

WELCOME

Prof. Dr. Nikolaus Fiebiger
President, University Erlangen-Nürnberg

Mr. Mayor, Dear Colleague, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen -

On behalf of the Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, I welcome you here in Bamberg. Very special greetings go to our guests from abroad.

The fact that presidents of two universities welcome you, illustrates the unusual situation in Bamberg. The Remeis-Observatory is part of the Friedrich-Alexander-Universität and belonged to this University already before the new University in Bamberg was founded; and this has remained so until today.

The University Erlangen-Nürnberg is a classical German university with a Faculty of Theology, Law, Medicine, Humanities, Natural Science, and Economy. Fifteen years ago - and this is something new in Germany - a Technical Faculty was incorporated, which now has more than 3.000 students. This has been an effort to fill a gap that existed in a few areas between universities and technical colleges in the courses offered. We can now say that this experiment has been successful.

We know, of course, that the Remeis-Observatory with its experimental facilities, is today of no great significance in astronomical research. Astronomy needs international cooperation and a great amount of sophisticated, and consequently, expensive instruments which cannot be provided by a single university. But we can and want to be a place where astrophysics is practiced and where young people can get an education in this subject. Although the appropriate experimental observations are carried out at the large national and international centers, the preparation and evaluation of these experiments still have to take place at the university.

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Z. Kopal and J. Rahe (eds.), Binary and Multiple Stars as Tracers of Stellar Evolution, xxiii-xxiv.
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Frankonia boasts a great son in astronomy: a few years ago, we celebrated the 500th anniversary of the birth of Regiomontanus who was born in Königsberg, Haßberge, and whose computational tables were used not only by Copernicus in his work but also by Columbus in his voyage of discovery to America.

I wish the Bamberg conference a good start and productive discussions. In my opinion, no other city could offer a more suitable frame than Bamberg and I hope that in the course of your meeting you will also have the chance to see a few of the historical places.