDITOR

The current volume of the *Goethe Yearbook* (16) was mailed in early February. The Society invites article submissions for volume seventeen of the *Goethe Yearbook*. We welcome articles on topics broadly understood within the *Goethezeit*, written according to any number of divergent methodologies. Please send manuscripts to Daniel Purdy, dlp14@psu.edu, by May 30. Submissions should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* and confine themselves to less than 35 pages. For specific questions about scholarly citations, please consult the *Yearbook's* style sheet at our web site.

Daniel Purdy
Pennsylvania State University

FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

Minutes of the Business Meeting, 27
December 2008 – MLA Convention, San
Francisco

President Simon Richter conducted the meeting.

Report from the President

The Society sponsored a successful Goethe conference in Pittsburgh in early November. (The program is archived at www.goethesociety.org). Over 100 people attended, about 60 papers were presented, two dissertation workshops were held for six recipients of the Flaherty prize, and two keynote addresses were given. The keynote speakers, Ulrich Gaier and Robert Richards, were named the first two honorary members of the Goethe Society of North America.

Members were eager to see this conference repeated. The board decided that the GSNA will run such a conference every 3 years; the next one will be in Chicago in 2011. The President and the Directors at Large will constitute the conference planning/organizing committee.

At the 2008 MLA, the Society sponsored a panel on *Faust* ("The Impropriety of *Faust*") at which Gayatri Spivak, Michael Holquist, and Jane Brown presented. This was one of five MLA panels open to the public, which brought welcome attention to the society.

Volume 16 of the *Goethe Yearbook* will be in members' hands shortly, and we are looking for submissions for Volume 17. This volume will likely include selections from the recent conference and a call for submissions will be going out soon, with a May deadline.

Calls for papers have been organized for upcoming GSA and MLA conferences:

Bernd Hamacher has arranged a call for the GSA on the emergence of literary studies out of Goethe Philology. Richard Block will arrange a collaborative Goethe Society/ Heine Society panel for the MLA in 2009.

Next year the society will be electing a new Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and two Directors at Large. The President will appoint a nominating committee and members will vote for these new positions by electronic ballot. More news about the election will be forthcoming.

Report from the Secretary-Treasurer

The society's finances are sound. Overall we lost about 4% in capital this year, primarily due to losses in equities following the downturn in the overall economy, but our exposure to this was minimal so we remain in a strong financial position. The conference was the biggest financial event of the year: on the one hand it required a large financial outlay; on the other it generated a large amount of income both from new dues payers and generous donations from outside organizations. Membership is at its strongest in decades with 211 dues-paying members and 2 new honorary members. This includes a 37% increase in student membership and more members than ever before paying at the senior member level, which should stave off a dues increase for the foreseeable future.

Book Series Editor

To date the series has received nineteen proposals. From these, one book will be published this year and one is under review. Five proposals have been

accepted for further review, seven were rejected before external review, two were rejected after external review, and three were rejected because they were proposals for edited volumes (which the series does not publish).

Annual Essay Prize

The Directors at Large considered over forty articles and came to the unanimous conclusion that Christian Weber's essay, "Goethes 'Ganymed' und der Sündenfall der Ästhetik" (*Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift* 81:317-45), merited the society's annual essay prize. Christian is currently at Florida State University, but the article was written while he was a graduate student at Indiana University. The scope of Christian's essay impressed the selection committee in that it went well beyond an interpretation of a poem to address the broader field of eighteenth-century thought.

Speaker

President Simon Richter introduced the speaker, Professor Arnd Bohm of Carleton University, who presented an engaging paper titled "Goethe's Reception of Stoicism: Elective Affinity."

Respectfully submitted,

John Lyon
University of Pittsburgh

PANELS

Special GSNA Session at ASECS 2009
27 March 2009

"Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften* at 200"

Organized by Mary Helen Dupree,
Georgetown University

Panel I

Chair: Mary Helen Dupree, Georgetown
University

1. Dorothea von Mücke, Columbia
University, "The Status of the Image:
Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften* and the
Iconic Turn"

2. Gunhild Berg, Universität Halle
/Zentrum für Literaturforschung Berlin,
"Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften* as
'Vermittler': A Literary Experimentation
Mediating Between Truth and Myth"

3. Tanvi Solanki, University of Chicago,
"Living Pictures in Goethe's *Elective
Affinities*"

Panel II

Chair: Astrid Weigert, Georgetown
University

1. Astrida Orle Tantillo, University of
Illinois at Chicago, "Family Values: *Die
Wahlverwandtschaften*, Aristotle and
Rousseau"

2. Zsuzanna Zádori Rothné, University
of Tennessee, "Female Subjectivity
versus Submissive Femininity? A

Psychoanalytic Study of Charlotte's Female Identity in Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*"

3. Loisa Nygaard, University of California, Santa Cruz, "The Production of Space in Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften*"

4. Raluca Cernahoschi, University of British Columbia, "A Question of Balance: Representing the Nineteenth-Century in *Le affinità elettive* by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani (1996)"

NB: If you are interested in organizing a panel sponsored by the Goethe Society at any of the annual (incl. regional) meetings of ASECS, GSA, or MLA, please contact our Executive Secretary.

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Deadlines for submission of panel proposals:

2010 ASECS, 15 March 2009
2010 MLA, 15 November 2009
2010 GSA, 1 December 2009

NEW BOOKS BY MEMBERS

Kowalik, Jill Anne. *Theology and Dehumanization. Trauma, Grief, and*

Pathological Mourning in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century German Thought and Literature. Ed. Gail K. Hart in collaboration with Ursula Mahlendorf, Thomas P. Saine and Hans Medick. Frankfurt am Main, et al. 2009. Approx. 240 pp. Berliner Beiträge zur Literatur- und Kulturgeschichte. Eds. Irmela von der Lühe and Gail K. Hart. Vol. 5. ISBN 978-3-631-59092-8 · hardback approx. € 42.80* / US-\$ 61.95 / £ 30.

Maierhofer, Waltraud, and Astrid Klocke. *Deutsche Literatur im Kontext 1750–2000*. Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 2008. Introductory textbook for students of German literature. Introductory texts and selection of primary texts by Maierhofer, exercises by Klocke. Pp. 321.

SYLLABUS ARCHIVE

We are looking to expand the syllabus archive for courses that address aspects of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century German culture. Located at www.goethesociety.org, the archive is intended to foster intellectual exchange on topics related to our teaching and pedagogy. Members are invited to submit syllabi for past, present, and future courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Courses that treat any aspect of the cultural and intellectual history of the period, whether as their sole focus or as part of a broader investigation, are welcome. Please send your syllabus, either as a Word document or a PDF file, to buhenke@davidson.edu. Be sure to include contact information on the

syllabus, in case colleagues are interested in getting in touch to ask questions or exchange ideas.

Burkhard Henke
Davidson College

STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST

The Goethe-Gesellschaft in Weimar is holding its second world-wide essay competition for students. The deadline for submission is 31 March 2009. For more information see www.goethe-gesellschaft.de.

FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

In an ongoing effort to increase the strength of the society, the GSNA is looking for new members. We ask for your assistance in this endeavor. If you know of any scholars or other interested parties who are interested in the Age of Goethe, but are not yet members, would you please encourage them to join the society? We are particularly interested in recruiting younger scholars—current and recent graduate students—to ensure the society's future for decades to come. Joining is simple—go to www.goethesociety.org and click on the link to “Membership.” Thanks for your support in this endeavor.

John Lyon
University of Pittsburgh

DUES

If you have not done so already, please send your 2009 dues to the Secretary-Treasurer, John Lyon, or go to www.goethesociety.org and use PayPal (a modest fee will apply). Dues are payable in each calendar year, see the schedule below. The GYB is sent only once this obligation is met.

junior member (non-tenured faculty)	\$25
senior member (tenured faculty)	\$35
patron (please consider becoming a patron)	\$100
emeritus	\$10
student	\$10
institution	\$40

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