

BULLETIN

ISSUE 35

FALL 2004

CONTENTS

PREFACE

FEATURES

Reflecting on the Past, Envisioning the Future: Perspectives for  
German-Jewish Studies 11  
*Liliane Weissberg*

New Perspectives in German-Jewish Studies: Toward a Diasporic  
and Global Perspective 33  
*Jeffrey Peck*

Immigrant Religion and the Republic: German Catholics in  
Nineteenth-Century America 43  
*Kathleen Neils Conzen*

Landscape and *Landschaft* 57  
*Denis Cosgrove*

Emplacing Memory Through the City: The New Berlin 73  
*Karen E. Till*

HELMUT SCHMIDT PRIZE

The Vulnerability of Globalization  
Helmut Schmidt Prize Lecture 85  
*Harold James*

GHI RESEARCH

Competing Modernities: Germany and the United States, 1890 to  
the Present 97  
*Christof Mauch and Kiran Patel*

Natural Disasters in Transatlantic Perspective: River Floods in  
German and U.S. History 99  
*Uwe Lübken and Christof Mauch*

## REPORTS ON CONFERENCES, SYMPOSIA, SEMINARS

- Reconstituting Public Realms: Archivists, Librarians, and Journalists in Postwar Germany 113  
*Astrid M. Eckert*
- The Welfare State: Past, Present, and Future in Transatlantic Perspective 119  
*Dirk Schumann*
- The Spatial Turn in History 123  
*Thomas Zeller*
- Natural Disasters and Cultural Strategies: Responses to Catastrophe in Global Perspective 125  
*Christof Mauch*
- Pietism in Two Worlds: Transmissions of Dissent in Germany and North America, 1680–1820 133  
*Jonathan Strom*
- Taxation, State, and Civil Society in Germany and the United States, 1750–1950 140  
*Alexander Nützenadel*
- Toward a Biographical Turn? Biography in Modern Historiography—Modern Historiography in Biography 147  
*Simone Lässig*
- Criminal Justice in Times of Political Crisis: Central Europe, 1920–1950 156  
*Richard F. Wetzell*
- A Mighty Fortress: A New History of the German People* 157  
*Frank Wagner*
- Civil Society, the Public Sphere, and Popular Politics in the Rhineland, 1800–1848: Mid-Atlantic German History Seminar 159  
*Marion Deshmukh*
- German History in the Short Nineteenth Century, 1790–1890: Tenth Transatlantic Doctoral Seminar in German History 161  
*Richard F. Wetzell*
- War and the Environment: Contexts and Consequences of Military Destruction in the Modern Age 167  
*Charles Closmann and Christof Mauch*
- The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War 172  
*David Lazar*

Beyond Anti-Semitism and Philo-Semitism: Searching for Normality in German-Jewish Relations <i>Simone Lässig</i>	175
First International Dialogue between Young Germans and Young American-Jewish Leaders <i>Anne Lümers</i>	177
The Origins of Green Parties in Global Perspective <i>Frank Zelko</i>	179
Environment, Culture, Politics: Transatlantic Perspectives Young Scholars Forum <i>Charles Closmann</i>	184
Archival Summer Seminar in Germany 2004 <i>Astrid M. Eckert</i>	190
Environmental History and the Oceans <i>Frank Zelko</i>	194
Alexander von Humboldt and North America <i>Andreas W. Daum</i>	200
Screening of <i>In the Shadow of Power</i> <i>Gerald Livingston</i>	207
Historical Research and Internationalization: The Historical Profession at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century <i>Philipp Gassert</i>	208
GHI Fellows Seminars, Spring and Summer 2004 <i>Dirk Schumann</i>	212
<b>ANNOUNCEMENTS:</b>	
<b>PRIZES, SEMINARS, FELLOWSHIPS, INTERNSHIPS</b>	
Fritz Stern Dissertation Prize	215
Transatlantic Doctoral Seminar 2005	216
Archival Summer Seminar in Germany	217
Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships	218
Kade-Heideking Fellowship	219
Thyssen-Heideking Fellowship	219
Internships	220

## NEWS

### In memoriam

Carola Wessel (1964–2004) 221

Hermann-Josef Rupieper (1942–2004) 221

Wolfgang Mommsen (1930–2004) 222

GHI Email List 222

Research Fellows Win Historikerverband Prizes 223

Helmut Schmidt Prize 223

Bucerius Archives Seminar 223

Robert Bosch Foundation Project “Competing Modernities” 224

German Unification Symposium 224

Breuninger Fellowship 225

German History in Documents and Images 225

Library Report 225

New Publications 226

Fellowship Recipients 228

Internship Recipients 229

Staff Changes 230

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall 2004 Lecture Series 233

GHI Events 2004–05 234

GHI PUBLICATIONS 237

## PREFACE

---

The feature articles in this issue of the *Bulletin* reflect both long-standing interests of the GHI and new directions in its research program. German-Jewish history and German migration to North America were the subjects of several of the earliest conferences the GHI organized. Two new collaborative initiatives give renewed prominence to these fields. The first joint lecture organized by the Leo Baeck Institute and the GHI served as the occasion for two penetrating assessments of contemporary studies of Jewish life in Germany. In her lecture “Reflecting on the Past, Envisioning the Future,” Liliane Weissberg sets recent German fascination with Judaism and the Jewish past within a tradition of scholarship initiated by Moses Mendelssohn. Jeffrey Peck, in his comment on Weissberg’s survey, calls attention to the central role of recent immigration in transforming the Jewish community in Germany, and suggests ways in which global migration is transforming notions of identity.

Migration and identity in an earlier era was the subject of the first Edmund Spevack Memorial Lecture, sponsored by the GHI and Harvard University. Speaking at Harvard’s Adams House, where Spevack (1963–2001) had resided as an undergraduate, Kathleen Neils Conzen examined the shaping of a distinctive German Catholic “ethno-religious subculture” in the United States during the nineteenth century. Conzen’s lecture was a fitting tribute to a scholar whose too brief career was devoted to explicating the reciprocal influences Germany and the United States have exercised upon one another over the past two centuries; the GHI is pleased to publish the lecture here for a broader audience.

The essays by Denis Cosgrove and Karen Till, originally presented at a symposium on the “spatial turn” in history, reflect the GHI’s engagement with the history of the environment. Historians have come to recognize the importance of conceptions and perceptions of space in humanity’s interactions with its surroundings. They have been guided in no small part by their colleagues in the field of geography. Geographers have taken a variety of approaches to exploring the experience of space, as the two essays published here demonstrate. Cosgrove ranges widely in both time and space in tracing changes in the meanings of the terms “landscape” and *Landschaft* and the shifting relationships between the two. Till, by contrast, focuses on one city and a relatively short period of time—Berlin in the decade and a half since German unification—to analyze the interconnections between place and memory.

A special feature of this issue of the *Bulletin* is the thought-provoking discussion of globalization and its critics that Harold James presented at the GHI when he accepted the first Helmut Schmidt Prize in German-American Economic History. The prize was established by the German business community in the United States in cooperation with the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany. As Knut Borchardt of the University of Munich noted in his laudation, James shares with the prize's namesake a great sensitivity to the connections between political and economic weakness. That sensitivity is evident in James's many writings on the history of modern Germany and of the international economy, and it is manifest, too, in his consideration here of political circumstances and economic vulnerability in the wake of the September 11 terror attacks.

In the "GHI Research" section of this issue of the *Bulletin*, we report on two recently launched projects. A group of two dozen German and American scholars will be joining forces under the aegis of the GHI's "Competing Modernities" initiative to explore a century of relentless change in Germany and the United States. Whether as rivals, enemies, or partners, the two countries have displayed a fascinating mix of deep-rooted similarities and fundamental differences since taking their places as major political and economic powers on the international stage after around 1870. The participants in "Competing Modernities" will work in pairs, each of which will examine a broad aspect of the two nations' histories in order to produce a systematic comparison of national histories that will shed light on what might be considered most characteristic of each. The GHI is grateful to the Robert Bosch Foundation for a generous grant that has made this project possible. We would also like to thank the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Foundation) for its support of the study "National Disasters in Transatlantic Perspective: River Floods in German and U.S. History." Taking a single form of natural disaster as its focus, this project will examine the social responses to emergency situations in the two countries and the development of a distinctive "culture of catastrophe" in each.

News of the GHI and its staff usually appears in the final pages of the *Bulletin*, but two related news items deserve special mention. As this issue was about to go to press, two GHI research fellows were honored for their outstanding scholarly achievements by Germany's leading historical association, the Verband der Historiker und Historikerinnen Deutschlands, at its annual meeting. Simone Lässig was awarded one of the Verband's biennial prizes for the two best *Habilitationsschriften* in the field of history for her study *Jüdische Wege ins Bürgertum: Kulturelles Kapital und sozialer Aufstieg im 19. Jahrhundert* (Jewish Paths to the Middle Class: Cultural Capital and Social Advancement in the Nineteenth Century).

Astrid M. Eckert received the Verband's biennial Hedwig Hintze Prize for the best history dissertation for her *Kampf um die Akten: Die Westalliierten und die Rückgabe von deutschem Archivgut nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (The Battle for the Files: The Western Allies and the Return of German Archives after the Second World War). My GHI colleagues and I join in congratulating Simone and Astrid for this well-deserved recognition.

*Christof Mauch*  
Director

# FEATURES

---

## REFLECTING ON THE PAST, ENVISIONING THE FUTURE: PERSPECTIVES FOR GERMAN-JEWISH STUDIES

*Joint Lecture of the Leo Baeck Institute (New York) and the GHI  
October 16, 2003*

**Liliane Weissberg**  
*University of Pennsylvania*

### I.

On July 24, 2003, the German weekly *Die Zeit* published an article on Jewish culture in Germany, entitled in Yiddish “Der auserwählte Folk” (The Chosen People). The article concerned itself with Klezmer music, here described as the celebratory music of Eastern European Jews:

Another accordion, that would just be too much. Three can be heard already, in addition to five clarinets, and there are two violins as well. This crowd has more than a dozen players, and they jam quite loudly while drinking apple juice and beer, and once in a while, a violin or a trombone is heard, a player jumps into the middle of this group and produces a solo of his own. Another accordion, one deems, would result in a contrapuntal effect; another bass fiddle would destroy the musical framework. But then, a bass comes weaving into the room, and curiously enough, it works: the music continues. For each additional player added, the others do not even have to interrupt the piece.

Thomas Gross, the author of this essay, concludes that “[o]ne cannot accuse the people at this “Klezmer-*Stammtisch*” of lacking a sense of fundamental democracy, or a joy in playing.”<sup>1</sup> Among the disembodied instruments—some accordions, clarinets, violins, trombones, basses—the journalist finds players who would appreciate a sense of political democracy. This music, brought forth by a chaotic mix of instruments, a doubling and tripling of keys, and carried by much improvisation, may be the sign of a new Germany.

Berlin, the old and new German capital at the country’s new eastern border, has become a capital of Klezmer music as well. While Poland had



moved westwards in a territorial shift after World War II, Berlin, now located a mere half an hour by car from the Polish border, has found its place not so much in a Central Europe of the past, but in a new Eastern Europe, one that would celebrate its former, now vanished shtetls in the courtyards of a post-industrial German metropolis. At the same time, Berlin may not be unique—the Klezmer scene described may be distinctive, but ultimately not much different, perhaps, from the music played in the outskirts of Polish Kracow today. The description of a thriving musical scene evokes haunting images from the past. The reader envisions a resurrected Jewish population, one that does not mourn the dead, but celebrates its presence. The music seems to evoke the memory of an idyllic, life-affirming past, one that none of these people had experienced. But these musicians are no threatening Jews, no members of any world conspiracy, but simply members of a chaotic but stable and fundamentally democratic organization. We can rest assured: These are merely Jews at play.

A couple of paragraphs further into the *Zeit* article, however, the reader realizes that her assumptions have been wrong. Not Berlin's Jews are celebrating their chosenness here, but young Germans have become the new "auserwählte Folk." Musicians and Klezmer fans hold names such as Carsten Schelp or Heiko Lehmann, and they are reviving tunes that have been unknown to Berlin's gentile population, until fairly recently at least. Now, they are embraced with gusto, by the musicians and their audience alike. Klezmer seems to transcend the simple demands of fashion. Those young Germans, performing in Berlin's Hackesche Höfe or its former Scheunenviertel, a section of town that was populated by poor Eastern European immigrants before the war, are not just playing music. They are playing Jews. This role play has become very successful, and gives apparent satisfaction to actors and listeners alike, many of them tourists visiting the German capital, who encounter this phenomenon for the first time and wonder what it is that they encounter here. And while Klezmer music had previously been alien to any German-Jewish experience, it has come to identify Jewish culture—indeed, much more so than the aspirations of assimilating German Jews. Oddities abound. An event called "Klezmer as in Herder's time" was announced as the entertainment program for a conference celebrating the two-hundredth anniversary of the birth of the German philosopher and Protestant theologian Johann Gottfried Herder in Weimar in November 2003. It was sponsored by the city's Kulturamt and the Protestant Academy of Thuringia in a place that was largely deprived of a Jewish population in Herder's time, the eighteenth century.

Thus, we encounter a peculiar paradox. Jewish culture, we must suppose, can exist without Jews, and once the question of "authenticity"

is suspended, we may suggest the same for Jewish Studies—not necessarily by denying it a Jewish subject, but the need for Jewish agency. Indeed, if one looked at the many Jewish Studies departments that have sprung up, and received funding, at various German universities in recent years, one would discover a phenomenon not unlike that of the Klezmer musicians. In Germany, Jewish Studies is largely conducted by non-Jewish scholars. Academic degrees are, in turn, obtained by non-Jewish students, who travel to Israel or the United States to learn Hebrew, further their studies, or visit archives. Many of these Jewish Studies departments and institutes flourish in towns like Duisburg or Trier, which until very recently had no postwar Jewish communities at all. And even where both academic institutions and Jewish communities exist, the relationship between both is tenuous, to say the least. In Germany, one could argue, Jewish Studies has in recent years become a popular field for the exploration of one’s German identity via the study of an Other. But more than the study of one or the acquisition of another identity is at stake here. These departments have completed a shift that has taken place in Germany since the early nineteenth century. It is the shift from a field that should be able to give answers as to *who one is*—thus defining a person’s Jewish identity via historical reflection—to a study of a *subject matter*, which could then be made available to all (and even be made available for the purpose of a renewed, or virtual, identification). And what is true for Jewish Studies in general is true for German-Jewish Studies in particular.

## II.

Indeed, one could describe German-Jewish Studies as Jewish Studies par excellence. The Bible, or ancient rabbinical writings, cannot be called particularly German inventions, of course. But one can argue that historical scholarship about these texts emerged, as a concerted effort, in German lands first. And this historical scholarship is a fairly recent phenomenon. Until the mid-eighteenth century, a notion such as “Jewish history” would have been quite unthinkable. Even the young Moses Mendelssohn maintained that “history” could not belong to Jews. Jews did not hold any civic rights; how could they possibly view themselves as part of a historical process?

But this political argument was only part of the problem at hand. There was, above all, the Jewish religion that seemed first and foremost to define the Jews. Did not the Jewish religion proclaim the Torah’s unchangeable truth? Were the rabbis not asked to explicate the Torah, interpret its meanings, rather than concern themselves with textual changes over time? Would a historical view of religious texts be heresy?

Did not God himself give this religion to his chosen people? Instead of history, Jews had tradition, and this was both a safeguard for religion and from the world “outside.”

But already the older Mendelssohn began to waver. The religious core was unchangeable perhaps, he argued, but the chosen people, the Jews themselves, could change. They had done so in the past—leaving Jerusalem, experiencing the diaspora—and they might do so in the future. Indeed, Mendelssohn demanded that their position within the society in which they lived be changed. Jews had to call for their emancipation.

For Mendelssohn, as for many other Jews at that time, it was impossible to enter the debate about Jewish emancipation without thinking about the Jewish people in historical terms. Changes were desirable and even demanded, but while these changes seemed mostly to concern Jews as political subjects, they finally touched the religious core as well. Lazarus Bendavid would formulate this provocatively in his pamphlet on the *Characteristics of the Jews*, published in 1793. Jews had to prepare themselves for emancipation, he wrote, they had to earn it. If they wanted Prussia to change, they would have to change first. They would have to modify their religion, adjust it to their Christian surroundings, and hence become enlightened citizens.

Not every member of the Jewish community demanded major changes regarding their own religion or learning. Mendelssohn translated the Torah into German, but he still used Hebrew letters. The study of German was to be accomplished by degrees. But a discussion ensued, most vigorously led by Mendelssohn’s friends and students—the adherents of the so-called Haskalah, or Jewish Enlightenment—over whether the Jewish religion could enter the modern age at all, and still remain the same. Were religious rituals just ancient ceremonial laws to be abandoned? Could the sermons be held in German? Should prayers be translated? Suddenly, everything was possible, and open for discussion and alteration, even if nothing was possible, legally speaking, at first. And while the terms of the Jewish religion were discussed, reforms proposed, and definitions multiplied, Jews ceased to be understood as simply the adherents of a specific creed. Judaism was no longer only a religion. Germans had come to regard themselves as a “nation,” still divided into different principalities. They began to view Jews as a “nation” as well, but one without a country of their own. Jews internalized these claims and began to think of themselves as such a political unity. As one nation among others, even as a different nation from all others, Jews made a claim on history. All they had to do was to look at their “chosenness” in a slightly different way.

In 1812, Prussia finally granted a first emancipation to its Jews, who henceforth could carry legal names and become common soldiers in the Wars of Liberation. France had offered its own Jews emancipation already with the French Revolution, but after their liberation by Prussia, its Jews could turn into proper patriots and fight against France. But were these new citizens really proper Germans? And were they German Jews? Many German gentiles wondered, although they themselves were unsure as to what they were—Prussians? Bavarians? Germans? And Jews began to wonder, too, but perhaps in other ways. Were they still Jews?

Judaism, once severed from a stricter religion now defined as “orthodox,” did not seem to have much hold at all. And, with the German passport in hand, even the notion of separate nationhood seemed to dissolve. Only seven years after this emancipation verdict, and in the year of newly vigorous anti-Jewish unrest and attacks on Jews, a group of men met in Berlin to found a “Society for Culture and Science of the Jews” (Verein für Kultur und Wissenschaft der Juden). The double significance of its name—being a society *of Jews*, and *for Jews*—hints already at its goal. Historical study should provide clarification of who one was, add to one’s self-respect, and help one accept oneself as a subject that was not deprived of any agency.

Thus, Eduard Gans, Heinrich Heine, and many others met in 1819 to discuss their Jewish identity and reflect on a Jewish past. Their meetings could be seen as emergency sessions of sort, to discuss philosophical, educational, and political issues that concerned, first of all, the Society’s membership. But during these meetings, Jewish Studies as Jewish historiography was born, and named *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.<sup>2</sup> Immanuel Wolf, a founding member of the group, was eager to describe the concept of the new “science of Judaism” that they wanted to pursue: “It is self-evident that the word ‘Judaism’ is here being taken in its comprehensive sense—as the essence of all the circumstances, characteristics, and achievements of the Jews in relation to religion, philosophy, history, law, literature in general, civil life and all the affairs of man—and not in the more limited sense in which it only means the religion of the Jews.”<sup>3</sup>

But Wolf’s claim was not only to widen the field of inquiry. He insisted on studying Judaism not only over time, but as the “characteristic and independent whole” in which it survived.<sup>4</sup> Thus, Wolf did not stake out a special claim for German Jews. His goal was rather for Jews to declare themselves as a people and not just as a religion, to stake out a claim to nationhood, one that would cross state boundaries and would be able to survive the ongoing discussions on the variety of religious practices. The “Science of Judaism” was a product of Enlightenment efforts, and even permitted secularization. The orthodox Jew was the student of the Torah, the modern Jew was the student of Judaism. Wolf was eager to

explain: "The textual study of Judaism is the interpretative and critical understanding of the whole literature of the Jews, as the literature in which are defined the special world of the Jews and their unique way of life and of thought."<sup>5</sup> "The history of Judaism," on the other hand, "is the systematic description of Judaism, in the forms it has assumed at any special time, and in all its aspects," and the "philosophy of Judaism has as its object the conception of Judaism as such."<sup>6</sup> This is, of course, Kantian in its formulation, and Wolf's description hints at a universal system. Leopold Zunz, another early nineteenth-century Jewish historian, added the note of German idealism. He declared "the substance of Jewish history" to be "the inner spiritual life of the Jews."<sup>7</sup> For Zunz, a different, but equally unifying aspect, gave room for a particular interpretation of a Jewish *Weltgeist*. The Jews' "external history—their suffering—is significant only insofar as it helps to explain some characteristics of their literary creativity," he wrote.<sup>8</sup> A gentile surrounding could thus be instrumentalized, it served both an educational purpose and the development of the Jewish people. But at the same time, Zunz established a peculiar description echoed by many historians to come. Jews were not simply a people undivided, a people living across state boundaries. They were not only unified by their religion, but by their common experience of suffering. Zunz established what Salo Baron once famously described in regard to other, more recent authors, as a "lachrymose" history of the Jews.<sup>9</sup>

The early Society's journal, the *Zeitschrift*, appeared only in one year, 1822. A few years after the first meetings, the group disbanded, still arguing about its own by-laws and goals. Most of the Society's members converted to Protestantism, some out of conviction, most of them for pragmatic reasons, as they wanted to enter careers in law or in other academic fields that were closed to Jews. But their discussions not only influenced Zunz, but also Isaac Marcus Jost, perhaps the first major German-Jewish historian of the Jews. Indeed, he started to publish his history of the Jews in 1819, the year of the Society's founding, and continued to write it well into the mid-nineteenth century. "We view the Israelite people as historically unique," he wrote, not stressing the spiritual essence of the Jews as much as their existence as a folk.<sup>10</sup>

When the Science of Judaism (*Wissenschaft des Judentums*) was finally institutionalized in the second half of the nineteenth century through the founding of an Academy, the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums (with its own scholars and publications to promote its ideas), history would finally enter rabbinical thought as well. Moreover, the school produced a kind of curriculum. Religious texts were not only studied and discussed, but dated, and also dated were the rabbis who explicated these texts, the Jewish communities in which they lived, and their gentile surroundings. But in this Academy, German-Jewish Studies

did not constitute a separate field. Yes, scholars wrote about German rabbinical scholars or German-Jewish communities. But the news about communities in Bavaria was reported alongside reflections on former communities in Spain, or the meaning of Aramaic words. Like Wolf before him, Abraham Geiger, who taught at the new institution, followed the tripartite distinction of philological, historical, and philosophical aspects of Jewish Studies. Geiger changed the borderlines of these three areas slightly. Literature and culture were now situated in the realm of history, while philology would stand alone and constitute a field in itself.<sup>11</sup> By the time Heinrich Graetz penned his *History of the Jews*, published in eleven volumes between 1853 and 1876, history reigned not only as an instrument of analysis, but as the *sine qua non*. Graetz's history was the first comprehensive, multi-volume history of the Jews ever to be written—those by Simon Dubnow and Salo Baron would follow in due course. "Judaism can be understood only through its history," Graetz would write, and historical study thus surpassed the study of religion in importance.<sup>12</sup>

Graetz's history of the Jews earned enormous popularity as well as scholarly interest, and established three characteristics for Jewish study that held firm for years to come. While Jewish history was perhaps no longer part of the history of the spirit, for Graetz it was *Geistesgeschichte*, intellectual history, nevertheless. It was also a history of suffering, a *Leidensgeschichte*, expressed by the experiences of the Jewish diaspora. "This is the eighteenth hundred-year era of the Diaspora, of unprecedented suffering, of uninterrupted martyrdom without parallel in world history," Graetz stated, hardly imagining the events of the twentieth century that lay ahead.<sup>13</sup> Like his predecessors, Graetz was eager to create a history of the Jews in its "totality."<sup>14</sup> Thus, German-Jewish history was integrated into the work's sweeping panorama of Jewish life and thought. And, considering its place in Graetz's eleven-volume oeuvre, it became nothing more than a footnote of sorts. Jews had lived in German lands since the Roman invasions of Germania, thrived in medieval communities, or carried a Germanic language, Yiddish, further East. Jews wrote in and studied German at least since the mid-eighteenth century; many of them had thrived economically and professionally in Germany and Austria since the emancipation. But could this compare to a history that was measured in millennia? Moreover, one question had not yet been asked: Were German Jews a subject to be studied in and of themselves?

In 1898, Adolf Kohut published an illustrated history of German Jews, less as a scholarly exercise than as a *Hausbuch für die jüdische Familie*, an uplifting work to be enjoyed at home that combined Jewish tradition with bourgeois values, comparable to the genre paintings of the time.<sup>15</sup> Scholars such as Ludwig Geiger posed the question whether German

Jews constituted a separate field of study cautiously, as they pursued smaller, more limited areas of inquiry. Geiger wrote about prominent German-Jewish women, for example, or Jews who admired Goethe.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, from the late nineteenth century until the Second World War, newly minted Jewish literary critics seemed to find it necessary to write about Goethe first, and often chose his work as a topic for their dissertations. Jewish philosophers declared their adherence to Kant, but touched Jewish topics quite rarely. The trajectory of acculturation was to leave the study of Judaism or Jewish matters behind. Thus, German Jews were studied, and contemporary German Jews gathered in religious, political, or social organizations. But they were not considered subjects of a separate field of study.

In the early twentieth century, many German Jews were perhaps not eager to think of themselves this way. Rather, they viewed themselves as part of other, different groups or larger visions. Those Jews who tried to assimilate would define themselves as Germans of Jewish religion, thus rejecting any claim of Jewish nationhood. Others looked to Zionism as an ideology that would integrate them into a larger Jewish population, and called upon Palestine as their destination. Gershom Scholem, for example, mentioned the Christmas celebrations in his parental home, and related how his study of Hebrew and preparation for emigration turned his understanding of himself as a “Jew” against his “German” past.<sup>17</sup>

Yes, Jews were German citizens, and many registered in Jewish communities. But we have also to consider those other venues of identification that they discovered via the reading of historical texts. There was the medieval Jewish community in Spain. Already Heine idealized the Spanish Jews, and the image of the aristocratic Sephardim became a means to express desire for another, glorious Jewish past, a bygone age of peaceful coexistence between different peoples and religions. German Jewish writers in the late nineteenth century invented stories of the Eastern shtetl, ghetto tales of a distant Eastern European land that never actually knew any ghettos. Thus, these authors promoted new mythologies for a German and Jewish reading public. Already then, those shtetls seemed idyllic, frozen in time. Writers like Ernst Bloch, Walter Benjamin, and Franz Kafka discovered the Eastern chassidim, known to many by the tales of the Baal Shem in Martin Buber’s rather free translation. But where could the German Jew be found? Scholars researched Mendelssohn’s life, or older community records, as part of their general interest in German history or Jewish history. In the early twentieth century, the answers to what a German Jew was were just too complex, and they resulted neither in an easy form of identification, nor in an easy definition of the study of a German-Jewish past. Perhaps Germany itself was too new a national construct to warrant further exploration.

### III.

The Holocaust seemed to provide both an end to Jewish life in Germany and a culmination of that history of suffering, the *Leidensgeschichte* once conceived by nineteenth-century Jewish historians. Suddenly, the early twentieth-century Jewish culture in Germany seemed to rival the Spanish Golden Age in significance, and the Holocaust offered an end to Jewish life more tragic even than the Spanish inquisition. Within the trajectory of the Jewish histories already written, moreover, German Jewry was essential to Jewish history. And thus, it was after the Second World War that the idea of German Jewry as a special "ethnos" of sorts, and a special field of study, was really born.

When the Leo Baeck Institute was founded in 1955, it set itself the goal of preserving the German-Jewish legacy, and set a specific agenda. It has helped create the definition of German-Jewish history and culture, and thus a particular field of inquiry. German Jews were defined as a people that no longer existed, and the institute viewed itself in the role of an executor of the German Jews' will, and charged with protecting their legacy. The posthumous nature of its subject of inquiry was further stressed by the Institute's location, as it was established not in Germany but in New York (London, Jerusalem), and founded by those German Jews who were lucky enough to escape.

Similar to the Institute's calling, the field of German-Jewish Studies was conceived as one that dealt with a culture that was lost. Wolf, Jost, Zunz, and Graetz had asked for the place of history within the study of Judaism. Now, German-Jewish culture itself emerged as historical, as a thing of the past. The extent to which this past was conceived as such is documented quite poignantly in one of Hannah Arendt's books. Arendt had begun to write the biography of a Jewish woman, Rahel Levin Varnhagen, in the late 1920s in Berlin. In 1933, Arendt fled Germany and completed her book in Paris. It was not published until 1957, on behalf of the Leo Baeck Institute, and in English translation. Arendt writes in her preface to the book:

The German-speaking Jews and their history are an altogether unique phenomenon; nothing comparable to it is to be found even in the other areas of Jewish assimilation. To investigate this phenomenon, which among other things found expression in a literally astonishing wealth of talent and of scientific and intellectual productivity, constitutes a historical task of the first rank, and one which, of course, can be attacked only now, after the history of the German Jews has come to an end. The present biography was written with an awareness of the doom of German Judaism (although, naturally, without any premonition of



how far the physical annihilation of the Jewish people in Europe would be carried); but at that time, shortly before Hitler's coming to power, I did not have the perspective from which to view the phenomenon as a whole. If this book is considered as a contribution to the history of the German Jews, it must be remembered that in it only one aspect of the complex problems of assimilation is treated: namely, the manner in which assimilation to the intellectual and social life of the environment works out concretely in the history of an individual's life, thus shaping a personal destiny. On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that the subject-matter is altogether historical, and that nowadays not only the history of the German Jews, but also their specific complex of problems, are a matter of the past.<sup>18</sup>

Arendt's statement shows the shift from the consideration of an individual to the exemplary for German-Jewish Studies, a field conceived by declaring its subject a posthumous one. German-Jewish Studies is here defined as *Trauerarbeit*, the work of mourning for an irrecoverable good. It is from the point of view of the present, by viewing it after its annihilation, that one would study German-Jewish life, appreciate its past existence, and theorize about its rise and decline.

Arendt's words have become emblematic of the constitution of the field. German-Jewish Studies may predate other fields of ethnic inquiry, such as research on Latinos, Blacks, or Asian American Studies in the United States. Because of its assumptions, it has largely denied itself a political presence, such as a continued fight against discrimination. Much as with any archaeological subject, the history of German Jews was concluded before its proper study could begin. Suffering was no longer part of its subjects, but moved to the side of the historians, who had to do the work of mourning. For Arendt, as for other German Jews of her generation, the task, moreover, was one of witnessing. And while the parties of guilt or innocence seemed fairly divided between Germans and Jews, both Germans and Jews were asked to come forth in testimony, but Jewish survivors in particular were given no other choice.

History as witnessing does not call for critical distance. It may not even call for historical analysis first, but for memorialization. In the case of the early descriptions of German Jews and German Jewish life, moreover, it often had an apologetic tone. Already in Arendt, the fate of German Jews not only emerges as a specific, defined area of historical reflection, but as an area of specific significance for Jews and Germans alike. The unique importance of German Jews would, moreover, turn them into the ideal subject for traditional historical writing, in which Arendt, however, took only very limited part. In their uniqueness, Ger-

man Jews could rival world leaders as important agents of events. And while Arendt remained one of the few authors to publish on German Jewish history in the fifties—even her own publisher, Klaus Piper, thought that a German audience may not have been “ready” yet for Jewish subjects<sup>19</sup>—the kings and queens of history volumes were soon rivaled by their modern-day Jewish equivalent, the Nobel prize winners, famous scientists, wise philosophers, and talented artists.

The view that German Jews were particularly talented, mostly affluent people well adjusted to German society was perpetuated in many of these biographies. This work contributed to a sense of mourning, enforced the shock of the Holocaust, and provided a certain consolation for Jews. It countered Nazi statements that Jews were nothing but vermin infecting a healthy social body by producing, for popular culture as well as school textbooks, a reverse image of the Jew. Not an understanding of Jewish religion or history was in demand, but a kind of hagiography of the Jew. The Jews in question, moreover, were always assimilated; their Jewishness had to be brought to a point of disappearance, insisted upon by others rather than by themselves. If Walter Rathenau, for example, was defined as an important personality, it was because he was a great human being first, and a Jew second. And the loss of many German Jews was to be mourned because they had been good and even patriotic Germans, not because they were good Jews. At first, the existence of a so-called German-Jewish symbiosis was hardly in doubt, but this came at the cost of utter Jewish assimilation. No Klezmer music was in vogue yet.

While reversing the racial stereotypes of the past, this early work insisted on a peculiar distinction. There was no discussion as to what Judaism was, but the labeling of Jews proceeded in largely racial terms, independent from religion or the subject’s self-understanding. In some cases, the terms of the Nazi persecution continued to supply the reasoning for that, but mostly, the racial definitions have proved to be of a peculiar longevity, even in scholarly studies. Even today, Jewish Studies institutes in Duisburg or in Potsdam are sponsoring biographical studies of persons who were Christians or of no religion and did not view themselves as Jews, but had a Jewish grandparent or a parent who was born a Jew. Thus, they not only research Jews, but search for them, and find them in rather unexpected places. Right after the war, racial terms still defined Jewish subjects, and descriptions like “Halbjuden” (partial Jew) were often used (and are, at times, still used today).

There were exceptions. Selma Stern continued her pre-war studies of the social and political status of Prussian Jews, for which she had conducted archival research before the war, collecting countless documents. Her book on German Court Jews appeared in the United States in 1950.<sup>20</sup> Jacob Katz continued to publish numerous books on the period of Jewish

emancipation in Germany and on Jews in the nineteenth century. This work was mostly done in the United States or Israel, not in Germany.

The real shift in the study of German Jews occurred much later, many years after the end of World War II. In the seventies and eighties, following the changes in historiography and the political landscape, historical writing on German Jews changed as well. Social history demanded the study of whole population groups, as well as the consideration of class. There was no longer an interest in the German-Jewish heroes of the previous generation. A group of scholars trained in the late sixties, in the time of the student revolution, questioned previous scholarly assumptions, and not only cared for Jews as victims, but for the underprivileged among the German Jews. The study of Jewish women established itself in the forefront of these socio-historical reflections, exemplified by the early work of Monika Richarz in Germany, or Marion Kaplan in the United States. A group of American women historians, including Kaplan, Atina Grossmann, and Deborah Hertz, met to discuss new terms of Jewish history. This work led to the discovery of new leading figures for the history of German political movements as well as feminist theory. Studies that were published in the United States as well as in Germany described the lives of Jewish workers, the entrance of Jews into the academic professions, and urban life in big towns as well as smaller villages. Critical theory was considered, and students of the Frankfurt School, like Micha Brumlik or Dan Diner, reconsidered Adorno and Horkheimer's *Dialectics of Enlightenment* and the experience of the Holocaust in the face of a longer view of Jewish history.

Social history was followed by local history. By the mid-1990s, most Jewish cemeteries in Germany had been amply described, and ongoing research projects in Hamburg, Duisburg, or Aachen have deciphered the inscriptions on gravestones. Books or pamphlets describing Jewish life not only in individual towns, but even in particular city quarters, were published, providing scholarly studies and tourist guides in one. Today, a reader can learn about the Jewish communities not only of towns or villages like Münster or Ichenhausen, but also of Frankfurt-Niederrad or Berlin-Steglitz. This local work was largely conducted by scholars affiliated with German universities, and much of it bears the marks of formal master's theses and dissertations.

#### IV.

But this academic work was not always written for history departments. In the 1980s, Jewish Studies established itself as a field at German universities. The older field of *Judaistik*, often part of Near Eastern Studies departments, would continue in places such as the Free University Berlin,

where chairs like Peter Schäfer (who recently moved to Princeton) have led the field to international prominence. *Judaistik* centers on the study of Hebrew, the Hebrew Bible, and the rabbinical tradition. It combines philological with historical work and the consideration of religious tradition. Most programs of *Judaistik* concentrate on the study of ancient and medieval Jewry, and *Judaistik's* representatives find their way only slowly and gropingly to the study of Jewish life in modern times. *Jüdische Studien*, in contrast, would view itself as a largely historical field, not necessarily wedded to the study of Hebrew or other Jewish languages, like Yiddish or Ladino, or the study of ancient texts. Instead, *Jüdische Studien* concentrates on Jewish culture, which would include the study of acculturated or assimilated Jews. Most programs of *Jüdische Studien* are administered by historians with a more general training in German history—such as the Moses Mendelssohn Center for European Jewish Studies in Potsdam, chaired by Julius Schoeps, or Leipzig's Simon Dubnow Institute for the study of Middle and Eastern European Jewry, chaired by Dan Diner—and they concentrate primarily on Jewish life, history, and literature since the emancipation period, the eighteenth century. Needless to say, a rivalry ensued between the departments of *Judaistik* and *Jüdische Studien*, with each denying the other's claim to serious scholarship or scholarly relevance. For representatives of *Judaistik*, *Jüdische Studien* ignores the core of Jewish language and learning. For representatives of *Jüdische Studien*, *Judaistik* has lost touch with modern Jewry and contemporary political issues.

The study of German-Jewish literature followed as a secondary field, often fighting for a place in the departments of Jewish Studies. Only a single chair in German-Jewish literature exists in Germany, and at a Technical University, namely Aachen; it is integrated into the department of German literature. But many German departments are more than willing to consider the study of German-Jewish authors. Already shortly after the war, authors like Heine or Kafka were reintroduced into the curriculum, but they were rarely studied within a religious or ethnic context.

Earlier than in Germany, the study of German-Jewish literature took hold in the United States, where it has flourished. Here, it could associate itself with a newly established interdisciplinary field called cultural studies that has tried to cross the boundaries between literature and history. Unlike the German pre-war *Kulturwissenschaften* that curiously survived in the former GDR, cultural studies does not concentrate on well-established cultural icons. It has a critical and largely leftist agenda. Similar to social history, it looks at figures of seemingly minor importance, everyday behavior, and ephemeral events. Sander Gilman's work, especially his study *Jewish Self-Hatred* of 1986, ushered in a series of works concerned with stereotypes of the Jewish body and of Jewish behavior,

and spawned new studies on anti-Semitic ideologies that would concentrate on German examples, but reach far beyond them.

The adoption of discourse theory led to the discovery of a minority discourse that added new authors to the list of already established ones. More recently, the development of post-colonial theory has led to a reconsideration of early modern German-Jewish writing (see the work by Jonathan Hess) as well as that of the twentieth century (see the work by Katja Garloff).<sup>21</sup> In general, German-Jewish Studies in the United States were more easily integrated into current research in social, literary, and cultural theory, while work done in Germany remained largely on a fact-finding mission, and was often more cautious in its approach. This reflected not only the potentially sensitive matter of studying any aspect of German Jewry after the Holocaust, seen by some as a scholarly need as well as a postwar reparation effort, but also the generally more conservative academic scene at German universities.

Until the 1980s, the study of German Jews was a relatively neglected topic at Israeli universities, and the study of the German language, an important means to access information, had long been thought of as taboo. But with the establishment of the Rosenzweig Center for the Study of German Jewry at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, a chair in Prussian-Jewish studies at Bar Ilan University in Ramat Gan, and a Center of Excellence at the Ben Gurion University in Beersheva, this has changed, largely due to German funding. In Jerusalem, work has concentrated on early twentieth-century authors, on emigrants like Else Lasker-Schüler, whose papers are housed at the Hebrew University. At Bar-Ilan, the stress is more on the research of the German-Jewish Enlightenment. Shmuel Feiner of Bar-Ilan and David Sorkin of the University of Wisconsin, are among the most important historians of Jewish life in the late eighteenth century. While Sorkin has been largely concerned with the works of Mendelssohn and other German Jews, Feiner has studied both German and Hebrew texts by German as well as Eastern European authors to provide a fuller picture of the international aspect of the Haskalah, as well as the Jewish counter-Enlightenment. The early twentieth century, in particular the Weimar Republic, as well as the time of the Emancipation, are probably by now the best, though not yet sufficiently, researched eras in German-Jewish Studies. And the recently established triangle of Germany, the United States, and Israel has been complicated by research institutes in London, Oxford, and Sussex, and a flurry of books and articles by Enzo Traverso, Jacques Le Rider, Dominique Bourel, and Ursula Isselstein, published in France and Italy.<sup>22</sup>

In the 1990s, the very structure of German-Jewish Studies has made it the prime area for work on memory, an area in which much research in cultural studies has been done. Here, it is not the question of history that

has moved into the center, but that of the memoir, the oral account, the cultural inheritance via narratives. James Young's studies of Holocaust memorials in Germany come to mind, binding them in a comparative context, but also work more closely associated with Pierre Nora's *Lieux de memoire*, a concerted effort that tried, however, to establish the cultural memory of France, and hence of a still existing population.<sup>23</sup> More attention has been paid to Jewish philosophy as well. Poststructuralist theories have led to interesting readings of texts by Mendelssohn and others, conducted by scholars like Jeffrey Librett or Peter Fenves, and an essay by Jacques Derrida on Kant and the Jews has opened up new perspectives as well.<sup>24</sup> Paul Mendes-Flohr has published work on Martin Buber, and much has recently been published on Franz Rosenzweig; Leora Batnitzky, for example, wrote on Rosenzweig's view of religion, and Eric Santner on his relationship to Freud.<sup>25</sup> Hermann Cohen's work has moved into the foreground of research through studies by Astrid Deuber-Mankowsky or the late Gillian Rose.<sup>26</sup> The question of Freud's relationship to Judaism continues to be widely discussed among historians and psychoanalysts. Jan Assmann's recent study of the figure of Moses has added to the work on cultural memory as well as that on Freud.<sup>27</sup>

Fields that have received rather little attention are in the visual arts. Biographies of German Jewish film directors and actors abound, but despite recent exhibitions of work by Moritz Daniel Oppenheim in Frankfurt and New York, or exhibits on German court Jews and Jewish artists, including German-Jewish ones, at the Jewish Museum in New York, not much has been done in the realm of the traditional arts.<sup>28</sup> German Jewish religious art needs further research, and the question of whether a secular Jewish art exists at all needs to be discussed. More work has been done on Jewish art historians, as this profession, just as psychoanalysis, has been long viewed as a particularly "Jewish" field. Thus, new studies on Ernst Gombrich or Aby Warburg, conducted by Louis Rose, Charlotte Schoell-Glass, and others, have furthered the discussion on the establishment of the academic discipline.<sup>29</sup> The recent restaging of Kurt Weill's *Eternal Road* in Chemnitz and New York has made its audience aware of a religious and secular musical tradition that is still under-researched. And, while German-Jewish studies have largely focused on two periods, the eighteenth and early twentieth centuries, the beginning and the end of the flourishing of German-Jewish culture, much work has to be done on nineteenth-century German-Jewish literature and history as well. With the exception of Glickl von Hameln, moreover, who has recently been a subject of a conference in Hamburg, and to whom Natalie Zemon Davis has dedicated a section of a book, we know little, and certainly not enough, about the Western Yiddish-speaking Jews of the medieval and early modern period.<sup>30</sup> Research on medieval manuscript and early mod-

ern book production is needed. German-Jewish Studies will have to look back beyond the period of emancipation.

## V.

That said, it is, most of all, time not only to add further areas of research, but to change the trajectory of German-Jewish studies. Let us return to Gross's article on the Klezmer groups in Berlin. As he describes the music, he also remarks on the negative reaction by the Berlin Jews. But what are they reacting against? Do they object to gentiles playing Jewish music? Do they mind the fact that Klezmer has become a privileged "Jewish" entertainment? Perhaps. But more may be at stake. Just as German Jewish Studies had defined its subject as a posthumous one, these musicians occupy a place that they would consider empty. Where there are no Jews, virtual Jewry abounds (this too has received recent scholarly attention).<sup>31</sup> But who would like to be declared non-existent or dead?

By declaring Germany free of Jews, or by granting an occasional Jew the status of a rare museum exhibit, postwar Germans were able to insist both on the prominence of a few and the invisibility of the group as a whole—something that Jews in Germany curiously both objected to and desired. Invisibility seemed to assure a safety of sorts, even if it meant that Jews in Germany belonged to the living dead. By declaring German-Jewish history to be concluded, Jewish Studies departments in Germany, too, could easily justify their indifference to the concerns of contemporary community life.

But the German Jewish community exists. In the early postwar years, its members may have preferred the status of remnants, as many thought of emigration.<sup>32</sup> With the growing immigration from the former Soviet states since 1989, the number of registered Jews has jumped from 20,000 in the 1960s to close to 100,000 today. It has now become the fastest-growing community in Europe. And although the population figures are still low, Jews have become a political force. Barely visible after the war, they first took to the streets in the 1970s in pro-Israel demonstrations. They became even more visible by turning their attention to German affairs. In 1985, a group of Jews stormed a Frankfurt theater stage to protest the production of a purportedly anti-Semitic play by Rainer Maria Fassbinder that featured a ruthless and vengeful Jewish real estate developer.<sup>33</sup> In the same year, Jews protested the visit of Ronald Reagan to Bitburg, a cemetery that includes graves of former Nazi officers, and entered political parties and city councils.<sup>34</sup> The community assumed political agency by making public declarations. Other protests, statements, and discussions followed.<sup>35</sup>

Ignatz Bubis, a former real estate developer who was thought to be the model for the main character in Fassbinder's play, led the German

Jewish community in the 1990s. Bubis proved to be anything but ruthless or vengeful. For the first time, a head of the Jewish community spoke not only on the Jewish community's behalf, but also on behalf of other minorities, like the Turkish guest workers, whose numbers had already exceeded that of the Jewish population in Germany. Thus, Bubis assumed a political role far beyond that of the leader of a religious organization. He experienced unheard-of popularity as a voice of moral concern. He was not only visible, but even discussed as a possible candidate for the German presidency. Born in a small Polish town, Bubis gave Breslau, the place of birth listed in his war-time papers, as his place of origin to confirm his own status as a German Jew.

Michel Friedman, then a member of the Jewish Central Council (Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland), went further than Bubis, by insisting on voicing his opinion on political topics beyond minority issues. His intervention was regarded as a "Jewish point of view," and he was given his own talk show, entitled *Achtung, Friedman!* (Attention: Friedman!). Because of a scandal involving his personal life, he had to leave both his prominent position in the Central Council and resign from his talk show, but he has continued as a political commentator, speaks on local networks, and works as an editor of political books for the Aufbau Verlag in Berlin, where he is under contract to publish two books of his own political interviews per year. Henryk Broder, a journalist, publishes his musings on political and cultural affairs in various newspapers, but above all in the political weekly *Der Spiegel*. His articles often concern Jews in Germany and abroad, as well as anti-Semitism. His popular website is entitled in English "Big Broder is Watching You."<sup>36</sup> Commentaries by Maxim Biller, Raphael Seligman or Michael Wolffsohn address a wider public in popular dailies; they, too, are consciously writing as Jews. All of them, although to different degrees, are eager to argue issues of ethics and moral conscience, although the role of being a country's conscience is more than difficult to maintain.

In the past decade, Jews have chosen more public professions in the media and at the universities, and have begun to call themselves German Jews, and not just Jews living in Germany. Even though they or their parents are mostly immigrants from Eastern European countries, they have cautiously begun to forge a connection to a pre-war German past. Like the Klezmer musicians, they, too, do not know much about the former shtetls, and many are still struggling with their own Jewish identity. To be a German Jew has thus become a learning process, pointing to the future. But most of the newer, younger Jews in Germany have a peculiar historical advantage. When the German government eased its immigration laws to raise its number of Jewish citizens, it invited Jews who were not affected by the traumatic experiences of the past. These



new citizens and their families did not experience the Holocaust; here no feelings of guilt or demands for reparation would connect Germans and Jews. The new Jewish population's point of negative identification would have to be the Stalin purges, which took place in another country. For them, Germany is an economic wonderland.

But with the new growth of Jewish communities, a simple fact has become more obvious still: Germany was never quite without Jews. This was finally discovered by German-Jewish Studies, too. Recent work has focused on the memoirs of Jews hidden in Germany during the war, as well as the arrival of Eastern European Jews in German Displaced Person camps. Studies written, and exhibitions curated, by Michael Brenner or Rachel Salamander have drawn attention to life in these camps, as well as to the emerging post-war Jewish communities.<sup>37</sup> The sociologist Y. Michal Bodemann has published on post-war German politics in regard to its Jewish population and on post-war Jewish life; the psychologist Kurt Grünberg has worked with experiences of survivors and published various studies describing their post-war lives.<sup>38</sup> A four-part television series written by the journalist Richard Chaim Schneider, entitled *Wir sind da* (We Are Here) was aired a couple of years ago. It told the history of post-war Jews in Germany to a wider audience; the series is meanwhile available as an audio book.<sup>39</sup>

American scholars such as Sander Gilman, Karen Remmler, Leslie Morris, and others have edited anthologies of or on post-war German-Jewish literature.<sup>40</sup> A consciously Jewish literary scene has emerged in Austria in particular, with authors such as Robert Schindel, Doron Rabinovici, or Vladimir Vertlieb.<sup>41</sup> In the 1980s, these and other scholars had concerned themselves with the literature of the past, or with the literature of survivors in exile. Now, they have begun to focus on the current social and literary scene. New topics include, for example, the comparison of Turkish and Jewish minority discourse in Germany today. At the University of Potsdam, a team of scholars has studied the acculturation patterns of recent Russian Jewish immigrants,<sup>42</sup> and many other sociological and educational studies are in progress.

It is too early to say what shape the Jewish community in Germany will take, but right now, it has become a laboratory of sorts. As in a previous century, there is discussion regarding religious diversity. The Hochschule für Jüdische Studien in Heidelberg, an institution associated with the local university but partially funded by the German Jewish Central Council since 1979, has decided to expand its offerings. It will not only train teachers of Jewish religion but, for the first time in Germany, rabbis as well. In Potsdam, a different rabbinical seminary has recently been founded, and has been named after Abraham Geiger. It will train Reform rabbis, although Reform Judaism has not yet been officially rec-

ognized by the German Jewish community at large. These religious discussions will have to be studied. Questions of multilingualism demand future research. As in the United States today, but within a different context, members of the German Jewish community are asking what it would mean to be "Jewish" today. While Jewish life in Germany may still proceed on a different path than in other European countries, it has begun to look outward, to its gentile surroundings again, and to Europe as a whole.

It is still difficult for Jewish Studies to rethink its original framework. In the 1990s, Michael Meyer edited a four-volume history of German Jews, published in English and German, which provides a counterpoint to the universal histories of the past.<sup>43</sup> It concludes, however, in 1945. Similarly, a social history of everyday life (*Alltagsleben*), edited by Marion Kaplan and published in Germany earlier this year, begins with a study of the seventeenth century, and ends in 1945.<sup>44</sup> But how should German Jewish history after 1945 be written?

Two years ago, the Leo Baeck Institute of New York established a second office in Berlin. One of the reasons was to bring its materials closer to their researchers, as most of the scholars using the archives had been Germans who traveled to New York. And again, it may not be insignificant that this office was established within a museum, the new Jewish Museum by Daniel Libeskind, which functions as a kind of Holocaust Memorial as well. But the move to Berlin also signifies more than a "return" of documents to their absent owners. It points forward to a greater integration of German Jewish Studies into German Jewish life, and to a future that nobody after World War II was able, or wanted, to imagine.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Gross, "Der Auserwählte Folk," *Die Zeit* 31 (July 24, 2003), Feuilleton, 35 (translation mine).

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Julius Carlebach, ed., *Wissenschaft des Judentums: Anfänge der Judaistik in Europa* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992).

<sup>3</sup> Immanuel Wolf, "On the Concept of a Science of Judaism," trans. Lionel E. Kochan, in Michael A. Meyer, ed., *Ideas of Jewish History* (New York: Behrman House, 1974), 143.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 157.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Salo Baron, *History and Jewish Historians* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1964), 64, 88, 96.

<sup>10</sup> Isaac Marcus Jost, "The Rigors of Jewish Historiography," trans. Michael Meyer, in Meyer, ed., *Ideas of Jewish History*, 177.

- <sup>11</sup> Abraham Geiger, "The Developing Idea of Judaism," trans. Ernst J. Schlochauer, in Meyer, ed., *Ideas of Jewish History*, 163.
- <sup>12</sup> Heinrich Graetz, "Judaism Can Be Understood Only Through Its History," trans. Noah Jonathan Jacobs, in Meyer, ed., *Ideas of Jewish History*, 219. See also Heinrich Graetz, *The Structure of Jewish History and Other Essays*, trans. Ismar Schorsch (New York: Jewish Theological Seminar of America, 1975).
- <sup>13</sup> Graetz, "Judaism," 229.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 221.
- <sup>15</sup> Adolf Kohut, *Geschichte der deutschen Juden: Ein Hausbuch für die jüdische Familie*, illustrated by Theodor Kutschmann (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag (Ges. M.B.H.), 1998–99).
- <sup>16</sup> See, for example, Ludwig Geiger, *Die deutsche Literatur und die Juden* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1910). Compare also Jacques Ehrenfreund, "Erinnerungspolitik und historisches Gedächtnis: Zur Entstehung einer deutsch-jüdischen Wissenschaft im Kaiserreich (1870–1914)," in Ulrich Wyrwa, ed., *Judentum und Historismus: Zur Entstehung der jüdischen Geschichtswissenschaft in Europa* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2003), 39–61.
- <sup>17</sup> See Gershom Scholem's autobiography, *From Berlin to Jerusalem: Memories of my Youth*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1980).
- <sup>18</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Rahel Varnhagen: The Life of a Jewess* (London: East and West Library, 1957), xii–xiii.
- <sup>19</sup> See my introduction to my critical edition of *Rahel Varnhagen: The Life of a Jewess* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 44–47.
- <sup>20</sup> Selma Stern, *The Court Jew: A Contribution to the History of the Period of Absolutism in Central Europe*, trans. Ralph Weiman (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1950).
- <sup>21</sup> Jonathan Hess, *Germans, Jews and the Claims of Modernity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002) and Katja Garloff, *Words from Abroad: Trauma and Displacement in Postwar German Jewish Writers* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, forthcoming).
- <sup>22</sup> See, for example, Enzo Traverso, *The Jews and Germany: From the "Judeo-German Symbiosis" to the Memory of Auschwitz*, trans. Daniel Weissbort (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995); Jacques Le Rider and Dominique Bourel, eds., *De Sils-Maria à Jérusalem: Nietzsche et le judaïsme, les intellectuels juifs et Nietzsche* (Paris: Cerf, 1991); Dominique Bourel, *Moses Mendelssohn et la naissance du judaïsme moderne* (Paris: Gallimard, 2004); and Ursula Isselstein, *Studien zu Rahel Varnhagen: Der Text aus meinem beleidigten Herzen* (Torino: Tirrenia stampatori, 1993).
- <sup>23</sup> See James E. Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993) and Lawrence D. Kritzman, ed., *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, 3 vols., trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).
- <sup>24</sup> Jeffrey S. Librett, *The Rhetoric of Cultural Dialogue: Jews and Germans from Moses Mendelssohn to Richard Wagner and Beyond* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); Peter Fenves, *Arresting Language: From Leibniz to Benjamin* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001). In regard to Jacques Derrida's work, see, for example, his *Schibboleth pour Paul Celan* (Paris: Galilée, 1986).
- <sup>25</sup> Paul Mendes-Flohr, *From Mysticism to Dialogue: Martin Buber's Transformation of German Social Thought* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989); Leora Batnitzky, *Idolatry and Representation: The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig Reconsidered* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Eric Santner, *On the Psychotheology of Everyday Life: Reflections on Freud and Rosenzweig* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001).
- <sup>26</sup> See Astrid Deuber-Mankowsky, *Der frühe Walter Benjamin und Hermann Cohen: Jüdische Werte, kritische Philosophie, vergängliche Erfahrung* (Berlin: Vorwerk, 2000); Gillian Rose, *Judaism and Modernity: Philosophical Essays* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1993).

- <sup>27</sup> Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997).
- <sup>28</sup> In regard to the exhibitions at the Jewish Museum in New York, see the following catalogues: Vivian B. Mann and Richard I. Cohen, eds., *From Court Jews to the Rothschilds: Art, Patronage, and Power, 1600–1800* (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1996) and Emily Bilski, ed., *Berlin Metropolis: Jews and the New Culture, 1890–1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).
- <sup>29</sup> Louis Rose, *The Survival of Images: Art Historians, Psychoanalysts, and the Ancients* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001) and Charlotte Schoell-Glass, *Aby Warburg und der Antisemitismus: Kulturwissenschaft als Geistespolitik* (Frankfurt: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1998). An English translation is forthcoming with Wayne State University Press.
- <sup>30</sup> Natalie Zemon Davis, *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth-Century Lives* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995). See also the following conference proceedings: Monika Richarz, *Die Hamburger Kauffrau Glikl: Jüdische Existenz in der frühen Neuzeit* (ser.) Hamburger Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Juden 24 (Hamburg: Christians, 2001).
- <sup>31</sup> Ruth Ellen Gruber, *Virtually Jewish: Reinventing Jewish Culture in Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).
- <sup>32</sup> See, for example, Lea Fleischmann, *Dies ist nicht mein Land: Eine Jüdin verlässt die Bundesrepublik*, with an afterword by Henryk M. Broder (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1980), or the interviews collected by Micha Brumlik et al, *Jüdisches Leben in Deutschland seit 1945* (Frankfurt am Main: Jüdischer Verlag bei Athenäum, 1986); Henryk M. Broder and Michel R. Lang, *Fremd im eigenen Land: Juden in der Bundesrepublik*, preface by Bernt Engelmann (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1979). In English translation, see Peter Sichrovsk, ed., *Strangers in Their Own Land: Young Jews in Germany and Austria Today*, trans. Jean Steinberg (New York: Basic Books, 1986).
- <sup>33</sup> See the documentation *Die Fassbinder-Kontroverse, oder, Das Ende der Schonzeit*, ed. Heiner Lichtenstein, afterword by Julius H. Schoeps (Königstein/Ts.: Athenäum, 1986).
- <sup>34</sup> See Geoffrey Hartman, ed., *Bitburg in Moral and Political Perspective* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986).
- <sup>35</sup> See, for example, Gerd Wiegel and Johannes Klotz, eds., *Geistige Brandstiftung? Die Walser-Bubis Debatte* (Cologne: PapyRossa, 1999) and Amir Eshel, *Jewish Memories, German Futures: Recent Debates in Germany about the Past* (Bloomington: Robert A. and Sandra S. Borns Jewish Studies Program, Indiana University, 2001).
- <sup>36</sup> <http://www.big-broder.de>. An anthology of Henryk Broder's texts has just appeared in English translation in Sander L. Gilman and Lilian M. Friedberg, eds., *A Jew in the New Germany*, trans. Broder Translators' Collective (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004).
- <sup>37</sup> See, for example, Michael Brenner's study and collection of interviews in Brenner, *Juden in Deutschland 1945–1950* (Munich: Beck, 1995), and Jacqueline Giere and Rachel Salamander, eds., *Ein Leben aufs neu. Das Robinson-Album: DP-Lager, Juden auf deutschem Boden 1945–1948* (Vienna: Christian Brandstätter, 1950). The latter book is also an exhibition catalogue.
- <sup>38</sup> Michal Y. Bodemann, ed., *Jews, Germans, Memory: Reconstructions of Jewish Life in Germany* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996) and *In den Wogen der Erinnerung: Jüdische Existenz in Deutschland* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2002); Kurt Grünberg, *Liebe nach Auschwitz—die zweite Generation. Jüdische Nachkommen von Überlebenden der nationalsozialistischen Judenverfolgung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und das Erleben ihrer Paarbeziehungen* (Tübingen: Edition Diskord, 2000).
- <sup>39</sup> Richard Chaim Schneider, "Wir sind da!" *Juden in Deutschland nach 1945* [sound recording] (Munich: Hörverlag, 2001). See also an accompanying volume with interviews, Schneider, ed., *Wir sind da! Die Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland von 1945 bis heute* (Berlin: Ullstein, 2000).
- <sup>40</sup> Sander Gilman and Karen Remmler, eds., *Reemerging Jewish Culture in Germany: Life and Literature since 1989* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), and Leslie Morris and

Karen Remmler, eds., *Contemporary Jewish Writing in Germany: An Anthology* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002).

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, Robert Schindel, *Gebürtig* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1992), Doron Rabinovici, *Suche nach M. Roman in zwölf Episoden* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997) and Vladimir Vertlieb, *Zwischenstationen* (Vienna: Deuticke, 1999).

<sup>42</sup> See, for example, Julius H. Schoeps, Willi Jasper, and Bernhard Vogt, eds., *Ein neues Judentum in Deutschland: Fremd- und Eigenbilder der russisch-jüdischen Einwanderer* (Potsdam: Verlag für Berlin-Brandenburg, 1999).

<sup>43</sup> Michael Meyer and Michael Brenner, eds., *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, 4 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). See also Brenner and David N. Myers, eds., *Jüdische Geschichtsschreibung heute: Themen Positionen Kontroversen* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2002)

<sup>44</sup> Marion Kaplan, ed., *Geschichte des jüdischen Alltags in Deutschland: Vom 17. Jahrhundert bis 1945*, trans. Friedrich Griese, Georgia Hanenberg, and Alice Jakubeit. This project was sponsored by the Leo Baeck Institute, New York, and an English edition is forthcoming.

## NEW PERSPECTIVES IN GERMAN-JEWISH STUDIES: TOWARD A DIASPORIC AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

*Comment on Liliane Weissberg's Lecture, October 16, 2003*

**Jeffrey M. Peck**

*Georgetown University/AICGS*

Professor Weissberg's optimistic reading of the future of German Jewish Studies is encouraging. In particular, as a scholar who writes about contemporary Jewish life since 1989, I am pleased that she does not address, to put it bluntly, just a dead people, but rather a vibrant and living community whose numbers have risen dramatically in the last decades. As we know, this surge has been caused, especially since 1989/90, by the fall of the Berlin Wall, the unification of Germany, and the collapse of the Soviet empire. Because of the popularity of Jewish topics today, as Weissberg tells us, the study of the Jews or Jewish subjects has also grown, even before the more recent historical watershed of 1989, both in the fields of *Jüdische Studien* and even *Judaistik*, primarily by non-Jews.

Indeed, academic fields should prosper because of dedication to intellectual substance rather than merely due to heritage, even if these fields in part provide "identity" for non-Jewish Germans or Jews who are searching for meaning in their lives that are necessarily fraught with the vicissitudes of history. In the recent past, especially since 1989, most of the scholarship, on minority literatures in general and on German Jewish literature in particular, has been accomplished by American scholars, largely female, whose work Professor Weissberg mentions. Perhaps worth noting as well is the fact that most of the Directors of the North American DAAD Centers for German and European Studies have been Jewish (and male), as if to attest to a Jewish investment in the institutional study of Germany in this latter case, and in the former case, an American concern with German minorities. Of course, it may come as no surprise to many that American German Studies in general is populated by a large number of Jewish scholars, a situation due, I believe, not only to intellectual, but also to generational and historical factors.

In Germany, of course, most analyses and critiques that have brought the Jewish voice into the public domain are journalistic accounts from German Jewish and almost exclusively male perspectives. Henryk M. Broder, Micha Brumlik, Rafael Seligmann, Michael Wolffsohn, and Richard Chaim Schneider among others are prominent here, as well as figures in the political sphere like the late Ignatz Bubis and now Paul Spiegel, the new President of the Central Council of Jews in Germany. Recently, talk show host and Vice President of the Central Council Michel Friedman's

criminal dealings not only forced his resignation from these high-profile posts, but also drew attention to Jews in Germany in an unfortunate manner. Clearly, Jews are subject to moral failings too, even in Germany! Professor Weissberg has mentioned prominent Jews in academic life who have contributed to a greater positive Jewish discursive presence in German everyday life, scholars like Dan Diner, the Director of the Simon Dubnow Institute at the University of Leipzig, Michael Brenner, who holds the first chair in Jewish history at the University of Munich, or Julius Schoeps, the director of the Moses Mendelssohn Center at the University of Potsdam. Most importantly, Professor Weissberg has established the important parallel between the existence of a Jewish community and the development of a Jewish Studies that makes this group an object of study. I am very pleased when I hear her say, "Indeed, one could describe German-Jewish Studies as Jewish studies par excellence"; however, we may have different points to make.

My satisfaction is not based on mere personal pride that the field I have devoted myself to for so many years plays such a central role in Jewish Studies in general. More importantly, it also signals that the optimistic future that she has mapped out coincides both with the demographics of the Jewish community and the growth in potential for the field. Stating that "to be a German Jew is a learning process, pointing to the future," and that the "shape the Jewish community in Germany will take . . . has become a laboratory experiment of sorts," suggests that studying the new German Jewry today may bring Germany more into focus in Jewish Studies, educating scholars in that broader field about Jewry in the country that is often still thought of as "the land of the murderers." It also has the potential, at least from the perspective I outline here, to bring the new Europe into the fold as well as seeing Israel, in its role as literal or symbolic Jewish home, in a changing relationship to the diaspora. Certainly, as we consider the identity of a future Jewish community in Germany and Europe, a central aspect in Weissberg's presentation, we must also take into account the global shifts affecting Jewish identity. These changes came into focus recently in a set of symposia co-sponsored by the Leo Baeck Institute (LBI), the American Jewish Committee (AJC), and the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies (AICGS), on the topic: What or who is the Jewish voice?<sup>1</sup> The question of who speaks for the Jews foregrounds the relationship of identity to voice and reminds us that these are not always synonymous, since power and authority to speak for a community or a people are not distributed equally among all Jews or the governments and institutions that represent them.

Potentially, the Jews in Germany, composed largely of immigrants from the former Soviet Union (primarily from Russia, the Ukraine, and

from the Baltic States), but also from other countries, can be seen as part of the shifting of cultural identities sparked and sustained by the processes we associate with globalization, such as migration, cultural circulation and hybridization. The resulting shifts in discrete disciplinary fields, or “area studies” as they are often known, although not usually associated with Jewish Studies, still provide insight into the transformations that may take place when Jewish Studies or German-Jewish Studies is seen in its globally shifting contexts.

Thus, a new (German) Jewish Studies may also be an example of a potential Diaspora Studies that might enable those of us interested in breaking down traditional disciplinary and national/regional boundaries to create a more interesting intellectual and methodological venue for studying the place of the Jews in a rapidly changing environment. What I am presenting is not meant to be a definitive model. It is rather one way of looking at global processes that create the shifting identities that mark all of us today, especially but not only for those who are recognized diasporic peoples, such as the black Africans, the Chinese, the Armenians, the South Asians, or the Jews. In the words of the brothers Jonathan and Daniel Boyarin, the first an anthropologist of the Jews and the other a radical Talmudic scholar, in their new book *Powers of Diaspora: Two Essays on the Relevance of Jewish Culture*, diaspora is

partaking always of the local, but by definition never confined to it, (and) thus suggests itself as a place where that interaction can be grasped. . . . There may be something to be gained from thinking about diaspora . . . as a positive *resource* in the necessary rethinking of models of polity in the current erosion and questioning of the modern nation-state system and ideal.<sup>2</sup>

Proceeding from the Boyarins’ positive position on diaspora, one must ask what does Diaspora Studies in general and Jewish Studies or contemporary German-Jewish Studies in particular offer us today, when the latter’s object of study is the third largest and fastest-growing Jewish community in Europe, comprised of over 100,000 members and still expanding?

As we all know, the Jews of Europe and especially of Germany have both a rich and tragic history. We know as well that institutional configurations such as departments, programs, and most importantly, funding do not necessarily coincide with the realities of a re-mapped globe that is then inhabited, however comfortably or uncomfortably, by refugees, exiles, (im)migrants, or even tourists who move now across once static boundaries and borders. We should pay more attention to these “movers” who increasingly make up larger portions of the population and the diasporic zones or regions they create which do not coincide with



the formal borders of nation-states. And we should also address the disciplinary and discursive fields that try to capture a people, especially in this movement.

The Jews in Germany and the traditional object of study of the Leo Baeck Institute are one such example, whose composition has changed. Before 1933, Germany's approximately 500,000 Jews were mostly Germany-identified Jews, and about one quarter foreign Jews (non-German), primarily immigrants from Eastern Europe, the infamous *Ostjuden*. We all know what happened in the twelve years of Nazi rule. Approximately 270,000 Jews left Germany before 1939, more than 165,000 were murdered, about 15,000 survived the camps, and another 2,000 survived underground.<sup>3</sup> In 1945, "as many as 100,000 Jewish survivors (the majority not being German) found themselves among the eleven million uprooted and homeless people wandering throughout Germany and central Europe."<sup>4</sup> Between 1945 and 1950, the number of Jewish DPs was nearly 200,000.<sup>5</sup> By 1950, there were less than 15,000 Jews left in Germany; 6,000 of these were displaced Jews from Eastern Europe, another 2,000 were from other countries, and the remaining 6,000 were German Jewish returnees.<sup>6</sup> In the following years until the Berlin Wall came down, there were approximately 25,000 Jews living in West Germany and approximately 500 in East Germany, most of those in (East) Berlin. These numbers include only the registered Jews, and there were certainly hundreds more. These statistics not only document the mobility and omnipresence of the Jews in Germany after the war, but also set the stage for the dramatic changes that would take place after the Wall came down and that would alter the face of Jewish life in Germany. Again, Germany is cast as an immigrant country of *Ostjuden* as far as Jewish life is concerned, even if the official policy of Germany at that time stated categorically that "Deutschland ist kein Einwanderungsland," and Jews from the Soviet Union were legally "Kontingentflüchtlinge" (quota refugees) and not immigrants.

Although the 2.6 million Turks are the largest body of immigrants in Germany, the immigration of Jews from the former Soviet Union into Germany has been the most dramatic alteration for Jewish life in Europe since the end of World War II. Since 1989, 120,000 Jews from the former Soviet Union have come to Germany. This rise has increased the number of communities to 89 and spread the Jewish population around Germany to cities such as Recklinghausen in the West or Rostock in the East, whose communities are now comprised nearly wholly of former Soviet Jews. Whereas Jews up until the 1970s and early 1980s were proverbially "sitting on packed suitcases," they now, even with the recent surge in anti-Semitism in the past two years, are planning to stay in Germany, especially younger Jews of what one might call the "third generation." The

integration of these immigrant Jews into German (Jewish) life is difficult, since they require jobs, housing, and language instruction, and many of them are not even Jewish according to Halakhic law, which is matrilinear rather than patrilinear, thus making their participation in religious life nearly impossible. Some even use false papers to emigrate to Germany, which represents more of a beneficial economic haven with its all-encompassing social welfare policies than a secure place to be protected from the infamous Russian anti-Semitism. Such opportunism has created resentment among Jews and Germans alike. However, Russian-Jewish immigrants are often caught in the bind of being Jews in Russia and Russians in Germany. Consequently, the question of belonging and identity remains a central issue, which affects their daily life, the schools their children may attend, the professions they assume, their religious practice, and their relationship to the German and Jewish communities with their mutually intertwined histories. These “new” Jews have become the quintessential hybrid diasporic people in a European environment that has both persecuted them and now in many cases welcomes them as a “litmus test” of democracy and liberalism in a rapidly changing Europe. In the words of Jonathan Boyarin, “Jews are thus examples of different notions of Europe. In addition to specifying Jews as a uniquely and unequivocally demonic force, Hitler made an example of them as well. They were the example of what had to be eliminated in order to produce a New Europe. Anti-fascists and other liberals . . . also take the Jews as exemplary Europeans, those without whom there can be no ‘Europe as such.’ ”<sup>7</sup>

As a new Europe unfolds, Boyarin’s optimism is an appealing vision that underscores what historian Diana Pinto calls a “new European Jewish space.”<sup>8</sup> The Jews of Europe and especially of Germany then reflect not only the demographic shifts, but also the constantly transforming identities of a continent in transition. A half-century ago, because of war and trauma, Europe was the site of migration and displacement, and then after 1990 it was viewed more optimistically as its eastern half was liberated from Communism and moved toward democratization. However, as if to remind us of its global centrality and its susceptibility to turmoil, Europe has now been thrown again into political confusion. This turn is due on the one hand to the ruptures in the transatlantic alliance caused by Middle East tensions and the war in Iraq, and on the other hand, the accession into the European Union of Eastern European countries with Jewish populations, unresolved histories, and anti-Semitism.

Diaspora studies can be a vehicle for an altered perspective on identity in a globalized world since the field emerges from these real political and social changes and produces a new intellectual and institutional paradigm with which to look at traditional areas, regions, or groups.

Increasingly, as the relationship between Israel and “its” diaspora is changing because of religious, political, or social differences, Jewish diaspora existence may well become more independent and self-assured, aside from altering its relationship to Israel. In his book *Home Lands: Portraits of the New Jewish Diaspora*, journalist Larry Tye makes this point persuasively, noting that “the Jewish diaspora is as critical to the survival of Israel as Israel is to the survival of the Jewish people.”<sup>9</sup> Recent immigration data bear this out as well, with “four times as many Israelis living in America as U.S. Jews in Israel,” as does the ironic fact that “the number of Israelis of German descent applying for German passports has increased dramatically in the two years since the start of the intifada. The German embassy in Tel Aviv is currently issuing some 250 passports a month, more than double the number in the 1990s, and expected to top 3,000 this year, compared to 1751 in 2001.” A lawyer who represents many of these dual citizens claims, “many Israelis regard a German passport as ‘an insurance policy in case times get harder.’ ” In fact, in 2002, more Jews emigrated from the former Soviet Union to Germany than to Israel.<sup>10</sup>

The diaspora’s changing relationship toward Israel that Tye chronicles in his study of seven diaspora cities around the world creates more detachment and increased willingness to consider these other Jewish populations as important as Israel. The existence of a Jewish state, while central to world Jewry’s notion of community, may no longer be, according to Tye, where they call home, as even Israelis realize that *aliyah* (the return home) of all diasporic Jews is neither realistic nor efficient. “Home lands,” perhaps purposefully separated in Tye’s title, thus represents the breaking and the questioning of a conflicted term. This is the case both generally for the dispersed diasporic Jews (37 percent live in Israel, 43 percent in the United States), but also specifically for Jews in Germany, who will be defined more heterogeneously as the impact of the Russian Jews in Germany continues to affect how they define their identity. While most feel more at home in their new country than expected, in fact some much more than in Israel, the specifically German notion of *Heimat* (homeland), still inflected with the semantics of racial exclusion, may never take hold. For Jews in Germany, a “homeland” remains perhaps more than for any other diasporic Jewish population an unachievable goal.

Indeed, a Diaspora Studies that takes its cue from the constant flow between “homeland” and domicile and what this relationship means can be extremely productive. However, these studies must go beyond just the study of the results—the status of the people after they have moved—and take into consideration the processes of movement itself: a reflected and examined level of how these transformations of mobility take place and

what they mean for our understanding of developing identities. The potential of these “new” German Jews with a different history and identity than their pre-war predecessors, but with the legitimacy to reconstitute the name with a different meaning, may be a model for Diaspora Studies. The careful distinction made between “German Jews” before 1933, “Jews in Germany” after 1945, and now again “German Jews” reflects an evolution of identity that will have to be addressed. This diasporic process affects both the self-definition of Jews, both indigenous (most of whom are in fact descendants of Eastern European displaced persons) and newly arrived Russians, as well as the German non-Jewish populations’ perceptions of the minorities and themselves. In other words, changing perceptions of Jewishness in Germany create new opportunities for German identities as well.

Diaspora, according to political scientist Itty Abraham, stimulates for the nation-state “a foundational trauma . . . [namely] the desire to identify unambiguously who belongs within the state and who does not.”<sup>11</sup> Contributing to a new notion of diaspora, an evolving and dynamic notion of Germanness becomes a product of the Russian Jews, who may want to stay in Germany’s comfortable surroundings, but never quite feel that they are “Germans.” Like the Turks, they remain a hybrid, the constant presence of foreignness. They can reinforce either the integrative, progressive, and above all civic power of a German democracy to accept difference as part of German identity or the conservative retrenchment of ethnic criteria for assimilation articulated in the debate spurred by the CDU on German “*Leitkultur*” (a dominant culture), a notion that seemed to many Jews and Germans too reminiscent of exclusionary policies that eliminate those without the proper pedigree. Assuming Germans choose the former path, the newly evolving German Jews, made up primarily of Russians, but also Israelis, Americans, and others settling in Berlin (the future site of one of the largest Jewish centers in middle Europe) could become an example for a redefined German Jewry and European diaspora.

Consequently, a new Jewish Studies and even a future German or German-Jewish Studies have in common the global migration of peoples that transcend borders of states and identified regions. While local specificities always intrude in broader global shifts and vice versa, as the Jewish and the German, this struggle between the particular and the universal will continue to characterize global culture and frustrate any global studies that tries to capture these constantly shifting foundational categories of “German” and “Jew” as mutually exclusive. If global studies can create an intellectual and institutional space where the movement of peoples, ideas, and processes can be articulated and examined, it perhaps has a chance to offer a new paradigm that can complement rather than

replace local area studies or a Jewish Studies or German-Jewish Studies that is based on static notions of "Diaspora" and "Homeland." Unseating fixed notions of identity, a global studies based in Diaspora Studies follows the path of the Jews in Germany on their road to becoming a new German Jewry. In constant flux, this trajectory is never normalized and always retains the critical moment of interaction and reflection, as unsettling as it is liberating. This liminal state may be the only constant in the coming years and may prevent the "normalization" of Jewish German life that some hope for, if this version of a desired status quo is defined only in conventional terms.

The historic place of the Jews in Germany and German life, even before the country's first unification, is well documented by Liliane Weissberg and by the work of the Leo Baeck Institute. However, Professor Weissberg and I would agree, I think, that there is much more to how the German Jewish story is to be told and studied, especially since 1989, than was thought in 1945 or even decades later. The last fifteen years have shown that there may indeed be a future for these people and the scholars that continue to study them, not only as *Trauerarbeit* or part of a *Betroffenheitskultur*, or because of philosemitism. By expanding its offices to the Jewish Museum in Berlin, creating an Academic Advisory Council to broaden its purview to post-1945 and contemporary German Jewish life, and last but not least, its collaboration with the German Historical Institute and the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, the Leo Baeck Institute proves that the premier institution for the study of German Jewry believes in its own future as well. It is actively trying to accommodate itself to changing definitions of and perspectives on German Jews that are affected by the transformations in the world around it as an institution and the subject to which it has been devoted for almost 50 years.

## Notes

A more detailed discussion of the subject of this lecture is in my book *New Jews in a New Germany: Post-Holocaust Identities in a Unified Nation*, to be published by Rutgers University Press.

<sup>1</sup> See Jeffrey M. Peck, ed., "The Jewish Voice in Transatlantic Relations," *AICGS German-American Issues* 01 (Washington, D.C.: American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan and Daniel Boyarin, *Powers of Diaspora: Two Essays on the Relevance of Jewish Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 5.

<sup>3</sup> Wolfgang Benz, "Die Legende von der deutsch-jüdischen Symbiose," *Merkur* 45 (1991): 10, cited in John Borneman and Jeffrey M. Peck, *Sojourners: The Return of German Jews and the Question of Identity* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 4.

<sup>4</sup> Abraham Peck, "Zero Hour and the Development of Jewish Life in Germany after 1945," in *A Pariah People? Jewish Life in Germany after 1945: A Symposium* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1988), 2–11, cited in Borneman and Peck, 4.

<sup>5</sup> Wolfgang Jacobmeyer, "Jüdische Überlebende als 'Displaced Persons,'" *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 9 (1983), 421–452, cited in Borneman and Peck, 4.

<sup>6</sup> Chaim Yahil, "Berlin: Contemporary Period," *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Vol. 4 (New York: Macmillan, 1971), cited in Borneman and Peck, 4.

<sup>7</sup> Jonathan Boyarin, *Thinking in Jewish* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 126.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, "The Jewish Challenges in the New Europe," in *Challenging Ethnic Citizenship. German and Israeli Perspectives*, ed. Daniel Levy and Yfaat Weiss (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), 239–252.

<sup>9</sup> Larry Tye, *Home Lands: Portraits of the New Jewish Diaspora* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2001), 12.

<sup>10</sup> Internet, Igal Avidan, "Israelis Look to Germany for Refuge," *The Jerusalem Report*, Sept. 9, 2002.

<sup>11</sup> Itty Abraham, "International Trends," SSRC India Seminar, August 19, 2003.

## IMMIGRANT RELIGION AND THE REPUBLIC: GERMAN CATHOLICS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA

*Edmund Spevack Memorial Lecture, Harvard University  
November 7, 2003*

**Kathleen Neils Conzen**  
*University of Chicago*

Edmund Spevack's two deeply researched books cross and re-cross the Atlantic as they probe the influence of his two homelands upon one another, his first book on Charles Follen charting the transit of German conceptions of freedom into American reform, his second book in turn exploring American influence in the framing of West Germany's Basic Law.<sup>1</sup> His work makes a powerful case for the scholarly necessity of transcending national boundaries if we are to understand even what appear to be fundamentally national historical questions. His enduring and important contribution to the histories of both countries stands as its own best monument. But in tribute, on the occasion of this inaugural Edmund Spevack Memorial Lecture, I would like to extend his insight into yet another area of mutual influence: the role of German-speaking Roman Catholics in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century America.

Just about the time that Charles Follen was, as Spevack shows us, arriving as a political émigré in the United States in late 1824, another educated, idealistic German, a 33-year-old Hanoverian named Friedrich Rese, also took his first steps onto American soil.<sup>2</sup> Follen, scion of a Hessian professional family, was at 28 already a veteran of more than a decade's struggle to realize liberal ideals of autonomous selfhood, democratic nationhood, and broader human emancipation in reactionary post-Napoleonic Europe. Rese, by contrast, was a Roman Catholic priest, once an impoverished tailor who fought as a cavalryman under Blücher at Waterloo and then trained for the priesthood in Rome, with two years of experience in the African missions under his belt before he responded to the personal appeal of Cincinnati's first bishop to serve in his diocese. In America, Follen's ideals carried him into lecturing on German philosophy at Harvard, into the religious liberalism of the Unitarian ministry, and ultimately into radical abolitionist reform. Rese, on the other hand, pioneered German services for Catholics in the Midwest, promoted lay and clerical German Catholic settlement in America, stimulated the founding of Vienna's Leopoldine Society to support American missions, and went on to become Detroit's first bishop. Hundreds of other young, educated German political refugees later followed the trail that Follen helped blaze,

finding refuge in America's freedom but, like him, seeking also to reform and perfect it through philosophical speculation and political activism. Their complex role in the national crisis that finally ended slavery and reconstructed the American state has been well explored by scholars. Reese similarly served as a pathbreaker for hundreds of other German immigrant clerics—and hundreds of thousands of German Catholic lay immigrants—over the course of the following century. History, however, remains comparatively silent on the significance of their Atlantic crossing. Yet it constitutes, I would like to suggest, an even more enduring instance of German influence upon America, and a problematic chapter in religion's ongoing engagement with American public life.

Catholicism has long seemed like an embarrassing guest at the table of American historiography, best ignored in the hope that it will not make a disturbing fuss. Catholic historians in their marginalized historiographical ghetto were long concerned to prove that Catholics were good, or even better, Americans than everyone else. Mainstream historiography, if it took them at their word, could avoid having to come to terms with an anomalous religious system, escape the political minefield of appearing to blame Catholic victims for differences that led to discrimination, and dismiss America's periodic outbursts of anti-Catholicism as irrational paranoia outside the national mainstream. American democracy, Alexis de Tocqueville famously argued, turned even its Catholic citizens into good republicans, and by their refusal to engage the Catholic issue, American historians implicitly agreed.<sup>3</sup> In Europe, too, Catholic historiography was long sealed off from mainstream historiographical concerns, with nineteenth-century Catholicism seemingly little more than a backward-looking footnote in a dominant narrative of modernizing secular progress. But this interpretive situation has undergone a dramatic transformation over the past several decades, as scholars have come to understand both the major revitalization that Catholicism experienced in nineteenth-century Europe, Germany included, and the significance of its corporatist, ultramontane resistance to the emerging liberal state.<sup>4</sup>

This new scholarship on European Catholicism poses a real question for American history. Were American Catholics, roughly a quarter of the American population from the mid-nineteenth century onward, truly immune to these international trends? If immigrants, did they import their new forms of piety and new Roman sensibilities to the United States, and could such allegiances have seemed as troublesome to the emergent American state as they did to its European counterparts? It is beginning to be clear that this was indeed the case. A new Catholic historiography has shown that the new devotional style, and the hierarchical corporatist sense of social order and ultramontane orientation upon which it rested, became pervasive among American Catholics after the 1830s. This helps



explain the distinctive Catholic political behavior that analysts have long identified, and helps account for the force of American liberal opposition to Catholicism's influence, as John McGreevey's recent study persuasively demonstrates.<sup>5</sup> The power of that anti-Catholic opposition itself emerges dramatically in Philip Hamburger's recent documentation of the central role of anti-Catholicism in the shaping of the American doctrine of the separation of church and state.<sup>6</sup> Within this context, then, the German Catholic experience can provide an instructive case of just what was at stake in these nineteenth-century American culture wars.

Perhaps two million Roman Catholics migrated from German-speaking Europe to the United States during the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century era of mass migration. This figure is only the crudest of approximations. Gerald Shaughnessy's widely quoted estimate that Catholics were a third of America's roughly 5.5 million German immigrants during this period rests on simple extrapolation of Catholic proportions of the populations of the various German states to state proportions of the total German emigration.<sup>7</sup> Yet we know that Catholic areas within certain states—Prussia in particular—were overrepresented in the early decades of emigration, and underrepresented in others, like Bavaria. Similarly, Shaughnessy may have been over-optimistic in his insistence that the vast majority of emigrants from Catholic areas remained within the Catholic fold once in America. Also lost to the specifically German variant of American Catholicism were those German immigrants who chose to affiliate with English-speaking parishes.

Still, by 1870, almost a sixth of all American Catholics belonged to German-speaking parishes, and a third of all American priests were German. A century later, roughly the same proportion of American Catholics still acknowledged German descent.<sup>8</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, there were more than 2,250 German-language Catholic parishes scattered across the northern United States, from the industrial cities of the northeast through the farming heartland of the Midwest to the Great Plains and the Pacific Northwest, with outliers as far south as Alabama and Texas. Roughly three-quarters of those parishes were concentrated in the five Midwestern archdioceses of Cincinnati, St. Louis, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Chicago, where German immigration coincided with the opening of the American frontier and where roughly a third of all Catholic parishes were German. The great majority of these German parishes were rural. Fewer than ten percent were in the sixteen large urban areas with six or more German parishes each, though those urban parishes were admittedly the largest ones.<sup>9</sup> When mapped, these German parishes form some fifty separate geographical clusters ranging in size from three, to thirty or forty, contiguous rural and associated urban parishes each.

Within the archipelago of these clustered colonies, German Catholic immigrants and their descendants long supported an elaborate institutional structure that paralleled both the secular German-American ethnic array and that of other Catholics. They developed a political culture at odds with that of other German Americans and a religious culture distinctive from that of other Catholics, nurturing a set of conservative, communal values that acquired significant influence within American public life. German Catholics formed a recognizable voting bloc as early as the 1850s, and remained one as late as 1970, when political analyst Kevin Phillips highlighted their role in the emergence of a national Republican majority and the new religious right.<sup>10</sup> Well into the second half of the twentieth century, sociologists have demonstrated, Catholics of German origin still exhibited some of white America's highest rates of fertility, rural residence, and religious endogamy, and, in rural areas, some of its lowest average levels of education.<sup>11</sup> Even today, when the German character of most urban parishes has long since dissipated, many of the rural German Catholic colonies have consolidated and extended their dominance of the local agricultural landscape, and their German Catholic roots are as recognizable in the graphic anti-abortion signs that line their highways as in the names in their phonebooks and the well-kept streets and businesses of their church-centered communities.

The distinctiveness and relative endurance of this ethno-religious subculture emerged from the immigrant encounter of a revitalized German Catholicism with an American republic undergoing its own process of religio-cultural redefinition. Four factors, I would like to suggest, played a crucial role in forming the German Catholic subculture: first, the relative success by the mid-1840s of German-American efforts to confessionalize the Catholic migration and retain immigrants within Catholic auspices; second, the diaspora consciousness—the sense of still being part of a larger, German-rooted whole—that was cultivated through continuing ties to homeland Catholicism; third, the practical political obstacles that Germans, along with other Catholics, presented to an America in the throes of evangelical self-redefinition; and fourth, the *Kulturkampf* mentality and separatist milieu formation that resulted.<sup>12</sup> Let me briefly consider each of these in turn.

First, then, the confessionalization of transatlantic migration. In a confessional age, to borrow Olaf Blaschke's concept, it should not seem remarkable that emigration, like so many other aspects of life, was also confessionalized.<sup>13</sup> This was not as strongly the case to begin with. To be sure, British colonial authorities ensured that eighteenth-century German migration to America was overwhelmingly Protestant. But occasional Catholics inevitably arrived with Protestant relatives and friends, laying the basis for a rapid growth in Catholic proportions as the momentum for

mass migration began to build in the 1820s and 1830s. Much of the Catholic character of this growing immigration can be attributed to the natural consequences of chain migration, as trailblazers attracted others whom they knew, as well as to well-known disparities within German society that found Catholics disproportionately represented among those with the strongest economic motives to emigrate.<sup>14</sup>

But there were also suggestive early efforts to lend the migration an explicitly Catholic focus. As early as the mid-eighteenth century, German Jesuit missionaries encouraged scattered German Catholics to concentrate in two rural Pennsylvania settlements, where they could be provided more efficiently with religious services. Immediately after the Revolution, Germans in Philadelphia and Baltimore began a painful process of separating from Irish coreligionists into German-language parishes of their own. Differences in devotional practice as well as language seem to have been responsible. In 1799, Dimitri Gallitzin, a Russian-Westphalian aristocrat who in 1795 became the first American-trained priest ordained in the United States, revived the Jesuit strategy of concentrated Catholic settlement when he recruited Pennsylvania and Maryland German and Irish pioneers to form a self-consciously Catholic colony in Pennsylvania's western wilderness, setting a precedent that other westward-moving German Catholics increasingly sought to replicate.<sup>15</sup> By 1824 there were enough German Catholics in the new western diocese of Cincinnati in Ohio that its Maryland-born bishop, traveling in Europe, sought German-speaking priests to serve them. He recruited first the Hanoverian Frederick Rese, who would become the first bishop of Detroit in 1833, and then two Swiss, Martin Kundig and John Martin Henni, the latter of whom would become Milwaukee's first bishop in 1844. In Cincinnati beginning in the late 1820s, these immigrant priests and their lay allies effectively invented the basic institutional array that would characterize German Catholicism in America. This included the elaborate institutional parish complete with school, choir, and mutual benefit societies and sodalities for every age and gender group, soon also the German Catholic orphanage, hospital, cemetery, as well as the first German-language Catholic newspaper in the United States in 1837, explicitly aimed at a national rather than purely local readership. It also involved the recruitment of German-speaking religious orders—Austrian Redemptorists in 1832, Swiss Sanguinists in 1843, Bavarian Benedictines in 1844—and the establishment of a German-language seminary in 1846. As early as 1827, Rese published in Germany the first pamphlet explicitly promoting America as a site for Catholic settlement—a new Catholic “Zion,” Henni would call it in an 1836 pamphlet—and at least by the late 1820s, Germany's infant Catholic press was publishing reports from their coreligionists in America.<sup>16</sup> The Cincinnatians also helped stimulate the for-

mation of societies to support American missions in Vienna in 1827 and Munich in 1838, which sent clergy and money to America and diffused news of American opportunities to a broad Catholic public in Germany through their published reports.<sup>17</sup> Soon each German priest in America became a point of information and practical aid tied into an international emigration network, each parish priest in Germany a potential point of access. Thus as German interest in emigration intensified in the 1830s, Catholic Germany was well on its way to developing what might be termed an emigration system of its own.

Might religion itself, then, have motivated emigration? We are unaccustomed to thinking of nineteenth-century Catholicism in these terms. But given the embattled state of Catholicism in Europe, emigration might well have offered a promise of sanctuary for the pious, a place to build a more godly world anew. The great central valley of America, Henni had prophesied in 1836, was destined to become "the arena of most effective working and flourishing of our holy religion."<sup>18</sup> German church authorities, less optimistic than their American counterparts, often sought to stem the tide of emigration with discouraging reports of American conditions, and the religious utopianism that brought Ambrose Oschwald and his 113 Badenese disciples to the Wisconsin wilderness in 1854 was clearly exceptional.<sup>19</sup> Religion "caused" little Catholic emigration in this immediate sense. But it surely shaped how opportunities were perceived, influenced the choice of those to whom emigrants turned for leadership and advice, and directly shaped patterns of settlement and community formation.

The best evidence for the success of the effort to confessionalize the migration within overtly Catholic channels is the growing elaboration of what has to be understood as a German Catholic settlement system. During the 1830s, German priests like Peter Henry Lemcke in western Pennsylvania and Joseph Ferneding in Indiana sought to follow Galitzen's example by drawing scattered Catholics into clustered colonies. Lay Catholics in Europe also began to form emigration colonies before leaving Germany, like the Westphalians and Bavarians who settled in Missouri, Eifelers in southern Michigan, and Hanoverians in Ohio. Such colonies, and the entrepôt cities that fed them, quickly acquired additional settlers directed to them by Catholic authorities to whom newcomers turned for advice, and by articles on new settlements that became a staple of America's widely circulated German Catholic press. By the late 1840s, Midwestern bishops in Dubuque, Milwaukee, and St. Paul were explicitly luring German Catholic settlers to their dioceses, and the scattered colonies of the earlier period soon gave way to broad bands of rural German Catholic settlement. Proliferating Benedictine monasteries proved particularly potent nodes of these expansive new frontier concen-

trations. As the second and third American generations came of age and needed additional land, the same process of ever-expanding colonization continued well into the twentieth century.<sup>20</sup> Catholicism, then, was not merely part of the immigrants' cultural baggage; it was the vessel in which many made their voyage to a new-world life.

Those who chose to settle under the auspices of the Church were in a sense self-selected by their adherence to its values, which would be reinforced in the clustered settlements through churches, schools, institutions, and social pressure. But—and this is the second factor I want to explore—America's German Catholicism was never just a simple construct of immigrant memory and American adaptation. It was a true diaspora culture, retaining continuing ties to the Catholic homeland and taking its cues from German rhythms as much as from those of America. For one thing, ongoing chain migration and family correspondence kept many personal transatlantic ties alive well into the third decade of the twentieth century and beyond, as relief efforts after both World Wars testify.<sup>21</sup> For another, America's German Catholic press provided constant, informed, and extensive coverage of events, controversies, and trends in Catholic Germany, and interpreted American events in their light.<sup>22</sup>

Even more significant was the direct leadership Catholic Germany long provided. Not until the early twentieth century did German America begin to be self-sufficient in its Catholic clergy. Barely 50 German-speaking priests served the nation's estimated 300,000 German Catholics in 1843. By 1869, there were a total of 1,169 German-speaking priests in the United States, of whom only 39 were known to be American-born; these German-speaking priests accounted for about 35 percent of all American priests at the time. The heavy clerical immigration at the height of the Prussian *Kulturkampf* helped push the number of German clerics to 2,067 by 1881, though the increase of the American-born proportion to 18 percent also signified a beginning transition to a home-grown clergy. Importantly, the largest single group, 30 percent of the total, came from Westphalian and Hanoverian dioceses, many of them *Kulturkampf* refugees carrying the passions of embattled German Catholicism directly into American pulpits and confessionals.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, while America's German seminaries began turning out male lay teacher-organists for German Catholic parishes as early as the late 1840s, immigrants trained in Germany as *Kirchenväter* long remained in high demand in American parishes. German sisterhoods, which began arriving in the 1840s, seem to have attracted recruits far more quickly from German America than did the priesthood.

This long-lasting religious immigration meant that America's German Catholicism was never purely a folk culture, a set of habits of the heart. It was a consciously imported, cultivated, evolving, and, like its

German parent, increasingly ultramontane intellectual and spiritual tradition, accompanied by a set of institutional strategies often derived from homeland example. Certainly Catholic Germans imported a traditional folk repertoire of Baroque piety. The annual parish fund-raising fair became the functional equivalent of the old country *Kirmes*, votive chapels sprouted along country lanes, and miraculous occurrences ensured occasions for multi-parish pilgrimage to local shrines. Much to the dismay of American bishops, Germans turned tax-supported rural public schools into parish schools on the old country model as soon as they dominated local electorates, and retained German customs of administering parish property through a lay *Kirchenrat* rather than by the pastor alone.<sup>24</sup> But many of the specific devotions, and the proliferation of cradle-to-grave Church-sponsored societies and sodalities, were not so much traditional as products of the nineteenth-century Catholic revival, and it remains unclear how much was American innovation and how much was direct copying of new German trends.

What is clear, however, is the extent to which national German Catholic organization in America depended on the German example for both forms and timing. America's weekly German Catholic press emerged in the late 1830s only a few years after its German models. America's national association of lay German Catholic societies was founded in 1855, seven years after the first national convention of Catholic associations in Germany and coincident with the beginning of national-level organization among secular German Americans. American branches of the Kolping Society sprang up in 1856, and the Cecilian Society for music reform in 1873. In the 1880s, in the wake of *Kulturkampf*-influenced organization in Germany, an American branch of the St. Raphael Society was founded, rapidly followed by a national association of German-American priests, the first national *Katholikentag*, and national associations for the German-Catholic press, for young men, for Catholic sub-groups like Luxembourgers, and for the support of poor German-American mission parishes.<sup>25</sup>

Diasporic connections, then, ensured that America's German-speaking Catholics would continue to view American events through German-tinted Catholic lenses, and gave them ready access to German-molded arguments and organizational forms. But American circumstances—my third point of discussion—provided the occasion for their need. It can be (and has been) argued that the most characteristic structures of German Catholic America—the rural colony, the institutional parish, the transplanted clergy, and the distinctive piety—were simply the natural responses of a revitalized romantic Catholicism to the needs of an immigrating, largely peasant population, and constituted no threat to America and its public culture.

Certainly Henni himself, when he first took up his editorial pen in 1837, saw the main task of the “worldly” side of his newspaper to be a double one: defending the Catholic as a model republican citizen, and telling his readers what they needed to know to fulfill the duties of citizenship. He insisted on his own political nonpartisanship, and consistently held up Catholic heroes like Columbus, Lafayette, and Declaration of Independence signer Charles Carroll of Carrollton to claim charter status for Catholics as Americans. He insisted that Catholicism, with its emphasis on duty, morality, and obedience to constituted authority, was compatible with any governmental form, including republicanism. In a position unusual for an American Catholic cleric, he even took a stand against slavery, advocating its abolition through gradual means consistent with public order. But the seeds of the German Catholic quarrel with America were also present in his constant insistence that community must come before self, that freedom should never be permitted to degenerate into insolence or anarchy, and in the convolutions he went through to justify religiously the enjoyment of alcohol and the convivial German Sunday cherished by his flock.<sup>26</sup>

There was the nub of the problem. Catholic immigrants were encountering an America in the throes of its own religious revival, a revival that was creating what Mark Noll has termed a new American synthesis compounded of evangelical Protestant religion, republican ideology, and commonsense moral reasoning. Not only did this redefinition of America’s religious identity and the “extraconstitutional religious establishment” (the term is William Hutchinson’s) that it stimulated leave little room for Catholic Americans, with their very different social and moral conceptions: It also brought direct day-to-day political conflict over issues like temperance, Sabbatarianism, public education, and slavery.<sup>27</sup> Thus by the 1840s, America’s anti-papist British heritage took on sharper political form, not only in revulsion against the growing Irish and German presence, but also in response to real concerns for national salvation and for the problem of maintaining effective self-governance among a culturally heterogeneous citizenry.<sup>28</sup>

German Catholic voters only too readily equated such efforts with German state pressures on ultramontane Catholicism, and quickly became some of the staunchest members of the Democratic Party’s coalition against the evangelical reform agenda that emerged in the 1850s as the Republican Party. The same localism and anti-statism on which southern slaveholders drew to defend their ‘peculiar institution’ from federal attack seemed the best defense for the autonomy and distinctiveness of German Catholic communities. This political alliance with southern rebels meant that northern German Catholic communities faced acute federal pressure during the Civil War, and that efforts to bring church

schools under public control became a significant component of the Republicans' postwar Reconstruction agenda.

Thus by the 1880s, America's German Catholics were adopting not only Germany's name for such state pressure—*Kulturkampf*—but also the milieu-building social and political tactics with which their cousins in the fatherland had responded. This is my fourth and final point. The fact that their opponents among the liberal German immigration were often radical Republicans only intensified the German Catholic retreat into a defensive localistic opposition that lasted until the 1930s, and whose traces remain evident in the anti-statism of the religious right today. They did their best to shape the Democratic Party into an American equivalent of Germany's Center Party, and the American Federation of Labor into an anti-socialist reflection of Germany's Catholic labor movement. Their retreat into their own milieu extended to reluctance to cooperate with fellow Germans even in opposing hated Prohibition, and to hesitance in sharing associational memberships with non-German Catholics. Indeed, German Catholic desire for cultural and administrative autonomy helped provoke one of the defining crises of later nineteenth-century American Catholicism, the so-called Americanism controversy, which, I have argued elsewhere, can only be understood if its roots in German milieu Catholicism are taken into account. The associational separatism constructed by America's German Catholics would not long survive generational assimilation processes, the pressures of World War I, and the efforts of their own bishops and clergy to bring them into the orthodox American Catholic fortress. But their heritage of confessionalized rural settlement and ethnically exclusive milieu formation helped ensure the far longer endurance of their distinctive ethno-religious culture.<sup>29</sup>

Neither Charles Follen nor Frederic Rese lived happily ever after in America. The year 1833 was a turning point in their parallel lives. For Follen, it marked his entrance into the ranks of early organized anti-slavery. For Rese, it marked his elevation to the new bishopric of Detroit. But by 1837, as America sank into economic crisis, the costs for both were clear, measured for Follen in friends and positions lost, for Rese in a forced letter of resignation from his see under charges from his fellow American bishops of personal and official dereliction of the duties and dignities of his office. His ambition, his complicated efforts to finance his frontier see, and perhaps his Germanness in a church of English- and French-speaking bishops, probably lay at the heart of his problems. The pope initially exonerated him, but, irritated by his refusal to immediately return to Rome to answer charges of unauthorized European fund-raising (Rese was trying to save his Michigan speculations from financial collapse), removed him from the exercise of his office in 1840. He never returned to America, his undocumented wanderings finally ending in



madness and death in his home bishopric of Hildesheim in 1871. Follen's early death in a steamboat accident came in 1840. His heritage lay in the example he set for the many freedom-seeking German refugees who followed him, and in the intellectual reputation that he bequeathed to them. Rese's only monument may be the street that bears his name in his home town of Vienenburg, but the echoes of his efforts, and those of all his fellow Catholic immigrants from Germany, can still be perceived in American religion and public life today.

I have been able to present only a sketchy synopsis of a larger argument that still demands far more basic research if it is to be supported. My subject must not be over-inflated in significance: America's German Catholic immigrants were always a minority within a minority. But, I would like to suggest in conclusion, they provide an instructive case study for the pervasiveness of nineteenth-century confessionalism. They raise questions for historians of Catholic Germany about the relationship between Catholic revival and emigration, and suggest the potential of international comparisons to illuminate issues like Catholic disadvantage or the roots of milieu formation. But most importantly in the context that I have sought to develop here, they suggest that international comparison can help clarify the logic of the emergent American state's concern with Catholic religion, too often dismissed by American historians as either nativist paranoia or irrelevant distraction from more central issues of race. They represent an enduring corporatist dissenting tradition within American public life, its simultaneously conservative and progressive tensions best embodied, perhaps, in the contrasting political careers of the twentieth century's two McCarthy's, Joseph and Eugene, who, despite their Irish names, were raised in the small-town Midwest within the subculture of their German Catholic mothers. Frederic Rese may be forgotten today, yet his legacy has had as long and significant an afterlife as Follen's, and merits similar scholarly attention.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Edmund Spevack, *Charles Follen's Search for Nationality and Freedom: Germany and America 1796–1840* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); *Allied Control and German Freedom: American Political and Ideological Influences on the Framing of the West German Basic Law (Grundgesetz)* (Münster: LIT, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> Rese lacks an adequate biography. For the basic outline of his life, see Leslie Tentler, "Rese, Frederic," <http://www.anb.org/articles/08/08-01257/html>, *American National Biography Online*, February 2000. More specific details can be found in Benjamin J. Blied, *Austrian Aid to American Catholics 1830–1860* (Milwaukee, 1944), and especially Robert Frederick Trisco, *The Holy See and the Nascent Church in the Middle Western United States 1826–1850* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1962).

<sup>3</sup> For the historiography of American Catholics, see e.g. Philip Gleason, "The New Americanism in Catholic Historiography," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 11 (1993): 1–18; Leslie Woodcock

Tentler, "On the Margins: The State of American Catholic History," *American Quarterly* 45 (1993), 104–27; Patrick Carey, "Recent American Catholic Historiography: New Directions in Religious History," in Harry S. Stout and D. G. Hart, eds., *New Directions in American Religious History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 445–61. Tocqueville's comments on American Catholicism can be found in Volume One, Part II, Chapter 9 of his *Democracy in America* (1835; first American edition 1838).

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., David Blackburn, "The Catholic Church in Europe since the French Revolution: A Review Article," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 33 (1991): 778–90; Oded Heilbrunner, "The Place of German Catholic Society in Recent Historiography," *Journal of Modern History* 72 (2000): 453–95.

<sup>5</sup> C.f. Jay P. Dolan, *In Search of an American Catholicism: A History of Religion and Culture in Tension* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Peter d'Agostino, *Rome in America: Transnational Catholic Ideology from the Risorgimento to Fascism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); John T. McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2003).

<sup>6</sup> Philip Hamburger, *Separation of Church and State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); see Marjule Anne Drury, "Anti-Catholicism in Germany, Britain, and the United States: A Review and Critique of Recent Scholarship," *Church History* 70 (2001): 98–131.

<sup>7</sup> Gerald Shaughnessy, *Has the Immigrant Kept the Faith? A Study of Immigration and Catholic Growth in the United States 1790–1920* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1925), Tables XVII–XXXVI.

<sup>8</sup> Shaughnessy, *Has the Immigrant Kept the Faith*; Alexander J. Schem, *Deutsch-amerikanisches Conversations-Lexicon* (New York: F. Gerhard, 1873), IX: 437; Harold J. Abramson, *Ethnic Diversity in Catholic America* (New York: Wiley, 1973), 13–14.

<sup>9</sup> Compiled from Johannes Nep. Enzberger, *Schematismus der katholischen Geistlichkeit deutscher Zunge in den Vereinigten Staaten Amerikas* (Milwaukee: Hoffmann Brothers, 1892).

<sup>10</sup> Kevin Phillips, *The Emerging Republican Majority* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor books, 1970); see also Samuel Lubell, *The Future of American Politics* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1956).

<sup>11</sup> Douglas G. Marshall, "The Decline in Farm Family Fertility and Its Relationship to Nationality and Religious Background," *Rural Sociology* 15 (1950): 42–49; Marian McNeil Deininger, "Some Differential Characteristics of Minnesota's Major Ethnic Groups in Selected Rural Townships," Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1958; Andrew M. Greeley, *The American Catholic: A Social Portrait* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

<sup>12</sup> This argument draws on the narrative interpretation presented in Kathleen Neils Conzen, "German Catholics in America," in Michael Glazier and Thomas J. Shelley, eds., *The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History* (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1997), 571–83, and documented in Kathleen Neils Conzen, "Immigrant Religion and the Public Sphere: The German Catholic Milieu in America," in Wolfgang Helbich and Walter Kamphoefner, eds., *German-American Immigration and Ethnicity in Comparative Perspective* (Madison, 2004), 69–114.

<sup>13</sup> Olaf Blaschke, "Das 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter?" *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 26 (2000), 38–75; see also Margaret Lavinia Anderson, "The Limits of Secularization: On the Problem of the Catholic Revival in Nineteenth-Century Germany," *The Historical Journal* 38 (1995), 647–70.

<sup>14</sup> Ronald J. Ross, "Catholic Plight in the Kaiserreich: A Reappraisal," in Jack R. Duker and Joachim Remak, *Another Germany: A Reconsideration of the Imperial Era* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1988), 73–93; Hans Meier, "Zur Soziologie des deutschen Katholizismus 1803–1950," in Dieter Albrecht et al., eds., *Politik und Konfession: Festschrift für Konrad Repgen zum 60. Geburtstag* (Berlin, 1983), 159–171; Werner Rösener, "Das Katholische Bildungsdefizit im Deutschen Kaiserreich—Ein Erbe der Säkularisation von 1803?" *Historisches Jahrbuch* 112 (1992): 104–127; Josef Mooser, "'Christlicher Beruf' und 'bürgerliche Gesellschaft':

Zur Auseinandersetzung über Berufsethik und wirtschaftliche 'Inferiorität' im Katholizismus um 1900," in Wilfried Loth, ed., *Deutscher Katholizismus im Umbruch zur Moderne* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1991).

<sup>15</sup> Lambert Schrott, *Pioneer German Catholics in the American Colonies (1734–1784)* (New York: U.S. Catholic Historical Society, 1933); V. J. Fecher, *A Study of the Movement for German National Parishes in Philadelphia and Baltimore (1787–1802)* (Rome: Apud Aedes Universitatis Gregoriana, 1955); Peter Henry Lemcke, *Life and Work of Prince Demetrius Augustine Galitzin* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1940).

<sup>16</sup> Roger Fortin, *Faith and Action: A History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati 1821–1996* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2002); Peter Leo Johnson, *Crosier on the Frontier: A Life of John Martin Henni, Archbishop of Milwaukee* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1959). For German Catholic coverage of American co-religionists, see, for example, *Der Katholik* (Speyer), v. 8, no. 4 (1828), 186–202; v. 8, No. 7 (1828), 206–211; v. 8, no. 9 (1828), 78–84; v. 8, no. 8 (1828), xxxix–xliii.

<sup>17</sup> Blied, *Austrian Aid*; Theodore Roemer, *The Ludwig-Missionsverein and the Church in the United States (1838–1918)* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1933).

<sup>18</sup> Johann Martin Henni, *Ein Blick in's Thal des Ohio oder, Briefe über den Kampf und das Wiederaufleben der katholischen Kirche im fernen Westen der vereinigten Staaten Nordamerika's* (München, 1836).

<sup>19</sup> Frank S. Beck, *Christian Communists in America: A History of the Colony of St. Nazianz, Wisconsin during the Pastorate of its Founder, Father Ambrose Oschwald 1854–1873* (St. Paul: St. Paul Seminary, 1959).

<sup>20</sup> Mary Gilbert Kelly, *Catholic Immigrant Colonization Projects in the United States, 1815–1860* (New York: The United States Catholic Historical Society, 1939); M. M. Hoffmann, *The Church Founders of the Northwest: Loras and Cretin and other Captains of Christ* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1937); Joel Rippinger, *The Benedictine Order in the United States: An Interpretive History* (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1990).

<sup>21</sup> For brief testimony to the relief efforts of Catholics in one state, see Vincent A. Yzermans, *With Courage and Hope: The Catholic Aid Association 1878–1978* (St. Paul: North Central Publishing Co., 1978).

<sup>22</sup> E.g. John S. Kulas, *Der Wanderer of St. Paul: The First Decade, 1867–1877* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996).

<sup>23</sup> These calculations are my own, derived from the listings in W. Bonenkamp and Joseph Jessing, *Schematismus der deutschen und der deutsch-sprechenden Priester sowie der deutschen Katholiken-gemeinden in den Vereinigten Staaten Nord-Amerika's* (St. Louis: Herder, 1882).

<sup>24</sup> For this culture in the German parishes of central Minnesota, see Kathleen Neils Conzen, *Making Their Own America: Assimilation Theory and the German Peasant Pioneer*, German Historical Institute, Washington, D.C., Annual Lecture Series No. 3 (New York: Berg, 1990).

<sup>25</sup> Georg Timpe, ed., *Katholisches Deutschtum in den Vereinigten Staaten von America* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1937); Colman J. Barry, *The Catholic Church and German Americans* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953); Philip Gleason, *The Conservative Reformers: German-American Catholics and the Social Order* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968).

<sup>26</sup> These conclusions rest on my reading of the first six years of *Der Wahrheits Freund* (Cincinnati), beginning with volume 1, number 1, July 20, 1837.

<sup>27</sup> Mark A. Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); William R. Hutchinson, *Religious Pluralism in America: The Contentious History of a Founding Ideal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

<sup>28</sup> Kathleen Neils Conzen, "German Catholic Communalism and the American Civil War: Exploring the Dilemmas of Transatlantic Political Integration," in Elisabeth Gläser and Hermann Wellenreuther, *Bridging the Atlantic: The Question of American Exceptionalism in*

*Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). For insight into German Catholic political activity in the antebellum period, see David Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism: Buffalo, New York, 1825–60* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989); Ward M. McAfee, *Religion, Race, and Reconstruction: The Public School in the Politics of the 1870s* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998) clarifies the religious dimension of post-Civil War politics.

<sup>29</sup> Conzen, “Immigrant Religion,” develops this argument in significantly more detail; see also Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*; Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*; Rory T. Conley, *Arthur Preuss, Journalist and Voice of German and Conservative Catholics in America, 1871–1934* (New York: Peter Lang, 1998); Jon Gjerde, *The Minds of the West: Ethnocultural Evolution in the Rural Middle West, 1830–1917* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

## LANDSCAPE AND LANDSCHAFT

*Lecture delivered at the "Spatial Turn in History" Symposium  
German Historical Institute, February 19, 2004*

**Denis Cosgrove**

*University of California, Los Angeles*

Across the humanities and social sciences, the past two decades have witnessed a shift away from the structural explanations and grand narratives that dominated so much twentieth-century scholarship, with its emphasis on universal theories and systematic studies, and a move toward more culturally and geographically nuanced work, sensitive to difference and specificity, and thus to the contingencies of event and locale. Various referred to in the social sciences as the "spatial turn" and the "cultural turn," this move has reworked the relationship between the social sciences and traditionally hermeneutic fields within the humanities. Both sides increasingly privilege questions of culture, meaning, and identity over "scientific" theories borrowed from economics, biology, psychology, or political "science." Unsurprisingly, geography, which suffered a recurrent crisis of identity in the era of scientism, has emerged as a key point of reference within this disciplinary convergence. Recognition of the difference that space and geographical location make to any understanding of processes and events in the human (and also the physical) world is not of course wholly novel. Geography's long-standing, if fraught, relationship with history with which my discussion opens bears evidence of a sustained recognition of the pitfalls of seeking to understand the world solely by reference to universalizing theories and formal laws, even when these are given the spatial veneer of titles such as "area studies." The historian Edmundo O'Gorman, for example, never tired of pointing out that constructions, such as "Pan-American history," that sought a unity of narrative themes through hemispheric participation were better understood as an outgrowth of ideological and imperialist assumptions on the part of the United States.<sup>1</sup> They failed not merely to show sensitivity to geographical and cultural difference within the pre-defined and supposedly "natural" area, but made less sense historically than less intuitively geographic spatial frames such as the "Black Atlantic"—an area defined according to cultural rather than natural or territorial criteria.<sup>2</sup>

As the example of "Black Atlantic" reveals, the "spatial turn" in the humanities and social sciences is also closely related to a significant re-

thinking of space itself. Both in theory and practice, space in modernity remained Cartesian and absolute, its language best described in Euclid's *Elements*. Space, like time, was treated as an objective phenomenon, existing independently of its contents. In this sense space was seen as a container that had effects on the objects existing within it, but was not itself affected by them. Regarding space in this way corresponded well with the territorial imperatives of the nation-state as it had evolved within modern Europe, with the categorical administrative and organizational structures of state bureaucracies, industrial production, and social life in the modern city.<sup>3</sup> Belief in absolute space was foundational to confidence in the pictorial claims of linear perspective to truthfully represent material spaces, trust in the scientific accuracy and objectivity of both topographic and thematic maps, and acceptance of territoriality as a normalizing way of ordering and classifying phenomena. All of these assumptions about order in the world and our capacity to grasp and represent it have been upset by a growing acceptance of alternative spatial conceptions, above all conceiving of space as relative rather than absolute. Space is increasingly regarded as lacking independent existence; it comes into being as a function of other processes and phenomena (which in the world of relativity also generate time). Thus any space is contingent upon the specific objects and processes through which it is constructed and observed. Questions of space become epistemological rather than ontological.<sup>4</sup> The public space of the Italian "piazza" for example is best understood as a product of a set of social conventions, desires and memories, political practices, and specific performances whose architectural realization within urban form is treated as secondary to those processes and practices rather than as their container.<sup>5</sup> The conceptual, methodological, and representational implications for geographical scholarship itself are obviously enormous, and they have opened up a formerly self-referential and defensive discipline to intellectual commerce with other natural and social sciences and the humanities.

In this discussion I examine the implications of these developments for the concept of *landscape* and its revived significance and use within geography and beyond. To do so in these pages is significant because landscape not only has long stood as the geographical concept that connects the discipline most closely to history and the humanities, but its roots in Anglophone geographic practice are to be found in the German concept of *Landschaft*. The latter is of more than purely philological interest: The migrations of meaning that *Landschaft*/landscape has experienced make it particularly suited to contemporary ways of thinking about space and reconnecting geographical study to current humanities concerns with culture, identity, and meaning.

## Chorography, Chronology and Evolving Meanings of “Landscape”

Any serious attention to questions of space, absolute or relative, and its relations to natural and social processes must inevitably confront the question of scale. Absolute space gives rise to the conception of scale as a nested hierarchy of containers for processes and for their observation. Geographical study operates according to given scales, from the local, through the regional, national, and global. Mid-twentieth-century geographers devoted time and energy to debating and defining such scale concepts as “the region.”<sup>6</sup> In the contemporary world, matters are rather different. Both in theory and in practice, relative space more readily embraces the fact of scalar continuity and the constant blurring and interaction between scales that are always dependent on process and observation. “Local” spaces are as much a precipitate of “global” processes—for example, the investment decisions of global financial networks—as they are constitutive nodes for such processes—for example, through internet connections. Geographical “place” is today treated as an instantiation of process rather than an ontological given.<sup>7</sup> This way of thinking about spatial scale immediately reintroduces matters of time and history into geography. We are thus obliged to reconsider the long-standing connection between these two fields of study, long framed in the Latin aphorism “geographia oculus historiae.” Conventionally the claim that geography acts as the eye of history allocated Clio’s other eye to *chronology*, the division of historical time into an event-determined narrative. Chronology, recursively, was paralleled with *chorography*, which denoted a specific scale of geographical study. A key source for early-modern scholars was the second-century Alexandrine geographer and mapmaker Claudius Ptolemy, whose book *The Geography* shaped much of the discourse of modern spatial representation. Ptolemy made a vital and much debated distinction between geography and chorography, one that, under the guise of different terminology, remains significant in contemporary spatial theory.<sup>8</sup> Geography, he claimed, was the description of the earth’s surface as a whole and of its major features (land, seas, continents, mountain ranges, cities, nations, etc). The absolute datum of the globe itself meant that geographical representation was primarily scientific and mathematical. Accuracy demanded that geographical locations had to be related to each other and to the whole globe through common metrics (coordinates, distance measures, etc).

Chorography, on the other hand, concerned specific regions or locales understood without necessary relation to any larger spatial (geographical) frame. The role of chorography was to understand and represent the unique character of individual places. In chorography, the skills

of the artist (painter and writer) were more relevant than those of the astronomer and mathematician, which were critical in geography.<sup>9</sup> The chorographic art, as it came to be practiced in early modern Europe (not least in Southern Germany among the groups of humanists gathered in such upper Danube cities as Ulm and Augsburg), incorporated both historical narrative (generally little more than a chronicling of a city or region's Classical pedigree and a hagiography of its principal aristocratic or noble families) and pictorial maps and architectural sketches. It established the place of geography within the humanities and its attachment to history at the scale of "landscape." Chorographies were popular among educated and scholarly groups in early modern Europe as celebrations of their own city or local region. In emerging nation-states such as seventeenth-century England, descriptions of individual counties were gathered together to create a picture that was "national" but remained sensitive to regional variation. It is within this, often tense and contested, historical process of fundamental change in the social spatiality of early modern Europe that the idea of landscape comes to prominence and is reshaped as a geographical descriptor. While the historical shift from a legal and territorial idea of landscape to a scenic and pictorial usage has been widely noted, the geographer Kenneth Olwig has recently re-examined it with great authority, and I draw heavily upon his argument in the following section.<sup>10</sup>

The German *Landschaft* and its cognates in the Scandinavian languages are still used as a descriptor for administrative regions in parts of northwestern Europe, specifically Frisia and Schleswig-Holstein. The physical nature of these low-lying marshlands, heaths, and offshore islands is important in understanding this usage. These have always been relatively impoverished regions, marginal to the interests of monarchs and aristocrats whose wealth and power depended upon the control, ownership, and taxation of more fertile and accessible territories. Location on the borderlands of the Danish kingdom and the German states reinforced the opportunities for greater local autonomy than in more central and tightly administered regions. Olwig points out that their designation as *Landschaften* denoted "a particular notion of polity rather than . . . a territory of a particular size. It could be extrapolated to polities of various dimensions, ranging from tiny Utholm to the whole of northern Jutland."<sup>11</sup> What mattered for the designation was that these were regions in which customary law, determined in various ways by the community living and working in an area, extended over and defined the territorial limits of the *Land*. "Custom and culture defined a *Land*, not physical geographical characteristics—it was a social entity that found physical expression in the area under its law."<sup>12</sup> The unity of fellowship and rights within the community and the space over which fellowship



and rights held sway constituted the *Landschaft*. In this sense its usage might be paralleled to the English “country,” which also is meaningful at different scales, and which can refer both to the national polity (calling an election can be termed “going to the country”) and to the national territory. It is logical that over time, the combination of community, custom, and territory would give rise to visible distinction of one *Landschaft* from another, but the scenic aspects that are now so closely associated with landscape were not in any sense primary to the meaning of the German concept and its cognates elsewhere in northwestern Europe. The nature of *Landschaft* as originally constituted is of much more than antiquarian significance. It points to a particular *spatiality* in which a geographical area and its material appearance are constituted through social practice. In a word, *Landschaft* is best understood in terms of relative rather than absolute space.

This stands in marked contrast to the conventional usage of *landscape* in English, whose primary meaning is closely associated with the idea of scenery. Indeed the oft-quoted Oxford English Dictionary (OED) definition of landscape refers to “a picture of natural inland scenery,” noting that the word first comes into the English language in the early seventeenth century as a designation of a type of painting. *Landschap* painting was a genre imported from the Netherlands that became popular among landowners seeking to represent newly acquired or consolidated estates, many of them witnessing a struggle between the customary rights enjoyed by a feudal peasantry and the property rights claimed for landowners in an emerging capitalist land market. Technically, the creation of landscape images was closely aligned with estate survey and mapping, and many artists were also surveyors and map makers. Mathematics, measure, and perspective provided the spatial language of landscape. Culturally, it was associated with the new literary form of “prospect poetry,” also popular in early seventeenth-century England.<sup>13</sup> As these various associations suggest, and the word “prospect” makes clear, *landscape* privileges the sense of sight, and what started as a representation of space rapidly became a designation of material spaces themselves, which were referred to as landscapes and viewed with the same distanced and aesthetically discriminating eye that had been trained in the appreciation of pictures and maps. A landscape is *seen*, either framed within a sketch or painting, composed within the borders of a map, or viewed from a physical eminence through receding planes of perspective.<sup>14</sup>

While this idea of landscape played a role in the construction of capitalist property rights and the suppression of exactly the type of community and customary rights that had given rise to *Landschaft*, Olwig points out that the change in meaning was also related to a changing scale of spatial control. He traces immediate connections between landscape

discourse in seventeenth-century England and the cradle region of *Landschaft* through the link between James I of England (James VI of Scotland) and Schleswig-Holstein through the king's marriage with Anne of Denmark. He suggests that the principal political challenges to the Stuart king came from uniting the "countries/lands" of England and Scotland under his sovereignty and negotiating with the local attachments of landed nobility in England (a question faced by each of the European absolute monarchs seeking to unify the territory of the modern nation-state). Central to this project was the extension of statutory law from the court and parliament across the whole national territory, thus expunging local customs that had arisen from lived experience of a community living and working in a specific physical environment. In seventeenth-century England this was a tense and contested affair, which played its role in the eventual collapse of Stuart absolutism, Civil War, and the ascent of parliament and constitutional monarchy. Olwig notes the importance of theatre in this process, especially the masque, with its creation of imaginary spaces in closed playhouses decorated with stage scenery designed to create the illusion of space. In various ways, Stuart cultural politics used landscape images to "naturalize" its legal and territorial claims. If the masque offered the court an illusion of a harmonious national space, the chorography expressed the continued vitality of a more regional political territoriality, in which lesser nobility and gentry drew upon the very customary and community attachments that they were expunging locally in order to resist the expanding authority of the crown at the national scale.<sup>15</sup>

Thus at both the local and national level, and in their political rivalries too, landscape emerged from *Landschaft* with a totally transformed meaning, and the transformation was at once social and spatial. Socially, landscape was divested of attachment to a local community and its customary law and handed to the "distanciated gaze"<sup>16</sup> of a property owner whose rights over the land were established and regulated by statute. Spatially, landscape was constructed as a bounded and measured area, an absolute space, represented through the scientific techniques of measured distance, geometrical survey, and linear perspective. In this respect, landscape should be understood as a direct expression of modernization.

### **Landscape, Romantic Nationalism, and Geography**

The European state system of absolute monarchies and territorial principalities established in the mid-seventeenth century by the Treaty of Westphalia, of which Stuart England was an example, endured as a geopolitical pattern until the Napoleonic wars of the early nineteenth century. While France's revolutionaries sought to extend across the continent universal principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity, they also embraced

the geopolitical principle that the state should be the direct expression of a nation as a natural entity bound to a given territory and finding cultural expression in a common language and common customs. In the case of France, the territory was contained within “natural limits” that, providentially for rationalists, took the geometrical form of a hexagon, whose six sides corresponded to the Channel, Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts, and the Alps, Pyrenees and Ardennes. This rigorous application of Cartesian space to national territory was applied locally in the replacement of the *ancien-régime*'s provinces with the new, regularly sized and shaped administrative spaces of the *département*, whose geometry was naturalized by naming the new units according to physical geography and topography: Loire, Vosges, Charente Atlantique, Alpes Maritimes. In each European country, nineteenth-century struggles to produce the modern nation-state sought to negotiate this tension between universal political principles, expressed in the language of mathematics, geometry, and statistics, and unique national identity, forged through the “natural” media of physical geography, language, folk culture, and custom. In these struggles, landscape emerges again as a vital field of expression and contestation.

The case of Germany is exemplary. The tension between political fragmentation and linguistic and cultural unity was partially resolved through the *Zollverein* and Prussian administrative and military authority, leading to unification in 1870. But the geopolitical question of territorializing the German nation within spatial boundaries that could be “naturalized” in a coherent way was never satisfactorily resolved, and has only ceased to be a source of international tension in the closing years of the twentieth century, with the emergence of the new spatiality represented by the end of the Cold War and the project of European unification. In Germany, as elsewhere in Europe and North America, an image of “national” landscape was constructed in the early years of the nineteenth century through romantic art and literature. The scenery of *Berg und Wald* with its strong Christian markings, captured by artists such as Caspar David Friedrich, reworked a tradition of German painting that can be traced to the emergence of the new, scenic understanding of landscape discussed earlier and its close connections with chorographic art in the work of Albrecht Altdorfer and other Danubian painters in the early sixteenth century.<sup>17</sup> This was also the archetypal landscape of German folk culture, as recovered by the Grimm brothers. However, such pictorial landscape images did not map directly onto the fragmented territory occupied by the German *Volk*. To provide a scientific cartography of German national space entailed, among other geopolitical strategies developed in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a reworking of *Landschaft*. This task was taken up by German geographers,

whose discipline was established earlier in the German universities than anywhere else in Europe and whose rigorous and sophisticated scientific theories gave German geography an intellectual dominance that lasted into the twentieth century, especially in the United States.

Among the scientific questions that dominated nineteenth-century German geography, especially after unification, those of the relationship between nation, state, and space (*Raum*) were central. Best known perhaps is the widely influential work of Friedrich Ratzel, whose theories of the organic nature of the state likened it to a creature in Darwinian struggle against other states through constant competition for territory. The influence of these ideas on military thinking lasted through two European wars, articulated most powerfully in the writings of the military geographer Karl Haushofer. Less familiar, but equally implicated in some of the more unsavory aspects of state policy well into the last century, was the German geographical fascination with settlement patterns and the appearance of landscape. Between the 1880s and the 1940s German geographers established a systematic study of the form and distribution of rural settlement types, generating such classifications as *Rundling* and *Strassendorf*. These were based on surveys of the layout and size of villages, hamlets, and scattered individual farmsteads, their relations with field systems, land tenure and use, modes of cultivation, pasturage, and woodland management. Landscape morphology, the study of visible forms of human occupancy, was understood to betray the organic connections between an autochthonous folk culture and its physical environment. For geographers such as August Meitzen and Siegfried Passarge, *Kulturlandschaft* revealed the abiding influence of *Naturlandschaft* on a people, expressing its ecological adjustment to geographical contingency across a region. Effectively, such study was a further stage in the evolving meaning of landscape. Here, the visual appearance of an area, developed in the modern concept of landscape, was being analyzed through selected forms to reveal a "natural" connection between a community and the land. While lacking the pictorial and aesthetic imperative of *landscape*, this scholarly definition of *Landschaft* did not depend on evidence of the customary legal and political relations that had underpinned the original German usage. The political imperative underlying this scholarship is revealed in the idea that there could be authentically *German* settlement types and landscapes, which careful morphological mapping would reveal. If the distribution of such a national landscape could be disclosed, a scientific case could be made for the true boundaries of the German *Raum*.<sup>18</sup>

The intellectual impact of this concept of landscape geography is particularly apparent in the United States, where German scholarship retained a powerful influence well into the twentieth century. The school

of environmental determinism, which dominated American geographical thought in the first two decades of the last century, attributed causal agency to the physical environment in explaining human occupancy and relations with nature. One of the strongest voices raised in criticism of this school was that of Carl O. Sauer. From a Midwestern German-speaking family, Sauer received his geographical training in Wisconsin, where he was introduced to German scholarship. His commitment to landscape study shared the German geographers' commitment to examining and explaining supposedly deep, organic connections between pre-modern cultures and the land. Sauer's commitment to the active agency of culture in shaping spaces, however, led to a firm rejection of environmental determinism, so that in his famous 1926 paper "The Morphology of Landscape," he argued for the reciprocal significance of both natural and cultural "factors" in the evolution of landscape, but stressed that "nature is the medium, culture the agent, the cultural landscape the result."<sup>19</sup> This methodological statement and Sauer's empirical work informed geographic practice in American landscape studies well into the 1970s and still finds resonance in such contemporary scholarly fields as environmental history. Further revealing the influence of German thinking, Sauer added to his landscape essay a brief section referring to the "aesthetic" dimension of landscape, in which he claims that however analytic and comprehensive the formal study of landscape morphology might be, there will always be a dimension of landscape that lies "beyond science," and which cannot be approached through formal study but only via the avenues of poetry and art. Innocent as such a claim might be from the pen of Carl Sauer, in 1920s Germany such sentiments were far more dangerous. The geographer Ewald Banse, today remembered if at all for his geopolitical collaboration with Haushofer and his extraordinary paean to German militarism in *Germany Prepares for War*, also wrote texts on landscape aesthetics, proclaiming that the superior vital spirit of the German people was rooted in the material and aesthetic qualities of its unique landscape.<sup>20</sup> Such ideas betray a close association of German *Landschaft* study with political ideology, an association that would have disturbing practical effects with the rise of National Socialism.

The German "landscape indicators" tradition of settlement geography reached its intellectual climax in the theoretical work of Walter Christaller and others in the mid-twentieth century. In addition to mapping and analyzing traditional rural settlement forms, this group went on to apply classical economics to model hypothetical settlement distributions and generate purely theoretical landscapes. Starting with an isotropic surface—undifferentiated and uninterrupted—they asked how supply and demand curves in a world of perfect competition and utility maximization would generate an efficient distribution of "central places" to

serve the needs of retail, transportation, and administration.<sup>21</sup> These spatial theories and the “economic landscapes” they generated became primary objects of geographical study internationally in the postwar world up to the late 1960s. Few geographers outside Germany who took up spatial science were aware at that time that this tradition of settlement landscape study was deeply compromised, not only by its connections with German geopolitics but through Christaller’s work for Himmler. The geographer’s theories were used in planning the resettlement of the eastern Slavic lands captured after 1939, directly connecting geographical landscape studies and the Nazi project of spatial domination and population engineering.<sup>22</sup> The former Polish and Soviet territories were divided by German geographers into authentically German zones, where farmers from the Rhineland and other “crowded” rural regions could be relocated, and spaces under German control but occupied by lesser (Slavic) races, which were to be managed in the interests of the *Reich*. According to the plan, the former zones were to be reshaped and redesigned through the management of field patterns, farmstead architecture, and woodland planting to resemble an ideal of “German” landscape, while the latter regions, cleansed of “undesirables,” could be treated precisely as an isotropic plain, a non-place whose landscape design was merely a matter of managerial efficiency and productivity.

Lest we imagine that the German case is entirely unique, it is worth recalling that in other European countries, too, nationalist schools of landscape painting, regional literature, and folk culture emerged in the nineteenth century as part of the project of shaping nationalism through landscape. In Britain, John Constable and J.M.W. Turner founded a strongly national tradition of landscape painting; in the United States a similar role was taken by Thomas Cole and Edwin Church; in Canada the “Group of Seven” sought to develop a pictorial language that expressed a uniquely Canadian spirit in the material forms of landscape. As early as 1838, the internationally influential English cultural critic John Ruskin subtitled his *Poetry of Landscape*, “the architecture of the nations of Europe considered in association with natural scenery and national character.”<sup>23</sup> And belief in the importance of preserving historical patterns and forms of settlement landscape at both regional and national levels as expressions of the “authentic character” of the nation may be traced through such diverse practices as Scandinavian open-air folk museum re-creations of folk housing types, English school children’s field study classes teaching the identification of “British” wild flowers, and American parkways designed to provide citizens with sentiments of national pride in the dramatic landscape vistas opened up from their automobile windshields.<sup>24</sup>

Perhaps the most powerful expression of how the relations between concepts of *Landschaft* and landscape on the one hand and the modern concept of absolute space as a container on the other have found political expression in the modern nation-state is the topographical map series. Each Western nation has an official topographic series covering the national territory and divided into map sheets at various scales. To recreational users—hikers, cyclists and other tourists—the familiar scale of the topographic map is between 1:25,000 and 1:100,000, with 1:50,000 the most widely available in most countries.<sup>25</sup> This scale has practical advantages in that a sheet of easily manageable proportions for reading “in the field” covers some 350 square kilometers, about as far as the eye may see landscape elements on a clear day, with a level of detail that permits the illustration of such features as topographic variation at the ten meter contour interval, the form of village settlements and location of individual farms, generalized land-use patterns, local place names, and so on.<sup>26</sup> In European states, the project of national topographic mapping dates to the late eighteenth century, and was closely tied to military defense of the national territory (thus in Britain the map is published by the *Ordnance Survey* whose title reflects its early use for artillery purposes; in Italy it is published by the *Istituto Geografico Militare*) and to the systematic inventory and bureaucratic regulation of the modern state. But it also illustrates the centrality of landscape in framing national identity and difference. The area covered by the modern topographic map corresponds broadly to the conventional scale of chorographic description. Indeed, it was the interests of eighteenth-century chorographers and antiquarians that ensured that archaeological sites were marked on the British topographic series with different lettering denoting prehistoric, Roman, and medieval sites. Variations in the landscape elements illustrated, signage conventions, and color on topographic maps reflect differences in both the physical environments and the cultural predilections of different nations. Thus Swiss maps are spectacular in their use of color and shading to dramatize mountainous relief, emphasizing the principal landscape object of national pride; French topographic maps mark the population of every commune, a reflection of the long shadow that population loss and stagnation cast across national pride in the nineteenth century. In both their similarities and their differences, these topographic series act as pictorial expressions of national landscapes and their role in constituting and expressing cultural identities within the boundaries of national space. Possession, use, and familiarity with the topographic map and its ways of representing landscape is regarded in many countries as a mark of citizenship and a guide to the correct way of seeing and conducting oneself in the actual landscape.

## Landscape's Deceptions, New Spatialities, and Meanings

This historical survey of changing meanings and relations between *Landschaft* and landscape reveals a complex and flexible way of describing spatial relations between humans and nature that has acted to frame a variety of social and political contexts. Much of landscape's authority comes precisely from what one writer has called its "duplicity," its capacity to veil historically specific social relations behind the smooth and often aesthetic appearance of "nature."<sup>27</sup> Landscape acts to "naturalize" what is deeply cultural. For example, the serpentine lines of manicured pasture, copses and reflecting lake of the English landscape park obscure beneath their "lines of beauty"<sup>28</sup> a tense and often violent social struggle between common rights and exclusive property; the image of a tropical island world of natural abundance and fertility depicted by the French artist Paul Gauguin and countless tourist images masks behind apparent naturalness a world of colonial oppression, disease, and seedy sexuality. Much recent scholarship has sought to unmask and denaturalize landscape, paying as much attention to its pictorial and literary representations as to material spaces themselves.<sup>29</sup> In refusing to take landscape "at face value," such landscape study moves beyond *Landschaft* in its original Germanic sense, beyond the pictorial English sense of *landscape* as an aesthetically unified space, and beyond the traditional geographical sense of landscape as an expression of ecological relations between land and life. It draws upon and contributes to the revised ways of conceptualizing space with which I opened this discussion, regarding space as a function of natural and social processes, but also as an outcome that in turn has social agency, able to create and transform the material world.

Landscape's revival within contemporary geography derives from those aspects embedded in its conceptual history that allow it to transcend the modernist dualism (perhaps dialectic) of nature and culture. A consistent feature of landscape's various expressions is that it is *simultaneously* a natural and a cultural space. Thus, for example, the landscape of Southern California today is in large measure the outcome of a suite of images of the good life, many themselves embodied in landscape images—of bungalows set in orange groves, of perfect bodies stretched over golden sands, of a dark, dystopian urbanism of mechanized violence—projected onto the physical region. These landscapes have drawn upon material elements of the physical and social geography of Southern California, to be sure—they would lack material effect if they did not. They also draw upon much deeper historical landscape themes derived from the cultural resources of Western art and literature: of arcadia, of the palm-fringed isle, of the pathological city. And they work through various media: art, photography, music, and the movies. Landscape images



tap into the desires and fears of living people who respond by creating imaginative geographies that shape in large measure their embodied experience of California as landscape. To interrogate such manufactured landscape images for the “accuracy” and authenticity of their geographical descriptions is to ignore the most interesting questions about landscape today: how it gathers together nature, culture and imagination within a spatial manifold, reentering the material world as an active agent in its continuous reshaping.

## Conclusion

Landscape’s current work is not of course confined to the disciplines of geography and history. Architects and environmentalists have also found in the term renewed conceptual vigor, for relating building to its circumambient world and for grasping the reciprocal relations between the natural and human worlds respectively. But my focus here has been geographical and historical, tracing landscape’s long journey from its medieval roots in *Landschaft* to its contemporary capacity to capture and materialize the idea of relative space. Throughout, landscape betrays an extraordinary flexibility in its capacity to bring together the interests of geographers and historians as these have responded to changing social contexts. While consistently focusing attention on local and regional scale, landscape is not inherently territorializing, and can readily be adapted to more relative conceptions of space. As historians reconnect with questions of space and spatiality, recognizing that *where* events occur contributes a great deal toward understanding how and why they occur, landscape, like *place*, can play a significant role in the conceptual usages of historical scholarship. Awareness of its complex history and of its capacity to bring together nature and culture as a spatial actor can only serve further to sharpen landscape’s scholarly value.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Martin W. Lewis and Kären E. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1997).

<sup>2</sup> The ‘Black Atlantic’ is that region comprised by the cultural, economic and geopolitical connections that have evolved during the past six hundred years between coastal Europe, western Africa, the Caribbean and the eastern seaboard of North and South America, and the area in which shaping the experience of Black Africans and their descendants is central. Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London and New York: Verso, 1993); Stuart Hall, ed., *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, in association with the Open University, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization* (London and New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1994).

<sup>4</sup> Robert David Sack, *Conceptions of Space in Social Thought: A Geographic Perspective* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980); David Harvey, *Spaces of Hope* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> Rose Marie San Juan, *Rome: A City Out of Print* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001).

<sup>6</sup> Richard Hartshorne, *The Nature of Geography: A Philosophical Enquiry* (Washington, D.C.: Association of American Geographers, 1939); Robert Eric Dickinson, *City, Region and Regionalism: A Geographical Contribution to Human Ecology* (London: Routledge and Paul, 1960).

<sup>7</sup> Doreen Massey, "A Global Sense of Place," in Trevor Barnes and Derek Gregory, eds., *Reading Human Geography* (London: Arnold, 1997), 237–245.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Curry, "Towards a World Without Maps: Lessons from Ptolemy and Postal Codes," *Annals, Association of American Geographers*, forthcoming 2004.

<sup>9</sup> I am simplifying a complex argument here.

<sup>10</sup> Kenneth Olwig, *Landscape, Nature and the Body Politic: From Britain's Renaissance to America's New World* (Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>13</sup> James Turner, *The Politics of Landscape: Rural Scenery and Society in English Poetry, 1630–1660* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976); Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Denis Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, 2d ed. (Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998).

<sup>14</sup> Denis Cosgrove, "Landscape and the European Sense of Sight—Eyeing Nature," in Kay Anderson et al., eds., *Handbook of Cultural Geography* (London: Sage, 2003), 249–268.

<sup>15</sup> Olwig, *Landscape*; Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*.

<sup>16</sup> My use of the term "gaze" draws upon feminist theories of vision that have associated gaze with an actively appropriating and mastering form of vision. See G. Rose, *Feminism and Geography* (Cambridge: Polity, 1993). To speak of landscape as a gaze thus suggests the control and authority of a landowner. "Distanced" gaze implies more than a physical distance between viewer and viewed, although this is critical to landscape and actualized by selecting a high point from which the area can be seen spread out before the eye. It implies a psychological and social distance, from direct physical and social engagement with the space observed. See C. Ginzburg, *Wooden Eyes: Nine Reflections on Distance* (New York, 2001).

<sup>17</sup> Christopher S. Wood, *Albrecht Altdorfer and the Origins of Landscape* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (London: Harper Collins, 1995).

<sup>18</sup> Friedrich Ratzel, "The territorial growth of states," in J. Agnew, et al., eds., *Human Geography: An Essential Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 525–535. Alan Mayhew, *Rural Settlement and Farming in Germany* (London: Batsford, 1973); August Meitzen, *Siedlungs- und Agrarwesen der Westgermanen und Ostgermanen, der Kelten, Finnen und Slaven*, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1895).

<sup>19</sup> Carl Ortwin Sauer, "The Morphology of Landscape," in John Leighly, ed., *Land and Life: A Selection From the Writings of Carl Ortwin Sauer* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, [1925] 1969).

<sup>20</sup> Ewald Banse, *Germany Prepares for War* (London: L. Dickson, 1934); Ewald Banse, *Deutsche Landschaft und Seele: Neue Wege der Untersuchung und Gestaltung* (Munich, Berlin: R. Oldenbourg, 1928); Ewald Banse, *Geographie und Wehrwille: Gesammelte Studien zu den Problemen Landschaft und Mensch, Raum und Volk, Krieg und Wehr* (Breslau: W. G. Korn, 1934).

<sup>21</sup> Walter Christaller, *Central Places in Southern Germany*, trans. Carlisle W. Baskin (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966).

- <sup>22</sup> Gert Gröning and Joachim Woschke-Buhlmann, "Die Landespflege als Instrument nationalsozialistischer Eroberungspolitik: Ein Standort-gerechter Beitrag," *Arch Plus* 81 (1985): 46–59.
- <sup>23</sup> Denis Cosgrove, "John Ruskin and the Geographical Imagination," *Geographical Review* 69, no. 1 (1979): 43–62.
- <sup>24</sup> Thomas Zeller, "'The Landscape's Crown': Landscape, Perceptions and Modernizing Effects of the German *Autobahn* System," in David Nye, ed., *Technologies of Landscape: Reaping to Recycling* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 218–238.
- <sup>25</sup> In the UK until the 1970s the standard scale was 1 inch to 1 mile (1:63,360), while in the US the equivalent scale remains 1:62,000, reflecting attempts in the early Republic to "rationalize" imperial measures.
- <sup>26</sup> The sheet size of topographic maps relates historically to the scale of military engagement and artillery distances in the mid-nineteenth century.
- <sup>27</sup> Stephen Daniels, "Marxism, Culture, and the Duplicity of Landscape," in Richard Peet and Nigel Thrift, eds., *New Models in Geography*, vol. 2 (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 196–220.
- <sup>28</sup> The serpentine "line of beauty," initially theorized by the artist William Hogarth, was adopted by eighteenth-century English landscape gardeners as a formal design principle.
- <sup>29</sup> W. J. T. Mitchell, ed., *Landscape and Power* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Don Mitchell, *The Lie of the Land: Migrant Workers and the California Landscape* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

## EMPLACING MEMORY THROUGH THE CITY: THE NEW BERLIN

Lecture delivered at the "Spatial Turn in History" Symposium  
German Historical Institute, February 19, 2004

**Karen E. Till**

Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London

*June, 1999*

*In the center of Berlin is a wooden fence. It was erected to protect the 4.2 acre construction lot destined to become the Central Memorial to Murdered European Jews. Plastered on the most-trafficked corner of this fence is an ever-changing montage of posters, political graffiti, and enlarged newspaper articles about the memorial yet to be built. While this fence is a temporary structure in the landscape, it marks contested social identities.*

*Large posters put up by the citizens' group responsible for the memorial announce "Here is the place!" On one, a familiar historical photo depicts a bedraggled elderly man wearing a thick coat stitched with a Star of David. A lonely figure, he reminds contemporary onlookers of the unjust death he and others suffered. His image haunts the city and our imaginations. It is a familiar face, one that some tourist walking by might recognize from black and white photographs previously viewed at museum exhibitions or in historical films. As a document, this photo provides evidence that he existed, and necessarily, given the history of Jews in the Third Reich, that he was persecuted. Still, he remains nameless. It is not clear who captured the image (Nazi soldiers? Local residents?), why he was photographed (Documentation? Propaganda?), or where he was when the photograph was taken (A processing center? A train station? A street in this neighborhood?).*

*Printed on a small band at the top of another poster, a different citizens' initiative invokes the authority of Theodor Adorno: "The past can only be dealt with when the causes of the past are removed." Viewing the memorial as yet another attempt to "draw a final line" (Schlußstrich) under the past, this citizens' group advocates discussion and debate about the continued presence of anti-Semitism and xenophobia in Germany. For them, the past is always constituted by the present; the violent histories of National Socialism and the Holocaust should be left open to interpretation indefinitely. They see the memorial as symptomatic of contemporary Germans' desire to put an end to discussions about their social responsibility for the past.*

*Someone else has posted a handwritten sign that declares: "The discussion IS a memorial!" Another asserts: "The memorial is already there" only to be*

*emended to read: "The memorial is already here." These proclamations point to the very real presence of the memorial in Berlin and in Germany's national imaginary despite its lack of a sculptural form in 1999.*

*The fence protects an empty lot.<sup>1</sup>*

The "New Berlin" represents the shimmering promise of Germany's future. During the decade following reunification, city marketers deployed images of construction cranes to showcase the city's transition from an icon of Cold War division to a spectacle of (Western) cosmopolitanism. As one city marketer for the public-private group Partners for Berlin, an organization that runs summer tours through Berlin's building sites, remarked: "Berlin is a large architectural exhibition. Each and every year things change. . . . In Berlin, unlike other cities such as Munich, I have to go to these places again and again because things change so fast."<sup>2</sup>

And they have changed indeed. The sheer scale of construction and renovation that has occurred after 1990 in the center of the city is highly unusual in Europe. Germany's national capital displays its new multi-billion-Euro projects at sites of former Cold War division, including: centrally located corporate developments at Potsdamer Platz and Checkpoint Charlie; transportation networks connecting East and West Berlin; and a federal government district stretching across the River Spree. Urban renewal projects in the former East include a museum island (recently classified as one of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites) and gentrified turn-of-the-century residential courtyards (now filled with fashionable loft dwellings, cafés, boutiques, galleries, and design and architecture studios). Despite the merger of "sister" cultural institutions following reunification, Berlin now rivals London as a central European cultural center, boasting world-class museums, galleries, opera houses, and alternative art scenes.<sup>3</sup>

Even as the contemporary city has been given a radiant material form through buildings and districts designed by world-famous architects, Berlin remains distinctive for its haunted geographies.<sup>4</sup> The material landscapes of the city shimmer with the hopes and desires of Berlins imagined in the past and historic Berlins imagined today. Specters of past and future become unexpectedly felt, even made visible, when marketers imagine yet another "new" Berlin, historic preservationists and local initiatives label artifacts and landscapes as culturally significant, citizens' groups discover formerly abandoned spaces, or tourists move through packaged pilgrimage routes. Places of memory, including memorials, museums, street names, and public commemorative art, continue to be (re)established and debated—sites that communicate the desires and fears of returning to traumatic national pasts.

Berlin, in other words, is a city that cannot be contained by time, by marketing representations of “the new.” It is a place with “heterogeneous references, ancient scars,” a city that “create[s] bumps on the smooth utopias” of its imagined futures.<sup>5</sup> As the capital of five different historical Germanies, Berlin represents the “unstable optic identity” of the nation, to borrow Rudy Koshar’s words, for it is the city where, more than any other city, German nationalism and modernity have been staged and restaged, represented and contested.<sup>6</sup>

Not surprisingly, numerous scholarly works exist about the politics of memory in the postwar city, including debates about “mastering” the National Socialist, and more recently, GDR pasts (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*), and about the relationships between social memory and history, the latter contributing to a larger interdisciplinary discussion.<sup>7</sup> In much of this literature, the city—and place more generally—is treated as a stage upon which the drama of history unfolds, as a bounded material site, or as an outcome of linear chronologies.<sup>8</sup> But places are never merely backdrops for action, nor are they texts from which the past can be easily read.<sup>9</sup> Always in the process of becoming, places are fluid mosaics and moments of memory and metaphor, scene and experience, dream and matter that create and mediate social spaces and temporalities. Through place-making, people mark social spaces as haunted—thresholds through which they can return to a past, make contact with loss and desire, contain unwanted presences, even confront lingering injustices.

While the literature about social memory is replete with spatial metaphors, most scholars neither acknowledge the politically contestable and contradictory nature of space, place, and scale, nor examine the ways that social memory may be spatially constituted.<sup>10</sup> Nuala Johnson has argued, for example, that the temporal framework of “traditional vs. modern” implicit in Pierre Nora’s work subsumes the geographies of remembrance under the histories of memory in ways that treat space as epiphenomenal to historical process.<sup>11</sup> Steve Legg has demonstrated how Nora’s nostalgia for the ideal of a time when memory was “real” and state power coherent prevents him from critically engaging with heterogeneous claimants to the idea of the French nation.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, scholars writing about memory who assume a linear movement between past, present, and future may inadvertently ignore how particular places constitute and structure temporal and social relations in distinctive ways. When historical process is narrated according to a modernist ideal of (progressive) change, and place is mapped as a stable material (and hence knowable Cartesian) location of continuity and decline (or any other temporal category classified as epochal), temporality is implicitly undertheorized.<sup>13</sup>

Understanding place conceptually as creating and illuminating complex relations and interconnections between other places, people, matter,

spaces, and times, in other words, has far-reaching implications for scholars of memory and historians more generally. Examining how memory is emplaced through the space-times of the city draws our scholarly attention not only to the complex histories of memory, but also to the ways in which individuals and groups think about time as a kind of spatial knowledge about their world(s). People experience the temporal as a social-spatial relationship. Discontinuous histories (and their distinct spaces and times) fold and intersect through place. If place might be thought of as offering possible entrances and exits to numerous passages through which (and where) whispers from pasts, echoes from anticipated futures, and haunted presences momentarily hover, temporality becomes rich with possibility.

The discovery of this area was at the end of the 1970s. I can remember well . . . back then the [Martin] Gropius building was under reconstruction—it was not in use. I remember going home and telling my parents that the historical exhibition I was working on about Prussia would be displayed in the Gropius building; it was not called that then but the ‘ehemaliges Kunstgewerbemuseum’ (former Museum of Industrial Arts and Crafts). Well, that was once at Prinz-Albrecht-Straße, now called Niederkirchnerstraße. My mother, who had survived the Third Reich hiding in Berlin, said that this is one of the worst addresses in Berlin because that was where the Gestapo was. I became interested, and a couple of other people also tried to discover what was there because of the reconstruction of the building. This is how a group of people got together—I do not claim to have discovered this area—others did that at the same time or maybe a bit earlier . . . Several people came together and formed a citizens’ initiative that argued that when you reconstruct the Martin Gropius Bau, you cannot ignore the history of the adjacent places. You can see their work in connection with the larger movement of the *Geschichtswerkstätten* (history workshops) at the time. Their slogan was ‘act, dig where you stand.’  
– Andreas Nachama, historian, Berliner Festspiele GmbH; current managing director of the International Documentation Center Topography of Terror in Berlin, 1993 interview.

Walter Benjamin, who paid particular attention to the detritus and corpses of early twentieth-century modernity, provides scholars of memory with a wide-ranging collection of literary, historical, and urban explorations about the dreams and violence left in the wake of historical progress. In his notes “On the Theory of Knowledge, Theory of Progress” in the *Arcades Project*, Benjamin offers his radical understanding of historical materialism through the concept of the constellation—a figural (*bildlich*) truth that emerges at a particular moment and context of danger,

when and where the knowledge of the what-has-been (*Gewesen*) becomes suddenly recognizable (*erkennbar*). This moment of recognizing a familiar, yet new, image takes place, emerges, through the time-space (*Zeitraum*) of the now.<sup>14</sup> As Benjamin explains in an oft-cited passage,

It's not that what is past casts its light on what is present, or what is present its light on what is past; rather [the dialectical] image is that wherein 'what has been' comes together in a flash with 'the now' (*Jetztzeit*) to form a constellation. In other words, image is dialectics at a standstill. For while the relation of the present to the past is a purely temporal, continuous one, the relation of what has been to the now is dialectical: it is not progression, but image, suddenly emergent.<sup>15</sup>

At Auschwitz-Birkenau I saw an elderly lady who was a survivor from the United States. She herself was not in Auschwitz, but lost most of her family there. I saw her standing in front of the crematorium and approaching the oven. You could literally see how something formed in her throat, how she couldn't breathe any more. She gasped for air and then started crying. After she had cried she came closer to the ovens, touched them, looked through this hole, put her head in. She was no longer touching this oven as an instrument for murder, but as a shroud—an object that touched the dead in their last minutes of living.

– Hanno Loewy, Director of the Fritz Bauer Holocaust Institute in Frankfurt, 1993 interview

Overlapping discontinuous histories—histories that are often emotionally charged—intersect through place. Yet individuals often construct and understand places as having a unique set of qualities that derive from a single internalized history. The seemingly stable material authority of a landscape is often treated as an objective fact that can be uncovered, located, and made visible to the objective observer. Space is represented as the horizontal plane and container of time's geological deposits. Knowledge of the past is fixed spatially; material truths are believed to be unpacked through stable temporal-spatial layers.

Yet as Simon Schama has written, some enduring myths about the landscape are like ghostly outlines beneath the contemporary, accessed by “digging down through layers of memories and representations toward the primary bedrock.”<sup>16</sup> As people search for this underlying essence, a seemingly unchanging reality, as they dig toward a mythical bedrock or truth, they encounter instead transgenerational phantoms.<sup>17</sup> How does one dig when time and space intersect, fold upon each other, and are mutually co-created? What does it mean to dig for ghostly presences?



Rather than think about historical truths as discovered facts, as found objects to display in the glass cases of our belated scholarship, Benjamin argues that we must pay attention to the practice of the dig, of how we assay our spades.<sup>18</sup> As we dig into new sites and even deeper through old ones, we may come to acknowledge how individuals (including ourselves as scholars) and groups map known and unknown places, search for traces, return to familiar haunts. For Benjamin, through the dig, through contact with the sensuous, emotional, and material everyday geographies of objects, paths, sounds, dreams, and movements situated in old and new contexts, we may awaken suddenly to an already known consciousness of the what-has-been and the what-is-to-come in the now. At this moment and place of awakening, this now of recognizability, the temporal momentum of the dialectical image moves neither forward nor backwards, but idles, shimmering with possibility.<sup>19</sup>

I remember when I decided to become an educator in this field [of the history of National Socialism] the fear I had when I began to look through archival materials. I kept searching through the documents, and especially the photos. It is an awful feeling not knowing whom you might find. I remember studying each photo, looking for the image of my father or uncle.

– German seminar leader and tour guide for the German Resistance Memorial Center in Berlin, 1992 interview

The many controversies in Germany over the meanings of particular places, such as the twelve-year-long controversy over the Holocaust Memorial, demonstrate that the past is never settled, sedimented, neatly arranged in horizontal layers. In the new Berlin, debates have raged precisely over what pasts should be remembered—where, and through what forms—as well as what ghosts should be evoked. Following reunification, people continued to make memorials, create historical exhibitions, dig up ruins, and go on tours to explore their social relations to a violent national past and forge possible futures. They made places as open wounds to feel uncomfortable.<sup>20</sup>

There is always a tension, a caesura and excess, when marking absence and loss, longing and desire through place. People establish institutions that are socially classified as temples of continuous historical time, such as museums or memorials, in ways that encrypt yet other memories, spaces, and times.<sup>21</sup> Or they may attempt to stop time by marking everyday landscapes as historic, to locate and acknowledge their complex emotional and social relations to the past. At sites associated with acts of violence and social injustice, places may be constituted as subjects or eye-witnesses to dark pasts. As part of Daniel Libeskind's proposal for the future of the so-called 'ground zero' site in Manhattan, for example, the slurry

wall was preserved as an authentic artifact, a material trace representing the trauma of the recent past and interpreted as symbolizing the strength of the American people, the body politic. The creation of the wall as artifact, as relic, narrates particular historical times and social spaces of the nation.

Through each place, multiple and discontinuous histories intersect, each of which have distinctive spaces and times. People make places of memory to work emotionally, socially, culturally, and politically for their needs and in the process, search for meaning about themselves, their worlds and times. The promise of a resurrected past through symbols, desires, and material objects—through place-making—gives some people hope. For some, it is a promise of redemption.

But as people search, as they make places, as they ritually return, they often encounter, even evoke, ghosts.<sup>22</sup> Some places are haunted because, while made as traces from the past, they are also “figures strained toward the future across a fabled present, figures we inscribe because they can outlast us, beyond the present of their inscription.”<sup>23</sup> As Steve Pile explains, “ghosts . . . haunt the places where cities are out of joint; out of joint in terms of both time and space.”<sup>24</sup> Sometimes, as we traverse the spaces of the city, we may encounter ghosts that may awaken us from the slumber of our taken-for-granted worlds. We may take notice, even only momentarily, of the pasts and possible futures illuminated in the emergent presence of the now.

*June, 2002*

*Another construction fence in the middle of Berlin. This one protects the on-again, off-again construction of the international documentation center called the Topography of Terror. It is located where the former Gestapo, Reich Security Service, and Reich SS headquarters were located, and in the 1980s became known as the Gestapo Terrain. After nearly a decade of citizen activism, protest actions, and city-sponsored public art competitions and discussions, the Topography of Terror was created in 1987 as a new type of place, as a site of perpetrators. It is now recognized as a city and national institution, belonging to an emerging central memory district in the new Berlin that will include the Jewish Museum designed by Daniel Libeskind; the soon-to-be unveiled Central Holocaust Memorial to Murdered European Jews designed by Peter Eisenmann; and the future international documentation center for the Topography of Terror designed by Peter Zumthor.*

*The Topography of Terror, like other places of memory, is a hybrid space. It is part museum, memorial, educational institution, archaeological terrain, activist site, and more recently has become a pilgrimage destination for hungry tourists, perversely curious about Germany's spectacles and Nazi secrets. Each of these social functions has different histories, and each of these histories has distinct spaces and times. Through this place they intersect.*

*In the 1970s and 1980s, for example, some planners and city officials wanted to restore historic buildings in the area as part of a larger urban renewal project in West Berlin and Germany. They proposed preserving the Martin Gropius Bau, located next to the terrain, for a cultural center and later for a historical museum that would evoke the rich historical legacy of the first German nation. History workshop movements and architectural historians also involved in urban renewal projects at the time, such as the Internationale Bauausstellung Berlin, conducted historical research and found that this area was the former administrative center of the Nazi police and SS state. Human rights activists and survivors' groups soon demanded that a memorial be established to commemorate those who were persecuted and murdered by the Nazi regime. Citizens' initiatives formed to make visible the postwar history of official denial.*

*People came together to dig, literally and symbolically, for their pasts and contemporary identities. After much debate, this place became known as the open wound of the city and nation. It became so successful that a decision was made to build a permanent center at the site. Twenty years later, a temporary historical exhibit presents the history of the rise of National Socialism through the multiple histories of the terrain, displayed in simple black-and-white placards located in an excavation just south of one of the only remaining parts of the Berlin Wall.*

*Today I notice tourists using the new audio tour, and wander to the temporary information container to find out more information. I see the visitor book and begin leafing through its pages, noticing the signatures and comments of visitors from different countries. As an American, I take special interest in reading the entries written by other visitors from the U.S. about September 11, 2001:*

5/11/02: What goes around comes around. Watch out Arab World—the Americans are awake.

6/14/02: To any Americans passing through this exhibit: Think about the early days of the Reich, as they took away the rights of *all* German people. Then think about what is going on at home in the name of counterterrorism. Insert the word “Arab” for “Jew,” or any group or nationality. Please understand that this was written by a New Yorker, but one who believes that people who want power will use *any* situation, *any* excuse to grab it. We are so fortunate to have our freedom. Do *NOT* give it up.

## Notes

Edited vignettes in this essay come from Karen Till, *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, forthcoming 2005), with permission.

<sup>1</sup> Unattributed italicized passages in this article are the author's edited ethnographic field-notes.

<sup>2</sup> Personal interview with author (Berlin, 2000).

<sup>3</sup> Manuela Hoelterhoff, “The Art of Renewal,” *Condé Nast Traveler* (May 2002): 170–179, 253–254 ([www.cntraveler.com](http://www.cntraveler.com)); Boris Grésillon, “Berlin, Cultural Metropolis: Changes in

the Cultural Geography of Berlin Since Reunification," *Ecumene* 6 (1999): 284–294; Alan Riding, "Seeking a New Identity, Berlin Shakes Up Its Art Legacy," *New York Times* online (*NYTimes.com*) (March 12, 2002). Grésillon counted 9 symphonic orchestras, 3 opera houses, 880 choirs, 350 galleries, more than 100 museums, and 140 theaters in 1999.

<sup>4</sup> On hauntings, see Monica Degan and Keith Hetherington, guest eds., Special Issue, "Spatial Hauntings," *Space and Culture* 11/12 (2001); Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994); Tim Edensor, "Haunting in the Ruins: Matter and Immateriality," *Space and Culture* 11/12 (2001): 42–51; Sonja Kuflinec, "[Walking Through A] Ghost Town: Cultural Hauntology in Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina or Mostar: A Performance Review," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 18 no. 2 (1998): 81–95; Steve Pile, "Spectral Cities: Where the Repressed Returns and Other Short Stories," in *Habitus: A Sense of Place*, ed. Jean Hillier and Emma Rooksby (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 219–239; Karen Till, "Hauntings, Memory, Place," in *The New Berlin*, forthcoming.

<sup>5</sup> Michel de Certeau and Luce Giard, "Ghosts in the City," in *The Practice of Everyday Life: Volume 2: Living and Cooking*, ed. Michel de Certeau, Luce Giard, Pierre Mayol, trans. Timothy Tomasik (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1998, rev. ed.), 133.

<sup>6</sup> Rudy Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts: Preservation and National Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

<sup>7</sup> For a selection on *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* in the history of German social memory see Aleida Assmann and Ute Frevert, *Geschichtsvergessenheit - Geschichtsversessenheit: Vom Umgang mit deutschen Vergangenheiten nach 1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1999); Ralph Giordano, *Die zweite Schuld oder von der Last Deutscher zu sein* (Munich: Knaur, 1990); and Manfred Kittel, *Die Legende von der zweiten Schuld: Vergangenheitsbewältigung in der Ära Adenauer* (Berlin, 1993). See the special issue of *German Politics and Society* 27 (1992) guest-edited by William Donahue, Rachel Freudenburg, and Daniel Reynolds about the so-called second *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* after 1990. On the politics of normalization as part of the history of social memory in Germany, see Timothy Garten Ash, *In Europe's Name* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993); Peter Baldwin, ed., *Reworking the Past: Hitler, The Holocaust, and the Historians' Debate* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990); Peter Bender, *Das Ende des ideologischen Zeitalters: Die Europäisierung Europas* (Berlin: Severin and Siedler, 1981); Stefan Berger, *The Search for Normality: National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Germany since 1800* (Providence and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1997); Mary Fulbrook, *The Divided Nation: A History of Germany 1918–1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Jürgen Habermas, *The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historians' Debate*, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholson (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989); Heinrich August Winkler, "Rebuilding of a Nation," *Daedalus* 123 (1994): 107–127. On Berlin, see John Borneman, *After the Wall: East Meets West in the New Berlin* (New York: Basic Books, 1991); Hermine G. De Soto, "(Re)inventing Berlin: Dialectics of Power, Symbols and Pasts, 1990–1995," *City and Society* 1 (1996): 29–49; Jane Kramer, *The Politics of Memory: Looking for Germany in the New Germany* (New York: Random House, 1996); Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); and Alexandra Richie, *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 1998). For an overview of the history and memory discussions since the 1980s, see P. Carrier, "Places, Politics and the Archiving of Contemporary Memory in Pierre Nora's *Les lieux de mémoire*," in *Memory and Methodology*, ed. Sarah Radstone (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2000) and Kerwin Klein, "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse (Historiography, History, Jews, Holocaust, 'After-Auschwitz')," *Representations* (2000): 127–150.

<sup>8</sup> For exceptions, see Andreas Huyssen, "The Voids of Berlin," *Critical Inquiry* 24 (1997): 57–81; Jennifer Jordan, "Collective Memory and Locality in Global Cities," in *Global Cities: Cinema, Architecture, and Urbanism in a Digital Age*, ed. Patrice Petro and Linda Krause (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers, 2003), 31–48; Rudy Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces: Artifacts of German Memory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); and Karen Till, "Place and

the Politics of Memory: A Geo-Ethnography of Museums and Memorials in Berlin" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1996).

<sup>9</sup> The literature on place is enormous. For a selection of approaches in social and cultural geography, see Paul Adams, Steven Hoelscher, and Karen Till, eds., *The Textures of Place: Rethinking Humanist Geographies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2001); John Agnew, *Place and Politics* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1988); Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology and Transgression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); James Duncan and David Ley, eds., *place/culture/representation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); J. Nicholas Entrikin, *The Betweenness of Place*; Michael Keith and Steve Pile, eds., *Place and the Politics of Identity* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994); and Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977). In cultural anthropology, see Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997). For an overview of place in the history of Western philosophy, see Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place* (Berkeley: UC Press 1997).

<sup>10</sup> Derek Alderman, "Creating a New Geography of Memory in the South: (Re)Naming the Streets in Honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.," *Southeastern Geographer* 36 (1996): 51–69; Karen Till, "Places of Memory," in *A Companion for Political Geography*, ed. John Agnew, Katharyne Mitchell, Gearoid O'Tuathail (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 289–301

<sup>11</sup> Nuala Johnson, "The Spectacle of Memory: Ireland's Remembrance of the Great War, 1919," *Journal of Historical Geography* 25 (1999): 36–56.

<sup>12</sup> Steve Legg, "Contesting and Surviving Memory: Space, Nation and Nostalgia in *Les Lieux de Mémoire*," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, forthcoming 2005.

<sup>13</sup> Historians, of course, have discussed the assumptions underlying linear historical narratives that are implied to be objective histories. See Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Charles Maier, "Consigning the Twentieth Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era," *American Historical Review* 105 (2000): 807–831; and Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1987).

<sup>14</sup> Walter Benjamin, "Convolute N," *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (based on the German volume edited by Rolf Tiedemann) (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999), 456–488.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, Convolute [N2a, 3], 462. In his earlier writings, Benjamin contrasted the time of the dialectical image with the time of Hegel's dialectic. For Benjamin, Hegel understands time as the "properly historical, if not psychological, time of thinking. The time differential in which the dialectical image is real is unknown to him [Hegel]. The temporal moment in the dialectical image can only be determined through confrontation with the now of recognizability." In *Arcades Project*, "First Sketches," <Q°, 21>, 867.

<sup>16</sup> Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (London: Harper Collins, 1995), 16–17.

<sup>17</sup> Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, "Secrets and Posterity: The Theory of the Transgenerational Phantom," in *The Shell and the Kernel: Renewals of Psychoanalysis*, ed. and trans. Nicholas T. Rand (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 165–176.

<sup>18</sup> Walter Benjamin, *Berliner Chronik: Gesammelte Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972).

<sup>19</sup> Benjamin, *Arcades Project*. For a discussion of place and modernity inspired by Benjamin's notion of idling, see Jani Scandura, *Down in the Dumps: Place, Modernity, and America's Depression* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, forthcoming). Scandura also draws upon Henri Bergson's notion of the *durée* in her discussion of place and modernity. See Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy Paul and W. Scott Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1991).

<sup>20</sup> On wounds, see Josef Beuys, *Josef Beuys: Zeige deine Wunde* (Munich: Schellmann und Klüser, Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, 1980); Cathy Caruth, "Introduction," in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1996), 1–9.

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion about crypts within the subject and history that hide repressed traumas, see Abraham and Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel*; Jani Scandura and Michael Thurston, eds., *Modernism, Inc.: Body, Memory, Capital* (New York: New York University Press, 2001).

<sup>22</sup> On ghosts, see especially Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997). See also Michael Bell, "The Ghosts of Place," *Theory and Society* 26 (1997): 813–836; Michel de Certeau and Luce Giard, "Ghosts in the City," 133–143; Alan Feldman, "Hardmen, Gunmen, Butchers, Doctors, Stiffs, Ghosts, and Black Men," *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago, 1991), 46–84; Steve Pile, *Real Cities: Modernity, Space and the Phantasmagorias of City Life* (London: Sage, forthcoming 2005).

<sup>23</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Memoires for Paul de Man* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 59; compare Louis Marin, *Utopics: Spatial Play*, trans. Robert Vollrath (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1984).

<sup>24</sup> Steve Pile, "Ghosts and the City of Hope," in *The Emancipatory City?* ed. Loretta Lees (London: Sage, 2004), 7.

# HELMUT SCHMIDT PRIZE

---

## THE VULNERABILITY OF GLOBALIZATION

*Helmut Schmidt Prize Lecture at the German Historical Institute  
May 20, 2004*

**Harold James**

*Princeton University*

### I.

I am greatly honored to receive this prize. The already great honor is augmented by three considerations: the person of the Laudator, the subject of the prize, and finally the person after whom the prize is named.

First, a few words about the Laudator. I first met Knut Borchardt, the preeminent German economic historian, at a lecture he gave at the German Historical Institute, not in Washington but in London, some twenty-five years ago. He gave, as you can imagine, an astonishingly rich and provocative lecture, was enormously accessible afterward to a young graduate student, and has ever since then been a source of inspiration, friendship, and support.

Second, I welcome the intention of the German Historical Institute in establishing a prize for economic history. It seems to me very hard to tell most historical stories, but perhaps even more so those of the recent past, without thinking about economics. The story of the twentieth century is one of tremendous material progress of a wholly unprecedented kind in large parts of the world, but also of deeply disruptive moments, when that progress was interrupted and reversed. But surprisingly, many historians in trying to interpret the century have turned away from economics. At first, conventional history was largely the story of foreign policy and high politics in domestic events; from the 1960s it became largely social history; and from the 1990s largely cultural history. No one would want to say that these depictions of the past do not have their place, but it seems to me that they are unintelligible, in many instances, without some discussion of material developments. In that sense, economic history has a key role to play in *histoire totale*. There has also been a parallel harmful process in which economists, both academics and policy-makers, have neglected history. In the study of economics, there is now an increased interest in the way institutions, which develop over time and

have a strong path dependence, shape economic outcomes. But such an argument requires history.

Third, no modern German biography could exemplify the importance of economic intelligence more impressively than that of Helmut Schmidt. As a policy-maker, he is and was acutely aware of the importance of studying historical events. He wrote a dissertation on the currency reforms of 1946 in Japan and 1948 in western Germany, which launched those economies on the road to economic dynamism and political and social recovery after the catastrophes of the mid-twentieth century. In the 1970s, in the midst of an economic crisis which many feared would replay aspects of the disaster of the interwar world, he pioneered an intense phase of economic cooperation between the large industrial countries to manage the crisis and prevent the escalation of economic problems into war. He was one of the initiators of the G-5 (later G-7) meetings of finance ministers, and then, as chancellor, together with Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, also a former finance minister who had become head of state, of the G-6 (later G-7 and G-8) summit meetings. When the first of these meetings was held, at Rambouillet in the midst of an oil crisis in 1975, there were many voices who urged the West to apply military means to stop the political instrumentalization of the oil price and oil shortages by Arab oil producers. Schmidt, with Henry Kissinger, saw more clearly than anyone else the senselessness of this course, and argued that linking petroleum producers more effectively into the world economy would defuse the political tensions. He has been a consistent advocate of multilateral and peaceful solution to the world's problems, in short of a world that we would now call the world of globalization. But he did not have a blind faith in the inexorability of global interconnectedness. This distinguishes him from many current, and more superficial, thinkers about global economics.

## II.

However bad security relations are between what can now really be called the opposed sides of the Atlantic, or whatever spats there are across the Pacific on the value of the renminbi and the yen, there is a frequent hope that the strength and complexity of the economic interrelationship (a product of globalization) is so great as to offer a counterweight to the political tensions. Indeed, the reason that both sides in modern conflicts often feel that they can afford to get rhetorically carried away is a function of the sense of interdependence and the idea that a really bad outcome is not possible. The British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan for instance liked to tell President Kennedy that a "united Free World was more likely to be achieved through joint monetary and eco-



conomic policies" than through political or military alliances.<sup>1</sup> Advanced democracies do not go to war with each other, as they have too much to lose.<sup>2</sup> Mercury, the god of commerce, has managed to send Mars, the god of war, into exile. We feel very secure about this argument and its implications, perhaps too secure.

Is globalization the only show in town? The major alternative to the "globalization" world view sees connectedness as producing unfair advantages, and international relations as based on exploitation. One convenient way of labeling this alternative is "imperialism," a word generally used with a critical intent. Labeling U.S. policy as "imperialism" became part of the standard rhetorical weaponry of an anti-American left in Europe and elsewhere, as well as of critical voices in the United States. The school of diplomatic history under William Appleman Williams strongly engaged in this approach.<sup>3</sup> In the 1990s, the language of empire as a way of critiquing power, especially American power, was revived, most influentially by the Italian philosopher of violent revolution from the 1970s, Toni Negri, who now became a guru for the anti-globalization left. After September 11, and especially after the Iraq war, this world view produced a tremendous spate of books. In particular, the Roman analogy, which had already been floated after the Second World War, became very popular: Critics saw the imperialization of the United States as an analogous process to the ending of the Roman Republic and its replacement by the Augustan empire.<sup>4</sup>

Curiously, however, this mostly critical literature began to be supplemented by normative suggestions that the United States should want to behave like an empire of the European past. At the conclusion of a stimulating survey of the story of the British empire, Niall Ferguson tried to draw "lessons for global power." The United States, he concluded, first of all "can do a great deal to impose its preferred values on less technologically advanced societies."<sup>5</sup> The suggestion was that it would be drawn in through a series of interventions analogous to those of nineteenth-century Britain, and would create a functioning imperial system without really willing or knowing it. (One famous phrase, coined by the great British historian J. R. Seeley, claims that the Victorian empire was put together in a fit of absence of mind). Michael Ignatieff, reflecting on the legacies of Bosnia and Rwanda, added an appeal for a dynamic human rights internationalism, which he termed "Empire Lite."<sup>6</sup>

Most figures actually associated with the U.S. administration did not like the idea of taking up Caesar's mantle or Victoria's tiara. But Vice-President and Lynne Cheney in 2003 sent out a Christmas card with a quotation from Benjamin Franklin: "And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?"<sup>7</sup>

The new discussion of imperialism as a model is quite perplexing. In particular, some committed institutional liberal internationalists such as John Ikenberry have pointed out that "Empire Lite" actually looks like old-fashioned liberal internationalism.<sup>8</sup> What is new? The story of some of the human rights catastrophes of the 1990s, as well as of international terrorism, raises the obvious issue that there are many people who will go to considerable risks to undermine a liberal and tolerant international and national order. How, in the absence of a world government, can they be kept in line? Only by the application of force by the hegemon.

Many of you will feel that it is possible to see both the world views presented here at the same time: that in the spirit of "Empire Lite," rules without enforcement are bound to be ignored, and enforcement without fixed rules is likely to be widely rejected as tyrannical. Therefore both rules and an enforcer (a state) are needed for stability and order. There is a well-established literature, based on the work of Charles Kindleberger and Robert Gilpin, which suggests that the nineteenth-century liberal order only worked because of the benign hegemon, and that after 1945, the United States learned this lesson.<sup>9</sup>

This is not, however, how most of the world sees the process of making politics in an integrated world. Generally, the rules approach demands participation in the formulation of the binding rules by a broad group of countries, views, and interests. Without such participation, the rules begin to lack legitimacy (unless it is generally agreed that the rules stem from a divinely created natural law order). The more a generalized relativism guides our approach to rule-making, the more we insist on process as the way of creating legitimacy. But these processes are actually deeply divisive in practice, and the most intractable tussles of recent years have arisen out of arguments about the rule-making process in such institutions as the United Nations (UN), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), or the European Union (EU). There is in each of these cases a sort of expectations trap.<sup>10</sup> International rule-making looks more crucial, so we have greater hopes about what international negotiation can produce. But the result is a compromise that is disappointing, resulting in a substantial questioning of the legitimacy of the process.

Consequently, when our hopes of rules are disappointed, we react by seeing power in its full realpolitik nakedness. Realpolitik overrides rules, or, as a rather old British pun had it, Britannia waives the rules in order to rule the waves.

The "imperialism" and the "globalization" models are overall interpretations of such power for their adherents that the other perspective simply disappears. The alternative is rejected as naive or ideological, as in Robert Kagan's juxtaposition of the Mars and Venus views of Americans

and Europeans.<sup>11</sup> As approaches, they are like the optical illusions made famous by Maurits Cornelius Escher, where squares either pop out of a page or recede, but where the observer cannot be brought to see both phenomena at the same time. There is one perspective, or the other.

Since 2001, there has been a definite retreat of the “globalization” paradigm. This is evident in a survey of Lexis-Nexis citations of the word “globalization” in major world newspapers, which shows a distinct falling-off after 2001. On the other hand, there are more references to “empire” and “imperialism.”

### III.

The clash of these interpretive models shapes responses to the major international economic issues of the day. Any economic order depends on systems of rules to set a framework for contracts: This is as true on the international level as it is in national affairs. Globalization depends on rules. Its critics see rules as an expression of power relations.

The major current debates concern the world trading system, the order of corporate governance, and the world monetary order. All of these domains have recently become highly contentious.

First, the commercial system. In the “globalization” view of the world, trade wars are destructive and dangerous. Globalizers are relieved when states draw back from the brink of confrontation, as recently in the case of the U.S. steel tariffs dispute. They believe the rationale for international economic institutions such as the GATT or the WTO lies in the enforcing of rules and procedures that might prevent the escalation of self-destructive responses to domestic political pressures. The likelihood of a WTO ruling against the steel tariffs thus helped the United States to have a better policy, and led it to give up on the unilateral imposition of the tariff.

The “imperialism” model thinks that trade relations shape an unequal system of exchange and dominance, and that political power molds trade law and patterns of commerce. Aggressive trade policy is or can be used as an instrument of policy and can create new opportunities for the assertion of power and the development of economic muscle. The current trade order thus reflects the ability of the United States to impose its vision on the world, and other countries are compelled or cajoled into compliance by threats (for instance to use Super 301 of the 1988 Trade and Competitiveness Act) or promises (of better access to U.S. markets).

Second, corporate governance until very recently was thought to be strictly the domain of national governments and regulators. Over the past ten years, however, there has been a systematic attempt to engage international institutions in governance issues. This is partly because the legal

framework of a modern economy is so complex that it would be needlessly complicated for national governments to work out all the rules required from scratch. In practice, when many states adopted market economies in the aftermath of the collapse of communism, they almost invariably either took over the legal systems of the European Union or of the United States.<sup>12</sup>

There are also obvious overlaps with issues relating to trade law and with financial stability issues. In the wake of the 1997–1998 Asian financial crisis, international institutions and the U.S. government focused much of their analysis on misgovernance or “crony capitalism” as responsible for the crises in Asian economies. According to this analysis, crony capitalism had led to a misinvestment in unproductive enterprises and to moral hazard problems. International lenders and investors had chosen to lend by preference to borrowers who were well connected politically, and whose debts thus carried an implicit government guarantee. Any reform program thus required dismantling corrupt structures and instituting accounting and oversight mechanisms to guarantee greater corporate transparency.

The most contentious issue in the Doha round of trade negotiations concerned rules for investment, which were often seen by developing countries as a way of producing one-sided benefits for industrial capital-exporting countries and interests. The tough position adopted by Japan and the EU on this issue (the so-called Singapore issue) was largely responsible for the breakdown of the Cancun ministerial meeting of the WTO.

In analyzing governance, it is hard to separate concern with overall rules from debates about self-interest, whether with the discussion of trade-related investment issues or with the dismantling of crony capitalism. Critics pointed out that in practice, improved transparency in domestic financial systems meant permitting market entry to large U.S. and EU institutions. American banks took dominant positions in Mexico and Korea, and Spanish banks in South America. After big corporate scandals emerged in the U.S. and other big industrial countries, much of the 1997–1998 preaching to Asia looked outrageously hypocritical. Again, it could easily be portrayed as a mask for concrete interests and for the projection of power.

Third, the international monetary order. In the “globalization” interpretation, the operation of the international economy requires a stable system of monetary rules. The system may take a diversity of forms. The restoration of the world monetary order after the breakdown of the interwar era and the Second World War took place on the basis of fixed exchange rates and restrictions on capital mobility. Modern globalization has developed on the basis of flexible exchange rates between major

industrial economies and capital mobility. But both these orders are internally consistent and robust.

The “imperialist” vision takes these rules and sees political advantage lurking behind them. Both the Bretton Woods system (the first postwar order of fixed exchange rates) and the modern international economy gave the United States an unfair position, or what General de Gaulle memorably termed an “exorbitant privilege.” “No domain,” the general explained to Alain Peyrefitte, “escapes from American imperialism. It takes all forms. The most insidious is that of the dollar.”<sup>13</sup> The dollar was the key currency of both systems, with the result that Americans could finance their civilian consumption and their military imperialism with “OPM”: Other People’s Money. In Bretton Woods, the United States financed capital outflows and military expenditures through a build-up of claims on the U.S. dollar. De Gaulle and his successors complained, but they failed to shake the reserve role of the dollar. Thus the United States in the 1980s and 1990s and especially since 2000 has been able to finance very large current account deficits as other countries build up surplus positions.

The odd parallelism of the 1960s and the current floating-rates era leads those suspicious of the United States to spend considerable amounts of time and intellectual energy trying to devise new monetary orders and institutions that might enable them to pull off something similar to the American trick. In particular, the long story of European monetary integration is permeated by what economic psychologists might term “dollar envy.” Many European currencies, especially the influential case of the Deutsche Mark, were devised so as to make the political use of the currency difficult in order to avoid some of the problems of the European past. The Deutsche Mark carried with it a restrictive vision of what a currency should be, and this was transferred to the Euro. By contrast, the dollar seemed to be a “can do” currency that could be harnessed by its political masters. The Werner Plan was drawn up as the Bretton Woods system started on its final crisis, the European Monetary System originated in part as a response to the perception that Jimmy Carter was abusing the world monetary system, and proponents of European monetary union in the 1990s sometimes (but not always) sounded an anti-American note.

#### IV.

There is a growing tendency, especially where corporate governance and monetary issues are concerned, to reinterpret the world in power political terms, to see through the lens of imperialism rather than that of globalization. This tendency, especially in Europe, however, marks a deep sense

of frustration about the geopolitics and geoeconomics of the new post-Cold War era. In the 1960s, the highpoint of the Gaullist critique, Europe could mount not only an intellectual critique, but also a real challenge to the position of the United States and of the dollar. At the present time it cannot, and the real challenges and threats to the stability of the system come from elsewhere. We need to face them candidly.

One of the comfort blankets that modern people cling to is the idea that there was only ever one big simultaneous world depression, produced by such an odd confluence of causes as to be quite unique: the legacy of the First World War and of the financial settlement of reparations and war debt; the chaotic banking system of the largest economy of the world, the United States; and inexperience in handling monetary policy in a world that was still pining for metallic money. Since these circumstances were so unique, it is argued, they cannot occur again. Historians should say that this reasoning may be quite wrong.

A great deal of the historically informed literature on globalization makes the point that there were several previous eras of increased worldwide integration that came to a halt and were reversed, with painful consequences. The most familiar precedent for modern globalization is that of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, an era that ended definitively with the interwar Great Depression. But there were also earlier epochs of integration: the Roman empire, the economic rebound of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries (the economic backdrop to the Renaissance), or the eighteenth century, in which improved technology and increased ease of communications opened the way to global empires for Britain and France.

All of these previous globalization episodes ended, almost always with wars. Bad policies can obviously wreck individual economies in a whole range of different ways; but systemic collapse is a product of militarized conflict. Globalization as an economic phenomenon depends on the movement across state boundaries of goods, labor, and capital. Security concerns produce heightened worries about all these kinds of mobility. Trade may create a dependence on imports that leads to strategic vulnerability, and one of the oldest arguments for agricultural protection was the need for autarkic self-sufficiency in case of attack. Labor flows may camouflage the movement of spies or saboteurs. Thus, for instance, Britain during the First World War was gripped by panic about the numbers of Germans employed in London restaurants. Finally, capital controls have often been justified on grounds of national security. One way of destabilizing politics was to try to promote financial panic, and restrictions on capital mobility might be a way of generating increased immunity to speculative attack.

There are obvious analogies in some of these past experiences to some of the threats to the economic order and to economic integration posed by the war on terror. Trade, financial flows, and labor movements are all vulnerable in the post-September 11 world. After September 11, every part of the package that had previously produced such unprecedented economic growth in many countries—the increased flow of people, goods, and capital—now seems to contain obvious threats to security. Students and visitors from poor and especially from Islamic countries might be “sleeper” terrorists; or they might become radicalized through their experience of western liberalism, permissiveness, or the arbitrariness of the market economy. It soon became apparent that customs agencies scarcely controlled the shipment of goods any longer, and that explosives, or even atomic, biological, or chemical weapons might easily be smuggled. Complex banking transactions and the free flow of capital might be used to launder money and to supply funding for terrorist operations.

It is natural and legitimate to suggest that all these areas should be subject to more intense controls in the face of security threats. But there is a danger of giving an absolute priority to the war against terrorism. Every sort of control also offers a possibility for abuse by people who want controls for other reasons: because skilled immigrant workers provide “unfair” competition; because too many goods are imported from cheap labor countries; or because capital movements are believed to be destabilizing, producing severe and contagious financial crises. A new debate about the security challenge offered the chance to present older demands for the protection of particular interests in a much more dramatic and compelling way. Protectionists of all sorts suddenly had a good story to tell about the harm done by international trade.

There are many signs that we are at the beginning of a new era, in which the “globalization thesis” is being rolled back once more. In the new world, differences become important. Business leaders focus on the way they have “traditionally” done business. Individuals see risks rather than opportunities coming from the outside. Citizens detect corruption. Countries are willing to fight trade and currency wars, and to resist external interventions in corporate affairs. Political leaders focus on re-designing the trading and monetary system in order to alter the balance of political and economic power. In this world, conflict tends to escalate, and destroys the basis of prosperity and international order. Its inhabitants think about Mars, not Mercury.

This brings me back to Helmut Schmidt. There is no more convinced upholder of the idea of rules in international economic (and political) life than Schmidt. He was simultaneously a great upholder of the transatlantic relationship and a persistent worrier. In 1987, Schmidt wrote that

"America has still not understood that purely national economic strategies are an anachronism in the world of today." He also commented that "Washington tends toward unilateralism, whoever is ruling. . . . American policy toward the rest of the world is shaped by idealism, romanticism and the belief in its own strength and greatness. . . . As long as western Europe cannot produce a common strategy, it will always be confronted by American unilateral initiatives."<sup>14</sup> The impetus to unilateralism, whether it follows from (Wilsonian) romanticism or a desire simply to be big and powerful, will not only be destructive of others, it will also be self-destructive and undermine the American ideal, which is to shape order by rules.

When Helmut Schmidt insisted in the 1970s that Western liberalism and democracy were very vulnerable, many—especially in a more comfortable retrospect—thought him unduly alarmist. But he was surely right. Globalization is very vulnerable, and the world can easily slip away from global interconnectedness into a much more volatile, dangerous, and destructive state.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Cited in Alastair Horne, *Macmillan. Volume II, 1957–1986* (London: Macmillan, 1989), 284.

<sup>2</sup> There is an extensive literature on the "democratic peace," taking up an idea originally propounded by Kant. See Michael Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 12 (1983): 205–35, 323–53; and "Liberalism and World Politics," *American Political Science Review* (1986), 1151–69. See also Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

<sup>3</sup> Notably in William Appleman Williams, *Empire as a Way of Life: An Essay on the Causes and Character of America's Present Predicament, Along With a Few Thoughts About an Alternative* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

<sup>4</sup> The very generalized use of the terms "Empire" and "Imperialism" as a way of understanding the modern world was presented in what became a cult book by Michael Hardt and Toni Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000). The recent books include: Chalmers Johnson, *The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2004); Benjamin R. Barber, *Fear's Empire: War, Terrorism, and Democracy* (New York: Norton, 2003); Michael Mann, *Incoherent Empire* (New York: Verso, 2003); and Emmanuel Todd, *After the Empire: The Breakdown of the American Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> Niall Ferguson, *Empire* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 367.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *Empire Lite: Nation-Building in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan* (London: Vintage, 2003).

<sup>7</sup> *Washington Post*, December 28, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> See his collective review of a recent collection of this literature in G. John Ikenberry, "Illusions of Empire: Defining the New American Order," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2004).

<sup>9</sup> See Charles Kindleberger, *The World in Depression, 1929–1939* (London: Allen Lane, 1973); Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).



<sup>10</sup> See, for instance, Harold James, "From Grandmotherliness to Governance: The Development of IMF Conditionality," *Finance and Development* (December 1998).

<sup>11</sup> Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (New York: Knopf, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> See Joseph Weiler, "The Constitution of the Common Market Place: The Free Movement of Goods," in *The Evolution of EU Law*, edited by P. P. Craig and G. de Búrca (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

<sup>13</sup> Alain Peyrefitte, *C'était de Gaulle* (Paris: Gallimard, 2002), 663.

<sup>14</sup> Helmut Schmidt, *Menschen und Mächte* (Berlin: Siedler, 1987), 330, 334.

# GHI RESEARCH

---

## COMPETING MODERNITIES: GERMANY AND THE UNITED STATES, 1890 TO THE PRESENT

**Christof Mauch (GHI) and Kiran Klaus Patel (Humboldt University, Berlin)**

The GHI and the Humboldt University Berlin recently began a joint project, "Competing Modernities: Germany and the United States, 1890 to the Present." The goal of this new project is to systematically compare the paths of the United States and Germany from a number of vantage points over an extended period of time. Made possible by a grant from the Robert Bosch Foundation (Stuttgart), it is conceived for a broader public in addition to an academic audience. One of the project's major objectives is the publication of a collection of scholarly but highly readable essays in English and German. Because it is the first comprehensive comparison of two national histories on this scale, it is hoped that the publication will serve as a model and a stimulus for future research. The project also strives to contribute to the public discussion about future social and political developments in Germany and in the United States.

Scholars from both sides of the Atlantic will work together in teams, called "tandems." To better serve this dialogue, two workshops will be held, as will multiple public events. In contrast to most university-based projects, "Competing Modernities" is concerned with a large-scale synthesis rather than with basic research. The interest shown by think-tanks, publishers, research centers, and research institutions when the project was still in its planning phase suggests that it will find great resonance in America as well as in Europe. The overarching intention of the project is to identify the historically conditioned cultural differences between Germany and the United States and to inspire public debate in both countries. This subject has great social and political relevance in light of today's much discussed question of whether "the West" has a future as a community based on shared values and actions.

We are not aiming for an encyclopedic contrast in the form of a handbook. Instead, we seek to open up avenues for the comparative study of significant themes based on existing research. To this end, we will investigate the emergence of commonalities *and* differences, continuities *and* breaks in each country's national history. Our ambition is to

compare two national histories. Within this framework, we will also investigate reciprocal perceptions and cross-cultural transfers. The histories of two countries will not be examined in terms of individual phenomena or events, but over a long period with reference to broad questions. We hope that our project will mark a new phase in comparative historical studies.

The time period to be examined spans the years in which modernity emerged. From the 1890s onwards, various changes made their mark on society. Urbanization, industrialization, the formation of a mass political market, imperial ambitions, and the beginnings of modern art are only a few examples of these developments. While these forces also characterized other Western societies of the period, the “young nations” Germany and the United States stand out from the rest. As “latecomers,” each sought a higher international standing, an aspiration which would lead Germany into the catastrophe of National Socialism, and the United States, by contrast, into a position of global leadership after two world wars and the Cold War. By examining the period from the 1890s to the present, we will deliberately breach traditional historical caesuras, especially regarding German history (1918, 1933, 1945), mindful of how more recent research increasingly questions these boundary lines. Our study will also attempt to provide a new basis for judging to what extent these dates actually do signal historical “breaks.”

Tandems of scholars will produce essays on the following subjects: empire and nation; religion; constitutional law; discipline and order; the welfare state; migration; gender roles and the family; markets and consumer culture; labor and industry; environment; science and education; and media. They will thus address central aspects of emerging modernity with reference to crucial current issues.

It is our hope that the methodology and international scope of “Competing Modernities” will have an impact on universities and schools on both sides of the Atlantic. Both the shared features and unique aspects of individual national histories can be brought into sharper focus and critically evaluated through a comparative perspective. On an institutional level, “Competing Modernities” seeks to promote transatlantic cooperation among a new generation of scholars in Germany and the United States. The current, politically lively debates around the idea of a “transatlantic community of values” might also gain historical perspectives from this project.

## NATURAL DISASTERS IN TRANSATLANTIC PERSPECTIVE: RIVER FLOODS IN GERMAN AND U.S. HISTORY

Uwe Lübken (GHI) and Christof Mauch (GHI)

Natural disasters are causing ever greater damage; this is especially true of floods. Despite the immense media interest and the broadly developed scientific and sociological research on natural disasters, however, the historical investigation of natural disasters is still in its early stages. The tools and strategies with which societies today approach environmental catastrophes have evolved over several centuries. Deep historical transformations are also visible in the experience of and cultural response to natural disasters. The first wide-ranging analysis of its kind, this project is a comparative historical exploration of a specific type of natural disaster: river floods in the United States and Germany. The project aims to improve our understanding of social responses to emergencies in different national cultures, and to offer innovative contributions to environmental history and other fields of historical research.

Given the increasing emphasis on the environment in recent decades, it is surprising that there have been only very limited attempts at a systematic historical analysis of environmental disasters. Environmental historians have pursued various aims. On the one hand, they have sought to uncover nature's historical dimensions: climatic changes over the centuries, shifting coastlines, or desert expansions.<sup>1</sup> In this version, "nature" appears as a slow but independent historical agent. On the other hand, environmental historians have emphasized the interaction between humans and their environment; they have, for example, examined the impact of railroads on landscape and how it is perceived.<sup>2</sup> More recent is the insight that imagined or idealized "representation[s] of nature and the environment—as they exist in perceptions, environmental ethics, environmental law, myths, and other mental constructions—structure the interactions of individuals or groups with nature."<sup>3</sup> All three levels are interdependent. For example, whether past "interventions" in the flow of the Rhine were judged as appropriate depended greatly upon how often the river overflowed its banks and how these floods were viewed by contemporaries: as God's judgment or as arrogant Nature overstepping her bounds, as potential danger or unchangeable fate.<sup>4</sup>

European and North American ways of writing environmental history differ fundamentally. Whereas British, French, and German historians have mainly focused on industrialization and its damaging effects on the environment (and these mostly in an urban context), historians in the

United States have a completely different understanding of nature that grew out of that country's specific historical experience.<sup>5</sup> Their interest in the history of the natural environment has been influenced for example by the late "discovery" and settlement of the North American continent. At a time when the industrialization of Western Europe was already well advanced, hundreds of thousands of Europeans migrated to the United States and, if they did not remain in the cities, founded farms, communities, and towns in the so-called "frontier" regions, on the border between "civilization" and "the wilderness." For the (mostly white) settlers who arrived to conquer and settle the North American continent since the 1600s, nature was in the first instance a hostile power, hardly something in need of protection.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, the main thrust of American historiography has been the emergence of American culture from the wilderness. The victims of this development were the Native Americans, the Africans forcibly brought to America, and their descendants. These groups were considered savages by the white settlers, respectively annihilated and exploited as the slaves who first made possible the large-scale exploitation of natural resources.

According to Frederick Jackson Turner's famous thesis, moreover, the confrontation with nature on the Western frontier served to renew the free political institutions in the civilized Eastern states, which but for the continuous flow of authentic democratic experience would have followed Europe down a path toward decline, corruption, and rejection of a representative political system. In this way, the environmental history of the United States was always political history as well.<sup>7</sup> In Germany—and, with some qualifications, for Europe as a whole<sup>8</sup>—historians have concerned themselves more with urban ecological problems than with mountains, rivers, and marshes, and have applied mostly sociological and economic methodologies. Their epistemological interests were often marked by contemporary ecological problems like the dangers of nuclear energy.<sup>9</sup>

Environmental history, meanwhile established as a recognized sub-discipline in many countries, is still primarily occupied with the long, slow, structural transformation of the environment in which humans live. Nature and the environment appear as two almost static quantities which only change after centuries, or at least decades. To be sure, Alfred Crosby has shown that catastrophes around the turn of the twentieth century stimulated a greater interest in understanding the environment.<sup>10</sup> But such events rarely become objects of study in their own right for environmental history. Environmental historians have been and continue to be concerned first and foremost with the *longue durée*.<sup>11</sup> Catastrophes attract their interest when they have a certain continuity and consistency.<sup>12</sup> This focus on gradual change, however, neglects the fact that nature itself can have the character of an event. Floods, tornadoes, and

earthquakes undermine the notion of time as the snail-like progress of centuries; they demand a unique mode of historical understanding appropriate to their dramatic pace. As Ursula Lehmkuhl puts it, "Through the episodic character of these disturbances, nature gains a quality of historical agency and, with it, power."<sup>13</sup> The analysis of unexpected, rapid, and destructive disasters has up to this point been almost completely neglected by historians and left to scholars in other disciplines.<sup>14</sup>

### Sociological and Anthropological Approaches

The investigation of natural and environmental catastrophes has assumed a more prominent place in various scholarly fields. Subjects such as risk perception and risk management are of interest to sociologists as well as to economists and psychologists. Anthropologists and literary critics explore connections between catastrophe and identity, while geologists concentrate mainly on the natural causes of catastrophes. Taken as a whole, all these approaches illuminate natural disasters from different perspectives. The most important inspirations for a historical perspective, however, are offered by social science approaches.

The first empirical study of human behavior in the face of a disaster was Samuel Prince's 1920 analysis of the collision of the French ship *Mont Blanc* with a Belgian steamship near Halifax.<sup>15</sup> Based on this "cornerstone of disaster research,"<sup>16</sup> several institutions devoted themselves to the study of catastrophes from a social science standpoint. Among these institutions, mostly founded after the Second World War, the University of Delaware's Disaster Research Center and the Natural Hazard Research and Applications Information Center at the University of Colorado at Boulder are especially noteworthy.<sup>17</sup> Their research centered on the systematic analysis of social behavior in emergency situations. Catastrophes were seen as deviations from a norm, as unpredictable and extreme occurrences which suddenly descended upon social communities. Hardly touched upon, by contrast, were the socio-cultural matrices in which such disasters occurred, the powerful aftereffects of discourses of catastrophe, and the historical dimensions of disasters.<sup>18</sup> This began to change in the 1980s. No longer automatically viewed as external forces, catastrophes emerged in a new light. According to the new credo, "the view that disasters are social occurrences as well as physical events . . . is central to social scientific disaster research."<sup>19</sup> The reconstruction that followed on the heels of disaster was viewed less as a symbol of a return to normality, but rather as a revelation of what a society defined as normal.

There are no "natural" disasters in the true sense of the word. Shifts in the continental and oceanic plates are "normal" from a geological standpoint and are in no way catastrophes. At most, nature supplies the

trigger for a disaster, but humans themselves are largely responsible for the consequences, by placing industrial facilities or trailer parks in flood zones, for example. Beyond this, there is an unequal distribution of insecurity and risk that can almost always be attributed to social rather than natural causes. This is the only way to account for the fact that certain segments of the population are often disproportionately affected by disasters.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, an analytic distinction between “man-made” and “natural” disasters makes little sense in relation to their causes.<sup>21</sup> Anthropological studies account for a large share of the recent work on disasters, concentrating on the social construction of “natural” catastrophes. Many individual studies have shown how even the smallest social organizations have accommodated themselves to continuous threats from the natural world, developing unique coping strategies.<sup>22</sup> The spatial and historical diversity of the human experience of catastrophe can be especially illuminated by the study of non-Western cases. Methodologically, ethnographic fieldwork has also set the standard.<sup>23</sup>

With the emphasis on the human contribution to “natural” disasters, the fact has largely been ignored that, from the standpoint of those affected, catastrophes often appear to be random events. At least since the Enlightenment and the diminishing power of theological explanations, the notion of a “negative chosenness” has shaped how these events are dealt with, making it very difficult to come to terms with them. It is only when interpretive strategies are deployed that meaning can be gleaned from a power that is fundamentally meaningless and senseless. Ann Larabee concedes that “writing about disaster, collecting and organizing these writings, reasserts the cultural project of signifying, accumulating, and sequencing.”<sup>24</sup>

Also, from a historical viewpoint, it is important to recognize that the distinction between “man-made” and “natural” disasters lives on in public discourse, unaffected by scholarly research.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, technological disasters with environmental implications are usually seen as avoidable and provoke anger rather than resignation. Finally, the nature of the destruction is different. Rarely do natural disasters cause contamination and pollution.<sup>26</sup>

In general, social scientists and anthropologists rarely deal with events that are more than twenty years in the past. Because sociological disaster research has chiefly been interested in structural insights and in prognosis, an analytical retrospective of recent contemporary history would almost be counter-productive. The context of historical disasters would be too different from contemporary cases to yield relevant insights. To be sure, sociological studies of disasters occasionally make allowances for the necessity of a historical-cultural approach.<sup>27</sup> Such calls,

however, have rarely led to results. In general, one can agree with Christian Pfister, one of the pioneers of historical research on natural catastrophes, that disaster research is currently "clearly lacking in temporal depth."<sup>28</sup>

## Goals

The preparation of this project and the review of the literature led to four main areas of inquiry with both historical and contemporary relevance. First, we intend to analyze the institutional reactions to natural disasters, that is to say, the historical development of defense against disasters and of relief measures. Second, we will investigate the social dimension of natural disasters, with special attention to those groups particularly affected by disasters and to reactions to this unequal "distribution of pain." Third, we will focus on cultural reactions to experiencing and working through a catastrophe. Finally, we shall seek to explore how insecurity is dealt with on both an individual and on a collective level.

Based on these four areas of inquiry, we will bring the following main questions to bear upon the source material: How did the state disaster management and prevention programs that shape our present-day institutions emerge historically? In what ways do catastrophes challenge or consolidate authority on the local, regional, and central levels? What examples of conflict and cooperation can be found both "vertically," between the central government and local authorities (for example, between the United States Congress and individual states along the Mississippi river that requested funds for flood prevention), and "horizontally," between different cities, regions, and states (for example, the upper and lower reaches of the Rhine)? Is there a connection between industrialization, the experience of catastrophe, and modernization? Are environmental disasters truly "the salt of the modernization process,"<sup>29</sup> in that they introduce a learning process and offer unconventional solutions a chance to be realized, thereby "fostering organizational creativity?"<sup>30</sup> Or was, for example, the fact that "flood protection shifted from being an individual responsibility to a state matter" merely the expression of a gradual development that would have taken place even without large catastrophes?<sup>31</sup> With increasing industrialization and the spread of technology in Germany and the United States, floods now no longer threatened "only" life and limb, but also wide sectors of the economy. In general, the material damages from environmental disasters have multiplied dramatically over the past two hundred years due to the growth of capital-intensive industries. What influence did this rapidly increasing vulnerability of modern states have upon natural "disturbances?" How were communication systems and the infrastructural setting transformed



by crisis? To what extent were natural disasters exploited for political ends? It is a self-evident part of the repertoire of public appearance in the twenty-first century that leaders show up to be photographed in disaster areas. In the United States, this was everything but ordinary up through the 1930s. In 1927, for example, President Coolidge refused to make such a gesture, despite a devastating situation along the Mississippi.<sup>32</sup> Beyond individual observations, an examination of the different cultures of political solidarity in Germany and in the United States can yield information about the varying mental responses to catastrophe and about the differing political expectations of government institutions.

### **The Social Dimension of Natural Disasters**

Social science researchers have established that environmental risks are anything but evenly distributed among different social groups. Because of factors such as age, sex, class, ethnicity, race, or religion, various groups have unequal access to financial resources (such as insurance or government assistance), government protection, or other benefits which can help avert disasters or at least minimize their damage.<sup>33</sup> This differing social vulnerability can in extreme situations lead to social and political conflict, which should be analyzed. By the same token, repressive social practices are often first visible in times of catastrophe.<sup>34</sup> Similar research findings can be expected from an analysis of floods.

The social dimension of natural disasters is evident not only in the related conflicts and confrontations, but also in the waves of solidarity and readiness to help that regularly accompany them. What can be learned about interregional, international, or transatlantic aid?<sup>35</sup> What conflicts emerged (and how were they resolved) when solidarity and spontaneous aid failed to meet the needs and expectations of those affected, as shown for example by the struggle between the federal government and states bordering the Mississippi river over federal responsibility for disaster relief? The congressional documents on flood control measures and financing related to this issue illustrate a vivid landscape of interests, uncovering social, political, and economic privileges.

It holds true for Germany as well as for the United States that, over the course of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a network of laws and regulations emerged from rather sporadic efforts to aid and care for disaster victims. These laws and regulations increasingly supplemented private charitable efforts with state-administered programs.<sup>36</sup> A comparison of developments and the various arguments deployed in the debate is of interest because America's founding myth is based upon the glorification of the frontiersman who endures nature's trials, survives without outside help, and derives his identity and strength largely from these experiences.

In addition to social conflicts and mutual aid efforts, there is a further field of historical inquiry into the “resilience” of the population. As a 1993 research project sponsored by the German Research Foundation phrased it, “we aim to examine the social and cultural developments which make the effects of a disaster so powerful that it threatens one’s very life-world, and to explore how these problems can be confronted effectively: Had they occurred thirty years earlier, the disastrous snow-storms of 1978/79 in Schleswig-Holstein would have merely been a severe winter—it was the modern system of centralized supply services and infrastructural dependency which turned this sort of event into a catastrophe.”<sup>37</sup> On the whole, we expect that an analysis of social responses to natural disasters will uncover areas of conflict which remain submerged in the “usual state of affairs.” On the other hand, modes of behavior emerge which are only evident during a fundamental crisis.

### **The Culture of Catastrophe and the Experience of Insecurity**

Alongside state measures, social reality, and economic factors, a further important aspect of the encounter with natural disasters falls under the heading of what might be termed “the culture of catastrophe.” What interpretive matrices shape the experience of natural disasters and how have these changed over time? How are disasters remembered and why have they played such a subordinate role in collective memory? Picking up on the work of Roland Barthes and Arno Borst, is it correct to suspect that repression mechanisms are at work here?<sup>38</sup> What underlying conceptions of nature and the environment are expressed in reports on natural disasters? Is nature seen as an enemy to be conquered, or is nature’s free reign beyond human boundaries acknowledged? How does this discourse connect with major political and social processes such as industrialization or the settling of the American West? Because news reports on natural disasters occupy such a prominent place in the media—from the earliest newspapers to today’s cable television—the question of the extent to which the media shape the perception of disasters should be addressed.

Disaster forecasting began long before the age of seismographs. In retrospect, signs that announce disasters seem apparent. For example, in Hamelmann’s Oldenburg Chronicle of 1599 there is an image of a triple rainbow, which was interpreted as a flood warning.<sup>39</sup> What meanings did these “virtual” catastrophes have, as prophecy, possibility, horror scenario, as something with which one could mobilize resources or campaign for votes? It is noteworthy that disaster reports repeatedly mention the attendant “sounds,” either as noise, associated with most disasters, or as a unique silence.<sup>40</sup> What role do disturbing and destructive sounds (or their absence) play in the experience of natural disasters?

One area that has yet to be researched is disaster tourism, something that is not only a late twentieth-century phenomenon.<sup>41</sup> How can this be charted over time, between the opposing poles of event-culture and the experience of the sublime?

Although natural scientists have meanwhile intensively researched natural disasters, it is still not possible to precisely predict the size and location of floods. As a result, people who live in particularly threatened regions must still maintain strategies for coping with the danger. Interestingly, despite these risks, there is a tradition of settlement in flood regions, which is often encouraged financially by insurers. How has this kind of risk management evolved historically?

A deep historical analysis of floods can demonstrate what measure of security was striven for in different periods. What price were states, societies, and individuals willing to pay for their security?<sup>42</sup> Special attention will be paid to the concept of insurance. The large and, in many respects, untapped field of insurance history is a treasure trove for the historical investigation of natural and environmental disasters. There is, to be sure, a wealth of literature, including historical studies, which deal with one or another branch of the insurance business, or with individual companies.<sup>43</sup> Few studies, however, address long-term structural questions and cultural issues.

## Theory and Methodology

This project underscores the fundamental insight that “natural” categories do not exist a priori, but are materially, socially, and discursively constructed. The meaning of this insight for the analysis of flood disasters is clear when one recognizes them as the result of river flow “corrections” or when one sees the changing ways they have been interpreted over the centuries. By the same token, the study of natural disasters can enrich environmental history in that it will loosen the dominance of the *longue durée* as a category of analysis and illustrate that natural processes and developments can also exhibit the character of events.<sup>44</sup>

An environmental history approach would, however, not be sufficient regarding the content and analytic breadth of this project. Insights from other disciplines are indispensable, and interdisciplinary connections can be made in a great many directions. For example, real disasters might be contrasted with their representations in legend and fiction.<sup>45</sup> Conversely, we can address the question as to what extent a “culture of disaster” (a term Mike Davis has coined for California) prejudices our view of catastrophes.<sup>46</sup> Sociological and psychological studies of catastrophe can help explain human behavior in emergency situations. Furthermore, gender studies and discourse analysis are essential to the study

of social practices.<sup>47</sup> The new institutional economics, and, above all, attempts to combine economic theories with cultural studies, are of great value for this study.<sup>48</sup>

A historical approach offers an excellent starting point for comparative questions.<sup>49</sup> Numerous diachronic and synchronic juxtapositions can not only illustrate lines of development in individual countries, regions, and cities, but can also allow comparisons of various strategies for handling disasters. Germany and the United States are at the center of this study. This comparative national history approach only appears to be in contradiction with an environmental problematic that, as is well known, does not recognize national borders. On the one hand, Germany and the United States will be considered first and foremost as geographic spaces that in a certain sense serve merely as the “containers” for the objects of study. On the other hand, too strong a territorial limitation can always be opened up, whenever certain events impact several countries, for example the Rhine and Elbe floods, the international dimension of which will not be ignored, or the history of the Mississippi River when it was still under Spanish control.

There is an additional reason to focus on Germany and the United States despite the non-national character of environmental disasters. It is not only the case that environmental issues are understood differently in every country (one thinks here of the almost diametrically opposing views in Germany and France on nuclear energy); the United States and Germany are, despite all their differences, comparable on the basis of their economic, social, and cultural history and structure. Beyond this, the investigative framework is large enough to reveal the great diversity (local, regional, national, and even international) within these “containers.” Lastly, in contrast to Switzerland and France, there are no long-term historical studies of floods in Germany and in the United States. In general, this research project will remain open in terms of the time period analyzed and will focus on specific places and events only for practical reasons. Thus, contemporary flood disasters as well as early modern events will be investigated, though the main emphasis shall be on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> See Rüdiger Glaser, *Klimageschichte Mitteleuropas: 1000 Jahre Wetter, Klima, Katastrophen* (Darmstadt, 2001); Christian Pfister, *Klimageschichte der Schweiz, 1525–1860: Das Klima der Schweiz von 1525–1860 und seine Bedeutung in der Geschichte der Bevölkerung und Landwirtschaft* (3d revised edition) (Bern, 1988); Dietrich Hoffmann, “Erdgeschichtliche Entwicklung der Küstengebiete an Nord- und Ostsee,” in *Historischer Küstenschutz: Deichbau, Inselschutz und Binnenentwässerung an Nord- und Ostsee* (Stuttgart, 1992), 1–16; Marc Reisner, *Cadillac Desert: The American Desert and Its Disappearing Water* (revised edition) (New York, 1993).

<sup>2</sup> See Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Geschichte der Eisenbahnreise: Zur Industrialisierung von Raum und Zeit im 19. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt am Main, 1989); John McPhee, *The Control of Nature* (New York, 1989); John Opie, ed., *Americans and Environment: The Controversy over Ecology* (Lexington, Mass., 1971).

<sup>3</sup> Ursula Lehmkuhl, "Einleitung—Umweltgeschichte: Histoire totale oder Bindestrichgeschichte?" in Ursula Lehmkuhl and Stefanie Schneider, eds., *Umweltgeschichte: Histoire totale oder Bindestrichgeschichte?* (Erfurter Beiträge zur Nordamerikanischen Geschichte 4, 2002), 13. All translations are the authors'. See also Catherine Albanese, *Nature Religion in America: From the Algonkian Indians to the New Age* (Chicago, 1990); Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995).

<sup>4</sup> See Marc Cioc, *The Rhine: An Eco-Biography, 1815–2000* (Seattle, 2002); Horst Johannes Tümmers, *Der Rhein: Ein europäischer Fluß und seine Geschichte* (Munich, 1994).

<sup>5</sup> Compare Joachim Radkau, *Natur und Macht: Eine Weltgeschichte der Umwelt* (Munich, 2000).

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, the description of the 1832 Ohio River flood by Samuel P. Chase, later Secretary of the Treasury and a Supreme Court Justice: "The river, like an animal eager in pursuit as its antagonist retires, pushed closely on and forced them [the merchants] to remove their stores still farther to the second story." John Niven, ed., *The Salmon P. Chase Papers*, Volume 1: Journals 1829–1872. Entry of February 14, 1832. (Kent, Ohio, 1993); Christof Mauch, "'Zurück zur Natur' und 'Vorwärts zur Maschine': Dimensionen und Paradigmata der Umweltgeschichte der USA," in Werner Kemp and Gerd Mielke, eds., *Umwelt* (Trier, 1999), 11–38.

<sup>7</sup> Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (Tucson, Ariz., 1986). For the broader context, see Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven, Conn., 1982).

<sup>8</sup> The French Annales school is an exception, if one understands it as a precursor of environmental history. It was above all Fernand Braudel's work on the Mediterranean that viewed the region as an ecological, and not merely a social and cultural, whole. See Braudel, *Das Mittelmeer und die mediterrane Welt in der Epoche Philipps II.*, 3 vols. (Frankfurt am Main, 2001).

<sup>9</sup> On the differences between American and European environmental historiography, see Christof Mauch, ed., *Nature in German History* (New York, 2004); Franz-Josef Brüggemeier, *Das unendliche Meer der Lüfte: Luftverschmutzung, Industrialisierung und Risikodebatten im 19. Jahrhundert* (Essen, 1996); Brüggemeier, *Blauer Himmel über der Ruhr: Geschichte der Umwelt im Ruhrgebiet, 1840–1990* (Essen, 1992). See also the overview of research by Joachim Radkau, "Technik- und Umweltgeschichte," *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 48 (1997): 479–96 and in *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 50 (1999): 250–58, 356–84. See also the bibliography in Franz-Josef Brüggemeier, *Tschernobyl, 26. April 1986: Die ökologische Herausforderung* (20 Tage im 20. Jahrhundert) (Munich, 1998).

<sup>10</sup> Alfred W. Crosby, "The Past and Present of Environmental History," *American Historical Review* 100 (October 1995): 1177–90. Crosby specifically mentions the eruption of the Krakatau volcano in 1883, the landing of a meteor in Siberia in 1908, and the appearance of cowpox in Africa.

<sup>11</sup> Examples include B. L. Turner II, ed., *The Earth as Transformed by Human Action: Global and Regional Changes in the Biosphere over the Past 300 Years* (Cambridge, 1990); Richard H. Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens, and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600–1860* (Cambridge, 1995).

<sup>12</sup> See Rolando V. Garcia and José C. Escudero, *Drought and Man*, vol. 2, *The Constant Catastrophe: Malnutrition, Famines, and Drought* (Oxford, 1982).

<sup>13</sup> Lehmkuhl, "Einleitung," 9.

<sup>14</sup> See William Cronon, ed., *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature* (New York, 1995), 24: "[. . .] recent scholarship has clearly demonstrated that the natural world is far more

dynamic, far more changeable, and far more entangled with human history than popular beliefs about 'the balance of nature' have typically acknowledged. Many popular ideas about the environment are premised on the conviction that nature is a stable, holistic, homeostatic community capable of preserving its natural balance more or less indefinitely if only humans can avoid 'disturbing' it. This, in fact, is a deeply problematic assumption." Compare also Donald Worster, *The Wealth of Nature*, 158: "In Sears's day ecology was basically a study of equilibrium, harmony, and order; it had been so from its beginnings. Today, however, in many circles of scientific research, it has become a study of disturbance, disharmony, and chaos."

<sup>15</sup> Samuel H. Prince, *Catastrophe and Social Change: Based on a Study of the Halifax Disaster* (Ph.D. Diss., Columbia University, 1920); see also Henry W. Fischer, *Response to Disaster: Fact versus Fiction and its Perpetuation: The Sociology of Disaster* (Lanham, Md., 1998), 9.

<sup>16</sup> Gerhard Waldherr, "Altertumswissenschaften und moderne Katastrophenforschung," in Olshausen and Sonnabend, eds., *Naturkatastrophen in der Antiken Welt* (Stuttgart, 1998), 59.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> See Kenneth Hewitt, ed., *Interpretations of Calamity* (Boston, 1983); Ian Burton, Robert W. Kates, and Gilbert F. White, *The Environment as Hazard* (New York, 1978); Susanna M. Hoffman and Anthony Oliver-Smith, "Anthropology and the Angry Earth: An Overview," in Hoffmann and Oliver-Smith, *The Angry Earth*, 1–16; F. D'Souza, "Disaster Research—Ten Years On," *Ekistics* 51 (1984): 496–99; W. I. Torry, "Hazards, Hazes, and Holes: A Critique of the Environment as Hazard and General Reflections on Disaster Research," *Canadian Geographer* 23 (1979): 368–83; Alessa Johns, "Introduction," *Dreadful Visitations*, xi–xxv; Lars Clausen and Wolf R. Dombrowski, *Einführung in die Soziologie der Katastrophe* (Bonn, 1983).

<sup>19</sup> Kathleen J. Tierney, Michael K. Lindell, and Ronald W. Perry, *Facing the Unexpected: Disaster Preparedness and Response in the United States* (Washington, DC, 2001), 15.

<sup>20</sup> See Hoffmann and Oliver-Smith, "Anthropology and the Angry Earth: An Overview," *The Angry Earth*, 1–16; Abramovitz, *Unnatural Disasters*, 23.

<sup>21</sup> See Hewitt, ed., *Interpretations of Calamity* (Boston, 1983); Anthony Oliver-Smith, "Peru's Five-Hundred-Year Earthquake: Vulnerability in Historical Context," in Oliver-Smith and Susanna Hoffmann, eds., *The Angry Earth*, 74–88.

<sup>22</sup> See Hoffman and Oliver-Smith, "Anthropology and the Angry Earth: An Overview"; Hoffmann and Oliver-Smith, *Culture and Catastrophe: The Anthropology of Disaster* (Santa Fe, NM, 2002).

<sup>23</sup> See Hoffman and Oliver-Smith, "Anthropology and the Angry Earth: An Overview," 2 f.

<sup>24</sup> Ann Larabee, *Decade of Disaster* (Urbana, IL, 2000), 8.

<sup>25</sup> "Natural disasters can appear innocent, even innocuous, in the face of human-made destructive agents such as nuclear accidents, deforestation, and industrial pollution." Johns, "Introduction," *Dreadful Visitations*, xx f.

<sup>26</sup> See Stephen Robert Couch and J. Stephen Kroll-Smith, "Introduction," *Communities at Risk: Collective Responses to Technological Hazards* (New York, 1991), 1–7.

<sup>27</sup> See Möller and Clausen, "Bestandaufnahme im Bereich der Katastrophensoziologie," 109: "Das Verstehen der standortgebundenen Abhängigkeit und des historisch-gesellschaftlichen Gewordenseins von Begriff und Begreifen [der Katastrophe] ist eine Grundvoraussetzung für eine angemessene Modellbildung der jeweils von Katastrophen betroffenen Gesellschaften."

<sup>28</sup> Christian Pfister, "Vorwort des Herausgebers," *Am Tag danach: Zur Bewältigung von Naturkatastrophen in der Schweiz, 1500–2000* (Bern, 2002), 7. An excellent historical case study is found in Manfred Jakubowski-Tiessen, *Sturmflut 1717: Die Bewältigung einer Naturkatastrophe in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Munich, 1992). See also Theodore Steinberg, *Acts of God: The Unnatural History of Natural Disaster in America* (Oxford, 2000).

- <sup>29</sup> Christian Pfister, "Naturkatastrophen und Naturgefahren in geschichtlicher Perspektive," *Am Tag danach*, 16. See also Christopher L. Dyer, "The Phoenix Effect in Post-Disaster Recovery: An Analysis of the Economic Development Administration's Culture of Response after Hurricane Andrew," in Oliver-Smith and Hoffman, eds., *The Angry Earth*, 278–300.
- <sup>30</sup> Ueli Müller and others, *Katastrophen als Herausforderung für Verwaltung und Politik: Kontinuität und Diskontinuität* (Zurich, 1997), 5.
- <sup>31</sup> Jürgen Weichselgartner, "Hochwasser als soziales Ereignis: Gesellschaftliche Faktoren einer Naturgefahr," *Hydrologie und Wasserbewirtschaftung* 44, no. 3 (2000): 124.
- <sup>32</sup> See John M. Barry, *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America* (New York, 1997), 286 ff.
- <sup>33</sup> See R. Eldar, "The Needs of Elderly Persons in Natural Disasters: Observations and Recommendations," *Disasters* 16 (1992): 355–58; Susanna M. Hoffman, "The Regeneration of Traditional Gender Patterns in the Wake of a Disaster," in Hoffman and Oliver-Smith, eds., *The Angry Earth*, 173–91; Elaine Enarson and Betty Morrow, eds., *The Gendered Terrain of Disaster: Through Women's Eyes* (Westport, Conn., 1998); Santi Rozario, "'Disasters' and Bangladeshi Women," in Ronit Lentin, ed., *Gender and Catastrophe* (London, 1997), 255–68; Margaret Kelleher, "Woman as Famine Victim: The Figure of Woman in Irish Famine Narratives," in Lentin, *Gender*, 240–54.
- <sup>34</sup> See Charles F. Walker, "Shaking the Unstable Empire: The Lima, Quito, and Arequipa Earthquakes, 1746, 1783, and 1797," in Johns, ed., *Dreadful Visitations*, 113–44.
- <sup>35</sup> See Alois Fässler, "Geburt der gesamteidgenössischen Solidarität: Die Hilfsleistungen zur Bewältigung des Bergsturzes von Goldau 1806," in Pfister, ed., *Am Tag danach*, 55–68. See also Anthony Oliver-Smith, "The Brotherhood of Pain: Theoretical and Applied Perspectives on Post-Disaster Solidarity," in Hoffman and Oliver-Smith, eds., *The Angry Earth*, 156–72.
- <sup>36</sup> Weichselgartner, "Hochwasser als soziales Ereignis," 124. In the interim, there appears to be a reversal of the process: "Die Verantwortung wird zunehmend auf die betroffenen Anwohner, Nichtregierungsorganisationen und durch verstärkte internationale Kooperation auch auf supranationale Körperschaften übertragen," 125. See also Steinberg, *Acts of God*, xxii.
- <sup>37</sup> Frerk Möller and Lars Clausen, "Bestandaufnahme im Bereich der Katastrophensoziologie," in Erich Plate and others, eds., *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft: Naturkatastrophen und Katastrophenvorbeugung*, 108.
- <sup>38</sup> According to Arno Borst, "Das Erdbeben von 1348: Ein historischer Beitrag zur Katastrophenforschung," *Historische Zeitschrift* 223 (1981): 529–69, it goes strongly against the modern European sensibility to accept natural disasters as a permanent feature of society and history: "Es isoliert Katastrophen in der Gegenwart und eliminiert sie aus der Vergangenheit, weil sie die Zukunft nicht definieren sollen." See also Roland Barthes's philosophical analysis of the "fait divers" ["Miscellaneous"] sections of the newspaper, where disaster news is often reported, because it fails to fit under any of the usual headings. Barthes, "Structure du fait divers," *Oeuvres complètes*, I (Paris, 1993).
- <sup>39</sup> Reprinted in Walter Barton, *Sturmfluten und Unwetter an der deutschen Nordseeküste: Die Naturgewalten in der Presse des 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhunderts* (Bibliotheksgesellschaft Oldenburg, Vorträge, Reden, Berichte, Nr. 22) (Oldenburg, 1997).
- <sup>40</sup> See the exemplary description of the 1927 Mississippi flood by the writer William Alexander Percy, cited in Barry, *Rising Tide*, 278 ff.
- <sup>41</sup> See Steinberg, *Acts of God*, 3–5.
- <sup>42</sup> See Niklas Luhmann, "Risiko und Gefahr," *Soziologische Aufklärung*, Bd. 5: Konstruktivistische Perspektiven (Opladen, 1990), 131–70; Luhmann, *Soziologie des Risikos* (Berlin, 1992); Michael Makropoulos, "Möglichkeitsbändigungen: Disziplin und Versicherung als Konzepte zur sozialen Sicherung von Kontingenz," *Soziale Welt* 41 (1990): 407–23.

<sup>43</sup> See C. Rommel, *Probleme der Hochwasser- und Überschwemmungsversicherung* (Zeit- und Forschungsfragen der Versicherungswirtschaft, Heft 6) (Hoffnungsthal, 1950); Wilhelm Schaefer, *Urkundliche Beiträge und Forschungen zur Geschichte der Feuerversicherungen in Deutschland* (Hanover, 1911); Franz Büchner, "Versicherungsgeschichtliche Betrachtungen zum Begriff 'Gefahrgemeinschaft,'" *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Versicherungswissenschaft* 8 (1987): 579–85; Claudia Kalenberg, *Zur Versicherbarkeit von Hochwasser- und Überschwemmungsschäden*. (Schriftenreihe des Fachbereichs Versicherungswesen der Fachhochschule Köln, Bd. 14) (Karlsruhe, 1998).

<sup>44</sup> For an introduction to the numerous attempts to provide the study of events with a social and discursive framework, see the excellent collection by Andreas Sutar and Manfred Hettling, eds., *Struktur und Ereignis* (Geschichte und Gesellschaft, Sonderheft 19) (Göttingen, 2001).

<sup>45</sup> See, for example, G. A. Starr, "Defoe and Disasters," in Johns, ed., *Dreadful Visitations*, 31–48.

<sup>46</sup> Mike Davis, *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster* (New York, 1998). See also Stephen Keane, *Disaster Movies: The Cinema of Catastrophe* (London, 2001).

<sup>47</sup> See Ronit Lentin, *Gender and Catastrophe* (London, 1997).

<sup>48</sup> Philip Ethington and Eileen McDonagh, "The Eclectic Center of the New Institutionalism: Axes of Analyses in Comparative Perspective," *Social Science History* 1995 19(4), 467–77; see also the special issue on "Neue Institutionsökonomik als Historische Sozialwissenschaft," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 27, no. 4 (2001).

<sup>49</sup> See Erich Angermann, "Challenges of Ambiguity: Doing Comparative History" (German Historical Institute, Washington, D.C., Lecture Series No. 4) (New York, 1991).



## REPORTS ON CONFERENCES, SYMPOSIA, SEMINARS

---

### RECONSTITUTING PUBLIC REALMS: ARCHIVISTS, LIBRARIANS, AND JOURNALISTS IN POSTWAR GERMANY

GHI-sponsored panel at the 118th Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, Washington, DC, January 8–11, 2004. Moderator: Christof Mauch (GHI). Panelists: Astrid M. Eckert (GHI), Michaela Hönicke Moore (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill), Peter A. Kraemer (Indiana University, Bloomington). Commentator: Christina von Hodenberg (University of California, Berkeley).

What are the hallmarks of an open, democratic society? Modern democracies are typically associated with open access to diverse sources of information through institutions such as libraries, archives, and independent news media. Recent setbacks to this ideal should serve to remind us that on the eve of the United States' entry into World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt identified freedom of speech and expression as the first of "Four Freedoms" upon which a democratic and peaceful postwar world would be built.

The papers presented at this panel described various attempts to restore or create such free institutions as part of an open public realm in postwar Germany. The year 1945 was clearly not a *Stunde Null* at which German archivists, librarians, and journalists broke cleanly with National Socialism. Both as individuals and as members of professional associations, the men and women who built important components of the institutions that were to help guarantee freedom of speech and expression in postwar Germany did so in the shadow of the recent past. The protagonists in the panel's papers worked within a mental framework that was characterized by a tension between national identity and foreign imports. "The West," specifically the United States, was an ever-present influence in the process of institution-building and reconciliation with the past, whether as the power that implemented denazification, as a supplier of financial patronage, as an imagined role model for modernity and democracy, or, negatively, as the specter of mass society and loss of culture.

In her paper "The History Makers: German Archivists in the Immediate Postwar Period," Astrid M. Eckert looked at how (West) German

archivists in the immediate postwar period dealt with their role under National Socialism. Archivists have traditionally been considered an unpolitical lot, quietly preserving a country's written legacy but not generating historically relevant records themselves. However, this perception overlooks the archivists' power to shape the historical record by deciding what to preserve and whom to allow to use it. During the National Socialist period, German archivists played an even more overt political role by incorporating confiscated Jewish archival material into their collections; by providing staff for (looting) missions into and administration of German-occupied territories; by setting up the NSDAP party archives, thus ensuring the possibility of rewriting history from the Nazi perspective; and by conducting genealogical research to provide essential data to prove "Aryan" descent (the so-called *Ariernachweis*). This latter service involved them squarely in the core elements of Nazi rule: its racism and anti-Semitism. Although German archivists cannot be considered major perpetrators to the same extent as members of the *Einsatzgruppen* or the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA), for example, they played their specific part in the machinery that ensured the functioning and longevity of the system, as did every professional group at the time. Eckert therefore argued that German archivists would have had plenty to think about after Germany's collapse in 1945 if they had openly tried to assess their share of guilt and political responsibility. Instead, leading archivists of the Prussian Archival Administration (Preußische Archivverwaltung) devised strategies to bypass denazification procedures and to preserve the profession intact, i.e. with the least possible interference from the Allies. With only a few 'victims' of denazification, the profession managed the transition into the early Federal Republic, where strong continuity of personnel marked the reestablishment of the archival scene.

Noting continuity of personnel, however, is not a surprising result for the German context and, indeed, can be shown for nearly every professional group. In a next step, therefore, Eckert distinguished between short-term transition (denazification) and long-term transformation of the archival profession during the first decades of the Federal Republic. Applying Ulrich Herbert's concept of "liberalization," she provided some tentative explanations for the transformation of the archival profession into what can now fairly be described as supportive of a democratic, pluralistic society, both in the individual outlook of its members and in the professional attitude of the profession as a whole.<sup>1</sup> This transformation is all the more remarkable because German archivists had been mostly conservative and traditional in outlook, had actively purged themselves of their liberal, democratic elements after 1933, and were largely in denial about their role during National Socialism. As explanatory factors, Eckert named the archivists' unwaivering allegiance to the

state; the generational shift in the profession that occurred in the early 1970s; and the Allied-imposed access clause for files on the history of National Socialism. These files had been part of the captured German records that were returned by the Western Allies in the late 1950s and early 1960s under the provision of open access for international research.<sup>2</sup>

Peter A. Kraemer turned the panel's attention to a unique project of transatlantic cultural negotiation and public-private philanthropy. His paper "Children's Crusade: American Philanthropy and the International Youth Library in Germany" told the story of Jella Lepman's idealistic endeavor to establish a children's and youth library in Munich as part of an individually conceived contribution to reeducation.<sup>3</sup> Lepman, born in 1891 as the daughter of a Jewish clothing manufacturer in Stuttgart, fled to Great Britain in 1935. When she returned to her native land in 1945, she did so in the uniform of the U.S. Army Advisor for Women's and Youth Affairs. An ardent observer, Lepman identified not the material scarcity of the *Trimmergesellschaft* as the most pressing need but rather the lack of nourishment for children's minds. She was a woman of canny political views who aggressively sought out scarce material resources to realize her vision of an International Children's Book Exhibition. These books should serve both as a model for possible future publications in German children's literature, and as a sobering reminder of how much Germany had isolated itself under National Socialism. The success of the endeavor encouraged her to turn the temporary traveling exhibition into a permanent youth library. For this, however, she needed financial support. Kraemer skillfully showed how Lepman's resolute personality intersected with the nascent political and philanthropic postwar agenda of the Rockefeller Foundation. In 1947, the New York-based foundation announced its ambitious Program for European Recovery to assist the reconstruction of West European universities and research institutions devastated by war. Lepman successfully tapped into the foundation's resources and received a travel grant to go to the United States to raise money and materials for her project. In 1952, the International Youth Library celebrated its fifth anniversary in Munich. The library was admired by Germans and Americans alike, from author Erich Kästner and Federal President Theodor Heuss to Eleanor Roosevelt, and was praised by its patrons at the Rockefeller Foundation as one of their most significant contributions to (West) German reorientation and world peace. The Rockefeller Foundation's support of the International Youth Library represented a unique moment in its own history when it extended its mandate beyond the patronage of pure scholarly and scientific research. For her part, Jella Lepman never allowed the Foundation to dictate her actions, however. Instead, she adapted and rejected, reshaped and manipulated her patron's attempts to influence her cause, making her story and that of the International Youth

Library in Munich less a story of "Americanization" than one of selective borrowing from American ideals.

Michaela Hönicke Moore shifted the debate toward another influential group in the public realm: writers and journalists. She examined the role that "America" as a theme and imagined entity played in the political publications and private musings of a group of prominent German commentators in the 1940s and 1950s, and offered a typology of intellectual transformations from the Third Reich to the Federal Republic. Drawing on a complex heritage of glorifying, ambivalent, at times even openly conflicting attitudes toward "America" and "the West," Germany's political and intellectual elites after the war engaged themselves yet again in the question of what the United States stood for. They delivered reflections and portrayals of the United States as victor, world power, and "land of promise," thereby playing a key role in Germany's thorny process of democratization and Westernization that unfolded against the backdrop of the American occupation and within the parameters of the ideological antagonisms of the Cold War. West Germany's transformation from an authoritarian-dictatorial to a liberal-democratic political culture was characterized by an acute tension between national unity and traditions on the one hand, and foreign imports and impositions on the other. Pragmatic recognition of American political-military supremacy coexisted with passionately voiced feelings of cultural superiority, now expressed as part of a Eurocentric concept of the "occident."

The protagonists of Hönicke Moore's paper were Margaret Boveri (1900–1975) and Dolf Sternberger (1907–1989). For both writers, the 1930 observation by a German literary critic holds true: "Our identity was characterized by where we stood in relation to America." And they stood at different ends of the spectrum. Boveri, with an American mother, well traveled and cosmopolitan, never wavered in her allegiance to Germany. She worked as a journalist during the Third Reich, and wrote a series of derogatory articles about American statesmen, including a compromising piece on "Jews in America," for Goebbels's newspaper *Das Reich*. In 1946, Boveri published her *America Primer for Grown-up Germans*.<sup>4</sup> The book was widely distributed and brought her praise as a contributor to German-American reconciliation. Under the guise of "value-free" presentation, however, her German readers easily recognized the entire panorama of familiar anti-American clichés. Only one American reviewer openly called the *Primer* what it was: an anti-American treatise.

Sternberger, on the other hand, had drawn different lessons altogether. For years, he tried to "write between the lines" and engage in "soft resistance" at the formerly high-quality newspaper, the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, while all along protecting his Jewish wife. During the last two years of the war, he withdrew, and worked as an industrial sociologist.

As the editor of the postwar political magazine *Die Wandlung*, he rejected nationalism and its rhetoric, embracing the idea of universal human rights and working to prepare his readers for democracy. In Boveri's eyes, his acceptance of Western political concepts and openness toward American political ideals bordered on collaborationism.

What, then, were readers to make of such contrasting stances, of such a clash between defiance and advocacy for democratic change? Hönicke Moore carefully argued that despite their differences, Boveri and Sternberger may have been complementary forces in postwar German society. Like their readers, both writers suffered from a lack of political orientation and both found themselves in what contemporary lingo termed a state of "spiritual-moral confusion." As they worked their way through the intense impressions of defeat, occupation, and confrontation with the murder of European Jewry, they brought their readers along with them on their intellectual journey. Boveri's writings resonated more with nationalistic feelings. She offered a confirmation of national identity and intellectual resistance to the occupier, thereby allowing her readers to release part of their own pressure. Sternberger, however, was more demanding and challenging, and ultimately represented the voice of the future. As Hönicke Moore concluded, both were "bridge-builders" in their own ways.

It was left to commentator Christina von Hodenberg to pull the various strings together and connect them to current scholarship on postwar Germany. Democratization of political culture, liberalization of attitudes, cultural transfer, Americanization, Westernization, and "coming to terms with the past" were the buzz-words of the presentations. Hodenberg encouraged the panelists to reexamine the usefulness and explanatory potential of the terms, and to explore ways to sharpen their meaning for the respective contexts touched upon in the three papers. With much work already done on the short-term transition from war to occupation to the establishment of the Federal Republic, new studies now concentrate on the processes of long-term transformation. They address continuities, reach back into the 1920s (and earlier), and carry the narrative through to the 1960s. This evolution of West Germany into a liberal, Western society was a complex process. Hodenberg reminded the audience that historians have not yet reached a consensus regarding its driving forces. But she argued that there seems to be growing evidence that one way to approach long-term change is to look not at politics and institutions but rather at people and professions. By doing this, otherwise abstract processes like "liberalization" and "Westernization" might be rendered more accessible. The individual adaptations, conversions, re-inventions, and denials after 1945 show us how circuitous the route to inner democratization really

was, and how many contradictions, ambivalences, and conflicts were part of it.

*Astrid M. Eckert*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Ulrich Herbert, "Liberalisierung als Lernprozeß," in: Herbert (ed.), *Wandlungsprozesse in Westdeutschland. Belastung, Integration, Liberalisierung 1945–1980* (Göttingen: Wallstein 2002), esp. 8f., 14–19.

<sup>2</sup> Astrid M. Eckert, *Kampf um die Akten. Die Westalliierten und die Rückgabe von deutschem Archivgut nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Stuttgart: Steiner 2004), 429–456.

<sup>3</sup> Peter A. Kraemer, "Germany Is Whose Problem? American Philanthropy and the German Question, 1944–1963" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> Margeret Boveri, *Amerikafibel für erwachsene Deutsche. Ein Versuch Unverstandenes zu erklären* (Berlin: Minerva Verlag, 1946).

## THE WELFARE STATE: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE IN TRANSATLANTIC PERSPECTIVE

Symposium at the GHI, February 2, 2004. Co-sponsored by the GHI and the Hertie Foundation. Conveners: Christof Mauch (GHI) and Dirk Schumann (GHI).

Participants: Kurt Biedenkopf (Chairman, Board of Trustees of the Hertie School of Government and former Prime Minister of Saxony), Robert Kuttner (co-editor, *The American Prospect*), Waltraud Schelkle (London School of Economics), Martin Geyer (University of Munich).

Is the welfare state destined to disappear, given its huge and ever-increasing costs? Or is it an essential instrument for the preservation of social stability? To many observers, it seems obvious that under the pressure of aging populations, lagging economic growth, and the challenges of globalization, the current welfare state cannot be sustained without major transformations. Adopting a historical perspective helps clarify the key functions of the welfare state, the sources of resistance to change, and ways to overcome this resistance. With the generous support of the Hertie Foundation, the GHI brought together a group of prominent experts to discuss the development of the welfare state from American and European points of view. Christof Mauch, director of the GHI, was particularly pleased to welcome Kurt Biedenkopf, who has made seminal contributions to this debate during a long and distinguished career that has combined scholarship with public service in a unique way.

Biedenkopf began his remarks by describing the evolution of the German welfare state since its beginnings in the late nineteenth century. When Bismarck established the welfare system, it was meant to support families caring for sick and retired family members, rather than to enable individuals to maintain their standard of living during old age or illness. Accordingly, pensions and other benefits were rather low. The Weimar Republic explicitly defined the state as a welfare state, formalized the participation of organized labor in its institutions, and extended its programs. While the Basic Law of 1949 placed the Federal Republic of Germany in this tradition, chancellor Konrad Adenauer interpreted the social responsibilities of the state as limited. By providing protection against basic risks only, the state would prevent the necessary institutional arrangements from endangering freedom. Following the passage of the crucial legislation in 1957, not more than one-sixth of the Gross Domestic

Product (GDP) was spent on social expenditures. Biedenkopf pointed out that in the 1970s, these expenditures expanded to eventually reach one-third of the GDP. During this time, social expenditures increased much more rapidly than individual incomes, thus dashing hopes that the growth of the latter would reduce that of the former. As a consequence, labor costs rose sharply, bringing about a sharp rise in capital investments that drove up productivity and eliminated most low-income jobs. This resulted in rising unemployment and a concomitant rise of transfer payments as well as an expansion of the shadow economy. All these developments, Biedenkopf concluded, had produced an "overextension" of the welfare state that was no longer affordable.

Biedenkopf identified three key challenges that made serious reform of the welfare state inevitable: demographic developments, the changes of labor markets resulting from globalization, and the expansion of the European Union. In his view, the first was the most important. At present, the average German retires at age 60 with a life expectancy of another 18 years, having spent only 37.5 years actively working. Against the backdrop of a rapidly aging population all over Europe, this ratio would before long fail to provide both a decent standard of living and sufficient pensions for old age. While Germans are now beginning to realize that a change of the system is necessary, Biedenkopf warned that overcoming the likely resistance would be difficult and time consuming. In his view, however, there was no alternative to restructuring the welfare state by returning responsibility to the individual.

Robert Kuttner's response took issue with the argument that the present extent of the welfare state in Germany placed too heavy a burden on its economy. After all, Daimler had bought Chrysler, and Germany leads the United States in exports, not the other way around. Citing Karl Polanyi's *The Great Transformation* (New York, 1944), Kuttner argued that failing to balance freedom and social security could cause severe social and political crises. Dictatorships resulted from out-of-control capitalism, not the excesses of the welfare state. By investing in areas not covered by the market, that is in health and education, the state would make a market economy viable in the first place. As Sweden's introduction of competition into the system demonstrated, however, experimentation and reform were necessary. Kuttner emphasized that two types of risks needed to be distinguished: voluntary risks, related to the opening of a business, for example; and involuntary risks, such as the relocation of jobs as a result of globalization. Agreeing with Biedenkopf that globalization made it difficult to defend islands of high wages, Kuttner nevertheless dismissed the idea that this necessitated the abolition of the welfare state.



While acknowledging that a reformed welfare state could not follow the models set by Bismarck or the New Deal, Kuttner called for a “work-and-welfare state” that allowed individuals to participate in the economy without fear; otherwise, they might fall for political extremists. Unfortunately, in his view the United States has seen an all-out assault on its social security system since the 1980s.

In his reaction to Biedenkopf’s remarks, Martin Geyer noted that, given the intensity and scope of the present public discourse on reforms of the welfare state, Germany was finding itself in another *Gründerkrise*, another attempt to rebuild the foundations of state and society. This should come as no surprise, Geyer emphasized, as the institutionalization of social interests over a long period of time had empowered many social groups and thus had helped to integrate Germany. But it had also created the potential for stiff resistance to reforms of the social security system. While farmers were often forgotten in discussions about the system, the reactions of civil servants had to be seen as a yardstick for the viability of changes. In contrast to Biedenkopf, Geyer described the 1980s, not the 1970s, as a crucial period. By providing new benefits for families, the Kohl government had increased the stakes families held in the system and made the welfare state even more resistant to reforms, in spite of attempts to cut it back elsewhere. Geyer found it puzzling that politicians in particular were voicing their disillusionment about the ability of the political process to change the social security system. Calling for more optimism, he interpreted the modification of the pension system that was associated with former labor minister Walter Riester as an example of successful piecemeal reform. Muddling through, Geyer concluded, might be a viable reform course for Germany, as it had been for the United States during the last two hundred years.

In the lively discussion that followed, it soon became clear that Biedenkopf’s and Kuttner’s positions were not as far apart as they had first appeared. Prompted by questions about the impact of German unification on the social security system, gender inequalities, the meaning of Hayek’s theories, and the differences between the reform discourses in the United States and Germany, Biedenkopf made it clear that he did not advocate dismantling the welfare state, but instead favored adjusting it in such a fashion that the coming generation would be dissuaded from opting out of the system. Defining education as an investment in the future, Biedenkopf refused to categorize it as part of the social security system. While opting for a broader definition that encompassed education, Kuttner acknowledged that Biedenkopf’s positions would place him to the left of the American discourse. Both agreed that globalization called for mechanisms of political control to avoid excessive emphasis on economic freedom in relation to social responsibility. Referring to the Euro-

pean Union, however, Biedenkopf pointed out that the nation-state had ceased to be the only institution capable of exerting this control. All in all, the presentations and the discussion shed new light on the enormous complexity of the debate about reforms of the welfare state on both sides of the Atlantic. Europeans and Americans seem not so much separated by different systems as they are close to each other in the problems of coming up with precise definitions and viable political strategies.

*Dirk Schumann*

## THE SPATIAL TURN IN HISTORY

Symposium at the GHI, February 19, 2004. Convener: Thomas Zeller (University of Maryland/GHI). Speakers: Denis Cosgrove (UCLA), Karen Till (University of Minnesota).

The relationship between historians and geographers has not always been an easy one. Over the last decade, however, more and more historians have begun to pay attention to the spatial dimension of history, and thus have become increasingly aware of the work of cultural and historical geographers. In February 2004, the German Historical Institute contributed to the ongoing conversation between geographers and historians by inviting two cultural geographers, Denis Cosgrove and Karen Till, to present their work. Their papers are published in the "Features" section of this *Bulletin*.

A workshop on the spatial turn is certainly timely. But it is also fair to say that historians often hesitate to address the spatial dimension of the processes that they are studying. On the most obvious level, many are wary of spatial analyses because of the overly deterministic way space has been used by scholars in the past. One need not only think of the geographical determinism inherent in the work of scholars such as Ellsworth Huntington or Karl Wittfogel; even in anti-racist and anti-essentialist works such as Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, spatiality sometimes tends to be the primary causal factor for many conclusions. In addition, the German word for space, *Raum*, very soon takes on an odious dimension, evoking the Nazis' push for *Lebensraum* or the supposed *Volk ohne Raum*. While spatial thinking of course does not necessarily lead to expansionist or aggressive policies, the legacy of the Third Reich has certainly left its mark on the debate over the spatial dimension of history. One could further develop this point by looking at the intersection of history and geography in various countries with different academic traditions. Great Britain, for example, has had a very productive school of historical geography, as has the United States. By contrast, after 1945, Germany's geographers and historical geographers no longer thrived as they had before World War II.

Since the 1990s, historical interest in the formation of space has increased, and certain subdisciplines within history, especially environmental history, have begun paying more attention to the spatiality of the historical enterprise. The geographer Edward Soja has accused historians of writing history as if it took place on the head of a pin; this is less true for environmental history. As the environmental historian Richard White recently noted, however, even environmental historians, with their awareness of large processes of change over time and space, still tend to

regard space as a simple, empty container for political, social, or cultural developments. Historians today can learn much from the ways in which geographers, in particular cultural and historical geographers, conceptualize space and use it in their analyses. As the American cultural geographer Wilbur Zelinsky once wrote, "if geographers dare not ignore history, practitioners of history and the other social sciences and humanities must reciprocate by taking the spatial factor into full account in their endeavors." The GHI's symposium attempted to encourage historians to consider the spatial dimensions of history by introducing them to the work of two prominent cultural geographers.

*Thomas Zeller*

## NATURAL DISASTERS AND CULTURAL STRATEGIES: RESPONSES TO CATASTROPHE IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Conference at the GHI, February 19–22, 2004. Conveners: Christof Mauch (GHI) and Christian Pfister (University of Bern, Switzerland). Made possible by a grant from the Gerda Henkel Foundation, Düsseldorf.

Participants: Anna Akasoy (University of Frankfurt), Greg Bankoff (University of Auckland, New Zealand, currently Netherland Institute for Advanced Study), Lauri Bauer Coleman (College of William and Mary), Vinita Damodaran (New Delhi, India and University of Sussex), Mathias Deutsch (University of Erfurt), Andreas Dix (University of Bonn), Georgina Endfield (University of Nottingham), Lutfallah Gari (Yanbu al-Sinaiyah, Saudi Arabia), Gustavo Gerardo Garza-Merodio (Universidad de México), Anne Marie Granet-Abisset (Grenoble), Alain Gioda (Maison des Sciences de l'Eau IRD, Montpellier), Richard Grove (Center for World Environmental History, University of Sussex), Andrea Janku (University of Heidelberg), Michael Kempe (Max-Planck-Institut für europäische Rechtsgeschichte, Frankfurt), Itoko Kitahara (Kanagawa University, Japan), Gabriele Lingelbach (University of Trier), Franz Mauelshagen (University of Zurich), Bernard Mergen (George Washington University), James K. Mitchell (Rutgers University), José Mouthaan (European University, Florence), Timo Myllyntaus (University of Turku), Karen Oslund (University of Maryland, College Park), María del Rosario Prieto (Instituto Argentino de Nivología, Glaciología y Ciencias Ambientales, Mendoza), Christian Rohr (University of Salzburg), Hugo Romero (Universidad de Chile), Stephanie Summermatter (University of Bern), Bertrand Taithe (University of Manchester), Otfried Weintritt (University of Cologne), Cornelia Wilhelm (University of Munich).

Humans have been coping with the effects of natural disasters and hazards throughout history and in every part of the globe. Both the impact of natural disasters and the ways in which humans have dealt with them have changed over time. This international conference brought together scholars from different disciplines to discuss the cultural strategies used to cope with floods, earthquakes, windstorms, and famine around the world from the Middle Ages to the present. Conference participants analyzed the different ways in which disasters were perceived and interpreted, the ways in which relief measures were organized, and the types of cultural strategies and coping mechanisms that evolved over time. For the first time, all of these issues were discussed in global and comparative perspective. One overarching question was whether national styles or cultural idiosyncrasies in dealing with disasters could be discerned.

In his paper "Natural Disasters—Catalysts for Fundamental Learning," Christian Pfister outlined some ideas on what he called "collective learning from disasters." He argued that disasters have long-term consequences that are worth studying, and emphasized that there is a correlation between the frequency of disasters and the readiness to implement preventive strategies. Pfister distinguished different types of responses, such as "technical innovations" (e.g. building dams) that occur during the "emergency phase" and the period of reconstruction, and "ecological responses" (e.g. the re-naturalization of rivers) that come later. He pointed out that "the settings and the artifacts for disaster prevention" have shifted over time to "higher scales, involving larger areas, higher levels of administration, and higher levels of technical sophistication." In a case study of the evolution of Swiss forestry law, Pfister analyzed the "career pattern" (Niklas Luhmann) of the "deforestation paradigm" that replaced earlier explanatory models for flooding in the course of the nineteenth century. Specifically, he identified the gravity of the 1868 disaster as a key determinant in changing attitudes and policies in the Swiss parliament.

In her paper "Viewing Nature Through the Lens of Catastrophe," Cornelia Wilhelm argued that an anthropocentric view gradually replaced religious explanations of disaster in the course of the eighteenth century. One of the central sources for her argument was a 1784 publication by mathematician Johann Ernst Baselius Wiedeburg, who was convinced that the dangers of earthquakes could be limited if not eliminated. According to Wiedeburg, all "physical evil" was preventable.

In his paper on "Mapping Natural Hazards: Representations of Floods," cultural geographer Andreas Dix discussed the role of maps in the analysis of disasters in recent centuries. He noted the role of the military and aerial photography in the documentation of disaster, and he emphasized the value of pictorial representations for the analysis of catastrophe. At the same time, Dix warned that visual evidence often incorrectly suggests that humans are in "absolute control" of natural disasters.

In a paper titled "Towards a Cultural and Social History of Disaster in Germany," Franz Mauelshagen argued that the nation-state was an inadequate category for the comparative analysis of disaster in history. He suggested that historians ought to identify "regions of disaster" rather than national cultures, and he demonstrated that the German North Sea coast, the subject of his own research, developed its own unique "hydrological culture" in coping with natural hazards over many centuries. Specifically, Mauelshagen demonstrated that the frequent recurrence of storm tides promoted technical developments, the establishment of pro-

fessional or expert groups, and early entrepreneurship in dike construction. In the second part of his paper, Mauelshagen discussed the role of religion in the conceptualization and management of disasters. He argued in particular that striking similarities exist between the Christian conception of "moral causation" (sins leading to divine punishment) and more modern concepts of "hybrid causation" (technical hubris leading to disaster).

Like Mauelshagen, Michael Kempe emphasized that a specific "culture of disaster" existed in the North Sea region of northern Germany. In his paper, he analyzed how memories of individual disasters were recorded and how disastrous events were communicated. He claimed that Germans on the North Sea coast constituted an "amphibian society" with its own culture of memory, manifested in commemorative plaques, literature, art, and local myths, but also in the very structure of engineered landscapes and dikes.

In her paper on "Perceptions and Reactions to Catastrophes in the Federal Republic of Germany," social historian Gabriele Lingelbach investigated the role of charities, the media, and the public in their reactions to the disastrous 1962 Hamburg flood. Lingelbach found that Germans across the nation donated unprecedented amounts to a wide variety of welfare associations. The campaign's success was not due to the prosperity of the donors alone, but also to the role of the media, which spread the news far beyond the Hamburg region, often in an emotionally stirring way.

Medievalist Christian Rohr's paper dealt with flood management along the Danube River, with particular emphasis on floods that hit the city of Wels in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Rohr was able to reconstruct not only how often the city was hit by floods during this period but also what reconstruction work was done to the bridge in Wels whenever floods damaged it. Rohr pointed out that the bridgeworker's records of the pre-Reformation period contained no references to religious interpretations of the floods; he suggested that scientific explanations became particularly prominent from the eighteenth century on, while religious convictions about the origins of floods persisted simultaneously well into the twentieth century.

Historian Mathias Deutsch presented a paper, co-authored by geographer Rüdiger Glaser, about flood control on the river Elbe from 1500 to 1900. Deutsch pointed out the need to distinguish between short-, medium-, and long-term effects of floods. During the first two weeks after a flood, local response generally emphasized charity drives and maintaining order. In the following six months, the focus shifted to the reconstruction of buildings and to calculating damages, whereas during a

third period, efforts centered on drafting emergency plans for future floods.

In a panel on “Nordic Disasters,” Timo Myllyntaus and Karen Oslund presented their research on Finland and Iceland respectively. Myllyntaus discussed the phenomenon of “kesähalla” (“summer frost” or “killing frost”), a silent and almost invisible natural phenomenon that has caused severe crises throughout Finnish history into the nineteenth century, when the Great Finnish Famine (1867) occurred. Myllyntaus stressed that many factors—including malnutrition, infectious diseases, and socio-economic disarray—were responsible for the disastrous damage caused by summer frosts. The famine years of the 1860s are often considered a turning point in Finnish history. They were followed by deep structural changes, including modernization and profound alterations in traditionally agrarian Finnish society.

In her paper on the disastrous Icelandic volcanic eruption of 1783, Karen Oslund demonstrated that disasters could bring more than just socio-economic changes. She argued that cultural constructions of Icelandic nature changed fundamentally as a result of the 1783 catastrophe. The volcanic eruptions were of immediate interest to European geologists; Iceland became a site of scientific discovery, and the “wildness” and “uncontrolled nature” of Iceland became a hallmark of the country’s unique qualities and character in artistic representations, in travel guides, and in the minds of Icelandic nationalists.

José Mouthaan’s paper on disaster relief in the Kingdom of Naples addressed the public responses of political and religious leaders in a seventeenth-century cultural setting. Mouthaan stressed the important role of Naples’s viceroy, who personally oversaw the relief work performed by the residents of Naples and by the large number of Spanish soldiers who assisted the population in the aftermath of earthquakes. She also explained that the Catholic leaders of Naples offered special services and rituals, including processions and acts of penitence, to help restore what they saw as a “disturbed relationship” between man and God. In her paper on natural disasters in France, Anne Marie Granet-Abisset gave an overview of French historiography on natural disasters and the work of a Grenoble research institute specializing on the history of catastrophes. Bertrand Taithe used his case study of droughts in Algeria to explore the origins of humanitarianism. He argued that humanitarianism is “hegemonic” in the Gramscian sense. For example, the decision to publicize the starvation of the Algerian population should not be seen as a gratuitous act, but rather as a way of demonstrating the shortcomings of Arab politics, culture, and religion. He noted the religious underpinnings of the humanitarian discourse and the affinity between humanitarianism and colonial interests.



In a panel on "Catastrophes in Islamic Culture," three experts on the Arab world, Anna Akasoy, Lutfallah Gari, and Otfried Weintritt, explained the role of natural disasters in Near Eastern history, Arab science, and Islamic theology. Akasoy addressed earthquakes, Gari focused on windstorms and relief activities, and Weintritt discussed major floods in Mesopotamia. In exploring various Islamic intellectual traditions, Akasoy found that texts about earthquakes offered both theological and scientific explanations for these natural disasters. Even in strictly theological texts, earthquakes were not necessarily interpreted as a form of divine punishment; they also offered authors an opportunity to express political and social criticism.

Akasoy's findings, largely based on theological texts, were complemented by Lutfallah Gari's presentation on "Preparedness and Response to Natural Disasters in Arabic Sources." Gari pointed out that many precautionary (technical and legal) measures were taken to protect ships from damage in windstorms. He also emphasized that government agencies, pious endowments, and medical services were engaged in relief work in early modern times. Their reach was, however, limited to local action.

In his paper "The Floods of Baghdad," Otfried Weintritt showed convincingly that the government and people of Mesopotamia were used to dealing with flooding. They experienced disaster on a regular basis, and had minimal recourse to religion and ritual. In dealing with the damage, their conduct was above all "technical-rational."

In a panel on natural disasters in Indian history, Vinita Damodaran and Richard Grove discussed droughts, floods, and famines on the Indian subcontinent. Damodaran's study focused on coping strategies of the indigenous people in the forest economy of nineteenth-century Chotanagpur. She demonstrated that a reliance on a diversity of forest products during the precolonial period had ensured that droughts would not cause famine. Once deforestation began and the forest department denied local communities access to traditional jungle produce, however, Chotanagpur for the first time found itself vulnerable to the threat of famine that had long affected many other parts of lowland India.

In the second paper on India, Richard Grove looked at the significant droughts that El Nino events have caused in India and other parts of South Asia, and as far west as southern Europe. In his assessment of the impact of El Nino in the "long seventeenth century," Grove concluded that El Nino events often gave rise to famines with a very high rate of mortality. They caused social disruption, including migration and military conflict, and they "contributed to the emergence of new kinds of property rights and revenue remission incentives, and to periods of inflation."

In her paper on disasters in nineteenth-century China, Andrea Janku explained that imperial kindness and concern, particularly relief aid and measures of reconstruction, were recorded in great detail in the historical documents. She pointed out that the Chinese were highly skeptical of foreign relief, which mainly came from London. At any rate, she argued, the symbolic impact of foreign relief aid outweighed its material effects. Once a natural disaster “was no longer restricted to distinct localities” but incorporated “into an international context, it had become a national experience.” In contrast to India, however, where it was suggested that the very presence of the British had caused some of the most severe famines, the Chinese acknowledged the existence of world markets as “an unavoidable fact one had to reckon with.”

In her paper on natural hazards in Japanese history, Itoko Kitahara presented her work as general director of the exhibition “Documenting Disasters: Natural Disasters in Japanese History, 1703–2003.” This exhibition aimed to bring historians and scientists together and to inform the public about the different types of preventive measures that have been adopted throughout Japanese history.

Greg Bankoff turned the discussion to hazard as a “frequent life experience” when he addressed “cultures of coping” in the Philippines. “For Filipinos,” Bankoff explained, “hazard and disaster are simply just accepted aspects of daily life.” Cultural adaptations—from distinct types of architecture to crop diversification—are among the preventive coping strategies that Filipinos have adopted over many centuries. Furthermore, anthropologists have identified cognitive and behavioral responses—including *bahala na* (“leave-it-to-fate sentiment”) and specific forms of humor—that reduce or eliminate psychological distress in tense situations. Bankoff also discussed the history of formal and informal associations among the people of the archipelago, from the local groups that formed several centuries ago to today’s Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), which began to emerge from the Catholic Church, the labor movement, and urban middle-class intellectuals.

In a panel on a variety of natural hazards in South America, María del Rosario Prieto, Hugo Romero, and Alain Gioda presented their research on floods, earthquakes, and droughts. According to del Rosario Prieto, the Parana, Paraguay, and Uruguay rivers have seen devastating floods for many centuries, but it took a disastrous flood in 1982–83 (and the evacuation of 250,000 people) for scholars to begin doing serious research on the history of flooding in South America. Interestingly, indigenous peoples and Spaniards each developed distinctive responses to flooding. Unknowingly, the Jesuits destroyed part of the indigenous culture of coping. Consequently, many natives suffered malnutrition, disease and death.

Like María Prieto, Hugo Romero, in his paper about earthquakes in Chile, pointed out the differences between Spanish and indigenous coping practices. As recently as 1960, the *mapuches* sacrificed a boy in the wake of an earthquake “to please the gods” and prevent future disasters. Romero also pointed out that the Catholic Church developed a “syncretistic ideology” in Chile in order to exert social control and to consolidate its power. In contrast to earthquakes and floods, South American droughts were “not catastrophic,” according to Alain Gioda. He explained that peasants had established coping mechanisms (including the introduction of crops with low water requirements and the diversion of 70% of the water to their fields) that reduced some of the most devastating effects of droughts in the Andes.

In a panel on “Natural Disasters in Mexico,” Georgina Endfield and Gustavo Garza-Merodio both emphasized the fact that natural disasters are commonplace in Mexico. Droughts, floods, and hurricanes as well as earthquakes and volcanic activity have continually tested the resilience and resourcefulness of the country’s population. As Endfield argued, however, the impact of an extreme event on society and society’s ability to recover from it depended very much on the context and the sequence of events. “Thus, a drought in one year might have negligible impacts if, in the following year, a good harvest [could] be secured.” Endfield pointed out that experimentation, innovation, and agrarian adaptation were common features in Mexico. Furthermore, the environmental awareness of Mexicans increased steadily since the late eighteenth century, and “cumulative disaster knowledge” has played an increasing role in social memory and in developing new coping practices. While Endfield’s paper focused on social aspects of disaster management, Gustavo Garza-Merodio discussed cultural practices from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. He focused on annual religious ceremonies and rogations for the rainy season. He also pointed out that the Indian mountain cities were much better designed and equipped to face water shortages than their Spanish colonial counterparts.

In her paper on “Calamity in Early America,” Lauri Bauer Coleman emphasized that natural disasters were closely tied to the radical changes in American society between 1750 and 1820. Conflicting explanations of natural hazards appeared in contemporary newspapers, as enlightened writers used them as a public forum to debate the merits of explanations offered by European scientists. While these scholars clearly wished to keep the discussion on a scientific level, popular and religious “impressions of disaster” were still very strong and often dominant during the same time period.

In a paper titled “Tornado Disasters in American Culture: From John Park Finley to Theodore Fujita,” Bernard Mergen analyzed the cultural

meaning of tornadoes. He argued that the frequency of tornadoes in America (no other country experiences as many tornadoes) and their place in America's public imagination make them an all-American phenomenon. Mergen examined the origins of tornado research and forecasting in the 1880s with John Park Finley, and then analyzed the evolution and institutionalization of disaster management from the nineteenth century to the present. In his tentative conclusions, Mergen suggested that communities generally ignore the danger posed by severe weather until a tornado occurs, after which they are motivated to make improvements. He also noted that Southerners have been more likely to believe "in God's will and luck"; they were generally less prepared to turn to weather instruments and media in their perception of natural disasters than Northerners.

In his paper on "Changing Twentieth-Century Patterns of Response to New Jersey's Natural Hazards and Disasters," geographer James K. Mitchell discussed a wide variety of natural disasters—forest fires, droughts, coastal storms, blizzards, etc.—that were not "extreme in New Jersey compared with many other places." Mitchell argued that these events have been important primarily in their own right, as they allow us to study broader environmental management actions in "places of modest extremes." Mitchell demonstrated in his paper that many of the hazard-related problems existed both in 1900 and in 2000, but the political and scientific contexts and the social and institutional patterns of response have changed radically over time. "Though we still speak a language of concern when big snows arrive, urban blizzards are more comfortably managed than ever before to the point where their importance as metaphors and performance spaces for acts of social solidarity has come to dominate their potential for damage and death." Mitchell pointed out that conservation interest groups and hazard protection groups were working together in the beginning of the twenty-first century, something that nobody would have imagined a century ago. Thus he reminded us that history has seen frequent and recurring disasters, but also paradigmatic shifts in the cultural and social construction of natural hazards.

Throughout the conference and during the final discussion, it became clear that the study of disasters has helped us understand important aspects of the role of humans in nature.

*Christof Mauch*

## PIETISM IN TWO WORLDS: TRANSMISSIONS OF DISSENT IN GERMANY AND NORTH AMERICA, 1680–1820

Conference at Emory University, March 4–6, 2004. Co-sponsored by Emory University and the GHI. Conveners: James Melton (Emory University), Dirk Schumann (GHI), Jonathan Strom (Emory University).

Participants: Ruth Albrecht (University of Hamburg), Christopher Clark (Cambridge University), Donald F. Durnbaugh (Juniata College), Katherine Carte Engel (Rutgers University, Camden), David Freeman (Emory University), Ulrike Gleixner (Technical University of Berlin), Hartmut Lehmann (Emory University/Max Planck Institute for History), Benjamin Marschke (UCLA), Mary Odem (Emory University), Douglas Palmer (Emory University), Alexander Pyrges (University of Trier), Helene M. Kastinger Riley (Clemson University), Anthony Gregg Roeber (Pennsylvania State University), Hans-Jürgen Schrader (University of Geneva), Jon Sensbach (University of Florida), Douglas Shantz (University of Calgary), William Bradford Smith (Oglethorpe University), Stephen J. Stein (Indiana University), Willi Temme (Kassel), Axel Utz (Pennsylvania State University), Hermann Wellenreuther (University of Göttingen), Renate Wilson (Johns Hopkins University).

Pietism studies have seen a renaissance in recent years as scholars across the historical disciplines have sought new ways of framing the interaction of religion, culture, and politics. The importance of Pietism has long been recognized in shaping Protestant society and culture in Europe and North America, but as a field of historical inquiry, it is only in the last thirty years that interdisciplinary approaches have broadened Pietism studies beyond the former limits of historical theology and provided a new level of methodological innovation. To capitalize on these developments, the GHI and Emory University invited leading scholars from Europe and North America to participate in an interdisciplinary conference on Pietism and the Atlantic world.

From the late seventeenth century, when the first Pietist refugees fled to North America, Pietism has been a transatlantic phenomenon. Pietists established strong networks of communication, commerce, and support between Germany and the New World. North America became important not only for refugees fleeing persecution in Europe, but also as the home of a society whose relative openness allowed Pietists to experiment with new forms of evangelization and to create new social and ecclesiastical structures.

Reflecting the current historiographical disagreements on the scope and meaning of Pietism, the conference opened with a session on “De-

fining Pietism in the World of Transatlantic Revivals." Donald Durnbaugh led off with a paper on the communicative networks established by radical Pietists between colonial North America and Europe. Durnbaugh noted that one constituent element in many definitions of Pietism is its eclectic nature, in which Pietists sought adherents and like-minded spirits across ecclesiastical, territorial, class, and economic boundaries. Using examples of the Philadelphian movement, Ephrata community, and radical separatists and the networks they established across Europe and North America, Durnbaugh argued for a trans-national and trans-confessional understanding of Pietism. Hermann Wellenreuther explored the varieties of Pietist movements in North America among German immigrants: the followers of Zinzendorf, the independently minded Pietists from Württemberg and Baden, and the institutional Hallensian Pietism represented by Heinrich Melchior Mühlenberg. The conflicts that erupted centered less on theological doctrines than on the understanding and governance of the church, and in particular the role of the laity vis a vis the clergy. Wellenreuther argued that the conflicts between Mühlenberg and the more radical Pietists led to a distinctly American synthesis of German Pietism, in which elements of both persisted in the emerging denominational structures. Chris Clark took up the question of Pietist definitions in the context of millenarian thought and the role of the conversion of the Jews. The goal of Jewish conversion was not limited to Pietists in the seventeenth century, but Clark described the unique elements of Pietist schemes in which Christian reform and Jewish conversion were closely linked. Moreover, Pietists were particularly concerned with the socio-economic status of Jews in Germany, and sought to draw Jewish converts away from what they saw as the morally damaging professions of itinerant trading and peddling. These concerns profoundly shaped the Pietist understanding of Christian mission. Clark concluded with two challenges for further research: one for an investigation of the affinity of Pietist and Enlightenment views of Jews and second for longer-term study of millenarian views in German history and the burden placed on the conversion of the Jews within them.

The second panel focused on new directions in Pietism research. Ruth Albrecht drew on feminist and gender studies to analyze the work of Johanna Eleonora Petersen, the most prominent woman writer in early Pietism. Petersen, Albrecht argued, is particularly difficult to categorize because of the highly learned nature of her works and the way in which her ideas transcended typical gender boundaries. She criticized earlier interpretations that understood Petersen's visions as typically feminine. In an analysis of her theological writings on chiliasm, she proposed instead that Petersen subordinated these to a Biblicism that was typical of the radical Frankfurt Pietists. Benjamin Marschke took up Pietists and the

Prussian state through an analysis of the military chaplains. He argued that the relationship of Pietism and Prussia has been neglected since the seminal work of Hinrichs and Deppermann, and that a reappraisal would especially benefit from an analysis of the patronage systems in place. Marschke detailed the Pietists' dogged pursuit of their confessional interests in Prussia through the placement of chaplains, and portrayed the collaboration with the state as far more contentious than has often been assumed. In his conclusion, he called for scholars to broaden the scope of research beyond its preoccupation with the leading figures of August Hermann Francke and Gotthilf August Francke. Alexander Pyrges built on social and communications systems theory as he analyzed the extensive correspondence between the Georgia Pietist community in Ebenezer and recipients in North America, the British Isles, and the continent. Arguing that networks and communicative practices were central to Pietist identity, Pyrges showed how the letters of the Ebenezer community revealed its changing character as the settlement grew from a gathering of Protestant refugees in the 1730s to a largely self-sustaining community in the late eighteenth century. Pyrges described how the semantic dimension of Ebenezer and the 'pious community' still had force even as the network itself began to dissolve.

In the third panel, on migration and dissent, Hans-Jürgen Schrader emphasized the peripatetic nature of radical Pietists, especially the Inspirationists. Following their movement from France to Germany and eventually North America, Schrader described how they incorporated new adherents and prophets along the way. Because their legal status was never certain, even in the more tolerant territories of the Empire, persecution periodically necessitated migration from one territory to another, which also allowed them to gather and strengthen awakened communities beyond political boundaries. Schrader advocated studying the religious aspects of the Inspirationists alongside secular notions of poetic inspiration that emerged in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In his paper on Jakob Böhme, Jane Leade, and Eva von Buttlar, Willi Temme followed the migration of religious ideas across Europe. In particular, he focused on the idea of the restoration of the image of God in humankind. Temme described how the idea of the divine Sophia in Böhme's work was transformed through its English reception in Pordage and Leade. In the thought of the visionary Leade, Temme argued, Sophia assumed dynamic new associations with mother, womb, and rebirth. Consequently, the apocalyptic sun-woman of Revelation Twelve is removed from the metaphysical and placed into the realm of history. In this more embodied sense, the transfigured Böhmenist ideas were transmitted back to the radical Pietists in Germany, including von Buttlar around 1700. In the third paper, Douglas Shantz drew on Berger's understanding

of modern religiosity and the characteristic ideas of mobility and 'homelessness' and applied them to radical Pietists in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Focusing on two radical clergymen, Andreas Achilles in Brandenburg and Heinrich Horch in Hessen, Shantz followed their persecution and forced relocations. In the context of their migration, Shantz argued that the gathering of the pious in conventicles took on special meaning for both, and that they incorporated notions of homelessness into their theological worldviews. Once their wanderings ceased, however, the conventicles lost their centrality, even as their sectarian and chiliastic views remained.

In the last panel of the day, on dissent and migration, Ulrike Gleixner returned to the question of gender and Pietism research. Noting the lack of attention given to women in traditional scholarship on Pietism, Gleixner proposed incorporating new sources and re-appropriating older ones in order to develop narratives and counter-narratives that would address issues of women in history, femininity, masculinity, and the role of gender difference in establishing power. Using examples from Lutheran Pietism of Württemberg, Gleixner argued that Pietism enabled women to expand their participation and agency in religion. This was the case not only in the beginning of the movement, as some scholars have argued, but continued throughout the eighteenth century. These changes, Gleixner pointed out, inevitably led to tensions within Lutheran Pietism, which did not challenge the traditional subordination of women in the family. Pietism expanded women's activities and the concept of "spiritual equality," but it did not lead to a Pietist demand for civil equality. In his paper, James Melton took up Protestants who were eventually expelled from Salzburg and migrated to the Pietist settlement of Ebenezer near Savannah. Focusing on Thomas Gschwaendl, a miner in the Gasteinertal, Melton examined how he and other members of his network practiced their faith secretly and maintained their confessional identity in the midst of persecution. Although celebrated in Germany as the "Urpietisten," Melton found no Pietist influence or contact with the Gasteiner Protestants prior to their expulsion. Melton argued that the culture of alpine mining produced a tightly-knit religious solidarity that preserved their Protestantism and may also have predisposed them to choose the risky option of a transatlantic voyage to America. Jon Sensbach described the role of the Moravian Church in evangelizing among enslaved Africans in the Caribbean during the eighteenth century. German-speaking missionaries converted thousands of slaves in the Danish West Indies and in British colonies. As a result, Sensbach argued, the roots of black Protestant religion in the Atlantic world are closely connected with Germany and continental Pietism. Sensbach focused on the life of Rebecca Protten, a free mixed-race woman from the island of St. Thomas. As a Moravian



preacher to African women, Protten helped organize the earliest black congregation on the island, illustrating the role of women in creating black Protestant Christianity, and the transatlantic connections forged by evangelicals in the shadow of the notorious triangle slave trade of the eighteenth century.

The next day's panels began with one devoted to Pietism and migration to North America. Helene Kastinger Riley described the challenges and controversies among Pietist immigrants as they vied for religious leadership in Georgia. With support from Halle, the Salzburg refugees settled near Savannah at Ebenezer, but they were challenged by Zinzendorf's followers, the Moravians, who had much more success in their attempts to missionize the Native Americans. Although the Moravians eventually abandoned Georgia, Riley described how another Pietist, Christian Gottlieb Priber, developed his utopian ideals among the Cherokee. When his activities conflicted with Oglethorpe's colonial designs, he was arrested, and he died in captivity. Katherine Engel noted that much scholarly attention has been focused on the Moravian settlement of Bethlehem and its unusual communal economic system known as the Oeconomy. The consequence of this emphasis has been to evaluate Bethlehem largely in connection with European and European-American religious trends, specifically in comparison with European Moravian towns. The result has been effectively to disconnect Bethlehem and its distinctive economy from the missionary work which both animated it and distinguished it from its peers. By returning Bethlehem to its proper context within the Moravian mission project, Engel argued, the central puzzles of the town's history—the origin, meaning, and eventual dissolution of the Oeconomy—resolve themselves into practical strategies for serving the economic needs of the missions and the larger Moravian community. In the third paper, Renate Wilson focused on what the archives in Halle and Herrnhut can tell us about the development of philanthropic institutions in the eighteenth century. By examining the account ledgers and other financial records, Wilson argued, historians can gain a much better picture of the larger network of financial support for Pietist institutions, and she described the complex ways in which noble patrons, strategic loans, as well as unpaid labor, especially that of women, enabled the Francke Foundations to flourish financially. Wilson demonstrated how Halle's trading activities remained strong through much of the eighteenth century, only to decline after the death of Gotthilf August Francke in 1769 in Europe.

The sixth panel presented the work of recent Ph.D. recipients and graduate students. David Freeman opened the panel with an investigation of the Dutch 'Further Reformation,' or *nadere Reformie*, and the refugees in the German city of Wesel. During a twenty-year occupation of the

city by the Spanish from 1609 to 1629, a remarkable level of toleration and religious diversity developed. Although the Reformed church was returned to prominence as the public church in Wesel, the idea of the 'pure' church propagated by the Further Reformation brought the Reformed church into repeated conflict with the tolerant religious spirit of the city. Caught between the concepts of pure and public church, Freeman argued that it was only in the small, francophone Walloon church that the ideals of the Further Reformation could actually be realized. In his paper on Jansenism in the eighteenth century, Douglas Palmer described how a Jansenist "Republic of Grace" developed in Utrecht that complemented the Enlightenment's "Republic of Letters." Drawing on Habermas's understanding of the public sphere, Palmer argued that the Jansenism represented an eighteenth-century reform in which laity were not just spectators but directly engaged in the politics of religion in the eighteenth century. Citing the provincial councils in the Dutch Republic as well as their extensive use of print to circumvent French censorship, Palmer argued that the Jansenist project paralleled Protestant Pietism in its relationship to the Habermasian public sphere. In his paper, Axel Utz observed that while in Christian Europe Pietist reform movements were designed to transcend cultural, social, and political boundaries, outside Europe and European colonial enclaves, these distinctions had no meaning and were replaced by a more basic Christian-heathen dichotomy. Utz described the attention paid to the concept in the late seventeenth century and how cultural geographers sought to map Europe's heathen past as well as the expansion of Christianity in Europe. Because Europeans saw a heathen past as part of their own heritage, Utz argued, they developed a generally sympathetic attitude to contemporary heathen. At the same time, this also implied a progressive superiority of Christianity to the backwardness of heathens. Both attitudes influenced the Pietists' approach to Native American and South Asian culture.

The last session was a roundtable discussion on Pietism in the Atlantic World. Hartmut Lehmann emphasized the continuing problems of defining and categorizing Pietist movements, particularly the ways in which the movement is periodized and divided into national groups. A. G. Roeber called for a wider understanding of Pietist movements in North America, especially the heirs of Halle Pietism. Roeber was particularly critical of the failure of American historians of religion to integrate continental Pietism into their understanding of American evangelicalism. Surveying the standard works on American religious history, Stephen Stein concurred with much of Roeber's comments, and pointed to the weak understanding of the impact and definition of Pietism in most scholarship on American religious history. Jonathan Strom highlighted a number of current challenges facing Pietism research, and sought to de-

lineate a number of new directions for further research on Pietism in the Atlantic world. The conference closed with a reception and tour of the Pitts Theology Library on the campus of Emory University.

The conference drew additional participants from Emory University and the greater Southeast who actively participated in the sessions. One of the goals of the conference was to bring researchers in North America and Europe into closer dialogue, and throughout, the conference was structured to allow dialogue and discussion in the sessions, as well as informally at meals and receptions. Plans have been made to publish selected conference papers in a volume edited by James Melton, Jonathan Strom, and Hartmut Lehmann. Emory hosts the conference website at <http://candler.emory.edu/RESOURCES/PIETISM/>.

*Jonathan Strom*

## TAXATION, STATE, AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN GERMANY AND THE UNITED STATES, 1750–1950

Conference at the GHI, March 18–20, 2004. Conveners: Alexander Nützenadel (Universität Köln) and Christoph Strupp (GHI). Made possible by a grant from the Thyssen Foundation, Cologne.

Participants: Thomas Adam (University of Texas, Arlington), Bennett D. Baack (Ohio State University), Robert Beachy (Goucher College), W. Elliot Brownlee (University of California, Santa Barbara), Ballard C. Campbell (Northeastern University), Charlotte Crane (Northwestern University), Martin Daunton (Churchill College, Cambridge), Max Edling (Uppsala University, Sweden), Robin L. Einhorn (University of California, Berkeley), Mark Jantzen (Bethel College), Gabriele Kersting (University of Cologne), Mark H. Leff (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), Ajay K. Mehrotra (Indiana University, Bloomington), Holger Nehring (University College, Oxford), Pia Nordblom (University of Mainz), Walter Rummel (Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz), Mark Spoerer (University of Stuttgart), Andreas Thier (University of Zurich), Hans-Peter Ullmann (University of Cologne), James C. Van Hook (Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State), Frank Zschaler (Catholic University, Eichstätt).

Taxes are a fundamental element of all modern societies. They play an important role in defining the complex and contentious relationship between state and civil society, and can be interpreted as a hinge-like mechanism connecting the public and private spheres. Moreover, taxes secure the financial basis of state activity, redistribute income and wealth, compensate for negative external effects of the private sector, and help to stabilize economic fluctuations.

This conference brought together experts from history, economics, and the legal sciences to discuss the historical origins and transformations of the modern fiscal state in both an interdisciplinary and comparative perspective. It was particularly rewarding to look at the history of two countries with very different “tax cultures”: Germany, where taxation is regarded as a central feature of state-building and modernization “from above”; and the United States, with its long tradition of antifiscalism and tax protest.

The panels of the conference were composed thematically and focused on: the emergence and development of modern taxation; taxation, state building and political representation; tax protests; the political economy of taxation; and taxation in times of political crisis.

In the introductory panel, Martin Daunton and Christoph Strupp discussed approaches and problems of a transnational history of taxation from different perspectives. Daunton presented seven “axes” to structure comparative historical analysis of fiscal systems: the economic performance of tax regimes; the relationship between state and citizen; the political system that determined the structure of the tax system; the public administration created in order to levy and organize the tax revenue; the relation between taxes and public debt; the connections between taxation and the franchise; and the role of other sources of state income. Strupp analyzed the German perceptions of the American tax system in Germany in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The fiscal structure of the United States attracted considerable attention among German economists. Before 1914, the U.S. tax system was usually regarded as premodern and very different from the system established in the modern bureaucratic nation-state of Germany. During the First World War and in the post-war years, economic nationalism gained additional ground. Several publications of the influential school of Karl Bräuer further emphasized the differences between Germany and the United States, and questioned whether a democracy could have a functioning tax system at all. After 1945, with the beginning of a new era of close economic contacts, historical interpretations of the American tax system by German scholars rapidly lost out to studies that were motivated by the practical interests of businessmen and politicians.

In the United States, the situation was different. Ajay K. Mehrotra pointed out that the transformation of the American system of public finance around the turn of the twentieth century was strongly influenced by a group of German-trained political economists such as Richard T. Ely, Henry Carter Adams, and Edwin R. A. Seligman. As leading economic experts of the Progressive era, they were at the forefront of the intellectual battle to dismantle the orthodox theories of *laissez-faire* and to advance the adoption of new and more effective forms of taxation. Indeed, the shift of U.S. tax policy toward the use of a direct income tax, finally introduced in 1913, was not guided simply by the requirement of new government revenue, but also by a concern for economic and social justice. The more differentiated fiscal system in Germany, guided by historicist social theory, was thus seen as a blueprint for an efficient and modern tax system.

Mehrotra’s interpretation was partly supported by the findings of Holger Nehring, who examined the role of the income tax in the process of state-building in Germany and the United States between 1890 and 1914. Nehring argued that in this period the income tax fulfilled similar tasks in both countries. It not only contributed to an efficient and universal system of taxation, but also played a crucial role in the building of

public institutions. In both countries, the state had to cope with the constitutional complexities of a federal system as well as with the social and economic problems of forced industrialization. Nehring thus questioned the conventional picture of two completely different “paths” of fiscal development. The American federal state was not as weak as many scholars have asserted, nor was the German state as strong and conservative as those historians who highlight a German *Sonderweg* have argued.

What were the main forces that drove the evolution of the modern fiscal state in Germany and the United States? In his broad analysis of the development of public finances and taxation between ancien régime and modern Germany, Hans-Peter Ullmann focused on what Josef Schumpeter once defined as specific *WendeePOCHen* (eras of change): the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which saw the emergence of the “Tax Leviathan” as part of absolutist state building; the period following the French Revolution, with the establishment of a system of modern public finance; and the late nineteenth century, when a modern fiscal system emerged that aimed at social redistribution and control of economic processes. Ullmann pleaded for separate analyses of distinct long-term processes such as the growth of public expenditure as well as the increasing institutionalization and homogenization of tax systems.

Ullmann’s overview was supplemented by several more narrowly focused papers. Robert Beachy’s case study on public debt and taxation in Leipzig during the *Sattelzeit* supported Ullmann’s argument that the period during the French revolution and the Napoleonic era was characterized by radical transformations of the fiscal system in Germany on both the municipal and state levels. Under the pressure of French military occupation, governments struggled to pay contributions, often leveraging their credit with the new tools of modern public finance. Demands for political participation arose immediately, but protest remained largely unanswered until the revolution of 1830 in France sparked a riot. As both municipal and state governments quickly discovered, the acceptance of systems of public finance and taxation was closely tied to the legitimacy conferred through constitutional governance.

Inspired by recent approaches of public choice in economic theory, Mark Spoerer challenged the conventional wisdom that the nineteenth-century history of public finance is characterized by a trend toward more tax equity. Contesting the seminal interpretation of the Heidelberg economic historian Eckart Schremmer, Spoerer argued that political actors and institutions, including the government, operate in their own interest. The assumption that the state behaves as a rational welfare maximizer does not withstand the test of empirical analysis. According to Spoerer, the share of indirect taxes, which usually have a regressive effect on income, increased during the nineteenth century. Moreover, already in

this period, local taxation was affected by tax competition. This further questions the “benevolent dictator model” that underlies traditional theories of public finance.

In his comparative analysis of the tax regimes of the German states, Frank Zschaler confirmed the existence of institutionalized tax competition during the nineteenth century. Within the federal system of the German Kaiserreich, the states acted almost autonomously in the field of fiscal policy. The competition pitted states with inefficient tax regimes against those with efficient arrangements. By contrast, Andreas Thier interpreted the emergence of the modern fiscal state as a major challenge for the constitutional monarchy during the nineteenth century. The division of legislative powers between king and parliament established a situation of permanent institutional tension. Tax legislation became one of the driving forces of the development of modern state institutions as the role of the parliament was continuously extended and the tax system became more and more an instrument of social reform.

In the United States, the emergence of modern taxation was closely intertwined with the problems of state- and nation-building in a socially and ethnically fragmented society. Robin Einhorn pointed out specific difficulties of introducing a federal tax after the American Revolution. American politicians were confronted with the question as to whether Afro-American slaves were to be counted as “persons” or as “property.” As this was highly controversial, contemporary debates over taxation can be read as evasive maneuvers to get around the problem of slavery. In framing the Articles of Confederation, the Continental Congress avoided the issue by adopting a completely unworkable scheme of apportionment among the states based on real estate value. As this plan was never realized, a 5 percent “impost” on imported goods was introduced. The delayed institutionalization of federal taxes in the United States was therefore closely linked to the existence of slavery.

This interpretation was challenged by Bennett Baack, who analyzed the emergence of federal taxation from the perspective of institutional economics. In 1775, the Continental Congress established the fiscal powers of the government for the period before and during the war. For revenue, Congress decided not to grant itself the power of taxation, but instead to rely upon voluntary contributions from the states. The provision of a national army to achieve independence furnished the states with a public good. As in any case where the government provides a public good but lacks the power of taxation, the states had little or no incentive to actually make voluntary payments. Baack analyzed various attempts of the Congress to overcome this “free rider problem.” Initially, it tried to circumvent it by establishing a national currency. As the financial return from this effort declined as a result of rapid inflation, Congress spent the

rest of the war trying out a variety of measures to reduce the severity of the free rider problem. The lessons learned from these attempts were to have a significant impact upon the fiscal powers granted to the government in the Constitution.

Max Edling offered a look at the transformation of the American tax system in the decades after the Revolution. Three main developments can be distinguished. First, the central government replaced the provincial or state governments as the dominant actor in the fiscal sphere. Second, customs duties were substituted for direct taxes as the major form of public revenue. Third, although overall per capita taxation in America increased about threefold with independence, the shift from direct taxes to duties nevertheless meant that few citizens made any direct contribution to the federal government at a time when state taxes were very limited.

Ballard Campbell continued the story into the late nineteenth century. He argued that the economic depressions of 1873–79, 1893–98, and 1907–15 led to the creation of modern fiscal institutions in the United States. According to Campbell's model, periodic economic disturbances destabilized the prevailing political equilibrium and provided critical inducements for political change. Especially in the field of taxation, depressions triggered policy innovation. For example, the introduction of the federal income tax in the years before World War I would not have been possible without the severe disturbances between 1907 and 1915.

The First and Second World Wars led to a dramatic growth of public expenditure and thus increased pressure on all governments to find new sources of tax revenue. In the United States, the political and financial options of raising new taxes were limited to corporate taxation. Still, as W. Elliot Brownlee showed in his paper, President Woodrow Wilson and the Democratic leadership in Congress tried to make excess-profit taxation a permanent part of the nation's revenue system in order to achieve a structural solution to the problem of monopoly power. Mark H. Leff demonstrated how New Deal politics and World War II shaped the re-examination of fiscal policies in the United States. Income tax, once seen as a "class tax" on "abnormal incomes," was now transformed into a mass tax that affected most incomes. Moreover, tax policy became a central feature of economic and social policies in a more general way following the reform impetus of the New Deal era.

The last day of the conference was dedicated to the relationship between taxation and political participation. Beyond their financial function and economic impact, taxes played an important role in state-building and the emergence of a civil society. In his analysis of the emergence of limited franchise in nineteenth-century Germany, Alexander Nützenadel pointed out the crucial role that direct taxation played in defining the



individual's right of political participation. The notion that those who contributed financially toward state and community should be rewarded with voting rights was widely accepted, especially among the liberal German *Bürgertum*. As Nützenadel demonstrated, the transformation of the tax system was closely intertwined with the emergence of modern citizenship in Germany. Still, the highly exclusionary three-class voting system, first established on a local level in the Rhineland in 1845 and later adopted for the state by the Prussian constitution of 1849, demonstrated the limits and contradictions of the liberal concept of "tax-citizenship." Especially during the last decades of the Kaiserreich, it privileged the old aristocratic elites and became a symbol of antidemocratic Prussian ideology.

In his case study of New York and Leipzig, Thomas Adam confirmed this interpretation. During the late nineteenth century, both cities were confronted with social tensions and a rapidly growing labor movement. These developments challenged the hegemony of the old cities' elites. Leading representatives of the local bourgeoisie demanded a reform of the municipal voting system to prevent the lower classes from taking control of the city. In both New York and Leipzig, reformers suggested the introduction of an electoral system that would take into account the amount of taxes paid by each citizen. But whereas these exclusionary reform attempts failed in New York, the highly restrictive three-class franchise was enacted in Leipzig in 1894.

In his study of the Mennonites, Mark Jantzen analyzed how taxes shaped the relationship between the state and religious minorities. In 1773, the Prussian state introduced a special tax policy for Mennonites in West Prussia. They were granted an exemption from military service in accordance with their religious principles in exchange for paying additional state taxes. In the following decades, new laws shifted the state's emphasis from making money to making Mennonites better subjects of the state. These laws linked exemption from special taxes and restrictions on property rights to the acceptance of military service. By the 1870s, the Mennonites' desire to avoid these additional taxes and to gain civil rights propelled a majority to renounce the pacifist stance of their religion and become Prussian soldiers. The history of Mennonite taxation policies in Prussia therefore presents a new and compelling view of the connection between taxation and society.

While taxes seemed to have played an important role in defining citizenship in Germany during the nineteenth century, there was also an increase in tax protests and tax evasion, especially in the first half of the century. Pia Nordblom analyzed the role of state parliaments in the political power struggles over taxation. Budget control and tax policy were the main fields of parliamentary competence during the nineteenth cen-

tury. Gabriele Kersting explored tax resistance in the Kingdom of Württemberg before 1848. The high tax rates on beer and wine in particular were the subject of conflicts and protests in this period. Kersting maintained that the protests and petitions were spurred by excessive controls and invasion of privacy rather than economic motives.

This interpretation was sustained by Walter Rummel's look at tax protests in the Prussian Rhine Province. Given the risk of severe punishment that tax protests involved, citizens of a state were driven by more than a desire to avoid paying money to the government. Tax protests in the Rhineland have to be seen as a desperate response to forced state-building and to the financial demands of the Prussian state, which were seen as an unjust burden on the local population. The protest against taxes was a driving force of the popular revolutionary movement that gained momentum in the years 1848–1849, especially in the rural areas of the Rhineland.

The final discussion especially problematized the idea of homogeneous "tax cultures" in Germany and the United States. Still, the participants agreed that national traditions and path-dependencies of fiscal systems must be interpreted within the framework of comparative history.

The three days of the conference led to fruitful exchanges between German and American experts, and offered valuable insights into the specifics of the history of taxation in Germany and the United States. Moreover, the conference must be regarded as a first methodological approach toward a transnational history of modern taxation. The organizers envision the publication of a volume with a selection of the papers presented at this conference.

*Alexander Nützenadel*

## TOWARD A BIOGRAPHICAL TURN? BIOGRAPHY IN MODERN HISTORIOGRAPHY—MODERN HISTORIOGRAPHY IN BIOGRAPHY

Conference at the GHI, March 25–27, 2004. Conveners: Volker R. Berghahn (Columbia University) and Simone Lässig (GHI). Made possible by a grant from the Thyssen Foundation, Cologne.

Participants: Roger Chickering (Georgetown University), Charles Cloppmann (GHI), Hilary Earl (Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, ON), Astrid M. Eckert (GHI), Jan Eckel (University of Freiburg), Willem Frijhoff (Free University, Amsterdam), Sander L. Gilman (University of Illinois, Chicago), Barbara Hahn (Princeton University), Ian Kershaw (University of Sheffield), Peter Longerich (Royal Holloway, University of London), Susan Pedersen (Columbia University), Karl Heinrich Pohl (University of Kiel), Cornelia Rauh-Kühne (University of Tübingen), Ulrich Raulff (Humboldt University Berlin), Hedwig Röckelein (University of Göttingen), John C. G. Röhl (University of Sussex), Paul Lawrence Rose (Pennsylvania State University), Mark Roseman (Indiana University), Angelika Schaser (University of Hamburg), Dirk Schumann (GHI), Christof Strupp (GHI), Christine von Oertzen (GHI), Christian von Tippelskirch (Brooklyn, NY), Dorothee Wierling (University of Hamburg), Michael Wildt (Institute for Social Research, Hamburg), Michael Wreszin (Queens College, New York), Ophra Yerushalmi (New York City), Stefan Zahlmann (University of Konstanz).

Historians who wrote biographies were long considered old-fashioned and methodologically conservative, especially in Germany. During the past decade, however, historiography has shifted from concentrating on structures and numbers to a cultural history that is sensitive to the individual, the unique, and the non-typical, and thus must bring “people” back into history. In this context, the criticism of biography, which was especially widespread in Germany during the battles between social history and traditional political history, has softened. One major motive for organizing this conference was the hope that, despite its methodological pitfalls, biography might enrich modern historical study. Consequently, the conference aimed to answer the following questions: Can biography offer historical research a distinctive contribution that is truly up to date in subject, method, and theory? What would a biography informed by the approaches and categories of modern historiography look like? What should a biography that aims to do more than present the story of a

“great man” (or a “great woman”) be? And what differences do we see between biographical writing in the American and the European realms?

To find some new answers to these questions, the conference brought together participants who covered a wide geographic, temporal, and methodological spectrum—scholars from Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Canada and the United States; scholars writing on time periods ranging from the Middle Ages through the early modern era up to the recent past; scholars pursuing topics from social and economic history to intellectual and political history, from gender history to psychohistory. Some of the participants did not originally set out to write biographies, but gradually discovered biography to be the right genre for investigating certain questions. Other participants had originally set their sights on writing a biography, but then realized that the genre involved so many difficulties that they decided instead to take their chosen personalities as points of departure for considering larger questions. Some panelists had already published biographical works or made major contributions to critical biographical scholarship; others presented works in progress.

The conference opened with a remarkable lecture by Ian Kershaw entitled “Biography and the Historian: Opportunities and Constraints.” Kershaw, the author of the most widely read and highly regarded biography of Adolf Hitler, examined the differences between the German and Anglo-Saxon cultures of historical research and writing. While English and American historians never seemed to have serious problems with biographies, academic historians in Germany identified biographies for a long time with positivism and hence with an antiquated approach to history. This was especially true of the path-breaking and later dominant social historians of the 1970s and early 1980s, whose methods appealed to Kershaw himself. While the situation has definitely changed during the last decade, and even the practitioners of *Gesellschaftsgeschichte* (the history of society) are moving individuals and charismatic rule to the center of their work, Kershaw remained skeptical concerning the analytical potential of biographies. In Kershaw’s opinion, which received strong support from several speakers at the conference, the biographical perspective should be used as a window to examine more complex problems in a very specific and unique way, rather than in the classical sense of writing about the lives of prominent individuals.

By contrast, John Röhl championed a much more “classical” biographical approach. Röhl, who spent a significant part of his academic life reconstructing the life of Wilhelm II for his multi-volume critical biography of the German emperor, adamantly defended his approach. While alluding to the controversies of the 1970s and early 1980s and giving special attention to the Bielefeld School of social history, which generally

had a critical view of the analytical potential of biographies, Röhl paid relatively little attention to the current "boom" of biographical research, even among prominent German social historians.

This boom became one of the threads running through the conference, intimately connected with the question of what it means to write an innovative and up-to-date biography. The first panel, entitled "Challenges of Social and Cultural History," was devoted to the problem of to what extent biographical research uses the insights and methods of recent historical research. From this point of view, medieval expert Hedwig Röckelein's paper asked "What Can Cultural Studies Offer Narratives of Historical Biographies?" Röckelein gave a survey of the development of biographies since ancient times and identified the specific stumbling blocks of the genre. She especially focused on the illusion of continuity and coherence, a challenge that is in her opinion best managed by using the reflective approach of cultural studies and cultural history. In other words, biographers must display their techniques of montage, and they must reveal and make explicit their ways of collecting, combining, reading, and writing, of constructing and narrating a biography.

This was also one of the major points made by Willem Frijhoff in his inspiring paper "Religion as the Interface Between Culture and Society: How to Write the Biography of an Ardent Believer." In his study of Evert Willemsz, a Dutch orphan who experienced a religious awakening and eventually became the second Reform minister of Manhattan, Frijhoff examined problems of belief and religion, but also raised more general issues. These included identity and identity transfer, the inner consistency of lives, problems posed by the lack of sources, strategies for constructing the life of a "no-name" individual, and the question of how to deal with myths and traditions constructed by posterity.

Christoph Strupp's paper "Biography as Historiography: Johan Huizinga (1872–1945)" examined recent biographical works that deal with scholars in the history of science. His main focus was directed toward biographies of historians, a booming field in contemporary Germany, and toward "biographies in context," considered an instructive and modern way to write social history and the history of an individual. Since Huizinga's historical writings lacked programmatic pretensions, Strupp preferred to overcome traditionally structured chronological narratives. Instead, he considered Huizinga's research and professional activities alongside his engagement in Dutch and international cultural life, but also his bourgeois background and the small size of the profession in the Netherlands. Strupp's presentation clearly underlined the advantages of a biographical approach in this special case.

Cornelia Rauh-Kühne's paper "Biographies of Entrepreneurs: Biographical Approaches to Economic History?" presented a review of three

recent studies that seemed to indicate a biographical turn in economic history. After introducing the biography of Otto Friedrich, by Volker R. Berghahn and Paul J. Friedrich, and the biography of Hugo Stinnes, by Gerald D. Feldman, Rauh-Kühne discussed the biography of Fritz Kiehn, which she co-authored with Hartmut Berghoff. According to Rauh-Kühne, while other authors only treat entrepreneurs as leaders and decision-makers and not as members of a social elite in German society, her own biography strives to contribute to the general history of the German *Wirtschaftsbürgertum*. Rauh-Kühne pleaded for an interdisciplinary economic history that would include the social background, the everyday practice, and the career and social motivations of a business, as well as its political instrumentalization.

The comment on the first panel was delivered by Stefan Zahlmann, who is currently working on a project that deals with “failure” as reflected in autobiographical writings. Zahlmann stressed the relationship between the historian and the subject that all four papers touched upon in some way. In this context, he explained how academic interest in biographies has changed over the last hundred years. Texts focusing on the lives of “heroes” (usually prominent, successful men) and mostly featuring anecdotal descriptions of the linear development of a character have given way to works constructing and reconstructing the lives of often unknown individuals and to “biographies in context.” Zahlmann pointed out that this shift is based on new theoretical approaches, new perspectives on sources, and an interest in the history of different social groups and persons. For Zahlmann, there could be no question that biography has become a stimulating impulse for a redefinition of modern historiography.

The second panel, “Life and Letters or Something Else?” considered precisely this shift in scholarship. It asked whether and to what extent “traditional biographies,” that is to say, the written lives of prominent persons, including political figures, leading intellectuals, or scientists, are affected and should be affected by new approaches in historiography. Angelika Schaser’s paper “Women’s Biographies, Men’s History?” presented the arguments and reflections that led to her decision to write a “double biography” of Helene Lange and Gertrud Bäumer, two leading figures of the German Women’s Movement who also shared a substantial part of their private lives. In this context, Schaser explained why biography has always been a predominantly “male genre.” As long as historians focused mainly on “heroes” and “big names,” women did not come into the focus of biographies. Only within the last decades have gender perspectives become more attractive and influential, leading historians to write biographies of “heroines” as well as gendered biographies of men and families.

This was also the main argument in Barbara Hahn's paper "Letters—Biographies: A Dangerous Shortcut? Or How to Write on Women Intellectuals." Hahn concentrated on two examples, Rosa Luxemburg and Ricarda Huch, and the main narratives that were constructed in past decades to explain their lives. The paper discussed these efforts as critical to their adoption in art, especially in films or movies, a medium that would stand in the center of interest at the conclusion of the conference.

The third paper, delivered by Karl Heinrich Pohl, drew on the life of Gustav Stresemann to suggest some novel approaches to biographies of well-known public figures. Since the notion of a life with a coherent thread and a deeper meaning from birth to death must be regarded as a "biographical illusion" (Bourdieu), Pohl preferred a structural rather than chronological approach. He also tried to deconstruct and (re)write his subject's life from uncommon points of view, such as illness, personal economic interest, social climbing, gender, or generation. Hereby Pohl demonstrated to what extent Stresemann (successfully) influenced future interpretations of his life.

Cultural patterns in a broader sense were also examined by Paul Rose. In his paper "Patterns of Thought and Behavior in the Biographies of German Cultural Figures during the Third Reich," Rose gave special attention to some prominent cultural figures of the Third Reich, including Furtwängler, Heisenberg, Riefenstahl, Jünger, Heidegger, Schmitt, and Strauss. Rose argued that beneath individual variations, a common pattern of mentality and behavior revealed the "deep culture" of Germany. Although he conceded that this approach is no longer fashionable and has some pitfalls, Rose was certain that such an approach could avoid terminological and ideological debates, and could help explain the "German Catastrophe."

In his commentary, Volker Berghahn, himself the author of a biography that uses a single life as an analytical window, raised some other questions of broader interest. He was skeptical not only of Rose's methodology, but also of attempts to negate a "red thread" and to emphasize instead the fragmentations, ruptures, and incoherences in the life of the subject, as Pohl had advocated. According to Berghahn, if one breaks with the continuities and coherence that are encouraged by the narrative itself, the resulting biography would probably be unreadable. Another point of interest was the question of to what extent the historian has to be, and is permitted to be, "investigative" in the private fields of intimacy or sexuality. Here Berghahn stimulated debate over which boundaries biographers must respect and which they should try to break down.

The third panel was devoted to a kind of biography that seems to have been "invented" in Germany: the special case of perpetrators and victims. Hilary Earl's paper "'Route to Crime': Writing Individual and

Collective Biographies of Perpetrators Using War Crimes Trial Documentation" suggested that war crimes trial testimonies are rich sources of perpetrator "voices" that can be used to better understand how and why the Holocaust happened. In Earl's opinion, they can help to reconstruct individual routes to crime and murder, and therefore help to understand "how ordinary people commit extraordinary acts of human evil." Moreover, Earl argued that trial documents also offer ample material to profile the social characteristics of an identifiable group or cohort of perpetrators by elucidating the common attributes of the specific group. Earl herself did this in the case of the *Einsatzgruppen* trial at Nuremberg in 1947 and 1948.

The approach of collective biography played a central role in Michael Wildt's paper titled "Generation and Institution—Towards a Concept of Collective Biography." Wildt commented on the remarkable increase in research on Nazi perpetrators in recent years and stressed the new quality of these works, most of which have a strong biographical bias. They depart from both the structuralist approach, which focused on the bureaucratic and political structures of the Nazi regime, and the intentionalist biographical perspective, which focused on Hitler as the dominant figure. More recent scholarship centers on lesser-known individuals or groups and their opportunities for decision-making, options for action, and agency. In this context, Wildt also referred to the concept of generation, which he used as a framework for interpreting groups of protagonists such as the high-ranking personnel of the Sicherheitspolizei (Sipo) and the Sicherheitsdienst (SD). Although he stressed the potential of the concept, he also discussed its limits, which become obvious when one seeks to comprehend the vector that takes individuals from experience to action. Apart from generational experiences, Wildt also stressed anti-Semitism, as well as the category "institution" as the basis upon which the self-radicalizing policy of this nucleus of Nazi perpetrators capable of committing genocide could emerge and grow.

While the first two speakers focused only on perpetrators, the perspective changed with the next two papers. Jan Eckel concentrated on Hans Rothfels, a historian who has been seen as a victim as well as an (intellectual) perpetrator. Eckel's paper, "The History of National Socialism as the History 'of the Contemporaries': Biographical Approaches to the History of Historiography," asked in what ways the historiographical interpretation of National Socialism in Germany after 1945 was prefigured by the biographical experiences of the historians concerned. Methodologically, Eckel saw the historiographical text as a space of intellectual self-reflection on political and personal experiences, a position illustrated by Eckel's examination of Hans Rothfels's book *German Opposition to Hitler*, published in 1948.



The paper "Writing the Biography of a Holocaust Survivor," delivered by Mark Roseman, presented the fascinating story of Marianne Ellenbogen née Strauss. This example offered Roseman a unique opportunity to discuss some fundamental methodological problems that one encounters in writing biographies, such as the function of memory, the use of (auto)biographical sources, the limits of oral history, and the biographer's identification with his or her subject. The paper demonstrated that an academic biography can offer both a sophisticated, methodologically exemplary analysis and a well-written, readable narrative. Altogether, Roseman provided the audience with very personal but far-reaching reflections of the research process and the relationship a biographer can develop to his or her "hero."

Peter Longerich, who is currently writing a biography of Heinrich Himmler and who served as commentator on the third panel, expressed skepticism regarding two points. The first concerned the question as to whether it is appropriate to connect biographies of perpetrators directly with biographies of victims. The second had to do with collective biographies and especially with the concept of generation.

The fourth panel, "Generation, Ethnicity and Class, Gender and Family: New Biographical Approaches and Methodological Problems," opened with a paper by Susan Pedersen, which posed the question, "Why do British Historians Write So Many Biographies—And Should Anything Be Done About It?" Pedersen, who just completed a biography of Eleanore Rathbone, the early twentieth-century British feminist, social reformer, and politician, pointed out that biography is a ubiquitous and established genre in Britain. Even in the academic field, it is an accepted mode of writing, and a great many established historians are known primarily for their excellent political biographies. However, as Pedersen pointed out, the conservative and boundary-conscious character of the majority of the biographers poses dilemmas for those seeking to incorporate less conventional figures into the biographical canon. This is particularly true for biographers of women.

By contrast, Michael Wreszin's paper "The Root is Man: Methodological Problems of Intellectual Biography" barely touched upon "unconventional" approaches to biographical research and writing. The author of a biography of Dwight MacDonald, Wreszin served as an advocate of a "classical" biography of political figures, and discussed problems of identification with the "hero" and the treatment of private and intimate matters.

The final two presenters departed from treatments of individual lives in order to focus instead on biographical approaches to "groups." Dorothee Wierling's paper "Cohort or Generation? The 1949ers in the GDR," based on her book about those born in 1949 in the GDR, presented the main

features of growing up in the GDR in the 1950s and examined the self-interpretations of protagonists belonging to this cohort. Wierling outlined those characteristics shared by most in the cohort, and discussed the categories that explain the most important differences among cohort members. In this context, the paper brought up a number of conceptual and methodological problems that had already played a role in other panels: the problems of generationality, of including oral history material in biographical writing, and of constructing a "collective" biography.

The last paper, "Between the Individual and Society?" was presented by Simone Lässig. She reminded the audience that categories of family and kinship matter not only for research in the field of early modern history, but are also relevant for the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Contrary to established positions of social and economic history, she argued that family biographies can offer new and genuinely different insights. Using the example of the German-Jewish banking family Arnhold, she demonstrated that "kinship" sometimes was as important as other categories such as class, ethnicity, or gender. In Lässig's view, "kinship" remained a serious economic factor, especially in a business that "lived" on social and symbolic capital. Thus kinship can help reveal the economic influence of female family members.

The gender issue was also one of the points addressed in the comment delivered by Roger Chickering, author of the major biography of Karl Lamprecht. He reflected on the fact that the entire biographical project has historically been coded male because "heroes" became heroes in roles that have historically been occupied by males. Chickering also commented on the problem of continuities and discontinuities in a given life, and presented stimulating questions concerning "collective biographies." This seemed to him to be a contradiction in terms which, in spite of the genre's potential, risked eliminating the richness, the multitude, and the complexity of individual lives. He also identified this problem for family biographies, which could make the individual biography nearly invisible, as in Wierling's approach. In this context, Chickering drew attention to another danger: the temptation to take sources produced by a political system, a family, a business, or an individual for granted and to tell exactly the story these "source producers" wanted to have told.

The last session of the conference differed markedly in format from the preceding panels. In a session called "Historical Research: Interdisciplinary and Popular Communication," two non-historians presented their work, which was in some sense biographical in nature. The pianist Ophra Yerushalmi screened her documentary film on Frédéric Chopin, and Christian von Tippelskirch presented his movie "Out of the Ashes," which tells the story of a Jewish doctor who survived the Holocaust working in Auschwitz. Sander L. Gilman, who wrote a biography of his

friend Jurek Becker, and Ulrich Raulff, the author of an instructive biography of Aby Warburg, delivered two instructive commentaries. They dealt not only with the films, but also broadened the perspectives of the audience. Both commentators discussed “manipulation,” as well as ways to reconstruct individual lives that differ significantly from an academic approach, but the results of which have a much bigger audience than do the works of professional historians.

In sum, the papers, the commentaries, and the discussion proved that the field of biographical research is still trying to find, adopt, and, what is more difficult, practice new and modern methods and approaches that will lead to biographies that are truly innovative and that have an impact on historiography. There are still more questions than answers. But on one point, all participants were agreed: Biography is “back” in serious historiography, even in Germany.

*Simone Lässig*

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN TIMES OF POLITICAL CRISIS: CENTRAL EUROPE, 1920–1950

GHI-sponsored panel at the European Social Science History Conference, Berlin, March 24–27, 2004. Moderator: Eric Johnson (Central Michigan University). Panelists: Gabriel N. Finder (University of Virginia), Benjamin Hett (Hunter College, CUNY), Richard F. Wetzell (GHI). Commentator: Helmut Thome (University of Halle).

This panel examined aspects of criminal justice in central Europe during times of political crisis and political transformation in the first half of the twentieth century. Both Benjamin Hett's and Richard Wetzell's papers addressed the question of the relationship between criminal justice and political ideologies. Whereas much of the historiography on Weimar criminal justice has focused on the right-wing political leanings of Weimar judges that were evident in many political trials, Benjamin Hett discussed a 1926 judicial scandal in order to examine some of the structural changes that occurred in the administration of ordinary criminal justice in the Weimar Republic. The crisis of public confidence in the courts during the Weimar years, he argued, was closely related to systemic changes in criminal procedure, namely the abolition of traditional juries, which actually made criminal justice in the Republic less democratic than it had been in Imperial Germany. While Hett was concerned with the changes that criminal justice underwent after Germany's transformation from monarchy into democratic republic, Richard Wetzell examined the politics of penal reform during the transition from the Weimar Republic to the Nazi dictatorship. Eschewing simple distinctions between "liberal" and "repressive" penal policies, Wetzell argued that the political implications of the Weimar penal reform movement were quite ambivalent and that the efforts of Nazi jurists to construct a "Nazi penal policy" were often in conflict with one another because the relationship between penal policy and political ideology was in fact quite fluid and ambiguous. Gabriel Finder, finally, examined an effort to construct new forms of criminal justice right after the collapse of the Nazi regime. Whereas Hett and Wetzell problematized the relationship between criminal justice and political regimes, Finder's examination of a Jewish civic tribunal that tried suspected Jewish collaborators in postwar Poland dealt with an extraordinary attempt to administer criminal justice outside the framework of the state. Thus all three papers pointed to the often paradoxical relationship between judicial and political structures. Helmut Thome's comment placed the papers in the context of sociological and legal theory.

*Richard F. Wetzell*

## A MIGHTY FORTRESS: A NEW HISTORY OF THE GERMAN PEOPLE

Lecture and discussion at the Goethe-Institut Washington, April 14, 2004. Co-sponsored by the GHI and the Goethe-Institut. Speaker: Steven Ozment (Harvard University). Moderator: Frank F. Wagner (Goethe-Institut).

Fifty-eight million Americans claim whole or partial German descent. Yet a great many of them, along with non-German Americans, know Germany primarily through two world wars and their aftermath. Those decades have colored two millennia of German history, and continue to influence the way Germany is viewed today. Steven Ozment's *A Mighty Fortress* argues that this twentieth-century history is neither a true mirror of who Germans have been, nor a proper guide to who they are today. The book presents German history from its beginning (in Roman times) leading up to the present day. "Whatever else may be said of Germans today," Ozment writes in his introduction, "they have survived their enemies and themselves, seemingly against all odds."

Unfortunately, Ozment argued, in American historiography, Germany has two histories: that of "before and after the 1930s and 1940s, and that of the 1930s and forties." This, he insisted, is confused historiography. As a result, no other modern nation has a more "predictable and enforced politically correct reading of its history." In Ozment's opinion, this view of German history as prelude to and aftermath of National Socialism and the Holocaust does scant justice to the German past prior to the twentieth century. The goal of the book is to recover mainstream German history. *A Mighty Fortress* is a history for those Germans who after 1949, and particularly following the reunification of 1990, have sought to remake themselves into their "better and truer historical selves." In a sense, the popular German film *Run Lola Run* emphatically asserts this by showing that "the life of an individual or a nation can go terribly wrong, yet both can struggle back and redeem the good that was always there."

*A Mighty Fortress* illustrates how the Germans are a "composite people" who like to adopt as their own the perceived best qualities of other peoples and cultures. Furthermore, Ozment maintains that for most of their history, Germans have embraced order and authority without totalitarianism, and pursued freedom and equality without democracy. Totalitarianism and democracy were new twentieth-century experiments for Germans. In the modern democracy that is Germany

today, freedom and equality work in tandem with authority and order. Unlike the egalitarian democracies found in the United States and France, however, German democracy places more limitations on freedom. But this is not necessarily a negative thing: "Germans do not believe that freedom must be untidy." In some ways, Germany can perhaps even serve as a model for modern multicultural democracies and the ills they suffer.

*Frank F. Wagner*

CIVIL SOCIETY, THE PUBLIC SPHERE, AND POPULAR  
POLITICS IN THE RHINELAND, 1800–1848:  
MID-ATLANTIC GERMAN HISTORY SEMINAR

Seminar at the GHI, April 24, 2004. Speaker: James Brophy (University of Delaware). Conveners: Marion F. Deshmukh (George Mason University) and Christof Mauch (GHI).

The semi-annual meeting of the Mid-Atlantic German History Seminar was held at the GHI on April 24, 2004. James Brophy presented his paper, part of a larger book project, on “Civil Society, the Public Sphere, and Popular Politics in the Rhineland, 1800–1848.” In his paper, Brophy sought to “establish firmer links between research on bourgeois civil society and the emergence of popular participatory political culture.” He examined *Bänkelsänger* and songs perceived as subversive that were sung at festivals and fairs. He described song sheets sold at taverns, the planting of liberty trees, and the selling of trinkets identified with issues of liberalism. One important item of reading material that Brophy described in depth was the house and folk calendar. In what most would regard as an apolitical listing of lunar cycles and planting advice, Brophy found “enlightened social attitudes” interspersed with folkloric miscellany. He discussed Johann Peter Hebel’s *Der rheinische Hausfreund* as a case study of the growing popularity of its form and its attempt to train “readers into a participatory form of reading that allowed them to reflect on the political choices of the day” in the *Vormärz* Rhineland.

Brophy also examined the popular political song, sung in various venues such as peasant houses, taverns, festivals, and churches. He described the singing of the *Marseillaise* and songs about Napoleon (sung with both positive and negative intent). He posited that patriotic songs “act as a yardstick to measure the longevity with which the unfulfilled hopes of 1815 resided in popular culture,” especially at the gathering of 30,000 at the Hambach Festival of May 1832. Religious festivals such as carnival and parish celebrations were also public spaces for loosely organized political criticism that government authorities often noted. Brophy observed that during these occasions, soldiers and civilians often came to blows: He was able to document fifty-six instances of soldier-civilian fights in the pre-1848 period.

The final section of Brophy’s essay discussed consumption of political ideas through the sale and marketing of trinkets, such as music boxes, cups, mugs, hats, plates, and other items. Thus, by detailing the various

ways in which the popular classes, as distinct from the bourgeoisie, participated in political activities, Brophy strove to offer a more differentiated view of popular political culture in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Following Brophy's summary of his work, a lively discussion ensued. Questions were raised regarding the chronology of popular culture in the period before the establishment of political parties, with participants asking if some of the activities Brophy described have a history predating the French Revolution. Other comments centered on the history of almanacs and their varied uses. After an extended discussion, the meeting adjourned. The next luncheon and meeting of the Mid-Atlantic German History Seminar will be held on Saturday, November 13, 2004. Astrid M. Eckert, Research Fellow at the GHI, will present her research in progress, tentatively titled "The Transnational Beginnings of German *Zeitgeschichte* after the Second World War." For further information, please contact Prof. Marion Deshmukh, Department of History and Art History, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA 22030 ([mdeshmuk@gmu.edu](mailto:mdeshmuk@gmu.edu)).

*Marion Deshmukh*



## GERMAN HISTORY IN THE SHORT NINETEENTH CENTURY, 1790–1890: TENTH TRANSATLANTIC DOCTORAL SEMINAR IN GERMAN HISTORY

Seminar at the University of Tübingen, April 28–May 1, 2004. Co-sponsored by the GHI and the BMW Center for German and European Studies, Georgetown University. Conveners: Roger Chickering (Georgetown University), Dieter Langewiesche (University of Tübingen), and Richard F. Wetzell (GHI). Faculty mentors: Margaret L. Anderson (University of California at Berkeley), Friedrich Lenger (University of Gießen), Sylvia Paletschek (University of Freiburg), James Retallack (University of Toronto).

Participants: Bernhard Altermatt (University of Freiburg, Switzerland), Antje Blumbach (University of Jena), Falk Bretschneider (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris), Amanda M. Brian (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), Erwin Fink (University of Toronto), Thomas Haakenson (University of Minnesota), Lars Maischak (Johns Hopkins University), Heidi Mehrkens (Technical University Braunschweig), Alexander Merrow (Georgetown University), Christian Müller (University of Heidelberg), Jeanne-Marie Musto (Bryn Mawr College), Genevieve Rados (University of California at Berkeley), Manuel Richter (University of Göttingen), Anike Rössig (University of Hannover), Désirée Schauz (University of Cologne), Tobias Wüstenbecker (University of Bielefeld).

For the tenth time, the Transatlantic Doctoral Seminar in German History brought together sixteen doctoral students from North America and Germany to present and discuss their dissertation projects with one another and with faculty mentors from both sides of the Atlantic. The 2004 seminar was dedicated to German history in the “short” nineteenth century, from 1790 to 1890.

The first panel examined two aspects of German political life in the 1860s: discussions about electoral reform between 1866 and 1870 and the politics of the city-state of Bremen. Christian Müller’s paper “Das Wahlrecht als ‘Waffe’: Die Wahlrechtsdiskussionen im Norddeutschen Bund und in den Deutschen Einzelstaaten, 1866–1870” examined the role that competing conceptions of electoral law played in the formation of political parties at the national level as well as in the individual German states between 1866 and 1870. By comparing form and content of discussions of the franchise in different German states, Müller sought to show that proposals for electoral reform were used as de-ideologized “weapons” in the conflicts over domestic policy in the states. Lars Maischak’s paper

"Cosmopolitans into Nationalists: Bremen Merchants in Germany and the United States, 1850–1880" argued that the specifically transatlantic content of Hanseatic political identity was Western conservatism. Hanseats were imbued with this conservatism through two independent venues, a German academic tradition and an active involvement in U.S. politics, and arrived at their peculiar position within German politics by fusing these conservative influences with liberal ideas of free trade and corporatist convictions. As a result, Maischak concluded, the "liberal" label should be attached to Hanseatic politics only with the greatest reservations.

The second panel focused on German cultural history through studies of theater and festivals. Tobias Wüstenbecker's paper "Die Stadt als Bühne, die Bühne als Stadt: Berliner Theater, 1848–1890" examined the development of theater in Berlin in the second half of the nineteenth century from two perspectives: first, by studying the impact that theatrical entrepreneurs and state bureaucrats had on Berlin theater; and second, by analyzing the portrayal of Berlin life on the city's stages, especially in *Lokalpossen* that dealt with current issues. Wüstenbecker thus showed that theater played an important role in Berliners' coming to terms with social, political, and economic change. In her paper " 'Ein Ereignis des freien, ächten Geistes': Das Jenaer Universitätsjubiläum 1858 und die liberale Erinnerungskultur," Antje Blumbach argued that the 1858 festival celebrating the three-hundredth anniversary of the University of Jena, which took place in the reactionary period following the failure of the revolutions of 1848, served the purpose of promoting a liberal sense of identity by presenting a liberal-national memory of the history of the university of Jena that was very much geared to present concerns. The self-presentation of the university and its reception by the public and the press projected a liberal consciousness that suggested that the university's alliance with the monarchy was dependent on its protection and promotion of liberal values.

The third panel examined the representation of the nation in nineteenth-century Germany. Jeanne-Marie Musto's paper "Defining a Nation: The Politics of Medieval Architecture in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Germany" examined the construction of nationhood through architectural styles. In early nineteenth-century Germany, Musto argued, the "Byzantine" architectural style bridged the styles most weighted with pan-German significance: ancient Greek and Gothic. Found in the Rhineland, the Byzantine style was held to demonstrate the region's Germanness. By 1840, however, just as the Prussians were sponsoring the completion of the (Gothic) Cologne Cathedral, the German nationalist interpretation of the Gothic style was beginning to be challenged by independent-minded Rhinelanders and Bavarian rulers who sought to

undermine the Prussian cause. By mid-century, the Rhineland buildings were relabeled “Romanesque,” because “Byzantine” had become associated with Russia and Islam. Erwin Fink’s paper “Representing the Nation in the Regions: Contested Symbolism, Exclusion, Inclusion, and Dissent in Imperial Germany” explored the contested symbolic space that “unified Germany” occupied during the Empire’s founding and consolidating phase between 1870 and 1890 by analyzing different commemorative approaches to German unification. Fink argued that the controversial symbolic representation of the nation-state in the Sedan Day celebrations was quite ineffective for national integration. By contrast, a specifically Saxon model of accommodating parallel manifestations of regional and national symbolism as well as other personalized forms of popular commemorations proved more conducive to this goal.

The fourth panel brought together two papers about the Catholic and Jewish subcultures in nineteenth-century Germany. Anike Rössig’s paper “Spinoza und die ‘Juden im Exil’: Literatur und Kultur im Tunnel über der Spree” presented her study of the Berlin literary club “Tunnel über der Spree,” in which Jewish and non-Jewish Berliners found a forum for literary-cultural discourses that set this club apart from the rest of Berlin associational life. By examining the largely unknown and diverse literature written by members and read at the club, Rössig elucidated the cultural self-understanding of Jewish intellectuals of the *Vormärz* period, which made reference to classical culture as well as to a self-consciously Jewish intellectual tradition. Alexander Merrow’s paper “The Catholic Master Narrative: The *Historisches Jahrbuch*, 1880–1899” traced the articulation of a Catholic philosophy of history during the founding years of the Görres-Gesellschaft in the 1870s and analyzed the *Historisches Jahrbuch*, the organization’s historical journal, from 1880 to 1899. Merrow argued that a “paradigm shift” led Catholic historians to embrace the discipline’s methodological norms, but confessional differences nonetheless led to two visions of the past.

The fifth panel was devoted to the history of criminal justice. Pursuing a line of inquiry suggested by Michel Foucault, Falk Bretschneider’s paper “Besserungs-Dispositiv und Technologien des Selbst in der Gefangenschaft: Sachsen im 19. Jahrhundert” sought to return some agency to nineteenth-century prisoners. The paper’s first part examined the “Besserungs-Dispositiv” of the Saxon prison system, that is, a conception of punishment aiming at the moral improvement of the prisoners through a regime of compulsory work as well as pedagogical efforts. In the paper’s second part, Bretschneider then analyzed printed and archival sources to understand how prisoners reacted to this penal regime and to what extent they were able to give their punishment a positive meaning. Désirée Schauz’s paper “Theoretische und methodische Überlegungen zu einer

Geschichte der Straffälligenhilfe im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert" reflected on the theoretical and methodological groundwork for a history of German prisoner aid societies. Schauz favored a modified "Dispositivanalyse" that combines a differentiated analysis of discourses with an examination of the relationship of these discourses to welfare practices. By focusing on discursive negotiation, Schauz sought to challenge the often monolithic and static image of the criminal justice system.

The sixth panel dealt with the Franco-Prussian war of 1870/71. Manuel Richter's paper "Nationale Selbst- und Fremdbilder in einem Selbstzeugnis aus dem Deutsch-Französischen Krieg von 1870/71" examined the letters of a German soldier deployed in France for evidence of his national self-image and his image of the French nation. By situating the letters in their social contexts of origin, Richter was able to interpret the letters as evidence of collective processes of communication and group formation, but also of individual practices of interpretation and the formation of the self. The transformations in the soldier's perceptions of self and other, Richter argued, must be understood as a result of changes in their functional meaning within a web of social relations that were changing due to the war. In her paper "Verhaftet in der Tradition: Die Wahrnehmung von Kriegsgefangenschaft während des Deutsch-Französischen Krieges 1870/71," Heidi Mehrkens analyzed the situation of the almost 400,000 French soldiers held in German prisoner-of-war camps during this conflict. Mehrkens argued that the prisoner-of-war experience of 1870 was a transitional phenomenon. Although the very high number of prisoners of war demanded the organizational efforts typical of modern mass war, the German perception of the French POWs was still shaped by traditional national stereotypes.

The seventh panel featured two papers on the history of the body. Amanda M. Brian's paper "Body Prescriptions in School Hygiene Manuals from Late Nineteenth-Century Germany" explored the delineations of children by physical shape, development, and punishment in an idealized school environment. Brian argued that school hygiene experts sought to mold and discipline children's bodies because they were predicated on instability, which threatened to disrupt certain norms. In her paper "Healthy Choices: Food, Reform and the Market in the German Movement for Natural Health," Genevieve Rados examined the food teachings and practices of the movement for natural health (*Naturheilkunde*) in Imperial Germany in order to reveal the importance of everyday food decisions in the formation of a "modern" self-identity. Noting that the commercialization of the natural food market was promoted by the same people who taught self-empowerment and individual reform, Rados argued that the tension between empowerment and dependence was a fundamental aspect of the project of modernity.

The final panel brought together two disparate papers. Thomas O. Haakenson's paper "Optics and Subjects: The Development of Anthropology in Berlin?" sought to demonstrate that during the development of anthropology as a scientific discipline researchers were concerned not just with the physical anthropological issues of the human form but also with the human optical apparatus. Vision studies proved troubling for anthropologists because they realized that they could not depend upon their inherent optical acuity as a means of producing visual evidence. Bernhard Altermatt's paper "Mehrsprachige Staatsbildung im Zeitalter des Sprachnationalismus: Belgien und die Schweiz 1790–1890" explored how, between the late eighteenth and late nineteenth century, Switzerland and Belgium were constituted as modern nations in spite of the fact that neither one was a linguistically homogeneous territory. Both countries, Altermatt argued, developed practices of handling their multilingualism which were mainly (but not exclusively) inspired by the principle of territoriality.

The most prominent variety of history among the seminar's papers was cultural history. It should be noted, however, that many of the cultural-history papers were particularly interested in uncovering the political meanings of activities such as university festivals, theater performances, literary clubs, architectural history or Catholic historiography. Many of the seminar's papers on political history (and some of those on cultural history) focused on the topic of nation, nationalism, and nation-building, especially on the relationship between nation, region and the transnational realm. The roles of gender and religion were also important themes in many of the papers and in the discussions. Given that the seminar's advertised topic was German history from 1790 to 1890, the almost complete absence of papers dealing with the first half of the nineteenth century was remarkable. Equally noteworthy was the absence of social history, labor history, economic history, diplomatic history, and political history focusing on the state, as well as the absence of topics such as the Revolution of 1848, the *Reichsgründung* or the *Kulturkampf*. Most of the trends noted so far applied equally to the German and the North American papers, suggesting a remarkable internationalization of historical trends, at least across the Atlantic. The only major difference that was noted was that many of the German papers explicitly laid out their theoretical framework, whereas in the North American papers theory usually remained implicit in the narrative, perhaps reflecting a more skeptical view of theories in the English-speaking world. One of the mentors suggested that the turn from social to cultural history that was so evident at the seminar reflected a change in historians' political commitment: Whereas the earlier turn to social history was fueled by historians'

concern with the present-day problem of social inequality, the turn away from social history demonstrated the historical profession's retreat from such political commitments. While some of those writing cultural history would undoubtedly take exception as far as their personal political commitments are concerned, the question whether the turn toward cultural history has weakened the link between the history we write and the political problems of the present seems worth pondering.

*Richard F. Wetzell*

## WAR AND THE ENVIRONMENT: CONTEXTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF MILITARY DESTRUCTION IN THE MODERN AGE

Conference at the GHI, May 7–8, 2004. Conveners: Charles Closmann (GHI) and Christof Mauch (GHI).

Participants: Greg Bankoff (Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies, Wassenaar), Lisa Brady (Boise State University), Dorothee Brantz (Free University of Berlin), Jeffry Diefendorf (University of New Hampshire), Bernd-Stefan Grewe (University of Trier), Daniel Fahey (San Francisco State University), Oliver B. Hemmerle (Chemnitz University), John R. McNeill (Georgetown University), Karen Oslund (Library of Congress), David Painter (Georgetown University), Chris Pearson (University of Bristol), Jeff Schutts (University of British Columbia), Richard P. Tucker (University of Michigan), William Tsutsui (University of Kansas), Frank Uekoetter (University of Bielefeld), Robert Wilson (Syracuse University), Frank Zelko (GHI).

Wars have had major impacts on urban and natural environments. As a consequence of military campaigns and destruction, landscapes and cityscapes have been transformed; oceans and air have been polluted. At the same time, environmental factors such as the climate and the availability of resources have influenced military strategies and the conduct of war. Some wars have been fought in order to gain access to natural resources; others have been compared to natural events.

Over two days in early May, a group of historians and social scientists from Europe and North America met to explore the nexus of environment and war from multiple perspectives. They analyzed the consequences that wars and the use of modern weapons have had on nature and natural resources. They discussed the ways in which wars have contributed to the physical and cultural transformation of landscapes, and they explored different types of postwar reconstruction.

The first panel was dedicated to the “Environment and the Military in Germany and the United States.” John R. McNeill and David S. Painter provided an overview of the ecological influence of the American military in general terms. They assessed environmental change by focusing on frontier expansion, infrastructure construction, the purchase and production of weapons, American land acquisitions, and the creation of U.S. overseas bases, “an archipelago of military facilities around the world covering around 8,100 hectares.” McNeill and Painter emphasized that the environmental effects of preparation for war were much longer last-

ing than those of combat itself. The ecological impacts associated with military bases—unprecedented levels of energy use as well as chemical and nuclear contamination—were indeed wide reaching and substantial, particularly so because of the global reach and expansion of American military power.

In her paper on W.T. Sherman's Civil War campaign of 1864–1865, Lisa M. Brady discussed nineteenth-century constructions of nature, warfare, and gender. She interpreted the military campaigns through Georgia and Carolina as an attempt by the North to reveal to the South its inability to control and defend "nature" in a meaningful way. By turning part of the South into a "wilderness," for instance, General Sherman "capitalized on a long-standing fear most Americans shared of disordered 'wild' nature." Brady also emphasized that the conquest of the Southern landscape was often described in gendered terms demonstrating male control over a feminine nature and population. In a paper titled "More than a Battlefield: Military and Forests from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century," Bernd-Stefan Grewe analyzed the strategic and economic importance of forests since early modern times. He identified various strategic functions of forests in military history, including forests as battlefields, natural obstacles, hideouts, and natural borders, and he emphasized the importance of forests for war economies. He pointed out that forests provided resources as well as revenue in times of both war and peace. In addition, Grewe noted a variety of indirect impacts of wars and the military on forests, such as the effect of wars on timber prices, on land use, and on forest ecology.

The second panel, titled "War and Environment: Experiences and Effects," opened with a paper by Dorothee Brantz on trench warfare in World War I. Brantz investigated how environmental factors shaped the daily practice of war and how trench warfare created a new sense of space. Brantz pointed out that the trench environment, with its rodents, mud, and direct exposure, had a major impact on the soldiers. In fact, the war transformed "landscapes of peace" into "environments of war" that "subsumed humans."

A paper by Daniel Fahey focused on the recent debate over depleted uranium munitions in the United States. Since the early 1990s, according to Fahey, depleted uranium ammunition has emerged from near total obscurity to become one of the most controversial weapons of modern warfare. Advocates have called it a "silver bullet" that saved the lives of thousands of Americans, while critics have called it a "genocidal weapon." In his paper, Fahey assessed scientific evidence about the effects of uranium, evaluated legal regulations, and analyzed political trends in dealing with this issue. Fahey pointed out that the Department of Defense has downplayed the extent and severity of battlefield expo-



sure. Above and beyond that, he demonstrated that both sides of the debate have been informed by ideology and politics rather than science and common sense.

Oliver Hemmerle, in his paper on "Landscape and Nation-Building amidst Wars," argued that the coastal strip on the Mediterranean that encompasses the pre-1967 state of Israel, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights would be economically self-sufficient. However, when divided into two or more parts, the military defense capability and economic sustainability would become "questionable." Therefore, according to Hemmerle, notions of the natural and urban environments have had an extremely strong impact on military strategy.

A third panel, "Imperialism, War, and Environment in South East Asia," dealt with the effects of colonialism and war on tropical forests. In an essay on the Philippines, Greg Bankoff argued that state formation under the Spanish and American colonial powers went hand in hand with the exploitation of tropical woodlands. The Spanish in particular harvested massive quantities of teak, guijo, yacal, and other hardwoods for the construction of forts during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Most importantly, according to Bankoff, particular species of Philippine trees "were felled at a much faster rate than the forest in general," a process which endangered the genetic integrity of certain kinds of hardwoods, and threatened some species with "chance extinction" in the long run.

The longterm consequences of military conflict on the world's tropical forests were also examined by Richard Tucker. Focusing on the effects of woodland exploitation resulting from the two world wars, Tucker maintained that World War II had a much larger effect on the environment than World War I. In particular, he argued, "By 1939, . . . systems of timber extraction and marketing (and the sciences that lay behind them) were far more highly developed than in 1914." Consequently, Great Britain, the United States, and Japan were able to cut much greater amounts of timber for the construction of military roads, boats, and aircraft than in the previous war. Moreover, he asserted, wartime governments funded extensive research into the technology of timber exploitation during World War II, and "paved the way for massive postwar expansion of tropical logging."

The fourth panel, "Environmental Policies in Times of War," began with another essay exploring the relationship between war and natural resources. In his paper on Japanese fishing policies, William Tsutsui shifted the focus to the environmental history of oceans, a relatively untouched realm of study. According to Tsutsui, the Japanese established a vast "pelagic empire" across the Pacific during the early 1900s. Motivated by the same militaristic factors that propelled Japan's expansion

into China, Korea, and Southeast Asia, Japanese fishermen harvested millions of tons of tuna, whales, and crabs from all corners of Asia. Tsutsui's story of Japan's aggressive fishing policies demonstrated that twentieth-century militarism often resulted from state efforts to control natural resources as much as from nationalism or political conflict.

In a paper on U.S. government policies to manage bird populations on the west coast, Robert Wilson argued that World War II had "uneven effects on the programs and practices of federal land management agencies in the United States." On the one hand, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service established large refuges to lure birds away from rice crops during the war, a practice that protected both game birds and rice. On the other hand, the Fish and Wildlife Service employed methods of insect control pioneered by the military, including the use of DDT, in order to kill weeds on its refuges. The story of this campaign is a cautionary tale about the complicated environmental effects of war. While the new refuges restored populations of ducks, the use of DDT killed thousands of gulls and other fish-eating birds in the 1950s and 1960s.

Frank Uekoetter also explored the nexus between government agencies, war, and the environment. In his essay, Uekoetter challenged scholarship on modern Germany that "fails to take into account the institutional background of conflicts over conservation issues during the world wars." Citing a successful 1942 campaign by officials in Baden to protect the Wutach Gorge from destruction by a hydroelectric plant, Uekoetter argued that one can only understand the persistence of prewar traditions of conservation or air pollution abatement by appreciating "the *bureaucratic* character of work in both fields." In the midst of total war, Nazi Germany's conservation officials emphasized bureaucratic routine, legal decrees, and their own indispensability to the regime.

The last panel, "Postwar Scenarios: Reconstruction and Memorialization," considered the ways in which people have planned for and represented the effects of war on cities and rural landscapes. Focusing on urban planning during and after World War II, Jeffrey Diefendorf noted that most experts saw the massive destruction wrought by bombing raids as an opportunity to make cities more livable through modernist designs emphasizing access to "natural light, air, and greenery." Yet the actual pattern of urban renewal after 1945 rarely fit this utopian model. More often, cityscapes in postwar Europe emerged as "compromises between what most planners dreamed of, what property owners and heritage-minded citizens wanted, and what was possible" given available finances.

In contrast to Diefendorf, Chris Pearson emphasized the rural countryside, in this case the Vercors region of eastern France. Drawing upon images of roadside monuments, cemeteries, and other features of this

rocky landscape, Pearson assigned nature a major role in memorializing the resistance of French maquisards who fought the Germans in 1944. Illustrating his point, Pearson cited a small stone monument at Pas de l'Aguille, dwarfed in the background by a massive, stony mountain. According to Pearson, such monuments referenced spectacular elements of the landscape in order to "appropriate nature" and to "glorify and remember the heroic resistance and tragic martyrdom" against the occupiers. Pearson's essay makes the environment central to an understanding of how the French state remembered the events of 1944.

The conference ended on Saturday with a screening of Michelle Mason's award-winning documentary, *The Friendship Village*. On one level, the film chronicles the life of George Mizo, a Vietnam veteran who led international efforts to build a village near Hanoi for the rehabilitation of children with Agent Orange-related deformities. On another level, the film highlights the potential of international organizations and individuals to overcome past animosities and build peace at the local level in a globalized world. Although the filmmaker could not attend, film co-producer Jeff Schutts led a lively discussion of the film and the broader potential of documentaries to educate viewers about the consequences of war.

While this conference covered a range of topics, a few themes recurred in all of the discussions. Perhaps most importantly, participants noted that the direct and immediate effects of military combat on landscapes are often less significant than the long-term consequences of planning for war, marshaling natural resources, and building support structures. Papers on forestry, fishing, and the United States military made this abundantly clear. Moreover, some papers suggested that the line between traditional definitions of war and state-sponsored campaigns to destroy landscapes, harvest timber, and otherwise dominate nature is often blurred. While natural resources like oil or wood are necessary to wage war, the efforts to exploit these resources are just as often a *casus belli*, and one that does not begin or end with military conflict. Finally, the engaging papers presented at this conference shed light on the ways in which military strategists and common soldiers thought about and experienced environments of war. Indeed, one can never fully understand militarism without also appreciating the complex relationship between war and the environment.

*Charles Closmann and Christof Mauch*

## THE UNITED STATES AND GERMANY IN THE ERA OF THE COLD WAR

Symposium at the GHI, May 17, 2004. Conveners: David Lazar (GHI) and Christof Mauch (GHI).

Participants: Harold James (Princeton University), Detlef Junker (University of Heidelberg and Heidelberg Center for American Studies), Thomas Schwartz (Vanderbilt University), Frank Smith (Cambridge University Press), Frank Trommler (University of Pennsylvania).

The terms “regime change” and “nation-building” might be recent additions to the working vocabulary of Washington’s policy-makers, but the goals they signify are anything but new. By one count, the United States made sixteen attempts at establishing democratic rule in foreign nations over the course of the twentieth century. The failure of most of those attempts makes the success of the American intervention in Germany after 1945 all the more conspicuous.

Explaining that success and the multifaceted ties it engendered was the aim of the GHI’s most ambitious project to date. During his tenure as director, Detlef Junker oversaw the compilation of a comprehensive survey of German-American relations during the decades following World War II. Over 130 scholars from both sides of the Atlantic were recruited to explore the myriad contacts, both formal and informal, between the United States and the two postwar German states. The resulting two-volume work appeared in German in 2001 under the title *Die USA und Deutschland im Zeitalter des Kalten Krieges 1945–1990: Ein Handbuch*. The English edition, *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1945–1990: A Handbook*, was published in the spring of 2004 by Cambridge University Press. The first volume of both editions is devoted to the period 1945–1968, the second to 1968–1990. Each volume is in turn divided into five thematic sections: Politics, Security, Economics, Culture, and Society. Each section opens with a long survey essay that is followed by roughly ten to twenty shorter chapters on more narrowly defined topics.

To mark the publication of *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War*, the GHI organized a public panel discussion with three of the authors of survey essays, Harold James (Economics, 1968–1990), Thomas Schwartz (Politics, 1945–1968), and Frank Trommler (Culture, 1945–1968 and 1968–1990). By way of introduction, Detlef Junker and Frank Smith of Cambridge University Press described the origins and goals of *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War*. Junker called particular attention to the complexity of German-American ties

during the second half of the twentieth century and the enormous influence the United States had upon both East and West Germany. The example of the bilateral relations between the U.S. and the Federal Republic, he noted, also makes clear the increased multilateralization of international political relations and the globalization of economic ties over the past half century.

The other three panelists addressed two broad questions: What might they change if they were to write their survey essays today, and how might recent events and developments influence understanding of the Cold War era. Thomas Schwartz, the first speaker, outlined three points that he would give greater attention if he were to rewrite his contribution to the first volume of *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War*, “‘No Harder Enterprise’: Politics and Policies in the German-American Relationship, 1945–1968.” First, he would stress that the circumstances in which postwar German-American relations developed were in many respects unique, thus making comparisons to other American interventions abroad difficult. In particular, the tremendous violence and destruction of World War II had a deep and unparalleled influence on German-American relations. Secondly, Schwartz would underscore the consequences of the brutality of Soviet policy in eastern Germany during the occupation and early years of the German Democratic Republic. The Soviet presence in East Germany, he suggested, spared the United States from pressure for quick resolution of the German question and increased West Germans’ willingness to put up with the American military presence in the Federal Republic. Thirdly, Schwartz would highlight the importance of multilateralism in U.S. foreign policy during the first two decades of the Cold War, especially in matters touching upon Germany. There were certainly instances when the U.S. was strongly tempted to act unilaterally or to resort to bilateral agreements in its dealings with European nations, he noted, but on the whole Washington sought to coordinate policy with its European allies.

Looking back to the period covered by his essay “Cooperation, Competition, and Conflict: Economic Relations between the United States and Germany, 1968–1990,” Harold James suggested that less has changed in transatlantic economic relations since the end of the East-West conflict than recent talk of tensions between Europe and the United States might suggest. Current European critiques of U.S. fiscal and economic policy strongly echo arguments advanced in the mid-1960s, James noted, and American responses to those critiques likewise follow well-established lines of argument. These continuities notwithstanding, however, James does see economic developments linked to the end of the international order of the Cold War era that could have a profound impact in years ahead. First, unified Germany confronts economic problems much more

severe than the recessions the “old” Federal Republic experienced up to 1989, but its political capacity to address those problems is now limited. Secondly, doubts about the sustainability of U.S. economic and fiscal policy are probably much more justified today than when Charles de Gaulle lambasted Washington’s predilection for deficit spending nearly forty years ago. Noting that the American current account was still in surplus in de Gaulle’s day, James wondered aloud whether the U.S. will continue to enjoy its status as the leading “safe haven” for international investors. In general, James observed, the international economic order seemed much more stable during the Cold War than it does today.

Frank Trommler, who contributed the essay “A New Start and Old Prejudices: The Cold War and German-American Cultural Relations, 1945–1968” to volume one of *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War* and “Culture as an Arena of Transatlantic Conflict” to volume two, outlined four aspects of Cold War-era cultural life that have become increasingly evident in the fifteen years since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Trommler first called attention to the importance of competition with the East bloc as a spur to German-American cultural cooperation during the Cold War; the sense of a common Western mission fostered by that competition has clearly waned since 1990. One tangible consequence of this development, according to Trommler, has been a marked reduction in state funding for bilateral cultural initiatives and growing reliance on private sponsorship. Secondly, Trommler pointed to the role of cultural relations as a form of *Ersatzpolitik* during the Cold War; a limited East-West rapprochement was possible in cultural exchange during the 1970s and 1980s as political relations, particularly between the Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic, stagnated. Rather than a substitute for politics, cultural relations have increasingly become a forum for “politics by other means.” Thirdly, Trommler argued that the production and reception of American popular culture should be seen as one of the pivotal developments of the second half of the twentieth century. The wide-reaching influence of American popular culture is evident not least in the emergence of the concept of postmodernism, which, according to Trommler, was closely tied to the American embrace of popular culture. Finally, Trommler speculated that Germany’s role in the American “economy of evil” has changed fundamentally as a result of the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Before September 11, the Holocaust stood as the defining image of evil in the eyes of many Americans; in the years since, “terrorists” and “terrorism” have increasingly displaced the Holocaust as the characteristic embodiment of evil for Americans.

*David Lazar*

## BEYOND ANTI-SEMITISM AND PHILO-SEMITISM: SEARCHING FOR NORMALITY IN GERMAN-JEWISH RELATIONS

Roundtable Discussion at the GHI, May 24, 2004. Conveners: Simone Lässig (GHI), Jeffrey M. Peck (American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, Washington, DC), Dagmar Weiler (Bridge of Understanding, Munich). Participants: Omer Bartov (Brown University, Providence, RI), Gregory Caplan (SITE Institute, Washington, DC), Hanno Loewy (Jewish Museum, Hohenems, Austria).

The starting point for this well-attended roundtable was the recent discourse about a “new anti-Semitism.” The roundtable asked what was really “new” about this anti-Semitism, and whether there is something specifically German about this phenomenon. Here the discussion reflected on the last conference of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Berlin, which acknowledged that the number of violent actions against Jews was increasing in several parts of the globe.

In her introduction, Simone Lässig noted that anti-Semitism is, and historically has been, an international phenomenon. The Holocaust is part only of German history, but anti-Semitism is not and surely was never limited to Germany and German history alone. From this point of view, the roundtable discussion had to consider another phenomenon as well, a phenomenon that seemed to be more particular to contemporary Germany since 1945: philo-Semitism. Lässig reminded the audience that, on the one hand, both phenomena can undoubtedly exist without Jews. Anti-Semitism does not require the presence of a “real” Jew; neither does an apologetic attitude toward Jews and the current “Jewish culture,” which was invented by non-Jews for non-Jews. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that both phenomena affect Jewish life in Germany. The purpose of the roundtable discussion was to determine their impacts and implications for the “search for normality” in Jewish-gentile relations. In addition, the roundtable also intended to focus on politics. Here it was clear that a plainspoken anti-Semitism is still unacceptable within German and European political culture. However, it is also clear that there is increasing criticism of Israeli policies and of globalization, both of which often employ anti-Semitic stereotypes, but which do not automatically lead to anti-Semitism. From this point of view, the panelists had to address the question of how to identify the line between public discourse and anti-Semitism, as well as who defines this line. Because the conveners

were interested in discussing these questions both from a contemporary and a historical point of view, they invited experts in the fields of history, politics, and culture who would be able to represent a truly diverse range of views.

At the beginning of the roundtable, Jeffrey Peck spoke about the OSCE conference on anti-Semitism, which he had attended in Berlin, and gave a thought-provoking survey of the past and present situation in Germany. His depiction of the problem was followed by brief statements by the panelists, all of whom emphasized different aspects. Omer Bartov compared Germany with some East European countries, and made clear that even "philo-Semitism" is not a uniquely German phenomenon, but is to be found in Poland as well. Hanno Loewy offered an inspiring cultural-historical interpretation of more than a thousand years of Jewish-gentile coexistence in Germany, and closed with some reflections on the current situation, which is significantly influenced by Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Whereas Loewy concentrated more on internal problems of German Jewry and the historical as well as current relationship between Jews and Christians, Gregory Caplan pointed to what he defined as a new and especially dangerous threat. In his statement, which provoked much discussion, he warned of an anti-Semitism rooted in Islam, not only in the Arab world, but also in Germany and other European countries, including France. Finally, Dagmar Weiler presented impressions from her daily work with American Jews who visit Germany, and also some insights concerning the current situation within the Jewish communities in contemporary Germany.

It was especially this non-academic point of view that motivated many visitors to participate in the sometimes heated debate about the relationship of history to moral commitment. A further point of discussion was the question of whether and to what extent anti-Semitism is connected with the ideology and religious doctrines of Islam. Here, all panelists underscored the importance of integrating Muslims into European society, with some of them also cautioning against equating the Islamic world with anti-Semitism.

At the end, it became clear that the roundtable discussion could not address all of the questions on the table. Nevertheless, this event underlined the self-conception of the GHI as a forum for discussion that ensures that many voices are heard. While some people felt uncomfortable in dealing with anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, most in the audience expressed their deep interest in discussing the questions and problems addressed in this discussion.

*Simone Lässig*



## FIRST INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN YOUNG GERMANS AND YOUNG AMERICAN-JEWISH LEADERS

On May 25, 2004, the GHI hosted a meeting of the First International Dialogue between Young German and Young American-Jewish Leaders. This important dialogue was initiated by Simon Nauerz, a young German currently working for the American Jewish Committee (AJC) in Washington, DC. Coming to the United States as a member of Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste (Action Reconciliation Service for Peace), Nauerz developed the idea of establishing a forum where young Germans temporarily living in the United States and young American Jews could get into contact with each other. This forum was intended to provide the third generation after the Holocaust with a unique opportunity to learn more about "the other side," and eventually develop a better understanding of each other.

The idea was well received by Jeffrey M. Peck, visiting professor at Georgetown University, Gregory Kaplan, director of programming and development at the SITE Institute, and Simone Lässig, research fellow at the GHI. All three agreed that the German-American discussion group should play an integral role in a larger platform for German-Jewish encounters in the spring of 2004 in Washington, DC. The idea was enthusiastically embraced and supported by the German Historical Institute, the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, and the German Embassy. A reception at the German Embassy, where Jeffrey M. Peck launched his publication "The Jewish Voice in Transatlantic Relations," and a roundtable discussion at the GHI entitled "Beyond Anti-Semitism and Philo-Semitism: Searching for Normality in German-Jewish Relations" were the other two major events of this German-Jewish encounter.

Simon Nauerz, who was actively supported by Rebecca Wolf, a young Jewish-American currently working for Avodah (the Jewish Service Corps), put together a group of twenty motivated young people affiliated with such diverse institutions as the American Jewish Committee, the German Embassy, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Jewish Youth Philanthropy Institute, the German School, the Goethe Institute, and the German Historical Institute. This discussion-group met three times over the course of two months and discussed topics such as "German-Jewish History: How Does the Younger Generation Deal with the Holocaust," "Anti-Semitism in Germany: How Real Are the Problems Today," and "The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Do American and German Views Collide?" During their various discussions, the group was assisted by David Bernstein, director of AJC's Washington

chapter, Gregory Kaplan, and Wolfgang Koydl, chief correspondent of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in the United States. For a large majority of the young participants, this discussion group was their first encounter with the other side and therefore was a unique opportunity to learn and benefit from each other. At the end, after enormously fruitful and lengthy discussions, perceptions of each other had either changed or been reinforced. The benefit for everyone was undeniable, and all agreed on the importance of continuing the dialogue between young Germans and young Jewish Americans.

*Anne Lümers*

## THE ORIGINS OF GREEN PARTIES IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Symposium at the GHI, May 26, 2004. Co-sponsored by the GHI and the Heinrich Böll Foundation of North America. Conveners: Frank Zelko (GHI) and Marc Berthold (Heinrich Böll Foundation).

Participants: Christoph Becker-Schaum (Archiv Grünes Gedächtnis, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Berlin), Bob Brown (Member of the Australian Parliament), Pekka Haavisto (United Nations Environment Program and former Environmental Minister of Finland), Howie Hawkins (Syracuse Greens), Hubert Kleinert (University of Wiesbaden), Christof Mauch (GHI), Sara Parkin (Forum for the Future), John Rensenbrink (Bowdoin College), Lorna Salzman (New York Green Party), Charlene Spretnak (Institute of Integral Studies), Brian Tokar (Institute for Social Ecology), Helmut Wiesenthal (Humboldt University, Berlin).

One of the more tangible political results of the environmental movement over the last thirty years has been the development of green parties throughout many parts of the world. To varying degrees, these parties have sought to transcend the political discourse of the conservative, liberal, and social democratic parties that have dominated western democracies since the Second World War. Indeed, while green parties still remain firmly grounded in ecological principles, most of them have developed agendas that extend well beyond the traditional boundaries of environmentalism, encompassing issues such as human rights, social justice, and international relations. In some instances, green parties have attained a significant degree of direct political power at various levels of government, while in a few cases—Germany being the best-known example—they have even become part of a coalition government. In countries where the political structures are less favorable, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia, green parties have had to exert influence in a less direct fashion. Nonetheless, their actions have frequently helped to shape the debate about various political issues, as well as forcing the traditional parties to consider matters that they would perhaps prefer to ignore.

In order to examine the history of such parties and to evaluate their impact over the past three decades, the GHI and the Heinrich Böll Foundation organized a day-long symposium featuring prominent green party activists and analysts from the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, Finland, and Australia.

Bob Brown, Australia's most prominent green activist and the leader of the Australian Greens, opened the proceedings, examining the origins

of the Australian Green Party and detailing his own role in the party's history. In 1972, the United Tasmania Party, arguably the world's first green party, was formed in an effort to oppose the construction of a dam at Lake Pedder. In 1983, Brown became the first green to be elected to an Australian state parliament, and Tasmania, in part due to its system of proportional representation, has remained a stronghold of green politics in Australia. Due to the first-past-the-post electoral system, greens struggled to replicate this success at the national level, and have only in recent years begun to emerge as a significant electoral force. Nonetheless, throughout the past two decades, the Australian Green Party has exerted considerable influence on the major parties, particularly Labor, and has become more appealing to younger voters disillusioned with the established parties.

While Australia may lay claim to having the earliest green party, it is the German Greens, *Die Grünen*, who have become the most famous. According to Christoph Becker-Schaum, *Die Grünen* evolved in the 1970s because of the simple fact that none of the other political parties were adequately concerned with issues of social and environmental justice. The story of their evolution, of course, is a more complex one involving issues such as the development of new social movements concerned with quality-of-life issues and the rapid construction of nuclear power plants throughout the Federal Republic. Hubert Kleinert described how the German Greens went from being a social movement to a party in the 1980s. Two key developments occurred in 1983. First, the Bundestag voted to allow nuclear missiles to be deployed on German soil. This event signaled the end of the growth of social movements in Germany and forced the Greens to abandon their puritanical commitment to grassroots democracy and to enter the arena of ordinary electoral politics. 1983 was also the year in which the Hessian Green Party formed a governing coalition with the Social Democrats, an event that triggered a hefty controversy within the party, the outcome of which was the formation of two factions or wings, the so-called *Realos* (who advocated political realism) and the *Fundis* (who adhered to fundamental principles). This dualism constituted a formative influence on the party until the early 1990s.

According to Kleinert, *Die Grünen* provide an example of the utmost success one could realistically expect from a social movement in a highly developed democracy. *Die Grünen* became an institution and thereby an integral part of a system that they had previously opposed. Helmut Wiesenthal, a leading researcher of the German Greens and a former member of the Green Party's National Executive Committee, argued that *Die Grünen* had a disproportionate degree of influence given their relatively meager electoral success. By receiving 5 to 10 percent of the vote, they

regularly held the balance of power, forcing other political parties to adopt green issues in order to secure their share of the electorate.

The American participants came from various factions within the U.S. green movement, many of which have had their differences in the past. In the early 1980s, Fritjof Capra, a New-Age physicist, and Charlene Spretnak, a spiritual eco-feminist, toured Germany in order to learn how *Die Grünen* were transforming German politics. The result was a book titled *Green Politics: The Global Promise*, published in 1984. Spretnak and Capra concluded that the United States was fertile ground for a similar political movement, and many who read their work agreed. The positive response prompted Spretnak to organize a gathering of activists, organizers, and theorists from across the country in order to discuss the formation of a U.S. equivalent of *Die Grünen*. The conference took place in St. Paul, Minnesota, in August 1984, and the result was the Committees of Correspondence, the forerunner to the Green Party. Spretnak argued that much of the energy and momentum of the U.S. Greens was dissipated by the fractious tendencies of various activists and by arguments about whether or not Greens should become active in the American electoral system or remain a grassroots, extraparliamentary movement. In Spretnak's opinion, the Green Party only began to offer an alternative to the mainstream parties when it moved away from the dogmatic Marxism and anarchism of some of its more radical members.

Howie Hawkins, a UPS truck unloader in Syracuse with a long history of involvement in green politics, came from one of the factions that Spretnak criticized. Hawkins, who has had a long-standing affiliation with Murray Bookchin's Institute for Social Ecology in Vermont, argued that his group had been primarily interested in linking social and environmental issues and criticizing the Old Left and American liberals for their lack of commitment to ecological and social issues. For Hawkins, the U.S. Greens were a product of the New Left student movements of the 1960s, which explains why many rejected mainstream electoral politics in favor of grassroots activism. Brian Tokar, also a member of the Institute for Social Ecology, further emphasized the problems of becoming involved in traditional electoral politics. In response to Spretnak's criticism, Tokar argued that the social ecology eco-anarchist perspective he and Hawkins represented had filled a vital niche in the movement's history. Rather than attempting to hijack the movement, as some of their critics contended, social ecologists had provided an ideological and organizational focus for many activists who were searching for a form of politics outside the American mainstream and for an ideology that explained the link between environmental deterioration and social inequality.

Like Spretnak, Lorna Salzman, who co-founded the New York Green Party in 1984 and has written extensively on green politics, took issue

with Hawkins's view of green parties as an outgrowth of the New Left. The major defect in progressive movements in the United States, she argued, is the lack of grounding in an ecological paradigm and sensibility. The U.S. Green Party, contrary to public belief and expectations, has relegated environmental concerns and activism to the back burner, and has instead chosen to identify itself with more traditional sectarian leftist ideologies, broadly defined as racial and social justice. As a result, the party has refrained from addressing or confronting the numerous transnational treaties and institutions that affect the global environment, such as the Kyoto Treaty, biodiversity protocols, NAFTA, and the WTO. If the Green Party is to become a force to be reckoned with, Salzman contended, it must go beyond those it deems its "natural allies," and offer a broader critique than that purveyed by the New Left movement of the 1960s.

John Rensenbrink, an emeritus professor in political science at Bowdoin College and longstanding Green Party activist, offered an explanation for the diverging views represented by Hawkins and Tokar on the one hand, and Spretnak and Salzman on the other. In his analysis of the U.S. Green Party, Rensenbrink employed Max Weber's distinction between an "Ethics of Intention" and an "Ethics of Responsibility." People who hold to an Ethics of Intention, Weber argued, focus strongly on their ideals and principles and are reluctant to bend them, much less break them, to adapt to changing circumstances. For such people, compromise tends to be an epithet. People who pursue an Ethics of Responsibility, on the other hand, are more pragmatic. They devote greater effort to strategy, risk assessment, and readiness to adapt to circumstances. Although they also believe that vision and values must be kept clearly in mind, they are nonetheless prepared to compromise. Most green parties, Rensenbrink argued, have drawn people from both of these ethical positions, which has resulted in the conflicts and damaging disruptions discussed by Spretnak, Tokar, and Hawkins. In Germany, this struggle was best represented by the split between *Realos* and the *Fundis*. In the United States, the struggle between these two ethical tendencies was intense for the first fifteen years of the Green Party's history. Gradually, however, Greens found a kind of structure that, though seeming to favor the *Realos*, has also built in some key elements of the *Fundi* perspective.

In their presentations, Pekka Haavisto and Sara Parkin discussed the rise of green parties in their countries—Finland and the United Kingdom respectively—and examined how Greens have come to play a role on the international stage. Parkin, a leading member of the U.K. Greens throughout the 1980s, pointed out that the United Kingdom's first-past-the-post electoral system meant that the Green Party had not been distracted by thoughts of imminent power. Instead, Greens expended their intellectual energy on long, detailed manifestos and policy documents. Parkin de-

scribed how she had fought, and ultimately lost, a battle for a new type of organization with a revised political strategy, one more suited to a first-past-the-post system, where standing for election in marginal seats could attract more attention to green ideas than standing in "safe" seats, where a huge majority for one party or another emboldened some voters to vote Green. Today, thanks largely to proportional representation, the U.K. Greens have managed to have several of their members elected to the European Parliament, which, in turn, has allowed them to benefit from the resources made available through the elected posts. Nevertheless, Parkin concluded, the electoral system and the drain on financial resources means the U.K. party still suffers from the "tyranny of the volunteer" and an enduring ambivalence about power.

Pekka Haavisto, the former environmental minister of Finland, outlined the success of the Greens in Finland and Sweden as well as throughout Europe. He reminded people that countries such as Germany were not the only ones where green parties had achieved electoral success; unheralded Latvia, for example, had even elected a Green Prime Minister, Indulis Emsis. The long presence of the Greens in the European Parliament, he argued, is due to a very intense cooperation between the different green parties. This culminated in February 2004, when thirty-two green parties in twenty-nine countries united to establish the European Green Party. Haavisto saw this as a major milestone, not just in the history of the Greens, but for European and international politics in general. The new European party will continue to strengthen the solidarity among Greens throughout the continent and represented, Haavisto believed, "the beginning of a global orientation" for the green political movement.

Overall, the symposium constituted a stimulating and sometimes controversial mixture of reflection and analysis from people who were, and in some cases still are, active members of green political parties in various countries. The Heinrich Böll Foundation and the GHI will publish the proceedings of the symposium. The resulting book will undoubtedly be of interest to scholars and green activists worldwide, and will constitute the first stage of the process of transforming primary sources into historical scholarship.

*Frank Zelko*

## YOUNG SCHOLARS FORUM 2004 ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE, POLITICS: TRANSATLANTIC PERSPECTIVES

Seminar at the GHI, May 27–30, 2004. Conveners: Charles Closmann (GHI) and Frank Zelko (GHI). Made possible by a grant from the Friends of the German Historical Institute.

Moderators: Christof Mauch (GHI), Joachim Radkau (University of Bielefeld), John McNeill (Georgetown University), Verena Winiwarter (University of Vienna), Donald Worster (University of Kansas).

The 2004 Young Scholars Forum offered graduate students and recent Ph.D.s from Europe and the United States an opportunity to develop their research in the field of environmental history in collaboration with peers and distinguished scholars from both sides of the Atlantic. The GHI invited submissions from scholars working on the environmental history of Europe (especially Germany) and the United States since the nineteenth century, while also encouraging applications with a broader international or comparative perspective. In addition, this forum emphasized the following topical themes: the environmental consequences of industrialization and/or agriculture; changing ideas about nature from the standpoint of cultural and intellectual history; and environmentalism, including movements originating in government agencies, activist groups, and other organizations.

After considering numerous strong applications, the conveners chose fourteen outstanding participants for the conference, including eight from Germany, five from the United States, and one from Russia. The conveners identified several key research areas, including: early nature protection groups; activism and protest in modern Germany; nature, discourse, and environmental awareness; transforming woods and landscapes; science, farming, and environmental change; and rethinking the urban world.

The conference began with a discussion of Richard Hölzl's and Laurence Christian's essays on semi-official and privately sponsored nature protection organizations in southern Germany. Analyzing the records of two Bavarian groups, the Landesausschuß für Naturpflege and the Bund Naturschutz, Hölzl challenged a long-standing overemphasis among scholars on the anti-modern, romantic roots of Germany's early conservation movement. According to Hölzl, supporters of these early twentieth-century groups employed concepts like *Heimat*, patriotism, and eco-



conomic rationality in order to “find an alternative, more sustainable and careful path to modernization.” Laurence Christian also examined the rise of south German conservation in the context of modernization. Comparing awareness of conservation in nineteenth-century Germany and England, Christian maintained that supporters of the Black Forest Association sought to prevent a “British-like industrial invasion” from decimating their beloved woodlands. He argued that German conservationists were more concerned about forest preservation than their English counterparts because of Germany’s comparatively late industrial revolution and the massive scale of that revolution when it occurred.

Jeffrey Wilson and Anselm Tiggemann also studied environmental reform in Germany, focusing especially on public activism. Wilson’s paper on a widely popular campaign to preserve Berlin’s Grunewald in the early twentieth century demonstrated, in his words, the “rational and progressive nature of the nature enthusiasts,” and not the reactionary rationales usually attributed to such groups. Studying this case of environmental protest, Wilson found that a host of social reformers, urban planners, scientists, and liberal politicians wanted to preserve the Grunewald forest in order to protect public health, provide recreation for the city’s laboring class, and win the political support of Berlin’s workers. Anselm Tiggemann’s exploration of the controversy surrounding a nuclear processing site at Gorleben also illustrated a wide range of rationales among environmentalists. According to Tiggemann, protests at Gorleben in the late 1970s demonstrated, among other things: concerns with the protection of future generations, “equity among regions and communities,” the “limits of scientific knowledge,” and a host of peripheral issues. As with Wilson’s Grunewald example, environmental protesters at Gorleben succeeded because they successfully marshaled broad public support.

Scott Moranda and Alla Bolotova offered fascinating insights into the way that discourses about nature in the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) influenced government policies. According to Moranda, a campaign among East German workers to encourage development of the Greifenbach reservoir area for recreational camping, games, and education reflected a “strong sense of citizens’ and consumer rights in a social welfare state.” Tourists at Greifenbach in the 1950s and 1960s demanded their rights to access nature for recreation and higher living standards, benefits allegedly promised by the regime. Moranda’s study challenged the prevailing view that environmental awareness only emerged in the GDR after 1980. Alla Bolotova also examined attitudes toward nature in a Marxist state. Drawing upon literary sources such as poetry and newspapers, she demonstrated that Soviet authors—at the behest of the state—established a “hegemonic discourse on nature” that

emphasized the domination of nature as an all-important task. Soviet geologists were the heroic vanguard of this campaign, according to Bolotova. Influenced by this hegemonic ideology, they studied and exploited Russia's vast taiga in order to dominate nature and create wealth for the state.

The second day of the conference began with a panel exploring transnational aspects of environmental concern. Drawing upon theories of "policy transfer," Kai Hünemörder analyzed the diffusion of knowledge about pollution, energy, and solid waste disposal between the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany. Led by Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, an American team of scientific experts studied German campaigns to combat pollution and environmental devastation during the 1960s, and, in so doing, also shared American experience with these issues. Hünemörder focused especially on the transfer of knowledge about Super Sonic Transport (SST) aircraft, demonstrating that German politicians and scientists challenged the use of this highly advanced jet aircraft based upon the Udall team's research. The SST debate also demonstrated a new spirit of democratic participation in major policy debates about technologies with adverse environmental effects. Bernhard Gißibl's paper explored transnational concerns about wildlife preservation in colonial Africa. Gißibl argued that colonial officials in German East Africa encouraged British officials to emulate the German example and establish a number of large nature preserves in their own colonies. Such policies were perceived by colonial powers as part of Europe's "civilizing mission in Africa." Calling the establishment of these preserves a milestone in the history of international environmental cooperation, Gißibl also cautioned that Anglo-German conservation policies in East Africa superimposed European values on indigenous people.

Papers by Daniel Orenstein and Christina Gerhardt also examined the potentialities of discourses on nature and the environment. In his study of environmentalism in Israel, Orenstein noted that "Zionist ideology and religiosity, coupled with immediate security and social concerns," created a "sanctioned discourse" in that country, making discussion of the environmental consequences of population growth extremely difficult. Orenstein cited Israeli studies on pollution, noting that, while the authors recognized the negative consequences of a growing populace, they hesitated to recommend measures to limit that population. Orenstein saw little hope for an immediate change in this discourse, given the highly charged political atmosphere in Israel. Christina Gerhardt's examination of Theodore Adorno's *Negative Dialectics* (1966) was more hopeful. Gerhardt underscored Adorno's call for a reading of human history that embraces natural history, a process that "pinpoints the suppression of antagonisms, the sort of antagonisms on whose suppression

History is founded." While Gerhardt was most concerned with the philosophical and political implications of Adorno's work, her essay suggested intriguing questions about the role of nature as an actor in world and environmental history.

More so than other participants, Martin Knoll and George Vrtis considered the evolving relationships between natural resource exploitation and human settlement. Knoll drew upon a rich mixture of municipal archives and secondary works to argue that external factors like the development of wood transport on the river Regen were the most important factors shaping wood supply policies in mid-nineteenth-century Regensburg. According to Knoll, the history of timber supply in Regensburg also demonstrated the inability of "traditional communal politics to react . . . to changing environments in wood management." Finally, the example of Regensburg confirms recent scholarship characterizing the early nineteenth century as a "bridge period," an era setting the stage for Germany's rapid industrial takeoff later in the century. George Vrtis's paper on Colorado's gold rush in the 1860s examined similar connections. In a study of this relatively unexplored story, Vrtis traced the devastating effects of gold mining on local streams, forests, and wildlife. Moreover, he asserted, Colorado miners quickly freed themselves from local transportation arteries, connecting their operations to the nation's elaborate railroad networks, and engaging in a broad process that was "one of the hallmarks of America's nineteenth-century industrial transformation."

At first glance, the last two papers seemed to address quite different topics: the role of domestic animals in nineteenth-century cities, and farmers' perception and use of agricultural chemistry in the twentieth century. Yet both papers shared a concern with the production of knowledge, both scientific and non-scientific in nature. In her essay on slaughterhouses in Paris and Berlin, Dorothee Brantz asserted that attempts to reform animal slaughter were "linked to the emergence of a new urban consciousness linked to a growing awareness of urban pollution." Moreover, she argued, the removal of slaughterhouses from the cities "went hand in hand with the emergence of specialized discourses about the health and welfare of livestock." For his part, Frank Uekoetter maintained that twentieth-century agricultural scientists privileged their own field of knowledge, virtually shutting out any discussion of concepts like organic farming. One important result has been an unfortunate perception that agricultural productivity—emphasized by experts in agricultural chemistry—must always come at the expense of the environment. According to Uekoetter, a better appreciation for the structural factors behind privileged forms of agricultural science can help us challenge the supremacy of that knowledge, enabling us to develop methods of farming that are both productive and less harmful to the environment.

The forum concluded on Sunday with a stimulating roundtable discussion by mentors and participants. Although it is difficult to summarize all of the issues raised, several themes emerged as important concerns. These included the recognition that early forms of environmental protest revealed competing paths to modernity. Challenging the belief that turn-of-the-century conservationists were reactionary, several papers showed that activists often succeeded when their rhetoric embraced concepts like economic progress, social justice, and national integration.

The papers also explored the various ways in which people have thought about nature in a variety of political settings. As represented in literature, scientific treatises, and philosophy, discourses about nature reveal much about human society, its ideologies, and its different national styles of environmental protection. Other works shed new light on the urban environment, and the way that people in Paris, Berlin, Regensburg, and other cities experienced and ordered their surroundings. Discussants drew special attention to the relationship of cities, energy flows, transportation arteries, and the hinterlands.

Pointing to the future of this burgeoning field, the mentors also called for more comparative studies, for work that “stays close to the sources,” and for more emphasis on quantitative indices of pollution and other forms of environmental degradation. All in all, the roundtable left no doubt that environmental history should position itself at the center of historical inquiry, a task that thoughtful young scholars at this conference should achieve with little difficulty. In the words of John McNeill, “environmental history is in good hands.”

*Charles Closmann*

### **Participants and Their Topics**

ALLA BOLOTOVA (Centre for Independent Social Research, St. Petersburg), *Colonization of Nature in the Soviet Union: State Ideology, Public Discourse, and Experience of Geologists*

DOROTHEE BRANTZ (Free University of Berlin), *Animals, The City, and Comparative Environmental History: The Example of Slaughterhouses in Nineteenth-Century Berlin and Paris*

LAURENCE CHRISTIAN (University of California, Santa Barbara), *Beneath the Soil: Rooting Out Late Nineteenth-Century Environmental Differences in England and Germany*

CHRISTINA GERHARDT (University of California at Berkeley), *A Rose is a Rose is a Rose: Natural History in Hegel and in Adorno's Negative Dialectics*

BERNARD GISSIBL (International University Bremen), *German Colonialism and the Beginnings of International Wildlife Conservation*

RICHARD HÖLZL (University of Regensburg), *Nature Conservation in the Age of Classical Modernity: The Landesausschuß für Naturpflege and the Bund Naturschutz in Bavaria, 1905–1933*

KAI F. HÜNEMÖRDER (University of Kiel), *The Udall-Program and the Diffusion of Environmental Concerns and Policies Between the United States and Germany in the late 1960s: The Supersonic Transport Case*

MARTIN KNOLL (University of Regensburg), *Urban Needs and Changing Environments: Regensburg's Supply of Wood and Timber Between the Early Modern Period and Industrialization (Eighteenth/Nineteenth Century)*

SCOTT MORANDA (University of Wisconsin-Madison), *Greifenbach Reservoir: Toward a Popular Environmentalism in the German Democratic Republic*

DANIEL ORENSTEIN (Brown University), *Population Growth and Environmental Impact: Ideology and Academic Discourse in Israel*

ANSELM TIGGEMANN (Landtag, Nordrhein Westfalen), *A Story with an Open End: The Controversy over Nuclear Waste Disposal in West Germany from its Beginnings to Gorleben, 1955–1985*

FRANK UEKOETTER (University of Bielefeld), *Did They Know What They Were Doing? An Argument for A Knowledge-Based Approach to an Environmental History of Twentieth-Century Agriculture*

GEORGE H. VRTIS (Georgetown University), *Changing the Face of the Mountains: The Colorado Gold Rush, Industrialization, and the Environmental Transformation of the Front Range of the Rockies*

JEFFREY WILSON (University of New Orleans), *Environmental Protest in Wilhelmine Berlin: The Campaign to Save the Grunewald*

## ARCHIVAL SUMMER SEMINAR IN GERMANY 2004

Between May 31 and June 12, ten graduate students from nine North American universities traveled to Germany as part of the twelfth GHI Summer Seminar. The group visited research institutions and met with archivists and scholars in Koblenz, Heidelberg, Cologne, and Gotha. The aim of the seminar was to prepare the young scholars for the practical aspects of their prospective dissertation research in German archives and libraries. In order to achieve this goal, participants first learned to decipher documents in various types of old German handwriting. They were also introduced to several archives and libraries to develop a sense of the diversity of research institutions available. Finally, German and American scholars engaged in archival research met with the group to discuss and share research methods and experiences.

Koblenz once again served as the port of entry to this year's seminar. Walter Rummel of the Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz was our instructor for the first three days, during which he offered five sessions on paleography. He prepared examples of different handwriting ranging from the sixteenth through the twentieth century. After a brief introduction to the history of how German handwriting evolved, the participants soon moved on to practical exercises, reading texts aloud or transcribing them, requiring progressively less help from their mentor.

Koblenz is also the home of the Bundesarchiv. Archivist Hans-Dieter Kreikamp took the group on a "backstage" tour of the facilities, explained the philosophy of storing and preserving files, introduced the participants to the peculiarities of German *Verwaltung*, including the hierarchies indicated by different ink colors, and discussed the process of requesting files from the stacks.

A new feature of this year's seminar was a day trip to Heidelberg, where the group met with Philipp Gassert of Heidelberg University. Gassert shared his experience researching his biography of former Chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger. He explained how to identify relevant source material, establish first contact with an archive, take notes, manage time, and organize the newfound material in order to prepare for the writing phase. The afternoon of the Heidelberg excursion was reserved for a meeting with graduate students and doctoral candidates in American history. Detlef Junker, professor of American history at the University of Heidelberg and former director of the GHI, joined the group for a discussion that coalesced around issues of differences and similarities in the graduate student experience in the German and American university system. Only little time was left for photo ops in picturesque Heidelberg before the group took the train up the Rhine river valley back to Koblenz.

In keeping with tradition, the last evening in Koblenz was reserved for dedicated study of the local wine culture at Weinhaus Schwaab in Koblenz-Güls. The participants had ample opportunity to sample *Grauburgunder*, *Spätburgunder* and *Riesling*, discuss the merits of *Spätzle* vs. *Rösti*, and try to be the very last guests to leave the friendly Weinhaus on the Mosel River. The next morning, the group relocated to Cologne to enjoy a weekend without files or archives.

In Cologne, the group spent the first full day at the Historisches Archiv der Stadt Köln, Germany's largest communal repository, where we were received by Eberhard Illner and Manfred Huiskes. The two seasoned archivists showed the participants some of the archive's most valuable and curious pieces, including medieval receipts from the local malt mill that might serve as the raw material for writing a quantitative history of *Kölsch* consumption, and a kitschy pseudo-parchment ennobling so-called *Bahnhofsadel* in 1918, as well as some folders from Günter Wallraff's personal archive that were badly burned after an attack on his home. Illner also gave the participants a sneak-preview of an exhibition focusing on the photography of the nineteenth-century Cologne bourgeoisie. Among other things, the group was impressed by the casual but caring treatment that the archivists accorded the material. Lunch was taken at *Malzmühle*, one of the traditional *Kölsch* establishments, where the group found itself at the table where President Clinton enjoyed his *Halve Hahn* in 1999. On Tuesday, the group went to the Rheinisch-Westfälisches Wirtschaftsarchiv, where Ulrich Soénius and Christian Hillen introduced them to the holdings and finding aids of this specialized repository. Thanks to Soénius, the group was able to use a conference room adjacent to the *Handelskammer*, where they spent the afternoon with Max Paul Friedman, the current GHI Heideking Fellow in Cologne. Friedman conducted research in multiple archives in various countries for his book *Nazis and Good Neighbors: The United States Campaign against the Germans of Latin America in World War II* (Cambridge, 2003). He provided valuable tips from the perspective of a former American graduate student working on a limited time and financial budget without the chance to return to an archive to check for the missing comma. His presentation did not shy away from the "nitty gritty" of archival work, including some thoughts on the *condition humaine* and the usefulness of notebook insurance and a computer lock.

Another new addition to the seminar's program proved to be an exceptional treasure: the Dombauarchiv. This unique repository collects the architectural maps and construction plans relating to the Cologne cathedral, each and every one of them a piece of art. Our host, Leonie Becks, not only showed us some examples of these fine drawings, she also took the group on a tour of the cathedral construction sites. This involved

a ride in a service elevator to a height of about 45 meters at which point the group was left standing on wooden planks secured by some iron bars. In the spacious roof of the cathedral, participants discovered a collection of a different kind: stone masons have archives, too! Sculptures, models, plaster casts, gargoyles, and the like are neatly stored in compartments and kept available for restoration, reproduction and study.

On Wednesday of the second week, the group traveled to Gotha in Thuringia and discovered immediately that life in the provinces is less expensive and comes with less traffic, making for a perfect, if sleepy, town. A very good reason to travel to Gotha, however, is the famous research library located in Schloss Friedenstein. This library came into being with the partition of the Ernestine territories in 1640, and benefited from the collecting instinct of Duke Ernest the Pious. The library holds over 570,000 volumes, and stands as a vivid witness to Gotha's glorious past as a center of enlightened political and philosophical thought. Our host in Gotha, Rupert Schaab, organized a two-day program for the participants. It included a tour of the library that occupies the entire east wing and east tower of the impressive baroque palace. Another unforgettable highlight was a tour of the former publishing house Justus Perthes, publisher of the *Stieler Weltatlas* and the *Almanach de Gotha*, known simply as *The Gotha*. The impressive collection consists of a geographical library dating back to the company's beginnings in the late eighteenth century, historical maps and globes, as well as the company's business correspondence. The collection is still held in its original location, contributing greatly to the impression of entering a time warp, throwing the visitor back into the days of the spirit of discovery of the nineteenth century and then forward into the office culture of the GDR's VEB Geographisch-Kartographische Anstalt Gotha.

In addition, the group attended four small workshops. Cornelia Hopf refreshed the participants' knowledge of old handwriting with original letters from Karl May. Kathrin Paasch introduced them to working with old prints and laid out the history of books and book printing. Rupert Schaab gave an overview of the German library system, explaining what a student can expect to find in a university library, a seminar library, or a public library, and how German library catalogues are organized. In the final session, Irka Biewald familiarized the group with the library's collection of the letters that German immigrants to the United States wrote back to their homeland. The participants enthusiastically applied their newly developed reading skills to these handwritten letters and just kept reading, not even noticing the end of the class.

Throughout the seminar, there was time to discuss research questions, graduate student life, experiences in Germany, and Yoga terms, and to teach each other new vocabulary ("plucky"), write laundromat



erotica, pretend to go shopping at Hermès, and practice rolling an “r” as in “Rrrrrrummel.”

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the individuals and organizations that contributed to the 2004 Summer Seminar in Germany. On behalf of the GHI, we would also like to thank the German Department of the University of Wisconsin, Madison, for its vital financial support of the program. Special thanks go to Joan Leffler at the University of Wisconsin for her cooperation and teamwork. An announcement of the program for the 2005 seminar appears in this issue of the *Bulletin*.

*Astrid M. Eckert*

### **Participants and Their Projects**

JOEL S. DAVIS, University of Missouri; dissertation project: “Rebuilding the Soul: Churches and Religion in Bavaria, 1945–1965.”

JOSHUA DERMAN, Princeton University; dissertation project: “German Liberal Intellectuals and National Identity, 1905–1922.”

ANGELES ESPINACO-VIRSEDA, University of Alberta; dissertation project: “Drawing the Line: (Re)configuring Human and Animal Identities in Imperial Germany.”

NICOLAS GERMANA, Boston College; dissertation project: “The Orient of Europe: The Mythical Image of India and the new Mythology of Early German Romanticism.”

SUZANNE KARR, Yale University; dissertation project: “Interactive and Sculptural Printmaking in the Renaissance.”

DANIEL J. KOEHLER, University of Chicago; dissertation project: “Enchanted Protestantism: Piety in an Impious Germany, 1850–1950.”

KRIS K. MANJAPRA, Harvard University; dissertation project: “Germans, Indians and Modernity: The Remapping of Cultural Difference in Germany, 1890–1930.”

KALIL OLDHAM, University of California, Berkeley; dissertation project: “The Invention of Classical Thermodynamics in Germany, 1840–1870.”

SARAH WOBICK, University of Wisconsin; dissertation project: “Sites and Symbols of the Jewish Public Sphere in France and Germany in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries.”

ELLEN M. YUTZY, University of California, Berkeley; dissertation project: “A New Look at Religious Dissidence in the Hessian Reformation: Anabaptism in Context.”

## ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY AND THE OCEANS

Conference at the Carlsberg Academy, Copenhagen, June 2–5, 2004. Co-sponsored by the University of Southern Denmark, the Danish Research Council, and the GHI. Conveners: Poul Holm (University of Southern Denmark) and Frank Zelko (GHI).

Participants: Kurk Dorsey (University of New Hampshire), Richard Grove (Australian National University), David Helvarg (Blue Frontier, Washington, DC), Julia Lajus (European University at St. Petersburg), David Lazar (GHI), Anne Marboe (University of Southern Denmark), Christof Mauch (GHI), Karen Oslund (John W. Kluge Center, Library of Congress, Washington DC), Michael Reidy (Montana State University), Helen Rozwadowski (University of Connecticut, Avery Point), David Starkey (University of Hull), Phil Steinberg (Florida State University), Gary Weir (U.S. Naval Historical Center, Washington DC).

The *Bow Mariner*, the ethanol-filled tanker that sank off the coast of Virginia in February 2004, provides us with a pointed reminder of how little our attitudes toward the oceans have changed. With reassuring equanimity, a spokesman for the company that owned the ship explained that “There’s not a great deal of anxiety about the slick at this point . . . Of course there’s concern, but it’s drifting out to sea and there’s not much concern about further environmental effects.”<sup>1</sup> Initially, the most pressing problem, apart from rescuing survivors, was that the slick might have come ashore at the Chincoteague Island National Wildlife Refuge. Nobody seemed too concerned about the effect the slick may have had out in the open ocean. Despite Rachel Carson’s immensely popular *The Sea around Us*, the lessons of the 1995 *Brent Spar* incident, and countless National Geographic specials and David Attenborough documentaries about the oceans, it seems that our environmental consciousness retains a strong terrestrial focus. The notion that the oceans constitute a limitless expanse of water, a bottomless sink capable of absorbing anything that humans throw into it, continues to linger in the popular imagination.

Environmental historians, on the whole, have shown relatively little interest in exploring this attitude, or, indeed, in examining the oceans in general. In his recent survey of the state of the discipline, John McNeill noted that “the field of environmental history maintains a terrestrial bias,” with aquatic ecosystems “receiving scant attention.” While there is “a burgeoning literature of the Atlantic world,” he argues, “no one has tried to write the environmental side of that story.” Likewise, “the Indian Ocean world, probably the most coherent of all the oceanic spaces, has yet

to be assessed in its environmental dimensions." Only the Pacific, "the least coherent" oceanic space, "has inspired a few efforts."<sup>2</sup>

The aim of the Copenhagen conference was to redress some of the above shortcomings, and to attempt to outline how environmental historians can better approach the history of the world's oceans. Key questions included: What are the potential insights—theoretical, methodological, and conceptual—of environmental history when it comes to studying the oceans? How can environmental history provide us with a more complete picture of how humans have interacted with the oceans in the past? How have the participants' own projects contributed to these insights and how could they further benefit from them?

Some environmental historians and historians of science have grappled with these issues, but there is much scope for new work and new approaches. For example, the collection of essays in *The Exploited Seas* constitute an important effort to inject traditional maritime history with a solid dose of ecology.<sup>3</sup> However, it mostly deals with the material and ecological realms without really discussing the cultural, intellectual, and political spheres. Ideally, historians studying the oceans should seek to combine these elements as much as possible. We should seek to understand and explain, not just how the oceans have been exploited as a natural resource or as a dumping ground, but how various peoples—scientists, artists, or simply "the masses"—have perceived the oceans at different points in history. This may involve more abstract and theoretical notions, such as how the ocean has been socially "constructed." We might even begin to question fundamental concepts, such as the distinction between "land" and "sea" as separate environments. Perhaps it is time that environmental historians subjected the oceans to the same critical scrutiny they have meted out to the traditional concept of wilderness.<sup>4</sup>

Poul Holm started the proceedings with an overview of the human impact on marine life over the past two centuries. His narrative emphasized the ways in which human beings' desire for marine resources, combined with an optimistic view in which the sea is seen as inexhaustible, have generally trumped more cautious and critical assessments of the oceans' limits. The analysis of historical levels of biomass and extraction, and time-series of climate and ecosystem variability, he argued, would be a productive way to improve our understanding of the oceans from both a scientific and humanistic perspective.

David Helvarg brought to the conference the perspective of a writer and activist who is well informed by history. He described how the sixteenth-century Dutch jurist, Hugo Grotius, developed the doctrine of the Free Seas, which became the global standard for the ocean commons after 1609, but which has gradually been eroded over the past two centuries as nations sought to exert greater influence on their surrounding

oceans. Over the past seventy years, nation-states have extended their claims on the resources within two-hundred-mile Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs). EEZs now fence in 40 percent of the global seas, with further claims being extended under the Law of the Seas Convention and additional attempts to “privatize” the seas for activities such as bio-prospecting and fish-farming, both within and outside national EEZs. While there has been much discussion about “the tragedy of the commons,” Helvarg noted, the enclosure and privatization of the world’s oceans has, to date, appeared to accelerate the cascading series of environmental disasters that now threaten to turn the living seas into vast dead zones within our lifetime. The concept of eco-management of public and common seas is only now being given lip-service in forums ranging from the Johannesburg Earth Summit to the report of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy.

Karen Oslund, Kurk Dorsey, and Frank Zelko focused their papers on whales and whaling. Oslund outlined how the history of whale hunting and whale protection might be told from an environmental history perspective, and examined how this history illustrates some problems and themes in the international history of the oceans. Unlike many other animals that are the subject of environmental history, the nature of whales and the oceans they live in means that both the hunting and the protection of whales have been international rather than national issues. Thus, the different understandings and meanings that people of various cultures attach to whales and their living environments have often come into conflict in international discussions, treaties, and negotiations. In his paper, Zelko provided an example of one such cultural understanding, examining how the image of the benevolent, intelligent, and ecologically benign whale was constructed over the past half-century, particularly in the United States, and how this was used by activist groups such as Greenpeace to further the cause of whale preservation. Dorsey also focused on the challenges that whales have posed for international maritime conservation. His paper examined whaling diplomacy from the first treaties on the subject in the 1930s to the low point of the International Whaling Commission’s history in 1965. By then, it had become clear to most observers that the International Whaling Commission had failed in its efforts to either regulate whaling properly or to find a workable formula for managing various species of whales on the high seas. Dorsey outlined three factors, each related to the nature of pelagic whaling in the Antarctic seas, which contributed to the failure of thirty-five years of whaling diplomacy: scientific uncertainty; a lack of precedents to guide diplomats, scientists, and whalers in setting international regulations; and government subsidies for companies that took huge financial risks.

In his paper, Phil Steinberg proposed two possible narratives that can explain the recent popular fascination with the ocean's endangered nature. The first narrative outlines how the ocean, previously considered immune to overfishing and systematic pollution, is now being exploited and degraded at an unsustainable rate. The second narrative, by contrast, locates increased concern for the marine environment in the ways in which interaction with marine nature has become *less* relevant in individuals' everyday lives. According to this view, the ocean, previously an arena that was encountered as a space of danger or as a provider of resources, is now encountered simply as an empty surface (perhaps with a few charismatic megafauna), to be gazed at from afar or to be traveled over by a tiny, specialized minority of humanity. As such, the ocean is encountered as a romanticized space of "pure" nature, outside of society and insulated from socially generated change. Steinberg then demonstrated how each narrative has its origins in changing uses of the ocean over the past few centuries and how the contemporary marine environmentalist movement borrows tropes from both narratives.

Richard Grove focused his paper on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Bermuda, which, he argued, was the "precocious site for some of the world's first formal conservation laws both at sea and on land." Conservation measures began as early as 1616, when Bermuda passed laws protecting the cahow, or Bermuda petrel. Intermittent drought and crop failure impelled the protection of alternative marine food sources, while early mercantile ambitions forced consideration of formal controls on the harvesting of fish and whales. Grove argued that the failure of most of these measures did not detract from the unusual Puritan circumspection and innovation that they represent.

Michael Reidy moved the discussion into the nineteenth century, examining the process by which the British Admiralty, maritime community, and scientific elite collaborated to organize the world's oceans, coasts, ports, and estuaries in the first half of the nineteenth century. These experts transformed the vast emptiness of the ocean into an ordered and bounded grid inscribed with isolines depicting tidal, magnetic, thermal, and barometric information. One important result of this transformation, according to Reidy, was the expansion of science from a limited and local undertaking receiving parsimonious state support and embracing only sporadic communication among philosophers of different nations, to worldwide and relatively well-financed research involving a hierarchy of practitioners working with increased budgets and sophisticated instruments. At the center of this transformation, the modern scientist emerged.

Gary Weir analyzed the impact that twentieth-century scientific and military research has had on our understanding and perception of the

oceans. Focusing on the U.S. Navy's Sound Surveillance System (SOSUS), Weir demonstrated how applied research in ocean acoustics opened up entirely new frontiers in understanding ocean dynamics and the oceans' role both as a heat sink and an indicator of climate change. Like Reidy's paper, Weir's work demonstrates how our scientific understanding of the oceans is frequently a byproduct of military necessity and imperial ambition. Julia Lajus also examined how the accumulation of scientific knowledge has impacted people's attitude toward the oceans. Her paper focused specifically on the Russian fishing industry in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She described how Soviet fisheries scientists, drawing on the quantitative approach of geochemists such as Vadimir Vernadsky, "modernized" fishing practices and transformed fish into calculable and manageable resources.

Finally, Helen Rozwadowski and David Starkey presented papers providing broad guidelines for how the study of the oceans in their subfields, the history of science and maritime history respectively, could benefit from an environmental history perspective. Rozwadowski used Richard White's *Organic Machine* and William Cronon's *Nature's Metropolis*, standard texts in the environmental history canon, to consider how we come to know and understand the ocean through work. In doing so, she mounted the argument that the history of science must be part of marine environmental history if scholars are to adequately explain how knowledge about the ocean environment has been created. In addition, we need to recognize that our knowledge and understanding of the ocean environment has been constructed not just by scientists studying the ocean, but also by those who work on the oceans, such as fishermen and whalers. Starkey's paper identified the problems that have increasingly afflicted the subdiscipline of maritime history over the last two decades. He argued that maritime historians should address these issues by considering more closely the relationship that has ultimately conditioned the use made of the sea and its resources by human societies in historic times: the relationship between human capabilities and the marine environment. He further contended that in conducting such an examination, maritime historians should deploy their particular expertise and techniques in conjunction with those of specialists in other disciplines. Such an environmental, multidisciplinary approach will perhaps enable maritime history to move from the periphery of the historical profession to the mainstream of intellectual enquiry, which is to be found at disciplinary interfaces such as those between the humanities and the natural sciences.

Although all the participants recognized that there was still much work to be done, both empirically and theoretically, there was a general sense of optimism that the oceans would become an increasingly important focus of historians' inquiries over the coming decades. Environmen-

tal historians, with their focus on the interplay between human actions and natural processes, as well as their interdisciplinary focus, were in an ideal position to provide a leading voice in this field.

*Frank Zelko*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> *Washington Post*, March 2, 2004, 2

<sup>2</sup> John McNeill, "The Nature and Culture of Environmental History," *History and Theory*, Theme Issue 42 (December 2003), 42, 33–34.

<sup>3</sup> Poul Holm, Tim D. Smith and David J. Starkey, eds., *Research in Maritime History No. 21, The Exploited Seas: New Directions for Marine Environmental History* (St. John's, Newfoundland: International Maritime Economic History Association/Census of Marine Life, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> I am referring to seminal texts such as William Cronon's "The Trouble with Wilderness or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," in Cronon, ed., *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature* (New York: Norton, 1995).

## ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT AND NORTH AMERICA

Conference at the GHI, June 3–5, 2004. Co-sponsored by the GHI and the College of Arts and Sciences, University at Buffalo, SUNY. Conveners: Andreas Daum (University at Buffalo, SUNY) and Simone Lässig (GHI). Keynote lecture made possible by a grant from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Bonn.

Participants: Nancy Anderson (National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC), Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra (SUNY Buffalo), Gerald L. Carr (Newark, Delaware), Charles Closmann (GHI), John Cloud (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), Ann Cox Halkett (Humboldt Field Research Institute), Georgina H. Endfield (University of Nottingham, UK), Ottmar Ette (University of Potsdam), Hartmut Keil (University of Leipzig), Andreas Kunz (Institut für Europäische Geschichte, Mainz), Andrea and Ingrid Lotze (Humboldt Field Research Institute), Kent Mathewson (Louisiana State University), Leslie K. Overstreet (Smithsonian Institution Libraries), Aaron Sachs (Yale University), Dirk Schumann (GHI), Georg Schütte (Alexander von Humboldt Foundation), Ingo Schwarz (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences), Wendy St. Jean (Boston University), Laura Dassow Walls (Lafayette College), Suzanne Zeller (Wilfrid Laurier University).

In the summer of 2004, historians and the general public had good reason to commemorate the bicentennial of two seminal explorations that have left an imprint on the history of both North and South America: the Lewis and Clark expedition to the Pacific and Alexander von Humboldt's much longer voyage to South, Central, and North America, which he concluded in 1804. While the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition turned into a major media event in the United States, supported by popular books and television series, the American journey of Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859) was primarily celebrated in South America, where the German-born, yet cosmopolitan traveler and scholar spent most of his time. Shortly before returning to Europe, however, Humboldt also visited the young United States, and spent three weeks on the east coast. He was honored at the American Philosophical Society, the United States' oldest learned Society in Philadelphia, and met President Thomas Jefferson in Washington. Jefferson had a keen interest in Humboldt's knowledge of New Spain and Humboldt's assessment of the geography and condition of those territories in the West, on which the United States had already cast an eye.



Exactly two hundred years after Humboldt dined with Jefferson in the presidential home on Pennsylvania Avenue, scholars from diverse disciplines convened in Washington to launch a new departure for Humboldt research and begin a systematic evaluation of Alexander von Humboldt's meaning for North America. This conference explored Humboldt's role as a scientific, cultural, and political personality in North America, and addressed the various cultural, intellectual, social, and political influences of Humboldt's oeuvre in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The conference thus sought to rediscover the immensely rich tradition of Humboldtian thinking in North America. Not only did Thomas Jefferson and Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury in the young republic, forge links with Humboldt. Throughout the nineteenth century, long after Humboldt's death in 1859, and well into the twentieth century, Humboldtian science and ideas continued to stimulate scientific writers, literary authors, environmental thinkers, politicians, leaders of ethnic minorities, and many others. All these have engaged in a complicated process of rereading and redefining Humboldt, capitalizing on what remains the most wide-ranging trans-disciplinary scientific oeuvre in world history. The ramification of this process reached into the work of the United States Coastal Service, New England's Transcendentalism, and North American landscape painting, no less than into the preservationist movement of John Muir's time.

This evaluation of Alexander von Humboldt's significance for the United States is part of a recent and increasing international interest in Humboldt that reaches across scientific disciplines. Humboldt's main idea, as expressed in his magnum opus *Kosmos* (available to American readers in English translation in the second half of the nineteenth century as *Cosmos: A Sketch of the Physical Description of the Universe*, with the first two volumes recently reprinted in the United States), may be summarized as the concept of the "interconnectedness" of all phenomena, natural and human. Certainly, Humboldt wanted to "collect, dissect, and measure" these phenomena, as he wrote shortly before embarking on his American journey. But he equally aimed to integrate the partial, specialized knowledge deriving from such measurements into larger views of society, of heaven and earth. Humboldt was aware that all knowledge was rhetorically constructed and always a literary and artistic enterprise. Humboldt's new popularity today—certainly among scholars, but not confined to them—might result from a common wish to overcome the dichotomy of what Charles Percy Snow once called the "two cultures." Reading Humboldt today coincides with attempts to understand the globalization of knowledge at the beginning of the twenty-first century in a way that goes beyond the mere accumulation of overly specialized expertise.

The conference was opened with a welcome by Dirk Schumann, deputy director of the GHI, and Georg Schütte, general secretary of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. In his keynote speech entitled "Toward World Science? Humboldtian Science, World Concepts, and Transregional Studies," Ottmar Ette—a scholar who teaches Romance Literature with broad interests in the history of philosophy, literary studies and Humboldt's oeuvre—suggested a new framework for understanding Humboldtian ideas. He uncovered the different semantic structures underlying Humboldt's definition of "cosmos." Ette concluded that Humboldtian knowledge was meant as "Lebens-" and "Überlebenswissen": knowledge that provides orientation to live and to survive, and that connects analysis and personal experience. Ette emphasized that the trajectories of Humboldt's work were transdisciplinary rather than interdisciplinary. Humboldt aimed to establish networks of knowledge across regions and to use different media—writings, visual imagery, and other presentations—in order to communicate this knowledge to the public at large.

During Ottmar Ette's lecture, the audience had an immediate visual experience of Humboldt's concept of knowledge. Leslie Overstreet had kindly arranged several original books by Humboldt from the Smithsonian Institution's rare book collection on display next to the speaker's podium. Following the lecture, the audience used the unique opportunity to have a closer look at works such as *Cosmos* and *Vues des Cordillères et monumens des peuples indigènes de l'Amérique*. The presentations were followed by a reception in the GHI's Felix Gilbert Reading Room.

Sessions began the following day with a thematic introduction to the conference by Andreas Daum. Daum placed Humboldt in the context of recent research trends in the fields of history of science, space, and visibility. He also addressed the challenge of writing a biography of Humboldt in light of Humboldt's extensive oeuvre and the divergent interpretations of his work and personality.

The first session dealt with "Popular Culture, Politics, and Networks." Ingo Schwarz looked at Humboldt's correspondence as an example of international scientific communication in the nineteenth century. Based on his extensive knowledge of Humboldt's letters documented in the Humboldt Research Center in Berlin, Schwarz used Humboldt's communication with Thomas Jefferson, Samuel George Morton, Lorin Blodget, and Matthew Fontaine Maury to illustrate how scientific interests and personal, material, and political motivations merged in this trans-continental exchange. The latter did not simply follow one pattern but also showed inconsistencies and gaps. Hartmut Keil focused on the 1850s and 1860s, and placed Humboldt in the context of the restructuring of the American party system during this period. He demonstrated that

Humboldt's name and the scholar's critical views of slavery became political arguments; they were used by the new Republican party, particularly by John Frémont, and must be seen in the light of the realignment of the Irish and, to a large extent, the German minorities with the Republicans' political platform. Choosing the German emigrant Francis Lieber as an example, Keil further emphasized that the ideal of European enlightenment, encapsulated by Humboldt, strongly appealed to liberals in the United States and helped to establish a transatlantic intellectual network. Andreas Daum extended the perspective into the realm of popular culture from the 1850s to the end of the century. He explored how Humboldt and his reputation were culturally appropriated by diverse groups—primarily in immigrant and democratic milieus, but throughout the United States—in order to create notions of social and cultural identity in a time of ethnic and social diversification as well as demographic and urban growth. The commemoration of Humboldt in places like Philadelphia and St. Louis became the core of a public culture of festivals, monuments, and anniversaries, in which historicism met political wishes for social and ideological cohesion.

The second session addressed the role of Humboldtian ideas in mapping the North American continent and "Inventing a Geography" for it. Kent Mathewson traced the impact of Humboldtian thinking on North American geography from Jedidia Morse, whose ideas on electromagnetism were of particular interest to Humboldt, to Frémont's work for the Corps of Topographical Engineers, to John Wesley Powell. Some German explorers and travelers such as Duke Paul Wilhelm, Balduin Möllhausen, and Prince Maximilian von Wied may be regarded as Humboldt's foremost "children" (William Goetzman) in the United States. Humboldt's reputation among North American geographers began to decline during the last third of the century, although Mathewson traced his influence well into the late twentieth century. This observation stimulated discussion throughout the conference about why specific scientific ideas gain or lose popularity, and how such cycles may be explained as a dialectical process between knowledge producers and the needs of society at a given time. Wendy St. Jean focused on the use of Humboldt in the process of the United States' westward expansion, which coincided with Humboldt's critique of slavery and racial inequalities, a topic that the conference picked up on several occasions. This topic also led to animated discussions about how to define "racism" and whether Humboldt may be accused of having looked at the societies he observed with "imperial eyes" (Mary Louise Pratt). St. Jean concentrated on Jefferson's interest in Humboldt's information on what would later become the American Southwest. Humboldt had not visited this area, but knew about it from Mexican archives, and sketched it on his map of New Spain that he gave to

Gallatin in 1804. St. Jean argued that Humboldt's map, in spite of his balanced view of Mexico, became an effective rhetorical tool for the United States government to use in its assertion that no Spaniards occupied the territory, which led to even larger territorial claims and the settlement of the Southwest.

The exploration of the North American continent was at the center of the third session. Suzanne Zeller dealt with "Humboldt and the Habitability of Canada's Great Northwest." Her paper presented a subtle analysis of the legacy of Humboldt for British North Americans during the first half of the nineteenth century. It problematized the definition of what historians have called "Humboldtian science." Zeller first took the naturalist John Richardson as an example. Like Humboldt, Richardson valued wide-ranging standardized documentations of localized scientific data, but he refined Humboldt's concept of isolines. The further analysis of naturalists such as Edward Sabine and John Henry Lefroy and their mapping of the meteorology, magnetism, and geography of what would become Canada demonstrated that these men's ideas did not descend directly from a cosmic, European concept. Instead, it was the biogeographical practice that made use of some of Humboldt's ideas, yet generated original insights deviating from what was never accepted as an authoritative Humboldtian model. The complications and transformations of Humboldtian thinking were stressed by Aaron Sachs, too, in his paper on "Humboldt, Exploration, and Environmental Thought in Nineteenth-Century America." Taking the explorer John Reynolds, the photographer Timothy O'Sullivan, the director of the United States Geological Survey Clarence King, and the pioneer of American environmentalism John Muir as examples, Sachs delineated the context of Victorian culture in which these men cited Humboldt in their distinct attempts to find a comprehensive view of nature that balanced specific scientific insights and the wish for synthesis, as well as the relative weight of science and art in depicting this nature.

The afternoon concluded with a roundtable. It presented two projects that bring awareness of Humboldt's diverse legacies to both academic audiences and the general public. Ottmar Ette introduced the "Humboldt Project" of the *Andere Bibliothek*, the publishing series by one of Germany's most eminent contemporary intellectuals, Hans Magnus Enzensberger. In the fall of 2004, the *Andere Bibliothek* will republish some of Humboldt's key works, among them the original *Kosmos* in all its volumes, including Humboldt's additions, edited by Ottmar Ette and Oliver Lubrich. This unique and courageous project honors Humboldt and brings to life again Humboldt's role as a pioneer of what is often only attributed to our own postmodern epoch: a science society that is based on truly transdisciplinary exchange and derives its innovative character

from a constant trans-border communication not only among experts but in society at large. Ingrid and Andrea Lotze showed how this ideal can materialize today in a concrete local setting that attracts international scholars: the Humboldt Field Research Institute/Eagle Hill Foundation (see <http://www.eaglehill.us>). Located on the coast of Maine, the Humboldt Field Research Institute attracts scientists, naturalists, artists, and the general public to conduct research and attend educational seminars that follow the ideal of transdisciplinary collaboration. Since 1987, the institute has been offering an extensive series of seminars. In addition, since the mid-1990s, the institute has published the *Northeastern Naturalist*, a quarterly peer-reviewed journal that features original research articles on a wide range of topics.

The next morning featured two more sessions. The first was devoted to "Humboldt, Art, and Culture." Laura Dassow Walls's paper traced the importance of Humboldt's *Cosmos* in American literature from Washington Irving to Ralph Waldo Emerson to Henry David Thoreau, who used his rediscovery of Humboldt to revise his famous *Walden*. Edgar Allan Poe and Walt Whitman responded to Humboldt, too, and all of these writers helped inscribe a notion of Humboldtian thinking into nature writing in the United States throughout the nineteenth century. Humboldt's enormous impact on North American landscape painting was the topic of Gerald L. Carr's paper. He concentrated on Frederic Church, Humboldt's "prime North American artistic disciple." Church read *Cosmos* early on and thus refined his view of tropical scenes. These became one of Church's favorite subjects, as Carr showed with examples such as Church's *Cayambe* (1858) and *Heart of the Andes* (1859).

The last session of the conference addressed once more the complex issue of how to evaluate Humboldt's view of Latin America in the light of recent critiques of colonialism and imperialism. Georgina Endfield spoke to the role of eurocentric ideology and local environmental knowledge in the development of Humboldt's geography of New Spain. Although we may identify biases in the traveler's work, Endfield demonstrated through a close reading of Humboldt's writings on Mexico that a simple critique does not do justice to Humboldt's subtle conceptualizations of the social, cultural, environmental, economic, geographical, and other characteristics of Mexico. These were influenced by, but transcended, prevalent Eurocentric ideologies of the New World. Endfield emphasized that Humboldt's research was informed by local historical sources and environmental knowledge. In his paper, Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra focused on the origins of Humboldt's ideas about the Andes as a microcosmic space, a natural laboratory for testing theories of biodistribution. He argued that Humboldt encountered a local intelligentsia that had already described the rich ecological variations within their

polities, and that Humboldt learned to read the Andes in part because local Spanish American scholars had for decades, if not centuries, been developing this idea. Cañizares-Esguerra gave examples from the writings and approaches to nature by, among others, León Pinelo in the seventeenth century, José Celestino Mutis in the eighteenth century, and José de Caldas (1768–1816) to underscore the richness of local knowledge.

The conference concluded with a final discussion that emphasized the value of taking Alexander von Humboldt as a prism to study not only South, but also North American culture. The reciprocal influences with Central American culture and the astonishing prominence of Humboldt as a public figure in the United States throughout the nineteenth century circumscribe new topics in historical scholarship on Humboldt and transatlantic relations in the early modern and modern eras. All contributors expressed their wish to see these new directions pursued further. Conveners and participants are currently exploring possibilities of publishing the conference proceedings.

*Andreas W. Daum*

## SCREENING OF *IN THE SHADOW OF POWER*

Screenings of the ARD/German Television film *Im Schatten der Macht* at the Goethe-Institut, Washington, June 10 and 23, 2004. Co-sponsored by ARD, the Goethe-Institut, and the GHI.

ARD's 180-minute reconstruction of the maneuvers and intrigue surrounding the resignation of Willy Brandt as Chancellor in May 1974, one of the most dramatic moments of postwar German history, was a highlight of the 2003 television season in the Federal Republic. Thanks to the generosity of ARD's Washington bureau, the production in its original German was made available for a screening in Washington on June 10. Because of popular demand, a second screening was arranged thirteen days later. Over two hundred people came to the showings.

The film traces the final twelve days of Brandt's chancellorship. His son, the actor Mathias Brandt, plays the East German spy Günter Guillaume, whose exposure led to Brandt's downfall. His close friends, loyalists, pseudo-friends, rivals, and enemies all appear in this partly fictionalized film history: Egon Bahr, Horst Ehmke, Herbert Wehner, Helmut Schmidt, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Walter Scheel, and many others, such as Günther Nollau, head of West Germany's counter-intelligence office, the Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, whom the film depicts as a key figure. Structured on actual events and using actual statements by the historical figures involved, the filmwriters had to make up some decisive conversations, such as that between Brandt and Wehner in Münstereifel, when Wehner let Brandt know that he would not support him against his detractors. Fictionalized though it is, the film nevertheless seems as a whole very close to the historical facts, as some of those portrayed in it have testified.

Commenting on the film was Ambassador Jonathan Dean, who served as an American diplomat in Bonn during Brandt's chancellorship. He called the film a "remarkably good historical drama" about a great figure of the Cold War, one who did more than any single individual to diminish the dangerous East-West confrontation in Europe. As Dean noted, the film movingly depicts the tragedy of human weakness as well as the fragility of political power in a democracy and of the public trust that must lie at the base of that power.

*Robert Gerald Livingston*

**HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND INTERNATIONALIZATION:  
THE HISTORICAL PROFESSION AT THE BEGINNING OF  
THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY  
SYMPOSIUM IN HONOR OF DETLEF JUNKER**

Symposium at the Heidelberg Center for American Studies (HCA), University of Heidelberg, June 25, 2004. Sponsored by the Heidelberg Center for American Studies. One panel co-sponsored by the GHI. Convener: Philipp Gassert (Heidelberg).

Participants: Manfred Berg (Center for U.S. Studies, Wittenberg), Georg Christoph Berger Waldenegg (Heidelberg), Volker Berghahn (Columbia University), Marion Breunig (Heidelberg), Reinhard R. Doerries (University of Erlangen-Nürnberg), Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht (Center for North American Studies, Frankfurt), Akira Iriye (Harvard University), Detlef Junker (Heidelberg), Egbert Klautke (University of London), Robert Gerald Livingston (GHI), Christof Mauch (GHI), Wilfried Mausbach (Heidelberg), Kees van Minnen (Roosevelt Study Center), Kiran Klaus Patel (Humboldt University), Christiane Rösch (Heidelberg), Anja Schüler (Humboldt University), Klaus Schwabe (RWTH Aachen), Alan Steinweis (University of Nebraska, Lincoln), Michael Wala (Ruhr University, Bochum), Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson (University of Munich), Michael Weißborn (Stuttgart).

What are the challenges for historians at the beginning of the twenty-first century as they perceive a growing trend toward internationalization in everyday life? In what ways do historical processes such as increased communication across national borders shape the art of writing history? What are the theoretical and methodological challenges for the historical profession in the years ahead? How does the perceived internationalization of life alter intellectual pursuits? What does it mean for historians to deal with international and global phenomena in research and teaching? What are the issues at stake if historians want to provide historical guidance in the public realm? These are some of the questions that are most intimately connected with the professional career of Detlef Junker, on the occasion of whose sixty-fifth birthday the symposium was organized. As professor of modern history at the University of Heidelberg since 1975, founder of the Schurman Library for American History in 1986, Curt Engelhorn Professor for American History since 1999, and founding director of the Heidelberg Center for American Studies since 2003, Junker has been actively engaged in the promotion of American history in Germany. As the GHI's second director from 1994 to 1999, he was also closely involved in the transatlantic exchange among specialists of German history. Moreover, a



major focus of Detlef Junker's research and teaching has been the history of U.S. foreign policy as well as the history of international relations.

The first roundtable looked at the study of German history outside Germany. From the point of view of an Austrian "outsider," Christoph Berger Waldenegg underscored the fundamental importance of West German historiographical debates in the shaping of Austrian history. Intellectually, Austrian historians were often inspired by West German debates, while at the same time they were constructing historical narratives distancing themselves from German history. This is particularly true with regard to the history of National Socialism, which Austrians long considered to be outside their national experience. Egbert Klautke looked at the British case and underscored the relative importance of German history between 1870 and 1945 as a favorite subject of British students. The teaching and writing of German history is thus colored by long-standing British perceptions of Nazi Germany and World War II. From an institutional point of view, British history departments are more international than their German counterparts, although history tends to be very much compartmentalized along national borders. Christiane Rösch provided an overview of the German Democratic Republic as a topic among U.S. historians. Although GDR Studies were very much part of Western scholarship on the Soviet bloc before 1990, studies of the former East Germany have seen a remarkable boom, especially among U.S. historians. Often incorporating a cultural history point of view, American historiography of the GDR has been highly influential for research in this field carried out in Germany. Taking a generational approach, Alan Steinweis surveyed American scholarship on the Holocaust. The sheer number and diversity of U.S. historians working in this field is going to guarantee the continued influence of North American scholars. An outside perspective seems important with morally charged issues such as the history of Nazi Germany. The final contribution, by Volker Berghahn, looked at various issues that have dominated the transatlantic exchange among American historians of Germany. The Fischer controversy as well as debates about the *Sonderweg* stand out as examples. In recent years, post-1945 scholarship benefited from the diversity of approaches being pursued in the United States, such as gender history and the new cultural history.

The second roundtable was devoted to the study of U.S. history in Germany and Europe. As chair Manfred Berg pointed out, U.S. history enjoys only weak institutional roots in Germany, and faces two challenges: first, to serve as translator of U.S. history for a German audience; and second, to make its own contribution to American history. Reinhard R. Doerries gave an overview of the state of the art in Germany. Despite the obvious importance of the United States for Germany and the catastrophic results of German misperceptions of the U.S. during the twen-

tieth century, American history remains a comparatively neglected field in Germany. This is in marked contrast to the remarkable institutional growth of American literary studies at German universities since the 1960s. Whereas fifty-nine chairs for American literature exist in Germany, there are only fourteen chairs in American history. This led Doerries to a renewed plea for stronger lobbying efforts on behalf of American history in Germany. Kees van Minnen described the situation in the Netherlands, Belgium, and France, which seems worse than in Germany, with, for example, the prestigious chair in American history at Leyden University having been left unoccupied for several years. Van Minnen also gave a thorough overview of the activities of the Roosevelt Study Center, which in recent years has made considerable efforts toward establishing a network of European historians of the United States. Marion Breunig's contribution sought to identify the contributions of German historians of early American history. Looking at the examples of Willy Paul Adams, Jürgen Heideking, and Hermann Wellenreuther, she argued that the lack of large-scale syntheses in early American history offers opportunities for outsiders because of an increasing trend toward particularization and regionalization in American history in the United States. The discussion was broadened by Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson's survey of gender and race issues. Because of its limited beginnings within Women's Studies during the 1990s, gender perspectives have only recently begun to influence U.S. history in Germany. Race as an analytical category has enjoyed a much more prominent role at German universities, however, and might have a positive impact on research in the United States. As the final speaker, Michael Wala also detected a solid chance for outsiders to make important contributions. U.S. historiography would benefit from diverse perspectives. European historians, for example, have a command of the languages that are indispensable to study the history of the South, the West, and the frontier. It also seems necessary to look at the "forgotten" nineteenth century from a comparative perspective, where German historians of the United States could provide important input into the general historiography in Germany.

The third roundtable was devoted to international history, and was chaired by Klaus Schwabe. He pointed to a general feeling of dissatisfaction with traditional diplomatic history. Although globalization in fact predates the nineteenth century, the question remains to what degree historians have been aware of these developments. In addition, he posed questions about the prerequisites for doing international history in terms of language skills, the importance of national prejudices, and the causal relevance of its objects for synthesis. Akira Iriye then surveyed several transnational actors from the 1920s on, making a strong case for viewing Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) as agents of globalization.

Globalization seems a more appropriate description of some of the phenomena that we are encountering because this term transcends the nation-state as the given framework of analysis. Jessica Gienow-Hecht asked whether international historians really “play with each other.” Their different backgrounds and training, academic structures, and social and political interests seem to remain an obstacle. Although a clear definition of the object of international history has become more complicated if not impossible, the cultural turn has not only resulted in a broadening of the debate, but also in its internationalization. By looking at how three German philosopher-historians, Hegel, Schelling, and Ranke, defined their objects, Kiran Klaus Patel asked what kind of international history we are doing. Whereas Hegel stands for the problem of how to account for the state, Schelling brings out the ambivalences and the problem of not taking a normative stance toward transnational actors. Ranke, however, despite the teleological dimensions in his oeuvre, reminds historians of the importance of sober empirical work and the problems of global history. Wilfried Mausbach reminded the audience that not only the nation state is a constantly changing “imagined community.” Transnational or even global communities such as the “West,” the “Occident,” or more recently the “Anglo-Sphere” are culturally constructed as well. Anja Schüler concluded the session with a striking case study linking gender issues with transnational reform movements among female social reform workers in the Progressive Era.

The final session was devoted to current German-American relations. Detlef Junker and Robert Gerald Livingston discussed the question “Are there still common interests among the U.S. and Germany?” Although they disagreed on a number of details, both Junker and Livingston saw the mutual relationship heading for further trouble. Interests have been diverging since September 11 and will continue to do so. Not only have interests been defined in different fashions: Despite continued professions of shared values on both sides of the Atlantic, the political cultures have been developing along different paths. Whereas Livingston saw a number of areas in which Europeans and Americans could pragmatically work together, Junker was more skeptical, and highlighted fundamental cultural differences. In addition, Junker was more negative in his assessment of the impact of President George W. Bush’s presidency on the current situation.

On the following day, during the academic ceremony in honor of Detlef Junker, Alexander Demandt presented his lecture “Antiquity in America” in Heidelberg’s splendid “Alte Aula.” During his lecture, the audience was reminded of the fact that despite a long history of repeated misunderstandings and different readings of tradition, North Americans and Europeans share a common heritage.

*Philipp Gassert*