Mollweide, Karl Brandan | Encyclopedia.com

(*b*. Wolfenbüttel, Germany, 3 February 1774; *d*. Leipzig, Germany, 10 March 1825)

astronomy, mathematics.

Mollweide graduated from the University of Halle, then became a teacher of mathematics in the Pädagogium of the Franckesche Stiftung there. In 1811 he was appointed to a position at Leipzig University, where he worked in the astronomical observatory that had been established in the old castle of Pleissenburg; the post carried with it the title of professor, and the following year he was made full professor of astronomy. In 1814 Mollweide was appointed to the chair of mathematics, one of the old and privileged university posts that carried with it the right to become dean or rector; he was twice dean during his eleven-year tenure at Leipzig.

Mollweide's two professorships left him little time to make astronomical observations—during term he usually gave four courses that met for fourteen to sixteen hours weekly. In his astronomy courses he emphasized the fixing of stellar positions, although he also treated the other branches of the subject; his mathematical courses comprised arithmetic, algebra, analysis, stereometry, trigonometry, analytical geometry, conics, and the theory of probability. He nevertheless was able to publish a number of scientific works; some of them represented his own researches, others were editions of standard authors and logarithmic tables.

Certain trigonometrical formulas and a conformal map projection are named for Mollweide. He is also known for his youthful dispute with Goethe over the latter's *Farbenlehre*, in which he defended the Newtonian theory of colors that Goethe was never able to accept.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A more complete list of Mollweide's writings is in Poggendorff, II, cols. 180–181. They include "Beweis dass die Bonne'sche Entwerfungsart die Länder ihrem Flächeninhalt auf der Kugel gemäss darstellt," in *Monat–liche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd– und Him– melskunde*, **13** (1806); "Analytische Theorie der stereographische Projektion," *ibid*., **14** (1806); "Einige Projektionsarten der sphäroidischen Erde," *ibid*., **16** (1807); *Prüfung der Farbenlehre des Herrn von Göthe und Verteidigung des Newtonschen Systems gegen dieselbe* (Halle, 1810); *Darstellungen der optischen Irrtümer in Herrm von Göthes Farbenlehre* (Halle, 1811); *Commentatio mathematico-philologica* (Leipzig, 1813); *Kurzgefasste Beschreibung der künstliche Erd and Himmelskugel*…(Leipzig, 1818); Multiplex et continnus seriorum transformation exemplo quodem illustratur (Leipzig, 1820); and *Formula valorem praesentem pensionum annuarum comptandi recognitio et disputatio* (Leipzig, 1823).

A short biography of Mollweide by Siegmund Günther is in *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*, XXII (Leipzig, 1885),151–154.

H.-Christ. Freiesleben