

I. Conference Description

The 42nd Wisconsin Workshop (November 5-7, 2009)

“The Wall Came Down: On the Twentieth Anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall”

The Berlin Wall has attained paradigmatic status for its geopolitical position within globalized contexts of border crises. As the twentieth century's leading symbol of difference and division, it had an enormous cultural and historical impact on the two former Germanies and serves as a lingering specter haunting the new walls, barriers, and fences dividing populations in the twenty-first century. Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall (November 9, 1989), this conference, the 42nd Wisconsin Workshop, aims not only to assess retrospectively how German culture East, West, and post-unification came to terms with national and political division but also to elaborate the dynamics of contemporary scenarios of peoples divided against themselves. A group of interdisciplinary scholars from the fields of German studies, history, anthropology, communication studies, and geography will address cultural and social dimensions of borders, boundaries, and exclusions as well as bridges and crossings.

The Berlin Wall was a political and architectural phenomenon that literally cemented a split between two different societies, creating an outer edge marking a defensive boundary in the tradition of the Great Wall of China, Hadrian's Wall, and the Maginot Line. In the microcosm of the city of Berlin, it also marked an inner edge, forming an enclosure like those that were meant to protect and contain medieval cities and later ghettos within early modern European cities. As post-Wall Europe expands the European Union and opens its internal borders among member states, its outer borders are increasingly under harsh control. Meanwhile, the postmodern, post-1989 permeability of boundaries has not weakened the ties between territory and identity; rather they are being fiercely recreated on various scales. In short, today we continue to see how divisions deepen cultural, political, ethnic, and religious differences between various populations: the 38th parallel in Korea, the Green Line in Cyprus, the neighborhood walls of Belfast, the new borders within the former Yugoslavia and around post-Soviet Russia, the fences being constructed on the US-Mexican border or in Israel's West Bank, and the walling off of parts of Baghdad to separate Sunni and Shiite residential districts. As demonstrated by the historical developments around the Berlin Wall, the reification caused by such separations between communities rarely solves underlying political problems and has remarkable implications for the dynamics of cultural identity.

The three-day event is organized by Venkat Mani and Marc Silberman (Department of German). The conference begins with two graduate student sessions that will feature competitively selected papers from universities in the Midwest (Northwestern University, University of Chicago, University of Illinois in Chicago, University of Illinois in Urbana, University of Minnesota). A film program will be organized for Friday evening, and a conference banquet for the invited participants on Saturday evening. All conference sessions will be held at the Pyle Center (702 Langdon St.), and rooms for conference guests have been reserved at Lowell Hall (610 Langdon St.). Funding for the conference has been secured from the Anonymous Fund at the University of Wisconsin, Department of German, Department of History, Center for German and European Studies, Center for European Studies, Center for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Center for Humanities (Year of the Humanities), and the German Consulate in Chicago. Selected conference proceedings will be published in an anthology of essays.

II. Conference program (tentative):

Thursday, November 5, 2009 (Pyle Center)

3:30 – 3:45 pm: Grad student session (3 papers)

Moderator: Mary Layoun (UW, Comparative Literature)

5:00 – 6:15 pm: Grad student session (3 papers)

Moderator: Sabine Moedersheim (UW, German)

6:15 – 7:30 pm: Reception

7:30 – 9:00 pm: Introduction – Marc Silberman

Keynote – Konrad Jarausch (History, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

Friday, November 6, 2009 (Pyle Center)

Session 1: Beyond Walls (9:00-12:30 pm)

Moderator: Jennifer Ratner-Rosenhagen (UW, History)

Venkat Mani, Department of German, University of Wisconsin - Madison

Breaking Down the Walls: The European Library Project

Katrin Sieg, German Studies, Georgetown University, Washington DC

Gender and the Global in post-Wall Berlin

Lina Insana, Italian, University of Pittsburgh

The Discourse of Islands and Bridges: A Case Study of Sicily

Session 2: Designing Borders (2:00-5:30 pm)

Moderator: Rudy Koshar (UW, History)

Olaf Briese, History of Religion / Cultural Studies, Free University - Berlin

‘Auferstanden aus Ruinen’: The Different Aesthetics of the Berlin Wall

Andrew Webber, German Department, Cambridge University, UK

Wall and Post-Wall in Films of Berlin

Henning Wrage Humboldt University, Berlin; Feodor Lynen Fellow, UW

Open and Shut: Media Depictions of the Rise and Fall of the Wall

Film evening: UW Cinematheque (Vilas Hall 4070, 7:30-9:00 pm)

Stanislaw Mucha, *Die Mitte / The Center* (2004, documentary, 85 min.)

Saturday, Nov. 7, 2009 (Pyle Center)

Session 3: Berlin's New Boundaries (9:00-12:30 pm)

Moderator: Sabine Engel (U of MN, CGES)

Isa Blumi, History Department, Georgia State University

Second Generation Balkan Immigrants in Berlin

Barbara Wolbert, Anthropology, University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

On Narration and Rituals of Separation in post-Wall Berlin

Levant Soysal, Communication Studies, Kadir Has University, Istanbul

Berlin Stories: Migrants, Natives, and the Spectacles of (Post)Unification

Session 4: Re-Designing Post-Wall Berlin (2:00-5:30 pm)

Moderator: Kris Olds (UW, Geography)

Karen Till, Geography, Virginia Tech

“Interim Spaces” in post-Wall Berlin
Janet Ward, History, University of Nevada - Las Vegas
Berlin Borders, New World-City Orders
Stephan Lanz, Urban Studies, Viadrina University, Frankfurt/Oder
Post-Wall Berlin=s Social Geography: The Limits of the Multicultural-Cosmopolitan
City

III. Speakers short biographies

Isa Blumi is assistant professor history at Georgia State University in Atlanta with special interests in the Middle East and Islamic Studies. He authored the monograph *Rethinking the Late Ottoman Empire* in 2003 and numerous articles on Ottoman Balkan and Yemeni history as well as contemporary Balkan issues. His current book project, “Redefining Balkan Nationalism: Albanian Identities at the End of the Ottoman Era,” draws on his experience as a member of the Provisional Government of Kosova in 1999 and as a consultant for international organizations like the United Nations Mission in Kosova (UNMIK) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Olaf Briese is a research fellow at the Institute for Religious Studies of the Free University in Berlin. Trained in philosophy, he has published extensively in the field of historical anthropology (history of cholera in Europe) and aesthetics (history of metaphors). His current research project focuses on the aesthetics of the Berlin Wall, and includes a systematic comparison to other (historical) walls.

Lina Insana is Associate Professor of Italian at the University of Pittsburgh. Her research and publications focus on Holocaust literature and film, for example, in her recent monograph *Arduous Tasks: Primo Levi, Translation, and the Transmission of Holocaust Testimony* (U of Toronto P) as well as images of Southern Italy in European literature. In this latter context she is engaged currently in a research project on the place of Sicily in the European imagination.

Konrad Jarausch is the Lurcy Professor of European Civilization at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. He co-founded the UNC Center for European Studies and until recently co-directed the Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung in Potsdam, Germany. An alumnus of the UW (MA, 1964; PhD 1969), he has written or edited more than thirty books in modern German history. Starting with Hitler's seizure of power and the First World War, his research interests have moved to the social history of German students and professions, German unification in 1989/90, historiography under the Communist GDR, the nature of the East German dictatorship, as well as the debate about historians and the Third Reich. More recently, he has been concerned with the problem of interpreting twentieth-century German history in general, the learning processes after 1945, the issue of cultural democratization, and the relationship between Honecker and Breshnev.

Stephan Lanz is a faculty member in the Institute of Social and Geographical Studies at the European Viadrina University in Frankfurt/Oder. His research focuses on the sociology of urban spaces with a special interest in how migration patterns affect urban design and planning as exemplified in most recent book, *Berlin aufgemischt: abendländisch – multikulturell –*

kosmopolitisch? Die politische Konstruktion einer Einwanderungsstadt (Berlin Roughed Up: Occidental – Multicultural – Cosmopolitan? The Political Construction of an Immigrant City).

Venkat Mani is associate professor of German and former interim director of the Center for Global Studies at the University of Wisconsin. His 2007 book, *Cosmopolitical Claims* (University of Iowa Press), focuses on contemporary Turkish and German literature. His current research project examines world literature and cosmopolitanism from the eighteenth to the twenty-first century.

Katrin Sieg is Associate Professor in the Department of German and the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. Her research areas cover queer and feminist theory, theater and performance, and post-1945 German culture. Her just published study, *Choreographing the Global in European Cinema and Theater* (Palgrave Macmillan), focuses on several theatrical performances and movies addressing multicultural politics in post-Wall Berlin.

Marc Silberman is professor of German and director of the Center for German and European Studies at the University of Wisconsin. He has published extensively on postwar German literature, theater, and cinema and is currently editing a book of essays on cinematic representations of German suffering after the war.

Levent Soysal is Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication at Kadir Has University in Istanbul. Since 1990 he has conducted research and field work on immigration, focusing on contemporary urban spaces and youth cultures in Berlin, London, New York, and Istanbul as well as the transnational movements of peoples, cultures, and goods. He currently supervises the research project “World City Berlin and the Spectacles of Identity: Public Events, Immigrants, and the Politics of Performance.”

Karen Till (Ph.D. University of Wisconsin, 1996) is Associate Professor of Geography in the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg. Her research explores the interrelationships between place-making, personal and social memory, and cultural politics in contemporary cities, as exemplified in her 2005 monograph *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (U of Minnesota P). Her current book project, entitled “Interim Space,” addresses various returns to and re/uses of the Berlin Wall after its fall.

Janet Ward is Associate Professor of History at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. She is an interdisciplinary scholar of German and comparative urban studies, visual culture, memory studies, and architectural theory in the twentieth century. Her current book project, “Berlin Borders: Building the Post-Wall Metropolis,” places the reunified German capital’s recent history into broader sociological, architectural, historical, and geopolitical contexts.

Andrew Webber is Reader in Modern German and Comparative as well as Department Head at Churchill College of Cambridge University. His research has focused on German and Austrian culture from 1800 to the present day, with special interests in narrative writing, film, and cultural theory and analysis. From 2004-2007 he held a major research fellowship from the Leverhulme

Trust to work on the city of Berlin, and the resulting book, *Berlin in the Twentieth Century: A Cultural Topography* just appeared in Cambridge University Press.

Barbara Wolbert is a trained anthropologist who just joined the faculty at the University of Minnesota in the Twin Cities as the DAAD Professor at the Center for German and European Studies. She has published extensively on the politics of migration as materialized in performance and exhibition practices, in particular among the Turkish community in Berlin.

Henning Wrage completed his dissertation at the Humboldt University in Berlin in 2008 on literary adaptations in East German cinema and television. He is a Feodor Lynen post-doc Fellow at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in 2009 (funded by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation). His current research aims at rewriting postwar German history as a history of its media (East and West).