

Heide Goettner-Abendroth

Remarks on the Opening of the MatriArchiv

It is an honor to speak to you today at the dedication of the MatriArchiv. For a long time I have had the opportunity to follow the process of its emergence – quite apart from the fact that modern matriarchy research, which I founded, is both the source and the basis of the archive.

Christina Schlatter, the founder of the MatriArchiv, has been associated with Academy HAGIA since 1994: first as a learner, then as a co-organisator of an Academy study trip, and since 2002 a board member of the Academy's sponsoring association (Förderverein). Since 2001 she has had her sights set on building up a library of matriarchal research, in order to bring together the rich body of literature directly relevant to the theme. She wanted the establishment of the archive to both support, and provide strong contextual roots for, the further scientific study of this theme.

Through her own persistence, along with the intellectual openness of the administration of the cantonal library Vadiana toward the project (and especially that of Mr. Cornel Dora) – and also thanks to the continual good fortune that played along with the project – Christina was finally able to realize her vision. And so, on 5. November 2007 the MatriArchiv – the first matriarchal research library in the world – was launched, with the acquisition of its first books.

Christina came well-prepared to take on every aspect of a scientific matriarchy library. As a participant in the extended course of studies at Academy HAGIA, she looked after my extensive private research library devoted to matriarchy. I made it available to her for a complete bibliography, and gave her access to my comprehensive documentation – collected by me into hundreds of folders. This, and my engagement as scientific advisor, continually providing information on further international publications in the field of matriarchal research, gave – and give – the MatriArchiv its intellectual foundation. It makes me especially happy to be able to play a substantial part in the ongoing development of the MatriArchiv.

After the founding in 2007, Christina wanted to further build up the library's holdings before holding a celebratory dedication and making a public announcement. From then on in Academy HAGIA, people were aware of the assets of the MatriArchiv, and participants in the study courses were already using it. But for the "grand opening" that we are celebrating today, more time was needed, because we wanted the occasion to make the MatriArchiv known on an international level. The occasion has now, in May 2011, arrived with the International Conference on Matriarchal Politics, where women from all over the world, who are already working on the theme of matriarchy, have gathered. To Christina and all of you who are here, a heartfelt Welcome!

The defining characteristics of the MatriArchiv are:

1. It is integrated into an officially recognized institution, the Vadiana Cantonal Library. It receives protection and support for its further build-up from this institution, and this arrangement assures a professional and trustworthy establishment.
2. It is a scientific library, consistent with modern matriarchal research, which sets forth a new, innovative, fast-growing science. In addition, the MatriArchiv is associated with the Wyborada Women's Library in St. Gallen, which parallels the MatriArchiv and also collects general works of women's literature.
3. From the outset, the MatriArchiv was internationally grounded; it included titles in several languages. This too is crucial to modern matriarchal research, which – since the two world conferences – has spread around the world. So not only interested parties in the German-speaking world, but those from nations all over the world, are invited to make diligent use of the MatriArchiv.
4. Finally I will allow myself to note that my complete works are also in the MatriArchiv – a foundational body of work that I hope will continue to motivate the development of modern matriarchal research.

These characteristics make the MatriArchiv a special, unique world library, and we are very pleased that it exists.

Our heartfelt thanks have been well-earned by Christina for her achievement, and Mr. Cornel Dora for his support. Thank you so much!

Biographical Note

(detailed, before her speech on the MatriArchiv)

Christina Schlatter, born 1955, studied German language and literature, and art history. During the years of raising her family, she undertook art projects and managed a gallery.

From 1994 she took participated in numerous events at Academy HAGIA, and soon was part of the team that organized the Academy's study trips, as well as my lectures in Switzerland. Since 2002 she has been a board member of the Academy's sponsoring association (Förderverein).

With Kurt Derungs she hunted for traces of matriarchal culture in Switzerland. These searches let to excursions, a co-authored book, and an exhibition dedicated to landscape mythology.

She completed a second degree in information and documentation, and this training enabled her to enter professional life – first in the famed monastery library of St. Gallen, and after 2001 in the Vadiana Cantonal Library. She is head of public services there, and a member of the executive management team. Already in 2001, her thesis work was concerned with establishing a library for matriarchal research, which she named “MatriArchiv”. In 2007 she founded the MatriArchiv, which now, in May 2011 is celebrating its official opening and introduction to the public.