

A b s t r a c t s

Rainer Lindner

In the empire of signs

East European history as cultural history

The discipline of East European history is going through a period of change. Some rash critics argued that its significance had declined after 1991, since historians of Eastern Europe seemed to have lost the object of their research along with the political task they had previously performed. As a consequence, savings and cuts were made in funding for research and teaching. German-language research on Eastern Europe has reacted by launching an offensive fought with new sources and methods. The revolution in access to archives and the cultural turn have strengthened this offensive. This article offers a preliminary assessment of research on Eastern Europe inspired by cultural history. Using the example of pre-Soviet and Soviet history, it presents an overview of selected topics, research questions, and methods.

Susan Stewart

Ukraine as a Model?

Hypotheses on Ethnopolitical Peace

The article explores the reasons ethnopolitical conflicts did not escalate in Ukraine in the 1990s. Six factors influenced the mobilization level of the Hungarians, Romanians, Crimean Tatars and Russians: state nationality policy, perceived collective disadvantage, group cohesion, group identity, international support and economic development in Ukraine and neighboring states. These factors did not have a unified effect, but rather varied in their impact according to the group and policy field analyzed.

Dietrich Beyrau

Old prejudices and new opportunities

Jews in the Russian armed forces, 1900 to 1926

This article focuses on forms of anti-Semitism and judaeophobia, using the case of the Russian armed forces. Before 1914 the most contested issue was the "scientific" proof or disproof of the "defense capabilities" of the Jews. Even if the old prejudices against the Jews continued to exist after the Revolution and Civil War, the population now confronted Jews not only as objects of stigmatization and violence but also as representatives of brutal Bolshevik violence. The mental structures that came into being in the post-Revolutionary era, with its rhetoric of struggle and confronting the enemy, opened up a space for anti-Semitic stereotypes in thought and action.

Christoph Mick

Ethnic violence and pogroms
in Lvov in 1918 and 1941

Two pogroms which took place in Lvov, one at the end of the First World War and one at the beginning of the German-Soviet war, are discussed here. In November 1918 the perpetrators were recruited in the main from the Polish population, and in July 1941 they were mainly drawn from the Ukrainian population. Common to both groups was the charge they levelled at the Jews of having previously acted in a hostile and antagonistic manner. While the Polish government condemned the pogrom in 1918, the later - and far bloodier - pogrom in 1941 formed part of the National Socialist programme of murder and was a prelude to genocide.

Bogdan Musial

Indigenous hatred of the Jews
and the German war machine
Northeastern Poland, Summer 1941

In the summer of 1941, bloody pogroms and massacres of Jews occurred in many towns and villages in Eastern Europe that had been occupied by the Wehrmacht. The perpetrators were German soldiers and policemen, in particular members of the notorious Einsatzgruppen, and members of the local non-Jewish population: Latvians, Lithuanians, Poles, Ukrainians, and Romanians. The main cause of this wave of violence was a fatal combination of indigenous hatred of the Jews, which had become radicalized under Soviet occupation, and the methodical actions of the German occupiers. Events in northeastern Poland show this clearly.

Bernhard Chiari

The Polish Home Army and the Jews
Discourses about a national history of the Second World War

The Holocaust unfolded before the eyes of Polish wartime society. Up until today, Polish historiography has dealt with the fate of Catholic and Jewish Poles as two different topics. Analyzing historiographical articles on the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa), the article describes the ambivalent Polish attitude towards the Jewish victims of Nazi Germany. In Poland, as well as in the occupied Soviet Union, Jews were confronted with indigenous anti-semitism. Anti-semitic stereotypes of „Jewish Communism“ remain virulent today. This becomes obvious when the Polish discourse about the dark sides of the Polish Resistance during World War Two is scrutinized.