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Goethe-Jahrbuch 2005 (review)

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to be found throughout the book, so it is not to be wondered at that no real conclusion is reached, with the final section ("Fausts Ende, Goethes Ende," 418–27) being broken up as follows: "Faust als Prototyp der neuen gesellschaftlichen Ära" (418–21); "Fausts Tod: Wiederbringung aller und Entelechie" (421–22); "Goethes Vorstellung vom Tod" (422–23); "Die Briefe aus Dornburg 1828" (424–26), and lastly "Staunen" (426–27).

And yet it would be wrong to discourage potential readers with an interest in Goethe's autobiographical writings from taking up this book. The knowledge and scholarship it displays are considerable, while many of the questions posed or assertions made can give rise to certain stimulating reflections. It is a book, however, that is to be enjoyed with caution, a book that requires its reader to be steeped in the details of Goethe's whole oeuvre so that Rohde's often random use of Goethean sources may be accepted or rejected in terms of their true validity. Well-written, well-presented, and a pleasure to read in terms of style, the book would have benefited from a greater rigor in the structure of its task. As it is, the main questions remain unanswered and the phenomenon of Goethe's immense autobiographical output continues to need greater attention, as before.

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Werner Frick, Jochen Golz, and Edith Zehm, eds., *Goethe-Jahrbuch 2005*. Volume 122. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006. 570pp.

At the close of his stimulating article entitled "Ruine oder Monument? Goethes Lebenswerk im Spiegel seiner Gotik-Studien," Peter-Henning Haischer cites a statement by Goethe as recorded by Frédéric Soret on 17 February 1832: "mein Lebenswerk ist das eines Kollektivwesens, und dies Werk trägt den Namen Goethe" (229). The *Goethe-Jahrbuch 2005* documents a particularly productive year for the "Dombauhütte Goethe." In addition to four longer and eight shorter essays and/or documentary accounts, thirty-one informative and well-arranged book reviews, extensive reports on memorable events for the International Goethe Society in 2005 as well as listings of the previous year's activities within local and national Goethe Societies (including the GSNA), and an extensive Goethe bibliography and name index for 2004, the first two hundred pages of this yearbook record the proceedings of the May 19–20, 2005 conference in Weimar that commemorated the two hundredth anniversary of the death of Schiller. For purposes of providing some "classical" unity to what otherwise could easily become a enumeration of "Go(e)thic" incidentals, the remainder of this review will focus on the fifteen essays dealing with the conference theme, namely *Goethes Schillers—Schillers Goethe*.

The opening talk by Rainer Safranski provides an overview of the development of a friendship and working partnership in the years between Goethe's return from Italy in 1788 and Schiller's death in 1805. In "eine Annäherung, die nicht erfolgte? Die schwierigen Anfänge eines Dichterbundes," Gesa von Essen makes effective use of Erwing Goffmann's and Pierre Bourdieu's respective categories of role-playing and literary field in order to analyze the social framework that led not only to the initial tension between Goethe and Schiller, but also to their first meaningful conversations and letters in the summer of 1794, as the two writers became aware of deficiencies in their own life and creativity that the other could help to fill. This talk, in turn provides a fine supplement to Andreas Beyer's account of the reassignment of Christian Daniel Rauch's projected

Goethe-Schiller monument to his prize pupil Ernst Rietschel; Beyer emphasizes the significance of Rietschel's decision to cloak his subjects in modern dress rather than the togas originally envisioned by Rauch, while also noting that this monument contributed to the nationalistic evocation of a "German" classicism in the years after its installation in 1859. The articles by Martina Lauster and Irmela von der Lühse that conclude this section of the *Goethe-Jahrbuch 2005* also deal with the reception of Goethe and Schiller—be this by Heine, Börne, Wienbarg, and Gutzkow in the decades between Goethe's death and Rietschel's monument in 1859, or else by Thomas Mann in his essays. Lühse notes that Mann's image of Schiller as the heroic sufferer does not change appreciably between 1905 and 1955, whereas Goethe serves as a figure whereby Mann strove to accommodate his own shifting conceptions of the artist's relationship to social issues. The author closes her essay with a reproduction and discussion of "Denkmalprojekt für das Goethejahr 1949"—a caricature by Hans Ulrich Steger in the *Weltwoche* of 10 June 1949 that features Thomas Mann in eighteenth-century dress standing in place of Schiller and grasping the hand of a bemused-looking Goethe, under which are placed Carlos's words to Posa: "Arm in Arm mit dir, so fordr' ich mein Jahrhundert in die Schranken" (214).

The contributions by Mathias Mayer, Günter Saße, Matthew Bell, and Norbert Oellers, meanwhile, examine concrete examples of the effects of Goethe and Schiller's partnership on each other's literary production, be these Goethe's "Episteln" and "Amyntas," his initial contributions to the *Horen*; Schiller's critical analysis of *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* in their correspondence; the dual concepts of anonymity and authorship in the *Xenien*; and Goethe's involvement in Schiller's *Wallenstein*. In each case, they help illuminate the productive differences in temperament and artistic outlook that—particularly with regard to the *Lehrjahre* and *Wallenstein*—helped bring about greater works than if they had been attempted in artistic isolation. Peter-André Alt's "Agon und Autonomie: Zu den Tragödientheorien Goethes und Schillers" contrasts Goethe's near total omission of the concept of "catharsis" in his reflections on the antagonistic forces operating in tragedy—e.g. his reflections on the conflicts between the twofold aspects of "phantastischen Geist" and the "gemeine, wirkliche Leben" operating in *Wallenstein*—with Schiller's concern for the demonstration of moral freedom within the context of suffering. Lesley Sharpe and Benedikt Jeßing, in turn, look at Schiller's reception of *Egmont* and *Iphigenie auf Tauris* in theoretical as well as theatrical terms. In his sovereign review of "Weimarer Nachbarschaften. Goethe, Schiller—und die anderen," Helmut Koopmann illustrates the hurdles Schiller had to overcome in order to get on the other side of the dividing dash in his title by using Jean Paul and Friedrich Schlegel as instructive counterexamples, while T.J. Reed's discussion of the correspondence between Goethe and Schiller makes clear how truly extraordinary this relationship was.

As opposed to reviewers, who presumably regard themselves as duty bound to scrutinize a book from cover to cover, most readers of so voluminous a publication as the *Goethe-Jahrbuch 2005* are likely to peruse only those articles, reviews, and reports that correspond to their particular research and reading interests. In this regard, the editors Werner Frick, Jochen Golz, and Edith Zehm have put into practice the exhortation of the director to the poet in "Vorspiel auf dem Theater": "Wer vieles bringt, wird manchem etwas bringen; / Und jeder geht zufrieden aus dem Haus." And, indeed, for those readers looking for a piece dealing with *Faust*, Holger Vietor contributes an analysis of "Das Hexen-Einmaleins—

der Weg zur Entschlüsselung" (325–27) that describes how one can follow the witch's apparent mumbo-jumbo to arrange a so-called "magic quadrant" whose total amounts to fifteen, regardless of whether one counts any three successive numbers horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. In other words—the contents of the 2005 *Goethe-Jahrbuch* add up quite well!

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J. M. van der Laan, *Seeking Meaning for Goethe's Faust*. London: Continuum, 2007. 202 pp.

Faust lives on, as J. M. van der Laan demonstrates in this monograph that sweeps through the ages from antiquity to postmodernity with a breath-taking audacity not unlike Goethe's own claim to bridge three thousand years in his play. The book first surveys Faustian themes and formats from the earliest chap-book versions to the wealth of literary manifestations, cinematic and musical renditions, and multi-media events. With that context in place, van der Laan then launches an insightful study of Goethe's two-part tragedy highlighting the tensions of the text in ethical and scientific terms alike. He demonstrates that Goethe's *Faust* goes head-on into debates that still—or, perhaps, even more so—resonate today in the early twenty-first century. These include such issues as the ethical and practical implications of our quest for knowledge, including whether technology is our magical savior or our destructive master, and, whether the "control" of nature is the human domain or our environmental demise. The play's intense offerings lie in its resemblance to the universe: the *Faust* texts "constitute just such a system [like Stuart Kauffman's chaotic molecules that develop into complexity], a site at the edge of chaos where order and disorder, stasis and dynamism, consistence and inconsistency meet and interact" (127). Even as van der Laan demonstrates the *scientific* potential of this play that inspired such thinkers as those who developed chaos theory, Mitchell Feigenbaum and Albert Libchaber, he also clarifies that *Faust* simultaneously reveals the potential terror and exploitation of the applications of scientific knowledge in *technology*: "Only in the technological experience does Faust find meaning and satisfaction, but what he actually achieves once again is not true, but what can only be called false, meaning. After all, the story closes with Faust lost in illusion. What meaning does he actually find?" (106). Van der Laan continues with the problem of the Faustian illusion by suggesting that we, like Faust, may pursue knowledge yet actually determine far less than we believe. This he formulates both in the theological terms of good works versus divine grace, but also via complexity theory's exploration of order and chaos in the universe. With typical deftness, van der Laan suggests that Faust's final "delusion" is his belief of control over that which actually has us trapped in violent dependency: "[W]e belong to an age utterly enamored of and dependent on our technologies, [and] [e]ven the seemingly most benign technological intervention involves power and domination" (108). Looking thus at meaning and the reverberations of the quest to find it, van der Laan has written a book that contributes much to the large spectrum of recent work exploring Goethe's thought in relation to contemporary science. Yet he also simultaneously includes ethical considerations often left out of many analyses of the exciting parallels in *Faust* to chaos and complexity theory. Goethe's scientific insights put him ahead of his time, yet they do not, according to van der Laan, overshadow Faust's responsibilities or lack thereof. This combination of chaos theory and ethical questions