

Awardee: John M. Spalek
Expert for Exile Studies

For almost forty years, John M. Spalek has tirelessly worked to keep the memory of German-speaking exiles to the United States between 1933 and 1945 alive. He not only wrote a number of standard works on exile literature, but, with a detective's instinct, also saved the estates of over 200 scientists, publicists, writers and artists who emigrated to the United States, thus preserving countless irreplaceable testimonies to German intellectual history. His unique dedication to exile studies is being honoured with the Goethe Medal.

John M. Spalek was born in Warsaw in 1928. He emigrated to New York on his 21st birthday. In the 1970s, Spalek acquired a doctorate in German literature from Stanford University and began teaching at University of Southern California in Los Angeles. This brought him to a city that had become the most important refuge for many prominent German and Austrian exiles during and after the Second World War, where he quickly came into contact with the exile community. During his work on a biography of the exiled writer Ernst Toller, Spalek also began focussing his research on German exile literature and laid the cornerstone for his remarkable academic life's work. John Spalek wrote a number of handbooks, catalogues and bibliographies thus creating the precondition for systematic study of the forced intellectual transfer from the National Socialists' sphere of control to the United States.

In addition to his research, John Spalek tirelessly travelled throughout America, combing through dusty attics and basements in his search for estates to view and archive. The correspondences between Thomas Mann and Hedwig Rossi, George Grosz and Hermann Borchardt as well as Soma Morgenstern and Stefan Zweig and manuscripts, photographs, telegrams and sketches by luminaries such as the author Joseph Roth and the sociologists Joseph and Alice Maier – the list of treasures unearthed by John Spalek is a long one. In the 1970s he established archives at the State University of New York in Albany for the extensive inventory that he had saved from obscurity during his research travels.

John Spalek also made a major contribution to the exile archives of the German National Library in Frankfurt am Main – at first as academic adviser and from the mid-1990s quite tangibly in the procurement of estates. Between December 1995 and December 2009 he turned over to the national archives 89 legacies of persons who emigrated to the United States including writers Soma Morgenstern, Hermann Borchardt, Wilhelm Speyer and Gina Kaus, chemist Rosemarie Ostwald, philosopher Ernst Moritz Manasse and the archives of the New York Jewish-German weekly newspaper *aufbau*.

Tribute speaker: Klaus G. Saur

Klaus Saur and John Spalek have worked together for many years: Spalek's first academic work to be published by the K.G. Saur Verlag was issued in 1976 and the Munich house published seven of Spalek's books in total. Saur was born in Pullach near Munich in 1941. Following his training in the book trade and publishing, he joined his father's publishing house as registered manager. From 1964, the company had focussed on publishing works concerning bibliology and librarianship, documentation and information, journalism and higher education. In 1977 Klaus Saur edited the *Marburger Index* and in 1982 he launched the Deutsche Biographische Archiv (DBA). In 2004 he became a member of the advisory board of the academic Berlin publishing house Walter de Gruyter and in 2005 its managing partner. De Gruyter took over the K.G. Saur Verlag in 2006, making it one of Europe's largest publishing houses in the field of the humanities. Klaus Saur has received a number of awards such as the Federal Cross of Merit on ribbon (1994), the silver *Bene merenti* medal of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences and Humanities (1997), the Helmut Sontag Prize of the Deutscher Bibliotheksverband (1999) and the Saxon and Bavarian Orders of Merit (both in 2002).