1.Tasks

The purpose of the Goethe Dictionary is to record and describe Goethe's lexis in its entirety (around 90,000 words). As an author-based dictionary, its aim is not only to illustrate the meaning of words in common usage but also their author-specific functions and the relations in a given text. Thus, the dictionary principally has a text-explaining function. Considering the scope and multi-dimensionality of Goethe's vocabulary, the Goethe Dictionary can also be regarded as a general dictionary for language in Goethe's time. The dictionary opens gates to the entire cultural era by not just making accessible its language but also its terms and ideas, its emotional world and realia. It serves literary and linguistic interests as well as general cultural interests. Until present, Volumes 1-6 have been published; for fascicles of Vol. 7 see 'Publikationsstand' ('publication status'). Further information on the aim and the concept of the project can be found in the 'Introduction' by Wolfgang Schadewaldt, the initiator of the Goethe Dictionary (Vol. 1, pages 2*-14*). For the approach to the lexicographical work see 'Projekt'/'Die Wörterbuchartikel' ('project'/'the dictionary entry'). On the objective of the Goethe Dictionary see 'Goethe's Wortschatz' ('Goethe's vocabulary').

2. Institutional Embodiment

The Goethe Dictionary is a joint project of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Letters, the Academy of Sciences and Letters at Göttingen and the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Letters, research groups being located in Berlin/Leipzig, in Hamburg and in Tübingen. The project is supervised by a joint committee comprised of two representatives each of the three academies.

3. The Hamburg Research Group

The group was founded in the year 1947. In the beginning, the specific assignment of the research group was the compilation of a reference archive for the sections 'letters' and 'official writings' (the sections 'literary works' and 'diaries' were excerpted by the Berlin research group, the sections 'scientific writings' and 'conversations' by the Tübingen research group). This arrangement has been continued into and throughout the publication phase of the Goethe Dictionary. The main task of the academic staff currently is the proportionate workload on sections of the alphabet. At present, work is being carried out in the area of the letters T, U and V. The research group has a complete reference archive plus a valuable specialist library on Goethe and various electronic sources. It welcomes (scholarly) requests, in particular those concerning Goethe's vocabulary and word usage from A to Z and on primary sources of Goethe's statements and quotes.

Project Supervisor (Member of the Interacademic Committee): Prof. Dr. Andreas Gardt; Research Group Supervisor: Dr. Elke Dreisbach; Academic Staff (authors of dictionary entries): Dr. Sabine Elsner, Jana Ilgner M.A., Claudia Ristau M.A., Dr. Karin Vorderstemann; Secretary: Stefanie Rühle M.A.

Project History of the Goethe Dictionary

The Goethe Dictionary was founded at the end of the year 1946 during a renewal of awareness of humanistic traditions when a memorandum was issued by the classical philologist and Goethe scholar Wolfgang Schadewaldt at the then Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin. Later the three research groups in Berlin (1947) with its branch in Leipzig (1948), in Hamburg (end of 1947) and in Tübingen (1951) were established. They started by excerpting their share of entries on the basis of the 143-volume 'Weimar Edition' and supplementing editions. The Berlin research group took charge of the sections 'literary works' and 'diaries', the Hamburg research group of the sections 'letters' and 'official writings', the Tübingen research group of the section 'scientific writings' and 'conversations'. By now, each research group has the entire reference archive at its disposal, which has gradually grown to 3,3 million excerpts. The concept of the dictionary of the complete works was essentially fixed by the year 1966 (compare W. Schadewaldt's introduction to vol. 1) after preparatory word monographs, sample articles and dictionaries of individual works (e.g. on 'Werther' and – unfinished – on 'Götz'). Conceptional and organisational initiatives of the Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, sponsor of the Hamburg research group since 1961, led to a significant tightening of the lexicographical description and to an acceleration of the work, without compromising the fundamental concept with its cornerstones of complete entry of all words used by Goethe and their comprehensive description of meaning. Starting from volume 2, this is visible in a more economic reference documentation in favour of more precise specifications of meaning. Since 1998, the supervisory board is a joint committee of the three academies. In 2001, this committee decided a further significant streamlining of work and a timesaving, very concise description, primarily of grammatical function words occurring at high frequency.

The Dictionary Entry: Approach and Structure

In its standard format, a full entry of the Goethe Dictionary is composed of 8 parts: headword, introductory note, description of meaning, citations, bibliographical sources, information on usage areas, information on word formation (left-hand constituents), information on synonymy. The citations, sources and information on usage areas are incorporated into the main part, the description of meaning. The minimal form of an article consists of the key word

and the bibliographical source. The description of meaning and the introductory note can both be structurally very complex. The introductory note may include:

- information on spelling, pronunciation, word form, government,
- information on the frequency and distribution of the word within various parts of meaning,
- information on the lexical field,
- information on the history of the word or concept,
- information on the idiosyncrasies of Goethe's usage,
- a structural overview of the article.

The section on meaning is structured hierarchically with alphanumeric definition markers (Roman I, A, 1, a, alpha) and may cover:

- information on lexical meanings, usually in the form of definitions, synonyms or paraphrases,
- information on antonyms,
- information on individually typical, work-, character- or context-specific modifications of meaning, connotations, assessments, special fields,
- information on special poetic features such as imagery, symbolism, ambiguity, associations,
- information on terminological usage.

Information on specific areas of usage (e.g. anatomical, architectural, miners' special languages), stylistic patterns (e.g. in letters, official writings) and stylistic variations (playful, coarse) normally appear in connection with information on meaning.

The reference quotes serve the function of documenting each specific meaning and at the same time of presenting an idea of the variety of functional possibilities in various contexts, while with high-frequency words, often only a strict selection of citations and sources will be given.