

PREFACE

In the fall of 2001 the GHI launched a new program to bring together young scholars from both sides of the Atlantic. The first annual Medieval History Seminar was held at the GHI in October. A dozen German and American doctoral students had the opportunity to discuss their work on topics ranging from the role of exile in Carolingian political culture to the reception of a Swedish visionary's writings in fourteenth-century Bohemia with three leading figures in the field of Medieval studies. The GHI is grateful to Professors Caroline Walker Bynum, Johannes Fried, and Patrick J. Geary for agreeing to serve as mentors, to Research Fellow Christoph Strupp for organizing the seminar, and to the ERP/German Program for Transatlantic Contact for its financial support. The Medieval History Seminar will be held alternately in the United States and Europe; the Humboldt University, Berlin, will be hosting the 2002 seminar this fall.

Shortly after participating in the Medieval History Seminar, Professor Bynum returned to Washington to deliver the 2001 Annual Lecture at the GHI. Her subject, violent religious imagery in late Medieval Europe, had unintended topical resonance following the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington. Images of bloodshed and dismemberment that horrify or baffle modern observers carried, Bynum suggested, connotations of wholeness and inclusion far removed from the "violent tenor of life" in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries so often noted by other scholars. Building on Bynum's argument, Professor Mitchell Merback explored the connections between guilt and violence in the "economy of violence" of the late Medieval world. The texts of both Bynum's lecture and Merback's comment are featured in this issue of the *Bulletin*.

In October, nearly a thousand scholars congregated in Washington for the annual meeting of the German Studies Association (GSA), the world's largest organization dedicated to interdisciplinary work on German history, society, and culture. The 2001 conference marked the 25th anniversary of the GSA's founding, and the GHI joined in the celebration with an open-house reception. GSA president Henry Friedlander was on hand for the reception along with many long-time friends and associates of the GHI. Gerald R. Kleinfeld, the GSA's executive director and editor of the *German Studies Review*, reflects on the development of the field of German Studies over the past quarter century in an interview with GHI Research Fellows Vera Lind and Raimund Lammersdorf in this issue. Lind and Lammersdorf also spoke with two other scholars at

the forefront of the field in the United States, historian Mary Nolan of New York University and *Germanist* Frank Trommler of the University of Pennsylvania.

This issue also features an essay by former GHI Research Fellow Wilfried Mausbach on how the United States' European allies viewed the undeclared war in Vietnam. During his time in Washington, Mausbach helped organize a major international conference that placed the Vietnam War in a broad international context. That conference was the basis for the volume *America, the Vietnam War, and the World: Comparative and International Perspectives*, which Mausbach edited together with Lloyd C. Gardner and Andreas Daum. *America, the Vietnam War, and the World* is now in press and will appear next year in the series "Publications of the German Historical Institute" published by Cambridge University Press.

Like previous issues, this *Bulletin* provides an overview of the work by younger scholars supported by the GHI and the Friends of the German Historical Institute. Eva Giloi Bremner and Jonathan R. Zatlin were the recipients of the 2001 Fritz Stern Dissertation Prize awarded by the Friends. The texts of the presentations that Giloi Bremner and Zatlin gave at the annual Friends' Symposium appear in this issue. Philipp Loeser and Annette Puckhaber summarize the findings of research they carried out in the United States while they were visiting post-doctoral fellows at the GHI. Both were part of the GHI's Transatlantic Program, which was co-sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Humboldt Foundation. Bernd Schäfer, who joined the GHI as a Research Fellow in the summer of 2001, discusses the newly available sources that he is using for his reexamination of U.S. foreign policy in the Nixon-Kissinger era.

The diversity of the research interests of GHI-affiliated scholars is reflected in the broad range—temporal, geographic, and thematic—of the conferences that the Institute sponsored in the second half of 2001. The public's reaction to a prominent British politician's suicide in the early nineteenth century, Bollywood's use and transformation of American cinematic conventions, the Kohl government's response to the rapid collapse of the German Democratic Republic in late 1989—these are all topics that have recently come within the GHI's ever-widening purview. More information on GHI-sponsored conferences and symposia is provided in this issue of the *Bulletin*.

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