



# GOETHE NEWS AND NOTES

XI.1 SPRING 1990

## A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

First of all, I am sorry to inform you that I have been told that Professor Karl-Heinz Hahn, the long-time President of the Goethe-Gesellschaft in Weimar, died at the beginning of this year. As you are undoubtedly aware, he has done much, both for Goethe scholarship and the Goethe-Gesellschaft. Earlier, Professor Hahn and the Vice-President of the Goethe-Gesellschaft, Professor Jörn Göres (Düsseldorf) had sent to all members a four-page letter from which the following excerpts might be of interest:

"Ein absoluter Neuanfang zeichnet sich ab, neue Formen politisch-gesellschaftlichen Miteinanders sind zu entwickeln ebenso wie aufklärerische Dialektik akzeptiert, eine Atmosphäre, die keine Ausgrenzung zuläßt, sondern heterogenen Auffassungen vollen Spielraum gewährt, konservatives Denken ebenso wie aufklärerische Dialektik akzeptiert, eine Atmosphäre, die einen geistigen Konsens in allen die Existenz der Menschheit tangierenden Fragen zuläßt." "So darf daran erinnert werden, daß sich die Teilnehmer an Hauptversammlungen der fünfziger Jahre, einer Zeit, da das Verlangen nach nationaler Einheit der Deutschen diesseits und jenseits des sogenannten eisernen Vorhangs ungebrochen lebendig war, stets als Vortrupp eines künftigen Gesamtdeutschland verstanden, ein Selbstverständnis, das während der sechziger Jahre mehr als einmal die Gefahr der Spaltung der Goethe-Gesellschaft in Vereinigungen Ost und West heraufbeschwor." "Hauptversammlungen der Goethe-Gesellschaft entwickelten sich so zu Foren uneingeschränkter Freimütigkeit und Offenheit auch im Umgang mit politisch-weltanschaulichen Antagonisten, wobei Achtung und Wahrung der persönlichen Integrität des jeweiligen Partners oberstes Gebot war und ist, Foren, die in besonderem Maße geeignet waren, Tugenden im wechselseitigen Umgang auszubilden, wie sie in der gegenwärtig im Entstehen begriffenen neuen Welt unerläßlich sein werden."

These statements speak for themselves. All I want to add is that I am most curious to learn what the

specific consequences of the rapprochement between the two Germanies will be for the Goethe-Gesellschaft.

I was pleased with the two interesting sessions we sponsored at the MLA convention in Washington, D.C. Again, my heartfelt thanks to Victor Lange, who impressed all of us not only with his frank assessment of Goethe, but also with the way he delighted the audience with his responses to their questions.

The arrangements for the 1990 Chicago MLA convention will be the same as in 1989, but beginning with 1991, all allied organizations will be somewhat limited in their ability to schedule sessions. You will hear more about this as soon as we receive the details from the MLA.

*Christoph E. Schweitzer*

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## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING FOR 1989

The 1989 business meeting of the Goethe Society of North America was held on the evening of December 29th in the Map Room of the Washington Hilton at the MLA convention in Washington, D.C. President Christoph E. Schweitzer (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill) called the meeting to order at 9 p.m. The minutes of the 1988 meeting and the treasurer's report for 1989 were approved.

Yearbook editor Thomas P. Saine (University of California, Irvine) reported that volume 5 was in press and would appear in April. He provided a brief summary of the contents, expressing some concern that so many of the articles would be in German. Submissions for volume 6 were invited. The book review editor is Jane K. Brown (University of Washington, Seattle).

President Schweitzer introduced Frederick Amrine (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor), the new Executive Secretary and editor of *Goethe News and Notes*. The Executive Secretary invited suggestions regarding the Society's newsletter, and noted the need for a drive to increase membership.

Recent changes in MLA programming policy will affect the assignment of meeting space and time to Allied Organizations such as the Goethe Society of North America at the annual convention. Christoph

E. Schweitzer outlined the issue and the responses under discussion in the Society's Executive Committee. Frederick Amrine, in consultation with members of the Executive Committee, will coordinate convention programming and recommend a format for 1990 and 1991.

The 1989 business meeting marks the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Society. Although it was not possible as originally planned to sponsor the late Karl-Heinz Hahn, President of the Goethe-Gesellschaft in Weimar, as a speaker at the meeting, President Schweitzer indicated continuing interest in contact with the Goethe-Gesellschaft. The possibility of combining a visit to the MLA by an officer of the Goethe-Gesellschaft with speaking engagements at various universities was noted.

There was no new business.

President Schweitzer introduced Victor Lange, founding president of the GSNA. In appreciation for a decade of leadership, volume 5 of the *Goethe Yearbook* will be dedicated to him. Victor Lange concluded the session with an address entitled "Mit Goethe leben."

Meredith Lee  
Secretary-Treasurer

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## THE GOETHE YEARBOOK

Vol. 5 of the *Goethe Yearbook* is complete and will soon appear. The contents are as follows:

EHRHARD BAHR, "Die Goethe-Renaissance nach 1945: Verspieltes Erbe oder verhinderte Revolution?"

EITEL TIMM, "Das Politikum der Größe: Goethes Institutionenkritik am Leitfaden der Depravationstheorie Gottfried Arnolds."

BERND FISCHER, "Goethes *Clavigo*: Das Melodrama des Bildungsbürgers im Trauerspiel des Sturm und Drang."

HANS-WOLF JÖGER, "Goethe reist auch traditionell. Ein Vortrag."

WILLIAM J. LILLYMAN, "Andrea Palladio and Goethe's Classicism."

JENS KRUSE, "Die Innenwelt der Außenwelt der Innenwelt: Tassos Ende und kein Ende."

IRMGARD WAGNER, "Vom Mythos zum Fetisch: Die Frau als Erlöserin in Goethes klassischen Dramen."

MATHIAS MAYER, "Liebende haben Thränen und Dichter Rhythmen: Natur und Kunst in Goethes 'Euphrosyne'."

W. DANIEL WILSON, "Weimar Politics in the Age of the French Revolution: Goethe and the Spectre of Illuminati Conspiracy."

FREDERICK AMRINE, "The Metamorphosis of the Scientist."

BIRGIT BALDWIN, "*Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* as an Allegory of Reading."

WOLFGANG WITTKOWSKI, "Goethe, Schopenhauer, und Fausts Schlußvision."

J. HILLIS MILLER, "Review Essay: Translating the Untranslatable."

HANS RUDOLF VAGET, "Review Essay: Unvorgreifliche Anmerkungen zu zwei neuen Goethe-Ausgaben."

EHRHARD BAHR and WALTER K. STEWART, "North American Goethe Dissertations: 1988 Supplement."

Book Reviews

Submissions for volume 6 are being solicited and considered. The *Goethe Yearbook* publishes in both English and German. Submissions should conform to the Chicago Manual of Style rather than the MLA Style Sheet, and does *not* use the 'Works Cited' format. There is no limit on length of submissions, but there is a bias against it'sy-bitsy pieces and unrevised conference talks.

Back volumes of the *Goethe Yearbook* can be bought from the Secretary-Treasurer: vols. 1 and 2 for \$15 each, vols. 3 and 4 for \$20. We are running low on vol. 1, which had a smaller edition than the later volumes.

Thomas P. Saine  
Editor

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## REPORT ON THE GOETHE SOCIETY'S SEMINAR AT THE ASECS

Professor Robert Spaethling of the University of Massachusetts, Boston, chaired the Goethe Society session on April 26th at this year's ASECS convention in Minneapolis. Abstracts of two of the talks follow (the third, entitled "Goethe's Microcomedies: Historical, Fictional, and Theatrical Situations," was by Eric Denton of Yale University).

ULRIKE RAINER (Dartmouth College), "A Question of Silence: Goethe's Speechless Women"

A poet's most frightening nightmare might well be the abyss of speechlessness, the loss of the very gift that ". . . ein Gott [ihm] gab zu sagen, was er leidet." This terror might be so deeply rooted that it cannot be acknowledged openly, and thus must be projected onto an "other." Often for male poets, this "other" is a fictitious female figure. In Goethe, Mignon, Ottilie, and to some degree Makarie, are such women, whose linguistic impairment, silence, or absence of a distinct voice, respectively, surround

them with an aura which is both mysterious and elusive of clear interpretation.

I propose to show that in Goethe's oeuvre these figures not only have a crucial function within the individual works, but also serve a larger purpose. I would like to claim that these three female figures embody Goethe's drive toward expanding the boundaries of the three novels' structure and content. The substitution of music for language (Mignon), the refuge of the written word as a last resort (Otilie), and the all-pervasive silent presence of one who seems to mirror everybody and everything and therefore perhaps nobody and nothing (Makarie), also point toward the problem of language as an insufficient tool for human communication as well as toward the dire consequences of speechlessness. Not only are there no appropriate words for Mignon and Otilie to express what moves them most deeply, but their creative substitutions (music and writing) also prove insufficient to save them from a death caused by their inability to find a shared language. Makarie, the vessel and reflector of the other characters' monologues and dialogues, remains remote and incorporeal. How does the poet deal with such profound emotions, which overtax the ability of language, but which, at the same time, cannot be legitimized and immortalized without it? And who carries the burden and the terror of ultimate silence?

**RICHARD FISCHER (Lake Forest College), "Goethe's *Winckelmannbild* and the Idea of Classicism."**

While it is generally accepted that Goethe's "Winckelmann" essay of 1805 espouses "classicist" convictions in the face of overweening catholic-sentimental "romanticism," the essay's strangeness is rarely engaged -- although the notion of promoting the idea of classicism in a fragmentary series of sketches only tenuously developed begs elucidation. This paper engages Goethe's classical (aesthetic, philosophical, humanistic) program by examining the way in which he employs an "inner form" of narrative in his discourse on Winckelmann's character, accomplishments and "antique disposition." The notion of an inner force shaping an outer form -- like the concept of *kalokagathia* to which it is related-- links Goethe's aesthetic and his science by means of the common bond of morphology. In Goethe's own Italian experience, as well as in his understanding of Shaftesbury, Plotinus, neo-platonism generally, and Kant, lies the origin of that quality which is said to define the existence of the ancient Greeks and of Winckelmann in Rome: the capacity to find reciprocating counter-images ("antwortende Gegenbilder") in the external world which substantiate the individual's intimations of beauty, order and grace.

The dynamic of "antwortende Gegenbilder" and the concomitant notion of prolepsis inform both Goethe's image of Winckelmann's life and his biographical narration of it. After a formal analysis which detects a basic narrative shift between the first five sections of "Winckelmann" and the remainder of the essay, the text is discussed as an enactment of the natural and religious-divine order delineated by the poem "Urworte. Orphisch," which first appeared in Goethe's journal *On Morphology*. The *Urworte* cycle not only demarcates the essay overall, it is inscribed into the essay's opening five chapters, which establish the identity of Winckelmann with "ancient nature." Thus the introductory pentateuch serves a generative function and prefigures the evolution of the entire essay as both "organic" and aesthetic form. In their individualizing as well as idealizing contours, the two cycles of *Urworte* replicate the process of metamorphosis, the dynamic formation or *Bildung* central to all life.

Schiller may have viewed Goethe as the naive genius untainted by sentimental alienation, but Goethe includes himself among the "wir" of his essay: the dissonant moderns whose capacities are fragmented, who see only themselves in everything because they are incapable of objectively apprehending the outside world. "Winckelmann" admits Goethe's own inescapable modernity even as it proclaims a classicism into which he retreats from the modern, forming an image of consonance between man and world which it knows to be untenable both as history and as contemporary stance. Yet the unity of humankind and world, the *logos* of nature and the *logos* of mind, underlying the trope "antwortende Gegenbilder" continues to determine Goethe's outlook, particularly on history (notably in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*) and on science, where he views this unity or "synthesis" as indispensable for all rational inquiry and discovery.

Thus the essay idealizes human wholeness and integrality from the perspective of modern disintegration and disjunctive forces. Both tendencies are self-representational reflexes of Goethe. Paradoxically, the fragmented essay is intended as a kind of construction project; the fractional form invites the reader to envision a whole amidst the arabesque of fragments. Goethe employs a textual strategy of healing and reconstitution, by placing subject (the reader) and object (the incarnation of Hellenic wholeness) in the relation of "antwortende Gegenbilder." Winckelmann would persist as the other if Goethe did not enlist the cooperation of the reader to rescue the idea of classicism by holding up a "schaffender Spiegel," a creative speculum. In this mirror, the reader perceives the image of his own integrality through the coherence and unity of

Winckelmann's *Gestalt*, which he helps imaginatively to create.

**CALL FOR PAPERS AT THE 1991 ASECS  
CONFERENCE IN PITTSBURGH**

*The Goethe Society Session at next year's ASECS conference in Pittsburgh is being organized by Meredith Lee. A call for papers is attached.*

**PETER GAY TO SPEAK IN CHICAGO**

The noted Yale Historian, Peter Gay, has graciously accepted our invitation to speak in our GSNA session at the 1990 MLA convention in Chicago. His paper is entitled "Goethe -- Discovered and Recovered." Cyrus Hamlin (Yale) has agreed to serve as respondent. The MLA is very pleased at this development, and has promised us both financial support and a spot in "prime time." Not to be missed!

F.A.

**A VISIT TO THE GOETHE-  
GESELLSCHAFT IN WEIMAR, 1989**

Last May, in the course of a sabbatical in the Federal Republic, I was able to attend the meeting of the Goethe-Gesellschaft in Weimar. Christoph E. Schweitzer has asked me to share my experiences and thoughts with GSNA members who might consider attending in coming years. How relevant my comments will be to future gatherings of the organization is not clear; undoubtedly the changing political situation will affect the structure and function of the meeting. I am also not certain how far one might want to generalize from the individual experiences of a first-time participant. I know that my first encounter with the rites and customs of that grand academic tribal event called the MLA annual meeting left impressions that were vivid and memorable, but (gratefully) not indicative of all future meetings. The difference is not only professional maturity and security, but learning over time how to realize the potential benefits of any particular conference structure.

Traditionally, the meeting of the Goethe-Gesellschaft has taken place alternate years during the late-spring vacation linked with Pentecost; thus, it is not fixed, but moves within the calendar year. Meeting in late May or early June, the gathering extends from a Wednesday through a Sunday. The ability of North American scholars to attend such a

meeting depends in good part on the academic calendar of their institution. For those like me on a quarter schedule, participation is usually out of the question. Quite apart from the question of cancelling classes for a week, the cost of a round-trip flight to Germany for only 7 days in the middle of Spring Quarter is nearly prohibitive; from the West Coast, the time change of nearly 9 hours compounds the rigors of travel with serious jet lag. But even those on semester schedules and situated on the East Coast encounter problems. Because the program format does not include the opportunity for regular members to present papers or moderate sessions, few North American scholars are able to get any institutional support for travel or conference costs.

The meeting is part academic conference, part high-culture event. Tickets need to be requested in advance for sessions, including the opening and closing sessions. At the opening ceremony (the term is chosen advisedly) seating was assigned, a string chamber ensemble played, greetings from sponsoring governmental and academic agencies served as an invocation from a podium decorated with a display of flowers, and the key-note address not only effectively set the conference agenda, but also served to inspire the faithful. The late Karl-Heinz Hahn presided with energy and style. The centerpiece of the closing academic session was reports from the 11 working sessions -- the academic heart of the gathering -- that had met the previous day. The conference concluded with a festive evening featuring an elaborate buffet, the first and only organized event that encouraged informal conversation among participants. Our table included an Erfurt professor of German literature and his wife, who works as an administrator in the University's foreign student programs, a GDR secondary school teacher working on curriculum development, a number of retired teachers and other professionals, both East and West, with a personal passion for Goethe and Weimar Classicism. I suspect it was not an atypical group.

The "Arbeitsgruppen" that are the core of the academic program fill one full day of the meeting. They are 3-hour sessions organized around pre-announced topics; each of the topics is related to the over-arching theme of the year's meeting: in 1989, Goethe and the French Revolution. Tickets must be requested in advance; the name of the session leader, however, is not pre-announced. Although each participant may choose two, I chose to attend only one working session. A recording secretary also shared the podium. After so many months, I'm afraid I don't recall much about the discussion; that in itself is perhaps indicative. The size of the audience seemed to invite set speeches. A certain moral earnestness was evident.

**OPEN FORUM PLANNED FOR THE BUSINESS  
MEETING IN CHICAGO:  
"TEACHING GOETHE IN THE '90S"**

Our Vice-President, Jane K. Brown, will lead a discussion on "Teaching Goethe in the '90s" at the Business meeting of the GSNA at the 1990 MLA convention in Chicago. You are all cordially invited to come and participate! The forum will begin with a report on this summer's NEH Institute devoted to "Goethe's Faust and the Humanities Curriculum."

I attended only one working group in order to create additional time to sample the enticing riches of the Weimar museums and sites. I know I was not alone. It takes exceptionally exciting speakers and discussions to compete with the unique offerings of the city and the surrounding area. Of course, I didn't know last May that I might be able to return to Weimar relatively soon without the long-familiar hassle and delay of the visa process compounded by high hotel costs. Under the circumstances, it seemed prudent to maximize the hours available. In the future, at least arguably, the distractions will be reduced as Weimar and its environs, including the Goethe-Schiller Archive, become more accessible to Western scholars. This was my third trip to Weimar, but the first with a car, making a series of new sites easily reachable for the first time. The newest addition within the city: a Schiller museum attached to the renovated Schiller house.

What about the participation of North American scholars? As a general participant, essentially a member of the audience, it was not apparent to me how people had been chosen to be program participants -- chosen, that is, to speak or provide leadership in the working groups. My informal understanding is that program planning is the work of a "Vorstand" and the Weimar leadership. More may have been said at the business meeting, which I did not attend. In the session I attended and elsewhere, serious attention seems to have been given to assuring representation of both East and West. Of concern to many, however, women were simply absent in the positions of literary authority throughout the meeting (although visible as recording secretaries and staff). The gender issue was raised at the concluding session and promises were made to correct the situation in the future.

General registration for the meeting, the practical arrangements such as hotel assignment, visa, and tickets for theatrical and musical performances (a joy!) were expertly arranged by the staff of the Goethe-Gesellschaft. Sigrid Heine deserves credit and thanks. When I received the program announcement and invitation to the meeting -

- regularly sent to members of the Society -- I wrote directly to Weimar expressing interest. (According to the announcement, applications must be received by February 1.) The paperwork was minimal. We were housed in Erfurt at Western prices. (Hotel accommodations in Weimar are not sufficient to the size of the conference; even using Erfurt hotels and shuttle buses, only a portion of the total conference applicants in any given year can attend.) Unfortunately, restaurants in Weimar also proved unable to handle the influx of guests. Invariably overcrowded, long lines were the norm, even for a cup of coffee. On more than one occasion, we simply drove back to Erfurt for meals (a 30-minute drive), glad also to have a chance to relax briefly in a hotel room between events. Experienced Federal Republic participants told me later that they have learned to bring along fruit and other snacks.

A final comment: GSNA members should not head to Weimar for the "Hauptversammlung" of the Goethe-Gesellschaft expecting an academic conference, North American-style. Much that we take for granted is not part of the meeting's agenda: multiple sessions with scholarly papers in which a majority of those in attendance are part of the program or have been in past years, places and times set aside to encourage informal mixing and relaxed academic conversation, nametags, posted lists of participants and such things. In my experience, the conference is not a place where one can assume to meet easily and converse leisurely with a representative selection of Goethe scholars from Eastern and Western Europe. The scholars can be found and intellectual excitement is available, but in style and substance, the "Hauptversammlung" of the Goethe-Gesellschaft is only partly motivated by such academic concerns. A cultural event with serious social as well as intellectual aims, it combines high purpose with good will and some pieties. Or, at least, it did so in May of 1989. I, too, am curious about 1991.

*Meredith Lee*  
*Secretary-Treasurer*

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## OTHER NEWS

Das Freie Deutsche Hochstift/Frankfurter Goethe-Museum zeigte vom 2. Dezember 1988 - 5. Februar 1989 die Ausstellung "Sturm und Drang". Der Katalog mit Beiträgen zahlreicher Forscherinnen und Forscher, 396 Seiten (zweispaltig), 188 Abbildungen, kann zum Preis von DM 48,00 beim Freien Deutschen Hochstift, Großer Hirschgraben 23-25, D-6000 Frankfurt am Main 1, bezogen werden. Weitere Ausstellungen: "Das Beulwitz-Konvolut -- Erinnerungen an eine

Rudolstädter Familie der Goethezeit" (27. August - 20. Oktober); "Wintervergnügen zur Goethezeit" (24. November 1989 - 31. Januar 1990); "Johann Gottfried Herder", Ausstellung zur Eröffnung eines ständigen Herderzimmers im Goethe-Museum am 24. November 1989. -- Jahrbuch des Freien Deutschen Hochstifts 1989 mit Beiträgen zu Goethe, Boiserée, Brentano, Kleist, Büchner und Heine sowie einem umfassenden "Jahresbericht 1988".

**Goethe in Rome:** *This Week in Germany* reports that Goethe's former apartment in Rome "will be purchased and converted into a museum, according to an announcement last week in the Italian capital. A joint initiative by West German cultural institutions, the federal government and private firms will foot the over DM 2.6 million bill for the 500-square-meter (5382 square feet) apartment, which is located near the Piazza del Popolo. Restoration of the site will cost an estimated DM 1 million.

... A permanent exhibit, called "Goethe in Rome/Goethe in Italy," is planned for the rooms, where the poet wrote the *Roman Elegies*, composed the verses for *Iphigenie*, and completed *Tasso*. The Federal Republic's Rome embassy said that the rooms will also house a reference library and a studio for lectures."

**The 1990 IVG-Kongress in Tokyo** will occasion a number of events sponsored by the Goethe-Institut, Tokyo, including a performance of *Faust I* by the Münchener Kammerspiele on August 30th, and a performance of the *Puppenspiel* by the Puppentheater Berlin on August 25th and 26th. Exhibitions on "Goethe's Faust in Dokumenten" and "Goethe's Faust im Fernen Osten" will be offered from August 28th to September 6th, and from October 22nd-27th respectively. In addition, a "Faust-Symposium," featuring among others Prof. Karl Robert Mandelkow (Hamburg) and Prof. Christoph Perels (Frankfurt) will be held on October 24th-25th, to address the issues: "Aspekte der Faust-Rezeption in Deutschland und im fernen Osten," and "Warum gibt es keine Faust-Sage im Fernen Osten?"

**Forthcoming lectures at the Goethe-Museum Düsseldorf:** 25 May: Dr. Ruth Kessel (Meerbusch), "Die Goethe-Lektüre des Grünen Heinrich in Gottfried Kellers gleichnamigem Roman"; 17 October: Dr. Lutz Arnold (Karl-Marx-Stadt), "Goethe und Leipzig"; 14 November: Prof. Dr. Walter Henze (Hannover), ". . . 'leb' mit der Welt in Frieden! Geselliges Leben in Weimar am Beispiel der Herzoginmutter Anna Amalia und der Gräfinnen Egloffstein"; 12 December: Prof. Dr. Albrecht Goes (Stuttgart), "Goethes Briefschlüsse."

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## A NOTE FROM THE NEW EDITOR

I am sure that I speak for all the members in expressing profound gratitude to Ehrhard Bahr for the splendid job he has done as Executive Secretary of the Goethe Society. His shoes feel very large. Last February, as a token of the Society's appreciation, Meredith Lee presented him with a handsome Mark Cross pen.

*Goethe News and Notes* will continue to appear twice-yearly, but now in fall and spring (rather than winter), so that a report on the session at the ASECS meeting can be included whenever possible. Please address all submissions and inquiries to the Executive Secretary at the address below. The deadline for the Fall issue will be October 15th.

Meredith Lee, our Secretary-Treasurer, has asked me to remind those who have not yet paid their dues for 1990 kindly to remit them as soon as possible to her at the following address.

I look forward very much to working with you all.

*Frederick Amrine*  
Executive Secretary

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