



Frankfurt Book Fair 2018

Frankfurt am Main, Germany, October 10 - 14, 2018

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 English: Catriona Valenta

This was my first time to experience the entire Book Fair; until this year, I had only attended for one day—either Saturday or Sunday, but this time I was there for the whole four days. Of course, I had reservations as whether I could make it through that many days of getting up early and continuing until 18:30 in the evening. But actually, it was not bad at all, but rather the opposite. Every single day was inspiring.

It is a very different experience from that of a book table on the street where one encounters a lot of rejection and very few stop to take a look. At the Book Fair, generally everyone is open and interested. And additionally, there are many opportunities to engage in conversation with the other exhibitors, and to make new friendships which deepen and positively improve through further meetings in subsequent years. Beate told me of how a Christian stand which had been very hostile in the past now treated us sympathetically as old friends.

The people there are mostly of a high-caliber and although they know the so-called Moon sect of the past, or today's Family Federation, they are not negative but rather are interested and open for information. Thus, for example, a woman remarked: „In my kindergarten there are children from the Moon sect; I really must read this biography.“ And even the mountaineer Reinhold Messner came by and accepted an information bag containing the biography. Several Protestant and Catholic theologians who are responsible for matters of world-view, professors and teachers showed great interest and intentionally took much of our material with them.

Also, an Archbishop from South Africa was very impressed and so moved by Father's biography that he would like to participate in the African Summit in Cape Town in November. He came a second time to our stand to confirm that he really would receive an invitation. Another bishop from Georgia absolutely wanted a copy of the World Scripture. The first secretary of the ambassador of the Sultan of Oman in Berlin was very open and showed an interest in the World-Tolerance Summit to be held in Dubai in November 2018.

Essentially, everyone who helped at the stand has an equally long list of such encounters. The helpers were: Beate Ogrizek, Gudrun Mobo, Laureen Mobo, Matthew Marsh, Jens Fernandez and me. On Saturday, Michael Balcomb and David Hanna and his wife visited the stand. Michael voiced the opinion that the stand for the Fair in 2019 should be a third bigger, i.e. 12m², so that also American and French publications can be exhibited. On Sunday, we were visited by Jürgen Kirchberger and Mr. Saidi, an Ambassador for Peace and artist from Stuttgart. He has painted words from Father Moon in Arabic calligraphy, which has been published in form of a book. Both helped us to disassemble the stand at the end of the exhibition.

I can only continue to emphasize: a stand at the Book Fair is one of the best tools to improve our image and to make a positive influence in society. We distributed 1100 copies of the biography but had to be restrained or we would not have had enough to last until the end of the Fair. For next year, I intend to make a plug for sponsors for the biography. Perhaps we could take up an extra collection for this purpose.