

FOCUS ON LITERATUR

VOL. 4 No. 2
FALL 1997



o c u s on

LITERATUR

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 2 FALL 1997

Sample Copy / Ansichtsexemplar

f o c u s *o n*
LITERATUR

Editors
Michael Rice
Bärbel Such

Technical Manager
Tom Stewart

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.

Editor

Michael Rice

Book Review Editor

Bärbel Such

Technical Manager

Tom Stewart

Copy Editors

Tim Straubel, Christina Bonner

David Prickett, Angelina Mrsic

Subscriptions and Mailings

Michael Rice

SUBMISSIONS

Focus on Literatur welcomes article submissions from 10–25 pages on topics related to German literary studies. Submissions are accepted continuously, but contributors must be students at the time of submission. Manuscripts must be submitted in triplicate to the editor and should be prepared according to the guidelines of the latest MLA Handbook. A self-addressed postcard should accompany the manuscript for acknowledgment of its receipt.

BOOK REVIEWS

Unsolicited book reviews of 2-5 pages will be considered for publication, yet *Focus on Literatur* prefers to work with an established pool of reviewers. Interested persons are encouraged to inform the Book Review Editor.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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

CONTACT ADDRESS

Send subscription fees and all other correspondence to *Focus on Literatur*, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio 45221-0372. Tel: (513) 556-2755 Fax: (513) 556-1991.

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.

We reserve the right to make any necessary editing changes without the express written consent of the authors.

Member

CELJ

Council of Editors of Learned Journals

ISSN 1076-5697

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The second installment of the fourth volume of *Focus on Literatur* was made possible only with the continued commitment of Dr. Judith Trent, Associate Vice President for Research and Advanced Studies and the officers of the University of Cincinnati Graduate Student Governance Association. We are deeply indebted to them for their support.

Our sincere thanks go to Department Head Sara Friedrichsmeyer, our Faculty Advisor Professor Richard Schade, and other faculty members of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures who have been very supportive of this publication. We are also grateful for the voluntary work offered by the graduate students of the German department.

Special thanks to all members of our board of reviewers. Articles for this issue were refereed by the following professors: Katharina Gerstenberger (U of Cincinnati) and Jerry Glenn (U of Cincinnati).

Focus on Literatur

Volume 4, Number 2

Fall 1997

Contents

from the editor vi

articles

"Mesch'schurs, ihr macht ja verteufelt wenig
Federlesens!": Rassendiskurse im Wilden Westen? 109
WILFRIED WILMS

Representing Torture: The Struggle for the Masculine
Self in the *HISTORIA VON D. JOHANN FAUSTEN* 137
BETTINA MATHES

The Constancy of Change: The Role of the *Paternoster*
in Grass's *Ein weites Feld* 161
DAVID PRICKETT

Thomas Mann's First *Vision of Woman* (1893) 171
GAMIN BARTLE

book reviews

Reinhold Batberger. *Pirckheimers Fall* 181
Christine Brückner. *Früher oder Später* 183

Thomas Brussig. *Helden wie wir* 185
Laura Doermer. *Vergehendes Blau* 187
Manfred Flügge. *Meine Sehnsucht ist das Leben* 190
Hermann Kant. *Kormoran* 193
Gerlind Reinshagen. *Am Großen Stern* 194
Patrick Roth. *Corpus Christi* 198

contributors 203

announcements 204



From the Editor

As the new editor of *Focus on Literatur*, I am happy to say that both our subscriptions and our pool of reviewers have grown over the past months. As my predecessor Britta Kallin stated in the last edition of *Focus on Literatur*, many of our past contributors have expressed the advantage of publishing in our journal when applying for jobs. We are very pleased to be able to provide a forum for graduate students to begin publishing and to create a dialogue in the academic community for original scholarship.

The Second Annual Graduate Student Conference, organized by the staff of *Focus on Literatur* and the graduate students of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Cincinnati, was held on the 10th and 11th of October 1997. We were very happy with the outcome of the conference. We were honored to have our own Dr. Katharina Gerstenberger deliver the keynote talk entitled "Honest Books: Cultures of Autobiography." Nine participants delivered papers, dealing with topics from the early modern period to contemporary German literature. Universities from the Midwest, the South, and the Eastern part of the United States were represented. Bettina Mathes came from the Humboldt Universität in Berlin to deliver her paper, giving the conference a truly international flavor. The last three articles in this issue are papers printed as proceedings of the conference. We will also be considering other papers from the conference for the next issue.

In the first article, Wilfried Wilms discusses race discourses in Karl May's *Halbblut*. In his analysis Wilms tries to show how an exotic adventure story like *Halbblut*, as a product of its time, reflects racist discourses of the late 19th century, or at least shows traces of them. In the second article, Bettina Mathes analyzes the representation of torture in the *Historia von D. Johann Fausten*. Mathes puts forth that the disputations between Faust and Mephistophiles represent torture, in so far as they assume the "structure and logic of torture." Her essay consists of four parts dealing with the problem of identity in the work, structure and function of torture with regard to the construction of identity, its representation in the text, and the

construction of masculinity. In the next article, David Prickett investigates the role of the *Pateroster* in Grass's *Ein weites Feld*. The *Pateroster*, Prickett shows, is used by Grass as a symbol of *ewige Wiederkehr*, i.e. a symbol of German history from the Nazi era through unification. In the last article, Gamin Bartle examines the image of women, particularly in Thomas Mann's *Vision*. She shows how Mann can be reread in order to reevaluate the image of women in German literature, challenging the traditional interpretations of a canonical text.

In our book review section we are pleased to present to the reader a selection of books that are current topics of discussion among Germanists. We include here a narrative by Reinhold Batberger and the novels of Christine Brückner, Laura Doermer, Manfred Flügge, Gerlind Reinshagen, Patrick Roth, and Thomas Brussig, with whom we hope to be publishing an interview in the next issue. Once again we are delighted to be able to bring to our reading public an interesting mixture of men and women authors.

In conclusion, I wish to express my hope that you enjoy this issue of *Focus on Literatur* and to stress the importance of such scholarly forums like our journal and conference, which give graduate students the opportunity to demonstrate their original scholarship and exchange ideas with their peers. We will be holding our Third Annual Graduate Student Conference on October 9-10, 1998 and encourage all those interested to send their abstracts to us. See the advertisement in the Announcement section at the end of the journal for further information.

Michael Rice