

HEIDELBERG UNIVERSITY: THROUGH 600TH YEAR

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A beehive of learning and knowledge Heidelberg is a very scenic and romantic city on the banks of river Neckar in West Germany. It occupies a magnificent position along the National gate-way formed by Konigstuhl and the Holy Mount of Heilganberg crowned by great ruins of Castle Heidelberg. This majestic Castle and ruins have been for five centuries, glittering residence of Palatine Prince Electors, overlooking the jubilantly flowing Neckar. Heidelberg is regarded, in all respects, as one of the most beautiful cities in the oldest and present day Germany. Set in their happy combination of the Castle, river, ancient and new city, green mountains; valleys and vineyards, it offers a spectacular panorama of beauty, romance and intellectual activity. Here also lies magnificently, a 600 years old Heidelberg University, which has so grandly produced philosophers, poets, artists, intellectuals, scientists in the past and continues to hold its exquisite record of celebrities until present day. It bears special significance for Pakistan, as Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal lived about in this beautiful University town preparing for his thesis for his Doctorate and acquiring the language.

University of Heidelberg is the oldest University in Germany founded by Ruprecht-I of the Palatinate in 1380, where-after, the Grand Duke Charles Frederick of Baden gave it the status of first National University in 1803. This bears the title to both its benefactors; as "Ruprecht-Karis-Universitate". This year the Heidelberg University will be marking 600th Anniversary of its foundation with a year round of celebrations. Two historical events provide dates for celebrations of its jubilee falling on oct. 23, 1385 when Pope Urban-VI issued papal bull, allowing the establishment of the University in the small town of river Neckar. A year later on Oct. 23, 1386 the 'Ruperto Carola University', officially celebrated its initiation in the Chapel of Holy Spirit. Students and teachers from all over the 'German Nation' who hitherto hankered after knowledge in Paris and other Capitals gathered in this new centre of learning, in their motherland. Today the 600th anniversary celebrations ranging from April 1986 to Oct. 1986 provide occasion for a

ceremonial hulla-baloo and stock-taking; their motto; "Into the future on the basis of tradition". The University views the jubilee, 'to entail and shape the university's future functioning, within scholarship and society, in the light of centuries of tradition'. Main emphasis is on a long term policy for research and teaching with structural improvements in quality and spheres of knowledge and life. The central anniversary project and its pride of celebration is the "Heidelberg International Science Forum". Other projects consist of under ground store for valuable collections and treasures of books, a computer net-work for effective data-processing of all the university's faculties. In words of the Vice Chancellor Dr. Gisbert F. Zu Putlitz, the jubilee reflects," a responsibility and a challenge proceeding resolutely into the future mindful of the University's history and importance of what it has recognised, as being valuable and lasting". The International Science Forum will be venue for researchers and Scholars from all over the globe to gather in Heidelberg for inter-disciplinary and International Symposia side by side with the local scholars and advance students, benefiting from contact and exchange with the leading experts of their subjects, of the world today. The wide range of themes involved in Symposia range from "Genome organisation and expression" to 'research into preaching' and from 'language Processing in social contact' to "diagnostic application of lasers in Ophthalmology". The basis of the Science Forum has been provided in two buildings in the Hauptstrasse in House Buhl and the old villa No. 242, both of which hold artistically important significance, in the Heidelberg's old town centre, providing the lecture hall Conference Centers with most modern facilities, in the old buildings. The 2nd large scale anniversary project is an under-ground store for the library in the old town centre for storage of books on humanities and old treasures of hand-written volumes in German language. The tree story under-ground magazine directly linked through escalators with the main library has been built to mark and store 1.35 million books, at a cost of 5 million D.M. project is intended as means of assisting data-processing in the research teaching and University Administration particularly in Humanities. A net-work of over 150 computers will be established with a new soft-ware developed at a costing of 10 million D.M. The year 1986, will present in this beautiful and traditional and artistic setting, over 100 international congresses, concerts, theatre performances, exhibitions, lectures and sport events, many in collaboration with sister Universities, students and Alumni. The Jubilee will be marked as well by its

six volume “document of essays, articles, a commemorative coin, medals and postage stamps. The high point of the year comes with the festival week from 12th to 19th Oct. 1986, culminating in the ceremony on 10th Oct. the anniversary day of the University’s Foundation. The history of the Heidelberg University reflects the political and intellectual evolution of the last 600 years. It first gained a measure of renown following the introduction of the reformation in the Palatinate by Prince Elector Ottheinrich and, interrupted by the thirty Years War, continued to enjoy this success until Heidelberg was destroyed in 1693.

The University of Heidelberg achieved considerable prestige in the 19th century. Following its reorganization in 1803, Charles Frederick of Baden invited a number of major scholars to teach and work in Heidelberg. The “Ruperto Carola” University soon entered the ranks of Germany’s and the world’s leading academic institutions, and it has remained there ever since.

A number of scientists from the University of Heidelberg have been awarded the Noble Prize for their work: Phillip Lenard (1905, physics), Albrecht Kossel (1910, medicine), Otto Fritz Meyerhof (1922,medicine),Richard Kuhn (1938,chemistry) Walter Bothe (1954,Physics) Hans Daniel Jensen (1963, physics)Witting (1979,chemistry).

Today the University of Heidelberg is confronted with the necessity of finding answers to the problems caused by the on going process of specialization of the sciences and the constantly growing student body: the “Ruperto carola” is one of the most popular German Universities. Presently, more than 27,000 students are enrolled.

Many of the research institutes which collaborate with the University are also based in Heidelberg: among others, the Heiderlberg Academy of Science, the College of Jewish Studies, the German Cancer Research Centre, the Electronic Data Processing Centre for Astronomy, the European Laboratory for Molecular Biology and the Max Planck Institutes for Astronomy, Foreign Public Law and International Law, Medical Research, Nuclear Physics and Cellular Biology.

No German city was so beloved by th poets of the Romatic Heidelberg. Any collection of the songs and poems dedicated to Heidelberg would have

to include Matthisson's "Elegy" (1786) and Holderlin's "Ode to Heidelberg" (1799). It was here that Eichendorff found his inspiration and it was here, in 1806 that Arnim and Brentano published their collection of folk-songs, "Des Knaben Wunderhorn". In Heidelberg, Goethe, who visited the city eight times, lost his heart to Marianne von Willemer, the "Suleika" of his "Westostlicher Divan", and she herself, in 1824, composed a poem in memory of this meeting; its finest stanzas are engraved on a stone in the Castle grounds: "Hier war ich glücklich, libbend und geliebt" ("Here I was happy, loving and beloved")

Gottfrid Keller, who studied in Heidelberg dedicated, a delightful poem to the Old Bridge: "Alte Bruck, hast mich oft getragen..." ("Old Bridge, often hast thou borne me...") Jean paul Richter, Victor Hugo and Mark Twain all praised Heidelberg's charms. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal paid his glowing tributes to Heidleberg, by writing a poem, "On banks of River Neckar" now inscribed in a Heidel-Bang Park. Viktor von Scheffel's "Alt Heidelberg, due feine" has remained popular down to the present day. There is a poignant chapter on Heidelberg's in carl Zuckmeyer's memories, "Als War's ein Stuck von mir" ("As if it were a part of me"). W.Meyer-Forster's "Old Heidelberg" was a theatrical success throughout the world and Sigmund Romberg composed the music for a no less successful musical, "The student Prince".

It was in Heidelberg in 1810 that Carl Maria Von Weber was inspired to write his opera "Der Freischutz" and it was here, too, that the student Robert Schumann, began to devote his life to music.

The list of Heidelberg landscape painter ranges from George Primavesi and the Englishman William Turner to the Romantic triumvirate of Carl Philipp Fohr, Ernst Fries and Carl Rottmann to the Realists George Issel and Wilhelm Trubner. Many of their pictures can be seen in the Palatinate Museum.

Dr. Iqbal lived for a few months in this city and loved it. The city's lanes and river banks are marked by his presence where he might have taken his philosophic walks and poetic strides, replets with his aspirational thoughts of tumultous and oppressed home-land. Under the same spell he wrote "An evening on the Banks of the River Neckar" as translated below:-

Silent is the moonlight - and so still
Every birth and twig grove and tree
The melody-mongers of the valley are mute.
Hushed are the green-cladden hills
The nature, drowsed, sedately
Has gone to sleep in bosom of the night
The Neckar flows with a tranquil ease.
The caravan of stars, serene, soft
Proceeds without a whisper or sound
The mountain, forest, river - all in lull
The nature, rapt in deep meditation
Oh heart, you too, be calm and quiet
Embrace the sorrow and slumber; still!

The house where Dr. Iqbal actually took his residence in Heidelberg, had vaguely existed, only known to few, with references in files and letters. It was in mid 60's that an association of Pak. students looked for the place where he exactly lived to mark it properly. Searching for clues, they came across a lady in a Hauptstrasse pharmacy whose old mother, exactly recalled and pin-pointed the apartment on the left bank of the river Neckar facing the picturesque castle and the old city. On further verification they approached the city mayor and University authorities, who willingly agreed to give it a monumental status. With assiduous cooperation of the then Ambassador of Pakistan Mr. Abdur Rehman Khan, a sign-board was placed on the wall of the compound where Dr. Iqbal lived, less than a minute's walk, from the Neckar. Further efforts of the Embassy, patriotic students and good-will of the city authorities resulted in naming a river-side part on the main High-way after him, as "Iqbal Offen", and inscription of the above poem on a large

stone placed in the Park, as a befitting tribute to the Heidelberg's Neckar. It is only a few years back, that a permanent Iqbal chair has been created in Heidelberg University and the well-known critic and scholar Prof. Dr. Ajmal was the first to occupy it. He was succeeded by Prof Dr. Siddique Shibli, the present chairman is Prof. Fateh Muhammad Malik. There is, at present a Pakistani Community of about 100 persons in Heidelberg including the students-but no mosque for congregations. It will be so commemorative, that during these historic anniversary celebrations a Symposia/ Seminar on Iqbal's poetry and message is held to eulogise the works of this great poet-and an illustrious ex-student of the University, who helped mould the destiny of the Sub-continent. To avail this occasion, an official delegation comprising of the Pakistani intellectuals and poets and experts on Iqbal needs to be sent to take part in the celebrations, allowing the proceedings of this Seminar, to go down in the annals of history of 600th jubilee celebration. The city of Heidelberg holds many delightful attractions for the visitors, like, 'river-boat cruise' Castle and its part, konignstuhl Observatory, Botanical and Scheu gardens, Museums, Old City monuments, pedestrian zone, art galleries, theatres and concerts and other festivities. The city is to be seen to be loved and remembered, as was done by the poet throbbing with zeal, rapture and inspiration. heidelberg is too beautiful to believe and its atmosphere more charming than can be expressed. It is simply love at the first sight.

The Knowledge-River

The Neckar does flow
The aging waters mingle
With new and the old-
The silver and the gold
The knowledge does flow
In wave after wave
In Heidelberg's spate
Where poets and thinkers

Reason and debate
through six hundred years
What a world create!
Oh Heidelberg live!
In ink of the scholar
In pace of the science
In cause of the human
In dreams of the lover
In songs of the poet
Oh beautiful live!
My heart, to you, I give!