

PREFACE

However much they might have in common, Berlin and New York look nothing alike. Germany's *Ruhrpott* and California's Orange County were both shaped by rapid industrial growth and the social change that followed, but these sprawling conurbations bear little resemblance to one another—and it's not just the weather that makes it impossible to confuse Bottrop, Gelsenkirchen, and Essen with Lakewood, Fullerton, and Anaheim. Why are the urban landscapes of Germany and the United States so different? For its Nineteenth Annual Lecture last November, the GHI invited two acclaimed scholars—Kenneth T. Jackson and Adelheid von Saldern—to grapple with this question. Urban history, as Jackson's and Saldern's masterful forays into comparative synthesis made clear, is a meeting point of many lines of historical inquiry as well as a promising point of departure for broader historical reflection. Explaining the diverging patterns of German and American urban development over the past half century ultimately requires trying to make sense of the deep-seated commonalities and fundamental differences that simultaneously link and divide the two countries. Some of the themes Jackson and Saldern touched upon were the focus of an international conference at the GHI three weeks later. "The Place of Nature in the City in Twentieth-Century Europe and North America," organized by former GHI postdoctoral fellows Dorothee Brantz and Sonja Dümpelmann, explored how notions of nature and humanity's place in it have influenced the evolution of cityscapes. A report by Profs. Brantz and Dümpelmann appears along with the texts of Prof. Jackson's lecture and Prof. von Saldern's comment in this issue of the *Bulletin*.

The interviews featured in this issue of the *Bulletin* provide a methodological complement to Jackson's and Saldern's reflections on the recent past. The directors of Germany's five largest non-degree-granting research institutes for contemporary history generously took the time to answer our questions about their institutes' work. Besides touching upon questions of organization and focus, the directors consider the broader political-cultural context in which the field of contemporary history has developed in Germany and the role it has come to play in German public life.

One way that the GHI has sought to engage the public in critical examination of the recent past has been to hold a symposium each year to mark Germany's national holiday, the *Tag der Deutschen Einheit*, on October 3. The first five symposia featured speakers who, as activists or officials, had played notable roles in the events leading up to German unification or in post-unification political life. In 2005, we shifted focus

from politics narrowly defined to the intersection of the political and the personal. Novelist Monika Maron has been a citizen of four Germanys. Born in Hitler's Third Reich, she moved as a child of ten with her family from Adenauer's Federal Republic to Ulbricht's German Democratic Republic. There, she grew up in comparatively privileged circumstances: her stepfather was the GDR's minister of the interior. That connection notwithstanding, however, her critical perspective prevented her novels from being published in the GDR. Maron moved west in 1988, and not long afterwards the old Bonn Republic gave way to the new unified Berlin Republic. At our 2005 October 3 symposium, Maron explored the ways that eastern Germans' experiences of the GDR have been remembered and characterized in the decade and a half since unification. We are delighted to present her comments here in the form of the essay "Historical Upheavals, Fractured Identities." The October 3 symposia, like many of the GHI's programs, are possible only as a result of the generous support we receive from a number of foundations and corporations. We are grateful to E.ON North America and the Gemeinnützige Hertie-Stiftung for helping us make October 3 an occasion not only for celebration but also for thought.

Special thanks are also due to the Annette Kade Charitable Trust and the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung for their continued support of a unique pair of fellowships. The late Jürgen Heideking was a true *Transatlantiker*. He made his mark as a scholar with a wide range of publications on German and American history, and he is also remembered with great affection by students and colleagues on both sides of the Atlantic. Following Heideking's untimely death in 2000, the GHI, with the help of Annette Kade Charitable Trust and the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung, established two fellowships in his memory. The Kade-Heideking Fellowship allows a German doctoral student in American history to spend a year in the United States. The Thyssen-Heideking Fellowship provides an American postdoc with a year for research and writing in Germany. The current Heideking Fellows, Mischa Honeck and Brian McCook, report on their projects in this issue of the *Bulletin*. In closing, let me note that the first book by a Heideking Fellow arrived from the publisher as we were going to press. A year's residence in the United States helped Kade-Heideking Fellow Markus Hünemörder polish his English skills to such an extent that he was able to write his University of Munich doctoral dissertation in English. The copy editor at Berghahn Books had little work when Hünemörder later submitted the manuscript of *The Society of the Cincinnati: Conspiracy and Distrust in Early America* for publication. The Revolutionary era was one of Jürgen Heideking's principal areas of interest, and Dr. Hünemörder's fine study is a worthy tribute to his memory.

Christof Mauch