German Pietism—a trans-confessional as well as sectarian reform movement—was a globally networked religious phenomenon flourishing from the mid seventeenth to the early nineteenth century. Originating at multiple centers across Germany (such as Spener’s Frankfurt collegia pietatis, Francke’s Stiftungen in Halle, and Zinzendorf’s Moravian communities in Herrnhut and Herrnhag, to name but a few), Pietist beliefs, missions, and the religious awakening it spurred quickly spread to the Netherlands, Scandinavia, and the British Isles but also took hold in missions and settlements from Tranquebar, India, to St. Thomas and St. Croix in the Caribbean, to Germantown, Pennsylvania, and the Muskingum River in Ohio. Rather a heterodox set of critiques of orthodox Protestantism than a unified movement, German Pietism nevertheless shared common concepts of inwardness, practical faith, a personal relationship to the redeemer, and the championing of individual religious experience. Such notions found resonances among congenial non-German religious groups, such as Quakers, Methodists, and even some New England Puritans.

Reflecting and making possible this global spread, translation became a routine endeavor for German Pietists transmitting their faith across linguistic boundaries but also, in turn, in absorbing and evaluating religious ideas and texts from other languages and denominations. Specifically, Pietists settling in North America—from Georgia in the South to Pennsylvania, New York, and Ohio in the North—lived in close proximity to different religious and linguistic groups, creating an internal “contact zone” that differed from border regions between French, English, and Spanish colonies.

This panel seeks paper proposals on any aspect of Pietism and its use of translation across the Americas and across the Atlantic, especially (but not limited to) the spread of devotional literature, missionary literature (such as communal diaries and their transmission through the network), hymnody and poetics, religious and political polemics, captivity narratives and other native American contact literature, short narratives of various sorts, theological and philosophical writings, as well as theoretical reflections on translation itself.

Please send a one-page proposal and one-page CV to Patrick Erben (perben@westga.edu).