Excursions

Friday, September 10th, has been set aside for excursions to several significant (and largely unknown) collections in Saxony and neigboring regions in central Germany. These are described below. Please indicate your selection on the registration form.

Excursion I: Freiberg and Waldenburg

The *Bergakadamie* (Academy of Mining) in *Freiberg*, founded in 1765 and now known as the *Technische Universität und Bergakademie*, is the oldest institution in the world devoted to the science of mining. It is located an hour southwest of Dresden in the heart of the *Erzgebirge* mountain range and the region's famous silver mines. Its holdings include more than 30 scholarly collections with ca. 10,000 technical objects and nearly a million objects from natural history. These include scientific instruments, minerals, and 18th-century models - especially for mining and smelting. In cooperation with the Academy and local craftsmen, Freiberg became a sigificant center for the production of fine mechanical instruments from 1770 on. This guided tour will include an insider's visit to several of the Academy's collections, including physical instruments, the early mining models and - by request - the mineralogical cabinet. The visit will also include the opportunity to walk through the historic city center of Freiberg, with its rich church and secular architecture and renowned sculpture. More information can be found at: http://www.wiwi.tu-freiberg.de/iwtg/kustodie.html.

The Cabinet of Natural History of the town of *Waldenburg*, less than an hour's ride away, was established by Count Otto Viktor I of Schönburg-Waldenburg. The foundation of this museum was the collection of *naturalia* and *artificialia* that had been assembled by the Lincks, a wealthy 17th-century family of apothecaries in Leipzig, and which Count Otto acquired in 1840. The Cabinet includes a variety of anatomical and medical objects, significant holdings of minerals and fossils, taxonomical preparations, and a striking collection of physical and astronomical apparatus, chiefly from the 18th and 19th centuries. More information can be found at: http://www.waldenburg.de/seiten/museum-naturkunde.htm.

The trip includes a boxed lunch.

Excursion II: Bautzen and Goerlitz

The eighteenth century saw the emergence of several learned societies and philosphical circles in the *Oberlausitz* (Upper Lusatia), as the region northeast of Dresden is known. Traces of this activity can still be found throughout the area, and this excursion will lead us to two cities there that house significant private collections from the Enlightenment.

Our first stop is *Bautzen*, which celebrated its 1000th anniversary last year. The city museum and public library display much of the surviving estate of Hans von Gersdorff auf Weicha, whose extensive, late 17th-century library and art collection were established as a foundation upon his death. The collection of globes and scientific instruments gives the visitor a vivid impression of the Protestant scientific discourse taking place outside of the main scholarly centers of the era. Fore more information, visit http://www.bautzen.de/.

Our second destination is *Goerlitz*, roughly an hour's drive east of Bautzen on the Polish border, a city nearly untouched by the Second World War and presenting one of the most completely preserved Renaissance city centers north of the Alps. There the Cabinet of Physics of Adolf Traugott von Gersdorff, founder of the *Oberlausischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Upper Lusatian Academy of Sciences), displays an impressive array of instruments used in the study of electricity. In addition to the physical apparatus and the noted library, the collection features a number of the oldest surviving Alpine models, which Gersdorff brought brought back to Goerlitz following a journey to Switzerland, as well as one of the most comprehensive mineral collections of the 18th century. For more information, visit http://www.museumgoerlitz.de/.

The trip includes a boxed lunch.

Excursion III: Halle and Jena

This all-day excursion will take us to two cities west of Dresden: *Halle*, seat of a distinguished university and birthplace of the composer Handel, and *Jena*, noted for its optical industry. Our destination in Halle may seem at first glance unusual: the orphanage of the *Franckeschen Stiftungen*. Yet the cabinet of curiosities of this orphanage, begun by the Pietist theologian August Hermann Francke at the end of the seventeenth century and supported by the Elector Friedrich III of Brandenburg, brought together some of the most astonishing curiosities from all corners of the globe. Originally used primarily as a means of demonstration in school lessons, it over time acquired the status of a public museum. Preserved as an ensemble over three centuries, it remains today one of most complete examples of an encyclopedic Baroque collection. For more information, visit http://www.franckesche-stiftungen.uni-halle.de/.

After lunch we will travel to Jena. Our destination is the famous Optical Museum built by the Ernst Abbe Foundation of the noted firm Zeiss. The exhibition traces the technical and cultural development of optical instruments over five centuries, as well as the emergence of Jena as a center of optical manufacture beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. Separate galleries are devoted to microscopes, telescopes, and photograpy, and a special exhibition documents the history of the technology of planetaria. For more information, visit http://www.ernst-abbe-stiftung.de/struktur/optischesmuseum.

A boxed dinner will be provided during our return trip to Dresden.