

1977

## Conferences

various authors

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# GDR BULLETIN

NEWSLETTER FOR LITERATURE AND CULTURE IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Vol. III, No. 3

October 1977

## CONFERENCES

### MLA CONVENTION

This year's Convention will include three sessions of particular interest to GDR literature:

SEMINAR: Discussion leader: Richard Zipser, Oberlin College.  
Respondent: Jürgen K. Hoegl, Univ. of Illinois Illinois-Champaign.

Papers: 1) "A Structural Approach to Volker Braun's *Unvollendete Geschichte*," Ann Clark Fehn, Harvard Univ.

2) "Christa Wolf's *Slickwechsel*," Karl-Heinz Schoeps, Univ. of Illinois.

3) "The Margins of Freedom in Rainer Kunze's *Die Hundsbaren Jahre*," Jack Zipes, Univ. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

SEMINAR: "Socialist Writing in the GDR: How Divisive is Dissidence?"

Chairperson: Helen Fehervary, Ohio State Univ.

Papers: 1) "Historical Forms of Dissidence in the GDR," David Bathrick, Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison.

2) "Wolf Biermann and Eurocommunism," Jay Rosellini, Washington Univ.

3) "Heiner Müller and Leninism," Marc Silberman, Univ. of Texas-San Antonio.

4) "Thomas Brasch and the Post-War Generation," Betty Nancy Leber, Univ. of Texas-Austin.

SEMINAR: "The Taxonomy of Socialist Realism."

Chairperson: Adele Rickett, Univ. of Pennsylvania.

Papers: 1) "What is Socialist Realism? The Instance of the Soviet Novel," Katherine Clark, Univ. of Texas-Austin.

2) "The Evolution of Narrative Technique in Recent GDR Fiction," Theodor Laugenbruch, Georgia Inst. of Technology.

3) "The Narrative Technique of the Modern Chinese Writer Hao Ran," Kam-ming Wong, Cornell Univ.

Exact times and room numbers for all sessions will be available at the Conrad Hilton, Chicago.

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### NORTHEAST MLA CONVENTION

The NEMLA meeting for 1978 is scheduled to take place in Albany, N.Y., dates to be announced. The session for GDR interesees will have the theme: "New Trends in East and West German Literature." Summaries of papers on newly emerged authors and/or publications should be forwarded by Nov. 1, 1977, to:

Marian Musgrave  
Dept. of German  
Miami University  
Oxford, Ohio 45056  
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### WESTERN ASSOCIATION FOR GERMAN STUDIES

The WAGS is sponsoring a conference with a session on GDR literature and society at their first annual meeting at Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona on Oct. 21-22, 1977. Moderator: Ingeborg Carlson, Arizona State U.  
Papers: 1) "Theater in a Planned Society: Contemporary Drama and Cultural Politics in the GDR," H.G. Huettich, Univ. of S. California  
2) "Recent Trends in the GDR Novel," Ted Frank, Univ. of Texas-Arlington.

Commentator: Michael J. Ziemann, Univ. of Washington.

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### WORLD FELLOWSHIP CONFERENCE

The fourth annual GDR Symposium of the World Fellowship Center in Conway, New Hampshire is being planned for the week of June 16 to June 23, 1978, having as its theme the topic "Human needs and wants in the socialist society of the GDR as reflected in GDR literature and other art forms". Topics for papers are invited for submission by Jan. 1, 1978 to:

W. Christoph Schmauch  
P.O. 1  
Birch Street  
North Conway, N.H. 03860  
(603) 356-5208

Of special interest will be a session devoted to the exchanging of ideas and information concerning materials for the teaching of courses on GDR literature and culture. In addition to the planned program, there will be ample opportunities for informal discussion. Summaries of papers are due by April 30 at the above address.

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DDR-Forschung scheint auch in der Bundesrepublik noch ein Desiderat zu sein. Es fehlt ihr an konkreten Zielsetzungen und interdisziplinärer Kooperation ebenso wie an methodologischen Prinzipien und finanziellen Mitteln. Diesen Eindruck wurde man auch nach der X. Forschertagung nicht los, die vom 31.5. bis 3.6. in der Europäischen Akademie Lerbach (Bergisch-Gladbach), einem Anhängsel des Gustav-Stresemann-Instituts, stattfand. Dabei sah die Liste der Teilnehmer, die sich diesmal unter den Themen "Kultur und Gesellschaft in der DDR" zusammengefunden hatte, durchaus vielversprechend aus. Neben dem obligaten hudi Dutschke waren eine Reihe von westdeutschen Korrespondenten in Berlin-Ost (Jörg Nettek, Klaus Kämpgen, Dirk Sager) präsent. Von den Literaturwissenschaftlern kamen Jörg Dilke, Walter Fühnders, Konrad Franke, Volker Gransow, Manfred Jaeger, Gerd Labrousse, Jürgen Scharfschwerdt und Hedwig Walwei-Kieglmann. Komplettiert wurde das Feld der über 100 Anwesenden von Soziologen, Politologen, Ökonomen und Bonner Ministerialbeamten. So kompetent und vielversprechend der Teilnehmerkreis war, schon bald wurde deutlich, daß es sich hier um ein Konglomerat von Einzelkämpfern handelte, die vier Tage lang mehr oder wenig an einander vorbeiredeten. Ein Höhepunkt der Tagung läßt sich denn auch nicht vermelden. Heinrich Nohr versuchte dem Thema "Literatur als Kritik und Utopie der Gesellschaft" Neues abzugewinnen; Frank Werner berichtete über "'Gebaute Kultur' - Aspekte der Architektur und des Städtebaus der DDR;" Wilfriede Werner mühte sich, etwas über die "Tendenzen des kulturellen Wandels im Bereich der Bildenden Kunst der DDR seit dem VIII. Parteitag der SED" zu sagen. Der Berichtende selber geriet mit dem einzigen historischen Beitrag ("Frühgeschichte der DDR-Kulturpolitik - Planungen der Moskauer Exil-KPD") ins Kreuzfeuer derer, die für 1945 weiterhin an die Chance eines radikalen Neuanfangs glauben. Andere, wie Thomas Ammer ("Entwicklung und Funktion der BRD-Forschung im Zusammenhang mit der Deutschlandpolitik der SED"), Herbert Güttler ("Imperialismusforschung in der DDR - Anmerkungen zu Gegenstand und Theoretischen Grundlagen"), Werner Rossade ("Grundzüge gegenwärtiger Kulturpolitik der SED") und Erik Nohara ("Arbeiterklasse und Kultur - Eine Prognose"), operierten mit zum Teil schwer verständlichem Fachjargon. Bedauerlich, daß das Papier von Lilliane Cripps aus Besançon nicht rechtzeitig fertig wurde, denn die mündlichen Diskussionsbeiträge der Referentin kündigten eine fruchtbare Debatte über das Verhältnis von Individuum und Arbeiterklasse in der DDR an.

Nicht ganz unproblematisch war der Tagungsmodus. Mitmachen und zuhören durfte nur, wer in das ebenso idyllische wie abgelegene Haus Lerbach eingeladen wurde. Und das schloß selbstredend die in der DDR-Forschung immerhin nicht ganz faule Linke aus. Völlig zu schweigen von interessierten Studenten, die aus der von Bonn eingerichteten "Spielwiese für Verwaltung, Wissenschaft und Journalistik" womöglich einen Bolzplatz der Radikalen gemacht hätten.

Wer an der nächsten DDR-Forschertagung teilnehmen möchte - und das lohnt sich schon wegen der sonst schwer zu knüpfenden interdisziplinären Kontakte - findet im Deutschland-Archiv die nötigen Informationen. Ein Sonderheft dieser Zeitschrift wird auch, so die Mittel sich finden, die diesjährigen Vorträge zugänglich machen.

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#### GDR Bulletin

Published four times a year. Correspondence should be addressed to: Patricia Herminhouse, editor, Dept. of Germanic Languages and Literatures, Box 1104, Washington University, St. Louis, Mo.

or to

Book Reviews - Barton Byg, Henning Fülbier, Marilyn Helt  
Research in Progress - Reinhart Jost  
Notes in Brief - Reinhart Jost, Barton Byg  
Conferences - Peter Jesse  
Travel and Exchange - Ingrid Weigand  
Visiting Lecturers - Henning Fülbier, Ingrid Weigand  
Bibliography - Leslie Adelson, Bernhard Zimmermann

All of the above can be contacted through the Washington University address given above.

Regional Contributing Editors:  
Helen Fehervary, Ohio State University;  
Frank Hirschbach, University of Minnesota;  
H.G. Huettich, University of Southern California;  
Theodor Langenbruch, Georgia Inst. of Technology;  
Christiane Zehl Pomero, Tufts University;  
Marc D. Silberman, University of Texas-San Antonio.

## WEIMAR 1977

The Internationaler Hochschulferienkurs für Germanisten, organized by the Friedrich Schiller Universität, Jena, had as its theme: "Ursprünge und Stellung der Romantik und ihre Aneignung und Rezeption in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft." A number of distinguished scholars contributed with lectures and colloquia, among them Dr. Walter Dietze, Weimar ("Urworte, nicht sonderlich orphisch"), Dr. Günter Hartung, Halle (with a stimulating presentation which dealt with the song "Der Lindenbaum", Wilhelm Müller/Franz Schubert), and Prof. Dr. Hans-Dietrich Dahnke, Berlin ("Ursprünge und Stellung der deutschen Frühromantik"), Prof. Dr. Klaus Träger, Leipzig ("Historizität und Erbe der Romantik"), and Prof. Dr. Hans-Georg Werner, Halle, who discussed the methodological problems of vol. VII, 2 (Klassik/Romantik) of the History of German Literature. The scholarly papers were supplemented by Günter de Bruyn reading from his book Das Leben des Jean Paul Friedrich Richter, which provided insight into sociological conditions of Jean Paul's time.

In spite of its focus on the romantic period in German literature, the program consisted of a wide range of topics, such as cultural politics, politics of higher education, foreign and economic policy, sociolinguistic developments (Prof. Dr. Thea Schippan, Erfurt) and GDR literature of the seventies (on poetry: Dr. Klaus Krippendorf, Jena; on drama: Dr. Klaus Hammer, Jena; on the novel: Dr. Sigrid Damm, Berlin). Among the Arbeitsgemeinschaften on language, literature or teaching methods in German as a foreign language, I chose the one offered by Prof. Hans Richter, Jena. Under his thoughtful guidance, theoretical and poetic texts by GDR authors were explored to arrive at an understanding of the self-perceptions of these authors within GDR society. Among the authors considered were Günter Kunert, Volker Braun, Christa Wolf, Anna Seghers.

Among the numerous performances and excursions were Ein Gespräch im Hause Stein über den abwesenden Herrn von Goethe, a play by Peter Hacks, followed by a discussion with the director of the Maxim Gorki Theater, Berlin, the actress Karin Gregorek and Peter Hacks himself, as well as the film Mama, ich lebe (Buch: Wolfgang Kohlhaase, Regie: Konrad Wolf). A glimpse of the daily course of production had also been included in the program. After touring the Maschinenkombinat in Seebach, we had the opportunity to discuss the process

of production and the organization of the entire complex in Seebach with members from the plant.

On the whole, it was felt that - in contrast to the previous institutes - a more open and intense exchange of views was characteristic for Weimar I in 1977. Discussions continued long beyond the official part of each day's program with lively interaction among participants from an amazingly large number of countries. Without doubt, this result may be attributed to a flexible and attentive organizational staff.

Leontine Burk  
Univ. of Kansas  
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## WEST VIRGINIA UNIV RESEY COLLECTION

The second annual West Virginia University Colloquium on Modern Literature, which took place on the dates of Sept. 22-24, 1977, included emphasis on contemporary theater in the GDR. Papers presented and discussed were:

- 1) "Literature in the GDR," A.C. Buettner, Univ. of S. California.
- 2) "The Uses of Tradition East and West: Flenzdorf's Die Leuen Leiden and Jürgen W. and Kroetz's Maria Magdalena," Helen Cafferty, Bowdoin College.
- 3) "Theater of Provocation: The Plays of Volker Braun," Christine Cosentino, Camden College, Rutgers.

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## RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

A team of scholars working in the field of GDR literature is preparing an analysis of the works of Christa Wolf. Several chapters are still open for colleagues interested in joining this team publication effort. For further information, contact either Theodor Langenbruch (Dept. of ML, Georgia Inst. of Tech., Atlanta, GA. 30332), or Nancy Lauckner (Dept. of Germanic and Slavic Lang., Univ. of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tenn. 37916).

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