

VOL. 2 No. 2
FALL 1995



FOCUS *on*

LITERATUR

Sample Copy / Ansichtsexemplar

f O C U S *on*
LITERATUR

Edited by

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Published by the German Graduate Student Governance
Association of the University of Cincinnati

Focus on Literatur is published semiannually (Spring & Fall) by the German Graduate Student Governance Association of the University of Cincinnati.

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Annual subscriptions are \$15.00 for individuals and \$22.00 for institutions; individuals and institutions overseas add \$5.00 for additional postage.

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COVER: "The Book Fool" from Sebastian Brant's *Ship of Fools*, London, 1570, courtesy of the Archives and Rare Books Department, University of Cincinnati Libraries. Cover design by Giana Morrell.

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ISSN 1076-5697

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This second issue in volume two of *Focus on Literatur* represents the continuing support of many people. Department Head Sara Friedrichsmeyer and the entire faculty of Germanic Languages and Literatures have given more than their fair share of advice and support. Richard Schade deserves special thanks for answering our many questions. Dean Judith Trent along with the University of Cincinnati Graduate Student Governance Association are especially appreciated for their ongoing financial support. The former editors J. Gregory Redding, Herman J. De Vries Jr., and David N. Coury have been extremely helpful in the transition process.

Managing a journal is difficult enough; it would be impossible without the assistance of the the following graduate students from the University of Cincinnati, who helped read and edit articles: Richard Askren, Tonya Hampton, and Michael Shaughnessy. The organizers of "Intersections?!" from the University of Pennsylvania, Gerhard Reich and Niel McDowell, also assisted in the final editing process and have our sincere gratitude.

Focus on Literatur

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From the Editor

Completing the second volume of publication, this fourth issue represents an experimental, cooperative effort between two graduate programs. It is a large-scale example of *Focus on Literatur's* implicit function: to initiate dialogue among the people who are beginning and pursuing careers in *Germanistik*. The journal has provided a needed forum for graduate students to share their research beyond their local institutions, introduced recent publications by contemporary German authors, and presented first-hand interviews with several of them. For the first four issues, the editors received forty submissions, eighteen of which have been published. Even the authors of those papers not published received extensive, professional feedback on their work. Our pool of reviewers and professional referees continues to grow. The journal has succeeded in establishing links of communication among graduate students in different programs throughout the United States, Canada, and Germany.

Instead of the usual articles and interviews, in this issue we are publishing selected papers presented at *Interactions?!*, a graduate student conference held last spring at the University of Pennsylvania. The editorial process has differed slightly from previous issues. The papers were initially selected by the organizers of the conference and forwarded to us. Then the *Focus* editorial committee reviewed the papers as referees. Impressed with the diversity and quality of the papers, we selected six which best matched the objectives of the journal and the interests of our readers. The organizers of the conference at the University of Pennsylvania have provided an introduction to the conference and the papers.

As *Focus* begins its third volume, a number of changes are in the works. We have instituted a Home Page with information on upcoming volumes, conferences, and issues of interest to all people involved in German Studies. On the Home Page, there will be information on current and previous articles, book reviews, and interviews published in *Focus*, as well as subscription information. Finally, the *Focus* Home Page provides links to the internet of information related both to the teaching of German and research in German Studies. Currently, it can

be reached at <http://www.uc.edu/~fourmag/focus.htm>.

On a final note, I am happy to announce that the editors of *Focus* and the German Graduate Student Governance Association at the University of Cincinnati are sponsoring a graduate student conference to be held at the University of Cincinnati on October 11-12, 1996. We are calling for abstracts on the topic of "German Literature since 1970." The deadline for submissions is February 1, 1996. Papers presented at the conference will be considered for publication in future issues of *Focus*. This period spanning over 25 years includes the dynamic post-unification period in the Federal Republic of Germany. Current controversy surrounding Günter Grass's *Ein breites Feld* will be one topic examined. The organizers of the conference concur that a theme focusing on literature after 1970 would offer both broad appeal and attract diverse and interesting papers. We invite the graduate students among our readers to consider participating in this event.

Garry L. Fourman

From the Organizers of *Intersections?!?*

The conference *Intersections?!?* took place at the University of Pennsylvania on Saturday, March 25, 1995. It was sponsored by the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, enlisting the support of the Departments of History and Comparative Literature. Concentrating on the relationship between literature and history in German Studies, a topic chosen for its broadness and contemporaneity, the conference sought to examine and critically discuss an often vague and complex subject. Despite the difficulties encountered in convening such an event, the conference proved to be a success on a number of levels.

First of all, the conference supplied a necessary forum for graduate students, with participants not only from various departments at the University of Pennsylvania (German, History, Comparative Literature) but also from across the nation: Columbia, Harvard, Penn State, Rutgers, SUNY/Stony Brook, University of Massachusetts/Amherst, University of Minnesota, Vassar, and Yale. Our goal was to facilitate a discussion between various academic disciplines, inviting not only different insights from fields outside of German Studies, but also seeking points of connection between the disparate methodologies. Without a doubt, the interdisciplinary nature of the conference added a refreshing and provocative note to the proceedings.

Secondly, *Intersections?!?* was committed to moving beyond a format organized around individual sessions without an overarching theme. The conference, in the sessions as well as the final panel discussion, strove to address various topics and methodologies under one rubric. This proved to be a daunting task, for underlying all the presentations were fundamental questions such as: "How does one define the concepts literature and history? Are the disciplines of literature and history seeking the same goals or entirely different ones? Can there be a fruitful collaboration between literature and history or will there always be an unbridgeable abyss?" To be sure, this endeavor was the most ambitious of the conference.

The conference was divided into six sessions. Two sessions each addressed, respectively, "The Mediation of History" and "National

Identity," while one session was devoted to "Rethinking (His)story." The conference concluded with a panel discussion, entitled "Talking the Literature and History Conundrum Blues."

The sessions devoted to "The Mediation of History" examined, through historical and historiographical investigation, the processes by which historical elements and ideas about history are disseminated. In addition to the papers included in this journal from Cynthia Appl, Jennifer Cizik Marshall, and Ann Reidy the following were also presented: Lauren M. Enzie (UMass/Amherst), "Technology out of Control: Apocalyptic Expressionism and the Jews in Paul Wegener's *Der Golem, wie er in die Welt kam*"; John Zilcosky (Penn), "Modernizing Monuments: Eliot, Nietzsche, and the Problem of History"; Colin B. Schaub (Minnesota), "Toward a Narrative Constellation in Walter Benjamin's *Der Erzähler*"; and Jonathan Skolnik (Columbia), "Myth and History: Thomas Mann, Oskar Goldberg, and the Historical Novel."

The sessions which revolved around the topic "National Identity" analyzed the role of nationality as it related to literature and history. The essays from Stefan Jux and Gerhard Reich were included in these sessions. Other conference papers not found in this volume: Michael Staebe (UMass/Amherst), "Die Heimkehr—ein feierliches Gefühl, was?—Deutsche Geschichte(n) in der Schwarzwaldklinik"; Ingrid Schenk (Penn), "Test which West: German Cigarette Consumption as a Mirror of National Identity in 1948 and 1990"; Kristie A. Foell (Vassar), "The New *Mitläufertum*: Rethinking Recent German History"; and Shelley Kirilenko (Penn), "Feuding Anti-Heroes: The Duel as Fossilized Social Ritual in the Dramas of Arthur Schnitzler and Anton Chekhov."

The session which concentrated on the theme "Rethinking (His)story" sought to investigate the historical and historiographical impulses found outside the traditional masculine domination of the area. Apart from Norman Roessler's essay these papers were also presented: Glenn Sandberg (Rutgers), "A Castrated Dionysus: Broch, Bachofen and Massenführer Sexuality" and Aleksandra Bednarowska (SUNY/Stony Brook), "Der Eintritt der Frauen in die Geschichte in dem *Trobadora Beatriz*—Roman von Irmtraud Morgner."

Finally, the panel discussion entitled "Talking the Literature and History Conundrum Blues" invited noted scholars Dr. Liliane

Weissberg (Penn: German & Comparative Literature) and Dr. Thomas Childers (Penn: History) as well as participants from the conference to examine once again the topic in light of the day's proceedings. This brought to a close a fruitful and rewarding intellectual exchange.

The organizers would like to thank the numerous people who made this first annual conference possible. We cannot list you all, but profound thanks are due to all those who helped us from the Departments of Germanic Languages and Literatures, History, and Comparative Literature. Thanks also to the moderators: N. Jeff Rogers, Susan Schwaneflugel, Julia Sneeringer, Daniel White, and Marion Hussong, the professors who gave their support and advice: Dr. Frank Trommler and Dr. Karl F. Otto, Jr. as well as the guest speakers: Dr. Liliane Weissberg and Dr. Thomas Childers. Special thanks is extended to Dr. Horst Daemrich, whose support and inspiration made this event possible. Finally, we would like to acknowledge our partnership with the journal *Focus*. Devoted to the same basic goals we share, they have graciously agreed to publish select papers from the conference. We salute *Focus* and their commitment to intellectual endeavor and professional development.

Looking back we can only view the 1995 conference as a success and look forward to the 1996 conference. The 1996 *Intersections?! conference*, entitled *Franco-German Discourses: Literary Exchanges from the Middle Ages to the twentieth Century*, will take place March 22-23, 1996. For more information contact Tim Lyons {(215) 898-7332 / tlyons@sas.upenn.edu} or consult the Department Home Page (<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/german>).

Norman Roessler
N. Jeff Rogers
Niel McDowell

Theodor Storm: Writing History Against the Grain

Ann Reidy

In the most astute pronouncement on Theodor Storm's thematization of history to date, David Jackson states: "He wrote history against the official grain" (203). Storm's subversion of the norm, Jackson argues, lies in his refusal to acknowledge only the great, heroic figures of the past as participants in history and therefore worthy of inclusion in historical accounts. This commitment to reinscribing the traditionally marginalized into historical discourse is evidenced in texts centered around common folk interacting with local forces rather than an elite corps of intellectual, political, and artistic luminaries (Jackson 203).

Unfortunately, Jackson's primary concern is not Storm's treatment of history and therefore his remarks on the topic are limited. The question of *how* Storm's historical fiction appeals to and problematizes dominant modes of historiography of his day remains largely unanswered. In examining Storm's *Chroniknovellen*, this paper challenges the dismissal of Storm as a sentimental *Heimatsdichter* and offers new strategies for reading his texts as literary protestations against prevailing trends in nineteenth-century German historiography. In particular, Storm addresses the presuppositions of "objective history," a discourse most closely associated with the name Leopold von Ranke. While the objections to Rankean historiography voiced by figures such as Nietzsche, Dilthey, and Burckhardt are well-rehearsed, Storm's role as an active participant in these critiques is unacknowledged. What follows represents an attempt to locate Storm within this critical trajectory. I approach Storm's texts not as a direct and personal attack on Ranke, but rather as a stage in the reception of the historical discourse popularized by him, with all the misprision, simplification, and insight that the reception process invariably involves.