

ASIREN (Albert Schweitzer International Research and Education Network)  
AISL (International Albert Schweitzer Organization)  
proudly announce :

## The Fourth International Albert Schweitzer Summer School

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday 12 July 2017



### A DRIVE TO CREATE

#### The spirit of Goethe in Albert Schweitzer's thought and action

The list of epoch-making minds that inspired Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) to write many of his profound and inspiring reflections contains - next to Bach, Kant, Christ, and St Paul - the name of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). Venerated as the invincible prince of German poetry during his life, to Schweitzer's questioning soul Goethe represented much more. In him he recognized a soulmate. Disregarding the historical or cultural distance, Schweitzer argued on several occasions that profound and reflexive personalities correspond with each other on what might be called a trans-historical, or even mystical level. Sincere and deep reflexivity enables the individual soul to enter the universal and continuous flow of life that connects all living creatures. All great men and women of the world each drink from the same source of life. In each and every one of them, this source seeks expression and realization in accordance with each individual's skills and talents, be it romantic poetry, baroque music, ethical engagement, or spiritual reflection.

Schweitzer himself does not give us clear cues as to the influence Goethe might have had on the core concept of his work: the principle of the *Reverence for Life*. Nonetheless, Goethe's assumption of life as the unifying, mystical foundation of being is striking. Some scholars even argue that Schweitzer might have discovered his notion of "reverence" (*Ehrfurcht*) in Goethe's work. Others see Goethe as the missing link between Schweitzer's original veneration for Kant's formal, categorical ethics and his own spiritual ethics of life. All these philological speculations are doubtlessly interesting to theorists and scholars of the history of thought, but what counts here is the force of appeal that thinkers such as Goethe and Schweitzer still generate. An appeal that – using a Goethean concept – might be called *Bildungstrieb* – a drive to create. The principle of the *Reverence for Life* calls on all human beings to engage with life. To make this world a better place to live in, and to prepare a livable future for ourselves, and our children and grandchildren. Life is *Bildungstrieb*, and we are responsible for what we make it.

## Fourth International Albert Schweitzer Summer School at Gunsbach (Alsace, France)

The purpose of the *Fourth International Albert Schweitzer Summer School* is to explore systematically and critically the creative impetus implied in both Schweitzer's principle of the *Reverence for Life* and Goethe's romantic vision of life. The following questions may be addressed, but free contributions on Schweitzer and/or Goethe are equally welcome. How does life's "drive for creativity" incite human beings to realize works that make our world a better place to live, in fields ranging from bio-medicine to politics, to artistic expression, peace studies, theology, philosophy, and so on? How should we evaluate Schweitzer's comprehension of Goethe in the five famous lectures he gave on the German poet? Is it valid to speak of a romantic undertone in Schweitzer's work and worldview, influenced by Goethe and the dominant Goethe-popularity at the beginning of the twentieth century?

### Call for contributions and participation

The *Fourth International Albert Schweitzer Summer School* welcomes all who are interested to participate in this event that offers both an introduction to the thought and life of Albert Schweitzer, and invites a shared reflection on the themes formulated above. Non-academics, advanced students, and scholars are all invited to participate. Informal in style and convivial in atmosphere, the meeting is held in Gunsbach (France), the village where Albert Schweitzer grew up and in later life established his European office (now museum and archives). Two excursions linked to the Goethe-Schweitzer theme are included in the program.

#### Participation is possible in two ways :

##### **1. Attending participants**

Anyone eager to learn more about Schweitzer and Goethe, but also ready to engage in open discussions of presentations and studied text fragments. No specific philosophical or theological knowledge, nor knowledge about Schweitzer or Goethe, is required.

##### **2. Contributing participants**

Participants are invited to present a short, 30 minutes paper that will be reviewed by the organizing scientific staff. The paper could address the question of "Life and *Bildungstrieb*" in the works of Schweitzer, Goethe, but also in affiliated spheres of thought and action (see suggestions below). Presentations analyzing analogies and differences between the two authors will be preferred. The organizers will strive for publication of the most outstanding contributions.

Possible topics to address (non-exhaustive list):

- Shared intellectual horizons (Romanticism, philosophy of nature, neo-Kantianism)
- Schweitzer, Goethe, and Rudolph Steiner's anthroposophy
- Esthetics, ethics, and the enigma of life experiences
- Poetry and narrative as inspirational resources for ethics in Schweitzer and Goethe
- The decline of culture and philosophical restorative therapy
- Albert Schweitzer's *Lectures on Goethe*
- Schweitzer and Goethe beyond Christianity?
- *Bildungstrieb*, "Reverence for life" and "applied ethics": what we should learn from Goethe and Schweitzer.

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## Program

### Friday (7th of July)

- Arrival (12:00) : lunch
- General introduction : *The lives and works of Schweitzer and Goethe* (Predrag Cicovacki)
- Visit to the Schweitzer Museum (Jenny Litzelmann, Romain Collot)

### Saturday (8th of July)

- Lecture : *Why Goethe matters to Schweitzer: introduction to the Lectures* (Chris Doude van Troostwijk)
- Lecture : *Goethe's Influence on Albert Schweitzer's Elemental and Living Philosophy* (Matthew Gowans)
- Text readings and discussions

### Sunday (9th of July)

- Lecture : *Herder, Goethe and the spirit of Strasbourg* (Patrica Rehm-Grätzel)
- Lecture : *Strangers and Enigmas : Goethe, Simmel and Schweitzer* (Michael Thate)
- Excursion to Schweitzer's and Goethe's Strasbourg (birthplace of *Sturm und Drang*, visit to the University Palace, to the Schweitzer archives in the National University Library)
- On the spot: text readings and discussion (fragments by Schweitzer and Goethe on Strasbourg)

### Monday (10th of July)

- Lecture: *The mixed influence of Goethe and Nietzsche* (Nalin Ranasinghe)
- Lecture: *Reverence for life: Contributions from Schweitzer and Goethe for environmental ethics in the present Brazilian scene* (Liliane Lins; Fernando Carvalho).
- Paper presentations followed by text-readings and discussions
- Visit of Schweitzer's church and organ; a Schweitzer-walk in the mountains

### Tuesday (11th of July)

- Excursion to the anthroposophical "sanctuary" the *Goetheanum* in Dornach (Switzerland)
- Lectures and text-reading on the spot

### Wednesday (12th of July)

- Paper presentations and text-readings.
- Concluding testimonies and discussion: The practical implications of Schweitzer's ethics and of Goethe's inspiration for today (Jan-Helge Solbakk; Hines Mabika)
- Festive Diner

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## Practical information

### **Deadlines**

Papers : please send in a first draft of your contribution (even schematic) before the **15<sup>th</sup> of May 2017**.

Registration deadline for all participants : **15<sup>th</sup> of May 2017** (at this date an advance of € 150 is due ; If the participant cancels his coming less than 2 weeks before the start of the summer school, the deposit of 150 euros will be retained by the AISL.)

### **Lodging and Participation Fees**

Fee includes all lunches, dinners and accommodation with the exception of restaurant visit during excursions.

Local travel costs and entrance fees are *not* included.

Price (students): € 500

Price (others): € 600

Each participant is responsible for her or his own insurance.

### **For more information**

Mrs. Jenny Litzelmann (practical organization) – [diffusion.gunsbach@schweitzer.org](mailto:diffusion.gunsbach@schweitzer.org)

Dr. Chris Doude van Troostwijk (program and papers) – [promontoire@orange.fr](mailto:promontoire@orange.fr)

### **Scientific Board**

Prof. Dr. Predrag Cicovacki (College of the Holy Cross, Worcester USA)

Dr. Chris Doude van Troostwijk (LSR&S, Luxembourg, University of Strasbourg, France)

Prof. Dr. Liliane Linz (Bahiana School of Medicine and Public Health, Brazil)

Dr. Hines Mabika (University of Bern, Switzerland)

Prof. Dr. Jan Helge Solbakk (University of Oslo, Norway, UNESCO)

### **Partners of the Fourth International Albert Schweitzer Summer School**

Faculty of Protestant Theology in Strasbourg

Luxembourg School of Religion & Society

Federal University of Bahia



Albert Schweitzer House (Gunsbach)

**Fourth International Albert Schweitzer Summer School at Gunsbach (Alsace, France)**

**Application Form**

**Personal details**

**Name :**

**Academic Position :**

**Professional Institution :**

**Home Address :**

**Professional Address :**

**E-mail :**

**Mobile phone :** + \_\_\_\_\_ *Will your mobile phone number work in Europe ? Yes / No*

**Meal Preferences :** No specific preferences / Preference (religion, allergies, vegetarian...) :

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**Accommodation :** Single room only / double room if necessary / preference for a double room with

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