Preface

This issue of the *Bulletin* showcases the variety of the German Historical Institute's academic programs, with articles on twentieth-century international history, early modern German history, Jewish history, and two articles reflecting on the field of German history and the historical profession. The first article, "After Life: The Legacy of Discontinued International Organizations in the Twentieth Century," presents the 38th Annual Lecture of the German Historical Institute, delivered in November 2024 by Kiran Klaus Patel, professor of modern history at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich. Examining the question "What happens when international organizations die?", Patel's lecture uses a case study of the dissolution of the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) in 1959/60 and its "rebirth" as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to examine the complex process by which an international organization that has outlived its original function can be simultaneously dissolved and transformed into a new international organization with a different set of tasks. In the postwar era, he argues, this kind of transformation was strongly influenced by the legacy of the League of Nations.

"On the Logic of Autocracy and the Plasticity of History: The Case of Frederick William I, King of Prussia" presents the Gerda Henkel Lecture, delivered at the GHI Pacific Office in Berkeley this past March by Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, professor emerita of early modern history at the University of Münster and rector of the Berlin Institute for Advanced Study. In this lecture, Stollberg-Rilinger, who is currently writing a biography of Frederick William I (1688-1740), examines the reign of Prussia's so-called "soldier king," who completely rejected the conventions of his time, in order to illuminate the logic of autocratic rule; and to investigate the

historiographical puzzle of how a monarch who, in the eyes of contemporaries, behaved like a classic tyrant was transformed into the king who taught the German nation true Prussianhood.

"The Power of Photobooks: Crafting (Jewish) History from Below" presents the research of Steven Weiss Samols, postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Cambridge, who won the 2024 Fritz Stern Dissertation Prize, awarded annually by the Friends of the German Historical Institute for the best dissertation in German history completed at a North American University. In this article, Samols explores the role of German-speaking Jews in developing the medium of the photobook. Through a remarkable series of case studies including photobooks on the Vienna Prater (1911), the Vilnius Ghetto (1931), the extermination of Polish Jews (1945), the failed journey of a refugee ship to Palestine (1948), and Freud's apartment in Vienna (1976), Samols examines how Jewish photographers, writers, and publishers used the medium of the photobook to craft a "history from below" that celebrated difference and outsider-status and sought to contest exclusion and antisemitism.

"The Challenge of German Histories: An American Retrospective," originally delivered as the 2024 Gerald D. Feldman Memorial Lecture at the GHI Washington by Konrad H. Jarausch, Lurcy Professor Emeritus of European Civilization at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, presents the distinguished historian's reflections on the state of German history, drawing on his six decades of research and teaching on both sides of the Atlantic. Beginning with an examination of indications of decline of the fields of German and European history in the United States, Jarausch goes on to provide a wide-ranging analysis of the historiography of modern Germany since 1945, concluding with a plea for historians of modern German history to engage with its "extraordinary diversity."

In our final article, former GHI Visiting Fellow Jürgen Dinkel, currently fellow at the DFG Heisenberg Program at the University of Leipzig, examines a central but rarely examined aspect of academic culture. In "Acknowledgments: A History of Academic Gratitude" Dinkel analyzes the transformation of acknowledgments in academic books from the panegyrics of the early modern period through the nineteenth-century's academic ideal of personal reticence (and therefore minimal acknowledgments) to the rise of highly subjective and expansive acknowledgments since the 1990s, which he relates to larger changes in academic culture, including democratization and internationalization.

As always, this issue also reports on GHI conferences on a wide range of subjects, including historical refugee studies, archival studies, Jewish history, and modern German history. The first item in the news section reports on our biggest piece of news: the arrival of the GHI's new director, Ulrike von Hirschhausen, who took up her directorship on October 1 of this year, succeeding Simone Lässig. For up-to-date information on upcoming events, publications, fellowships, and calls for papers, please consult the GHI website at http://www.ghi-dc.org, check our Bluesky account at @ghiwashington.bsky.social or sign up for our digital newsletter on our website. We look forward to welcoming you at upcoming events in both Washington and Berkeley.

Ulrike von Hirschhausen (Director) and
Richard F. Wetzell (Editor)