

ARCHIVAL SUMMER SEMINAR IN GERMANY 2004

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Astrid M. Eckert

Participants and Their Projects

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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