

Preface

Peter Barker, London

The Football World Cup in Germany in the summer of 2006 provided a focus for discussion about the role of sport in Germany, in particular its influence in the political sphere and on the German sense of identity. In recognition of this influence the Association of Modern German Studies (AMGS) decided to concentrate its conferences in 2006 on sport in Germany. The three papers published here were presented at the AMGS conference at the University of Birmingham on 29 April 2006, entitled 'Sport in German Culture'.

A further four papers were presented at the conference. *Allyson Fiddler* (Lancaster) gave the keynote paper on sport in contemporary Austrian literature and politics; *Stefan Marthin* (Loughborough) spoke on reactions to West German football successes in the SED party newspaper in the GDR, *Neues Deutschland*. There were two papers on film and sport: *Kay Schiller* (Durham) presented a paper entitled 'Before Spielberg: The 1972 Olympics and coping with the German past', while *David Clarke* (Bath) explored the relationship between West Germany's World Cup win in Bern and consumerism in his paper 'German boys do cry: masculinity and consumerism in *Das Wunder von Bern* (2003)'. These papers had either already been published elsewhere or were already scheduled for publication in other journals. They could therefore not be included in this volume.

A follow-up workshop to the April conference took place at the Goethe Institute, London, in November 2006, 'Die Welt zu Gast bei Freunden: Deutschland im WM-Fieber'. The aim of this workshop was to provide teachers and lecturers with strategies and materials for developing the writing skills of A/AS Level students and undergraduates. *Martina Esser* (Exeter) presented the keynote paper on teaching advanced writing skills. This paper was followed by readings by *Chris Young* and *Markus Hesselmann* from their book *Lieblingsfeind: Deutschland aus der Sicht seiner Fussballrivalen*. There then followed two workshops: *Chris Young* and *Silke Mentchen* (Cambridge) used podcast recordings of interviews made during the World Cup from the *Deutsche Welle* project as the basis for writing tasks. *Markus Hesselmann* (Redakteur Ressort Sport at *Tagesspiegel*, now their London correspondent) and *Ruth Ciesinger* from the Ressort Politik at *Tagesspiegel* used

newspaper texts from the World Cup as the basis for developing writing skills. Overall, the two events emphasised the important role of sport in German culture and explored a number of ways in which this relationship could be exploited to increase students' interest in German culture and language.

Biodata

Peter Barker teaches German Studies at the University of Reading. He specialises in his research on the GDR and eastern Germany after unification. He has written a monograph on the Sorbian minority in Germany, *Slavs in Germany. The Sorbian Minority and the German State since 1945* (2000).