



North American Heine Society

January 30, 2024

Dear Members,

Looking back over the last year, the two highlights of the Society's activities were the panel at the GSA (German Studies Association) in Montreal in October and the panel at the MLA (Modern Language Association) a few weeks ago in Philadelphia. Given our small membership, it is reassuring to be able to boast this level of activity and we should try to keep up the momentum.

While we are dwarfed in numbers by the demographics of the Goethe Society of North America and the Lessing Society, the numerical proportions of the respective memberships seem to reflect the canonical ranking of the respective authors in almost comically exact proportional manner. In this respect, I am happy to report, we don't come off too shabbily.

More seriously, I believe that continuing the recruitment of new members must remain a priority, and not just for the sake of the future of the Society. I believe that engagement with one of Germany's most inspiring and resourceful exponents of modernity continues to hold the promise to serve as a most valuable source for

renewing – for rethinking and reimagining – our various fields in creatively forward-looking ways. To say it with John Lennon: I might be a dreamer but I am not the only one. Put differently: Facing the pressures to rethink our fields in an age when the humanities are under acute siege, we need to return with new resolve to one of the most inspiring champions of modern literary imagination whose whole project consisted in doing just that in his own *métier*.

Drawing inspiration from Heine keeps this Society going. Sharing our source of enthusiasm more resolutely might not just be a lifeline for ourselves and what we do but might ultimately prove Heine once again to be strikingly more contemporary than his canonical status would suggest. With an occasional touch of the uncanny Heine's contemporaneity shows not the least because his oeuvre has remained largely resistant to instrumentalization by national and political interests and for canonical appropriation.

Another highlight showcasing how Heine stands out as a critical voice of enduring significance is the forthcoming volume of the *Heine-Jahrbuch* featuring the proceedings of the 2022 conference on

Heine and human rights co-organized by the folks in Düsseldorf and the NAHS. The publication is a bit delayed and now the publisher's site indicates April 2024 as date of release. But the section with contributions by Sebastian Wogenstein, Christoph auf der Horst, Helge Dedek, Christian Liedtke, Tracie Matysik, Christine Frank, and myself (in the order of the articles) is a solid 160 pages and, more importantly, offers some innovative perspectives on Heine and the question of Human Rights.

GSA panel Montreal 2023

At the GSA in October 2023, the NAHS participated after some time again with its own panel. Thanks to Abigail Gillman and Michael Swellander for organizing this great inaugural session on "Heine and Translation." Here is the program:

Jocelyn Aksin (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), "Es treibt sich fort von Ort zu Ort": Tracing the Footsteps of Heine in Turkish

Abigail Gillman (Boston University) Heine's *Fichtenbaum* in a Grove of *Oranin*: Towards a History of Heine's Poems in Hebrew

Michael Swellander (Skidmore College), Logopoeia: Reading Heine with Ezra Pound

Paul Peters (McGill University), Heine in and Beyond Translation

Moderator: Na'ama Rokem (University of Chicago)

Commentator: Jeffrey Grossman (University of Virginia)

The panel's focus on translation opened a window onto previously unexamined chapters in the reception history of Heine's early poetry in French, Hebrew, Turkish, and English, particularly Heine's

role as an aesthetic and political touchstone in theorizations of national literature and of literary modernism. A common focus of the papers was on the careers of Heine's translators and how Heine often served for them not just as an object of translation but as an interlocutor in their theory and practice of writing and translating poetry.

De Gruyter has invited organizers of the panel to propose an edited volume on "Heine and Translation" for the series *Transnational Approaches to Culture*. If you would like to participate, please get in touch with Michael Swellander (mswellander@skidmore.edu) and Abigail Gillman (agillman@bu.edu).

This is a wonderful opportunity for members to do new work. Do reach out to the editors!

MLA panel Philadelphia 2024

The MLA panel "Heine between Hegel and Marx" was organized by Colby Chubbs, a graduate student in Comparative Literature at the University of Toronto organize working on a dissertation on Hegel, Heine, and Marx. Here is the program:

Tracie Matysik (University of Texas at Austin), Chair

Colby Chubbs (University of Toronto), Heine, the First Left Hegelian

Jörg Kreienbrock (Northwestern University), A Right Against Rights: Hegel, Marx, and Heine on the Human Right to Life

Tracie Matysik, Respondent

I would like to thank Colby for an excellent job and our Vice President Tracie Matysik for her generous support facilitating the discussion at this panel.

Upcoming GSA and MLA

Deadlines for submitting Call for Papers for both the GSA and the MLA are coming up and I ask you to please contact me in the next two weeks or so with suggestions for organizing a panel at those annual conference so that the Board can vet them.

Jeffrey L. Sammons Prize

The deadline for nominations and self-nominations is February 15, 2025. But it is a good idea to send us leads for the past year if you have any to share. For more information see our home page.

Free Graduate Student Membership

This is a reminder that we continue to offer free membership to graduate students. I would like to encourage all members to direct students interested in becoming members to the Secretary-Treasurer for registration: wogenstein@uconn.edu

Dissertation Mentoring Program

Please direct any students writing their dissertation on Heine or a Heine-related subject and interested in mentoring support to me so we can match them with an experienced colleague for support and mentoring.

Research opportunities at the Heinrich-Heine-Institut

The Heinrich-Heine-Institut offers a fellowship for students conducting research for their dissertations. This is a great opportunity to receive not just a nice stipend but also benefit from the

generous expertise of the knowledgeable scholars working at the institute.

Candidates should contact me for further information.

NAHS Website

If you have recently published a book, article, or another contribution on, or relevant to, Heine, please send the information to Sebastian Wogenstein for posting on the NAHS website.

Finally

We exist only thanks to your contributions: intellectually as well as monetarily. This is the annual appeal to please pay the annual membership fees. But maybe more importantly you will get, as always and eventually, a copy of the *Heine-Jahrbuch*, which this time, as mentioned above, features a substantial section with the proceedings of the “Heine und die Menschenrechte” conference from 2022. I would also like to invite you to support our activities by contributing with your work. While this comes now with the promise of the Jeffrey L. Sammons Prize for younger colleagues, we all appreciate your work and support as participants and organizers of panels. Your initiatives are literally priceless.

With best regards and wishes,

Willi Goetschel