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GOETHE NEWS AND NOTES

XL.2, Fall 2020

Burkhard Henke, Editor
Davidson College

FROM THE EDITOR

Despite the disruption caused by the pandemic, there is much to report in this number of the newsletter. That includes, sadly, the loss of Hans Reiss, who passed away at his home in Heidelberg earlier this year. Theodore Ziolkowski has written a brief but moving tribute for him.

The usual array of announcements may have become a tad slimmer in the times of COVID, but the Goethe Society has been able to continue to promote scholarly production and exchange, as evidenced by the updates provided by the editors of the *Yearbook* and the book series. The Atkins Conference as well as the GSNA-sponsored panels at GSA may have been COVID-postponed for a year, but the *Goethe-Lexicon of Philosophical Concepts* is going strong and is close to publishing its first two dozen entries.

Finally, do note the Secretary-Treasurer's last call for 2020 dues. If you would like a copy of *Goethe Yearbook 28* (scheduled to appear in the spring), you should renew your membership now.

Burkhard Henke
Davidson College

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Goethe Society members,

When I wrote my last newsletter column in April 2020, most of us were in complete lockdown and had begun teaching virtually with limited and hasty preparation. We had little sense of what the next months would hold. Unfortunately, we are still weathering uncertainty and crisis the likes of which Goethe also experienced in the final months of his life. In 1831/32 Europe was afflicted by cholera (six further waves would beset the continent until 1899). Goethe's reactions to the cholera epidemic of 1831 strike a chord. The notoriously "gesund" poet was reportedly averse to lingering on disease and death, bypassing funerals, condolences, and cemeteries. When news of the epidemic raging in Berlin drove the denizens of Weimar to hysteria, the aged Goethe hovered between avoidance of press reports, of conversation about cholera or political upheavals, and, as historian of cholera Olaf Briese has pointed out, rhetorical naming strategies aimed at deflecting a real and present danger in

apotropaic and, for us now, all too familiar terms (“asiatische Hyäne,” “unsichtbares Gespenst”). There are apparently limitless quantities of “Goethe Things.” Here is a genius piece of 2020 marketing for us GSNA members: browsing through Etsy this week (better than doom scrolling), I came across a Goethe face mask, so you too can now sport the Stieler portrait of 1828 to ward off Covid-19.

As you all know, the Atkins Goethe conference on *Goethe’s Things* has been rescheduled for Nov. 5-7, 2021. We plan to send out a second call for papers later in the autumn. New submissions will be welcome at that time (accepted papers from the past call will carry forward, unless participants wish to submit a different proposal). We will also be proposing a subtopic for papers on disease and epidemics in the *Goethezeit*, a topic which has material as well as discursive implications: to name only one example, paper as a carrier of infection.

Before the summer, the board sent out a call for proposals for various kinds of reading and writing groups, with the aim of sustaining and building community during our enforced isolation and in a 2020 calendar missing the conference we had been planning for. These proved to be quite successful. I had reports of summer reading projects devoted to Kant’s Third Critique as well as the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, and other groups workshopped writing in progress and shared research tools for archival work. My thanks go to Vice-President Heather Sullivan, who has also organized a dissertation workshop that will take place on November 8th (virtually). I am grateful to all the other members of the board too, for their help in thinking through and navigating these

challenging times for us as scholars, with particular attention to the needs of early career colleagues in Goethe studies.

Catriona MacLeod
University of Chicago

IN MEMORIAM:
HANS REISS (1922-2020)

Hans Reiss, who died on April 2 at age 97, outshone the dry facts of his *vita* as greatly as the 373 pages of his lively autobiography (2009) outweigh his entry in *Wikipedia*. Though confined in recent years to a wheelchair in the Heidelberg apartment that he shared with his wife Linda, a gifted artist, he carried on a spirited correspondence with his many friends in Germany and abroad; and his conversation was never less than animated, whether with colleagues on intellectual topics or with my ten-year-old granddaughter, whom he charmed.

Hans’s autobiography (*Erinnerungen aus 85 Jahren*), which amounts to a survey of international Germanistics over the past fifty years and includes conversations with major figures from European political, religious, and intellectual life, describes his flight in 1939 at age sixteen from his parents’ home in Mannheim to Ireland, where he studied literature at Trinity College Dublin. With his Ph.D. in German he taught first at Trinity College and then at the London School of Economics and the University of London. In 1958 he moved to McGill University in Montreal and later, from 1965 until his retirement in 1988, chaired the German Department at the University of Bristol. Active during his retirement years as a

guest professor and lecturer at some 80 universities, he and Linda moved in 2009 to Heidelberg, where he spent his final years.

While highly regarded as a Goethe scholar—his *Goethe's Novels* (1969, 1971) was voted “Outstanding Book of the Year 1972”, and in 1997 he was awarded the Gold Medal of the Goethe-Gesellschaft Weimar—his interests embraced a much larger intellectual range with influential books on *Kant's Political Writings* (1970), aesthetics, political romanticism, and modern writers from Nietzsche to Brecht: all written in the same clear and often witty style as his conversation.

Hans will be sorely missed by many—not only as a dear and loyal friend and supportive colleague but also as a representative of that dwindling group of European intellectuals with a broad grasp of both detail and context.

Theodore Ziolkowski
Princeton University

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

The Goethe Society sponsored two panels, both organized by Heather Sullivan, that were accepted for the 2020 GSA but will instead be part of the 2021 GSA. We are all very excited about the panels and really hope we can have an actual in-person conference next year.

“Natural/Unnatural Crises in the Early Anthropocene”

Panel 1: “The Non-human”

Moderator: Sean Franzel

Commentator: Jason Groves

1. Matthew Childs
2. Caroline Schaumann
3. Heather Sullivan

Panel 2: “naturecultures”

Moderator: Matthias Buschmeier

Commentator: Seth Peabody

1. Rory Bradley
2. Sally Gray
3. Sam Heidepriem
4. Bryan Norton

Heather L. Sullivan
Trinity University

FROM THE YEARBOOK EDITORS

With volume 28 in production, the editors are working on volume 29, to appear in spring 2022. We are especially interested in articles—possibly also clusters (talk to us!)—on the pandemic and issues regarding eighteenth-century public health; on Ottoman/South-Eastern Europe literary and cultural relations; and on studies that engage with new materialism, the latter as a printed showcase to publish shortly after the 2021 Atkins Goethe conference takes place in Chicago. While we’ve approached some panel organizers, presenters, and commentators of this year’s GSA about developing their contributions into full-fledged articles and special sections, we are always open to and interested in your suggestions. For volume 29, we already have articles

accepted and/or under review on the Goethe Year 1932 in Argentina; on Goethe's contemporaries; on his science projects; and on poetry. We have invited two shorter special sections, and we hope to continue the Forum feature. Please send us your suggestions for a possible forum topic.

Our goal is to devote much, if not all of volume 30, to work first presented at the 2021 Atkins Conference revolving around Goethe's Things.

As always, inquiries or manuscripts should be directed to both editors, Patricia Anne Simpson and Birgit Tautz at the addresses listed below. Mails sent to editors@goethesociety.org reaches both.

Note that the *Goethe Yearbook* is a double-blind, peer-reviewed publication, widely indexed, and published with DOIs. All manuscripts should be prepared in Microsoft Word, and in accordance with the *Yearbook's* style sheet – published on our web site – and anonymized for review. Manuscript submissions should be no longer than 8,500 words.

Patricia Anne Simpson
University of Nebraska

Birgit Tautz
Bowdoin College

FROM THE EDITORS OF THE GOETHE-LEXICON

After a highly successful second annual workshop (via Zoom) in July with over

40 participants across nine time zones, the editorial team of the *Goethe-Lexicon of Philosophical Concepts* has been busy preparing the first two clusters of some 24 *GLPC* entries for publication early this fall and this winter. Please go to <https://goethe-lexicon.pitt.edu/GL> to delve into the *GLPC* as it continues to move forward. You can register online as a user, which will then enable you to read the latest entries and, we hope, consider submitting one yourself. The “Guidelines for Authors” provide detailed information about how to do this. We look forward to welcoming more of you to our growing team of international scholars as the *GLPC* uses its digital platform and open-access format to offer fresh looks at Goethe's work as a heterodox philosopher.

Clark Muenzer (University of Pittsburgh), Editor
John H. Smith (University of California, Irvine), Editor
Bryan Klausmeyer (Virginia Tech), Digital Editor
Jenni Caisley (Cambridge University), Assistant Editor
Daniel Carranza (Harvard University), Assistant Editor

FROM THE EDITOR OF THE BOOK SERIES

We recently celebrated the publication of our first edited volume, *Play in the Age of Goethe: Theories, Narratives, and Practices of Play around 1800*, with a roundtable discussion of the topic via Zoom, hosted by the co-editors Edgar Landgraf and Elliott Schreiber.

Peruse the table of contents below and get your own copy [here!](#) Don't forget that GSNA members receive a 40% discount on this, and all books the series. Just use the code BUPSOCIETY at check-out.

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As always, we're eager to hear about your proposals, whether for a single-authored monograph or an edited volume. Through Bucknell's publishing partnership with Rutgers, we're able to offer reasonable cover prices and strong marketing. Please reach out to me at kschutjer@ou.edu with your queries.

Karin Schutjer
University of Oklahoma

*FROM THE SECRETARY-
TREASURER*

Last call for 2020 dues! If you would like a copy of *Goethe Yearbook 28* (appearing

spring 2021), please renew your membership by the end of the year. In January, I will send out reminders for 2021 memberships. You can conveniently renew your membership through PayPal with no additional fees. We also offer discounted three-year membership options in all categories as well as Lifetime (\$500) and Lifetime Patron (\$1,500) memberships. To pay for the membership level that's right for you, we encourage you to visit our web site at goethesociety.org/membership. Use the drop-down menu to select a membership category, then click the Pay Now button. You do not need a PayPal account. You may use the secure PayPal Guest Checkout and enter your credit card information there. If you would like your *Goethe Yearbook* shipped to an address other than the one used for PayPal, please send me an email: wcarter@iastate.edu. Also, should you have a change of address, please let me know. Of course, we still accept checks, payable to "Goethe Society of North America." They can be mailed to William Carter, Department of World Languages and Cultures, Iowa State University, 3102 Pearson Hall, Ames, IA 50011.

William Carter
Iowa State University

DUES

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GSNA OFFICERS

President

Professor Catriona MacLeod
Department of Germanic Studies
University of Chicago
1050 East 59th Street
Chicago, IL 60637
Telephone: (773) 702-8494
cmacleod@uchicago.edu

Vice President

Professor Heather Sullivan
Department of Modern Languages and
Literatures
Trinity University
One Trinity Place
San Antonio, TX 78212
Telephone: (210) 999-7535
hsullivan@trinity.edu

Executive Secretary

Professor Elliott Schreiber
German Studies Department
Box 72
Vassar College
Poughkeepsie, NY 12604
Telephone: (845) 437-5687
elschreiber@vassar.edu

Directors-at-Large

Professor Vance Byrd

Department of German
Grinnell College
1226 Park Street
Alumni Recitation Hall 231C
Grinnell, IA 50112-1609
Telephone: (641) 269-3238
byrdvl@grinnell.edu

Professor Eleanor ter Horst

Department of Foreign Languages and
Literatures
University of South Alabama
Mobile, AL 36608
Telephone: (251) 461-1527
eterhorst@southalabama.edu

Secretary-Treasurer

Professor William Carter

Department of World Languages and
Cultures
Iowa State University
3102 Pearson Hall
Ames, IA 50011
Telephone: (515) 294-1610
wcarter@iastate.edu

Editors of the *Yearbook*

Professor Patricia Anne Simpson

Department of Modern Languages and
Literatures
1111 Oldfather Hall
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, NE 68588-0315
Telephone: (402) 472-7031
psimpson4@unl.edu

Professor Birgit Tautz

Department of German
Bowdoin College
7700 College Station
Brunswick, ME 04101-8477
Telephone: (207) 798-7079
Fax: (207) 725-3348
btautz@bowdoin.edu

Book Review Editor

Professor Sean Franzel

Department of German and Russian Studies
University of Missouri
428 Strickland Hall
Columbia MO, 65211
Telephone: (573) 882-4328
Fax: (573) 884-8456
franzels@missouri.edu

Editor of the Book Series

Professor Karin Schutjer

Department of Modern Languages,
Literatures & Linguistics
202 Kaufman Hall
University of Oklahoma
Norman, OK 73019
Telephone: (405) 325-1907
kschutjer@ou.edu

Editor of the Newsletter

Professor Burkhard Henke

Department of German Studies
Davidson College
Box 6956
Davidson, NC 28035-6956
Telephone: (704) 894-2269
buhenke@davidson.edu
webmaster@goethesociety.org