

Working on this issue in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic shutdown is a tad surreal. One wants to resist the many voices who breathlessly proclaim that everything will be different “AC” (after corona). Besides the horrible health and economic aftereffects, things will likely be rather similar to the situation “BC” (before corona). Then again, maybe this will be some sort of turning point. For instance, western societies—particularly Germany—have long been oriented to the past. There were so many worthy anniversaries that some actually contemplated maintaining an “anniversary tracker” so as not to miss anything important. Suddenly, we are forced to be focused on the present and daunting future; and the near obsession with commemorations of various kinds appears to be coming to an end. Just months ago, many were looking forward to massive and internationally coordinated commemorations of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the end of WWII. Many countries indeed carried on with scaled-down events, but the coverage and resonance were minimal.

Going into the summer and fall of 2020, I suspect that a similar trend will continue with anniversaries and commemorations being much more low key. Nevertheless, the thirtieth anniversary of German reunification on 3 October still ought to be a momentous occasion. At the least, it should provide an opportunity once again to reflect on developments in Germany over an entire generational span by now.

*German Politics and Society* started such a reflective process in our last special issue devoted to the thirtieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. This second special issue looks more at the thirtieth anniversary of reunification. The editors have compiled seven fascinating articles looking at many policy areas and issues. Carol Hager provides an excellent overview of the evolution of green politics from the 1980s to the present, while Steve Silvia does the same for the German economy—concluding that despite some storm clouds on the horizon, the country has experienced an almost two-decade period of prosperity, a silver age nonetheless. Luke Wood



examines various theories of hegemony in the context of the Federal Republic's European policy. Two papers look at memory politics: Esther Adaire delves into the continuities in memory culture from Adenauer to Kohl to the contemporary AfD; and Jonathan Bach writes penetratingly about Germany grappling with its history and memory of colonialism through the prism of debates about the new Humboldt Forum in Berlin and in the Bundestag. Finally, two authors tackle partisan politics. Jonathan Olsen reviews the trajectory of the Left Party from its origins in the East German communist party to its current predicament in competition with the AfD in the eastern region, while Jonas Rädcl looks at eastern populism and the AfD from the perspectives of modernization theory and postcolonial critique, concluding that the latter has more explanatory heft.