

research collaborations; opportunities to promote international research in Children's Literature; possibilities of professional and institutional alliances; a meeting place; opportunities to nominate and be nominated for awards and prizes for new voices and excellence in scholarship; and intellectual debate in the field.

Planning for the Future. Children's literature studies are at a very exciting point in their development. There are indications that the growth of children's literature theory is providing the dynamic lift to literature studies that feminism and postcolonialism did in the later decades of the 20th century. While some researchers have proposed a notion of 'childist' (after 'feminist' and 'postcolonialist') as a descriptor, it seems that, whatever the terminology, children's literature studies are here to stay, and set to become a significant part of the intellectual agenda.

IRSCL faces a number of challenges. The most important of these is its 'internationalism': how can a society address the needs of and represent with integrity so many different countries? What decisions need to be made about languages? In what ways can the society most contribute to the development of the studies of youth literatures, particularly in developing countries? How can membership and attendance at congresses be encouraged and facilitated for the scholars in these countries? How can the Society best use its resources to develop international partnerships and collaborations?

There are no easy answers to some of these questions. However, the Society is fully committed to its intention – that is, to work towards outcomes that generate rigorous, intellectual and scholarly research in the important area of children's literature studies.

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International Association for Germanic Studies (IVG)

International Vereinigung für Germanistik

Michael S. Batts

The International Association for Germanic Language and Literature (Internationale Vereinigung für Germanische Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft – the name was changed at the business meeting at the 2000 Congress in Vienna to Internationale Vereinigung für Germanistik) has connections on the one hand with the Fédération Internationale des Langues et Littératures Modernes (FILLM) and on the other hand with the International Association of Teachers of German (Internationaler Deutschlehrerverband, IDV). The FILLM was founded in 1948, when the field of linguistics was added at the fourth congress of the Commission Internationale d'Histoire Littéraire Moderne and the name changed to the more appropriate Fédération Internationale des Langues et Littératures Modernes. At the fifth congress of the FILLM in Florence in 1951 a series of disciplinary organizations was suggested by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), including one for Germanic studies. The Germanists present at this meeting supported the idea and formed a provisional executive, consisting of Professors Borcherdt, Santoli and Böckmann. The first idea was to create an umbrella organization, but this idea was soon dropped and at a meeting in 1952, attended by 26 Germanists from 15 countries, it was decided that there should be

only personal membership. At the first full meeting in Rome in 1955 a constitution was approved, and this included the proviso that the IVG accepted its inclusion under the aegis of the FILLM.

It has always been important for the IVG to include Germanic languages other than German both in its structure and at the international meetings. To this end places on the board were reserved from the beginning for Scandinavian, Dutch and Frisian. The emphasis has varied from time to time, but at present Germanic is defined as including Scandinavian, Netherlandic and Yiddish, and the board includes by statute one member from each of these three areas. Despite this formal recognition, the participation of representatives of these other Germanic languages has been less than substantial, in part as a result of competing disciplinary organizations, in part no doubt also as a result of the fluctuation at congresses between subject-oriented and language-oriented topics. When sections are divided by topic the minor languages are at a disadvantage; when sections are divided by language (Netherlandic, Yiddish, etc.) the representatives of these areas are among themselves, but also at a disadvantage inasmuch as it is expected that the papers will be given in German, since German has become by tradition the language of the congresses, although there is no statement in the statutes about the language that is to be used either at congresses or in the day-to-day affairs of the association.

Membership in the IVG is limited to individuals active in the area of Germanic studies, primarily those at universities, and their nationality is defined by their place of work, i.e. the institution at which an appointment is held. The 'nationality' of the individuals in the IVG is important, as the constitution requires that no more than two members of the board (Ausschuß), originally 15, later 20 in number, of whom 10 are elected in each quinquennium, might be from any one country. The executive committee (Präsidium) consists of the president and the two vice-presidents, and these must also be from different countries. Their term of office is from one congress to the next and they may not be re-elected. A permanent senate (Senat) was later formed of all those who had been either board members or members of the executive committee, and this senate was supposed to assist the executive and the local organizing committee in preparing the congresses, but it does not seem to have played any significant role, and it was finally abolished in 2000. The general assembly (Vollversammlung) at these congresses, i.e. all members present and in good standing, has of course the last word, as it is responsible for the election of the officers and the committees (not the finance committee) and for approving or disapproving of motions put before it. The only committees laid down in the constitution are the working committee (Arbeitskommission) and the congress committee (Kongreßkommission), both of which used to be elected by the general assembly at its first meeting at each congress and which presented their reports at the closing session. There is also a finance committee (Finanzkommission), consisting of three of members of the board, and this committee advises the executive on all financial matters and, together with the treasurer, also a member of the board, is responsible for the financial affairs of the IVG, including the collection of fees. The function of the working committee is to consider the activities of the IVG and to make recommendations for the future, and the purpose of the congress committee is to prepare for the election of officers.

As a result of the rapid increase in the size and complexity of the congresses these committees were unable to carry out their function in the few days during the congress, and the constitution was therefore changed in 1995.

The committees and other activities of the IVG had to be moved forward, as the size of the membership made it impossible to complete all the tasks required of them, of the executive committee, and of the board at or during the quinquennial congress. The Constitution requires, for example, that a membership list be furnished to the members, a relatively easy task when the membership was a few hundred, but a much more difficult task when the

number of members exceeded 1000, and the arrangements for the congress (accommodation, cultural events, etc.) became correspondingly complex. It is not, however, the absolute number of members so much as the number of countries represented in the membership and the difficulty of communicating with members in far-off places that puts a burden on those administering the IVG. At the congress in Rome (1955), for example, 23 countries were represented by those attending; in 1995 the figure was 59, and 55 in 2000.

Although the congress committee is given the task of selecting the place of the next congress, in practice the congress has always been held since 1955 (Rome) at the university where the President is employed. Congresses have therefore been held in Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Princeton, Cambridge, Basel, Göttingen, Tokyo, Vancouver and Vienna. The next congress will be held in 2005 in Paris. The purpose of the IVG, as put forward in its statutes, is the furtherance of personal contacts and of contacts with disciplinary and national organizations, especially through the organization of international congresses. Some efforts have been made in recent years to improve relations with national organizations, in particular since the political changes in eastern Europe, but the main, in fact almost the sole, purpose of the IVG has been the mounting of the international congresses which are held, in accordance with UNESCO principles, every 5 years. Given the international nature of the membership, selecting a time of year for the congress has always been a difficult problem and no one is entirely satisfied. Traditionally, the meetings take place at the end of August or in early September.

At the first congress in Rome there were sections for literature and linguistics, the former having as a general topic the 19th century, the latter the topic of standard language and dialects ('Hochsprache und Mundarten'). Since then, with the exception of the congresses in 1975 and 1980, a general theme has been chosen for each congress, the last being in Vienna in 2000: 'Time of Change – Germanic Studies on the Way from the Twentieth to the Twenty-First Century' ('Zeitenwende – Die Germanistik auf dem Weg vom 20. ins 21. Jahrhundert'). It has to be admitted, however, that many of the speakers in the individual sections have not adhered to the main topic. The two sections, literature and linguistics, in Rome in 1955 had become, by the year 2000, 24 sections (the 25th section for Yiddish was cancelled for political reasons), divided partly by topic and partly by language. The plenary lectures and also the section papers (in Vienna there were 623) have been published partly or wholly in one form or another since the time of the second congress.

The size of the congresses has in fact become an increasing problem, compounded on the one hand by a growing number of organizations devoted to a discipline or a single restricted theme, and on the other by financial concerns. In this connection the importance of the venue of the congress cannot be overestimated. There was of course a natural growth in the number of those attending, as the IVG became better known, for example, from 260 in Rome to 477 in Copenhagen and 555 in Amsterdam. There was then a sharp drop when the congress was held in Princeton (308) and this number did not recover substantially in Cambridge (403). After that, however, the numbers grew rapidly from c. 800 in Basel through 1400 in Göttingen to 1600 in Tokyo. The large number in Göttingen was attributable to a number of factors, not least that this was the first time the IVG had met in the Federal Republic of Germany. The even greater number in Tokyo apparently resulted from the large number of Europeans who wished to visit Japan (German membership, for example, was the highest ever) and the large number of Japanese who joined solely for the purpose of attending the congress. Japanese membership rose from 75 in 1985 to 411 in 1990. It dropped back to 202 in 1995 (Vancouver is easily accessible from Japan) and to 135 in 2000.

The fact that the IVG is seen as an organization devoted almost exclusively to the mounting of a quinquennial conference, where one can exchange news and views and discover what is new in the field, is a considerable disadvantage from the financial point of view. The fee paid is intended to cover the operating costs for the 5 years between congresses, but members

are slow in paying these fees or, if they are not planning to attend the next congress, reluctant to pay them at all. In other words, the fees paid are related by many members primarily to the forthcoming congress, and whether or not they attend is something that they may decide at a very late stage. The fluctuation in membership is therefore dependent on a number of factors, of which the fee paid to the IVG is probably the least important, since this has been kept at a relatively low level; and it has always been the policy of the IVG that those in less well-developed areas or where currency restrictions apply should be accepted as members without payment of these fees. The IVG has consequently been able to finance its activities primarily through the generosity of the institution where the president is located and the sponsors that he or she is able to obtain. The attendance of members at the congresses has also been supported partly by their own institutions, partly by such German organizations as the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung), the German Research Council (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) and the German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst).

However, institutional support at the local level has declined in recent years, as have also the budgets of the organizations listed above. The result is an unfortunate development that seems likely to affect not only the IVG congresses but all kinds of congresses in the future. Most members cannot afford to travel, but the precondition for a travel grant is evidence that a paper has been accepted. There is, therefore, on the one hand pressure on the organizers to accept papers, since they well know that rejection means that the proposer of the paper will not attend. On the other hand, the number of those attending but not giving a paper is sharply reduced. Since the number of papers that can be accommodated at the congress is in practice limited, the number of participants will not greatly exceed the number of those giving a paper and will consist primarily of those who live locally. At the congress in Vienna, for example, 53 percent of those attending came from Austria, Germany and Switzerland, although these countries together account only for 41 percent of the membership. Partly to ensure some degree of continuity between congresses and to convince members that the IVG does not exist for the sole purpose of mounting a quinquennial conference, the originally rather haphazardly distributed, later annual, newsletters from the president to the membership have been expanded. They are now much more substantial and contain not only material relevant to the forthcoming congress, but also reports of other, usually national, conferences, obituaries, and so forth. The IVG is much more international than it was in its early days, and it is hoped that the newsletter will materially assist in maintaining and fostering connections worldwide in the field of Germanic studies.

International Association for Dutch Studies (IVN)

Internationale Vereniging voor Neerlandistiek

Roel Vismans

Dutch is the mother tongue of some 21 million people. It is the official language of the Netherlands and Flanders as well as Suriname, Aruba and the Dutch Antilles. The strategic