

IN THIS ISSUE

The gentleman on the cover photo is not exactly radiating a pioneering spirit. There is something downtrodden about his posture, not just in terms of ergonomics. He seems a little ill at ease with the gadgetry in front of him; he's no ›digital native‹. His workstation is uncluttered, if extremely limited in radius of action. The picture was taken in 1969 in an office of the West Berlin criminal police and presumably sought to document the modernity of the ›administration automation‹ of the time. The Nixdorf data processing system cost DM 20 million, the server was located at OSRAM. Looking at it now, the photo raises various questions: When, how and why did the (police) authorities start using computers? How did they affect workflows, staffing, the way individuals and institutions saw themselves? How did the ›esprit de corps‹ of the criminal police in particular change under the influence of the new technical infrastructure and the concomitant new codes of conduct? In his comparative article on the computerization of the West German Federal Criminal Police Office and the Ministry of State Security of the GDR, *Rüdiger Bergien* shows that this transformation from the mid-1960s onwards was a tough and tortuous, but also exciting phase. It progressed by fits and starts, with a number of unexpected side effects and internal disputes. The police computers did not immediately bring about the complete ›surveillance state‹, but they had a wide range of effects which were more similar in the two German states than one might at first suppose.

One focus of this ›open‹ edition of our journal is current research on the National Socialist era. Harriet Scharnberg's article on the cooperation between the photo agency Associated Press and the National Socialist regime in the years leading up to 1941 (see ZF 1/2016) attracted widespread international attention; *Norman Domeier* now draws on new sources to demonstrate that this cooperation continued even after the US entered the war. Every day, via circuitous routes through Lisbon and Stockholm, German pictures made their way into the United States and American pictures into the German Reich. Some of the background to this photo transfer has yet to be unravelled. The article involves readers in a search for clues about foreign reporting in World War II, a search which is sure to bring further findings to light as time goes on.

Jan-Hinnerk Antons also depicts a complex constellation in the late phase of the ›Third Reich‹: The retreat of the Wehrmacht from Eastern Europe was accompanied by the migration of hundreds of thousands of refugees from Ukraine and elsewhere seeking protection in Nazi Germany. Given the racial ideology of the Nazis, this seems at first sight paradoxical. Antons investigates the motives and circumstances of a flight that was by turns organized and improvised. The latter can also be said to some extent of an investigative commission set up in 1945, which *Regina Fritz* examines more closely in her article for the ›Sources‹ section. Immediately after the end of the war, efforts were undertaken in Hungary to document the atrocities of the National Socialists and the Arrow Cross Party – in order to clarify what happened and secure justice,

as well as to exonerate the majority of the Hungarian population. Reading the collected records today, a complex picture emerges of denunciation, robbery, anti-Jewish violence and partial resistance.

A second focus of this issue deals with very different subject matter and a very different period of time. *Uta G. Poiger, Philipp Dorestal, Christiane Reinecke* and *Mila Ganeva* historicize fashion, beauty and practices of distinction. These texts range from the 1950s to the present day, from the two German states and France to the USA. One common element is the question of gender roles, body-based ›authenticity‹ and representation, and the political messages these imply.

Charlotte Joppien's essay and the ›Literature Revisited‹ contribution by *Michael Hagner* have an even greater bearing on the present. With background information about the party political landscape in Turkey after the Second World War, Joppien provides the key for a better understanding of Erdoğan's rule. Outrage and protest against the arbitrary imprisonment of journalists, scientists and officials (both men and women) are justified, indeed necessary. But they do not replace closer analysis of socio-economic structures, political power aspects, cultural traditions and their historical origins. We would welcome more contributions on contemporary Turkish history in the future – suggestions will be gratefully received. Hagner, meanwhile, makes it plain (in the light of current circumstances) that legitimate scepticism towards science and blanket criticism of it need to be clearly distinguished, and that the latter cannot justify itself by invoking Paul Feyerabend. ›Postmodernism‹ is not a suitable ›dummy target‹.¹ At the same time, the humanities should not merely withdraw to the comfortably uncomfortable position of supplying ›more disorientation‹.²

Finally, an editorial announcement: After 14 years on the ›Studies in Contemporary History‹ advisory board, Hannes Siegrist has now left the committee. The editorial team and publishers would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his important support. Iris Schröder, a member of the editorial team since the inception of our journal, has moved to the advisory board. Klaus Große Kracht and Peter Carrier, who have been involved since 2003 and 2005 respectively, have also left the editorial team. Both provided important ideas and inspiration for the ›Studies in Contemporary History‹; our heartfelt thanks go to them also. We hope to be able to introduce new members of the editorial team on our website in the near future.

Jan-Holger Kirsch for the editorial team
(Translated from the German by Joy Titheridge)

1 Sylvia Sasse/Sandro Zanetti, Postmoderne als Pappkamerad, in: *Geschichte der Gegenwart*, 11 June 2017, URL: <<http://geschichtedergegenwart.ch/postmoderne-als-pappkamerad/>>.

2 Jörg Scheller, Mehr Desorientierung: Wozu und worin die Geisteswissenschaften gut sind, in: *Merkur-Blog*, 19 May 2017, URL: <<https://www.merkur-zeitschrift.de/2017/05/19/mehr-desorientierung-wozu-und-worin-die-geisteswissenschaften-gut-sind/>>. With a different emphasis: Pablo Dominguez Andersen, Mischen wir uns ein!, in: *WerkstattGeschichte* 73 (2017), pp. 85-92.