

Knowledge in Transition: Institutional Development and Reorganization of Eastern European Studies in the Early 20th Century

The Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (IOS) in Regensburg and the editors of the *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* will organize a conference on the institutional development and restructuring of Eastern European studies in the early 20th century on 15 November 2024 to mark the journal's 100th anniversary.

The call to engage with Eastern Europe beyond the study of Russia is not new. Immediately before the First World War, the circle of those professionally concerned with the Russian Empire was thrown into disarray. "By and large, our public opinion knows nothing of the nature of the great transformation process of the Russian present. Our judgment of our neighbor must become more secure," Otto Hoetzsch postulated in early 1913 in a memorandum aimed at founding a society for the study of Russia, in which scientific, political and economic interests would merge. Only a few years later, after the end of the war and the collapse of the Russian Empire, Hoetzsch reacted to the reorganization of the state and also focused on the Baltic states and Poland in the newly founded journal *Osteuropa* in 1925. In the same year, the *Jahrbücher für Kultur und Geschichte der Slaven* were published for the first time in Breslau under the direction of Erdmann Hanisch – as a continuation of the *Jahresberichte für Kultur und Geschichte der Slaven*, which had been launched in 1924. Here, historiography and Slavic studies were combined, so that literature from Czechoslovakia and the Ukrainian Soviet Republic was also discussed.

The journals *Osteuropa* and *Jahrbücher für Kultur und Geschichte der Slaven* are examples of an intensive phase of institutionalization of the study of Eastern Europe in the run-up to and aftermath of the First World War, which took place at universities, but also in the form of societies and associations – in many European countries as well as in North America. As an exile, Tomáš G. Masaryk inaugurated the multidisciplinary School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES) at King's College London in 1915 and a year later, together with its founder Robert W. Seton-Watson, initiated the weekly newspaper *The New Europe* to support the Czech and other national movements of the Habsburg monarchy. In 1922, *The Slavonic and East European Review* emerged from the SSEES with academic aspirations. In Warsaw, the Instytut Wschodni (Institute for Eastern Affairs), founded in 1926 as a scientific institute for the study of Russia and the Soviet Union, was politically closely linked to the Promethean movement, which sought an alliance with the national independence movements that had been subjugated by the Soviet Union since 1918. It cultivated contacts in the Caucasus and Central Asia through the journal *Wschód-Orient* and promoted Polish-Ukrainian understanding within the Polish Republic through the popular scientific *Biuletyn Polsko-Ukraiński* (Polish-Ukrainian Bulletin). Polish historians formulated their own ideas on the scientific and politically oriented study of Eastern Europe at the International Congress of Historical Sciences in Warsaw in 1933.

Some of the individual initiatives and protagonists of this 'founding period' have been well researched, but their European and transatlantic interconnections and their various academic and non-academic motivations have hardly been studied. The planned conference will therefore focus on the socio-political contexts and interrelationships of the various

projects, their financial foundations, the biographies and networks of their protagonists, the constitution of bodies of knowledge as well as the role of travel, emigration and exile.

Please send your proposal for a presentation (approx. 300 words) and a short CV to Katharina Kucher (jahrbuecher@ios-regensburg.de) by May 17, 2024. A decision on the acceptance of the presentation will be made by June 17, 2024.

The conference will take place on November 15, 2024 in Regensburg at the Institute for East and Southeast European Studies. Travel expenses and accommodation will be covered for speakers. Conference languages are German and English.