

# From Weimar to Vienna: The Problem of Non-Discursive Thought from Goethe to Wittgenstein

*TransCoop-Project Application*

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## I. Thematic Introduction

The aim of our project involves five phases of literary and philosophical filiation: (1) the inception of a strand of literary and philosophical concern in Weimar regarding the importance of non-discursive forms of representation, centered around the inheritance of Kant's philosophy, primarily at the hands of Goethe and Schiller, but also in the linguistic philosophy of Wilhelm von Humboldt, the philological program of Friedrich Schleiermacher, and the aesthetic theory of Friedrich Schlegel; (2) the radical transformation of these concerns and correlative reconception of history, philology, and aesthetics in the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche; (3) the resulting crisis that emerges from the apparent unsalvageability of the ideals of the Weimar enlightenment; (4) the response to this crisis, and the attempt to reconcile the original aspirations of Weimar in the face of a radical Nietzschean critique of their sustainability, in the various literary and philosophical undertakings of fin-de-siècle Vienna, most notably, in Robert Musil's reconception of the form of the novel, Hugo von Hofmannsthal's reconception of the task of poetic and dramatic writing, and Karl Kraus's reconception of the writer's ethical responsibility to language; and, finally, (5) the remarkable synthesis of various aspects of these Viennese literary strands of response in the two phases, early and late, of Ludwig Wittgenstein's subsequent radical reconception of the task of philosophy.

In Weimar, in the wake especially of *Kant's Critique of Judgment*, Goethe and Schiller found themselves grappling with questions regarding the degree to which the forms of content which not only poetry and drama, but even sciences such as biology and optics strove to represent could be captured by purely discursive means -- questions that remain no less urgent today. Contemporary philosophers and linguists have arrived at a fairly detailed appreciation of how *linguistic* expressions (and discursive representations, more generally) are able to embody and convey meanings when employed assertorically -- of how, that is, individual concrete objects, such as sentences, can say or mean what is the case. It is still much less clear, however, how a

*non-discursive representation* is so much as able to convey a determinate intelligible content – a content that admits of understanding or misunderstanding. (There was once a popular answer to how pictures are able to do this: pictures *resemble* the things they are meant to represent. But that answer has proven unsustainable.) And the puzzle becomes greater still, when one tries to understand the non-discursive dimension of linguistic communication. Yet an understanding of this dimension is essential to any adequate account of the aesthetic experience of literary works and the power of certain forms of philosophical writing.

TFor the question that concerns us here, in its most general form, extends well beyond the intelligibility of works of literature. The question, posed in its most general form, is the following: how can a concrete non-discursive particular item have general significance? This problem of what we may call (following Hegel) *the concrete universal* arises in a host of different ways in almost every discipline: it arises in one way in mathematics (a diagram of a geometrical construction shows something general: how things are in all cases of a certain kind, not just how things are with respect to *this* triangle here and now); it arises in a different way in physics (physics instruction proceeds through the exhibition of what Thomas Kuhn calls *paradigmatic* examples); and in yet a different way in poetry (it is constitutive of something's being a poem that it means more than it merely says, and thus that it not be identical with any of its possible paraphrases). A particular version of this question, however, became urgent in the thought of literary and philosophical authors working in the wake of the Weimar reaction to Kant's *Critique of Judgment* -- a reaction that cast a remarkable shadow across the subsequent century of literary and philosophical activity throughout the German-speaking world.

Although our TransCoop Project will be interested in getting a handle on that questions that preoccupied these writers over the course of this century in their full generality, our way into these questions will be an historical, genealogical, and comparative one. Indeed, it is our conviction that the broad interdisciplinary relevance of our theme can only emerge in a fruitful way if it is anchored in historical inquiry. The historical point of departure for our project will be the specific moment in the German Enlightenment in which the question of the nature of the concrete universal was first posed in its full generality and thereby came to assume a sudden urgency. Under the pressure of this question, there was a tremendous explosion of (what might be anachronistically termed) interdisciplinary inquiry—culminating in the German Romantic conviction that physics, biology, philosophy and poetry must all become fused into one single interrelated field of inquiry. Though nothing like such a utopian unification of disciplines any longer seems feasible, it is nonetheless striking that contemporary theorists across the humanities, from philosophers to art historians, have again become increasingly concerned to take up anew some aspects of the puzzle regarding how concrete universals are so much as possible. The genealogical aim of the seminar will be to trace the roots of various contemporary intellectual obsessions with this question to their origins in this previous moment in the German Enlightenment and the first century of response to it, and to uncover and understand the various mutations and transformations that the proposed answers to this question have undergone over this

period. By virtue both its historical framework and its comparative methodology, the project will contribute to an understanding of the problematic of non-discursive thought at the center of current research in both philosophy and literary studies.

## II. Historical Focus of the Project

Immanuel Kant argued, in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), that only two fundamental kinds of representation were possible for humans: singular and immediate representations (which he called intuitions, ›Anschauungen‹) and mediated general representations (which he called concepts, ›Kategorien‹/Begriffe‹). Kant went on to frame and concede the bare possibility of a further sort of representation (which he alternately called an intuitive understanding or intellectual intuition) that partook of some of the qualities of each of the other two: a sort of representation that could somehow be both immediately given to the knower (in the manner of a perception) and yet of itself already possessed of a sort of generality that would enable it (like a concept) to apply to more than a single particular case. The mere enjoyment of such a representation, however, would (unlike both mere perceptions and mere concepts) of itself yield knowledge—knowledge of a sort that could be attained without the mediation of any intervening process of conceptualization or generalization. Kant further argued that the nature of finite human cognition precluded the possibility of our entertaining such representations and therefore that such a representation could be enjoyed, at most, by some form of non-finite knower, such as God.

From that moment on in the history of thought, various German-speaking philosophers, poets, and scientists became concerned to argue, each in their different ways, not only that humans ought to be capable of some version of this further kind of representation—one which immediately combines aspects of singular perception with those of general thought in a single apprehension—but also that the very possibility of philosophy, or poetry, or science, or some combination thereof, depends upon such a non-discursive form of representation or apprehension. It is this tradition of thought, from Goethe to Wittgenstein, and its ramifications up until the present day, that our project will be concerned to explore.

This tradition of thought was inaugurated in Jena on July 7, 1794, when, according to an anecdote recounted by Goethe, he and Schiller happened into conversation as they were leaving a lecture on botany. At issue was the appropriate mode of representing nature scientifically. Schiller's keen interest in the matter prompted Goethe to outline his as yet unpublished conception of the morphology of plants and to draw "with a few characteristic strokes of the pen" what he claimed was the very image of the primal plant (*Urpflanze*), the archetype of all particular plants. After attentively studying the image, Schiller objected that what Goethe had endeavored to depict was "not an experience, but an idea," alluding to the Kantian notion of an idea of reason that has no "congruent" representation in experience. Goethe, irritated by this frontal assault

on one of his most deeply felt convictions, took pause, allowing his umbrage to subside, and then replied: “It’s fine with me that I have ideas without knowing it and furthermore can even see them with my own eyes.” The response is noteworthy because it acknowledges the justness of Schiller’s criticism and yet holds fast to the notion assailed: the notion, that is, of a kind of experiential seeing that nonetheless has as its object not a particular empirical entity, but rather something that must be qualified as ‘general’ or ‘conceptual.’. And just this (from a strict Kantian point of view) impossible notion was destined to become the centerpiece of Goethe’s conception of a morphological science, the key to an investigatory method devoted to apprehending what he famously called the primal phenomenon (*Urphänomen*).

The question of non-discursive representation emerged as a central issue on the intellectual agenda of post-Kantian philosophy, aesthetics, and scientific theory in response most specifically to considerations put forward by Kant in two notoriously difficult paragraphs, 76 and 77, of his *Critique of Judgment* (1790). In this series of dense reflections, Kant tries to refine and clarify his earlier distinction between discursive understanding (which forms judgments through the application of concepts to an intuited sensuous material) and what he, again, alternately refers to as an “intuitive understanding” or an “intellectual intuition,” types of cognition which, although thinkable (and perhaps attributable to a divine intellect), are not available to human intellect. These pages of Kant’s, intended to establish the inevitability of his earlier distinction between two mutually exclusive forms of representation, had the opposite effect: his characterization of a kind of thinking not supposed to be possible for humans, instead proved immensely suggestive to subsequent generations of philosophers, poets, and scientists, starting with Goethe, who sought to characterize the fundamental sort of insight to which their own endeavors aspired. This pivotal Kantian demarcation—between discursive representation, on the one hand, and a form of intuition that grasps conceptual or ideal configurations, on the other—is vigorously contested in the work of the major idealist philosophers who endeavored to think beyond Kant’s strictures on human cognition.

Building on Goethe’s claim that an “intuitive understanding” (“anschauende Urteilskraft”) is central to the method of natural science (especially morphology and optics), Hegel extends the point to several other areas of human intellectual endeavor. The first step is taken, in *Glauben und Wissen* (*Belief and Knowledge*, 1802), in a passage devoted to the elucidation of the concept of beauty. Hegel writes (note the echoes of Goethe’s and Schiller’s conversation): “Since beauty is the Idea as experienced, or more correctly, as intuited, the form of opposition between intuition and concept falls away. Kant recognizes this vanishing of the antithesis negatively in the concept of a supersensuous realm in general. But he does not recognize that, as beauty, it is positive, it is intuited, or, to use his own language, it is given in experience.” The intuition of the idea, which in Goethe’s experience took place in the apprehension of archetypal natural forms, is here discussed in terms of aesthetic experience, in which, in Hegel’s view, the Kantian distinction between intuition and concept and therewith the limitation imposed on human (discursive) representation “falls away.” Similar contestations of the strictures imposed on human cognition in those two crucial

paragraphs of the *Critique of Judgment* can be found in all the major post-Kantian thinkers: in addition to Goethe and Hegel, Fichte, Schelling, and Schopenhauer. The possibility of non-discursive representation is centrally at issue throughout every stage in the development of post-Kantian thought. Immediately thereafter, it comes to form the crucial theoretical background of German Romanticism. Schleiermacher's hermeneutic theory, with its insistence on the interplay of the sensible and intellectual aspects of poetic-linguistic experience, seeks to embed and interweave the central insights of this generation of thinkers in a single overarching theory of philological practice.

The seed of a different line of filiation in the history of the inheritance of this line of thought first began to sprout in the subsequent extended three-way exchange about these matters that took place in conversations and correspondence between Goethe, Schiller, and Wilhelm von Humboldt. Humboldt sought to develop a conception of the power of judgment that was able to do justice to the artistic thought and practice of the Weimar Classicism. (His study of Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea* is a case in point.) His work represents the first attempt to draw the moral of the post-Kantian problematic for a sound theory of philological practice. With this development, for a brief historical moment, there arises the possibility of a sort of literary criticism that seeks to take on board the full implications of Kant's ideas (e.g., about the kinds of possible representation, the non-codifiable character of judgment, and the nature specifically of the sort of claim that a specifically aesthetic judgement makes upon others). Here we have the first glimpse of the possibility of a system of thought in which the claims of philosophy and literature represents two aspects of a single unified endeavor -- a possibility which then takes on a certain radical form in the conception of Friedrich Schlegel, in which poetry, philosophy, philology and science are all aspects of a single intellectual/existential endeavor.

These unified utopian conceptions which emerge in different ways in the thought of figures as diverse as Hegel, Schleiermacher, and Schlegel came under fire in the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche who sought to expose the manner in which they share a series of enlightenment presuppositions -- presuppositions which he subjects to a scathing critique. Yet Nietzsche retains an aspiration to practice a form of cultural critique in which the tools of the historian, the philologist, and the aesthetic critic play an essential role. This raises the urgent question what survives of these tools in the face of his critique of the enlightenment and what new form their re-inheritance may take that would allow them once again to be culturally fertile and philosophically viable.

This brings us to fin-de-siecle Vienna. In the wake of Nietzsche's critique, it was no longer possible for the writers of Viennese modernism to rely upon the founding notions of artistic and philosophical activity developed in the Weimar period. While programmatically rejecting these notions, the major writers of this period nonetheless continued to operate within a theoretical framework that depended upon them. This introduced a tension between their artistic theory and practice -- between the actual character of the works they produced and their own official theories about the nature of the artistic process. Research on this period, however, has for the most part followed the programmatic enunciations of these authors, thus failing to grasp the inner contradiction

inherent in their post-Nietzschean rhetoric of literary and cultural crisis. Three exemplary literary projects will concern us in particular, each of which, in turn, can be summed up through a single concept, *Kulturdichtung*, *Sprachethik* and *Romanreflexion*, and each of which may be centrally identified with the name of a particular author: Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Karl Kraus und and Robert Musil verknüpfen. Their exemplarity lies in the ways that each seeks to escape the terms of the literary and cultural crisis of the period. Hofmannsthal attempts to establish a representative body of work by drawing on a diversity of literary and artistic traditions in such a way as to simulate cultural authority, thus inaugurating a self-conscious and radical eclecticism. Kraus develops a thoroughgoing critique of the journalistic deformation of language and grounds his practice in an ethics of the writer's responsibility to language -- one which he exhibits through sequences of quotations carefully selected and scrupulously dissected so as to reveal the respective character of fraudulent and authentic uses of language believes to be embedded in texts he merely documents. Finally, Musil produces a literary work the unity of which must be understood not in traditional aesthetic categories of closure, but rather in terms of a practice of continuously escalating novelistic self-reflection which serves to that holds together its apparently disparate, fractal, unfinished material nature.

In the light of these modernist literary projects, the following traditional questions of a general nature take on a new urgency and complexity: What is it to grasp an artistic form? How is, for example, the unity of a poem understood? How do we measure the adequacy of our interpretation of such a work? Our aim is to bring the insights of the aforementioned literary/philosophical tradition to bear specifically on these questions. It is, however, our intention not merely to attend to theoretical formulations, but also to explore concrete manifestations of non-discursive representation in the history of literary practice, and especially in the tradition of German poetry and literary thought that grew up in the wake of this philosophical problematic. The authors in this tradition were inclined to hold that all genuinely literary writing presupposes a form of self-reflection nicely captured in the theological exegetical formula "textus interpret sui". Literary self-reflexivity, however, can come in varying degrees of resoluteness, explicitness, and rigor. The literary works of these authors themselves come to embody an extraordinary extreme of self-consciousness precisely in those moments in which they seek to come to terms with the philosophical problem of a non-discursive form of understanding. To this extent, these literary works themselves represent an important chapter in the history of philosophical and hermeneutic thought about this problem.

Our project will be concerned to explore and substantiate the thesis that this Viennese modernist tradition culminates in the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein in a hitherto unsuspected ways. The young Wittgenstein begins as devotee of the dominant intellectual tendencies of fin-de-siecle Vienna, as he encounters them in Karl Kraus's journal *Die Fackel*, Ludwig von Ficker's journal *Der Brenner*, and, above all, the writings of Otto Weininger. This is in itself not news. The tendency, however, is to see his first great work, the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, as simply an expression of his devotion to these ideas. The canonical book, in this connection, is Alan Janik and Stephen Toulmin's *Wittgenstein's Vienna*. This results in a reading of the *Tractatus*, in which it is viewed as an attempt to execute through technical logical resources a variant of the

project to reveal the limits of language of the sort undertaken by Hofmannsthal in works such as the *Chandos Brief*. We find ourselves, however, highly dissatisfied with the Janik and Toulmin account of these matters of the opinion that the time has come for a thorough reevaluation of its widely influential claims. We find ourselves in agreement with the critique of the resulting reading of Wittgenstein's early work which has been put forward in the writings of James Conant and Cora Diamond. This recent reading, in turn, has given rise to an entirely new way of understanding some of the central ideas of Wittgenstein's work, both early and late. This is currently a matter of intense discussion in the contemporary philosophical literature under the rubric of *The New Wittgenstein*. We are of the view that this new reading of Wittgenstein gives rise to an urgent demand to reexamine Wittgenstein's relation to the Viennese intellectual milieu out of which he came. We hope to produce a far more nuanced account of this relation than has previously been available -- something we believe to be possible only through a concerted cooperation between scholars of German and Austrian literature, on the one hand, and philosophers, and, in particular, experts on Wittgenstein's philosophy, on the other. Such a cooperation has yet to take place. We believe that it will reveal, among other things three important sorts of deep connection between moments in the development from Weimar to Vienna traced above, and Wittgenstein's treatment of topics such as perspicuous representation, family resemblance, rule-following, and aspect-seeing: (1) Of especial importance here is Wittgenstein's careful studies of Goethe's work and its inheritance of elements of the doctrine of Kant's *Third Critique* (though the importance of this subject is hardly news, its investigation has yet to have been prosecuted through a joint collaboration of Goethe and Wittgenstein experts); (2) Wittgenstein's relation to Nietzsche and the Nietzschean critique of the German enlightenment -- a topic which has almost entirely escaped careful systematic study; (3) Wittgenstein's abiding devotion to and concern with the *Sprachkritik* of Karl Kraus -- a devotion that completely survives his repudiation of his early enthusiasm for the ideas of figures such as Hofmannsthal, Weininger, et al. **Wittgenstein**

Such a project of understanding what Wittgenstein truly seeks to retain and transform and what he actually seeks to jettison and subject to critique in the intellectual development from Weimar to Vienna requires that one first come seriously to grips with that intellectual development itself, on its own terms and simultaneously as part and parcel of a project of understanding Wittgenstein's own development. Such a project is an inherently interdisciplinary one; and it has yet to be seriously attempted. Our aim is to do this by bringing the relevant leading literary and philosophical experts on the relevant strands of this development into dialogue and cooperation with one another.

### III. Forms of Cooperation that the Project Seeks to Foster

The project seeks to foster two different forms of cooperation: on the one hand, between scholars in Germany and those in the United States currently working

separately on these topics, and, on the other hand, between philosophers and literary scholars in both of these countries.

The topic of our project has particular importance today, given the situation in which both literary studies and philosophy presently find themselves in both the United States and Germany. Contemporary literary studies in both these countries are at a crossroads. The excitement surrounding the postmodernist or poststructuralist moment in literary studies has subsided and conceptual problems inherent in this direction of thought have become increasingly evident. This has led to a sometimes frantic search for new paradigms and to a proliferation of often ill-considered intellectual borrowings. In several quarters, however, the inability of such partial and ad hoc models to account for the central questions of traditional literary scholarship has inspired a renewed engagement with the major works of aesthetic theory and a sustained reflection on the relationship between literature and philosophy. Questions of literary form are increasingly being taken seriously. A notable feature of these developments is the intense engagement with Kant's work, which has become a key point of reference even for specialists in both the German and English literary traditions. But this renewed interest in Kant, however salutary, typically does not include a sufficient awareness of the post-Kantian tradition extending from Goethe to Wittgenstein.

At the same time, unlike in previous decades, the topics explored by literary scholars are receiving equally intense scrutiny by philosophers in both of these countries. For contemporary analytic Anglo-American philosophy, both in the United States and in Germany, is also at a crossroads. The old research programs within this tradition now longer command the same enthusiasm and respect and the work of Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche and Wittgenstein is being read anew by philosophers seeking to revivify the analytic tradition. (A representative example of this tendency -- one that lies close to the heart of the current research project -- can be found, for example, in the latest issue of the North American journal *Philosophical Topics*, which bears the title *Analytic Kantianism*, a volume that contains essays by both American and German philosophers currently contributing to this trend.) These recent developments within contemporary philosophy permit the possibility of a rapprochement between analytic philosophy and literary studies of a hitherto unprecedented order. Yet, at a time when many of the same authors (Kant, Goethe, Hegel, Nietzsche, and Wittgenstein) and, indeed, the very same passages from these authors, currently stand at the forefront of attention in both philosophy and literary studies, there is astonishingly little communication across the institutional divide that separates these fields. One aim of the proposed seminar will be to help initiate this badly needed dialogue by fostering discussion between literary scholars and philosophers on both sides of the Atlantic on these common topics of interest.

## IV. Institutional Framework



We want to pursue our project in two forms which we think will complement one another. On the one hand, we want to advance our project by having a continuous exchange between the two applicants. This will involve two- to three-month research stays in the country of the corresponding partner for the purpose of discussing each other's work, organizing joint symposia and producing joint writing on the subject. Over a three-year period, we plan on at the very least one such stay for each partner each year. On the other hand, we wish to establish an ongoing conversation among scholars working on the systematic debates described above both in Germany and in the United States. It seems to us that the format of an ongoing three-year lecture series is best suited to achieve this objective. One such lecture series will be conducted at the University of Chicago, another at the Universität Osnabrück. We conceive of this format as very flexible. We intend it to include not only individual lectures, but also what we propose to call mini-seminars. These are short courses that may be held by more than one person and may comprise three to five sessions over a period of one to two weeks. We shall also hold three international workshops, one per year, inviting a small circle of top experts from both the United States and Germany on the proposed topic of the project. (The workshops will be funded entirely out of the matching funds and thus are not mentioned in the budget plan below. The mini-seminars will be partially funded out of matching funds.) We intend to publish select contributions to the lecture series and the conferences in the form of one or more volumes.

Beyond being an intellectual cooperation between the two applicants, the project will also involve cooperation on a larger scale between literary scholars and philosophers at both the Universität Osnabrück and at the University of Chicago. On the German side of the equation, the following three primary institutional partners will be involved:

1. Universität Osnabrück, Institut für Germanistik
2. Universität Osnabrück, Peter-Szondi-Kolleg für germanistischen Nachwuchs,
3. Promotionsstudiengang *Theorie und Methodologie der Textwissenschaften und ihre Geschichte* (Universität Osnabrück and Universität Göttingen).

The plan is also to involve German philosophers, especially through the participation of the Philosophy Department at the Universität Leipzig, through the cooperation and leadership of Pirmin Stekeler.

On the North American side of the equation, the primary partners will be two departments at the University of Chicago: the Department of Germanic Studies and the Department of Philosophy. Professor David Wellbery of the Department of Germanic Studies enjoys a close working relationship with his colleagues in the Department of Philosophy, several of whom share interests in the topics of the project and who will play a central role in its execution. Particularly noteworthy in this connection are Professors James Conant and Robert Pippin. The plan of the project would be to involve members of both of these departments at the University of Chicago in the workshops and

discussions of the project.

From the financial point of view, the project would be conducted with the assistance of the following five institutional partners at the University of Chicago, each of which will contribute some matching funds:

1. The University of Chicago Franke Center for the Humanities
2. The University of Chicago Wittgenstein Workshop
3. The University of Chicago Center for Interdisciplinary Research on German Literature and Culture
4. The University of Chicago Department of Germanic Studies
5. The University of Chicago Department of Philosophy

## V. Qualifications of the Applicants

Both applicants are well qualified to carry out the described project.

Christoph König has been Professor of German Literature at the Universität Osnabrück since 2005. During the academic year 2008/2009 he was a fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. He is the director of the Peter-Szondi-Kolleg für germanistischen Nachwuchs and the co-director of the Promotionsstudiengang *Theorie und Methodologie der Textwissenschaften und ihre Geschichte*. He is the author of the following books: *Hofmannsthal: Ein moderner Dichter unter den Philologen* (2001, second edition 2006); *Engführungen: Peter Szondi und die Literatur* (2004), and *Häme als literarisches Verfahren* (2008), as well as numerous articles about Goethe, Schiller, Humboldt, the history of literary scholarship, and contemporary modern literature. He is the editor of the three-volume *Internationales Germanistenlexikon 1800-1950* (2003), and of the Hofmannsthal / Walther Brecht Correspondence (2005) and of Paul Celan / Peter Szondi Correspondence (2005). He is the managing editor of the journal *Geschichte der Germanistik* and a regular contributor to the literary pages of in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. It is worth also noting that, many years ago, from 1983 to 1986, he worked in the Brennerarchiv, specializing in the philosophical conceptions of language put forward by Ferdinand Ebner, Theodor Haecker, and Ludwig Wittgenstein. The Wittgenstein dimension of this project therefore represents a return to his intellectual roots.

David E. Wellbery, who joined the faculty of the University of Chicago in 2001 as the LeRoy T. and Margaret Deffenbaugh Carlson University Professor, holds appointments in the Departments of Germanic Studies and Comparative Literature and in the Committee on Social Thought. He is the Director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Research on German Literature and Culture. He is the author of *Lessing's Laocoon. Semiotics and Aesthetics in the Age of Reason* (1984), *The Specular Moment: Goethe's Early Lyric and the Beginnings of Romanticism* (1996), *Schopenhauers Bedeutung für*

*die moderne Literatur* (1998), *Seiltänzer des Paradoxalen: Aufsätze zur ästhetischen Wissenschaft* (2008). His edited volume, *Positionen der Literaturwissenschaft: Acht Modellanalysen am Beispiel von Kleists "Erdbeben in Chile"* (1984) is now in its fifth printing. He is the editor-in-chief of the *A New History of German Literature* (2004), which recently appeared in German as *Eine neue Geschichte der deutschen Literatur* (2007). He has been granted fellowships from the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin and the Carl Friedrich von Siemens Stiftung. Since 1998, he has been co-editor of the *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*. In 2005, he received the Research Prize of the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung. In 2008, he was elected a corresponding member of the Bayrische Akademie der Wissenschaften and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2009, he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Konstanz. He is also a co-director of the University of Chicago's Vienna Project.