

Preface

This issue of the *Bulletin* features a thematic *Forum* on “Rethinking Cross-Border Connections,” edited by three GHI research fellows – Andreas Greiner, Carolin Liebisch-Gümüş, and Mario Peters, who are pursuing research projects on mobility infrastructures in a global history perspective – in cooperation with Roland Wenzlhuemer. Their research reflects the fact that the German Historical Institute focuses not only on German, North American, and transatlantic history but has, for some time, also been supporting and conducting research in global history. The *Forum’s* examination of border crossing is also connected to the research program on the history of migration and mobility that has developed at the institute since 2015, and which grew out of the GHI’s longstanding engagement with the migration of German speakers to North America from the seventeenth century to the present.

As the guest editors’ introduction to the *Forum* explains in greater detail, the common theme of the *Forum’s* three feature articles – and the guest editors’ own research projects – is that they examine cross-border infrastructures not only with the aim of revealing increasing connectivity but pay equal attention to deficiencies, disruptions, and blockages in mobility, thereby providing a corrective to narratives of globalization that stress ever-increasing connections. The international team of junior scholars writing in this *Forum* explores this theme via three very different case studies: Andreas Guidi (Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, INALCO, Paris) examines cross-border mobility in interwar Europe through the figure of Carlos Fernandez Bacula, a diplomat involved in the drug trade, dubbed “Dope Ring Diplomat” by the tabloid press. Lars Kury (Institute for European Global Studies, Basel) analyzes the transformation of the Strait of Malacca into a global transit corridor in the second half of the nineteenth century. Charlotte Hoes

(University of Göttingen) investigates the complex cross-border network of the early twentieth-century international wildlife trade through the lens of a German animal trade company. The *Forum* concludes with an essay by the distinguished global historian Roland Wenzlhuemer (Munich Centre for Global History, Ludwig-Maximilians-University, Munich), in which he traces his own “journey from researching global connectivity to emphasizing elements of disconnection.”

This issue’s conference reports report on a series of conferences on different aspects of the history of mobility and migration – on child migration, information networks during and after the Holocaust, and the socio-spatial dynamics of mobility – but also reflect the wide spectrum of historical topics examined at GHI conferences: the connections between the history of anti-Semitism and the history of sexuality; the history of Utopian settlements; digital history; and the pursuit of science in conservative religious settings after 1945.

Please turn to our news section for recent GHI news. For up-to-date information on upcoming events (which are mostly taking place in person again), publications, fellowships, and calls for papers, please consult the GHI website at <http://www.ghi-dc.org>, check our twitter account at <https://twitter.com/GHIWashington> or sign up for our digital newsletter at <https://ghidc.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/ghidc/subscribe.jsp>. We look forward to welcoming you again in both Washington and Berkeley.

Simone Lässig (Director) and
Richard F. Wetzell (Editor)