

## 8 The Legacy of Max Sering and Inner Colonization

### The Second World War and Its Aftermath

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In the wake of Sering's death, the conquest of Poland, and the "renewed" settler colonization of the *Wartheland*, several authors got to work producing essays for a *Festschrift* in honour of Heinrich Himmler. In the resulting *Festgabe für Heinrich Himmler*, appearing in 1941, the third essay was almost a book in and of itself. At 113 pages, Drs. Reinhard Höhn and Helmut Seydel produced a detailed examination of the legacy of Max Sering and his settler compatriots, entitled, "The Struggle over the Reconquest of the German East: Experiences of Prussian Eastern Settlement 1886 to 1914." Here the authors spoke aloud, without shame, thoughts that were never entertained by Sering in written form. They pronounced Sering's failure was in his lack of nerve. The Program of Inner Colonization was bound to fail, argued the authors, due to its liberal ideas of peaceful competition, and because the German settlers were never forced to stay in place, all because some ideas concerning "freedom" were allowed to trump the very real danger to *Deutschtum* in the East. Due to party politics and decentralization, various commissions and credit banks were free to pursue different aims, with only some schemes succeeding, while others failed. But the biggest problem of all, averred the authors, (and the most powerful weapon employed by the Poles) was the Prussian constitution itself, with its "equality" and "laws." Höhn and Seydel insisted that there was much to analyze in this program as much had been learned and gained, such as information on how towns should be laid out, how settlement should best be implemented, all of which would be of great use. But the authors gloated that it was not until now that this program could be put into action with a united German people, with singular purpose, and without the impediments of the past. The article ended with an emphasis on "erasure," that a true failing of the old inner colonization had been that it allowed for the existence of Poles, both in nearby settlements and as partners in trade. Now, a new settlement of purely German villages, closely knit together, would withstand any polonization. The authors found the accomplishments of Prussian inner colonization to have been truly impressive, but they were left



Figure 8.1 Occupied Poland, 1939

(Drawn by graphic company – original created for author)

wondering what would have happened, what could have been achieved over all those decades, had the “obstacles” (*Hemmungen*) they faced, including the Poles, been removed.<sup>1</sup> At the time of writing, the authors were quickly finding out, as Nazi planners attempted to reshape the land along the Warta.

### The *Warthegau*: A Land and Its “Obstacles”

The behavior of the “ordinary” *Wehrmacht* soldiers during the five-week invasion and conquest of Poland indicated immediately that the German attitude toward Poles had taken a radical turn. The brutalization thesis of Omer Bartov tries to account for the behavior of German soldiers toward Russian civilians and Jews as a response to the extreme form of warfare encountered on the Eastern Front after the 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union.<sup>2</sup> But it fails to take into account the soldiers’ actions toward Polish civilians from the very beginning of the war. These were not “brutalized” *Wehrmacht* soldiers but, instead, men who had been raised to believe that Slavs were *Untermenschen*. Although such propagandistic

<sup>1</sup> Reinhard Höhn and Helmut Seydel, “Der Kampf um die Wiedergewinnung des deutschen Ostens. Erfahrungen der preussischen Ostsiedlung 1886 bis 1914,” in *Festgabe für Heinrich Himmler* (Darmstadt: Wittich, 1941), 61–174.

<sup>2</sup> Omer Bartov, *Hitler’s Army: Soldiers, Nazis, and War in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

depictions of Poles as a lesser *Volk* had taken a much more extreme turn over the previous six years, it has been shown in this and many other works that 1933 was simply a deepening and intensification of a decades-long process that conceived of Poles as a primitive people worthy only of German hegemony. Alexander Rossino, whose work catalogues the atrocities committed by German soldiers during the brief Polish campaign, points out that the army of 1939 was not made up merely of very young men who had grown up in the moral swamp of Nazism, but also possessed a cadre of officers and older soldiers whose formative years had been spent exposed to Weimar's vitriolic anti-Versailles, anti-Polish rhetoric, something in which Sering had been a key player.<sup>3</sup> In Bryce Sait's work on ideological training in the 1930s German military, he also admits that the pre-1933 trajectory, from the experience of the Eastern Front in the First World War, through the Weimar years, is necessary to explain how non-SS soldiers in Poland could so easily understand "vague orders" to mean the murder of Polish civilians.<sup>4</sup> Six years of Nazism cannot account for the fundamentally different manner with which *Wehrmacht* soldiers treated French civilians in 1940 versus their atrocities against civilians in Poland in 1939. There was a way of seeing the East, developed over decades, that allowed for the easy loss of restraints around how conquest would be carried out.

And this loss of restraint also appeared immediately with the reinstatement of German control in western Poland.<sup>5</sup> In the most extensive study of German settler colonialism in the *Wartheland* in the Second World War, Phillip Rutherford points out that, until the middle of September, the Nazis did not have concrete plans as to how to carry out the "final" settlement of this long contested piece of territory, only that they knew that they would be allowed to do whatever they wanted.<sup>6</sup> After all, Hitler's famous quote that no one remembered the Armenians, which is often mistakenly believed to be about Jews, was stated in August 1939, and it was in fact a reference to what was about to happen to the Poles. The old Prussian provinces of Posen and West Prussia were immediately annexed to the German Reich, forming the bulk of the new *Reichsgau*

<sup>3</sup> Alexander Rossino, *Hitler Strikes Poland: Blitzkrieg, Ideology, and Atrocity* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2003).

<sup>4</sup> Bryce Sait, *The Indoctrination of the Wehrmacht: Nazi Ideology and War Crimes of the German Military* (New York: Berghahn, 2019).

<sup>5</sup> Karl-Rolf Schultz-Klinken, "Das ländliche Siedlungswesen in Deutschland zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen (1919–1939)," in *Raumordnung und Landesplanung im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Günther Franz (Hanover: Gebrüder Jänecke, 1971), 117–140.

<sup>6</sup> Phillip T. Rutherford, *Prelude to the Final Solution: The Nazi Program for Deporting Ethnic Poles, 1939–1941* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2007), ch. 2.

*Wartheland* (often referred to simply as the *Warthegau*). Importantly, in an echo of the *Reichsland*-status of Alsace in 1871, this region was not to be administered as a normal province, but instead would be under the jurisdiction of military police and the new Settlement Commission, now the *Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums* (RKF) led by Himmler. The eastern third of Poland was taken over by the Soviets, and the central, southern remaining chunk of Polish land was named the *Generalgouvernement* (as it had been in the First World War), with its capitol in Krakow (and the sleepy town of Oswiecim, better known by its German name, Auschwitz, 65 km west of that city). This strange frontier space, the planned future dumping ground for the Jews and Poles of the *Warthegau*, resembled in some ways the Umatilla Reserve Sering passed through in 1883, a place where "lesser" peoples were sent to, ideally, die off.

As was planned in the First World War, the bulk of new German settlers were to be the *Volksdeutsche* currently spread throughout Eastern Europe. They were to return and be consolidated on German soil, *Heim ins Reich*, as the saying went, back home in the Empire. Immediately in September 1939, Darré began to put together a survey of Polish estates in the *Warthegau* and canvassed old Prussian administrators, asking them for a list of "trustworthy" German farmers to oversee these farms once the current owners were removed.<sup>7</sup> In November, a memorandum was put together that strongly echoed the "border strip" plan of 1915: a 150 km deep *Ostwall* of soldier-farmers (*Wehrbauern*) was to be created. First, the Poles and the Jews were to be removed, dumped into the *Generalgouvernement* reserve. The *Volksdeutsche* would then be settled in this cleared space, but also, importantly, the very Reich Germans who had previously lived in Posen and West Prussia and who had had their old farms taken by the newly-created Poland after 1919, would have their old farms returned to them. In language that would have filled the just deceased Sering's heart with joy, Darré claimed that, for the future agricultural and population needs of Germany, as well as her defense, the *Wartheland* had to be thickly settled by small farming plots.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, as Ulrich Kimpel describes, a special unit (*Einsatzgruppe*) of 100 agrarian officials within the *Wehrmacht* were specifically to go to the pre-First World War property of expelled Germans, and place them "again 'in German hands' and thereby 'have things function as they had earlier in the Settlement Commission'."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Rutherford, *Prelude to the Final Solution*, 56.

<sup>8</sup> Rutherford, *Prelude to the Final Solution*, 66–72.

<sup>9</sup> Ulrich Kimpel, "Agrarreform und Bevölkerungspolitik. Bäuerliche Siedlungspolitik, rassische Auslese und Agrarstrukturänderung durch den Reichsnährstand und das

As Sering took to his deathbed, in early November, the first transit camp, in the Głowno industrial section outside Posen, was being set up. That term is of course strongly associated with the Holocaust, and so a word here now about the “ethnic” order of removal. Already in September, even before the decision was made to settle *Volksdeutsche* in the *Warthegau*, it was decided that all 550,000 Jews in the *Gau* would be removed over the coming year, transited to the *Generalgouvernement*.<sup>10</sup> Yet, the large Jewish population of Lodz was not ghettoized until the following year.<sup>11</sup> Because we know that the Jews were racial enemy number one to the Nazi regime, why then was the first transit camp to be set up, in Głowno, for Poles? Why is it that the “racial state” made it their first goal to rid this space of Poles, before then turning their attention to the hated Jew? The answer is quite simple: Poles had farms. Removing the largely urban Jewish population would have done little to create a belt of Spartan warrior-farmers, would not have been immediately helpful to the inner colonization of the German East. Nevertheless, this grand experiment the Germans were about to undertake against the Poles would provide many lessons on how, and how not, to conduct their later, more “successful,” deportation and destruction of the Jewish population. This was, as Rutherford titles his book, a “prelude to the Final Solution.”

The first deportation took place from December 1 to 17, 1939, when 87,000 Poles (including some Jews) were successfully removed to the *Generalgouvernement*. However, it immediately became clear to occupation authorities that losing so much labour so quickly was incredibly disruptive to the agricultural economy of what was supposed to become the “breadbasket” of the Third Reich. Further, thousands of deported Poles were returning home, either by receiving an official allowance from the *Wehrmacht* to gather forgotten items, or merely by walking back. The authorities in Hohensalza (Inowrocław) reported on February 19, 1940 that fully 20 percent of deportees were once again living in their old homes.<sup>12</sup> A week earlier, Goering loudly complained that Germany could not afford to lose such precious labour and, while Himmler

Reichministerium für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft,” in *Modelle für ein deutsches Europa. Ökonomie und Herrschaft im Großwirtschaftsraum*, ed. Götz Aly (Berlin: Rotbuch, 1992), 138. For an excellent history of the *Warthegau*, and the devastating impact of Nazi agricultural policies there, see Catherine Epstein, *Model Nazi: Arthur Greiser and the Occupation of Western Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>10</sup> Rutherford, *Prelude to the Final Solution*, 43.

<sup>11</sup> Mark Mazower, *Hitler's Empire: How the Nazis Ruled Europe* (New York: Penguin, 2008), 87.

<sup>12</sup> The first deportation is the subject of chapter 2 in Rutherford, *Prelude to the Final Solution*.

disagreed and was not pleased, he did consent to slow the arrival of incoming *Volksdeutsche*, who at this point were mainly from the Soviet occupied east of Poland. The second deportation began on March 1, 1940 and lasted until January 20, 1941, and officially claimed the removal of 133,000 Polish peasants. The original plan for this deportation included Jews, but this was completely abandoned, again because such a move would not free up farmland for incoming German settlers.<sup>13</sup> Thus, for a brief moment, the dreams and plans of a decades-old understanding of German inner colonization, a colonial vision in which the subjugation and removal of Poles was paramount, appeared to be more important to certain members of the Nazi occupation of Eastern Europe than was the “Jewish Question.” Yet, simultaneously, the fate of the subjects of Hitler’s true obsession was being prepared, with the gates first closed on the new Lodz ghetto on April 30, 1940.

It was the ultimate Nazi inheritor of Sering’s dream, Konrad Meyer, who at this point stepped in and commenced inner colonization “without obstacles.” In January 1940 he began drawing up the plans for the settlement in the *Warthegau* of his new crop of settlers, the *Volksdeutsche* of the East. After first returning farms to their rightful German owners, including those of the old Settlement Commission, the transformation of traditionally “Polish” property into German would take place. In a move like the pre-1914 settlement, the repopulation of already German areas with more and more Germans, who would then spread out and isolate islands of Polish speakers, was the goal. For his plan, Meyer declared that he would need 1.8 million German settlers. When, however, over the course of 1940, it became increasingly obvious that the Germans would not (and economically could not afford to) remove all Poles, something began to happen that, quite simply, could not (ideologically) have taken place with the Jewish population. The colonial gaze began to see Germans where it had earlier seen Poles. The less “dangerous” blood of Slavs, it turned out, could, with a little imagination, be seen as “German” enough. With Meyer’s pushing, by May 1940, Himmler was convinced that there were probably around a million “Germans” among the eight million Poles in the *Warthegau*, and that they could be found and properly classified through a system of racial screening. This process began and indeed successfully “found” Germans, and thereby proved that the Poles as the main target of Nazi

<sup>13</sup> The second deportation is the subject of chapter 3 in Rutherford, *Prelude to the Final Solution*.

occupation was only temporary, and that the true racial enemy of the Third Reich would soon receive all the attention of the occupiers.<sup>14</sup>

Much of the story of settlement in the new East can be traced in the pages of the Meyer-helmed *NB*. "The Big Trek out of Eastern Poland," was a long article in early 1940, full of images of Germans on the move. The author tells the tale of the massive migration of *Volksdeutsche* from the eastern third of Poland (now occupied by the Soviets), and their arrival in the newly annexed *Warthegau*. There they were given old German settlements, farms that had been successfully developed for decades, but had, according to the author, recently fallen into terrible disrepair under Polish hegemony. Indeed, it was claimed that some of these villages were beyond repair, and the article included sketches of villages to be created as ideal settlements for these new arrivals.<sup>15</sup> In the next issue, the man who Himmler had put in charge of running the RKF, *SS-Brigadeführer* Ulrich Greifelt, was quoted as saying that the *Warthegau* was not some new "land of colonial expansion politics, but instead *völkisch Lebensraum*."<sup>16</sup> Another article claimed, first, that in the Middle Ages there was a great movement of peoples, then later the Prussian Settlement Commission had organized incoming farmers. Now Germany was witnessing a melting together of both of those stories, migration plus organized settlement.<sup>17</sup> Hermann Priebe, who would be an important figure in the postwar life of inner colonization to be discussed later in this chapter, penned the article "The Settlement of Baltic German Farmers in the *Warthegau*." He described the arrival in late 1939 of 1,500 Baltic families, 50–60 percent of whom had settled into houses earlier created by the Settlement Commission, while homes built by Poles since 1918 were deemed wholly inadequate for Germans.<sup>18</sup> In the Spring of 1941, editor Konrad Meyer wrote "New People of the Land," in which he alluded to the Prussian Settlement Commission and its faults, and how the Nazis were now going to get it right. He argued that German settlers today had to move on from the "half measures" of the past and should now invoke the "total measures" of the National Socialist movement. Ideally, the properly settled *Warthegau* would have 80 to 100 PPSKM and be a mixture of agrarian and industrial

<sup>14</sup> Rutherford, *Prelude to the Final Solution*, ch. 6.

<sup>15</sup> N.A., "Der grosse Treck aus Ostpolen," *NB* 32 (1940): 53–56.

<sup>16</sup> N.A., "Grundfragen zum Aufbau der neuen Ostgebiete," *NB* 32 (1940), 81.

<sup>17</sup> N.A., "Organisation und Bewegung im neuen Osten," *NB* 32 (1940), 121–127. See also, Hans-Gunther Haenelt, "Der Lokator in der mittelalterlichen Siedlung," *NB* 34 (1942), 404–405.

<sup>18</sup> Hermann Priebe, "Die Ansiedlung baltendeutscher Bauern im Warthegau," *NB* 32 (1940), 163–165.



economies.<sup>19</sup> In a 1941 issue of *Raumforschung und Raumordnung*, Greifelt boasted that, with 180,000 *Volksdeutsche* now settled in the Warthegau, in a mere two years the Nazis had outdone the 170,000 settlers brought in over decades by the Prussian Settlement Commission.<sup>20</sup>

The removals that were making space for these settlers came to a halt on March 15, 1941, just as the third deportation was underway. Quite suddenly, the *Wehrmacht* poured into the province, began clearing areas and setting up bases, and took control of rolling stock. Preparation for the invasion of the Soviet Union brought to an end the last German “inner colonial” program in the Wartheland.<sup>21</sup> Instead, the conquest of huge swaths of land in the east, the Great Advance of 1941, mirroring that of 1915, drew the eyes of the settlement experts ever further away from Germany, to the limitless possibilities of the expanding frontier. Just as occurred in the pages of *AFK* in 1915, by 1942 in *NB*, with the move of the Reich’s border far to the East, the interest of Nazi settlement specialists moved with it. In “The Agrarian Economy in the Ostland and the Ukraine,” Hans-Gunther Haenelt detailed the soil and climate of these distant lands, explaining their agricultural potential.<sup>22</sup> Shortly thereafter Meyer chimed in, pointing out that *Raumenge*, restricted space, had long been Germany’s problem, but that this was now solved. Simultaneously, with a nod to the concerns always being raised by Darré, Meyer emphasized that biology was nevertheless crucial when it came to those who settled the land, and that only the most fit were to be chosen for such a great task.<sup>23</sup>

In 1940, with the “modest” gain of most of Poland, Konrad Meyer penned what would be the first iteration of the infamous General Plan East (*Generalplan Ost*, hereafter GPO).<sup>24</sup> This plan, calling for the emptying of the eastern space, followed by its filling with German

<sup>19</sup> Konrad Meyer, “Neues Landvolk,” *NB* 33 (1941), 93.

<sup>20</sup> This is the lowest guess I have seen, regarding the total number of settlers pre-1914. Greifelt is quoted in Rutherford, *Prelude to the Final Solution*, 173.

<sup>21</sup> Rutherford, *Prelude to the Final Solution*, 180ff.

<sup>22</sup> Hans-Gunther Haenelt, “Die landwirtschaft im Ostland und in der Ukraine,” *NB* 34 (1942): 31–33.

<sup>23</sup> Konrad Meyer, “Der Osten als Aufgabe und Verpflichtung des Germanentums,” *NB* 34 (1942): 205–208.

<sup>24</sup> See the collection of essays in Isabel Heinemann and Patrick Wagner, eds., *Wissenschaft – Planung – Vertreibung. Neuordnungskonzepte und Umsiedlungspolitik im 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2006), and the collection of primary documents in Mechthild Rössler and Sabine Schleiermacher, eds., *Der “Generalplan Ost”. Hauptlinien der nationalsozialistischen Planungs- und Vernichtungspolitik* (Berlin: Akademie, 1993). The clearest expression of Meyer’s thinking about the East can be found in Konrad Meyer, “Siedlungs- und Aufbauarbeit im deutschen Osten,” *Die Bewegung* 8 (1941): 7.



settlers, was continually modified as the front moved east, until the defeat of the German army at Stalingrad put a sobering stop to such fantasies. In the various versions of these plans, the colonial desire for emptiness is everywhere apparent, but how that cleansing was to be achieved is never detailed. When Meyer discussed the “de-urbanization” (*Entstädterung*) of Leningrad, he did not explain the method for the reduction of that city’s population by three million. The same was the case for Warsaw. This elimination of whole cities was part of perhaps the most extreme form of “high modern,” *tabula rasa* planning of all, the Central Place Theory of geographer Walter Christaller.<sup>25</sup> Christaller had risen through the ranks of Nazi spatial planning during the 1930s, and proffered an efficient networking theory for a plan of medium to small sized settlements. This concept was to be put into effect in the conquered East, where the colonizer could, theoretically, do whatever they wished. Christaller would write that, in a colonial situation, it was much easier to put his ideas into practice.<sup>26</sup>

The most famous example of settlement planning beyond the *Warthegau* was in and around Zamosc, renamed Himmlerstadt, in the dumping ground of the *Generalgouvernement*. The region first experienced an ethnic cleansing from late 1941, followed by the attempted settlement of Germans throughout 1942. As the Red Army approached in 1943, the scheme was abandoned. In terrain more familiar to settlement attempts in the First World War, Lithuania saw its *Volksdeutsche*

<sup>25</sup> Seminal here, on high modern, *tabula rasa* planning, is James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

<sup>26</sup> See Michael G. Esch, “‘Ohne Rücksicht auf historisch Gewordenes’: Raumplanung und Raumordnung im besetzten Polen 1939–44,” in Aly, *Modelle für ein deutsches Europa*, 77–123. See the seminal article, Walter Christaller, “Grundgedanken zum Siedlungs- und Verwaltungsaufbau im Osten,” *NB* 32 (1940): 305–312. Christaller’s influence can be seen in Herbert Frank, “Das Bauen von Dörfern,” *NB* 32 (1940), 225ff, and W. Grebe, “Zur gestaltung neuer Höfe und Dörfer im deutschen Osten,” *NB* 32 (1940), 57–60. Walter Christaller’s ideas would become the guiding formula for the planned settlement of “empty space” in the Canadian Prairies of the 1960s. With regard to the fantasy of emptiness, here are the eerie words of the obituary for Christaller in the *Canadian Geographer* (Vol. 14, no. 1, p. 68): “Christaller’s mind was not geared to study how the central place theory works in the context of the real world, where so many variables modify the theoretically postulated pattern.” Finally, in Trevor J. Barnes and Claudio Minca, “Nazi Spatial Theory: The Dark Geographies of Carl Schmitt and Walter Christaller,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 103 (2013): 669–687, the argument is made that the damning contribution to geography made, especially by Christaller, was “deterritorialization” followed by “reterritorialization.” But, the history of wanting to make space empty before settling, the imagining, and fantasizing about such emptiness, long predates these thinkers. The obvious and deep connection to the history of settler colonialism is not made by these authors.

initially leave for the *Warthegau* but, as the Nazi vision expanded, the Baltic region once again became a site of eastern colonization. A fascinating article, by Dr. Robert Stupperich, appeared in a 1941 issue of the *Ostforscher* periodical *Jomsburg*. "Settlement Plans in the Area of Ober Ost during the World War," examined Ludendorff's belief at the time that "the experiences of settlement in the Province of Posen should be put to use," but the tone of the article suggested that such half measures were weak.<sup>27</sup> Further still, an *NB* editorial in 1943 contained a quote by Himmler, stating that the old style of settlement, with its belief that German language lessons and schooling could assimilate the Slavs, was over, and instead only those with German blood would be allowed in the East. Although Darré had been removed from power in 1942, the editorial went on to affirm that the law of the "new East" would be based on his *Erbhofrecht*, and that one should not assume that Sering's RSG would always contain "the ultimate wisdom" (*der Weisheit letzter Schluss*).<sup>28</sup> Amazingly, despite the vast territory now under German control, at the end of 1943 there was a rather old-fashioned-sounding article in *NB* on "Moorland as Areas for Settlement."<sup>29</sup> Ultimately, some 19,000 Germans were brought in to settle Lithuania from 1942 to 1943, before, again, the Soviets forced an end to such fantasies.<sup>30</sup> In the summer of 1944, with the Red Army outside of Warsaw, *NB* continued to discuss the work of settlement to be done in Germany and the East. The last issue, number ten, had rather Sering-like language on the importance of *Land* for the *Volk*, alongside one last article on the "Landstadt" (a countryside city of three to four thousand people) by Christaller, a man who seemed to ignore all of the obstacles Sering had always had to deal with, such as traditions, laws, and, most importantly, people.<sup>31</sup> A note inserted into the bound volume 36 (1944) indicated that, due to "total war," production of the *NB* had come to an end. Of course, all the settlement plans ended in failure and the overall GPO

<sup>27</sup> Robert Stupperich, "Siedlungspläne im Gebiet des Oberbefehlshabers Ost (Militärverwaltung Litauen und Kurland) während des Weltkrieges," *Jomsburg* 5 (1941): 348–367.

<sup>28</sup> N.A., "Neues Bauerntum im neuen Lebensraum," *NB* 35 (1943), 41–42. On Darré's struggles, and ultimate ouster, see Uwe Mai, "Rasse und Raum": *Agarpolitik, Sozial- und Raumplanung im NS-Staat* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2002).

<sup>29</sup> Karl Bär, "Moorböden als Siedlungsgebiete," *NB* 35 (1943), 211–213.

<sup>30</sup> Christoph Dieckmann, "Plan und Praxis. Deutsche Siedlungspolitik im besetzten Litauen 1941–1944," in Heinemann and Wagner, *Wissenschaft – Planung – Vertreibung*, 93–118.

<sup>31</sup> Walter Christaller, "Die Landstadt als Stufe des Siedlungsaufbaus," *NB* 36 (1944): 300–304.

remained largely a blueprint. But again, for our purposes, the plans of these thinkers reinforce over and over again that the entire population of the East was seen through a radical colonial lens. One of the most famous statistics from the GPO is the statement that some thirty million people, Slavs and Jews, were expected to be eliminated. The vast majority of those deaths were to occur via starvation but, as we know, some six million were murdered much more quickly.<sup>32</sup>

In the Summer of 1941, behind the quickly advancing *Wehrmacht*, the *Einsatzgruppen*, the specialized units that had earlier rounded up and shot members of the Polish intelligentsia, as well as thousands of other civilians and Jews in 1939, now began the truly mass, or “wild” shootings of Jews, in eastern Poland and into Belarus. Over the winter of 1941–1942, some half million people, mainly Jews, were killed in this fashion and, by certain definitions, the Holocaust was now underway. Of course, the genocide of European Jewry is most closely associated with gas chambers. It was back in the *Wartheland*, in the small village of Chelmno ad Nerem (renamed Kulmhof), some fifty kilometres north of Lodz, that the first of the six Nazi extermination camps began operating. On December 8, 1941, two gas vans were used to begin killing Jews brought to Chelmno from the Lodz ghetto. In our story of the shift from removing Poles to eliminating Jews as the main goal in the *Wartheland*, the commander of the Chelmno extermination camp, *SS-Obersturmführer* Herbert Lange, had already been experimenting with gas vans in 1940, murdering 1,558 Polish mental patients at the nearby Soldau concentration camp.<sup>33</sup>

Similarly, in the summer of 1940, Auschwitz was initially set up as a concentration camp and an execution site for Poles. Timothy Snyder goes so far as to write that, in the original plans for the occupied East, because Slavs primarily owned the land, their fate appeared worse than that of the Jews. Those early plans depended on the eventual deportation of Jews East, or to Madagascar. With Operation Barbarossa, however, that option closed and by the end of 1941, with three Great Powers allied against Germany, Hitler’s language of a worldwide conspiracy of Jewish control altered the equation in the *Warthegau* and elsewhere. The focus

<sup>32</sup> Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 162.

<sup>33</sup> Henry Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution* (Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 138–139. Importantly, among the very first victims of gassing were Germans, who, along with Poles and Jews, were patients in asylums outside Danzig, Swinemünde, and Stettin, targets of the T-4 Euthanasia program. Shelley Baranowski, *Nazi Empire: German Colonialism and Imperialism from Bismarck to Hitler* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 253.

on the much more numerous Slavs shifted, as “[t]he menace henceforth was less the Slavic masses and their supposed Jewish overlords, and more the Jews as such.”<sup>34</sup>

All Jews were now deemed “partisans,” and would be treated accordingly. Thomas Kühne has written thoughtfully on the links between colonialism and the Holocaust, including the legacy of Germany’s relationship with the people of Eastern Europe, but remains circumspect on the connection.<sup>35</sup> Although this book has not been about the history of antisemitism, and while direct and total genocide was not the fate of the Poles, it is inescapably crucial to understand the murder of the European Jews as taking place within the space of a truly radical settler colonialism that understood all non-German people of the East as “vanishing races,” people with no future. Six million Jews, and at least that many non-Jewish, non-German people in Eastern Europe, were murdered by the Germans. And there is strong evidence to believe that tens of millions more would have starved to death had German victory in the East been secured.<sup>36</sup> A mindset that saw the East as a radical colonial space in which one could undertake whatever one thought best, was invented over decades.

One final time we return to the moment Sering travelled through the Umatilla reservation, and then later visited the Métis at St. Laurent in Manitoba. Sering witnessed both methods of colonial erasure: removal and assimilation. He was decidedly in favour of the latter. The “structural genocide” of Nazi settler colonialism in the *Warthegau*, however, insisted that ultimately the Poles were to disappear. In this case, to physically die off, like the Umatilla. But the Poles, at least temporarily, were to occupy a special category unaccounted for in Wolfe’s framework: the role of Poles as slaves became more important than their territory, thus they were to continue existing until their labour was no longer required. However, and reminiscent of the Métis, as the war progressed more and more Poles were “classified” as Germans and were thus “erased” in a non-lethal manner, that is, assimilated. There was,

<sup>34</sup> Snyder, *Bloodlands*, 215. In a later work, Snyder makes the argument that one required the removal of a state apparatus for the Holocaust to begin. That in many ways mirrors my argument that, in the radical, colonial state, one undertakes what “laws” tend to prevent. Timothy Snyder, *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning* (New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2015), 85.

<sup>35</sup> Thomas Kühne, “Colonialism and the Holocaust: Continuities, Causations, and Complexities,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 15 (2013): 339–362.

<sup>36</sup> The architect of the “hunger plan” was the man who ultimately usurped Darré, Herbert Backe. See Gesine Gerhard, “Food and Genocide: Nazi Agrarian Politics in the Occupied Territories of the Soviet Union,” *Contemporary European History* 18 (2009): 45–65.

however, no such escape for the ultimate “enemy” of Hitler, as neither territory nor labour were ever sought from the Jews. Wolfe importantly delinks genocide from settler colonialism because, sometimes, a race is to be eliminated purely because of their race.

### **The Final Inner Colonizations: Poland, East Germany, West Germany**

*The Final Inner Colonization of the Wartheland: Western Poland, 1945–1948*

There is a great irony regarding the central theme of this book. The long story of the attempt to Germanize the lands along the Warta River via the settlement of German farmers, and either the assimilation or removal of Poles living there, culminated in the complete and totally successful inner colonization of the *Wartheland* by the Poles. At the end of the Second World War, the borders of pre-war Poland shifted significantly to the west. The Soviet Union annexed the eastern third of Poland, while the new western border of Poland moved all the way to the Oder river, some eighty kilometres east of Berlin. As of 1944, some eight million ethnic Germans lived within what would become modern Poland. Six million of them fled the oncoming Red Army and, of those, about a million returned after the war. Thus, in 1945, Poland had three million ethnic Germans, almost all of them in these newly acquired western provinces. In an uncanny echo of November 1939, more than one million refugees were uprooted from formerly eastern Poland and made the “trek” westward to the *Wartheland*, only this time, instead of *Volksdeutsche*, they were Poles. Just as in November 1939, a decision was made to “nationalize” the *Wartheland* by first removing the “incorrect” nationality, and then providing those now empty homes and farms to the incoming “correct” nationality. But this “inner colonization” would be much more “successful” than all previous German attempts. Over the course of the summer and fall of 1945, through a mixture of organized governmental and military action, alongside citizen-motivated unofficial actions, the vast majority of the remaining three million ethnic Germans were expelled.<sup>37</sup> One imagines newly arriving eastern Poles discovering war-torn, empty farms for the taking, just as Sering had seen

<sup>37</sup> Philipp Ther, “The Integration of Expellees in Germany and Poland after World War II: A Historical Reassessment,” *Slavic Review* 55 (1996): 779–805.

in Latvia in 1915.<sup>38</sup> And in another move eerily reminiscent of Nazi flexibility in 1940/1941, the Polish government took up the German *Volksliste*, the ranking of the Germanness and/or Polishness of each person in the area, and simply reclassified many of the remaining Germans as Poles. Thus, mainly through removal, but also via assimilation, at long last, by 1948, more than a century into the process, the *Wartheland* was finally, successfully, “inner colonized.”<sup>39</sup>

*The Final Destruction of the Junker Estates: East German Inner Colonization, 1945–1948*

Immediately in May and June of 1945, in occupied East Germany, the Soviet authorities, working with the German Communist and Social Democratic parties, began preparing to permanently end the reign of the *Junker*. On September 3, the expropriation of *Junker* land began, in order to make these “guilty” landowners “harmless forever.” All farms over 100 ha (not merely the one third Sering had clamoured for in 1919) were turned into 5–10 ha plots to be made available to incoming expellees, former agricultural workers, as well as those city dwellers whose factories had been bombed out. In total, 770,000 ha were seized in this manner. Thousands of *Junker* and other large landholding families were sent to the isle of Rügen, off the Baltic coast, where they were dispersed among the residents there. Many starved and, although they were forbidden to leave the island, thousands escaped to the West. Nevertheless, in a strange echo of the Polish deportations of 1939/1940, several landowners wandered back to their farms in 1946, rehired their former labourers, and continued as before. Overall, this radical inner

<sup>38</sup> See also Gregor Thum, “Integrating without a Host Society: The Repopulation of Poland’s Western Territories after 1945,” in *Refugee Crises 1945–2000: Political and Societal Responses in International Comparison*, ed. Jan C. Jansen and Simone Lässig (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 55–82. Thum points out that the best housing had already been seized by Poles from Central Poland (i.e., from the thoroughly razed Warsaw), before the eastern refugees arrived. Paul McNamara further points out that, unlike the usual “modernizing” undertaken by a colonizing people, the Soviet removal of much heavy industry from the *Wartheland* as “reparations” resulted in exactly the opposite effect, and made this space much less appealing to the arriving Poles. Fascinatingly, he also cites the Polish use of “internal colonialism” in post-war documents when referring to this space. Paul McNamara, “Layered Colonialism: Colonisation and Sovietisation in Poland’s Recovered Territories,” in *The Shadow of Colonialism on Europe’s Modern Past*, ed. Róisín Healy and Enrico Dal Lago (London: Palgrave, 2014), 211–227.

<sup>39</sup> For the seminal study on how the same occurred in Silesia, see Peter Polak-Springer, *Recovered Territory: A German–Polish Conflict over Land and Culture, 1919–1989* (New York: Berghahn, 2015).

colonization was an utter failure. The Soviets requisitioned a huge portion of the farm animals and machinery of East Germany and, after failed attempts at hand-ploughing, many farms were soon abandoned. Two years after the war ended, some 80,000 families from the East had been settled, but 600,000 people were still in displaced persons camps.<sup>40</sup> By 1961, 800,000 of the expellees in East Germany had indeed gone to the West, where many of them managed to purchase their own farms and were part of the last, great inner colonial project.<sup>41</sup> One can only imagine the horror Max Sering would have felt if he had witnessed this final, radical culmination of his long sought after goal of breaking up and parceling *Junker* estates.

*The Final German Inner Colonization: West Germany, 1945–1981*

The full return of the inner colonizers is best recognized with the re-founding in 1952 of the *Archiv für innere Kolonisation*, this time entitled *Zeitschrift für das gesamte Siedlungswesen* (hereafter, *ZGS*, and from 1956 *IKO*, for *Innere Kolonisation: Zeitschrift für Fragen der Siedlung, Landesplanung, Agrarstruktur und Flurbereingigung*). The opening issue's editorial, "Dissolution and Rebirth: The Work of the GFK in the New Settlement Movement" made it quite clear that they, like much of German social science, would treat the twelve-year-long Third Reich as an abnormality, excising it from any sense of continuum in the great German academic tradition. It was therefore declared that this journal was the continuation of the publication *AFK*, and not what it was renamed in 1934, *NB*. And, just like old times, Erich Keup was back as the editor, while heading the editorial team was none other than Constantin von Dietze.<sup>42</sup> That first editorial provided a quick *tour d'horizon* of the GFK, mentioning Sering and Schwerin as its founders, and conveniently failing to mention the tainted Alfred Hugenberg. After having been dissolved in 1934, the GFK was re-founded on June 6, 1946 in Lübeck, in the British occupied zone of West Germany. The authors detailed how, during and in the wake of the First World War, the

<sup>40</sup> Norman M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945–1949* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 150–161.

<sup>41</sup> Ther, "Integration of Expellees," 800. See also Arnd Bauerkämper, *Ländliche Gesellschaft in der kommunistischen Diktatur: Zwangsmodernisierung und Tradition in Brandenburg 1945–1963* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2002).

<sup>42</sup> "Auflösung und Wiederbeginn: Das Wirken der GFK in der neuen Siedlungsbewegung," *ZGS* 1 (1952): 1. Dietze was ensnared in the July 20 Plot against Hitler and was awaiting execution at Plötzensee Prison when the end of the war spared him.



GFK organized the settlement of those Germans forced out of the East, and that this was now once again the role of the inner colonizers.

Their expertise was in fact much needed for it was the rural, agricultural areas of West Germany that faced the most immediate crisis with the arrival of the expellees. Half of all West German housing in 1945 was damaged or destroyed, with most major cities bearing the brunt of this loss. Already an enormous number of city dwellers had moved to the countryside and they were now joined by millions of expellees, crammed into whatever rural dwellings were available. Although this initially exacerbated the food crisis, ultimately all this new labour would result in a boom in agricultural output, something that surely pleased the inner colonizers. Alas, there were no large *Junker* estates to break up as most farms in the West were already small. This resulted, as the settlement experts surely expected, in 600,000 landless labourers, two thirds of whom were expellees. Many of them would migrate, ultimately, to the cities.<sup>43</sup>

What would become the final mission of inner colonization, the settlement of the expellees from the East onto land in rump West Germany, would be the focus of the re-founded journal for the next twenty years. In the second issue, the man who would later become the second president of the Federal Republic, Heinrich Lübke, wrote “The Mission of Inner Colonization.” After mentioning some of the old tropes, such as how good it was for farmers to own their own land, he wondered where Germany should now put the 200,000 expellee families. With only 0.2 ha per person in West Germany, it would be tight, he pointed out, but they would make do.<sup>44</sup> Another author declared that the era of proclaiming that Germans were a “*Volk ohne Raum*” (people without land/room) was over, and instead, with long expertise in inner colonization, they would figure it out.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, Sering’s RSG of 1919 was still on the books, and this issue contained a series of suggestions for amending the law to be able to deal with the new circumstances. In fact, it was declared that, for the first time ever, inner colonization had more settlers than space, and that the government was completely

<sup>43</sup> Still the best source in English on the settlement in West Germany of the expellees is Karen L. Gatz, “East Prussian and Sudeten German expellees in West Germany, 1945–1960: A comparison of their social and cultural integration” (PhD dissertation, Indiana University, 1989).

<sup>44</sup> Heinrich Lübke, “Die Aufgaben der inneren Kolonisation,” ZGS 1 (1952): 33–35.

<sup>45</sup> Joseph P. Franken, “Innere kolonisation – Landesplanung und Raumordnung,” ZGS 1 (1952): 36–38.

supportive of their efforts.<sup>46</sup> It could have also been pointed out that the *Junker* were now gone. Here, at the end of the story, inner colonization strangely experienced a heyday.

Later, in 1954, Erich Keup penned a fascinating article that neatly blended the long-term history of inner colonization into something he believed the Allies needed. In “Why Was and Why Is Inner Colonization a European Problem?” Keup argued that the occupiers had learned that, as opposed to being simply an “anti-Polish” tool, inner colonization was, in fact, an anti-*Junker* program, and a device to create a thickly settled *Schutzwall* (protective barrier) against the Asiatic hordes that had threatened (and now threaten again) not only Germany but all of Europe. Both were goals the Allies would surely agree to support, and, Keup argued, they best support the provision of land to incoming German expellees, or else they would wander back east.<sup>47</sup> Two years later, an editorial argued that the mission of inner colonization had in fact changed very little since a speech by Otto von Gierke in 1893 in which he argued that the land needed to be populated and healthy in order to stave off the rise of Communism. The editorial went on to claim that such a healthy relationship between men and the land in the agricultural sphere was today’s mission and, while in the past filling the empty East had been paramount, today, the goal was slowing the damaging effects industrialization was having upon agriculture.<sup>48</sup> Although elements of agrarian romanticism had of course always been a part of inner colonization, here in this final phase we see the more modern language of environmentalism begin to creep into the journal, something that, once the expellees were settled, would become the *raison d’être* of the publication.

Sering’s 100th birthday was celebrated in the 1957 volume. The pragmatic shift in the gaze of the colonizer was on open display in the accompanying editorial, as the author stated that one merely had to swap out Sering’s use of the “East” with places like “Westphalia,” and it all still meant the same thing for Germany. The proof of this, argued the author, was the fact that the 1919 Lex Sering was still functioning, despite the

<sup>46</sup> N.A., “Vorschläge zur Reform des Reichssiedlungsgesetz,” *ZGS* 1 (1952): 51–53. For details on the provision of farms to refugees in West Germany, see Ian Connor, *Refugees and Expellees in Post-War Germany* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 140–147.

<sup>47</sup> Erich Keup, “Warum war und warum ist innere Kolonisation ein europäisches Problem?” *ZGS* 3 (1954): 157–163.

<sup>48</sup> N.A., “Innere Kolonisation,” *IKO* 5 (1956): 1.

loss of the East.<sup>49</sup> Three years later, in “Visiting German Farmers in Canada,” the new co-editor of the journal, Johann Haefs, described his twenty-three day summer journey through Canada, seventy-seven years after Sering’s first trip. Modern transportation was on full display as Haefs travelled from Halifax to Vancouver and back, 13,500 km, in three weeks, by car, plane, and train. He noted that there continued to be many empty farms in the Prairies, with the boom in industrialization during the First World War having attracted many farmers permanently to the cities. He noted that a soldier settlement scheme in the wake of that war had tapped non-farmers and had, thus, been a failure. He therefore advised that anyone arriving in Canada should first work on a farm, before purchasing one. The article then ended with exactly the opposite of Sering’s earlier findings: if a German could not get a farm in Germany, they should go to Canada. There was no mention about the maintenance of one’s *Deutschtum*.<sup>50</sup>

Instead of the earlier international focus of *AFK*, where other forms of inner colonization had been studied in order to find “best practices” for Germany, now the journal described settlement areas of the world in terms of how well they could support German emigrant farmers, as in the piece on Canada. In the very first volume, in 1952, “Settlement Land in Chile,” advertised the opportunity being provided for twenty German families to go and settle there. Further, there were descendants of 1848ers there who were ready and willing to help incoming Germans.<sup>51</sup> The first issue of 1953 was dedicated to “emigration,” with an editorial claiming that there were multiple opportunities for Germans overseas, and that the connections made via such migration would be good for Germany’s standing in the world. A description of possibilities in Brazil<sup>52</sup> was followed by a somewhat discordant article by the venerable Erich Keup, on the history of German settlement in East Africa, referencing earlier colonialism and ending with the statement that Germans were still there today.<sup>53</sup> An article in 1961, by which time most expellees had been settled, described the changing role of the GFK since 1912, noting that today it was just as much focused on healthy settlement overseas as it was

<sup>49</sup> N.A., “Max Sering,” *IKO* 6 (1957): 1–2. This editorial directly mentioned the moment in 1913 that the *Juncker* Oldenburg-Januschau embarrassed Sering in front of the Kaiser. Sering clearly spoke of it later in life.

<sup>50</sup> Johann H. Haefs, “Besuch deutsche Bauern in Kanada,” *IKO* 9 (1960): 247–250.

<sup>51</sup> Siegfried Palmer, “Siedlungsland Chile? Notizen während einer Studienreise,” *ZGS* 1 (1952): 198–200.

<sup>52</sup> Emil Rauch, “Brasilien als Siedlungsland,” *ZGS* 2 (1953): 8–13. See also Helmut Wagner, “Innere Kolonisation im brasilianischen Nordosten,” *IKO* 14 (1965): 12–13.

<sup>53</sup> Erich Keup, “Die Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft,” *ZGS* 2 (1953): 13–15.

within Germany.<sup>54</sup> 1966 saw a return in interest to a model of inner colonization once mentioned in *AFK* in 1912, with the analysis “Regarding Problems with Inner Colonization in Israel.”<sup>55</sup> And a carefully worded piece from 1970, by one Maria von Baratta, on Poland’s agrarian politics, described what was happening in the new western provinces, with the word “*Polonisierung*” in scare quotes. She stated that the land had been “liberated” from Germans and was now successfully settled with Poles.<sup>56</sup>

Slowly but surely during the 1950s and 1960s, there was a passing of the guard as major figures from past inner colonization found their way to the grave. In the first volume of *ZGS* it was noted that both Silvio Broedrich and Max Stolt had died. The old Balt had purportedly died a happy man, but not in the Courland of his youth, and instead on a homestead in Holstein. Stolt was said to have been rather unhappy with his final Holstein home, having been expelled from the now Polish Stettin (Szczecin).<sup>57</sup> Yet another inner colonizer, Wilhelm Boyens, ended up in Holstein after 1945. His expulsion, however, amounted to a full circle homecoming as he happened to have come from there in the first place. His obituary appeared in 1956.<sup>58</sup> Finally, in 1973, one of the most central pre-1933 and post-1945 inner colonizers, Erich Keup, died. In a ritual that maintained the inner colonial link over the disaster of the Third Reich, Keup had been awarded the “Max Sering Medal” in 1965. The inaugural version of this award had in fact been given to Heinrich Lübke in 1962, and its annual presentation was featured in the journal until the honour, and the theme of settlement in general, largely disappeared by the 1970s.<sup>59</sup>

Alongside these triumphant “moderates” however, the post-war years turned out to be just fine for the *Raumplaner* of the GPO. Konrad Meyer found himself in the *Sudetengau* when the war ended. He ripped off his SS insignia and hiked at night in a northwesterly direction for twelve

<sup>54</sup> Friedrich Greiff, “Zeitgemäße Förderung der inneren Kolonisation als Aufgabe der GFK,” *IKO* 10 (1961): 1–6.

<sup>55</sup> Dieter Partzsch, “Zur Problematik der inneren Kolonisation Israels,” *IKO* 15 (1966): 105–109.

<sup>56</sup> Maria von Baratta, “Polens Agrarpolitik,” *IKO* 19 (1970): 96–100.

<sup>57</sup> “Silvio Broedrich” and “Dr. Max Stolt,” *ZGS* 1 (1952): 103–104.

<sup>58</sup> “Wilhelm Friedrich Boyens,” *IKO* 5 (1956): 22–24. Boyens was a key figure in reviving the “inner colonizers” after the war and was nearing completion of what would become a seminal history of the entire movement when he died: Wilhelm Friedrich Boyens, *Die Geschichte der ländlichen Siedlung*. 2 vols. (Berlin: Landschriften-Verlag, 1959/60).

<sup>59</sup> “Dr. Erich Keup zum Gedächtnis,” *IKO* 22 (1973): 73; “Verleihung der Max Sering-Medaille an Dr. Erich Keup,” *IKO* 14 (1965): 346–350; “Bundespräsident Dr. h. c. Heinrich Lübke,” *IKO* 11 (1962): 274.

days, 250 km, successfully escaping to the West, where he was then interred. At the Nuremberg trials, he was faced by a “Jewish prosecutor,” whom he claimed in his outrageously unapologetic memoir, was full of “mockery and ridicule.”<sup>60</sup> Meyer, as well as other *Ostforscher*, were cleared of crimes against humanity, as it was believed they were merely academic “theorists” who did not actually do anything. After having served three years in prison (guilty only of having been in the SS), Meyer simply waited out the Denazification period, and in 1956 was appointed Professor of *Raumforschung* at the Technical University of Hannover. In 1963, there was an attempt to appoint him as a consultant to the European Economic Community (EEC) and it took the forceful and vengeful intervention of Dietze to put a stop to it.<sup>61</sup> Earlier, in 1950, Dietze heard that a protégé of Darré’s, Dr. Saure, had found work with the Americans. He had been rather bitter about it, but what could he do: “The old Nazis are everywhere sitting secure in the saddle, and too many today are again seeking their favour.”<sup>62</sup>

The last of the “temporary” camps set up for expellees in West Germany closed in 1971 and, indeed, by the end of the 1960s, the settling of those from the east was no longer discussed in the *IKO*. Volume 18, in 1969, had a definite sense of nostalgia for the work of inner colonization, with a long historical piece on “Settlement Politics and Settlement Practice in Prussia between Reform and Revolution (1807–1919),” as well as a fiftieth anniversary celebration of Sering’s 1919 Settlement Law.<sup>63</sup> With the final act of inner colonization complete, the 1970s saw the

<sup>60</sup> Konrad Meyer, “Auf Tiefen und Höhen. Ein Lebensbericht,” (written after 1971), in Barch K N 1561/24, 150.

<sup>61</sup> Willi Oberkrome, “Konsens und Opposition. Max Sering, Constantin von Dietze und das ‘rechte Lager’ 1920–1940,” *Zeitschrift für Agrargeschichte und Agrarsoziologie* 55 (2007): 10. After referring to Meyer as the “brown ghost” of the 1938 conference in Banff, L. K. Elmhirst made sure that he was not invited to be a part of the International Agrarian Conferences after 1945. See, Theodor Dams, “‘Machtergreifung?’ – Kontinuitäten und Brüche bei Institutionen und Persönlichkeiten der Agrar-, Siedlungs- und Raumordnungspolitik,” in *Vom Dritten Reich zur Bundesrepublik. Beiträge zu einer Tagung zur Geschichte von Raumforschung und Landesplanung*, ed. Heinrich Mäding and Wendelin Strubelt (Braunschweig: VSB, 2009), 176. See also, Wolfgang Hofmann, “Raumplaner zwischen NS-Staat und Bundesrepublik. Zur Kontinuität und Diskontinuität von Raumplanung 1933 bis 1960,” in Mäding and Strubelt, *Vom Dritten Reich zur Bundesrepublik*, 39–65.

<sup>62</sup> See the letter exchange in, ALUF UAC100/349. Indeed, Christaller’s Central Place Theory made an encore in the *IKO*, see Karl Neupert, “Die Theorie der zentralen Orte und ihre Bedeutung für die Dezentralisation und die Neugestaltung der Siedlungslandschaft,” *IKO* 16 (1967): 270–273.

<sup>63</sup> Karl-Rolf Schultz-Klinken, “Siedlungspolitik und Siedlungswesen in Preussen zwischen Reform und Revolution (1807–1919),” *IKO* 18 (1969): 210–213.

journal transform into an environmentalist publication, focused much more on agrarian politics. The future foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, penned a piece entitled “Environmental Planning – Opportunities and Limits,”<sup>64</sup> and an editorial of 1976, “Five Minutes to Twelve,” asked the question, now that we have settled the expellees, what is our goal? The answer was a shift to the environment and a devotion to making life better for those now living on the land.<sup>65</sup> By 1978, an entire issue was devoted to “Bevölkerungspolitik” (demographic politics) and, while the postwar economic and demographic booms, the “Wunder,” were declared to now be over, this was not decreed to be a danger to the future of Germany. There was no attempt to urge movement to the land in order to have larger rural families for Germany’s future, à la 1898.<sup>66</sup> The following year one issue focused on European Economic Community expansion and included an article on “Guest Workers,” *Gastarbeiter*. Again, gone was the former dogma about the threat to *Deutschtum* by this new version of “Polish seasonal workers.” In its place was simply a clear-headed description of the situation, along with the statement that they were likely here to stay.<sup>67</sup> There was even a piece on agriculture versus industry, which claimed that the “old arguments” were obsolete and now the two sectors were completely intertwined.<sup>68</sup> Two years later, in 1981, after a decade of meandering and trying to justify its existence, the last version of the *Archiv für innere Kolonisation*, founded in 1908, ceased publication. After a century of swimming against the current of industrial modernization and the concomitant depopulation of the rural countryside, the work of Max Sering and his followers had come to an end.

<sup>64</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher, “Umweltplanung – Chancen und Grenzen,” *IKO* 20 (1971): 151–152.

<sup>65</sup> “Fünf Minuten vor Zwölf,” *IKO* 25 (1976): 173.

<sup>66</sup> Issue number one, *IKO* 27 (1978).

<sup>67</sup> “Gastarbeiter in Europa,” *IKO* 28 (1979): 63–66.

<sup>68</sup> “Landwirtschaft und Industrie im ländlichen Raum – Rivalen oder Partner?” *IKO* 28 (1979): 170–173.