FROM THE EDITOR

It's official. After the first newsletter was mailed in 1980, Goethe News and Notes 33.1 (Spring 2013) is the last number you will receive in hard copy. We hate to add to the woes of the U.S. Postal Service, we hate even more to alienate those among you who prefer the yellow missive, but the decision to end paper distribution was really long overdue. Switching to electronic delivery is not only environmentally friendly but it also makes economic sense. It allows us to keep our membership dues low (here, our Secretary-Treasurer would like me to remind you to pay your 2013 dues, if you haven't already done so) while continuing to provide the kinds of services you have come to expect from the Goethe Society – from our publications, conferences, panels, and prizes to the support of young scholars, like-minded organizations, and the occasional worthwhile endeavor.

If you know you are on our listserv (you are if you have received your fair share of quotation queries over the past few years), you need do nothing. If you are not on the listserv, or if you are unsure, or if you would like to receive the newsletter on a different email account, just send your name and email address to webmaster@goethesociety.org.

We appreciate your understanding and hope you agree that the move to electronic dissemination is in the best interest of our Society.

Burkhard Henke
Davidson College
FROM THE PRESIDENT

What our Society Represents: Goethe as Scholar and the American Goethe Scholar

By way of officially introducing myself, I’d like my first communication with you to recall that well before there was a Goethe Society of North America, an “American” perspective on Goethe as a scholarly enterprise had begun to take shape. I won’t take you as far into this past as Aaron Burr’s visit to Weimar in 1810, when the former Vice-President – in self-imposed exile following his trial for treason – found himself at the Haus am Frauenplan in a geological conversation with Goethe, doubtlessly still thinking about Mexican mines. Nor will I elaborate upon Goethe’s more satisfying audiences a few years later with Harvard’s Joseph Cogswell and George Bancroft. Instead, I’ll linger with a few observations from Emerson, who in 1850 cast Goethe as representative “for the class of scholars or writers, who see connection where the multitude see fragments, and who are impelled to exhibit the facts in order, and so to supply the axis on which the frame of things turns”: Goethe as representative, that is, for us and for our American brand of Goethe scholarship.

As featured by Emerson and amply demonstrated through the play of chaos and order in the second and third acts of Faust II, Goethean creativity could successfully stage the overload of knowledge that marked his own historical moment. We might, therefore, reasonably assume that the Information Age did not just begin with the digital revolution of today; it had already defined modern industrial life in the nineteenth-century (if not earlier). “There was never such a miscellany of facts,” Emerson exclaims some hundred years after Goethe’s birth. “The world extends itself like American trade.” And “Goethe,” he proclaims, “was the philosopher of this multiplicity; hundred-handed, Argus-eyed, able and happy to cope with this rolling miscellany of facts and sciences, and, by his own versatility, to dispose of them with ease.”

Imagine, then, if you can, Emerson’s picture of Goethe in the frames of a Marvel comic book, transfigured into a professorial cyber-robot! This disquieting image of the icon of Weimar Classicism as a technological wonder with superhero capacities “to see” and “to do” strikes me as strangely “post-classical.” More to my point, however, Emerson’s representative writer-scholar seems to capture what a generation of American Goethe scholars has pursued through the GSNA since its inception in 1979. For when viewed through the second part of Faust as the staging of a new kind of creative capability, Goethe appears in Emerson’s construction to have been equipped with an aesthetic disposition that measured up to, and adequately processed, the manufactured information glut of our shared modernity. As the essay summarizes, we find collected in Goethe a vast historical and geographical record, which – I would add – is tensed toward the future. In fact, by 1850, and under the “great influences” of nature and books and action, the new “American” Scholar” of Emerson’s famous address by that name to the Phi Beta Kappa Society in 1837 – had already metamorphosed into the Goethe of Representative Men, the master of histories, mythologies,
philosophies, sciences, and national literatures, in the encyclopaedical manner in which modern erudition, with its international intercourse of the whole earth’s population, researches into Indian, Etruscan, and all Cyclopaean arts, geology, chemistry, astronomy; and every one of these kingdoms assuming a certain aerial and poetic character, by reason of the multitude.

Of course, as North American Goethe scholars in the twenty-first century, we have been listening to the challenge of our own belated moment from our own marginalized place in the world of Goethe studies for some time. Like Emerson’s Goethe, some of us have probably even found ourselves “accumulating a glut of facts and fruits too fast for any hitherto-existing savants” from time to time. Such feelings, I would also guess, were an impetus for establishing our North American Society in the first place. We wanted to gather and redistribute the “fruits” of the philologists’ “great Exploring Expedition,” if not with the help of “new mythologies” such as “sail[ed] through [Goethe’s] head” when writing Faust II, then at least assisted by the “new methodologies” of the post-modern moment, which would take us, like Alexander in the Goethe essay, “as far as Chaos,” but still bring us “safe back.”

In this spirit of imaginative rediscovery, then, and in order to facilitate its work within worlds that are larger than the traditional chambers of the scholar’s narrow province, the GSNA has fled the “Kerker” of prescriptive reading-ideologies and undiscriminating adulation by setting inclusivity and openness as standards of the guild. The work of our Society, we might say, has consisted in facilitating the scholarly enterprise of the membership to become representative of Goethean globality as filtered through Emerson. Collectively, that is, we have helped shape an “international intercourse” with a research agenda comprised of a “multitude” of “kingdoms.” It is the hope of the current board that the next three years will continue to produce fruitful conversations in pursuit of this lofty mission: with other disciplines and fields of inquiry, as well as with scholars from other places. By way of conclusion, then, I’ll briefly remind you of what we are with a preview of what we’ll be doing through the rest of the year. Please share your thoughts about any or all of these activities with me and the other officers, so that we can remain up-to-date on your views.

I’ll begin with our planning for the triennial Atkins Conference, which is scheduled to convene at the University of Pittsburgh from October 23-26, 2014. Do mark this date in your calendars. Horst Lange, Daniel Purdy, Heather Sullivan, and I have already met twice – most recently in cyber-space – to discuss the conference topic and the “Call for Papers,” which we’ll distribute in a little over a year from now. The title that our discussions have produced, in line with Emerson’s vision, is “Creating Worlds: Goethe and the Aesthetic.” I am also pleased to announce that Jane Brown has graciously accepted my invitation to be one of our plenary speakers. More conference news will follow in future issues as it develops, but I can already announce that we will continue the highly successful dissertation workshop, which Daniel is organizing. Please inform your graduate students to keep
this event in mind. Finally, once the program committee has reviewed the proposals for papers that have been submitted, panels will be organized around coherent topics, as in the past. However, we would also like to consider new formats, including proposals for pre-set panels, discussion sessions for pre-circulated papers, etc. Early input from the membership will help us decide whether and how to try new modalities of scholarly exchange.

Since the editor of the book series, as well as the editors of the Goethe Yearbook, will communicate with you in this issue, I’ll simply note here the publication of Benjamin Bennett’s new monograph in our series with Bucknell University Press, “New Studies in the Age of Goethe.” Ben’s intriguing title, *Aesthetics as Secular Millennialism: Its Trail from Baumgarten and Kant to Walt Disney and Hitler*, is indicative of the kind of transformative scholarly expedition that Emerson’s Goethe essay features, and I look forward to reading it.

In addition to Jane Brown’s editorial leadership of the book series, the *Goethe Yearbook* will continue to serve as a major scholarly organ with its new co-editors, Adrian Daub and Elisabeth Krimmer, as well as with its new book-review editor, Birgit Tautz. I know they are eagerly awaiting your submissions. Daniel Purdy, by the way, who has generously agreed to assist the new editors during the transition, is also chairing the selection committee for this year’s essay-prize. If you published an article in 2012 that meets the criteria, I urge you to contact Daniel soon with a self-nomination in order to assure its consideration.

In the midst of our ongoing activities, I expect a number of small “changes” in how we do business. One of these you’ll notice with the fall number of *Goethe News & Notes*. At its last meeting, the Board decided to end paper-distribution with the current issue. Some members may decry this decision to speed up the dissemination of the newsletter as “veloziferisch,” but I would remind them that Goethe loved “green,” a color that effects “eine reale Befriedigung,” not only physiologically and psychologically, but also environmentally, I would add. We shall, of course, provide detailed instructions about downloading a copy for those who reserve the right to crumple paper. But if someone still wants to receive the familiar old yellow leaves in the mail, I’m sympathetic, and we’ll be happy to accommodate.

Since I’ve now come full circle back to Emerson with my reference to the circulation of information, I should also say that we are considering a re-design of our website. If any of you has a special interest in this kind of cyber-arcana, please share your insights and ideas with Burkhard. In addition to updating the look of the site and some of its features, we might explore other platforms from where the GSNA and its members could “extend” their Goethe world “like American trade.” In order to encourage such exchange, we moved the Business Meeting of the Society to the annual meeting of the GSA in 2102, when we also introduced a new cash bar as an annual event. I hope to see many of you at the GSA again this fall in Colorado, where David Wellbery is organizing a panel on “Goethe’s Apprehension of the Social,” or at this Spring’s ASECS in Cleveland, where Birgit Tautz has put a session together.
on “Marginalia.” And to look forward to next year, the 2014 MLA will offer a second panel courtesy of David on “The Sacrificial Dynamic in Goethe,” as well as a collaborative panel with the Heine Society on “National Epic” that Charlton Payne will be submitting. Both of these events should offer good starts to our conference in the fall of the year.

Clark Muenzer
University of Pittsburgh

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MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS MEETING

October 6, 2012, at the GSA Conference in Milwaukee

President’s Report

Astrida Tantillo, in her last business meeting as President, thanked the Society members for all their contributions to the GSNA activities and expressed her wish that such involvement and dedication continue. She reiterated the Society’s commitment to supporting young scholars; encouraged people to participate in the GSNA conference; asked them to contribute to the Yearbook and the book series and to stay involved through the GSNA panels and the community at conferences.

She then announced the election results and the new officers of the Society: Clark Muenzer, current Vice President, will take over as President; Daniel Purdy, outgoing Yearbook Editor, has been elected Vice President; Claire Baldwin is continuing as Secretary-Treasurer; Heather Sullivan and Horst Lange were elected new Directors at Large; the new Yearbook Editors are Elisabeth Krimmer and Adrian Daub; the new Book Review Editor is Birgit Tautz.

On behalf of the continuing board members Clark Muenzer, Claire Baldwin, Jane Brown, and Karin Schutjer, Karin Schutjer thanked the outgoing board members: Andrew Piper and Elisabeth Krimmer, Directors at Large, in absentia; Catriona MacLeod, Book Review Editor; Daniel Purdy, Yearbook Editor; Astrida Tantillo, President.

Vice President’s Report

Clark Muenzer began his remarks with a reminder that the next GSNA conference will take place approximately two years and two weeks from now in Pittsburgh. The work to set an inclusive topic with a snappy title, following precedent for the GSNA conferences, has begun and he will keep the membership informed. He anticipates asking for abstract submissions for conference papers in the spring of 2014.

Clark Muenzer also announced plans for the third GSNA Dissertation Workshop, to be held at the 2014 conference in Pittsburgh. He asked members to keep this opportunity in mind and to bring it to the attention of graduate students: students just beginning a dissertation now will be in a good position to participate in the workshop in two years.

As Vice President, Clark Muenzer chaired this year’s Essay Prize Committee, and was joined in by three colleagues who did yeoman’s work in
making the prize selection: Martha Helfer, Andrew Piper and Fritz Breithaupt all received praise and thanks!

The winner of the Essay Prize for the best article on the Age of Goethe published in 2011 is John H. Smith, for his article in *The German Quarterly* 84.2 (2011): 137-158, entitled “Living Religion as Vanishing Mediator: Schleiermacher, Early Romanticism and Idealism.”

Clark Muenzer presented the Essay Prize to John H. Smith on behalf of the Society with the following words:

“With this cogent analysis of the centrality of religion to Idealism and early Romanticism, John Smith makes an important and much-needed contribution to the intellectual history of the Goethezeit. Arguing that Schleiermacher functions as a productive “vanishing mediator” for Friedrich Schlegel, Novalis, Schelling and Hegel, John Smith traces the genealogy of the Romantic conception of a “living God” and an organic universe. These thinkers all aimed to “vitalize” the Spinozan identity of deus and natura, and thereby made a crucial turn from the philosophies of Kant and Fichte. John Smith’s elegant and lucid reconstruction of this genealogy underscores the fundamental importance of “living religions” to Romantic and Idealist thought, and lays the foundation for future research.”

**Executive Secretary’s Report**

Karin Schutjer drew attention to the GSNA panel to take place October 7 at 8:30 am: “New Directions in Goethe Illustration Studies” and encouraged members to attend.

She then announced that the GSNA is sponsoring three panels at the 2013 MLA in Boston: two organized by Claudia Brodsky on “Goethe als Vermittler” and one organized by John Smith on “Mathematics in the Goethezeit.” The GSNA panel at the 2013 ASECS conference in Cleveland is being organized by Birgit Tautz under the title “Marginalia.”

Karin Schutjer then put out a call for GSNA panel proposals for upcoming conferences and shared the following deadlines for such proposals to come to her. The Board will review the proposals and respond quickly:

- November 15, 2012 for the GSA conference, October 3-6, 2013 in Denver, Colorado
- December 1, 2012 for the MLA conference, January 6-9, 2014 in Chicago

**Yearbook Editor’s Report**

Daniel Purdy reported that he has just received the last article for Goethe *Yearbook* volume 20, the last volume he will edit, which will appear in the late spring. The transition to the new *Yearbook* editors is going smoothly: Daniel Purdy is passing things along to Adrian Daub and Elisabeth Krimmer and some essays of the many currently on hand will be rolled over to them for a future volume. The peer review process
for the *Yearbook* runs independently and will be passed on to the new editors. We have had great success with online publications of the *Yearbook* through Project MUSE, and we will be on JSTOR in the future, as we have been assured in our friendly negotiations with Camden House. We continue to be committed to supporting young scholars. Daniel Purdy reminded people that the *Yearbook* would like to build on the connections between the Dissertation Workshops and the *Yearbook*, and urged participants to consider submitting revised chapters of their work on Goethe to the *Yearbook* down the line.

**Book Review Editor’s Report**

Catriona MacLeod began by thanking the GSNA membership for their devotion to writing book reviews, both for agreeing to take the reviews on and for actually sending them in as well. She expressed her appreciation for the wonderful network of scholars that make up the GSNA. As Catriona MacLeod steps down, Birgit Tautz will be taking over the Book Review Editorship, and future reviews should be sent to her.

**Book Series Editor’s Report**

Since Jane Brown could not be at the GSA conference, Karin Schutjer shared information about the Book Series at Bucknell. Benjamin Bennett’s book *Secular Millennialism: The Trail of Aesthetics from Baumgarten and Kant to Walt Disney and Hitler* is currently in production with an expected publication date of January 1. The Series Editor is eager for more submissions and asks the GSNA membership for these and for help in spreading the word about our excellent series and this publication opportunity.

**Secretary-Treasurer’s Report**

Claire Baldwin reported that the GSNA is in good financial shape, especially due to the increased revenues from the *Yearbook* royalties through Project MUSE and due to the gifts of generous donors, especially Mr. Stuart Atkins whose sponsorship of our triennial conference is enormously valuable. Membership dues also continue to be important, and she thanked the membership for consistently supporting the GSNA through their dues as well as through their work. She is still happy to accept 2012 dues and is also more than willing to credit dues in advance, as some members prefer. The year-to-date financial report and membership numbers of the Society were made available to interested members.

There is a new GSNA email for membership queries and issues: gsna.membership@gmail.com

**Other Items:**

Bill Carter encouraged members to attend the GSA session on *Goethes Amtlicher Schriftverkehr* on Sunday, October 7.

The cash bar preceding and following the GSNA business meeting proved a successful and enjoyable event, and may set precedent for future years.

Respectfully Submitted,

Claire Baldwin
Colgate University
FROM THE YEARBOOK EDITORS

Volume 20 of the Goethe Yearbook is currently in the production stage and will ship before summer’s end. It will contain a special section on Goethe’s lyric poetry with contributions from leading scholars. The essays incorporate a range of new methodologies that provide innovative readings of Goethe’s most important poems, including contributions by Benjamin Bennett on Faust and Daniel Wilson on the Westöstliche Divan. Volume 20 also includes essays on Götz von Berlichingen, the Sturm-und-Drang sublime, the Nibelungenlied’s place within Weltliteratur, as well as an examination of Schiller’s notion of freedom.

Volume 21 of the Goethe Yearbook is off to a very promising start and will go to editorial review in June of 2013. We have received a large number of high-caliber manuscripts and are particularly delighted by the diversity of approaches to Goethezeit literature. Although we are well on our way, there is room for more articles. We urge all colleagues in the greater field of eighteenth-century studies to consider submitting their work to the Yearbook. It is our goal to present a truly inclusive Yearbook that offers close readings of canonical and non-canonical texts, contributions to intellectual history and gender studies, as well as comparative and interdisciplinary work, in particular, on music and the visual arts, but also reception studies, religion and science.

We are also interested in including articles centered on thematic clusters and encourage scholars to suggest topics for such clusters. For volume 22, for example, we are planning a special section on ecocriticism compiled by Dalia Nassar and Luke Fisher.

Please direct all correspondence to Adrian Daub at daub@stanford.edu and Elisabeth Krimmer at emkrimmer@ucdavis.edu. Manuscript 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 on our web site.

As always, the entire run of back issues is available on Project MUSE.

Adrian Daub
Stanford University

Elisabeth Krimmer
University of California at Davis

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FROM THE BOOK REVIEW EDITOR

As always, I encourage you to let me know if there are particular areas of research that you are interested in reviewing for the Goethe Yearbook. Please send books for review and suggestions for books for review to:

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FROM THE EDITOR
OF THE BOOK SERIES

I am very pleased to report the appearance of the fourth book in the New Studies in the Age of Goethe, and the first under my editorship, *Aesthetics and Secular Millennialism: Its Trail from Baumgarten and Kant to Walt Disney and Hitler* by Benjamin Bennett. As the title suggests it has the reach we have all learned to expect from Ben Bennett’s work. Taking off from Hannah Arendt it argues that aesthetics has functioned in our culture as “secular millennialism,” an ideology of perfecting the individual through culture that leads ultimately to totalitarianism. Bennett traces this tradition through the development of aesthetics in Germany and its relocation in the realist novel; he also discusses important resisters of the tradition, from Goethe to Bugs Bunny. The book is refreshing in its clear presentation of often difficult material and bracing in its resolute view of all culture from high to low as a coherent continuum. Like all of Bennett’s work it articulates firmly the role German culture has played in developing the cultural discourses in which we are all still engaged. We are proud to have this book by an eminent past president of our society.

We have two additional interesting projects in the pipeline, and continue to encourage all members and their friends to submit their projects to us. I would also like to thank the members of the editorial board (Martha Helfer, Simon Richter, Astrida Tantillo) for their thoughtful and dependable assistance with the series.

Jane K. Brown
University of Washington

PANELS

Special GSNA Session at the ASECS Annual Convention in Cleveland, OH, 4-7 April, 2013

**Marginalia**

Moderator: Seth Berk, U of Washington/ U of Münster

1. Elizabeth Petersen, Purdue University: “Goethe Sonnets: the Marginal in Flux”
2. William Carter, Iowa State University: “From the Margins: Goethe’s Amtliche Schriften and Faust”

Commentator: Birgit Tautz, Bowdoin College

The Goethe Society is also sponsoring two panels at the 2014 Annual Convention of the Modern Language Association, in Chicago, January 2014 – “The Sacrificial Dynamic in Goethe,” a special GSNA Session organized and chaired by David Wellbery (who also put together a panel on “Goethe’s Apprehension of the Social” at the GSA.
convention), and “National Epic,” a collaborative session with the North American Heine Society organized and chaired by Charlton Payne.

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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Telephone: (405) 325-1907
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Deadlines for submission of panel proposals:

2013 ASECS, 15 March 2012
2013 GSA, 15 November 2012
2014 MLA, 1 December 2012

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ESSAY PRIZE

2011 Award


As stated in the abstract, religion was fundamental to the conceptual revolutions of Early Romanticism and Idealism. Schleiermacher linked the divine to the new philosophies of life and served as a productive “vanishing mediator” for Friedrich Schlegel, Novalis, Schelling, and Hegel. They all strove to “vitalize” the Spinozan identity of deus and natura and thereby made a crucial turn from the philosophies of Kant and Fichte. The idea of a living religion laid the foundation for a new dialectic of unity-in-difference and difference-in-unity. This vitalistic religious dimension becomes visible for us as we come to recognize the interweaving of faith and secular reason in modernity.

2012 Award – Call for Submissions

The executive committee seeks nominations or self-nominations for its 2012 essay prize, which carries an award of $500. Please submit a copy of the essay (electronic version preferred) for the best essay published in the year 2012 on Goethe, his times, and/or contemporary figures by March 31, 2013 to Professor Daniel Purdy at dlp14@psu.edu.

The following articles are eligible:

1. articles written by a North American scholar (defined by institutional affiliation at the time of publication); or
2. articles written by a current member of the GSNA; or
3. articles published in the Goethe Yearbook.

NB: Articles by current GSNA board members are not eligible. GSNA members are encouraged to submit their own articles for consideration.

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FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

In an ongoing effort to increase the strength of the society, the GSNA is looking for new members. 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, just go to www.goethesociety.org and click on the “Membership” link. Thanks for your support in this endeavor.

Claire Baldwin
Colgate University

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DUES

If you have not done so already, please send your 2013 dues to the Secretary-Treasurer, Claire Baldwin, or go to www.goethesociety.org and use PayPal (a modest fee will apply). Dues are payable in each calendar year according to the schedule below. The GYB is sent only once this obligation is met.

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