

# A b s t r a c t s

## Measured Worlds

Joachim von Puttkamer

European and Polish at the Same Time

The Museum of the Second World War in Gdansk

After months of contention, the Museum of the Second World War opened in Gdansk on 23 March 2017. The exhibition presents impressive objects, which are persuasively showcased. They put the everyday life of civilians and soldiers at the centre of focus and explain Hitler's and Stalin's mass crimes in the context of the world war. The museum points to a new way for European remembrance.

Sören Urbansky

Germany - Yes, Hitler - No

Klaus Mehnert's War Years in the Pacific

Klaus Mehnert turned his back on Germany in the mid-1930s and lived in Moscow, Honolulu, and Shanghai. Although he was never a member of the National-Socialist German Workers' Party and never adopted National-Socialist ideology, Mehnert never saw himself as an émigré either. On account of his loyalty to Germany and his wartime journalism, Mehnert was suspected of being a German spy or a National-Socialist sympathizer. Although the allegations remained unproven, they haunted the German publicist and scholar until the end of his life.

Egbert Jahn, Inge Auerbach

Peter Scheibert, Historian of Eastern Europe

Notes on an Inadequate Biography

Since the end of the 1990s, German historians and social scientists have been debating the entanglement of former professional colleagues in the National-Socialist system of rule and its policies of conquest and annihilation in Central and Eastern Europe. A recently published biography is devoted to Peter Scheibert (1915-1995), who served in the Foreign Office and in Special Commando Künsberg, a unit that carried out the state-sponsored theft of art and cultural property in the occupied countries. The book provides hardly any indication of Scheibert's personal activities and his political views during the years before 1945. Scheibert's political and moral convictions are analysed with reference to questionable concepts. A thorough, critical examination of his intellectual and political development, his role as a university teacher in Marburg, and his academic work remain desiderata.

## **Experts on Eastern Europe in the 20th Century**

Jan Kusber

Expert Cultures in Transition

Eastern Europe Experts and Politics in the 20th Century

To understand other countries and regions, it is necessary to know languages, history, and culture. Those who carry this knowledge are experts. It is not self-perception, but outside perception that makes an expert. In the 20th century, those who possessed special knowledge because they had grown up in Eastern Europe were for a long time dominant among experts for Eastern Europe. Only with functional differentiation, specialisation, and professionalization of politics and the sciences did their profile change. But the criteria and mechanisms for deciding who was considered an expert and who was recruited also changed. The study of experts makes a contribution to the history of knowledge and science, political and cultural history. It is well suited to reconstructing life environments (Lebenswelten), ways of thinking, and networks.

Peter Haslinger

“Where Are You, Professors?”

Expert Communication and the Russia-Ukraine Crisis

The Russia-Ukraine crisis has raised questions concerning the conditions by which academic knowledge makes its way to the political world and the general public. Social and media transformation promotes the formation of isolated “knowledge communities”. The interpretative authority of academic experts is receding. Moreover, in Eastern Europe, those sciences that have the political authority to interpret and are therefore instrumentalised by the political world or kept on a tight rein are now at risk of being isolated within their own country. The aspiration to maintain dialogue with East European partners must not be allowed to undermine standards of quality in the acquisition of knowledge. Transfer of knowledge on Eastern Europe faces a dual challenge.

Maciej Górny

Fortuitous Moment

Racial Anthropology in Eastern Europe since 1914

The First World War was a special “moment of glory” in racial anthropology. Overflowing prisoner of war camps offered ample opportunity for anthropological research. German and Austrian scientists used the chance to measure the members of various nationalities in large numbers, particularly those from the Tsarist Empire and Southeast Europe. But anthropologists from East Central Europe also actively participated in these investigations. In the states that were newly founded after the First World War, racial anthropology gained considerably in importance. It was precisely in Europe’s East that this research tradition initially experienced its strongest development in the interwar era.

## Benjamin Conrad The Geographer and His Borders

### Eugeniusz Romer's Influence on Poland's National Territory

Eugeniusz Romer is considered the founder of modern Polish geography. As a geographer, he also participated in the peace negotiations after the First World War. He did not see himself as a neutral expert, but committed himself to the restoration of the Polish state. The Polish delegation's successes at the 1919 Paris conference are in no small part attributed to his preliminary cartographic work. At the Riga conference in 1920-21, Romer's primary objective was no longer the largest national territory possible, but rather the most ethnically homogenous population possible. Here, however, his influence was already waning. Military interests gained the upper hand.

## Agnes Laba For the Sake of Expansion

### Research on Poland during the First World War

Science and politics are closely entangled. This is shown by an early example from German „Ostforschung“. During the First World War the German Empire occupied territories that since the Partitions of Poland had been under Russian rule. The head of the administration in the newly created Generalgouvernement Warschau created the „Landeskundliche Kommission“, an academic body whose research focused on the geographical distribution of ethnic groups in former Congress Poland. The commission's purpose was to justify German rule in the conquered territories and to supply practical knowledge to the occupation authorities. Scientists also benefited: they obtained material support, and their prestige was enhanced.

## Martin Munke On the Failure of an Expert

### Georg Leibbrandt during the National-Socialist Era

Georg Leibbrandt belonged to those experts who owed their status primarily to their origins. Born an ethnic German in Ukraine, Leibbrandt subscribed early on to ethno-nationalist thinking and the struggle against the Bolsheviks. After 1933, he pursued a career in the National-Socialist regime. He saw it as his task to liberate the peoples of the Soviet Union from Bolshevik rule. His plans aimed at the dissolution of the Soviet Union. During the war and the occupation, he recommended betting on the national-Ukrainian cause. With that, he failed. He belongs to the National-Socialist functionary elite which later succumbed to the illusion that they themselves were victims of the regime. This instance of academic knowledge placed at the service of National-Socialist policies of conquest and annihilation is just one example of the tragic bond that science and politics formed during the 20th century.

## Dirk Schuster “European Culture” and its “Eastern Borders”

### Hans Heinrich Schaeder’s Thinking during the Third Reich

Hans Heinrich Schaeder is considered an important Iranist and historian of religion. For reasons of opportunism, careerism, and anti-Semitic resentment, he used the chance afforded him after the National Socialists seized power in Germany: he combined his historical and philological knowledge with National-Socialist racial ideology. Drawing on the superiority of “Aryanism” he derived from this merger, Schaeder tried to redefine the “Eastern Borders” of “European Culture”. In his concept, Armenians and Persians became integral elements of European culture and history, while Jews and “Semites” were excluded. In academia, publishing, and politics, he put himself at the service of the National-Socialist regime. In his own view, this served the struggle against Communism and the West’s social system. After the war, a de-Nazification commission concluded that there existed no reservations concerning his employment at Göttingen University.

## Sophia Dafinger How the Enemy Ticks in a Time of Crisis

### The U.S. Sovietologist Leon Gouré during the Cold War

Starting in the 1940s, anybody well informed about the Soviet Union had good prospects for finding influential purchasers of his knowledge in the United States. For more than a few social scientists, this meant being able to pursue a career in the rapidly expanding field of research and consulting organisations. The political scientist Leon Gouré became famous for his study of Soviet civil defence, pursued a career at the RAND Corporation, and, because he was so skilled in symbiotic consulting, found the ear of the U.S. Air Force and the Pentagon during the Vietnam War.

## Jörn Happel Servant of Different Masters

### Gustav Hilger: Soviet Union Expert and “Consultant”

For George F. Kennan, Gustav Hilger was the “doyen of all Russia experts”. Born in Moscow, this son of a German businessman initially made a name for himself in Berlin and Moscow after the First World War: among Germans through his involvement in the repatriation of prisoners of war, among Bolsheviks through his humanitarian engagement against famine. He joined the German Foreign Office as a lateral entrant, served, as a consultant, both the National Socialists, the United States and the nascent Federal Republic under Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. By the time he retired, people like him, those who had gained their qualifications based on their origins and life experience, were being replaced by academically trained Sovietologists.

Benno Nietzel  
Struggle of Ideas

U.S. Foreign Propaganda during the Early Cold War

Under the auspices of “psychological warfare”, a new field of expertise came into being during the early Cold War. Regional and communication studies formed a close bond. Social scientists began to illuminate the structure of Soviet society in a systematic manner and marketed basic research as useful for “psychological warfare”. Scientific expertise competed with knowledge of public relations and the practical experience of veterans from the Second World War who had worked in propaganda. Political consulting based on basic research, however, found little resonance.