CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

Before Television: Mass Media, Political Cultures, and the Public Sphere in Western Europe and the United States, 1900-1950

Conference at the GHI, September 23-26, 1999. Convener: Thomas Goebel (GHI). Participants: John Abbott (University of Illinois at Chicago), Jane Caplan (Bryn Mawr College), Heide Fehrenbach (Emory University), Karl Christian Führer (University of Oldenburg), Philipp Gassert (GHI), Mark Hampton (Wesleyan College), Christina von Hodenberg (University of Freiburg), Gianni Isola (University of Padova), Peter Jelavich (University of Texas at Austin), Michael Kazin (Georgetown University), Marcus Kreuzer (Villanova University), Cornelia R. Levine (Berkeley, California), Lawrence R. Levine (George Mason University), Robert D. Levy (University of Minnesota), Christof Mauch (GHI), Garth Montgomery (Radford University), Kiran Klaus Patel (Humboldt University of Berlin), Uta Poiger (University of Washington), Jörg Requate (University of Bielefeld), Steven J. Ross (University of Southern California), Adelheid von Saldern (University of Hannover), Axel Schildt (University of Hamburg), Dieter Schott (Technical University of Darmstadt), Renate Schumacher (German Broadcasting Archive), Vanessa R. Schwartz (American University), James Schwoch (Northwestern University), Brian Ward (University of Newcastle Upon Tyne), and Clemens Zimmermann (University of Heidelberg).

There can be no doubt that the mass media have been among the most powerful forces shaping politics, society, and culture in the twentieth century. Starting with the evolution of movies and radio in the early decades of the century and ending with the dramatic rise of the Internet in the second half of the 1990s, the mass media have played a powerful role in the evolution of Western democracies. It seems that each "invention" of a new medium was accompanied by dramatic predictions about its impact on the social fabric and on everyday life. Of course, the contemporary media scene is dominated by television. And indeed, many observers are likely to argue that the introduction of television represented a qualitative leap in the history of the mass media, that the ability to combine sound and pictures and deliver it to virtually every home has revolutionized the role of the media in cultural production, political life, and moral values. However, even a cursory look back at the first half of the twentieth century shows that earlier media "revolutions" often affected political behavior and cultural perceptions in equally powerful ways. Because so much attention has been centered on television, the GHI deemed it particularly interesting to organize a conference that focused on the evolution of mass media in the pretelevision age between 1900 and 1950.

The goal of the conference was to bring together scholars from different countries to systematically compare the effects of such innovations as radio, film, and newspapers on political systems and political cultures under a variety of national settings and political regimes. The contributions focused largely on Germany and the United States, with some analysis of conditions in Italy, France, and Great

Britain. Given the time-frame of the conference, the choice of media seemed almost self-evident. Film was an invention of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that by 1910 had evolved into maybe the most popular form of mass entertainment. The radio craze of the 1920s and 1930s included the rapid popularization of a medium that, for the first time, allowed direct media access into the home. The development of newspapers, finally, was also marked by significant popularization with the evolution of the penny press and mass journalism. Different papers analyzed how new media forms were or were not integrated into existing political routines, how they altered conceptions of public life and political behavior, whether they transformed the very definitions of the political that structured political action, and what differences the legal and political organization of new media forms made in their societal impact.

The conference began with Lawrence Levine's keynote address on President Franklin D. Roosevelt's innovative use of radio in his "fireside chats." Over the course of his presidency, FDR skillfully employed the radio to reach a mass audience and to solicit popular support for his often controversial policies. The millions of letters he received in response to his chats testify to their popularity. The talks had a powerful effect on the listeners, who often felt a personal connection over the airwaves. In a time characterized by massive unemployment and economic misery, Roosevelt's ability to relate to the audience provided encouragement to millions of Americans. He did not overuse the medium; altogether, he only gave about thirty chats. But when he did speak to a national audience, it was an event eagerly anticipated by many Americans, who regarded Roosevelt and his talks as beacons of hope during a difficult time. Like no other example from this period, FDR's fireside chats demonstrated the effectiveness of the radio in creating a national community of listeners that could become an important political asset.

The fireside chats were an example of the positive role radio could play in a democratic society, but they also illustrate the keen interest governments in all Western democracies had in all new forms of mass media. Although the number of independent radio stations in the United States had sharply decreased by the 1930s, a relative lack of government control allowed for greater diversity in radio programming. Brian Ward's paper dealt with the pivotal role of radio in the rise of the Civil Rights movement in the 1940s and 1950s. Black activists used their access to radio stations, almost always owned and operated by whites, to further the cause of black emancipation all across the American South. Although overt political action was often impossible, many radio personalities found ingenious ways to foster black pride and self-consciousness, to raise awareness of racial inequalities, and to sow the seeds of an emerging Civil Rights movement. In this instance, a commercialized medium was made into an agent of cultural and political change.

No more striking contrast can be found than the role of radio in Nazi Germany. Even before the Nazis came to power in 1933, German radio had found itself under

much closer government control than radio in America. Although regionally decentralized and not subject to direct state control, radio in Germany had been regarded from the outset as a medium that needed to be carefully controlled by government authorities. Private radio stations did not exist, and the various supervisory boards ensured that German radio pursued a clear educational agenda that lent itself readily to conservative causes (Renate Schumacher). In the years before 1933 one can observe a clear increase in the number of programs that dealt with nationalistic and *völkisch* themes. As part of the changing intellectual and cultural landscape of Germany during the Great Depression, these radio programs demonstrated the growing appeal of National Socialist ideology and helped pave the way for the Nazi takeover of power (Adelheid von Saldern).

Once in power, the Nazis, especially Propaganda Minister Josef Goebbels, identified the radio as the medium central to their success in indoctrinating and manipulating the German population. The rapidly growing availability of radio sets multiplied the national radio audience, and the Nazis placed great confidence in their ability to mold public opinion with the help of an ideologically streamlined set of programs and radio personalities. In his paper, Philipp Gassert traced the career of Hans Fritzsche, one of the most well- known radio personalities of the Third Reich. It was during World War II, when he hosted Germany's most important radio news program, that Fritzsche's influence peaked. Using the many letters written to Fritzsche during this time, Gassert illustrated the relationship between the Nazi broadcaster and his audience. Although some reveal a growing disenchantment with the Nazi regime amidst the deteriorating conditions of the war, others illustrate the hold that Nazi propaganda continued to have among the German population. If the radio did not always live up to the expectations of the Nazis as an instrument of mass propaganda and manipulation, it certainly acted as a powerful force in spreading the Nazi message.

The Nazis also had a strong interest in motion pictures as a propaganda tool. That was true for urban centers, already well equipped with numerous cinemas, but even more so for rural areas often without access to theaters. Clemens Zimmermann described the media policies of the Third Reich in relation to the rural countryside. The Nazis founded a special service designed to show movies in rural areas where no cinemas existed. As a result, millions of peasants gained access to a previously largely unavailable entertainment. Many of the movies shown were the standard comedies produced throughout the 1930s and 1940s. Others reflected more closely Nazi ideology. As with most forms of Nazi propaganda, audiences proved to be far more interested in entertainment than in explicit ideological messages. Within academic circles, an intense debate developed in the 1930s concerning mass-media theories and ways to reach the audience (Garth Montgomery). Yet even under the conditions of a regime that controlled all forms of mass media, the ability to shape public beliefs and induce behavior conforming to Nazi expectations remained mixed. There existed a persistent gap between the Nazi belief in the power of mass media to manipulate audience behavior and the actual performance of Nazi-controlled movies, television, and newspapers. Given the frequent conflicts within

and between Nazi organizations themselves, which sometimes spilled over into the media (Kiran Klaus Patel), the less than stellar results of Nazi media activities are even less surprising.

After the end of World War II, the democratization of German mass media was among the more pressing issues faced by the occupying powers. As demonstrated by James Schwoch, the fate of postwar German television became an object in the global telecommunications strategy of the United States. The allocation of frequencies in Europe and control over the airwaves were discussed at a number of postwar conferences that pitted American against Soviet conceptions. The Americans clearly pursued an agenda that combined concerns over denazification and democratization in West Germany with a project of global telecommunications hegemony. Within the parameters set by American policies and goals, however, West Germany would soon reclaim a large portion of autonomy in regard to media policies.

Indeed, the media sphere in West Germany soon became an example of the successful liberalization of the public sphere. Slowly, but with growing speed in the late 1950s and early 1960s, radio, television, and newspapers became increasingly independent of government control and increasingly critical of government policies. A new generation of journalists evolved that began to seriously grapple with the implications of National Socialism for Germany's identity in the postwar era (Christina von Hodenberg). The strong educational impulse of German television and radio programming allowed for the development of a number of public affairs shows that revitalized German political debates. Over time, the mass media became one of the more powerful agents forcing Germans to seriously confront their own past.

This newfound independence of West German media stood in marked contrast to conditions in postwar Italy. Here, at least with radio, government control continued to be stronger. The domestic political situation, marked by the conflicts between the Christian Democrats, in control of radio programming, and the Communists raised the stakes and made it much more difficult to carve out an independent role for radio. At least until the late 1950s radio broadcasts were characterized by a clear conservative bias toward government policies (Gianni Isola). The differences between Italy and Germany in the immediate postwar era underscore the successful liberalization of the media in Germany.

Many of the papers presented showed how ineffective media strategies often were even under conditions of total government control. Technological advancements did not necessarily equal greater success in manipulating the public. And the advent of television did not automatically revolutionize political campaigning. As shown by Marcus Kreuzer, some of the key ingredients of modern political campaigns that are often portrayed as a direct result of television - most notably the idea of politics as a strategic game, the personalization of politics, and the weakening of party organizations - antedated the introduction of television, at least in France and

Germany. In these two countries, conservative parties developed a new style of political campaigning and behavior between 1890 and 1940 that incorporated all these elements. The competitive pressures of an electoral mass market were responsible for their development, not a technological determinism. Another example of this trend can be found in the practice of direct democracy in California in the decades before World War II (Thomas Goebel). This state, a trailblazer in the development of initiative and referendum elections, pioneered the evolution of political consultants, the use of scientific public opinion polls, the use of methods drawn from commercial advertising in political campaigns, and other hallmarks of modern campaign methods. In a state where parties were traditionally weak and played virtually no role in initiative campaigns, political actors developed new tools and techniques even without the benefit of a technological innovation such as television.

Other papers presented at the conference focused on various aspects of the mass media between 1900 and 1950. Steven Ross showed the significant role played by silent films produced by labor unions and other labor activists during the first two decades of the twentieth century. These movies represented an often forgotten strand of critical filmmaking that was later eclipsed by Hollywood and the rise of the studio system. Jörg Requate compared the political aspirations of large newspaper owners in Germany, the United States, and Great Britain. Although some enjoyed a modicum of success, most failed in their attempts to translate their powerful role in the mass media into real political power. John Abbott looked at the important role of the German Catholic press in rural Bavaria in the early decades of the century. In charting a difficult course between social and economic modernization and Catholic beliefs, they played a crucial role in establishing a rural public sphere.

Taken together, the contributions to the conference "Before Television" offered a broad array of perspectives on the role of the mass media in Western Europe and the United States between 1900 and 1950. They focused on a sometimes overlooked period in the history of the evolution of mass media. Dazzled by the power of television, some observers have been blind to the important media revolutions of the first half of the century. The history of the mass media is a vital part of the history of the twentieth century. As the first conference hosted by the GHI exclusively devoted to this history, the event provided a stimulating venue for scholars from various countries to bring their collective perspectives to bear on a crucial element of modern life.

Thomas Goebel

Reviving a Historical Corpse: Rewriting the Historiography of Nineteenth-Century Religious Art

Panel at the 88th Annual Conference of the College Art Association, New York, February 23-26, 2000. Convener: Cordula A. Grewe (GHI). Participants: Alicia Craig Faxon (Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts); Brian Grosskurth (York University, Toronto); Maria E. Di Pasquale (University of Texas at Austin); Joyce C. Polistena (Pratt Institute, New York).

In 1841 the Young Hegelian art critic Friedrich Theodor Vischer condemned the making of religious art as an attempt to revive a historical corpse. He claimed that religious art, like religion itself, was outmoded and retrograde in character, and thus should be abandoned. This judgment on the anachronism of religious belief was an early expression of what became an orthodoxy equating modernity with secularization and secularization with the bourgeois project. Thus, the paradigm of secularization, or, as Max Weber called it, the "disenchantment of the world," came to dominate twentieth-century (art) historical scholarship.

Over the last two decades the publication of a number of studies by historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and theologians has challenged this concept. Scholars have called for a new awareness of the continued social and cultural significance of both organized religion and popular religiosity in the nineteenth century.

Engaging this broader revisionist project, the session on rewriting the historiography of nineteenth-century religious art addressed the consequences of such revisionism for assessments of the era's religious art. In this context, the questioning of the conventional understanding of the process of modernity as an antagonism between religion and secularism formed the overarching theme of the presented papers, whose topics ranged from the German Nazarenes and the British Pre-Raphaelites to French avant-garde painting of the fin-de-siècle. Collectively, they attempted to draw attention to the ongoing process of constructing compromises among dichotomous systems of meaning, the paradoxes in religious art, and the often unmediated clash of modernist, historicist, and antimodern elements.

In her paper "Art/History: Competing Narratives of Re-Christianization, De-Christianization, and Secularization," Cordula A. Grewe pointed to a certain resistance in art historical scholarship to take part in the broader re-evaluation of religion's role since 1800. She appealed for a more rigorous historical understanding of the period's religious art. Stressing the profound element of crisis as an important constituent element in the artists' relationship to religion and religion's role in the modern age, Grewe stressed the contemporaneity of nineteenth-century religious art. For greater insight into the struggle over religious art we have to accept the notion that not only the modernists but also the antimodernists were genuinely modern in their specific *Gestalt*.

An example of this modernist/anti-modernist fusion is Nazarene medievalism. Beside strong elements of anti-modernism, this escapist search for an undivided society not haunted by industrialization or corrupted by modern civilization also

implied a yearning for origins and the original, the homogeneous, the whole that became the foundation for the moderns' taste for the primitive. Thus, the medieval primitivism of Nazarene art can be placed within modernist primitivism. It is one of many characteristics of Nazarene art that in a different context came to typify modern art movements per se, such as the avant-gardist secession of the Brotherhood of St. Luke from the academy or the development of anti-illusionistic, abstract pictorial strategies. Like their turn toward religion, the Nazarenes's emulation of the old masters as reflections of significant aspects of the zeitgeist. This project of emulation was genuinely modern because the Nazarene artists attempted to modernize religion through historicism, which itself represents a fundamental, constitutive phenomenon of modernity (O. G. Oexle, 1986).

In her paper on "Revising Eugène Delacroix's Religious Oeuvre: Romantic Painting and Its Reintegration with Theology," Joyce C. Polistena emphasized the need for a more nuanced conception of nineteenth-century art that addresses the hybrid, conflicted, and often contradictory nature of that modernity. She contested perceptions of Eugène Delacroix as a radical nonbeliever who, in the tradition of the Enlightenment, thought religion irrational. Providing a profound analysis of the religious sources for Delacroix's religious paintings, such as German radical systems of theology (Johann Adam Möhler) and social Catholicism (R.-F. Lamennais), Polistena traced the artist's sympathetic and sustained interest in Christianity. By demonstrating that Delacroix's emphasis on Jesus's human/divine nature was deeply rooted in certain religious movements of his time, she sought "to balance distortions concerning Delacroix's religious oeuvre as merely commissions and remote from his personal tastes or experience." Polistena's paper pointed to the lack of any essential relation between style and meaning, that is, between a specific stylistic idiom and a certain religious orientation. She exemplified this contingency by comparing Delacroix with Ary Scheffer, Theodore Chasseriau, and Hippolyte Flandrin, whose works are similar in spirit but drastically different in style.

This contingency also emerged from a juxtaposition of Delacroix with Maurice Denis, the subject of Maria E. Di Pasquale's paper on "The *Crise Catholique*: Avant-Garde Painting and Catholicism in Fin-de-Siècle France." Although both artists pursued a modernist trajectory, they engaged in opposing religious trends. Whereas Delacroix championed partisan theological systems that were to be crushed by the official church prior to 1850, Denis embraced Neo-Thomism, the very essence of mainstream Catholicism at his time.

As in Delacroix's case, the religious aspect of Denis's production has generally been underemphasized in favor of an analysis of his place in the development of modernism. Di Pasquale, however, showed that the very religiosity of this leading member of the Nabis played a crucial and indispensable part in his artistic formation. In contrast to most scholars who have focused on Symbolist artists' interest in unorthodox religious practices - for example, occultism, mysticism, and primitive religions - as an expression of individualism and revolution, she emphasized that the avant-garde also entailed expressions of orthodox religion that

played an important role in France in the 1890s. The search for avant-gardist formulations of Catholic religiosity thereby resulted from the desire to overcome the so-called *crise catholique*, that is, the perceived incompatibility of faith and reason. Denis's modernism directly responded to this task, attempting to harmonize seemingly irreconcilable values. By merging religious themes with a Neo-Impressionist divisionist technique that was associated with science at that time, Denis sought to reconcile nature and the ideal and thus to create a visual "rhetoric of reconciliation." Because devout Catholicism marked Denis's whole artistic career, Di Pasqule rejected interpretations that hold an increasing religiosity on Denis's part responsible for the stylistic differences between his early, more avant-garde period before the Dreyfus affair, when he wrote the "Definition of Neo-Traditionism," and his later, more traditional idiom.

This retroactive "secularization" of modernist artists, as Alicia Craig Faxon phrased it, has not been restricted to the historiography of French art. It has also dominated the evaluation of early Pre-Raphaelitism. Thus, scholarship on Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Everett Millais, and William Holman Hunt, three of the best-known Pre-Raphaelites, has mainly focused on either biographical or literary aspects of their work. Interpretations of Pre-Raphaelite art predominantly centered on formal composition, artistic antecedents, and avant-garde characterizations, a strategy that resulted in "Writing Religion Out: On the Secular Revision of the Pre-Raphaelites." Opposing this secular revision, Craig Faxon inquired into the religious roots of early Pre-Raphaelitism, such as the Oxford movement of the 1830s and 1840s with its influence on new Anglo-Catholic liturgy and art. Like with Delacroix, German theology and religious art movements also played a significant role in the development of these English artists, who gained intimate knowledge of German Nazarene art through Ford Madox Brown. It was Brown who had personally met two of the leading figures in Nazarism, Johann Friedrich Overbeck and Peter von Cornelius, both members of the Brotherhood of St. Luke, in Rome in 1845. Craig Faxon concluded that even though Rossetti, Millais, and Hunt later discontinued their early religious subjects because of savage contemporary criticism, which scented a Roman Catholic conspiracy in the initials P. R. B., their art cannot be understood without an account of its religiously inspired beginnings.

The history of nineteenth-century religion is thereby marked by remarkably fierce, often hostile debates. This hatred, as well as its predominantly negative reputation in twentieth-century historiography, has less aesthetic then genuinely political reasons. Hence Friedrich Theodor Vischer's devastating critique of the Nazarene enterprise was as much an expression of his distaste for medievalist historicism as it was an attack on conservative politics. His claim that religious art was a historical corpse articulated a great deal of wishful thinking, as the alliance of "throne and altar" was very much alive in 1841. Only seven years later, the German states would witness the suppression of a revolutionary upheaval that sought, among other things, to create a democratic nation-state.

Despite its fundamentally different history, the French nation faced a similar divide, as Brian Grosskurth elucidated in his paper on "Resurrecting the Dead: Death, Art Criticism, and Religious Painting at the Salon of 1819." The political situation in France after the Congress of Vienna (1815) and after the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy made the Salon of 1819 a decisive moment in the construction of a critical model that rejected religious art as a viable and vital enterprise. In charting this emergence, Grosskurth argued, one must place emphasis on politics above all else. Images of death thereby formed an especially active battleground for these issues, as death foregrounded the question of the existence or nonexistence of religious transcendence beyond social, emotional, and physical ties. In the aftermath of Napoleon's defeat, both liberals and conservatives engaged in fierce polemics concerning the politics of death. Around the deathbed, around the coffin, the close alliance of throne and altar insisted that divine judgment awaits us all and ensures a cohesive social order. At the opposite end of the political spectrum, liberals argued that the gaping skull and open grave were mere props put into play by priests and reactionaries, empty bogeymen to browbeat the citizens of France into the meek submission of frightened children.

Subscribing generally to this image of a divide between conservative religious forces and liberal, democratic, as well as socialist thinkers who grew increasingly alienated from the Christian endeavor, the papers nevertheless cautioned us against overlooking the complexities of these alliances. For example, the alleged association of the German Nazarenes with the restoration powers of their homelands cannot withstand close analysis. Only Ludwig I of Bavaria immediately embraced the movement. Prussia and the Vatican, however, never supported the movement in any major way, and Austria only endorsed the second generation of Nazarene artists, who distanced themselves from the dream of a united Germany held by the Brotherhood of St. Luke.

In sum, the revisionist agenda of the panel aimed to draw attention to what has famously been called the "simultaneity of the unsimultaneous," a phenomenon that challenges teleological notions of modernity as a sharp temporal divide between one world and another that supercedes it. The overall goal of the session was neither a radical inversion nor a simple falsification of the existing canon. Instead, it sought to expose the canon to a more nuanced and comprehensive picture of modernity, a picture that embraces the very essence of modernity: the diversification of styles, the destruction of an overall unified cultural paradigm, including aesthetics, the essential particularism of all forms of cultural expression, the multiplication of voices and thus of the multiplication of art's functions. Questioning the persistent influence of an unexamined and unquestioned tradition of secular (and politically secularized) art criticism on our understanding of nineteenth-century art, the session understood itself as a prolegomenon for a broader discussion of a field in art history that has been widely neglected.

Cordula A. Grewe

Berlin-Washington, 1800-2000: Capital Cities, Cultural Representation, and National Identities

Conference at the GHI, March 30-April 2, 2000. Conveners: Andreas W. Daum and Christof Mauch (both GHI). Co-Sponsor: College of Arts and Sciences, American University. Participants: Carl Abbott (Portland State University), Peter Alter (University of Duisburg), Celia Applegate (University of Rochester), Lucy Barber (University of California at Davis), Kenneth Bowling (George Washington University), Michael S. Cullen (*Tagesspiegel*), Belinda Davis (Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey at New Brunswick), Marion F. Deshmukh (George Mason University), Steven J. Diner (Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey at Newark), Walter Erhart (University of Greifswald), Cynthia R. Field (Smithsonian Institution), Barbara Franco (The Historical Society of Washington, D.C.), Stephen S. Fuller (George Mason University), Robert Garris (School of Advanced International Studies, The Johns Hopkins University), Martin H. Geyer (University of Munich), Howard Gillette Jr. (Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey at Camden), Susanne Hauser (Humboldt University), Peter Jelavich (University of Texas at Austin), Douglas Klahr (Brown University), Jane Kramer (*The New Yorker*), Alan H. Lessoff (Texas A&M University), Jane F. Levey (*Washington History*), Richard Longstreth (George Mason University), Christian F. Otto (Cornell University), Uta Poiger (University of Washington), Wolfgang Ribbe (Free University of Berlin), Ralf Roth (University of Frankfurt), Dietmar Schirmer (Cornell University), Pamela Scott (Cornell University), Wolfgang Sonne (Technical University of Zurich), Nathan Stoltzfus (Florida State University), Janet Ward (University of Colorado at Boulder).

Current visitors to Berlin and Washington find two capital cities undergoing change. The center of Berlin, the world's most famous construction site for the past decade, is beginning to take on a shape that displays the new self-confidence of the "Berlin Republic," as many call the unified Germany. New government and commercial buildings, spawned by the political elite's move from Bonn and the arrival of the ambitious generation of the information age, bring new life, if not glamour to the city on the Spree. For some, the new image is a reassuring step for a nation long suffering from identity crises. A second look at the "New Berlin," however, reveals unresolved ambiguities regarding the roles of both capital and nation and points to an uneasy marriage in the city of several cultures - old and new, east and west, German and international. Many of the architectural highlights and memorials in the capital's center embody its diversity, complexity, and the city's turbulent past. Undoubtedly, the move of the German federal parliament from Bonn to Berlin at the turn of the millennium is a decisive marker in German history. At the same time, the move does not put an end to the ongoing debates outside Germany on the trajectories of the Berlin Republic nor does it cool the heated discussions within Germany about the role the capital should play in a (re)united Germany. Nothing focuses the current debate and reflects the conflicting views and aspirations more clearly than the scheduled federal takeover of some of

Berlin's key cultural institutions and the struggle to build a Holocaust memorial in the heart of the city.

Visitors arriving at Washington's Dulles International Airport and taking a bus or taxi to downtown also meet old and new along the way. Whereas the superhighway to America's capital is lined with high-tech companies, the city itself - in contrast to Berlin - displays a peculiar continuity in its symbolism and its monumental architecture. Under the surface of a celebratory appearance, be it commercial or governmental, however, there is much in Washington that causes controversy. In 2000 America's capital officially celebrates its bicentennial - two hundred years of history that still prompts lively discussion and debate. Soon-to-be-issued license plates bearing the slogan "No Taxation Without Representation" exemplify one major unresolved issue - the fact that the District of Columbia's one representative in Congress has no right to vote on pending legislation.

What do both capitals, Berlin and Washington, represent? In particular, what meaning do they have for their respective nations? And how do ideas about a nation shape the political, social, and cultural profile of its capital city? How do cities actually become capitals, and what makes a city a capital? What does being a capital mean for a city?

Questions such as these have been intensively debated all over the world since the establishment of nation-states and the rise of large urban centers. The development of capitals and public discussion of their functions and meaning play a crucial role in the formation of national identities and the articulation of symbolic and cultural forces within a nation - as well as their effect on the outside world. Capital cities, in other words, reflect much more than the peculiarities of urbanization and the problems inherent in any urban settings, their infrastructure, demographic and economic composition, and the mechanisms of city administration. Capital cities have always assumed specific meanings for nations; they have encapsulated visions, revealed core problems, and raised challenges that go beyond internal urban concerns. This is true for Berlin, Germany, and for Washington, D.C.

These observations formed the basis for bringing colleagues from different disciplines together to investigate the changing meaning of both capitals during the past two hundred years. Conveners and participants were well aware that Berlin and Washington are cities that differ fundamentally in their social and historical profile and scope. Both cities hold different meanings for their respective countries, which in turn embody distinct variations on the national history. A comparison, however, can serve as a hermeneutic device to help us identify important questions and raise crucial historical issues. A comparison between Berlin and Washington, therefore, yields some amazing similarities but also sharpens the sense for the unique features of each capital and its meaning for the larger nation.

For the better part of three days, the conference examined how the capital character of Berlin and Washington had developed through political discourse, aesthetic

strategies, and the power of symbols. Often, the relevant outcomes did not result primarily from conscious measures and strategies, for example, through governmental action; instead, the emergence of Berlin and Washington as capitals also relied on participatory processes. These processes were co-determined by influences from outside the institutional body of urban and national governments - be it by public opinion at home and abroad, by foreigners or minority groups.

In her keynote address Jane Kramer of *The New Yorker* mapped out the territory on "What Makes a Capital? Washington - Berlin." In her crisp, elegant language, Jane Kramer approached both capitals from the perspective of a visitor who uncovers, step-by-step, through interviews and immersion into the city's history and the nation's past, the inner contradictions and ongoing uncertainties about the self-assumed role of the capital. Kramer's address on the campus of American University drew a large audience and stimulated lots of questions. The successful evening was cosponsored by the Department of History in the College of Arts and Sciences of American University.

The following morning the first conference session concentrated on the role of "Capitals in the Nation." Ken Bowling read a comparative paper on the historical debates over the location of the American and German capitals. He detailed major arguments in the eighteenth-century decision to locate the new American capital on the Potomac River and the post-World War II controversy over situating the (West) German seat of government. In both instances, geopolitical arguments merged with legal concerns, attempts to strengthen or - depending on one's viewpoint - to limit federal authority, and intellectual concerns. The Potomac location, for example, was seen by many contemporaries as a signal for a "western" orientation of the United States and placated those Americans who harbored antiurban sentiments in the tradition of agrarian republicanism. In 1949 (Bonn) and again in 1991 (Berlin) - both decisions were preceded by months of discussion and debate - the historical associations with each city and their public standing played a key role. Unlike the revolutionary Americans, however, German decision-makers also had to heed international concerns over the historically and politically dangerous accumulation of power through the establishment of the capital in a large city. Within this context, Bowling focused on the dichotomy between settling on a *Bundesdorf* or a *Bundeshauptstadt*, a distinction that allowed him to characterize even Washington, at least in its beginnings, as an "American Bonn."

Peter Alter added a different kind of comparative perspective. He stressed that since the founding of the Bismarckian empire in 1871, Berlin had defined itself with respect to other capitals and acquired, in the process, a surprising degree of insecurity. Until the fin-de-siècle, this comparison focused on the major European capitals - Paris, London, Vienna, and St. Petersburg. Incidentally, observers from these cities tended either to dismiss the Prussian city or to regard it as an unwelcome rival. After 1900 Berlin's urban flowering transformed the city into the embodiment of what contemporaries called "modernity" and, as such, linked the city to the modern urban culture of the United States. From now on, New York and

Chicago would serve as counterparts and role models - for good or for bad. Hitler and Speer sought to end Berlin's unease with itself by planning the monstrous "Germania" - a horrific vision of a world capital that was never realized only because the 1,000-year empire that had begun to set it in stone was destroyed - along with much of historical Berlin.

The session on "Planning the City" concentrated on some of the most significant individual attempts to design capital cities. Pamela Scott analyzed the urban concepts and political visions in Thomas Jefferson's and Pierre L'Enfant's plans for the federal capital. As the United States' first secretary of state, Jefferson oversaw the founding of Washington following the passage of the Residence Act of 1790. He developed a checkerboard town plan that reflected not only his republican mistrust of big cities and his skepticism of a strong central government. Jefferson's plan, as Scott argued, also relied heavily on European ideas. Jefferson appropriated details of city planning he had observed in Paris. He also was indebted to the plans of Ancient Babylon, recreated by Europeans, and interpreted them as a model of a rationally structured city that incorporated elements of nature. L'Enfant, however, dismissed Jefferson's plans. His design for the capital would be a giant symbol for the new republic, with weighty references to the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. This, according to Scott, is reflected in the street naming and axes of the major avenues. In addition, the speaker pointed out that L'Enfant incorporated several French ideas, thereby paying respect to the French role in American independence. L'Enfant exceeded Jefferson's ideas as well as the official mandate by the president, George Washington, in that he drafted a much larger city than both men had foreseen. L'Enfant's concept envisioned space for many public and infrastructural functions that a modern, expanding city would require.

Wolfgang Sonne examined the political visions of planning for the twentieth century. He compared Washington's McMillan Plan of 1902 with the competition for an architectural renewal of Berlin around 1908-10. Analyzing the respective aesthetic ideas in their institutional and political context, Sonne delineated basic parallels and differences. In both cities planners realized the need to redesign parts of the urban center in order to meet social requirements and improve representative functions; they also considered similar formal ideas. In Washington, however, this drive was based on a broad political consensus, encompassing the federal government, and shared common ground with the City Beautiful movement. Although the democratic system of the United States did not allow for an authoritarian solution to city planning, it generated a uniform and monumental image of the capital, encapsulated in the redesign of the National Mall. With the addition of the Lincoln Memorial and several monumental federal buildings to this central corridor in the years following 1902, the McMillan Plan succeeded in strengthening the symbolism of the capital. In contrast, the simultaneity of opposing political forces in the German Empire and the lack of a political consensus prevented Berlin from charting a clear course in city planning. Here, several planning strategies were laid out in the 1908 competition but all of them

emphasized the achievements of civic culture and the importance of municipal functions; they did not invent a national architectonic iconography.

The theme of "Politics and Architecture" was further illuminated in the following session. Susanne Hauser compared Pennsylvania Avenue and Unter den Linden as the most representative avenues in Washington and Berlin, respectively. Her main concern was to analyze the "construction of symbolic space" through which city planners and politicians tried to create a historical continuity as part of an effort to control the public interpretation of national sites. Based on this semiotic approach, Hauser recapitulated the initiatives to redesign Pennsylvania Avenue, particularly since 1961. An early plan to construct a "national plaza" at the western end of Pennsylvania Avenue facing the White House, was reduced to the current Freedom Plaza. The powerful Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, created in 1972, referenced L'Enfant's ideas in an attempt to transform the avenue into the "main street of the nation." Like Washington planners, Berlin city planners of the 1990s made selective use of historical models in their effort to "critically reconstruct" the west end of Unter den Linden, including the Paris Square and the Brandenburg Gate. With the exception of the Academy of Arts, all parties owning land around the square adapted to a fixed scheme of reconstruction that omitted elements of urban vitality in favor of implicit or explicit - as in the case of the Hotel Adlon - references to the past.

Michael S. Cullen followed up on the interplay of politics, historical traditions, and architectural language in his paper on parliament buildings in Berlin and Washington. "Vive la différence," as Cullen put it: Washington has always had only one parliament building, the Capitol, the most visible building in the city, positively received by most Americans (and foreigners) and never seriously contested as an institution or in its symbolic power. Berlin presents a completely different picture. Nearly a dozen parliaments - federal, Prussian, provincial, and municipal - have congregated at the center of the city on the Spree, often accommodated in different kinds of structures. The most prominent of these, the Reichstag, designed by Paul Wallot and completed in 1894, remained an object of heated architectural and political controversy. Once again, the German case illustrates a much more fractured and contested national history.

The last session of the first day examined the dimensions of "Time and Space" beyond the parameters of architectural history. Martin H. Geyer used the discussion of prime meridians and the establishment of a national time as a mirror for the search for national identity and international cooperation during the nineteenth century. Geyer demonstrated that the fixing of geographical standards to measure distance and the quest for precise and coordinated clocks served symbolic purposes in order to establish or defend national prestige; both processes were bound to political, economic, and legal needs. In the case of the United States, the discussion over the creation of a national observatory and the establishment of an American meridian running through Washington - an "attribute of sovereignty," as James Monroe observed - started in the early nineteenth century but dragged on for

decades. Reservations about the power of federal structures decreased in the 1840s. But it was only after the Civil War that the then well-established Naval Observatory in Washington succeeded with its standardization policy, thanks to Western Union's cooperation. Whereas the United States never relied on bureaucratic state building, Germany pursued the opposite strategy and faced numerous obstacles in centralizing the measurement of time and space. Until the 1870s Berlin, the reference point for the Prussian meridian, was not yet recognized as a symbolic center of the German nation. Rather, economic reasoning - the needs of the railroad companies and others to set standards of precision not only as mathematical but also as social norms - helped establish precise clocks in Berlin. Geyer spoke of a "fetishism of precision" that also was adopted by the private sector. Toward the end of the century, and like in the United States, commercial interests undermined the association of time with state authority. Supported by the United States and Germany, but facing resistance from France, the movement to establish the Greenwich meridian as the universal standard finally succeeded. However, this achievement still left much room for subtle national interpretations. Furthermore, Geyer indicated that the different meanings of time synchronization for Berlin and Washington have their place in differing concepts of modernity. In Germany the idea of a "synchronization of the souls" and a mechanical understanding of nationhood gained momentum between 1900 and 1933.

In his talk Christof Mauch focused on the Berlin Tiergarten and the National Mall as the oldest landscaped gardens in these cities, both of them imbued with political meaning and perceived as places that represent certain national attributes through nature, sculpture, and architecture. Mauch pointed out that the Tiergarten has always maintained a delicate balance between political usage, that is, through royal banquets or the erection of monuments dedicated to Prussian heroes, and an unauthorized, spontaneous use by the local population. In fact, Berliners never entirely subscribed to the sacred meaning of this garden as a showcase for the nation; instead, they integrated the Tiergarten into their everyday life. In contrast, the Mall in Washington remained unattractive to the urban population until the mid-nineteenth century. The McMillan Plan marked the most important step in the process of turning the Mall into a unified vision for the nation. Public buildings and museums created a strict formal composition that underscored the Mall's meaning as a petrified celebration of American history. Mauch argued that its new grand design primarily created sanctity and aimed at preserving the illusion of permanence. The National Mall thereby detached itself from the vitality - and the problems and conflicts - of the surrounding urban reality.

Issues of "Politics of Memory and National Identities" remained on the agenda when the conference group reconvened on day two. In the first morning session Janet Ward spoke on the "Architecture of Holocaust Memory" in Berlin and Washington. The opening of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1993 established a permanent site for the memorialization of the Holocaust, didactically arranged and immensely successful in drawing visitors from all over the world. In contrast, it has taken Berlin decades for plans to remember the Holocaust within a

specific architectural setting. Ward touched on the ongoing and highly controversial discussions of the Holocaust memorial in central Berlin, next to Paris Square. She criticized the "monstrous monumentality" of the latest designs and the surrounding spirit of boosterism and nostalgic reconstruction being pursued by city planners. Ward suggested substituting Daniel Liebeskind's new Jewish Museum for a yet-to-be-constructed Holocaust memorial. Liebeskind's architecture has already been accepted by the public, reflecting the fractured and heterogeneous nature of urban memory and emphasizing "voids" of imagination. The question of whether the - still empty - museum can and should be interpreted as a Holocaust memorial and, as such, might conflate Jewish history and Holocaust remembrance, stirred up a particularly lively discussion.

Dietmar Schirmer addressed the intricate questions of how buildings adopt meaning and become part of national narratives. He argued that the historical development leading toward nation building is marked by a dialectics of disembedding and re-embedding. According to Schirmer's model, the nation can assume a crucial role in the latter process by recreating social meaning and coherence. Architecture provides one symbolic re-embedding mode by creating commemorative structures and national mythologies, a role it has fulfilled increasingly since 1800. Schirmer emphasized that architectural forms per se cannot be assigned to specific political systems; instead, the self-definition of nation-states and their specific political histories influence the construction of homologies between architecture and national peculiarities. In the case of the United States, the monumental design of Washington, particularly in the wake of the McMillan Plan, reflects the existence of a dominating narrative of American history, marked by continuity and consensus. With the exception of the Vietnam War era, this narrative is unbroken and leaves few doubts about the democratic trajectories of the nation. Consequently, classicism could serve Washington as the appropriate and lasting architectural form, corresponding to the idea of democratic-republican order. In contrast, there have been several, and always contested narratives of German history during the past two hundred years. This contention has contributed to the plurality of architectural styles chosen to represent the nation. The strong elements of discontinuity and conflict about the ultimate interpretation of the nation's purpose made it nearly impossible after the Nazi era to return to the language of classicism in Germany, a formal repertoire that was greatly distorted by the Third Reich.

Douglas Klahr discussed a different sort of monumentality. He compared the architectural history of the grand hotels in Berlin and Washington between 1875 and the early twentieth century. Specific traditions of housing and hotel management as well as the distinct character of both cities contributed to different concepts of how to structure space in hotels and define their public functions. Washington compensated for its lack of commercial activity with the hegemonic presence of the federal government and the specific American tradition of residential hotels. Washington hotels, such as the Willard, often accommodated political organizations and offered considerable space for public life, thereby

mixing private and public spaces on their ground level. Urban peculiarities, such as the low density of buildings and the generous scale of streets allowed for free-standing hotels, monumental buildings that served as landmarks for the capital's social life. Not so in Berlin. Klahr pointed to such famous examples as the Adlon and the Kaiserhof to show that Berlin's grand hotels were restricted in their architectural and public functions. They had to cope with the limits of a high building density and generally refrained from opening the ground level to the public. Social spaces tended to be grouped around elements of nature within the buildings, such as a wintergarden or a palm court. Nevertheless, Berlin hotels took on some American features after 1900; for example, they integrated street-side bars and expansive lobbies.

Like hotels, railway stations are transitory places through which people enter and leave cities. As portals to a capital, they also are designed to convey a message about that central city. In their joint paper on railway stations as "Capital Gateways," Christian F. Otto and Roberta M. Moudry referred back to the city planning ideas that left an imprint on both Berlin and Washington during the first decade of the nineteenth century. Washington's monumental Union Station was its only railway station. Its aesthetic design expressed the concepts of the City Beautiful movement and became part of the new classicist design for the area around the National Mall. Berlin had numerous railway stations, and these did not follow a common design. However, most were seen as reception halls that underscored the moment of arrival. With their tracks driving through densely built urban areas, the Berlin stations expressed an aesthetics of motion that differed from the static character of Union Station, which emphasized its façade and concealed the station's operations.

The next session investigated those functions of capitals that link them to their regional, national, and even international surroundings. Because he was unable to attend the conference in person, Carl Abbott's paper on "National Capitals in a Networked World" was read to the audience. Abbott began by revisiting known theories about the character of international cities. The concept of "world" or "global cities" has gained particular prominence in recent years; it concentrates on the control functions of capital elites, based on the availability of telecommunications. Abbott took the deficiencies of this model as the starting point to lay out a different kind of concept, that of "international cities." This concept takes the functions of cities within a region or nation and their historical endowments into consideration and can be based on a typological differentiation between production, gateway, and transactional cities.

Against this background Abbott took a fresh look at Washington and Berlin. Since the late nineteenth century, according to Abbott, both cities have developed into transactional cities. Although they originally lacked attributes of cosmopolitanism, Berlin and Washington succeeded in becoming centers of policymaking and information technology, especially Washington. Moreover, both cities developed into intellectual and cultural centers, even if ideas were imported rather than self-

produced. Stephen S. Fuller strengthened this line of argumentation with his comments on the evolution of Washington's economy. In particular, he showed that the recent economic boom and the rise of communication networks, including the immense growth of Dulles International Airport, have turned Washington into a truly national and international hub.

Complementing this aspect about how capitals relate to their environment, Ralf Roth combined economic, social, and cultural perspectives to assess the role of railroads in Berlin between the late 1830s and World War I. Roth demonstrated that the fundamental functions of railroad traffic through Berlin - the transport of people as well as goods, such as coal from Silesia and industrial products from western Germany - responded to urgent social and economic needs. Railroads facilitated the migration from the East, turning Berlin into a huge human port of call. In addition, railroads were seen as a means to develop surrounding regions and turn them into an outlet for the crowded inner city districts. Railroads also helped stimulate commercial interests and paved the way for a rise in tourism to the Baltic Sea, to Scandinavia, and to southern Germany and beyond. At the same time, Roth argued, railroads became an embodiment of the perils of modernity - they provoked cultural criticism and reinforced a general uneasiness with the pace and disorder of big city life.

An examination of the national and international connectedness of capitals gives rise to the question of who rules and administers these cities. Wolfgang Ribbe, the current doyen of Berlin historians, and Alan H. Lessoff gave their respective answers - and revealed a surprising similarity between Berlin and Washington: Both cities have been deprived of essential rights of self-government during large segments of their history. Ribbe reminded the audience of Berlin's dual origin, going back to the settlements of medieval Berlin and Cölln becoming a princely residence of a sovereign only in the fifteenth century. From that point forward and even throughout the time of municipal reform and urban growth during the nineteenth century, Berliners were deprived of many aspects of self-government. Even when Berlin became the capital of the second German Empire, its self-administration remained more restricted than in other German cities. The drive to create a strong, independent, and unified city administration following the creation of Greater Berlin in 1920 was soon curtailed and then reversed by the Nazis. Following Allied four-power control and the division of the city into two ideological halves, it was only with German unification that democratization finally arrived.

Lessoff concentrated on the history of Washington between the Civil War and the end of World War II. These years mark an era of decisive demographic growth and urban transformation for the American capital. Federal activity increased dramatically and the city's infrastructure and public functions - in part due to the efforts of the protean figure of Alexander R. Sheperd - raised Washington to the level of a modern big city. Differing from the metropolitan setting of Berlin, however, this dynamic growth relied almost exclusively on state support instead of

being fed by industrial and cultural competition in the region. The most significant feature of Washington, as Lessoff underscored, was the denial of representation in Congress and the abolition of local self-government. Only between 1871 and 1874, a mere three years, did the city govern itself. Congressional oversight blocked African Americans from participating in local politics and generated a patchwork system of commissions, relying on Congress's largesse, which benefited the white city elite for decades.

At the end of a long conference day, Walter Erhart reported on "National Images and Capital Topography in Travel Literature." Cities can be and are read like books: Erhart took this approach to analyze the perceptions of German travelers to Washington during the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, and those of Americans visiting Berlin during the same time. Surprisingly, both cities left parallel impressions on their respective visitors. They generated disappointment because the gap between capital ambitions and their actual realization seemed painfully obvious. The signs - in Erhart's reference to the language of semiotics - of Berlin and Washington did not live up to their intended meanings. This perception, however, led to different aesthetic judgments. Whereas visitors to Washington sought refuge in the terminology of the sublime to indicate that the American capital represented a meaning beyond mere appearance, Berlin provoked a rather ironic and satirical language. By 1900 Berlin assumed a new character. As a contemporary observer noted, "Athens on the Spree" had turned into "Chicago on the Spree," with its manifestations of modern life and hectic urban pace associated with American cities. This Americanization of Berlin's image made the German capital increasingly unreadable, and the city's significance as a national capital was obscured. In contrast, Washington began to embody qualities that reminded visitors of European cities and made it easier for them to decode its inherent symbolism: The center of the city on the Potomac lost its "American tempo" and assumed a well-structured and aesthetically appealing design as if from the drawing board.

The last day of the conference focused on the social reality of Berlin and Washington. Accordingly, the first session dealt with "Protest and the Display of Discontent." Lucy Barber showed how physical space matters when it comes to turning the capital into a stage for demonstration. Barber analyzed the various marches on Washington from 1894 to the present and the creation of "national public spaces" as a result of these various protest movements. From the late nineteenth century onward the pledge of the Founding Fathers to keep the federal government free of outside pressure and secure the capital as a place, detached from social, and political problems, proved untenable. Coxey's Army of 1894, driven by populist demands, the parade of the women's suffrage movement in 1913, the protests of World War I veterans for benefits in 1932, and the presence of the NAACP in Downtown Washington, all claimed the area around the National Mall and the Capitol Building as backdrops for their agenda. Their efforts clashed with the federal and local authorities' claim for control and triggered a lasting process of negotiation for the creation of and access to relevant urban spaces for the public. The 1963 March on Washington, culminating in Martin Luther King's famous "I

Have a Dream" speech, undoubtedly marked a high point in the establishment of tactics for attracting public attention to protest actions and singled out the Capitol and the Mall for that purpose. From now on and reinforced by the Vietnam War protests, the Mall developed into a space that is perceived as a national forum, serving the public, where issues of relevance to the entire nation are addressed - war, race relations, and AIDS.

Berlin did not create a Mall-like political space in the twentieth century. But the city gave special meaning to "the street" as a place of public protest and political unrest, viewed by the state as a serious challenge to its authority. Belinda Davis elaborated on this topic in a broad treatment of everyday street protest from the pre-1848 period to the present. Davis pointed out that no other German city showed a comparable and continuous proclivity for unrest and spontaneous street protest with the concomitant aggressive exercise of governmental power. State and municipal authorities always tended to interpret street unrest as a political threat. During World War I broad press coverage of hunger protests helped dramatize everyday politics and communicate the government's lack of authority to a national audience. Political violence during the Weimar Republic and even protests against Nazi proclamations and laws after 1933 - as exemplified by the Rosenstraße protest of women married to Jewish husbands - materialized in the streets of Berlin.

That the urban reality of both Berlin and Washington has been marked by a presence of different ethnic groups and by conflict, based on racial thinking, became finally clear in the last session of the conference. Howard Gillette Jr. underscored the centrality of race for Washington, which has influenced changing city administrations, the capital's profile, and the nation's identity. The denial of congressional representation to the District of Columbia has affected African Americans - the majority population since the 1940s - more than any other group. In the 1980s Mayor Marion Barry sought to reverse past deferential behavior on the part of blacks by asserting legitimate claims for respect and power for the African-American population.

In the conference's final presentation Robert Garris made it clear that although Berlin has been perceived as a metropolis populated by immigrants since the late nineteenth century, it has, in fact, maintained a relatively low level of immigrants. Nevertheless, this population has suffered discrimination, in particular from the definition of German nationality, based on ancestry rather than place of birth.

The chairs of each session contributed much to the pleasant and productive atmosphere at the conference. Their enthusiasm for the topics, their probing questions, and their insightful comments ensured its success. We would like to extend our thanks to Celia Applegate, Marion F. Deshmukh, Steven J. Diner, Cynthia R. Field, Barbara Franco, Peter Jelavich, Jane F. Levey, Richard Longstreth, Uta Poiger, and Nathan Stoltzfus.

The conference with its numerous visual presentations, through the use of slides and overheads, took its participants on a fascinating journey through the history and streetscapes, architecture and maps of the German and American capitals. At the same time, its vivid and congenial discussions went beyond the tale of two cities. The conference raised questions about the construction of a democratic public sphere, the visualization of power, and the degree to which a seat of government can transform the character and identity of a city and its historical consciousness.

Andreas W. Daum

Christof Mauch

Writing World History, 1800-2000

Conference held at the GHI, London, March 30-April 1, 2000. Conveners: Eckhardt Fuchs (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin) and Benedikt Stuchtey (GHI London). Participants: Michael Adas (Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick), Jerry H. Bentley (University of Honolulu), Michael J. Bentley (University of St. Andrews), Thomas Bohn (University of Jena), Sebastian Conrad (Free University of Berlin), Arif Dirlik (Duke University), Vinay Lal (University of California at Los Angeles), Ricardo K.S. Mak (Hong Kong Baptist University), Jochen Meissner (University of Hamburg), Mauro Moretti (University of Pisa), Patrick O'Brien (University of London), Jürgen Osterhammel (University of Konstanz), Roxann Prazniack (Hampden-Sydney College), Lutz Raphael (University of Trier), Hagen Schulze (Free University of Berlin), Julia A. Thomas (University of Wisconsin at Madison), Eduardo Tortarolo (University of Turin), Peter Wende (GHI London).

The German Historical Institutes in London and Washington invited practitioners and theoreticians of world historiography to a three-day conference in order to discuss, in international comparison, the discipline's past traditions as well as present and future direction. The conference followed a meeting in Washington in October 1997, where we investigated the professionalization of the historical sciences as well as the possibilities and limits of intellectual scholarly exchange and transfer. (See the conference report in the *Bulletin*, issue no. 21, Fall 1997, pp. 27-30.) As was the case in Washington, the London meeting aimed to trace the development of academic history in international perspective, whereby emphasis was placed especially on non-European examples. Of course, the conference could not claim to have covered each and every tradition, and for that reason only a small yet representative selection of European and non-European historiographies were chosen: Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the United States. The conference ended with papers on contemporary debates and research emphases in world history writing, followed by a discussion of the central question of whether and how world history can be written at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

After words of welcome by Peter Wende, the director of the GHI London, Benedikt Stuchtey presented his concept of the meeting and several general tendencies in the writing of world history, past and present. In his introduction Stuchtey pointed out the differences between the terms *world history*, *global history*, *total history*, and *universal history*. He also addressed the question of the connection between world history, on the one hand, and local, regional, and national histories, on the other. Is the historical discipline in danger of fragmenting further, or will world history help prevent this? Already in the 1980s the renowned historian William McNeill argued that world history writing - in its goals and methods - should not differentiate itself from other types of history writing. When the French *Annales* school recognized the arbitrariness of chronological and regional borders of traditional historiography, it unintentionally created the important fundamentals of modern world history writing. Naturally, the problem of the unevenness of what we know remains: Is it even possible to write a comprehensive world history as long as the Western world is substantially better researched than the non-Western world? What are the possibilities, and the limits, of a comparison?

The conference was divided into two chronological units, 1800 to 1945 and 1945 to the present, and two geographic units, a comparison of Europe with non-European countries. In the nineteenth centuy, universal history was understood as the history of the development of European civilization, economic primacy, and imperial expansion. Taking the example of Italy, Mauro Moretti presented the works and debates of leading Italian historians, concentrating in particular on Cesare Cant□ (1804-95) and his "Storia Universale" in thirty-five volumes (published between 1838 and 1846). Despite great interest in the national question and the rise of the Italian nation-state, the writing of world history, especially influenced by German works, played a not unimportant role in nineteenth-century Italy. However, Cant□'s concept of "history" remained conventional because he limited himself to describing the European and Christian West, and understood universal history exclusively as the history of Christendom.

In his investigation of world history writing in Czarist Russia and the Soviet Union, Thomas Bohn came to the conclusion that in his example the political function of historiography could be discerned: Russia's place in Europe, the tense relations between backward-looking and modernizing forces, society and the states, between academic works and popular syntheses, traditional and modern, interdisciplinary methods, and finally between Eurocentric models, on the one hand, and the construction of a patriotic Russian *Sonderweg* (special path), on the other. Russian and Soviet concepts of world history depended to a great extent on how the country defined its position between its colonial periphery and Europe, and the emancipation from the influence of German historicism and Hegelianism. Nevertheless, the official Marxist-Leninist history of the world in ten volumes (1955-65) was grounded in the classic European viewpoint, even if its motifs, such as the class struggle, were used as scaffolding.

Eckhardt Fuchs shed light on the three traditions of world history writing in Germany since the end of the eighteenth century: the universal and cosmopolitan perspective; world history starting with Europe; and history with the idea of the nation at its center. In the second half of his talk Fuchs spoke about the problems of writing a transcultural and transnational history of historiography. Beginning with recent debates on Eurocentrism and postcolonialism he enumerated the theoretical and methodological problems confronting the writing of universal history. From an epistemological point of view he appealed for a "soft" Eurocentrism as a possibility, in self-critical reflection and via transcultural comparison and transfer, for embarking on new ways of writing the history of history.

In her contribution on Japan, Julia A. Thomas tendered the thesis that world history writing in Japan above all served the purpose not of understanding the Other, that is the non-Japanese world, but rather the self-understanding and self-definition of Japan itself. From the Tokugawa Period (after 1600) to the post-World War II era Japanese world history writing was marked by anxiety and insecurity in dealing with the country's national identity; the critical engagement with the world outside Japan primarily served the function of a critical engagement of Japanese with themselves.

Ricardo K. S. Mak remarked that Chinese ideas about the world outside of China experienced a watershed during the time of the Opium Wars. The wall separating China from the outside world that existed in the first half of the nineteenth century, in spite of trade with Southeast Asia and the influence of Western science, slowly gave way after 1842 to Chinese intellectuals opening up to the West and attempting to redefine China's place in the world. Whereas the first generation of these intellectuals still believed in the possibility of a Chinese exceptionalism that was independent of the outside world, the second generation recognized the shortcomings of Chinese civilization and strove for a partial integration into world society. Furthermore, in the age of imperialism social Darwinism played a decisive role in the perception of the country and its relations to other nations.

As Vinay Lal reported in his paper, India found itself in an area of conflict between Western colonialism and the beginnings of political emancipation. This situation produced its concept of world history, such as that of India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. Yet, according to Lal, despite the multicultural and transnational collaboration within the scholarly community, there can be no talk of having overcome the Eurocentrism - that is, the western European and American perspective - that dominates world history writing. Few studies of world history use a genuinely comparative approach, and the current discourse on globalization still has a unified concept of the world, which does not take seriously the manifold possibilities for interpretation.

In the same session Jochen Meissner called into question the Eurocentric focus of universal history using the example of the Brazilian historian Gilberto Freyre. Meissner discussed Freyre's book *Casa grande e senzala* (1933), which does not

attribute Brazil's miserable conditions and putative powerlessness to reach the level of development of other countries to the usual racism but rather to societal ills. When the book was published, it was widely cited by Fernand Braudel and Thomas Mann, which led to twenty-five printings. Freyre had studied with Franz Boas, among others, and had taken an interest in anthropological and transcultural issues.

Tracing the development of Japanese world history after 1945, Sebastian Conrad articulated how much Japan tried to define its position between Asia and Europe, that is, between Asian and Western history. World history was popular and was firmly anchored in school curricula. It had the function of connecting Japan's past to a universal history. Whereas in the immediate postwar period Japan tended to understand itself as part of the West within the concept of modernization, then in the 1960s to see itself again closer to the Asian world order, in the 1990s the country rediscovered and valued positively the period of national isolation (1603-1853), which is associated with pride in the nation and a vision of a peaceful, nonexpansionist society. Thus, support for isolationist politics can be viewed as a consequence of Japan's position in world history.

Lutz Raphael elucidated the theory and practice of world historiography by the *Annales* school. He began by discussing Henri Berr's famous "L'evolution de l'humanité" project and then by talking about Lucien Febvre's and Marc Bloch's concepts of world history. Of special importance is the role played by Fernand Braudel, whose book *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* has become an undisputed class of historiography. Braudel's program, which breaks down into an immutable geographic period, the "long durée" of social and demographic period, and then the short duration of events, however, was never adopted by the *Annales*. The Sixth Section of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, the *Annales* school's institutional base, was of extraordinary importance.

The two great figures of German world historiography are without doubt Karl Marx and Max Weber. They functioned as key figures in Patrick O'Brien's reflections on "The Global History of Material Progress." O'Brien proposed a few parameters for the study of the universal history of economic growth and systematically investigated by means of a chronological outline the economic conditions from Adam Smith, Marx, and Weber to the World System School and Brenner. The second half of his talk compared European with Asian developments with regard to technologies, techniques, processes, and management of the means of production from 1368 to 1815.

The last panel of the conference dealt with the tasks and problems of present and future world history writing. In his paper Jerry H. Bentley focused on the connection between "World History and Grand Narrative." Bentley appealed for the drafting of a world history that divorces itself from the Eurocentric model based on the Enlightenment and strives for the integration of individual societies into a global dynamic. As support for this proposal he sketched three historical "realities" that were common to all human societies and that would create world history

through their contextualization, in contrast to the existing teleologies based on supremacy and domination: population growth, constantly improving technical possibilities, and increasing transcultural relations are of decisive importance for the development of the world as a whole.

In his paper Michael Adas emphasized that from a global perspective, however, it would be very difficult to write a "grand narrative" without the exceptionalism of the American past. The experience of the former settler society, to have achieved global hegemony, is essential for a better understanding of world historical problems and especially those of the twentieth century. Important preconditions herein again would be historical comparison as well as the ascertaining of common experiences, for example, the frontier and the influence of scientific and technological change. Adas also indicated that world history has only relatively recently found acceptance, following the gradual relaxation of the domination of the specialized disciplines.

In the last contribution to the conference Arif Dirlik raised the problem of current world history writing, seeking its justification and meaning in light of the fact that world history essentially reflects "world making" and still cannot free itself from the ruling Eurocentrism. Dirlik warned against the tendency to privilege world history vis-à-vis other types of history writing, to proceed positivistically in practice, and to do nothing but gloss over the triumph of Western-imprinted globalization.

This tension between arguments for and against writing world history continued in the final discussion. To begin with, Jürgen Osterhammel summarized the five central problems: the development of criteria for problems related to world history; the question of "good" or "bad" world history; its intellectual as well as institutional premises; the questions of whether comparative history is the same as world history, and whether space and time are the units of world history. These criteria were taken up once again during the discussion of individual papers. Thus, participants debated the example of British historiography's astounding lack of world history. The importance of the history of philosophy, as well as the difference between a profession focusing on national histories and amateur historians, who also study world history, have been as thematized as the problem of Eurocentrism in current world history writing. The societal and economic relevance of world history was then underscored, which makes clear conceptual definitions necessary, for example, the differences between "culture" and "cultural." The study of the history of "civilization" also has encountered criticism ever since Edward Said's critique of "orientalism" in Western scholarship. In fact, an academic subfield has been created to deal with this issue. As Michael Geyer and Charles Bright already wrote in their essay in the *American Historical Review* (1995), modern world history writing has not yet freed itself from Western stereotypes. Reorienting the field would create numerous theoretical and practical questions and affirm its potential. The conveners plan to publish the results of the conference.

Eckhardt Fuchs

Benedikt Stuchtey

Cultivated Nature: Gardens, Parks, and Playgrounds

Panel held at the Biennial Conference of the European Association of American Studies (EAAS) in Graz, Austria, April 15, 2000. Co-sponsored by the GHI. Chairs: Robert Lewis (University of Birmingham) and Bernard Mergen (George Washington University). Participants: Teresa Botelho (University of Lisbon), Pere Gallardo-Torrano (University of Lleida), Marcus Hall (Swiss Federal Institute of Forest, Snow, and Landscape Research), Susanne Hauser (Humboldt University of Berlin), Abby Arthur Johnson (Georgetown University), Ronald Johnson (Georgetown University), Christof Mauch (GHI), Eric J. Sandeen (Odense University, Denmark; University of Wyoming).

Interest in planned and designed landscapes is relatively new. In Europe it was sparked by Renaissance discoveries of architectural landscape drawings from antiquity, in the United States by nineteenth-century nationalism and romanticism. In general, the inspiration to save, cultivate, and design nature grew out of Transcendentalist art and literature, and merged with the interest of city planners to create safe and "wholesome" spaces. The first American landscape parks provided rural scenery, formal promenades, and a relaxing naturalistic environment. But as the century progressed the public no longer found such parks sufficient for recreation. People demanded entertainment, organized activity, and, above all else, variety. The playground movement was a result of intense urban growth and crowded, unsanitary housing. Amusement parks were designed as highly specialized recreational landscapes that provided novel and technologically innovative experiences for the entire family. Social and recreational needs were often at the core of American landscape design.

Another force that brought changes to urban and rural landscapes was environmentalism. The environmental ideal shaped American ideas about the (suburban) garden as an oasis of untouched nature, it helped create national parks throughout the United States, and it led, most recently, to the transformation of former industrial sites into landscaped parks and museums.

A full-day panel at this year's EAAS conference on "Nature's Nation Reconsidered: American Concepts of Nature from Wonder to Ecological Crisis" devoted itself to the study of urban and nature parks in the United States. The papers and discussions offered insights into a rapidly expanding field of historical research and called for the reconceptualization of traditional ideas about our natural and cultural environment. In his paper on the Great Teton National Park, Eric J. Sandeen, for example, called attention to the historic, human landscape that was superimposed on the natural one. Every year over 3.5 million visitors come to admire the Teton

peaks from the Snake River plateau, unaware that John D. Rockefeller assembled the land precisely so that this view would be given to the American people - a virtual, commodified wilderness promenade. In Sandeen's opinion, the Great Teton National Park is a thoroughly cultural landscape, inscribed with the values and tensions of contemporary American culture.

In their presentation on the Congressional Cemetery in Washington, D.C., Abby Arthur Johnson and Ronald Johnson interpreted "America's first national cemetery" as a "garden." They showed that this cemetery, which functioned as the burying ground for presidents, senators, congressmen, and other leading citizens of the nation, not only played an important role in shaping national burial customs and forms of memorializing but also emerged as part of a larger effort to incorporate garden concepts into the design and setting of American parks and cemeteries. In his paper on the National Mall in Washington, Christof Mauch discussed the different functions of this "public garden" over the centuries. He found that the planners of the American capital city intended to design a public space that was devoid of all facilities aimed at turning the Mall into a national playground or recreation center. Interestingly, however, and despite these intentions, the Mall became both a theme park - with its carousel, fairs, and many museums - and a popular place for athletic recreation and competitions. In a presentation entitled "Our Own Bit of Green," Teresa Betelho examined private yards and spaces. In particular, she traced the history of gardens in American suburbs, from the "private fantasy and caprice" where one could "withdraw like a monk and live like a prince"(Lewis Mumford), to the uninspiring manicured front lawns of the 1950s housing development. She argued that the new home-owning middle class invested all its creativity in the interior decoration of their mass-produced homes while passively accepting strict regulation of their front yards, imposed by developers.

Whereas nature parks, cemeteries, city parks, and suburban yards were created to avoid any suggestion of work or productivity, more and more parks in the United States are the result of a transformation of (industrial) workplaces into new types of parks and historic sites. Susanne Hauser explored the ways in which designers have attempted to bury the industrial past of former brownfields and wastelands, and created "aesthetic post-industrial landscapes" in their stead. Pere Gallardo-Torrano discussed another genre of park that combines elements of nature and technology: the theme park. She argued that sites such as Disneyland are reminiscent of cinematic universes that have produced utopian micro worlds of technological sophistication, environmental awareness, and consumer euphoria. Finally, in a paper on "American Histories and Restored Pasts," Marcus Hall reminded the audience that there are distinct differences between the American and European perceptions of nature. He claimed that in the American mind, ideal wilderness has no human history; whereas in the European mind, ideal cultural landscapes have very long human histories. While restoring nature, Europeans appear to be creating historic landscapes, whereas Americans are re-creating ahistoric landscapes - with widely differing consequences for the land.

The broad range of issues addressed in this panel, attracted a diverse audience from different countries and disciplines. The lively discussion showed that a focus on cultivated nature - parks and gardens - may serve as a prism to look at broader questions such as human interaction with the environment, human values concerning urban and natural landscapes, the effect of technology, and the social and economic role of design.

Christof Mauch

Witnessing the Third Reich: Diaries, Memoirs, Memories

Workshop at the GHI, June 5, 2000. Conveners and moderators: Christof Mauch (GHI), Christine von Oertzen (GHI & Technical University of Berlin). Participants: Susanne zur Nieden (Technical University of Berlin); Brewster Chamberlin (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum); Frank Stern (Georgetown University and Ben Gurion University of the Negev); and Freya von Moltke (Norwich, Vermont). Co-sponsored by the Friends of the GHI.

Scholarly investigations using diaries, journals, and letters as well as testimonials of contemporaries have produced what Jay Winter calls the "memory boom at the end of the twentieth century" (see his essay in this issue of the *Bulletin*). The translation into English in the 1990s of two important works by eyewitnesses on the resistance to and persecution by the Nazis - Viktor Klemperer's diaries and a collection of letters between Freya von Moltke and her husband, Helmut James Graf von Moltke - prompted the GHI to bring together scholars and a prominent contemporary eyewitness for an extended conversation. (Victor Klemperer, *I Will Bear Witness: The Diaries of Victor Klemperer*, 1st American ed. New York: Random House, 1988; Count Helmuth James von Moltke, *Letters to Freya, 1939-1945*. 1st American ed. New York: Knopf, 1990.) The aim of this one-day workshop was to spend an afternoon reflecting on the place of "memory" and "witnessing" in our understanding of the Third Reich. Although National Socialism and the Holocaust have been extensively studied, participants in the workshop hoped to gain new insights by examining memory and eyewitness reports.

When the first part of Klemperer's diary was published in Germany in 1995, even those who had read the literature, followed the debates, and watched the movies were gripped by what was more than a personal journal. In Klemperer's words, this was "a record of the everyday life of tyranny." It was immediately hailed as the most comprehensive account of the Jewish experience during the Third Reich. When reading Klemperer's diaries we hear, it seems, "an authentic voice." It is a voice that "speaks out in fear of persecution, repression, and terror." Born in 1881, the son of a well-known Reform rabbi, Klemperer converted to Protestantism and grew up to become a professor of Romance languages in Dresden. Recording his thoughts and feelings in his diary during the 1930s and 1940s gave him strength and sanity: "I shall go on writing," he wrote in May 1942, "that is my heroism."

The historian and literary scholar Susanne zur Nieden began the first session of the workshop by reviewing the literary and historical context of Klemperer's diaries. Zur Nieden reminded us that Klemperer lived in an era when educated people kept a record of daily life. Although the diaries were not initially addressed to an audience, Klemperer - in the course of his exclusion from German society and later persecution - became a chronicler of the daily terrors of Nazi Germany. Through his attempts to connect the personal and the social Klemperer discovered the power of language as a means of constructing social reality and of self-definition: In his writings Klemperer maintained his identity, defining himself as a "true German." Zur Nieden characterized Klemperer's hesitation about publishing his diaries in the immediate postwar period as a true stroke of luck. Accordingly, the diaries appeared, first in German then in other languages, shorn of the burdens and revisions of postwar memory. This is in no small measure part of the explanation for their widespread appeal today.

Brewster Chamberlin presented an overview of the American reception to the diaries and wondered whether the American publisher will be able to recoup the costs of the translation rights. Chamberlin did indicate that the work has gained significant attention in the United States. Unlike Germans, however, American reviewers of the diaries have registered a clear sense of ambivalence. Although reviewers have acknowledged the importance of the more than 2,000-page record in detailing life under National Socialism, Americans are less willing to embrace Klemperer as a Jewish spokesperson. Chamberlin found little sympathy for Klemperer's virulent anti-Zionism, in particular the author's equation of Zionism, communism, and National Socialism. In the same vein, he has observed a disconcertedness with Klemperer's insistence on his identity as a German, his decision not to emigrate, and his refusal to see himself as belonging to a minority community of Jews. Klemperer's American critics also have noted the diarist's narrow-mindedness, hypochondria, thoughtless willingness to endanger friends and neighbors, as well as repeated pejorative remarks about his wife. In stark contrast to their reception in Germany, the diaries appear to suggest to an American audience that there were more "Good Germans" than hitherto assumed. Different assumptions exist among readers on either side of the Atlantic concerning German society's role in the persecution of German Jews: Typically, German readers are more shocked at the extent of open discrimination and violence that Klemperer witnessed.

Frank Stern's presentation focused on the reception of the thirteen-part television series based on Victor Klemperer, which was first aired on German television in November 1999. Stern indicated that the film's director and producers - notwithstanding their claims to the contrary - took noteworthy liberties with the history as Klemperer recorded it in his diary. Stern showed how key elements of Klemperer's story became either sentimental kitsch or cheap attempts to recreate the long-lost German-Jewish symbiosis. Two examples illustrate Stern's point: In the series, Klemperer's last student - a young woman - takes her leave with a kiss. His postwar rehabilitation is at least equally melodramatic: The professor of

Romantic languages returns to the university to receive a hearty round of applause from his students. Neither event, Stern makes clear, has any basis in historical fact.

The workshop's second session was devoted to Freya von Moltke and her "memories of Kreisau," as well as her reasons for making her reminiscences publicly available (Freya von Moltke, *Erinnerungen an Kreisau 1930-1945*. Munich: C.H. Beck Verlag, 1997). The name "von Moltke" has two immediate associations for historians: Before the 1940s it evokes the name of Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke, a military hero of nineteenth-century Prussia. The second association is with that of Helmuth James Graf von Moltke, Freya's husband, who later represented the resistance of "Good Germans" to Hitler. The von Moltkes lived in Kreisau in the eastern Prussian province of Silesia, now part of Poland, in a castle from which they oversaw a thousand acres of land and forest. During the war the Kreisau estate became the meeting place of a group of anti-Nazi resisters, hence the name Kreisauer Circle. When the Nazis discovered the group, many were arrested; the Nazi state killed Helmuth James von Moltke in January 1945. His letters to Freya survived the war; she had hidden them in a beehive.

For von Moltke, writing - in this case letters, not diary entries - also was an act of heroism. Her belief and that of her husband that Hitler would bring about the defeat of Germany was seen by the Nazis as a treasonous act. In her conversation with Christof Mauch, von Moltke recalled memories of her youth in the Rheinland, her holidays in Austria, and her studies at Bonn University. Most of the conversation, however, focused on her life in Kreisau and on the resistance against Hitler. Moltke implored her listeners not to overvalue the importance of the Kreisauer Circle but rather to see it as it actually was: a series of important, if sporadic, discussions among a group of regime opponents from different political camps. At its core, "the Kreis" consisted of young, idealistic friends. Moltke's quick-wittedness, humor, and disarming self-confidence kept her audience in rapt attention. Toward the end of the evening, the audience began to ask their own questions; and after two hours of intense discussion in the GHI Lecture Hall, which was filled beyond capacity, the *grande dame* of the German resistance left the room to a standing ovation.

Christof Mauch

Christine von Oertzen

Ethnic Encounters and Identities: German, American, and African Perspectives

Conference held at the University of Leipzig, Germany, July 5-8, 2000. Sponsored by the GHI and the Fritz Thyssen Foundation. Conveners: Hartmut Keil (University of Leipzig) and Vera Lind (GHI). Presenters: Britta Behmer (University of Munich), Robin Blackburn (University of Essex), Carol Blackshire-Belay (Indiana State University), Benjamin Braude (Boston College), Annette Brauerhoch (Columbia University), George M. Fredrickson (Stanford University), Maria Hoehn (Vassar College), Russell Kazal (Beaver College), Egbert Klautke

(Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin), Andrea Mehrlaender (Stiftung Leucorea, Wittenberg), Martin Oefele (University of Leipzig), Heike Paul (University of Leipzig), Matthias Reiss (University of the Bundeswehr, Hamburg), Jeffrey L. Sammons (Yale University), Jeffrey T. Sammons (New York University), Timothy Schroer (University of Virginia), Jon F. Sensbach (University of Florida).

Growing interest in and new research on the relationships between Germans, German-Americans, and African Americans prompted the conveners to invite to Leipzig a distinguished group of scholars from Germany and the United States. In Germany today the debate over naturalization and citizenship reflects an increased awareness not only of ethnic diversity in contemporary German society but also of the historical developments of ethnocentrism, anti-Semitism, and racism. In the United States historians have stressed the issue of race relations in their research for well over a generation. In recent years many immigrant, labor, and cultural historians have attempted to overcome the limited perspective of concentrating on one ethnic group. They have instead looked at the importance of ethnicity and racism as general factors leading toward integration as well as separation in the creation of an ethnic American identity.

In his keynote address George M. Fredrickson portrayed racism as a relatively modern construct, with Jews and blacks as the principle victims. He argued for studying the two groups comparatively. Tracing the origins of anti-Semitism back to the fourteenth century and drawing comparisons between the exclusion of Jews with the enslavement of Africans, Fredrickson showed how white supremacy slowly developed as a dominating culture. He also stressed the close connection between civic/ethnic rationalism, democracy, and the cultural achievements of society, on the one hand, and the development of hierarchical rankings and white supremacy, on the other.

Russell Kazal opened the first session with a case study of the changing identities of German Catholic immigrants in Philadelphia in the nineteenth century. His paper looked at the connection of this process to the migration of blacks into the same neighborhoods. His microhistorical approach showed how the development of an American identity greatly depended on racial prejudice. In this process, ethnic categories changed to race categories, which allowed the integration of other white immigrant groups, but drew a heavy color line and excluded blacks. This development can be traced back to the early nineteenth century and to the other side of the Atlantic: Egbert Klautke pointed out the absence of references toward race in German *Amerikabücher*, information books on the New World. Like Americans, many Germans excluded blacks because they did not fit into their picture of this country as the center of modernity. Focusing on the view of a different social group of German immigrants toward African Americans, Hartmut Keil portrayed the antislavery efforts of many intellectual German immigrants of 1848 in the pre-Civil War era. From their most important communication medium, the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, it is clear, that they drew a distinction between slavery and race questions,

which led to their active support of abolitionism but reluctance to guarantee slaves civil rights.

Session Two again dealt with German immigrants and race issues but on a more individual level: Britta Behmer pointed out the contradictions in Ottilie Assing's newspaper articles against slavery, her relationship to Frederick Douglass, and her views on other social problems. Assing's abolitionist views were accompanied by harsh words for the suffrage movement and racism toward Douglass's wife. Martin Oefele analyzed the wartime diaries of two German officers serving in African-American units during the Civil War. These officers had empathy for the soldiers and tried to educate them, but they also complained about disciplinary and performance problems. Most notable is the absence of any reflection on the perspective of the black soldiers in the diaries. Andrea Mehrlaender was able to trace the view of an aristocratic female German immigrant toward race through family correspondence. For over a decade Louise von Seibold, who owned a plantation and slaves in the Mississippi Delta, completely adopted Southern stereotypes of blacks.

Session Three focused on images of blacks in nineteenth-century German popular literature. Heike Paul analyzed travel literature and showed that the discussion of general cultural contact rather than race dominated the narrative. This literature included criticism of slavery but also accepted it as part of the cultural landscape of the United States. Nineteenth-century German novels voiced a more diverse view: As Jeffrey L. Sammons pointed out, from Friedrich Gerstäcker to Karl May, these texts include utopian and Rousseauian views of blacks and antislavery remarks, as well as typical racist comments of the day.

Session Four examined modern perceptions of blacks. Benjamin Braude traced the Biblical story of the curse of Ham through its depiction over several centuries. Though the story was used early on to justify slavery, racial depictions of Ham are not to be found until the seventeenth century, and it is not until the middle of the the nineteenth century that Ham finally became black. Two papers focused on eighteenth-century German attitudes toward Africans on each side of the Atlantic. Vera Lind explored the topic of African Americans and Africans who served in the German military or worked as servants for the aristocracy. These blacks achieved a relatively high status and integration into German society, with baptism as the key "rite of passage" necessary for acceptance. But despite this acceptance, they could never escape the dependency on their sponsor's good will in this hierarchical society. Jon F. Sensbach concentrated on the attitude of early German immigrants in America toward slavery and pointed out their flexible, sometimes overlapping perception. Protests against slavery were followed by enslaving blacks, due to a shortage of German servants after the Seven Years' War. A significant influence on German immigrant attitudes toward blacks until the nineteenth century was the German-Moravian church, which attempted to Christianize blacks in North America. On a more general level, Robin Blackburn argued for a comparative study

of slavery in the Americas focusing on the enslavement of indigenous people by the Spanish in South America and Africans in North America.

Session Five included papers about black athletes at the 1936 Berlin Olympics and the search for identity of Afro-Germans today. Jeffrey T. Sammons stressed the important role African American participation in the Olympics played in equality and citizenship within American society. He focused on the famous myth that Hitler refused to shake Jesse Owens's hand after Owens had won his four gold medals. In fact, Hitler had simply gone home by the time Owens had won his events. The story did not put the Nazi side of the event into focus but instead served as a powerful myth of black performance and achievements. Carol Blackshire-Belay analyzed the living conditions of the 500,000 Afro-Germans in Germany and their quest for reclaiming their history and identity as black Germans. The lack of awareness among Germans of several generations of Afro-Germans has re-enforced stereotypes and racism among white Germans and confounded an already difficult struggle for identity among black Germans. The *Initiative Schwarzer Deutscher*, founded in 1986, is making an effort to change the situation, however.

In Session Six, Maria Hoehn showed what the factor "race" meant for the experience of the 30,000 black GIs, who served in Germany in the 1950s. From interviews she conducted with the ex-soldiers, an extremely positive image of their time in Germany emerged, dominated by experiences of liberation and more racial equality. Nonetheless, outbreaks of racial violence, in which German and American racism interacted, occurred and were regularly covered up by the U.S. military. Giving the German perspective from the other side of the Atlantic, Matthias Reiss concentrated on the complicated relationship between German prisoners of war and blacks in the segregated American South during World War II. Despite little contact between the two groups, German POWs noted the kind behavior of blacks toward them (quite contrary to Nazi propaganda), and how blacks viewed them as equals, since they were prisoners and did the work in the fields usually reserved for blacks. Germans also observed racism in American society, for example, when the U.S. Army decided not to use blacks as guards for POWs, and noted how this contradicted what the Americans taught them in their re-education program.

The last session brought up the topic of sex and race: The many relationships between German women and black American soldiers after World War II rarely received coverage by the German media, as Annette Brauerhoch pointed out. Moreover, on the rare occasion when these relationships were discussed, journalists and film makers relied on sexist and racist portrayals of these involved. Timothy Schroer analyzed the rhetoric of a conflict between German police and American military police in Bavaria involving the relationships of German women and black soldiers. He concluded that interracial sex was viewed as something dangerous and fearful for German society.

The conference ended with a roundtable discussion on the general concept of terms like "race" and "racism." It was proposed that scholars should drop the term "race"

from the research agenda, because it describes something that does not exist, and tends to separate rather than include groups of people. On the concept of "race" describing something physical opposed to "ethnicity" as a cultural concept, comparisons were drawn to the distinction between "sex" and "gender", in which "sex" is equally questioned as non-existent in reality. But the participants agreed on the importance of the term "racism," because it does describe reality in many societies. The importance of the interrelation between "racism" and "nationalism" was stressed, as well as the need for further research on the topic.

All in all, the conference brought together many scholars who are engaged in new, original research on blacks and Germans. The focus was therefore on discussing research results and the emergence of fascinating new details on encounters between Germans, Americans, Africans, and African Americans, rather than the evaluation of theoretical concepts. The papers cohered nicely, which allowed participants to refer repeatedly to the presentations of others. This stimulated thought-provoking and far-reaching discussions in this fairly new field of historical and literary inquiry. Leipzig, the beautifully restored eastern German city, added to the enjoyable atmosphere of the conference.

Vera Lind