

Classical Weimar

Weimar is a city in Germany. It is located in the Bundesland of Thuringia (German: Thüringen), north of the Thüringer Wald, east of Erfurt, and southwest of Halle and Leipzig. Its current population is approximately 64,000. The oldest record of the city dates from the year 899. Weimar was the capital of the Duchy (after 1815 the Grand Duchy) of Saxe-Weimar (German Sachsen-Weimar). The city also gives its name to the Weimar Republic.

Weimar is one of the great cultural sites of Europe, having been home to such luminaries as Bach, Goethe, Schiller, and Herder; and in music the piano virtuosi Hummel (a pupil of Mozart) and Liszt. It has been a site of pilgrimage for the German intelligentsia since Goethe first moved to Weimar in the late 18th century. The tombs of Goethe and Schiller as well as their archives, may be found in the city. It is around the city of Weimar that Goethe's famous 1809 *Elective Affinities* is based. The period in German history from 1919-1933 is commonly referred to as the Weimar Republic, as the Republic's constitution was drafted here because the capital, Berlin, with its street rioting after the 1918 German Revolution, was considered too dangerous for the National Assembly to convene there. Weimar was, beside Dessau, the center of the Bauhaus movement. The city houses art galleries, museums and the German national theatre. The Bauhaus University and the Liszt School of Music Weimar attracted many students, specializing in media and design, architecture, civil engineering and music, to Weimar.

During World War II, there was a concentration camp near Weimar, at Buchenwald, a little wood that Goethe had loved to frequent only 8 kilometers from the city center. More than 55,000 prisoners entered the gates bearing the mottos "Jedem das Seine" ("to each his due") and "Recht oder Unrecht—Mein Vaterland" ("right or wrong—my fatherland"). [citation needed] The Buchenwald concentration camp provided slave labour for local industry.

The European Council of Ministers selected the city as a European Capital of Culture for 1999. On September 3, 2004, a fire broke out at the Duchess Anna Amalia Library. The library contains a 13,000-volume collection including Goethe's masterpiece *Faust*, in addition to a music collection of the Duchess. An authentic Lutheran Bible from 1534 was saved from the fire. The damage stretched into the millions of dollars. The number of books in this historic library exceeded 1,000,000, of which 40,000 to 50,000 were destroyed past recovery. The library, which dates back to 1691, belongs to UNESCO world heritage, and is one of the oldest public libraries in Europe. The fire, with its destruction of much historical literature, amounts to a huge cultural loss for Germany, Europe, and indeed the world. A number of books were shock-frozen in the city of Leipzig to save them from rotting.

Source: -- Wikipedia [<http://www.wikipedia.org>]