Preface

This Bulletin features a special thematic forum titled "The Campus and Beyond: Higher Education and Social Inequalities in Europe and the United States since the 1870s." This forum – which grew out of a 2025 conference organized by the German Historical Institute with the support of the Fritz Thyssen Foundation and is co-edited and introduced by Stefanie Coché (University of Gießen), Raphael Rössel (GHI Washington), and Elizabeth Tandy Shermer (University of Georgia) – presents five case studies that examine issues of inequality, social mobility, and diversity in higher education in Europe and the United States since the late nineteenth century.

The first article, "Detours to Promotion: American Doctorates as Upward Social Mobility in Germany, 1870s-1920s," by Olga Sparschuh (University of Vienna), examines how aspiring dentists in Imperial Germany dealt with a particular kind of status inequality, namely the fact that while physicians were trained at German universities, generally completing their studies with a doctoral degree (Dr. med.), dentists were trained outside the university system and could not earn doctorates. Starting in the 1870s, increasing numbers of aspiring dentists began to address this status gap by obtaining doctoral degrees in dentistry in the United States – some by attending legitimate American dental schools, others by obtaining degrees from diploma mills. The proliferation of American doctorates in dentistry led to complaints from general practitioners of medicine and to government regulations limiting the recognition of foreign degrees – until the introduction of the "Dr. med. dent." degree in Germany in 1919 made the American doctorates obsolete.

In the second article, "Fighting Intellectual Unemployment: The League of Nations, Marie Curie, and Social Inequalities in Higher

Education," Jonathan Voges (University of Hannover) investigates how the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation set up by the League of Nations in 1922 sought to address the problem of academic unemployment that resulted from the combination of the expansion of higher education and the straitened economic circumstances of the postwar era. The article focuses on Nobel laureate Marie Curie, who in 1926 proposed an international scholarship program designed to support promising junior scholars – allowing those who did not have their own financial means to pursue scientific research and careers. By the time the expert commission presented its report in 1930, however, the world economic crisis had eliminated any prospect of funding such a program.

The third article, "Breaking Barriers: Women in Croatian Advanced Education (1892–1942)," by Ida Ograjšek Gorenjak (University of Zagreb), addresses the role of gender in higher education by examining the complicated process by which Croatian women gradually gained access to a university education. Addressing the complex legal, institutional, and cultural barriers to women's education, Ograjšek Gorenjak shows how women first got access to college-preparatory secondary education (Lyceum), which then, often with the crucial support of Lyceum teachers, gradually opened the path toward university study for women. Probing gradual changes in family support and public opinion, she explores how women gradually managed to break through barriers to professional careers.

In the following article, "Balancing Conservativism and Diversity: Participatory Democracy as a Challenge and Resource for U.S. Evangelical Colleges," Stefanie Coché (University of Gießen) shows how, starting in the 1980s, Evangelical colleges in the United States strategically used notions of diversity and minority rights to secure their own position in the American higher education landscape. Although evangelicals generally championed traditional gender roles, Evangelical colleges met the challenge of the women's and civil rights movements by increasing ethnic diversity in their student bodies and highlighting female students in their

publicity. At the same time, they began to use the language of diversity and civil rights in order to position evangelical universities as representing a religious minority deserving of protection, thus bolstering their position within American higher education.

The final article, "From Old to New Inequalities: The East-West Gap in Post-Unification German Higher Education," by Aron Schulze (Technical University Dresden), examines the role of economic inequalities in the transformation of East German higher education during the process of German unification that began in 1989/90. By focusing on two particular issues – the gradual but, for a long time, incomplete integration of student financial aid for East German university students into the West German BaFöG system; and the gaps in pay and pension rights for a particular cohort of East German academics who were promoted to full professorships at East German universities after unification, the so-called *Aufbauprofessoren* – Schulze is able to show that the process of unification in higher education was characterized by significant economic inequalities between East and West German students and professors, which lingered for more than a decade after unification.

Finally, this issue reports on GHI conferences on a wide range of subjects, including the history of gender and violence, climate migration, and digital approaches to the history of sound and language, as well as reports on the West Coast Germanists' Workshop and the Transatlantic Doctoral Seminar in German History. Please turn to our news section for recent GHI news. 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 @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.

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