

# CONFERENCES

## "THE GDR UNDER HONECKER: 1971-81"

A conference will take place from Friday, September 11, to Sunday, September 13, 1981 at the University of Dundee, Scotland.

The program will include the following papers: "Political Developments in the GDR under Honecker": David Childs; "Kulturpolitik in the GDR under Honecker": Alexander Stephan; "Bahro's *Die Alternative*": Jürgen Tomaneck; "Volker Braun's Works of the 1970s": Ian Wallace; "GDR Social Policy under Honecker": Martin McCauley. The following discussion groups are also planned: "Sozialistische Nationalliteratur der DDR -- The Division of German Literature?" and Politics/Society Discussion Group. (Offers of papers are invited.) Papers should not exceed 20 to 25 minutes in length and should offer a basis for discussion. Inquiries may be sent to: -  
GDR Monitor  
1 Richmond Terrace  
Dundee DD2 1BQ  
Scotland

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## ANNUAL EUROPEAN STUDIES CONFERENCE

From October 8 through October 10 an interdisciplinary meeting (with sessions devoted to current research, research techniques, teaching methodologies, as well as traditional topics) will be held in Omaha, Nebraska. Abstracts of papers and suggestions for panels should be submitted by May 1, 1981. Address: Dr. Patricia Kolasa (Dept. of Educ. Foundations) or Dr. Bernard Kolasa (Dept. of Political Science) University of Nebraska at Omaha  
Omaha, NE 68182

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## COLLOQUIUM ON MODERN LITERATURE

### COLLOQUIUM ON MODERN LITERATURE "HUMOR IN MODERN LITERATURE AND FILM"

The Session will take place from September 17 through September 19, 1981 under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Languages at West Virginia University, in cooperation with related departments. No categories have yet been finalized so possibilities are numerous. (The Colloquium will also need 20-30 discussion group leaders to chair sessions.) All papers should be approximately 20 minutes in length. A one-page abstract should be forwarded by May 1, 1981. Inquiries and abstracts should be sent to:  
Joseph Prentiss  
Colloquium Director  
Dept. of Foreign Languages  
Chitwood Hall,  
West Virginia University  
Morgantown, WV 26506

# JOURNAL NOTES

The most recent issue of *Deutsche Bücher* (Vol. X, 1980 Heft 3), published in Amsterdam, contains a "Gespräch mit Günter Kunert" (p. 165-180). The "Gespräch" is based on correspondence with Marieluise de Waijer-Wilke rather than on the usual interview techniques and focuses particularly on questions of form-content relationship, contemporary reception of classical German literature, fantasy and realism, skepticism and pessimism.

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## Kürbiskern. 3/80, 4/80, 1/81.

"Autoren, die Grund zum Optimismus haben und so, wie Anna Seghers oder Bruno Apitz oder Hermann Kant, durch die Resultate ihrer Arbeit jederzeit davor geschützt gewesen sind, in Skeptizismus zu verfallen" - thus does Dieter Noll define the common ground between himself and the authors named. Two of these, Anna Seghers and Hermann Kant, as well as Noll himself are the subjects of articles in recent issues of *Kürbiskern* (Dammitz-Verlag, Munich). We are thus in a position to examine this statement more closely.

The pre-election issue "Lieb Vaterland" (3/80) contains an interview Dieter Noll gave Oskar Neumann, the Frankfurt Book Fair issue "Weltsprache Literatur" (4/80) devotes some fourteen pages to an interview with Hermann Kant by Elvira Högemann-Ledwohn and the first issue for 1981, which is entitled "Geschichtsbilder" (1/81), contains a series of reflections on the work of Anna Seghers by Ursula Püschel (DDR) entitled "Das heftige Gebrauchtwagen", written in celebration of Seghers' recent 80th birthday.

Taking as her starting point a number of quotations from Seghers herself, Püschel centers her attention largely on political and literary aspects of the two "DDR-Romane", *Die Entscheidung* and *Das Vertrauen*, whose theme is defined as "nichts Geringeres als die Macht der Arbeiterklasse, der Herrschaftswechsel zwischen Bourgeoisie und Proletariat in Deutschland, genauer: BRD und DDR, vorgeführt in der entscheidenden, der ökonomischen Sphäre". In this context Püschel defends particularly Seghers' portrayal of Stalin in *Das Vertrauen* against the strictures of Western critics such as Reich-Ranicki ("Schamlos scheint mir die Liebe der alten Anna Seghers zu Stalin zu sein") situating it against the background of her long-standing membership in the Communist Party, her espousal of the ideals of the October Revolution and the contribution of her work to the mobilization of the masses, which according to Brecht (as quoted by Püschel) is the necessary prerequisite to the elimination of Stalinism: "Zu den Leistungen der Anna Seghers zählt, daß sie in einem Ensemble von Personen mit ihren Schicksalen und Haltungen die Politik als einen organischen Teil des Menschenlebens dargestellt hat." In Oskar Neumann's view, Dieter Noll's best-selling novel *Kippenberg* (the first DDR-Edition ran to 110,000 copies) "richtet sich gegen den...Trend zum Kulturpessimismus, zur Dämonisierung, wenn nicht schon Verfehlung des wissenschaftlich-technischen Fortschritts". This novel, pointedly recommended to East German readers by Klaus Kropcke at the 1979 Leipzig Book Fair, is concerned to demonstrate, so Noll tells us, that the manifold problems of the contemporary world cannot be understood without some insight into developments in natural science and technology. Noll, sharing none of the Western concern for the possible effects of new technologies and convinced that a planned socialist economy -