

This year's focal theme of the Göteborg Book Fair that ran from 22 to 25 September, was literature from Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Therefore, the Swedish umbrella association of literary societies, DELS, had the magnificent idea to initiate a cooperation with its German counterpart, the ALG (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Literarischer Gesellschaften und Gedenkstätten / Association of Literary Societies and Museums).

Arriving at the stand of DELS, I was very happy to meet again the association's chairman Bo Malmsten, whom I first got to know on the occasion of the European Workshop organised by the ALG in 2009, and I was really impressed by the warm welcome by all the association's staff members.

A first look around showed that about 20 members of DELS have their own stands at the Fair – DELS is present with the association's quarterly *Parnass*. The stands are located around a large stage highlighted in the Hall plan of the Fair as "De Litterära Sällskapens Scen". Here, during the four days of the Book Fair some 56 miniseminars took place, giving the member societies of DELS the opportunity to present their work and to introduce a great variety of topics. This could be an interesting suggestion for the ALG in respect of our annual appearance at the Leipzig Book Fair.

On Saturday afternoon, a Swedish-German seminar took place, moderated by Catharina Söderbergh, editor of *Parnass*. Chairman Bo Malmsten and I talked about crucial questions for literary societies: the importance of these societies for the classics, how to recruit new (and particularly young) members, the opportunities of international cooperation etc. Several members of individual societies joined in the discussion. It was shown that the challenges literary societies are confronted with, are similar in both countries – and all over Europe.

I was very impressed by the friendly and open atmosphere at the Book Fair, but first of all by the overwhelming hospitality of the DELS staff and by their professionalism. Meeting the Swedish colleagues and sharing ideas was a very inspiring experience that I will pass on to the ALG. We are most grateful for the invitation and would like very much to continue the close cooperation with the DELS!

Gesa Schubert
ALG European project

Website ALG: www.alg.de

Website European project: <http://literaryheritage.culturebase.org/>