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**GEORG ECKERT
INSTITUT**

Leibniz-Institut für internationale
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Georg Eckert: A Driving Force in International Textbook Revision and Cultural Policy

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Matthias Bode, Corine Defrance, Eckhardt Fuchs, Ulrich Pfeil,
Steffen Sammler, Thomas Strobel

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Foreword

Georg Eckert, the ‘founding father’ of the Institute for International Textbook Research that today bears his name, helped shape the textbook-related research scene, the educational landscape and the international cultural policy of the early Federal Republic of Germany. Alongside the powerful impact of his larger-than-life personality, the impressive life’s work he left behind endures. Heike Christina Mätzing’s biography of Eckert, *Georg Eckert 1912 – 1974. Von Anpassung, Widerstand und Völkerverständigung*, painstakingly reconstructs the influences, experiences and decisions that drove the key directions of his life.¹ Georg Eckert has been a figure of fascination for numerous academics, who have applied a range of distinct disciplinary and institutional perspectives to their explorations of his work as a historian, cultural anthropologist, educator and actor in cultural foreign policy.

An international conference in Braunschweig, held in October 2012 to mark the hundredth anniversary of Eckert’s birth, brought together new thematic and research approaches to this towering figure; its proceedings were published in German as *Georg Eckert. Grenzgänger zwischen Wissenschaft und Politik*.² A series of this book’s chapters, by Matthias Bode, Corine Defrance/Ulrich Pfeil, Eckhardt Fuchs, Steffen Sammler and Thomas Strobel, dedicated themselves to Georg Eckert’s work in the field of international education policy, in the course of which he was a founder member of the German Commission for UNESCO and eventually became its president. In highlighting the textbook discussions with France and Poland of which Eckert was a prime mover, these contributions to research on Eckert and his field illuminate the key significance of international textbook revision efforts to the process of reconciliation and mutual understanding among nations in Western Europe and to dialogue that crossed the Cold War’s lines of battle. Looking to Asia, this section of the book further points to Eckert’s ambitious and geographically far-reaching endeavours, as well as casting light on the difficulties encountered by his work in relation to domestic and foreign policy tensions between European and Asian empires and to the nation states newly emerging from colonial rule.

In issuing an English translation of these chapters,³ our aim is to make this recent research on Eckert’s life and work accessible to a broad audience of academics in the fields of international cultural policy and textbook research and revision, and our hope is that it may inspire new research endeavours and collaborations at and with our Institute.

¹ Heike Christina Mätzing, *Georg Eckert 1912 – 1974. Von Anpassung, Widerstand und Völkerverständigung*, Berlin: J. H. W. Dietz, 2018.

² Dieter Dowe, Heike Christina Mätzing, Eckhardt Fuchs, Steffen Sammler (eds), *Georg Eckert. Grenzgänger zwischen Wissenschaft und Politik*, Göttingen: V & R unipress, 2017.

³ The translation of this publication by Katherine Ebisch-Burton was made possible by the generous support of the German Federal Foreign Office.

A diplomat in the service of culture and international understanding: Georg Eckert and the German Commission for UNESCO

On 28 October 1971, Georg Eckert, then president of the German Commission for UNESCO (Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission, DUK), speaking at the Commission's general assembly in the German town of Lübeck, observed: 'Long before [West Germany's] new *Ostpolitik* entered the scene, we had made significant progress towards realising [its] resolution to establish cooperation with Communist states'. At this point in time, the said *Neue Ostpolitik* had already proved successful, sidelining the previous dominance of the 'German question' in foreign policy and ushering in the period of détente which eventually culminated in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), with the Federal Republic of Germany as a participant equal at least in principle to the other European states at the table. As Eckart Conze has emphasised, the 1970s marked the beginning of a development which made the 'scope of [the FRG's] foreign policy' 'increasingly global', due both to its rising influence in world trade and to the heightened engagement with issues affecting the world family of states brought about by its accession to the UN in 1973.¹

Historians of the FRG's 1960s and 1970s are beginning to train their focus on accounts referencing structural factors and multilateral causality.² One pertinent question in this regard relates to the role of international organisations in general and UNESCO in particular.³ Mark Mazower notes that, since the rise of institutions with global reaches around the end of the nineteenth century, the 'international' has been the 'terrain upon which widely differing political groups and ideologies mapped their dreams and nightmares'. From the outset of their existence, Mazower continues, these institutions, having emerged precipitously into an unsettled time – 'their births were abrupt, and war was their midwife' – bore the strain of 'tension between the narrower national interests

¹ Eckart Conze, *Die Suche nach Sicherheit. Eine Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland von 1949 bis in die Gegenwart*, Munich: Siedler Verlag, 2009, 642f. The observation of a 'multilateralisation [in] West German policy on the Eastern Bloc and on détente' is likewise made by Hermann Wentker, 'Doppelter UN-Beitritt. Deutsch-deutsche Konkurrenz auf der internationalen Bühne', in: Hermann Wentker and Udo Wengst (eds), *Das doppelte Deutschland. 40 Jahre Systemkonkurrenz*, Bonn: Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 2008, 235–258, 240.

² Christof Münger, *Kennedy, die Berliner Mauer und die Kubakrise. Die westliche Allianz in der Zerreißprobe*, Paderborn: Schöningh, 2003, 23f.

³ Cf. the fundamental considerations in Hans-Heinrich Nolte, *Weltgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Cologne/Vienna/Weimar: Böhlau, 2009, 383ff.; Eckart Conze, Norbert Frei, Peter Hayes and Moshe Zimmermann, *Das Amt und die Vergangenheit. Deutsche Diplomaten im Dritten Reich und in der Bundesrepublik*, München: Blessing, 2. Auflage 2010, 624ff.; with specific reference to UNESCO, cf. Perrin Selcer, 'UNESCO, Weltbürgerschaft und Kalter Krieg', in: Bernd Greiner, Tim B. Müller and Claudia Weber (eds), *Macht und Geist im Kalten Krieg*, Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2011, 477–497; Poul Duedahl (ed.), *A history of UNESCO*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016; Aigul Kulnazarova and Christian Ydesen (eds), *UNESCO without borders*, London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017; Thomas Strobel, *Transnationale Wissenschafts- und Verhandlungskultur, Die Gemeinsame Deutsch-Polnische Schulbuchkommission 1972–1990*. (Eckert. Die Schriftenreihe 139), Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2015.

that the Great Powers sought to promote through them and the universal ideals and the rhetoric that emanated from them.’⁴ Mazower’s analysis views the UN as dominated by US interests from its inception, yet simultaneously open to ideas proposed by a range of expert groupings, such as global ‘developmentalism’, a faith in the benefits bestowed via top-down authority by development schemes for variously defined ‘less developed’ states.⁵ UNESCO maintained an almost mystic reverence for the power of education as an instrument of post-war pacification and social progress. The UN, then, albeit ‘no enchanted palace’, at least served as a ‘great power talking shop’, ‘a global club of national states’.⁶ Various researchers have emphasised the UN’s importance as a multi-faceted platform for international cooperation and for the coordination of its members’ interests in the context of its specialised agencies, UNESCO among them.⁷

Returning to the DUK, this chapter will explore its influence on West Germany’s *Neue Ostpolitik*, particularly on the intensification of East/West cultural communication and exchange; did the DUK, with Georg Eckert at its head, follow prompts from overarching UNESCO policy as shaped in Paris, or did its policy on cultural communication reflect specifically West German interests or indeed party political motives? A further question arising from this consideration relates to the attention paid to UNESCO by West German governmental foreign policy in the 1960s; we ask whether the FRG’s primary objective here was supporting UNESCO in its specific capacity as an international organisation or instead seeking its own interest as a nation state. We will do well in this context to regard the relationship between the DUK, UNESCO and the German Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt; henceforth AA) as a formal network with points of transition and intersection to informal networks of other actors including political parties and influential individuals.⁸

I argue that in the 1960s, the primary influence brought to bear on the policies pursued by the DUK, as an actor in this system of networks, was that of factors relating to the FRG as a nation state, and that the DUK’s contribution to the management of international relationships in the UNESCO context accorded with the specific, interest-driven worldview of the FRG. This does not necessarily mean that outcomes of its work did not provide starting points for projects and change at national level, effecting a contribution by UNESCO to the internationalisation of state-specific administration; neither does it mean that this work did not help drive the emergence of an international administration for education. Successful control over developments in the context of this network principally required, as the chapter will explain, the appropriate line of political

⁴ Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea*, London: Penguin, 2012, xiii.

⁵ Ibid., 277, 285f.

⁶ Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace. The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009, 27.

⁷ Michael Omolewa, ‘UNESCO as a Network’, in: *Paedagogica Historica* 43 (2007), 211–221, 117; Chloé Maurel, *Historie de l’UNESCO. Les trente premières années, 1945–1974*, Paris u.a.: L’Harmattan, 2010, 294 f.

⁸ Cf. the distinction between formal and informal networks drawn in Eckhardt Fuchs, ‘Networks and the History of Education’, in: *Paedagogica Historica* 43 (2007), 185–197, 194 f; cf. also Marten Düring and Ulrich Eumann, ‘Historische Netzwerkforschung. Ein neuer Ansatz in den Geschichtswissenschaften’, in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 39, 3 (2013), 369–390.

argument; in 1960s West Germany, references to the ‘international sphere’, which might relate to contact with other nation states or competition with the GDR, were among the prompts likeliest to command power and resources. The reverse likewise held in the international context, with a decisive role falling to matters deemed ‘national’, such as the historical background of individual stakeholders in a particular issue, when members of other states approached and assessed that topic.

While this chapter must restrict itself to highlighting specific aspects of its subject, I contextualise those aspects by preceding them with a brief outline of the DUK’s role in the institutional structures of the FRG’s early years, before I proceed to an analysis of how the DUK under Eckert tackled rapprochement and communication between East and West and which factors may have been influential in shaping this approach’s character. Further, the chapter will examine the significance of UNESCO policy to the foreign policy pursued by the FRG government and the aims of the lobbying conducted by the DUK during Eckert’s almost ten-year period at its helm, particularly with regard to the consolidation of UNESCO’s role as an international administrative organisation.

1. The DUK’s position in the institutional structures of the early FRG

From its inception and establishment, which took place between November 1945 and November 1946, UNESCO has had the purpose of ‘contribut[ing] to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture’ inscribed into its constitution, on the basis of the idea that ‘since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed’.⁹ UNESCO’s endeavours to promote and implement its policies in its member states rest in the hands of National Commissions, entities legally and organisationally independent of the main organisation, but in regular contact with its headquarters in Paris. The role of the Commissions is to involve the institutions in each country whose remit covers education, science, culture and communication in planning, realising and evaluating UNESCO’s broad and diverse range of activities and to raise awareness of these activities.¹⁰

The DUK came into being in a manner that reflected the hesitant, cautious nature of the incipient contact between UNESCO, a new global organisation still trying to gain a clear sense of itself and its remit, and the disparate, destabilised and at that point unstructured network of experts in the relevant areas that existed in post-war West Germany. In January 1950, responding to an invitation extended by the Canadian UNESCO staff member John W. Thompson, representatives of education, science and academia, and cultural administration in the Federal Republic, many of them former émigrés and opponents of the Nazi regime, met in the German town of Bad Soden, an occasion which

⁹ UNESCO Constitution; http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=15244&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html (accessed 4 January 2020).

¹⁰ Cf. Klaus Hüfner and Wolfgang Reuther (eds), *UNESCO-Handbuch. 50 Jahre deutsche Mitarbeit in der UNESCO*, Bonn: Uno-Verlag, Neuausgabe, 2nd ed. 2005; Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission (ed.), *Lernziel: Weltoffenheit*, Bonn: Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission e.V., 2001.

saw the foundation of what was later to become the DUK. This *Deutscher Ausschuss für UNESCO-Arbeit*, established prior to the FRG's actual accession to UNESCO (11 July 1951), had at its helm Professor Walter Hallstein, whose subsequent career included periods as a permanent secretary in the AA and as president of the Commission of the European Economic Community.¹¹ UNESCO was one of the first international organisations, and the first UN specialised agency, of which the FRG became a member; the accession therefore carried powerful symbolic import in foreign policy terms as regarded West Germany's 're-internationalisation'. It is this significance which explains the DUK's status as what is termed an intermediary organisation for foreign policy around culture and education and the concomitant fact that the AA has been its primary funder from its inception, although in constitutional terms it pertained unambiguously neither to the federal nor to the *Länder* level.¹² The AA allowed the DUK to work largely autonomously, albeit retaining the final word in political matters, particularly at its general assemblies; in many cases, its members indeed requested the AA to lead on these decisions. In terms of its staffing and its institutional structures, there were close ties between the DUK and the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut*, later to become the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, which convened discussions around textbooks and the German-Polish Textbook Commission, the latter being the subject of an analysis by Thomas Strobel.¹³ Various researchers have highlighted specific facets of the diverse contribution made in this context by Georg Eckert,¹⁴ such as his role in setting up the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut* at the Kant-Hochschule in Braunschweig,¹⁵ his activities as the founder of the social history archive *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*¹⁶ and his significance as a 'pioneer

¹¹ Matthias Bode, 'Expertise mit Weltverstand. Transnationalismus und auswärtige Kulturpolitik der Bundesrepublik in den sechziger und siebziger Jahren', in: Habbo Knoch (ed.), *Bürgersinn mit Weltgefühl, Politische Moral und solidarischer Protest in den sechziger und siebziger Jahren*, Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2007, 93–114, 96 f.; cf. Jutta van Hasselt, 'Zur Geschichte der deutschen Mitarbeit in der UNESCO', in: Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission (ed.), *Lernziel: Weltoffenheit*, 151–381.

¹² Matthias Bode, *Die auswärtige Kulturverwaltung der frühen Bundesrepublik*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014.

¹³ Thomas Strobel, *Gemeinsame deutsch-polnische Schulbuchkommission*, 257 ff.; see also Strobel, *Transnationale Wissenschafts- und Verhandlungskultur*.

¹⁴ There are general outlines of Eckert's life and work in: Hans-Peter Harstick, 'Georg Eckert (1912–1974), Wegbereiter einer neuen Konzeption von Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht', in: Ursula A. J. Becher and Rainer Riemenschneider (eds) *Internationale Verständigung. 25 Jahre Georg-Eckert-Institut für Internationale Schulbuchforschung in Braunschweig*, Hanover: Verlag Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2000, 105–115; Heike Christina Mätzing, *Wissenschaftler und Botschafter der Völkerverständigung. Georg Eckert (1912–1974) zum 100. Geburtstag*, Bonn: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2013; Rainer Riemenschneider, 'Georg Eckert und das Internationale Schulbuchinstitut in Braunschweig', in: *Pariser Historische Studien* 89 (2008), 115–131.

¹⁵ Ibid., 124 ff.; Rosemarie Rümenapf-Sievers, 'Georg Eckert und die Anfänge des Internationalen Schulbuchinstituts', in: Becher and Riemenschneider (eds) *Internationale Verständigung. 25 Jahre Georg-Eckert-Institut*, 116–122. On collaboration with the Council of Europe, cf. Maitland Stobart, 'Fifty years of European co-operation on history textbooks. The role and contribution of the Council of Europe', in: *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 21, 2 (1999), 147–161, 149ff.; Steffen Sammler, 'Schulbuchgespräche in friedenspädagogischer Absicht. Die Revision der Geschichtsbücher im Versöhnungsprozess nach 1945', in: Corine Defrance and Ulrich Pfeil (eds), *Verständigung und Versöhnung nach dem 'Zivilisationsbruch'? Deutschland in Europa nach 1945*, Brussels: Peter Lang, 2016, 605–623.

¹⁶ Jürgen Kocka, 'Georg Eckert und die Anfänge der deutschen Sozialgeschichtsschreibung', in: *Eckert. Das Bulletin* 12 (2012), 4–11.

of the renewal of history teaching post-1945'.¹⁷ Eckert, who had trained as a secondary school teacher and completed his academic *Habilitation* in cultural anthropology in Bonn, had been teaching at the Kant-Hochschule in Braunschweig since November 1946 and took its chair of history and the methodology of history teaching in April 1948. Having joined the German Social Democratic Party in his youth, he was in contact with Alfred Kubel, Alfred Nau, Willi Eichler, Willy Brandt and other leading figures of the party. Notably gifted in forming and maintaining networks, he was a member of various committees and commissions in education and beyond.¹⁸

A founding member of the DUK, Eckert advanced to its presidency in 1964, remaining in office alongside his other commitments until his death in January 1974. His access to the DUK's founding circle came via a recommendation from Herbert Walker, deputy head of the Educational Branch in Bielefeld, and from Richard Perdew, an American who served UNESCO as an expert on textbooks. By this time, Eckert had already gained a reputation in the field of communication and cooperation on textbooks and became head of the sub-commission on history books at the Bad Soden meeting in the context of the committee on education formed there. It is unlikely to have been UNESCO itself which prompted Eckert's engagement with textbook revision; instead, his inspiration presumably emerged from the influence of a debate around the purposes and methods of education which was restarting at the time and bore traces of the objectives pursued by the British Allied authorities, and which Eckert encountered most markedly at the beginning of 1947, during his work on overhauling history curricula.¹⁹ In December 1946, Eckert had founded what eventually became the *Geschichtspädagogischer Forschungskreis* (Research Group on History Education) to the end of 'creating history [text]books and providing support of all other kinds to history teaching'; it was within this group that he set out his 'Grundthesen zur Reform des Geschichtsunterrichts' (Fundamental Propositions on Reforming History Education) in February 1948.²⁰ This was a time at which the key discussions on textbook revision were taking place in the context of UNESCO²¹ and of the

¹⁷ Michele Barricelli, 'Didaktische Räusche und das Verständnis der Einzelwesen. Zu Leben und Wirken von Georg Eckert', in: Wolfgang Hasberg and Manfred Seidenfuß (eds), *Modernisierung im Umbruch: Geschichtsdidaktik und Geschichtsunterricht nach 1945*, Berlin u.a.: LIT, 2008, 261–290.

¹⁸ Among his various activities were his membership as a founding member of the German history teachers' association *Verband der Geschichtslehrer Deutschlands*, of which he served as treasurer for many years, and his initiatorship of the *Institut für Sozialgeschichte* (Institute of Social History) in Braunschweig and Bonn. He was a member of the German Education Union (GEW), chair of the *Kuratorium Unteilbares Deutschland* in Braunschweig, an organisation whose purpose was to maintain the idea of German unity and work towards its realisation, and sat on the board of trustees of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Riemenschneider, *Georg Eckert und das Internationale Schulbuchinstitut*, 116.

¹⁹ StA WF 143 N Zg. 2009/069 vol. 259, letter from Eckert to Trimborn, 7 November 1946, 1.

²⁰ Another founding member of the group was Karl Turn, the Braunschweig representative of the education board. StA WF 143 N Zg. 2009/069 vol. 259: Bericht über die bisherige Tätigkeit der Geschichtsarbeitsgemeinschaft Braunschweig, undated, 1ff. Cf. also Eckert's speech 'Der Geschichtsunterricht und die Völkerverständigung', delivered to a conference of teachers from Denmark and Germany held in Sonnenberg in the German Harz region in February 1959; *ibid*.

²¹ UNESCO was the patron of a project, which commenced in the summer of 1951, aiming at producing a multi-volume work on the 'Scientific and Cultural History of Mankind'. Katja Naumann, 'Mitreden über Weltgeschichte – die Beteiligung polnischer, tschechoslowakischer und ungarischer Historiker an der Cultural History of Mankind (1952–1969)', in: *Comparativ* 20 (2010), 186–226; Pertti Luntinen, 'School History Textbook Revision by and under the Auspices of UNESCO', in: *Internationale Schulbuchforschung*

four international meetings of historians held in the German town of Speyer between 1948 and 1950. Eckert was in attendance at the third of these conferences, which was where he met Perdew.²² The 'spirit of Speyer', shared by the bulk of the meetings' participants, entailed alignment and identification with supranational, European values and called the dominance of nation state-focused histories into question.²³ Other fora of discussion around textbooks and their revision included the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Lehrerverbände* (Working Group of Teachers' Associations in Germany), chaired by Eckert; the *Société des Professeurs d'Histoire-Géographie*; and the Council of Europe, which, of all these bodies, exerted the greatest long-term impact. These groupings ensured continuity for textbook revision processes, which, as Romain Faure has demonstrated, therefore became able to detach themselves from the institutions that had fostered them,²⁴ and speeded up the reciprocal communication of ideas and concepts in this field.

All activities conducted by UNESCO in general and the DUK in particular took place against the backdrop of West German public debate,²⁵ which set the political agenda in this regard and was capable of helping an idea gain a foothold or, alternatively, of causing it to be dropped.²⁶ It is impossible to overestimate the impetus UNESCO provided to the education scene in post-war Europe; it encouraged diverse groupings of experts to explore its projects, which included research into textbooks, and in so doing successfully linked up its work to existing traditions²⁷ and brought specialists together in international committees and commissions. Germany was far from being the only country whose textbooks and learning materials contained stereotypes and nationalisms; this evidenced the necessity of a joint approach and provided a field in which stakeholders from West Germany and elsewhere met on an equal footing. The work in this area brought into being a new league of 'experts on communication and mutual understanding' whose potential field of activity was virtually limitless.

10, 4 (1988), 337–348, and in *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 11,1 (1989), 39–48, 339ff.

²² '24 days ago, an international meeting of historians took place in Speyer, with French, Belgian, Swiss and German [delegates] in attendance, where I was able to connect with important French historians. I consider it particularly valuable to have made the acquaintance of the head of the UNESCO textbook commission, Prof. Perdew, who has assured us of every possible support.' StA WF 143 N Zg. 2009/069 vol. 259, letter from Eckert to Eichler, 31 October 1949, 2.

²³ The participants were primarily university professors, teachers at academic secondary schools, lecturers at teachers' colleges and education authority representatives. Corine Defrance, 'Die Internationalen Historikertreffen von Speyer', in: Ulrich Pfeil (ed.), *Die Rückkehr der deutschen Geschichtswissenschaft in die 'Ökumene der Historiker'. Ein wissenschaftsgeschichtlicher Ansatz*, Munich: DeGruyter, 2008, 213–237, 221ff.

²⁴ Romain Faure, 'Connections in the History of Textbook Revision, 1947–1952', in: *Education Inquiry* 2 (2011), 21–35, 23ff., 32; cf. also Faure, *Netzwerke der Kulturdiplomatie*, Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2015. The work continued under the auspices of the Council of Europe and other institutions, Stobart, *Fifty years of European co-operation on history textbooks*, 147ff.

²⁵ On the concept of the 'public' in the FRG context, cf. Bernd Weisbrod, 'Öffentlichkeit als politischer Prozeß. Dimensionen der politischen Medialisierung in der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik', in: Weisbrod (ed.), *Die Politik der Öffentlichkeit - Die Öffentlichkeit der Politik*, Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2003, 11–25, 11ff.

²⁶ Bode, *Expertise mit Weltverstand*, 110ff.

²⁷ Eckhardt Fuchs, 'The Creation of New International Networks in Education: The League of Nations and Educational Organization in the 1920s', in: *Paedagogica Historica* 43 (2007), 199–209, 205f.

2. Mutual understanding as a field of expertise: The DUK in the Cold War era

The post-war conflict between East and West did not fail to cast its shadow on UNESCO, nor to leave its traces in the form of vacillations in its programme and project policies in line with the specific global situation.²⁸ Reciprocal interactions with the contemporary process of decolonisation and the growing number of new so called 'Third World' states added to the overall picture.²⁹ Until the mid-1950s, the dominant force in UNESCO was the US, which, among other things, attempted to harness it as a medium of information campaigns in support of its intervention in Korea and of anti-Communist public communication in south-east Asia. 'UNESCO's significance on the world stage' rose with the accession of the Soviet Union in 1955,³⁰ which put it fundamentally beyond question as an organisation and occasioned an increase in its budget – it seemed, then, that, 'ironically, [...] the tensions of the Cold War' supplied it with firmer foundations, as Perrin Selcer, chair of the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO, observes. And, Selcer continues, while the Eastern Bloc states had introduced 'an element of raucous theatre to [its] General Assembly', a retrospective view reveals these events as having been 'predictable and banal'.³¹

These developments prompt consideration of the DUK's position as an intermediary between the parent organisation in Paris, the AA, and the DUK's member institutions in the FRG. This would of necessity include an exploration of the extent to which tensions within UNESCO impacted the DUK's work, or, put differently, the degree of autonomy, in professional and political terms, the DUK was able to attain. In the early years of its existence, the DUK's efforts focused on the work of organising and establishing itself, which entailed discussions around the commission's structure and around which societal stakeholders needed to be on board. In terms of activities, the DUK only ever covered a fraction of the spectrum of topics engaged with by UNESCO. In 1957, this fraction appeared composed of four thematic areas as follows:

- a) German involvement in cultural events held outside Germany
- b) work with schools, educational services for young people, and adult education
- c) cooperation with cultural, academic and scientific organisations in Germany
- d) press and PR work³²

During this period, the DUK served primarily as a forum for communication among experts and a sort of 'base camp' for a diverse range of projects and cooperative initiatives. The East-West conflict whose shadow fell on the societal and cultural climate at the dawn of the 1950s was very much 'in the room' during UNESCO's general conferences and gave rise to discussion at the equivalent events held subsequently by the DUK. These debates

²⁸ Maurel, *Histoire de l'UNESCO*, 95ff.

²⁹ Laura Elizabeth Wong, 'Relocating East and West: UNESCO's Major Project on the Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values', in: *Journal of World History* 19, 3 (2008), 349–374, 351ff.; cf. Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, 150ff.

³⁰ Selcer, *UNESCO, Weltbürgerschaft und Kalter Krieg*, 482, 495.

³¹ Ibid., 495f.

³² PA AA (Political Archive of the German Federal Foreign Office, Berlin) B 91 20; brief report on the DUK, January 1957, 1.

were a kind of 'background noise' due to the fact that the Soviet Union had yet to join UNESCO at this point and its satellites often demonstratively avoided the meetings at this early stage. The AA, and some sections of the DUK, did note with satisfaction that the 'Soviet occupation zone' – i.e. East Germany – had not acceded to UNESCO, and the FRG's foreign policy at this stage preferred it to remain a non-member.³³

The then head of the AA's department of culture, Rudolf Salat, noted that the general assemblies of the DUK's early years saw increasing attendance by 'representatives of Oriental cultures' to the end of greater emphasis on topics relating to Western Asia and the Orient. Salat adds that in this context, 'East' does not carry 'the meaning [it acquired] in "East-West" terms', which [at that time] characterises the opposition between the free world and that under Communist rule'. Salat was among those who, after UNESCO's sixth General Conference, rightly feared that the organisation 'might all too easily be inclined to identify the world with the Euro-American cultural region', and considered it desirable for 'dialogue between the Orient and the Occident [to be] continued on a more profound level at future conferences'.³⁴ And indeed, the 1956 General Conference approved a project on 'Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Values', planned for ten years' duration and with the remit of creating a transdisciplinary understanding of the developments that had driven civilisation and identifying shared roots of and differences among these. The FRG proposed to include joint textbook improvement projects in the efforts to this end. The conferences on this matter provided a space for encounter between the former colonial powers and the new states which had attained their independence. All parties were agreed on the necessity of further textbook revision and cooperation, and the work that took place generated positive outcomes on specific points. Laura Elizabeth Wong comments:

Overall, the East-West textbook conferences fostered international agreement that more positive portrayals of both East and West were needed in school texts. [...] Certainly the textbook conferences, among other activities of the East-West Major Project, had demonstrated that culturally focused intergovernmental relations could facilitate relatively open cooperation around specialized subjects.³⁵

From 1958 onward, the DUK held several interdisciplinary meetings in the town of Bad Ems, at which it discussed cultural relations between Asia and Europe, fundamental political and social conditions in Asia, and the continent's role in present-day historical awareness.³⁶ It appears beyond doubt that UNESCO's East-West Major Project and the international working conferences associated with it exerted a considerable influence on Eckert and on the work on textbooks proceeding under his aegis in Braunschweig. The International Textbook Conference held in Goslar in May 1962, for instance, consisted

³³ The German Democratic Republic founded its own national commission for UNESCO in 1963. Its chairman was Professor Walther Neye, director of the institute of West German and foreign civil law at Humboldt-Universität in Berlin. PA AA B 91 121, letter from Bergstraesser to AA, 26 June 1963, 1; Gesetzblatt der DDR, Teil II, Nr. 50 v. 12. Juni 1963; cf. also *Neues Deutschland*, 10 May 1963, 5.

³⁴ PA AA B 90 322 Die Sechste Vollversammlung der UNESCO, notes by Salat, undated, 13f. Laura Elizabeth Wong notes that '[t]here was no representation of Asian, African, or Arab views' in UNESCO's early stages. Wong, *Relocating East and West*, 355.

³⁵ Wong, *Relocating East and West*, 356, 371f.

³⁶ Van Hasselt, *Zur Geschichte der deutschen Mitarbeit in der UNESCO*, 189ff.; Walter Steigner, 'Ost ist Ost und West ist West', in: *Gewerkschaftliche Monatshefte* 8,7 (1957), 391–394.

principally in 'taking stock' of the work done 'thus far on the basis of the recommendations' issued by the UNESCO project and in the drawing up of further recommendations for these tasks.³⁷ Work on textbooks was the central engine of West German contributions to UNESCO activities, of which it served to raise awareness. This is an illustrative example of convergence between projects pursued within a specific nation state and those taking place at international level, in that UNESCO supplied the framework for the activities of national experts and contributed a supra-state level to the expertise provided by the national commissions and their project partners, and in that both sides, the international – in UNESCO – and the national, were essential to any and all cooperation in this context.

It was not until the debate around international recognition of Communist China as a state and the contentious discussion of its admission to UNESCO in Paris that the 'German question' began to accrue greater significance. In 1955, the then DUK president, Walter Erbe, speaking at its general assembly, raised the pertinent question: 'How will [this discussion] go one day with the German Democratic Republic?' Summing up the atmosphere of the assembly, he commented: 'The question of the two Germanys was the constituent of the deeply troubling pressure we felt bearing down upon us'.³⁸ The 'opposition between the Eastern Bloc and the free world' intensified in the period that followed, finding expression in UNESCO matters in highly divisive, adversarial votes on issues such as the admittance of the Hungarian delegation.³⁹ The GDR had applied to join UNESCO in 1955; the decision-making body, the UN Economic and Social Council, denied it admission by a margin of thirteen votes to five. The AA wished to counter such applications, which the GDR was also making to other international organisations, and to this end took the decision to 'record on file' the member states' views on the matter.⁴⁰ Other states, such as the Soviet Union, made applications on the GDR's behalf, often exploiting an element of surprise. The authorities in Bonn analysed these 'attempts at infiltration by the Soviet occupation zone' most closely, sending their findings to German missions abroad for their information and to enable them to enlist the support of relevant partner organisations in fending them off.⁴¹ The DUK noted that the 'Soviet zone' was also undertaking specialist activities, deploying 'significant organisational and financial means' in attempts to create 'commissions modelled on the Braunschweig institute' via which it intended to establish contacts in Europe and Asia;⁴² these endeavours were a response to the prohibition on the GDR establishing embassies or state-run trade missions in Western Europe, which made the generation of informal contacts and

³⁷ AsD (Archiv der sozialen Demokratie, Bonn), NL Georg Eckert, vol. 408 Basic internal working paper for the Meeting of Experts, Braunschweig, 11 January 1962, 1f.

³⁸ AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 582 DUK, minutes of seventh General Assembly, 7–8 March 1955, 3–4.

³⁹ PA AA B 91 20 minutes of the thirteenth General Assembly of the DUK, 25–27 May 1959, 7.

⁴⁰ PA AA B 91 121 Vfg. Ref. 601, 15 October 1959, 1.; *ibid.*, letter from Buddenbrock to von Simson on recording the views of individual states, 23 June 1961, 1.

⁴¹ One such application was made in 1962. PA AA B 91 121, telex re. UNESCO, 19 May 1962, 1; *ibid.*, letter from Blankenhorn to Lahr, 2 November 1962, 1; PA AA B 91 501 letter from the mission to the Internationales Organisations in Geneva to the AA, 9 August 1962, 1.

⁴² AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 486 DUK, minutes of the eighth General Assembly of the DUK, 10f.; this is also commented on expressly in *ibid.*, vol. 265, letter from Schüddekopf to Platz, 8 November 1955, 1–3.

relations via foreign cultural policy an important concern.⁴³ The international space thus evolved during this period into a theatre of conflict between the blocs, on which the 'Third World' states kept a watchful eye.

The political backdrop to the foreign policy of the FRG's government in this regard – the non-recognition of the GDR – was not to shift for some time;⁴⁴ there nevertheless emerged, from 1955 onwards, a tendency among at least a specific circle of DUK members towards the initiation of contact with national commissions in the Eastern Bloc states. Key figures among this grouping were Georg Eckert and the DUK's then president Theodor Steltzer. The latter, writing in 1966, recalled a meeting in 1957 between the European national commissions, held in Dubrovnik: 'Contacts of this kind are particularly instructive for us Germans because the Eastern UNESCO commissions are in attendance'. This particular event gave rise to 'many personal encounters with members of the Soviet, Ukrainian, and Central and South-Eastern European countries'.⁴⁵ In 1959, giving the DUK's General Assembly an account of the 'attacks on West German textbooks on the part of the Eastern Bloc states', Eckert described their core claim as being that 'the West German textbooks propagated a bloc ideology that was intended to expand the areas of friction between the peoples of Eastern Europe and the Eastern Bloc'. Eckert nevertheless urged the DUK's members to 'do their part towards constructive engagement with Communism'.⁴⁶

In the same year, Eckert reported back to the then Secretary-General of the DUK on a seminar held by the Hamburg-based UNESCO Institute for Education (now UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning), at which he was in attendance alongside delegates from Poland, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria, whom he described as having participated in a 'fairly positive' manner in the discussion, 'with a slight touch of propaganda, of course. [...] As far as my brief impression [of the event] allowed me to judge, it was very positive.'⁴⁷ While representatives of the DUK secretariat were in Paris, making tentative 'initial contact with representatives of the Polish UNESCO delegation', Eckert had already forged relationships via the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut* which gave him direct access to 'confidential information' straight from Poland⁴⁸ – this at a time when the politics around the state and concept of Germany made any perception of Poland

⁴³ 'Agencies' of the 'Chamber of Foreign Trade' (*Kammer für Außenhandel*) were classed as non-state institutions and therefore permitted. Wentker, *Doppelter UN-Beitritt*, 248f.

⁴⁴ In 1956, for example, the DUK members Eckert and Leber called for 'as numerous a German delegation [to the UNESCO General Conference] as possible' in order to 'effectively counter any moves towards admitting the GDR'. AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 485 DUK, minutes of the sixteenth meeting of the DUK's executive committee, 4.

⁴⁵ Steltzer observed: 'Some of [the Eastern European delegations] were virtually complaining that too little is happening on our side in this regard. [...] These encounters have [...] prompted me to form the view that it is wrong to avoid such human and cultural contacts.' Theodor Steltzer, *Sechzig Jahre Zeitgenosse*, München: List, 237f.

⁴⁶ PA AA B 91 20, minutes of the thirteenth General Assembly of the DUK, 25-27 May 1959, 11.

⁴⁷ AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 328, letter from Eckert to Platz, 11 September 1959, 1.

⁴⁸ AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 285, minutes of the twenty-fifth meeting of the DUK's executive committee, 2 February 1959, 6. Enno Meyer, *Wie ich dazu gekommen bin. Die Vorgeschichte der deutsch-polnischen Schulbuchgespräche*, Frankfurt a.M.: Diesterweg, 1988, 22f.

as an 'independent factor' in foreign policy appear 'absurd'.⁴⁹ It is likely this to which Steltzer refers in recalling: 'I considered as particularly valuable [...] my acquaintance with Prof. Eckert [...]. He was capable of tackling highly fraught and difficult topics in his work with great confidence and competence.'⁵⁰ Steltzer, a by then aged, highly innovative thinker who had been involved in resistance circles during the National Socialist period, and Eckert, an academic with a broad network, a hectic travel schedule, and a taste for adventure, found in the DUK, its committees, conferences, its offices in Cologne, and its close links to the parent organisation in Paris the ideal platform for discussion around how to treat the Eastern Bloc states and for gaining contacts abroad which were initially informal in nature. The DUK additionally served as a valuable information exchange on matters relating to party politics, academic and foreign policy. The conferences and meetings, most of which took place over several days, were invaluable for the opportunities they afforded for informal, off-the-record sharing of ideas and views among DUK members, representatives of government ministries, and visitors from abroad, providing a confidential space for exploring strategies and testing out lines of argument.

The DUK's adoption in mid-1964 of East-West communication and mutual understanding as an integral part of its remit did not take place on Eckert's initiative alone, but stemmed from multiple factors; among them was its alignment with the West German 'path towards a new policy' on the Eastern Bloc, a period that began roughly with the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 and came to a close around the accession to power of a coalition of the Social Democrats and the liberal FDP in 1969.⁵¹ Alongside Willy Brandt and his close circle, the key drivers of this shift, accompanied by broad-based and polarised debate in the West German public sphere, were 'multiple individuals and institutions [...] seeking to effect a revision of the dogmatic [existing] policy on the two Germanys and place [West Germany's] relationship with East [Germany] on a more factual, less ideologically charged basis'.⁵² A crucial influence in this regard was the policies pursued by the Kennedy administration in the US, which held ongoing status as 'uncontested leader in the Western alliance' and whose Limited Test Ban Treaty, which it had signed alongside the UK and the Soviet Union, had the objective of forging accord across the blocs. John F. Kennedy's agenda-setting announcements in the aftermath of the Cuba missile crisis, and his acceptance of the status quo in Berlin and therefore effectively of the Wall, served to further underline this approach.⁵³ The West German government observed these developments with a critical eye, particularly in view of their impact on the balance of

⁴⁹ Dieter Bingen, 'Der lange Weg der "Normalisierung"', Die Entwicklung der Beziehungen zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Polen 1949–1990', in: Wolf-Dieter Eberwein and Baisl Kerski (eds), *Die deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen 1949–2000*, Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 2001, 35–73, 39.

⁵⁰ Steltzer, *Sechzig Jahre Zeitgenosse*, 237.

⁵¹ Manfred Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, München: C. H. Beck, 1999, 534f.

⁵² Ibid., 534; Joachim Scholtyssek, 'Mauerbau und Deutsche Frage. Westdeutsche Intellektuelle und der Kalte Krieg', in: Dominik Geppert and Jens Jacke (eds), *Streit um den Staat. Intellektuelle Debatten in der Bundesrepublik 1960–1980*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008, 69–90, 80ff.; On the churches' role as non-state actors in détente between Germany and Poland, see Basil Kerski, 'Die Rolle nichtstaatlicher Akteure in den deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen vor 1990', in: Kerski and Wolf-Dieter Eberwein (eds), *Die deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen 1949–2000*, Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 2001, 75–111, 76ff.

⁵³ Münger, *Kennedy, die Berliner Mauer und die Kubakrise*, 330ff.

power within Europe. Government and opposition alike wrestled with controversy over the correct course of action, with the Atlanticists around Ludwig Erhard, Gerhard Schröder⁵⁴ and Willy Brandt in opposition to the Gaullists, whose key figures were Konrad Adenauer and Franz Josef Strauß.⁵⁵

During Erhard's chancellorship, the endeavours of 'official policy' to create relationships of trust with the Eastern European states remained 'tentative' or 'half-hearted attempts', likely due to the exclusion of the GDR, or of the unsolved 'German question', from the idea of a 'policy of movement' put forward by Erhard and Schröder.⁵⁶ At the heart of the matter was a weighing up of the 'inevitability of the inevitable' against the 'intolerability of the intolerable'.⁵⁷ It also appears the case, however, that the sluggishness of West Germany's organs of public administration, unprepared for the flexibility called for in their dealings with the Eastern Bloc states, was an important factor here.⁵⁸ Proponents of the more détente-oriented *Berliner Linie* of policy within the Social Democratic Party (SPD) were at a clear advantage in terms of their responsiveness to current events, due to their experience of being on the Cold War's 'front line' in divided Berlin and of the 'border pass agreement' (*Passierscheinabkommen*) of 1963, and to their ability to call on the principles set out by Kennedy as witnesses to their argumentation.⁵⁹ The foreign policy overhaul undertaken by the SPD in its Godesberg Programme of 1959, and its effective repudiation of its *Deutschlandplan* policy, which would have blocked rapprochement in practical terms, intensified this effect.⁶⁰

These developments did not pass the DUK by unnoticed. As early as December 1963, its Secretary-General, Holger Reimers, wrote to Jobst Freiherr von Buddenbrock in the AA's department of culture that he gathered, from 'a series of comments in the daily papers',

that the Czechoslovakian president Novotny emphasised yesterday during a meeting in Prague that his government is now waiting for a positive response from Bonn to Prague's most recent offers of a normalisation of relations.

⁵⁴ Not to be confused with the chancellor of the same name, he was a member of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and served as Federal Minister of the Interior from 1953 to 1961, as Foreign Minister from 1961 to 1966, and as Minister of Defence from 1966 until 1969.

⁵⁵ Henning Köhler, *Adenauer. Eine politische Biographie*, Berlin etc.: Propyläen-Verlag, 1994, 1214f.; Münger, *Kennedy, die Berliner Mauer und die Kubakrise*, 346ff.; Beatrix W. Bouvier, *Zwischen Godesberg und Großer Koalition. Der Weg der SPD in die Regierungsverantwortung*, Bonn: Dietz, 1990, 213f.; Bingen, *Der lange Weg der 'Normalisierung'*, 42.

⁵⁶ Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 535; Wentker, *Doppelter UN-Beitritt*, 245f.

⁵⁷ Peter Graf Kielmansegg, *Das geteilte Land. Deutsche Geschichte 1945-1990*, Munich: Pantheon, 2007, 193f. '[The political classes] in Bonn took [...] decades to publicly and officially accept that reunification was no longer on the agenda.' Gregor Schöllgen, *Jenseits von Hitler. Die Deutschen in der Weltpolitik von Bismarck bis heute*, Berlin: Propyläen-Verlag, 2005, 284.

⁵⁸ Cf., for instance, the 'planning studies' that commenced in the AA in December 1966. Frank Fischer, 'Im deutschen Interesse'. *Die Ostpolitik der SPD von 1969 bis 1989*, Husum: Matthiesen, 2001, 43; Conze, Frei, Hayes und Zimmermann, *Das Amt und die Vergangenheit*, 642; Karsten Schröder, *Egon Bahr*, Rastatt: Moewig, 1988, 134ff.

⁵⁹ Fischer, 'Im deutschen Interesse', 41ff.; Heinrich Potthoff, 'Ostpolitik in Tutzing', in: *Die neue Gesellschaft. Frankfurter Hefte* 48, 1-2 (2001), 43-47, 44f.

⁶⁰ The *Deutschlandplan* proposed the establishment of a 'zone of détente', consisting in a reunited Germany, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia and subject to limitations on arms which would be monitored by the Soviet Union and the US, Bouvier, *Zwischen Godesberg und Großer Koalition*, 44; Manfred Görtemaker, 'Die Ursprünge der "neuen Ostpolitik" Willy Brandts', in: Arnd Bauerkämper (ed.), *Doppelte Zeitgeschichte. Deutsch-deutsche Beziehungen 1945-1990*, Bonn: Dietz, 1998, 44-57, 48ff., 52ff.

[...] Regardless of further political developments, perhaps, however, as their precursor, concomitant or a marginal incidental event associated therewith, we might wish to consider the establishment of official contact between the German and the Czechoslovakian Commissions for UNESCO as a small sign of Germany's being prepared to warm up the climate a little in the cultural field.⁶¹

Continuing, Reimers noted that 'semi-official meetings between the undersigned [i.e. Reimers] and the deputy education and culture minister Grohman [had already] taken place'. He envisaged the potential for similar relations with Poland and Romania.⁶² Von Buddenbrock accordingly examined the 'possibilities for realisation' of this idea, replying at the beginning of January 1964 that the AA had 'no political concerns about contacts of this kind' and that the scheme appeared 'highly agreeable'.⁶³ This said, individuals within the DUK placed diverging emphases on these '*Ostkontakte*'. Its then chair, the Freiburg-based political scientist Arnold Bergstraesser, was at pains to stress, at the end of June 1963, the importance of having 'fend[ed] off the attempt to strengthen the Soviet Union's involvement in UNESCO's work' at that organisation's twelfth General Conference in the previous year. By contrast, Otto von Simson, the Permanent Representative of the FRG to UNESCO, highlighted the 'possibilities for linking up for East-West discussions' as 'a positive side' of the inter-bloc conflict.⁶⁴

After Bergstraesser's sudden death, the vice-president of the DUK, Maria Schlüter-Hermkes, asked a number of well-known individuals to stand for the presidency, but none were willing. Eventually, Eckert declared himself prepared to assume the task on an 'interim' basis, albeit commenting in his personal circle that the office was one 'I can only take on with a sigh'.⁶⁵ His unanimous election to the position took place at the DUK's 1964 General Assembly, held at the beginning of June of that year in the city of Trier. He was doubtless aware of the limitations imposed on him by the UNESCO policy pursued by the FRG's government, which at that point was yet to progress much beyond the strictures of the Hallstein Doctrine. A motivating factor in his assumption of the position is likely to have been the prospect of bringing experts in international communication and understanding closer to the 'official foreign policy' of the time, which was palpably undergoing change. It is safe to assume that his specific politics, influenced by the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), were at work here; in June 1964, at the DUK's General Assembly, Georg Kahn-Ackermann, a DUK member and a Social Democrat, proposed a motion to establish 'contacts with the National [UNESCO] Commissions of the "socialist countries"'; he probably did this with Eckert's prior knowledge and in accordance with his wishes.⁶⁶ The motion was carried, lending legitimacy within the DUK to endeavours to intensify relationships with counterparts east of the Iron Curtain. This said, Eckert excluded a priori the possibility of establishing contact with the 'Soviet occupation zone', i.e. the GDR, as variously proposed, including by Steltzer at the 1965 General Assembly.

⁶¹ PA AA B 91 128, letter from Reimers to von Buddenbrock, 13 December 1963, 1f.

⁶² PA AA B 91 128, letter from Reimers to von Buddenbrock, 13 December 1963, 1f.

⁶³ PA AA B 91 422, letter from von Buddenbrock to Reimers, 2 January 1964, 1.

⁶⁴ PA AA B 91 128, minutes of the nineteenth General Assembly of the DUK, 28–29 June 1963, 13, 16.

⁶⁵ AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 345, letter from Eckert to Hensee, 26 November 1964, 1.

⁶⁶ Cf. AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 435, minutes of the twenty-first General Assembly of the DUK, 6–7 May 1965, 17.

Eckert's rationale was that 'the zone [*die Zone*, an expression frequently used in pre-1989 West Germany to refer to the GDR] [...] [was] not a UNESCO member state'. The response of the DUK member Annedore Leber was rather stronger in tone than Eckert's; her view was that the prospect of 'a better relationship with people who shoot at their fellow human beings at the Wall [must] be considered an illusion'.⁶⁷ While we note the presence of a representative of the AA during this discussion, the exchange nevertheless demonstrates the distinctions made within the DUK in 1965 when it came to *Ostkontakte*, and highlights that, all rapprochement in principle notwithstanding, the GDR remained excluded from such considerations until the close of the 1960s.

In late June 1964, Eckert, freshly elected president of the DUK, travelled to Paris to visit the 'German employees present' at UNESCO headquarters.⁶⁸ Conrad M. B. Brann, then working at UNESCO, later an academic linguist in Nigeria, notes in a letter that Eckert had asked him to 'give [him] confidential advice from time to time on relations with the National Commissions in Eastern Europe' to the end of working towards 'intensified cooperation'. Eckert advised the DUK's General Assembly of 1965 that these 'newly established contacts' had 'already unfolded an effect during the [UNESCO] General Conference [of 1964]', explaining that there had been no application from the 'Soviet occupation zone' to join the body, and that, indeed, two Eastern Bloc states had voted for the West German candidate, von Simson, to join the Executive Board. Moreover, firm agreements had been reached with Romanian and Czechoslovakian delegates regarding exchanges of architects, educators and traditional artists.⁶⁹

Having organised in this way the key points in his network of contacts, Eckert was able in the second half of the 1960s to begin reaping the fruits of his labours: In 1965, as well as informing the DUK's General Assembly of the 'effect' of greater cooperation towards the east, he gave an account of his contacts in Bulgaria and Poland, which in some cases amounted to no more than gestures or acts of politeness, but which were nevertheless personal encounters, instrumental in creating the right atmosphere for future visits. In closing his speech to the 1965 General Assembly with the observation: '[These are] extremely hopeful prospects – a policy of small, yet real and specific steps',⁷⁰ he was reflecting his equally real aim of effecting gradual rapprochement between East and West. By this point, he was in contact with the National Commissions in Romania, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.⁷¹

Speaking at the DUK's general assembly in 1966, Eckert described having enjoyed 'numerous conversations in a spirit of great openness' and 'most magnanimous hospitality';⁷² rather than as a sort of secret agent contriving to drive the GDR into isolation in line with the *Ostpolitik* championed by Gerhard Schröder, he is likely to have

⁶⁷ PA AA B 91 171, minutes of the twenty-second General Assembly of the DUK, 28-29 October 1965, 15ff.

⁶⁸ AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 334, letter from Eckert to Zeit, 24 June 1964.

⁶⁹ AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 435, minutes of the twenty-first General Assembly of the DUK, 6-7 May 1965, 17ff.

⁷⁰ AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 565, manuscript of speech to General Assembly, 1965, 7.

⁷¹ PA AA B 91 128, letter from Eckert to von Buddenbrock, 16 December 1964, 1.

⁷² AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 492, manuscript of speech to General Assembly of 1966, undated, 10ff.

viewed himself as an expert in inter-state communication and mutual understanding, as a bridge-builder in the field of foreign policy. It is worth noting here that he, and indeed the DUK's Executive Committee, were not alone in pursuing this course; other members of the DUK, such as the educational researcher Prof. Hellmut Becker, were also forging links to UNESCO officials in the Eastern Bloc.⁷³ Eckert's diplomacy in this arena was the expression of an attitude of invitation, an approach which called the perceptions typical of the Cold War into question. He was not one to engage in the 'eager adjustment to the reigning values of the moment, a two-tiered classification dividing the sheep from the goats', which Theodor W. Adorno perceived and critiqued as a dangerous indication of 'National Socialism liv[ing] on' in a democratic age.⁷⁴

Eckert did face the challenge of attempting simultaneously to meet the expectations of Eastern European state representatives and those of the AA. Preparing for UNESCO's General Conference of 1966, he noted:

In spite of being relatively well prepared, we must shed all our illusions as we proceed to the Gen. Conference. We may be confronted with difficult polit.[ical] questions – [regarding] recognising or at least according greater respect to the SBZ [Soviet occupation zone, i.e. GDR] – [we will need] great alertness – [and to employ] highly flexible tactics, harnessing personal liking.⁷⁵

We might wonder what the ultimate objective of Eckert's 'highly flexible tactics' was. He was well aware that diplomatic recognition for the GDR, or at least a raising of its status, was of necessity an earnestly pursued goal of the eastern European states and of their national commissions for UNESCO. However, he was also enough of a realist to know that West Germany's foreign policy, as it related to the situation of the two Germanys, was subject to political exigencies which lay outside his immediate sphere of influence. Essentially, he needed to avoid damage to his international reputation as a proponent of mutual understanding and communication. Eckert defended his manner of proceeding to the FRG's government by pointing to its successes in 'driving a wedge' into the Eastern Bloc.⁷⁶ This shows his acute recognition of the fact that he could not count on governmental support for the Commission's work out of a utopian belief in the increasing importance of cultural projects across borders, and instead needed to earn that support by delivering a political quid pro quo.

At the end of 1966, a grand coalition⁷⁷ took office in the FRG, which made it easier for the DUK under Eckert to pursue cooperation with the states east of the Iron Curtain. As early as the beginning of February 1967, Eckert sent the AA notes on his conversations with a range of these countries, suggesting that his correspondent 'might also [pass them] on to

⁷³ GSPK (Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin) VI HA (Hellmut Becker) vol. 361, note on a conversation in the State Commissioner's office, Moscow, 15 October 1965, 1.

⁷⁴ Theodor W. Adorno, *Interventions: Nine Critical Models*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2005, 27.

⁷⁵ AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 492, manuscript of speech to General Assembly of 1966, 9.

⁷⁶ In a report on the international conference of textbook publishers held in Paris in June 1964, Eckert pointed, for instance, to the fact that 'the representatives of the Eastern Bloc states' had been 'anxious to avoid presenting themselves as a bloc'. AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 334, letter from Eckert to von Beyme, 6 November 1964, Appendix, 1.

⁷⁷ The Bundestag elected Kurt Georg Kiesinger as chancellor on 1 December 1966; he unveiled his cabinet, composed of both CDU/CSU and SPD politicians, on the same day. Willy Brandt took the post of foreign minister.

the relevant political department'.⁷⁸ After an internal inquiry into Eckert's position regarding cooperation with the Eastern Bloc states in the context of UNESCO, the AA concluded: 'We should use the UNESCO delegations' contacts as a *source of information* [emphasis in original]. However, all cultural exchange measures should be agreed between the [relevant] governments'. The view was that cultural exchange must 'under no circumstances' meet the levels of intensity desired by the Eastern European states and in so doing 'render superfluous the inter-governmental agreements we wish to conclude'.⁷⁹ The AA instructed the FRG's permanent delegate to UNESCO to 'focus particular attention on contacts with Eastern Bloc states' on the one hand, yet to 'respond in a non-committal manner only to any proposals for cultural exchange' on the other, giving priority to 'consolidating bilateral relations at state level'.⁸⁰ The AA's department of culture expected the DUK to likewise adopt this practice of tactical rapprochement, commenting that, as 'our neighbours to the east' were clearly interested in 'bypassing the official German bodies to achieve their aims (scholarships, exchange of academics) via the German Commission for UNESCO', 'the two gentlemen [Eckert and the DUK's Secretary-General Dr Franz Zeit] should be advised to practise a certain restraint in agreeing to specific measures constituting a cultural exchange'.⁸¹

In mid-November 1967, Eckert travelled to Moscow on an official FRG passport to take up an invitation to a conference at the city's Institute of the International Workers' Movement. The AA considered the trip to be 'in the interests of the Office [i.e. the AA], due to Eckert's declared intention to 'use his stay in Moscow to step up contact with the Russian commission for UNESCO, which has the potential to be extremely useful to our position at that organisation's General Conferences.'⁸² The West German trade mission in Bucharest, one of the FRG's first 'outposts' in the Eastern Bloc, arranged for a request to be put to Eckert to take the initiative towards 'intensification of connections with the Romanians' in the cultural arena.⁸³ However, as soon as formal letters had been exchanged between the two commissions for UNESCO confirming their mutual intent to work towards promoting academic cooperation and awarding scholarships, the AA took the view that the principle of 'restraint' had been infringed and accused the DUK's Secretary-General of having overstepped his remit by assuming a 'guideline authority' to which he was not entitled;⁸⁴ its interest was in supporting the establishment of contact in principle while avoiding entering into any specific agreements.

⁷⁸ PA AA B 91 128, letter from Zeit to von Buddenbrock, 1 February 1966, 1.

⁷⁹ Several enquiries from West Germany's permanent delegate to UNESCO were among the factors that prompted this edict, Haack. PA AA B 91 422, letter from department IV/ZAB, Dr. Peckert, to department Referat IV 2, 13 September 1967, 1.

⁸⁰ PA AA B 91 422, letter from department IV 2 to the Permanent Delegate, 24 November 1967, 1f. The ambivalence apparent in this instruction gave rise to 'much puzzlement' for the Permanent Delegate, Hanns-Erich Haack.

⁸¹ The view was that Zeit had 'ventured incautiously far forward' towards the Romanian ambassador in particular and therefore required 'taking somewhat in hand'. PA AA B 91 422, note re. the regional UNESCO conference of European culture and education ministers, 17 November 1967, 1.

⁸² PA AA B 91 422, letter from department IV 2 to V 3-9, 30 October 1967, 1.

⁸³ Cf. PA AA B 91 422, letter from the Bucharest trade mission to the AA, 23 January 1967, 1.

⁸⁴ PA AA B 91 422, letter from department IV/ZAB to department IV 2, 23 November 1967, 1.

Despite these constraints, the DUK continued to pursue its agenda of continuous intensification of contact, inviting the Romanian delegate to UNESCO, Valentin Lipatti, to come to Germany; the visit took place in mid-July 1968, with the AA in attendance. In June 1969, Eckert toured Romania, having been invited to do so by the Romanian commission for UNESCO, without involving the AA. During the tour, he concluded agreements on an exchange of exhibitions, reciprocal awarding of scholarships for chemists and specialists in Romanian language and literature, literary exchanges and cooperation on textbook conferences.⁸⁵ The AA gave its retrospective blessing to the trip, but requested close involvement in the realisation of the agreed projects, 'as most of [them] [fell] within the remit of the Federal Foreign Office'.⁸⁶ The DUK's conclusion, in the presence of the Romanian ambassador and without prior consultation with the AA, of an agreement on 'expanding cooperation in UNESCO matters between Germany and Romania' incorporating the exchange of experts, specialist literature, and exhibitions and planning for joint events⁸⁷ led Hans-Georg Steltzer, the head of the AA's department of culture, to the indignant exclamation: 'That's tantamount to a "mini-cultural accord"! That is not acceptable!'⁸⁸ Among the points of criticism levelled at this off-piste agreement were its failure to include the provisions covering West Berlin that were usual at the time and its potential financial implications. The AA accordingly responded by informing the DUK that its activities were to limit themselves to specifically UNESCO-related areas and topics and that it expected the 'closest consultation' on such matters in the future.⁸⁹

In mid-November 1967, addressing the assembled members of the UNESCO working group in Berlin, Eckert noted that '[t]he grand coalition has made our work easier + harder. Harder – because it is now taken considerably more seriously, because it has a new and distinct polit.[ical] quality.' He suggested that the DUK had 'today [become] a piece of real foreign policy'.⁹⁰ The new foreign minister Willy Brandt had extended an invitation to Eckert, as the DUK's president, and his Secretary-General as early as the end of 1967. During the 'detailed' 40-minute encounter that ensued, wrote Zeit after the event, 'the Foreign Minister *agreed to all points* of our requests' [emphasis in original]. [...] The Minister is evidently interested in intensifying German activities in UNESCO'.⁹¹

Eckert's services to Polish-German relations are a particularly significant aspect of his work, and one in which he had a long track record. As early as the end of 1964, Eckert entered into communication with the Polish UNESCO delegation on the occasion of UNESCO's General Conference; the encounter ended in a mutual agreement to share information on developments in each country and in an invitation extended by the Polish delegation to members of the DUK to visit Poland in the coming year.⁹² The ten-day trip,

⁸⁵ PA AA B 91 422 DUK, report by Prof. Eckert on the DUK delegation's visit to Romania of 15-22 June 1969, undated, 1ff., and minutes by the two UNESCO commissions, 19 July 1968, 1ff.

⁸⁶ PA AA B 91 422, letter from Werz, head of department of culture, to the DUK, 2 September 1969, 1.

⁸⁷ Cf. UNESCO aktuell, press release issued by the German Commission for UNESCO, no. 15/72.

⁸⁸ PA AA B 91 422, annotation by Steltzer on internal note for Mr Dg IV, 23 May 1972, 1.

⁸⁹ It further stipulated that any expenses arising from the agreements were to be borne by the DUK. PA AA B 91 422, letter from Hergt to the DUK, 25 July 1972, 1f.

⁹⁰ AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 263, manuscript of Eckert's speech to the assembled working group, 4f.

⁹¹ AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 261, letter from Zeit to von Simson, 1 December 1967, 1f.

⁹² PA AA B 91 422, letter from Eckert to the Polish Commission for UNESCO, 2 December 1964, 1.

taken in late June 1965, incorporated meetings at which Eckert, Zeit as Secretary-General, and other DUK members entered into dialogue with Stefan Wierblowski, the president of the Polish commission for UNESCO and a former foreign minister of the country, and others. Zeit commented that the Polish contingent had shown a 'noteworthy openness', yet were resolved 'to *initially* [emphasis in original] avoid making too much of the contacts that had been established'. Topics discussed had encompassed matters of domestic policy, German rearmament, and possibilities for the DUK to exercise influence.⁹³ These meetings did not result in specific agreements. Eckert's conviction as regards the significance of this visit manifests in the fact that he sent minutes of meetings and conversations to the AA, alongside the suggestion that they be 'share[d] with other interested departments within the Foreign Office' as well as the department of culture. He told a close friend that he 'had led the first semi-official cultural delegation of the FRG [to Poland]' and that the visit had been a 'complete success'.⁹⁴ And indeed, this trip was doubtless more than run-of-the-mill, particularly in view of the fact that it preceded even the correspondence between Catholic bishops in Poland and West Germany that took place at the close of 1965 and continues to enjoy the repute of being a 'milestone' of rapprochement between the two countries.⁹⁵

It took the Treaty of Moscow, which served as a form of framework agreement for West Germany's relationships with the Eastern Bloc states and laid the required foundations for the conclusion in December 1970 of the Treaty of Warsaw, for the normalisation of relations between Poland and the FRG to become possible.⁹⁶ This notwithstanding, it was on the basis of a long-established relationship of trust that the heads of the commissions for UNESCO in Poland and West Germany agreed at the end of 1970, at the UNESCO General Conference, to pursue a joint history and geography textbook improvement endeavour. The first Polish-German textbook conference took place in late February of 1972 in Warsaw, followed by a further meeting in Braunschweig in mid-April of the same year. The conferences drew up sixteen 'recommendations on the treatment of German-Polish relations in the textbooks' of both states.⁹⁷ These agreements, which enjoyed the support of the FRG's then president⁹⁸, received considerable and largely positive coverage in the country's mass media.

Eckert's plan for the third of these meetings, held in mid-October 1972, was to conclude an 'agreement' between the two commissions, drawn up without consultation with the AA and containing passages calling for the historical assessment of the two countries' shared past to 'promote the incipient normalisation between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Polish People's Republic' with reference to the 'textbooks of both countries', 'processes of education and learning, teaching and learning materials', and

⁹³ PA AA B 91 422, letter from Zeit to von Buddenbrock, 20 July 1965, 1, Anlagen.

⁹⁴ StA WF 143 N Zg. 2009/069 vol. 47/1, letter from Eckert to 'Jura', 17 July 1965, 1.

⁹⁵ Kerski, 'Die Rolle nichtstaatlicher Akteure in den deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen vor 1990', 80ff.

⁹⁶ Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 537ff.

⁹⁷ PA AA B 91 422, letter from department IV to the undersecretary of state, 8 May 1972, 1ff.

⁹⁸ Gustav Heinemann, then West German president, supplied a brief message to be read out at the conference in April 1972, counter to the recommendation made to him by the AA and his own aides. Cf. BA Ko. B 122 9785, letter from Caspari to Eckert, 11 April 1972, 1.

teacher education. Confronted with this intention less than a week before the agreement was due to be signed, the relevant department at the AA recommended roundly that the DUK be instructed 'to refrain from signing the agreement'; its concerns related to the agreement's potential effect on the relationship between the federal state and the *Länder* – already highly fraught in this regard –, the 'financial implications, about which information has not been forthcoming', the sense of having 'been backed into a corner', and the 'one-sided wording of the [agreement's] text'.⁹⁹ Hans Georg Steltzer, as head of the AA's department of culture, 'emphatically' pointed out the issues to Eckert, who responded by 'substantially' revising the agreement's text. He failed in this to satisfy the *Länder*, urgently requested by the AA to submit their views; they felt able neither to agree unanimously to the plan nor to assess the agreement adequately in light of the short notice given them. 'Disregarding the concerns of the Federal Foreign Office' – as that organisation pointedly noted – Eckert and his Polish counterpart Władysław Markiewicz concluded the agreement on 17 October.¹⁰⁰ The AA's legal department, asked to investigate the matter, was not unjustified in its request that 'future agreements not [be] concluded via legally undefined arrangements between representatives of international organisations, but instead by organs [of state] with the right and authority to do so, within the normal process of communication between states'; it assessed the document constituting the deal as very similar in nature to an agreement under international law, yet its implications, and its impact on the *Länder*, as unclear.¹⁰¹ It is beyond doubt that, in terms of international accord, this was the right time to progress in academic history to '[recognising and acknowledging the] political realities which had arisen from the East-West conflict and the different systems in place in Poland and the FRG'.¹⁰² This notwithstanding, the incident goes primarily to demonstrate, first, Eckert's strikingly uncompromising desire to push ahead with and complete the task initiated in 1964 under UNESCO's aegis in spite of all institutional resistance that came its way, and, second, the self-confidence that characterised the leadership of the DUK at this time; it is barely exaggerated in this context to speak of a 'test of power', perhaps even a 'showdown' between it and the established organs of German foreign policy.

The cooperation between the countries' UNESCO commissions exerted a specific and decisive influence on diplomacy between Poland and the FRG by underlining the earnest motives of the policies pursued by the latter, and in so doing supplied a crucial argument when it came to diplomatic negotiations around official agreements. This factor was also of use in relation to the controversy around the agreements' ratification; the cooperation

⁹⁹ PA AA B 91 422, letter from Venzlaff to Mr D 6, 12 October 1972, 1ff.

¹⁰⁰ PA AA B 91 422, letter from department 6 to undersecretary of state, 26 October 1972, 1ff. Cf. also UNESCO aktuell, press release issued by the German Commission for UNESCO, no. 40/72.

¹⁰¹ PA AA B 91 422, letter from Treviranus to department Referat 620, 4 December 1972, 1ff. The department of culture was correct in its conclusion that, in terms of constitutional law, Eckert had had 'no legitimacy' to conclude an agreement of this type; 'However, we cannot use this line of argument with the Poles. The ostensible legality of the case is in their favour.' Ibid.; letter from Holzheimer to Referat 214, 4 December 1972, 3.

¹⁰² In the view of Thomas Strobel, this is the 'key precondition' for the Polish-German textbook Commission's constitution and work, Strobel, *Die Gemeinsame deutsch-polnische Schulbuchkommission*, 254.

in progress on textbooks made it possible to point out that real work on reaching a mutual understanding was taking place, and Poland found itself required to renounce the view of the FRG as a 'neo-Nazi' state.¹⁰³ The textbook work was also what effectively brought the Treaty of Warsaw 'to life';¹⁰⁴ its comparative approach evolved into a model drawn upon during cooperation with other states, Bulgaria being one example.¹⁰⁵

The DUK's informal channels of contact had the decisive advantage over bilateral foreign policy that they continued when the grand coalition lost its way in this regard at the beginning of 1967. After an exchange of ambassadors with Bucharest, the GDR pushed for, and achieved, consensus among the Warsaw Pact that none of its members were to normalise their relations with the FRG without the latter's having first concluded a formal agreement on its relationship to the GDR. This policy, known as the Ulbricht Doctrine, turned the Hallstein Doctrine of the FRG into a 'boomerang'.¹⁰⁶ Personal and UNESCO commission-based informal contacts remained in place, and proved successful particularly in the wake of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, when its principal objective, its 'expansion into a security system for Central Europe and into a structure determining peace for the whole of Europe', had failed.¹⁰⁷ The principles for cooperation in the humanitarian and cultural fields which had been included in 'Basket III' of the Helsinki Final Act continued to unfold an effect, helping create an atmosphere of greater openness in the societies of the Eastern Bloc states.¹⁰⁸

The DUK took up the central UNESCO organisation's ideas and approaches as regarded activities, adapting them to the specific context of the FRG; one example of this manner of proceeding appears in its selection of countries for bilateral dialogue on textbooks and its plans for the meetings and the scope of the talks. Significantly, the DUK was capable of working around, or leaving aside, influences exerted by UNESCO central policy, as evidenced by the events of 1953, when UNESCO made drastic cuts to its budget for textbook revision and in so doing effectively put an end to the associated schemes,¹⁰⁹ but the DUK continued its activities in this area. We see, then, the emergence of independent policy in the DUK, fundamentally referencing UNESCO's international programmes, but

¹⁰³ The attacks within West German society on the recommendations issued by the Textbook Commission – which went as far as the issuance of 'alternative recommendations' by the *Kulturstiftung der deutschen Vertriebenen*, a cultural organisation working from the perspective of Germans expelled from Eastern Europe at the end of the war – must come as no surprise to us in this context; cf. Strobel, *Die Gemeinsame deutsch-polnische Schulbuchkommission*, 256; Jerzy Holzer, 'Polen und die deutsche Zweistaatlichkeit 1949–1989', in: Bauerkämper (ed.), *Doppelte Zeitgeschichte*, 74–82, 79. Dieter Bingen, by contrast, is of the view that the textbook discussions were unable to effect long-term change to Polish-German relations 'due to particular political/ideological taboos maintained by the Polish side'. Bingen, *Der lange Weg der „Normalisierung“*, 51.

¹⁰⁴ Walter Mertineit, 'Der Warschauer Vertrag und die Gemeinsame Deutsch-Polnische Schulbuchkommission', in: *Die Neue Gesellschaft* 27 (1980), 752–756, 752f.

¹⁰⁵ Daniela Taschler et al. (eds), 1974 [Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland], Munich: Oldenbourg, 2005, 446; meeting between the FRG's foreign minister Scheel and his Bulgarian counterpart, 25 March 1974.

¹⁰⁶ Görtemaker, *Die Ursprünge der 'neuen Ostpolitik'* Willy Brandts, 56f.; Bingen, *Der lange Weg der 'Normalisierung'*, 43; Wentker, *Doppelter UN-Beitritt*, 246.

¹⁰⁷ Fischer, *'Im deutschen Interesse'*, 51ff.

¹⁰⁸ Kielmansegg, *Das geteilte Land*, 220ff.

¹⁰⁹ Luntinen, *School History Textbook Revision by and under the Auspices of UNESCO*, 345.

tailoring them to the specific situation 'on the ground'.

It is of little surprise to us that the FRG government's foreign policy was likewise at pains to maintain its autonomy in relation to UNESCO, including, noteworthily, in mid-1970, when UNESCO's Director-General René Maheu urged the FRG to agree to the GDR's admission to the organisation. The German federal government, however, while it consented, more or less under duress, to GDR academics' involvement in international organisations, placed a clear priority on finding a bilateral solution to the issue of accession to the UN and its specialised agencies. The GDR indeed joined UNESCO – the first specialised agency to which it found admission – in 1972; arguments that this event was the '*fruit des efforts diplomatiques de Maheu*', and that UNESCO had the key '*rôle moteur*' in driving the accession, are unlikely to be particularly accurate.¹¹⁰ Instead, the GDR joined as the upshot of the contemporaneous conclusion of key areas of the preliminary work on the Basic Treaty of 1972, which was to create a new basis under international law for relations between the two Germanys.¹¹¹ This appears, then, to constitute a case of the instrumentalisation of multilateral cooperation in the service of West German interests.¹¹² The FRG policy of claiming sole representation of all Germans, and the concomitant *querelles allemandes* in the international organisations, found their final conclusion with the admission of both German states to the UN in September 1973.¹¹³

The picture was now profoundly different from that Eckert had encountered in 1964, when he took the DUK's chair with reluctance and great concerns and in the intention of holding the post for a temporary period only. Eckert and the DUK had come, through the pursuit of their policies and the support shown them by Willy Brandt, to regard themselves as experts in their field of activity and accordingly to command a status of virtual indispensability when it came to endeavours of international communication and understanding. This occasioned a shift in the manner in which the DUK argued for the legitimacy of its work and position in dialogue with the AA. At the outset of the 1960s, it primarily emphasised the defensive character of its work, referring to it as the 'political price' it paid for its activities; by the mid-1970s, it had moved towards stressing its contribution to *détente*.¹¹⁴ During this period, the DUK's policies effectively took on a life and rationale of their own, successively transcending the bounds of the organisation's remit under constitutional law, which accordingly brought the DUK into mounting conflict with other actors on the foreign policy stage.

¹¹⁰ These arguments are advanced by Maurel, *Histoire de l'UNESCO*, 163.

¹¹¹ Mechthild Lindemann et al. (eds), 1972 [Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland], Munich: Oldenbourg, 2003, 1691, report from Bahr to Frank, 10 November 1972.

¹¹² For a different view in regard to 'internationalisation and multilateralisation' see Conze, Frei, Hayes and Zimmermann, *Das Amt und die Vergangenheit*, 624f.

¹¹³ The Hallstein Doctrine had begun to show 'cracks' at an earlier date, in 1969, when Cambodia, Iraq, Sudan, Syria, South Yemen and Egypt officially recognised the GDR, Kielmannsegg, *Das geteilte Land*, 202, 206.

¹¹⁴ Here an example from a letter from the DUK's Secretary-General to the AA's department of culture: 'I also added that we regarded [the activities] as linked to the task set us by Minister Brandt to continue and intensify our cooperation with the commissions from Eastern Europe.' AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 264, letter from Zeit to Eckert, 1 August 1968, 2.

3. The DUK, UNESCO and the AA: UNESCO's position between international administration and the interests of nation states

UNESCO was a first-class forum for forging and intensifying contacts and provided ideal conditions for the emergence of networks which frequently exerted a strong influence on specific discourses back home in member states. This chapter will now turn to exploring the extent to which the FRG's UNESCO policy, above and beyond these networks and their maintenance, helped shape the central organisation's activities and emphases during the 1960s. We are interested in examining the attention and energy the West German government directed towards UNESCO, alongside its payment of significant membership fees,¹¹⁵ contributions of project funds and diplomatic receptions when high-ranking representatives of the organisation came to visit. The extent and degree of representation in international bodies is an indicator of this; one key question in this regard is how much of a voice the DUK had in the global cultural arena and to what ends it used it.

From the organisation's inception, the work that took place under the UNESCO aegis was relatively complex and thematically diverse. The meetings of UNESCO's Programme and External Relations Commission during the organisation's sixth General Conference in 1951, the first to which a German delegation was admitted, included discussion, facilitated by the renowned educator Jean Piaget, of 160 proposals on such disparate topics as compulsory schooling in central and south Asia, teaching about human rights, a plan for a general history of the world, and cooperation between UNESCO and the International Bureau of Education on access of women to education. Reporting back to the AA, Maria Schlüter-Hermkes, a member of the West German delegation, who later represented the country on UNESCO'S Executive Board, stated that, effectively, 'only those delegations with knowledge and expertise [...] [were able to] exert an influence on the programme's content' and that the 'detailed cooperation expected of us' would call for a period of several months' thorough study of the topics and issues involved. With a certain air of resignation, she added that 'UNESCO's large-scale administration' was not safe from the 'risk of partial idleness':

In order to progress towards attaining its originary objective of laying the foundations for solidarity and a mental and spiritual bond among people of all races and levels of education by preparing the way for universal acknowledgement of shared objective values, UNESCO relies upon its member states striving to free its agenda of key programmes from the dominance of administrative and organisational tasks and functions, [...] [and upon] exemplary models of humanitarian action fusing with specialists' knowledge and expertise.¹¹⁶

The FRG found a place on UNESCO's executive and administrative bodies relatively soon after joining the organisation. UNESCO's highest decision-making body is its Executive Board, which monitors its programmes and proposes candidates for election to the post

¹¹⁵ In 1960, the FRG paid 2.8 million DM in membership fees to UNESCO; this figure increased to 6.6 million DM in 1966 and had reached 8.7 million DM by 1972. Cf. Deutscher Bundestag, Drs. III/1704; Drs. V/250; Drs. VI/3354.

¹¹⁶ PA AA B 90 322 Programme Commission, sixth General Conference of UNESCO, Schlüter-Hermkes, undated, 1f.

of Director-General. The governments of member states propose candidates for the Executive Board, and the General Conference elects them. Maria Schlüter-Hermkes, a philosophy lecturer and activist in the Catholic women's movement, represented the FRG on the Executive Board from 1954 to 1959. Between 1957 and 1961, Rudolf Salat, formerly acting head of the AA's department of culture, was the first official from the FRG to hold a directorial post in UNESCO's Secretariat as an international representative.¹¹⁷ This said, the FRG was under-represented in proportion to its membership fee, a situation that neither considerable efforts on the part of the AA nor political pressure exerted by the Bundestag¹¹⁸ was able to change at that time.

The very outset of Eckert's term of office in the DUK was marked by a serious clash relating to the post of permanent delegate to UNESCO in Paris. The well-respected art historian Otto von Simson, who enjoyed a highly positive reputation among the DUK's members, had held the post of permanent delegate since the beginning of 1959, and was elected to the organisation's Executive Board in 1960. Von Simson had left Germany for the US in 1939 and returned in 1957.¹¹⁹ As in the case of the FRG's first ambassador to Paris after the war, Wilhelm Hausenstein,¹²⁰ von Simson was an 'outsider' to German politics, a man of 'good standing', untainted by any guilt from the National Socialist years. During the 1950s, these, alongside appropriate expertise, were crucial qualifications for any representative of Germany abroad, certainly when it came to UNESCO.

In late February of 1964, von Simson contacted the AA from Paris to ask whether the federal government intended 'to retain the German seat' in light of the impending elections to that body, due in November of that year.¹²¹ Both the German ambassador in Paris and von Simson himself, hoping to see German involvement at UNESCO given more weight, had requested, not unreasonably, that the AA turn the post of permanent delegate to UNESCO into an 'envoy' (*Gesandter*) position. The AA decided in May that the title of envoy would not be accorded to the position until it had become vacant and been refilled and that Foreign Minister Schröder had been 'entirely unamenable' to von Simson's request. It suggested that von Simson, who commanded high regard within UNESCO, should at least stand for election and hand the post over to another candidate shortly afterwards in order to enable the FRG to retain the seat. Von Simson rejected this proposal, suggested that 'another candidate [be] put forward in whom the Minister has full confidence',¹²² and requested his release from the foreign service.

¹¹⁷ Salat stood for the office at the suggestion of Schlüter-Hermkes, then a member of UNESCO's Executive Board. We are aware that 'the Chancellor personally' had 'repeatedly' expressed a wish for the FRG to be represented in UNESCO's administration; cf. PA AA 56277 Personalakte Rudolf Salat, letter from Dr von Trützschler to Salat, 24 January 1957, 1f.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Deutscher Bundestag, Drs. IV/2038; cf. Deutscher Bundestag, Drs. V/1635; Drs. V/3029; Drs. VI/875. The proportion of Germans among UNESCO staff stood at 2.7 per cent in 1964.

¹¹⁹ Between 1939 and 1943, von Simson taught at Marymount College in Tarrytown (New York), moving to St. Mary's College in Notre Dame (Indiana) in 1943/1944, and to the Art Department of the University of Chicago from 1947 to 1957.

¹²⁰ Cf. Ulrich Lappenküper, 'Wilhelm Hausenstein – Adenauers erster Missionschef in Paris', in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 43, 4 (1995), 635–678.

¹²¹ PA AA B 91 170, letter from von Simson to the AA, 27 February 1964, 6.

¹²² PA AA B 91 234, note by Sattler re. Mr von Simson's candidacy for the Executive Board of UNESCO, 8 June

The background to this crisis was related to Hans-Joachim von Merkatz, the FRG's former minister of justice and for Germans displaced from eastern Europe after the war, who had headed the federal ministry for the affairs of the Federal Council (Bundesrat) until 1962 and who had been forced out of the Federal Cabinet after his party, the CDU, sustained losses in the state of Lower Saxony in federal elections. The Foreign Minister wanted von Merkatz to take on the UNESCO post after the failure in early 1963 of a plan, proposed by the then federal chancellor Adenauer, to send him as an ambassador to Spain as compensation for the loss of his Cabinet position.¹²³ As early as the beginning of 1964, von Merkatz had sounded out the undersecretary of state, Rolf Otto Lahr, 'in a face-to-face conversation' as to 'whether the Federal Foreign Office still maintained the idea, discussed with him informally, of conferring on him the chairmanship of the German delegation to the UNESCO Conference'. Lahr's view 'remained [that the idea was] excellent', adding that von Merkatz 'might later succeed Prof. Bergstraesser', who was then still chair of the DUK.¹²⁴

The election of Eckert to the presidency of the DUK in June 1964 after Bergstraesser's death left only the Executive Board as a possibility for von Merkatz; however, the DUK's General Assembly produced an unprecedented majority against co-opting him:

After a most heated discussion, the members of the Executive Committee finally came to the consensus that the Commission must regard as unacceptable the proposal for positions of prominence in UNESCO by the Federal Government – which the Commission is tasked with advising – of individuals whose entry to the Commission has been declined.¹²⁵

It was noted that the Executive Committee had 'expressed very openly its discomfort with this situation' and considered 'resigning en masse and recommending the dissolution of the German Commission for UNESCO'.¹²⁶ It would not have been absolutely necessary for von Merkatz to be a member of the DUK in order to represent the FRG on UNESCO's Executive Board, and the relationship between the DUK and the AA had not been consistently free from tensions even prior to this incident, but von Merkatz' rejection by the DUK nevertheless signified an unambiguous protest on the part of that body. Part of the 'increased objection of the Executive Committee's members' stemmed from assertions identified by the committee in von Merkatz' doctoral thesis in the legal field, submitted in 1934, on the subject of ministerial responsibilities.¹²⁷ Von Simson's representative confirmed from Paris that 'circles in the Executive Council' had 'already raised questions about Dr von Merkatz' thesis'. The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* reported on the concerns with the

1964, 1.

¹²³ Konrad Adenauer, *Briefe 1961–1963*, Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006, 54, 324, 488. 'Mr v[on] Merkatz would certainly be a highly suitable ambassador for Madrid, who also possesses the sort of manner which will garner attention and respect in Spain.' The appointment failed due to Schröder's restructuring plans for the AA, which had assigned the post in Madrid already.

¹²⁴ PA AA B 91 234, note re. chair of the German delegation to UNESCO, made by undersecretary of state II, Lahr, 15 January 1964, 1.

¹²⁵ B 91 234, notes Sattler to Lahr in respect to meeting to the DUK's Executive Committee meeting on October 12, 1964, 1.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Hans-Joachim von Merkatz, *Politische Entwicklung und rechtliche Gestaltung der Ministerverantwortlichkeit. Eine vergleichende Studie*, Quakenbrück: Kleinert, 1935.

headline 'Bonn ruffles feathers with Merkatz.'¹²⁸

Eckert and Schlüter-Hermkes, as the DUK's top people, received the task of 'visiting the Foreign Minister, explaining the situation to him and asking him for a statement on how he considers the issue might be resolved', with the ideal solution, in their view, being von Merkatz' replacement by another candidate. Eckert, Schlüter-Hermkes, Lahr and Sattler met on 15 October 1964, shortly before the General Conference was due to begin. The AA conceded during the ensuing discussion that certain passages in von Merkatz' thesis 'were palpably in the spirit of National Socialism [...]', but argued that this 'work, written by a young man in the early years of the 3rd Reich, was now 30 years old'. In response, Eckert noted that he had known von Merkatz for some time and 'consider[ed] him [to be of] a decidedly conservative type and [to be] unsuitable for [...] Unesco'. The financial daily *Handelsblatt*, which appeared to have astonishingly well-informed sources on the matter, published an article on the 'heated exchanges around the candidacy of the former federal minister'; with regard to the 1934 thesis' evident statement of allegiance to the Nazi state, the piece cited the AA's view that it amounted to 'a youthful transgression'.¹²⁹ The AA prevailed in the dispute and von Merkatz was duly elected to the Executive Board. Eckert's view of him was to prove accurate in that his support for UNESCO projects was very limited in nature, perhaps due in part to his having additionally retained his position as a member of parliament.

Limited space prohibits us from a close examination of von Merkatz and his activities here; it is nevertheless an uncontroversial view that he belonged to the markedly conservative end of the political spectrum, having spent years as an official of the now-defunct Deutsche Partei who had, moreover, 'monarchist tendencies'.¹³⁰ At as late a stage as the mid-1950s, he continued to deny the right of individuals who had been involved in the resistance to the National Socialist regime to hold public office; one example is Otto John, then president of the federal domestic intelligence service *Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz*, a polarising figure who subsequently absconded to the GDR.¹³¹ Referencing his forebears from the region of Pomerania, von Merkatz termed himself a *Vertriebener* (an expellee from the formerly German regions in Eastern Europe), although he was not a member of any of the associations in which this population group organised.¹³² Attending the 1960 meeting '*Tag der Pommern*' as a representative of the FRG government, he had stressed the 'duty [of the *Vertriebenen*] to insist with tenacity that no permanent peaceful order of our country can or may be founded upon the division and mutilation of our people'; while 'the German state [is] riven, the German nation is not'.¹³³ These views notwithstanding, he was simultaneously an 'energetic champion of

¹²⁸ Alfred Frisch, 'Bonn eckt an mit Merkatz', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 16 October 1964, 6.

¹²⁹ Ulrich Planitz, 'Der umstrittene Kandidat im UNESCO-Rat', *Handelsblatt*, 28 October 1964, 18.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ 'A man who collaborated with the enemy has disqualified himself for any and all public office. I would adhere to this principle.' Deutscher Bundestag, 42nd session, 16 September 1954, 1985; Helmut Dubiel, *Niemand ist frei von der Geschichte. Die nationalsozialistische Herrschaft in den Debatten des Deutschen Bundestages*, Munich etc.: Hanser, 1999, 67.

¹³² Wolfgang Fischer, *Heimat-Politiker? Selbstverständnis und politisches Handeln von Vertriebenen als Abgeordnete im Deutschen Bundestag 1949 bis 1974*, Düsseldorf: Droste, 2010, 269.

¹³³ Hans-Joachim von Merkatz, *In der Mitte des Jahrhunderts. Politische Lebensfragen unserer Zeit*, Munich

European integration and therefore of Adenauer's policy of integration with the West', and possessed notable expertise in the fields of international relations and international law. He went on, in the second half of the 1960s, to call for the current 'realities [to be] acknowledged', albeit without 'substantially plac[ing] in question' the principles of non-recognition of the GDR and of the Oder-Neisse line.¹³⁴

The conflict around von Merkatz is significant in its demonstration of how the issue of how to deal with the National Socialist past overshadowed matters of individual competency and suitability. There was an evident opposition between von Simson, the former émigré and representative of the 'other', non-Nazi Germany,¹³⁵ and von Merkatz as a conservative 'German of the majority' whom the FRG's foreign minister pushed into post despite his susceptibility to critique on the international stage. The DUK's displeasure at these proceedings appears to have stemmed partly from this instance – not the first of its kind – of 'opportunism' in terms of approaches to the past apparently acting as a 'salutary force',¹³⁶ leaving von Simson, for all his strong reputation within UNESCO, out in the cold as far as the AA was concerned.

Questions of the FRG's international representation likewise fell under the shadow of matters of the past. On the one hand, there were invocations of the ideals underlying Germany as a cultured and cultural state, and the hope was that, in putting forward for representative tasks individuals as irreproachable as possible in terms of their past, critical voices from the Allies or 'abroad' could be headed off at the pass. On the other, the numbers of those with murky National Socialist pasts who in the FRG again found themselves with access to public office were not small.¹³⁷ In contrast to the GDR's approach, 'Germany's quest for postwar international recognition included increasing public memory of the crimes of the Nazi past', as Jeffrey Herf observes, commenting that 'public acknowledgment of the truth about those crimes was a moral but also a practical precondition for international acceptance'.¹³⁸ During this process, internationalisation and multilateralisation by no means necessarily meant that those who bore Nazi-era guilt were leaving the scene; from the mid-1960s, indeed, the reverse was true, with scruples diminishing in this area, certainly in the AA.

As has become evident during this chapter, Eckert and the DUK's Executive Committee were not prepared to submit without resistance to the AA's claim to the last word in associated matters. Their perception of UNESCO politics was clearly as a transnational politics with mutual understanding and communication at its heart. The von Merkatz affair provides a window on the fact that, as early as 1964, Eckert and the DUK already held a clear vision of the spirit of mutual understanding and rapprochement that was to

etc.: Langen-Müller, 1963, 186ff.

¹³⁴ Fischer, *Heimat-Politiker?*, 260, 345, 349.

¹³⁵ Cf. Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys*, Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 1997.

¹³⁶ Ulrich Herbert, 'Drei deutsche Vergangenheiten. Über den Umgang mit der deutschen Zeitgeschichte', in: Bauerkämper (ed.), *Doppelte Zeitgeschichte*, 376–390, 389.

¹³⁷ Norbert Frei, *Vergangenheitspolitik. Die Anfänge der Bundesrepublik und die NS-Vergangenheit*, Munich: C. H. Beck, 1996, 400f.

¹³⁸ Herf, *Divided Memory*, 388.

take root in the FRG's foreign policy and feared a diversion from their pursuit of this course should von Merkatz take office. Once Willy Brandt was federal foreign minister, the DUK, led by Eckert, pushed successfully for a change on the Executive Board. In the period that followed, the DUK enjoyed a greater voice, and used it to focus the AA's attention more closely on supporting UNESCO's work in its specialist fields. Brandt boosted the DUK's institutional role and position, meeting with its executive committee and offering Eckert the chair of the FRG's delegation to the UNESCO General Conference to be held in the autumn of 1968.¹³⁹ Indeed, Brandt himself addressed that General Conference, the first German federal foreign minister to do so, with a speech that drew considerable mass media attention, referencing the civil unrest that had spread in that year in numerous states on both sides of the Iron Curtain. This framing of national events in an international context which highlighted their significance helped advance the emergence of a 'transnational political culture' which brought matters of domestic and foreign policy into closer harmony than had previously been the case.¹⁴⁰

Attempts at setting up international administrative structures operating outwith and beyond the existing conceptions, dominated as they were by nation states, enjoyed the greatest success and robustness where they gave rise to routine cooperation around specific matters outside the realm of political argumentation. The project whose purpose was to write and publish a 'Scientific and Cultural History of Mankind' is an example of a fruitful endeavour to create a work which overarched the conflicts between North and South and those dividing East from West and inspired productive debate (it was published under the title 'History of mankind. Cultural and scientific development'). The continued existence of 'nation state-based logics', however, prevented unconditional universalism from taking root.¹⁴¹ A further example of such cross-border cooperation is the International Geophysical Year of 1957/58, which, under UNESCO's patronage, promoted issues relating to the geosciences across the blocs and generated outcomes of significance, including the Antarctic Treaty.¹⁴² The IGY is illustrative of a general tendency observable during UNESCO's first thirty years, in which it moved away from its original '*orientation intellectuelle*' and evolved into a more scientific and technical organisation in many areas of its activity.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ AsD, NL Georg Eckert, vol. 261, letter from Brandt to Eckert, 9 August 1968, 1.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Bode, *Expertise mit Weltverstand*, 103ff.

¹⁴¹ Naumann, *Mitreden über Weltgeschichte*, 195, 225f.

¹⁴² Jacob Darwin Hamblin, 'Piercing the Iron Curtain. UNESCO, Marine Science, and the Legacy of the International Geophysical Year', in: Jake Lamar (ed.), *Sixty Years of Science at UNESCO. 1945–2005*, Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2006, 68–70; Helmut Moritz, 'Das Internationale Geophysikalische Jahr 1957 und seine Folgen', in: *Sitzungsberichte der Leibniz-Sozietät* 94 (2008), 201–214.

¹⁴³ Maurel, *Histoire de l'UNESCO*, 295.

4. Conclusion

The DUK, with Georg Eckert at its helm from 1964 to his death in 1974, was a key actor in the arena of transnational cooperation on education in post-war Europe. Its activities and policies were dependent on the Paris-based parent organisation with its plans and policy designs, and on the political administration at home from which it drew its funding. In this occasionally conflictual field of intertwinements, the DUK succeeded, in the 1960s and early 1970s, in attaining marked autonomy, which it used to put its own stamp on West Germany's UNESCO work in terms of both content and people. It gave precedence to those UNESCO programmes which its members believed to be most capable of momentum in educational and party political terms and in relation to the as yet unsolved 'German question', and pressed on with developing them once UNESCO itself had discontinued its involvement, as evidenced by the internationalisation of the FRG's national education policy and the emergence of an independent international education administration under UNESCO's aegis. The crucial condition here was collaboration among experts interested in stepping beyond the bounds of their day-to-day work to dream up utopias which held the promise of a more just or peaceful world. The DUK's work attracted individuals who sought to change or improve education systems outwith their particular disciplines. One such expert was Eckert, whose passion for his aims and specific skill in leading the organisation enabled him to unite the various special interest groups which constituted the DUK and place mutual communication and understanding between East and West at the top of its agenda.

Until around 1967, the DUK under Eckert sought to justify its work to the FRG's ministerial authorities as aimed towards the implementation of the parent organisation's objectives, in areas such as textbook comparison, and as helping to seal off the UNESCO system from the unwanted incursion of the GDR. At the same time, its internal proceedings had begun at a much earlier point to seek contact and communication with the Eastern Bloc states, an approach whose value lay in its creation of lines and fora of dialogue which, particularly in times of crisis, provided the FRG's 'official foreign policy' with successful joint endeavours it could reference. In 1967, with the beginning of Willy Brandt's tenure as foreign minister, the leaders of the DUK found themselves held in noticeably higher regard than previously, likely due to the cordial relationship between Eckert and Brandt and to the DUK's role as what we might term an engine of *détente*. All this said, the AA remained steadfastly opposed to any direct attempt by UNESCO's Director-General to influence the FRG's attitude to the 'German question' to the end of the GDR's accession to the organisation. This chapter, then, has illuminated how the FRG's *Ostpolitik* renewal reaped the benefits of work and ideas stemming from international organisations without transcending national borders and itself becoming an international matter. It has also pointed to the role of Eckert and the other experts in the DUK as pioneers, mediators and effectively as diplomats in this regard.

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Georg Eckert and international cooperation on textbooks in Braunschweig (1946-1974)

After Georg Eckert's unexpected death on 7 January 1974, those who had worked with him in the academic or political arenas were unanimous in their emphasis on his outstanding personal contribution to the field of international work and cooperation on textbooks.¹ The praise expressed by Enno Meyer, a secondary school teacher from Oldenburg, was particularly glowing; he spoke of Eckert's international work on textbooks as the stellar achievement of a unique individual within the academic community who had faced and overcome diverse institutional and cultural hurdles. Although not everyone waxed as lyrical as this, the consensus was that the suddenly vacated shoes of Eckert, the founder of the International Textbook Institute, would be difficult to fill.² Academics involved with or aware of Eckert's work on textbooks pointed to his energy, commitment and charisma as having been vital to the success of these endeavours,³ while advocating a view of them that goes beyond the highly successful 'beacon' projects and includes the 'grunt work' of an international textbook revision community which laid the foundations for these successes along with a critique of the procedures and practices developed in the Braunschweig institute.⁴

This chapter seeks to take up this prompt in retracing the development of international work on textbooks in Braunschweig, from the commencement of Georg Eckert's lectureship at the city's Kant-Hochschule in 1946 up to his untimely death. I will attempt

¹ Cf. the speeches made at the academic memorial for Eckert held on 14 January 1974, *In Memoriam Georg Eckert (1912-1974)*, Braunschweig: Pädagogische Hochschule Niedersachsen, Abteilung Braunschweig, 1974.

² 'Georg Eckert's death affected me profoundly. His life's work – performed essentially on his own – merits the greatest of respect.' Enno Meyer to Robert Multhoff, 12 January 1974. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 209/069, Nr. 96.

³ Cf. Hans-Peter Harstick, 'Geschichte und ihre Didaktik', in: Gerhard Himmelmann (ed.), *Fünfzig Jahre wissenschaftliche Lehrerbildung in Braunschweig*, Braunschweig: Erziehungswissenschaftlicher Fachbereich der Technischen Universität, 1995, 273-291; Harstick, 'Georg Eckert (1912-1974). Wegbereiter einer neuen Konzeption von Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht', in: Ursula A. Becher and Rainer Riemenschneider (eds), *Internationale Verständigung. 25 Jahre Georg-Eckert-Institut für internationale Schulbuchforschung in Braunschweig*, Hanover: Verlag Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2000, 105-116; Horst Gies, 'Neuanfang und Kontinuitäten. Geschichtsdidaktik und Geschichtsunterricht in Niedersachsen nach 1945', in: Horst Kuss and Bernd Mütter (eds), *Geschichte Niedersachsens neu entdeckt*, Braunschweig: Westermann, 1996, 98-111; Michele Barricelli, 'Didaktische Räusche und die Verständigung der Einzelwesen. Georg Eckerts Beitrag zur Erneuerung des Geschichtsunterrichts nach 1945', in: Wolfgang Hasberg and Manfred Seidenfuß (eds), *Modernisierung im Umbruch. Geschichtsdidaktik und Geschichtsunterricht nach 1945*, Berlin etc.: LIT, 2008, 261-290; Heike Christina Mätzing, *Wissenschaftler und Botschafter der Völkerverständigung. Georg Eckert (1912-1974) zum 100. Geburtstag*, Bonn: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2013.

⁴ Cf. Michele Barricelli, *Didaktische Räusche*; Rainer Riemenschneider, 'Georg Eckert und das Internationale Schulbuchinstitut in Braunschweig', in: Ulrich Pfeil (ed.), *Die Rückkehr der deutschen Geschichtswissenschaft in die 'Ökumene der Historiker'. Ein wissenschaftsgeschichtlicher Ansatz*, Munich: Oldenbourg, 2008, 115; Romain Faure, *Netzwerke der Kulturdiplomatie. Die internationale Schulbuchrevision in Europa, 1945-1989*, Berlin, Boston: DeGruyter, 2015.

to identify the range of methodologies Eckert, Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf and colleagues from Europe and America developed for textbook revision and outline their strategies regarding the development of textbook collections and the publication of their findings.

Institutionalising international textbook work: from Braunschweig to Strasbourg

Returning to Germany after a period as a prisoner of war held by the British forces, Georg Eckert found himself able to draw on the solidarity of his former comrades from the German Social Democratic Party, who provided him with the opportunity to become involved in planned fundamental reforms to how history teaching was organised in the then Free State of Braunschweig. After the conclusion on 1 November 1946 of his denazification process, conducted by the state denazification committee for teachers, Eckert received a lectureship at the Kant-Hochschule, Braunschweig's academic college of education. One of his first acts immediately thereafter was to found, in agreement with the local governmental authorities and the British military government, a 'Working Group on History', which evolved after some years to regard itself as a 'Research Group on History Education' (*Geschichtspädagogischer Forschungskreis*; see p. 5 above). Other founder members, who were teachers and administrative education authority staff, included Hans Ebeling, Karl Mielcke and Karl Turn.⁵ The group set itself the objective of developing new history teaching and learning materials which would reflect the contemporary state of research internationally, on the basis of a scholarship scheme aimed at promoting historical and education research.⁶ The scholarship programme that was among the plans laid by Georg Eckert and the circle's other members was to be funded by foundations in the US and to enable members of the group or invited visiting researchers to carry out work.⁷ The group received express support from the 'textbook branch' of the British military government's department of education, whose head, Terence P. Leonard, provided Georg Eckert at an early stage with contacts in the networks of those involved in history teaching revision which the Allied military governments' education departments and UNESCO had brought into being.⁸ Eckert succeeded in linking the endeavours of the Working Group of German Teachers' Associations (AGDL) on history textbook revision with the international initiatives being advanced by UNESCO and the military authorities and drawing benefits from this connection for the

⁵ Cf. Ulrich Mayer, *Neue Wege im Geschichtsunterricht? Studien zur Entwicklung der Geschichtsdidaktik und des Geschichtsunterrichts in den westlichen Besatzungszonen und in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1945–1953*, Cologne, Vienna: Böhlau in Komm., 1986, 179–182, and Ulrich Mayer, 'Demokratischer Geschichtsunterricht. Georg Eckerts Beitrag zur Geschichtsdidaktik nach 1945', in: Dieter Dowe, Eckhardt Fuchs, Heike Christine Mätzing and Steffen Sammler (eds), *Georg Eckert. Grenzgänger zwischen Wissenschaft und Politik*, Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2017, 151–176.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Georg Eckert was optimistic about the possibility of acquiring significant funds from the Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations. While he was the recipient in 1952 of a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation's grant-in-aid programme for the humanities, his hopes of medium-term funding and concomitant security for his research group's project planning did not come to fruition. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, Nr. 259.

⁸ Cf. Romain Faure, 'Connections in the history of textbook revision, 1947–1952', in: *Education Inquiry* 2 (2011), 21–35.

institutionalisation of international textbook revision work in Braunschweig.⁹ In April 1951, he invited numerous colleagues from Belgium, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the US, whom he had encountered in 1950 at a UNESCO seminar in Brussels and come to value, to a conference of history teachers at the Kant-Hochschule; this was the founding event of the International Institute for Textbook Improvement. A teacher educator through and through, Eckert defined the Institute as a 'seminary' in which participants in the textbook dialogues it organised could access an international collection of textbooks and a bibliography of textbook research for the purposes of analysing, revising and redeveloping history and later geography textbooks.¹⁰

After the Institute's foundation, Eckert initially attempted to turn the Research Group on History Education into a foundation under public law, to the end of creating a framework for his activities around reforms to history education in Lower Saxony that would give him as much scope and choice as possible in terms of content and organisation. The state of Lower Saxony denied his request,¹¹ whereupon the rector of the Kant-Hochschule, Heinrich Rodenstein, who worked closely with Eckert in the AGDL, sought in emphatic terms to convince its ministry of education to provide a 'home' for the Institute at his institution. Acceding to Rodenstein's proposition, the ministry established, as of the budgetary year 1953, the 'International Textbook Institute' as a research establishment attached to the *Pädagogische Hochschule* (i.e. Kant-Hochschule) in Braunschweig, with the remit of 'conducting research work in the field of the design of teaching and learning materials and in methods of teaching'; there was particular emphasis on history and related subjects and an explicit mandate to conduct international cooperation in these areas.¹² Lower Saxony's state budget funded two posts at the Institute, a lectureship in 'comparative textbook studies' and a secretary. Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf, who had worked with Eckert on a freelance basis since 1950, took up the former position, and Dorothea Feige the latter. Until the dawn of the 1960s, the trio of Schüddekopf, Feige and Eckert were the institutionally funded 'backbone' of international work on textbooks in Braunschweig.¹³

⁹ Eckhardt Fuchs and Kathrin Henne, 'Wissensaustausch international – Schulbuchrevision und das internationale Schulbuchinstitut in Braunschweig nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg', in: *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, Beiheft 63 (2017), 108.

¹⁰ NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, Nr. 128. In its early years, the 'workshop atmosphere' that prevailed at the Institute was particularly noticeable to international participants in textbook dialogues, who correspondingly emphasised it repeatedly in their accounts of these occasions. Speaking at the fifth US-German conference of historians in November 1963, the American historian and educationalist Arthur H. Moehlman referred to the institute, in its synthesis of library and seminary functions, as one of the 'most unusual workshops on Earth; for my friend Georg Eckert needs only to reach out and take hold of a book in order to exclaim: "Here it is; here's the book [we want]!"'. Georg Eckert and Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf (eds), *Elemente eines atlantischen Geschichtsbildes. Gutachten, Diskussionen und Empfehlungen der 5. Amerikanisch-deutschen Historikertagung, Braunschweig, November 1963*, Braunschweig: Verlag Albert Limbach, 1965, 30.

¹¹ Der Präsident des niedersächsischen Verwaltungsbezirks Braunschweig. Abteilung für Volksbildung an den Geschichtspädagogischen Forschungsbereich Braunschweig, 3 December 1951. NLA. 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, Nr. 263.

¹² NLA. Hauptstaatsarchiv Hannover, Nds. 400 Acc. 121/81, Nr. 556.

¹³ Cf. Rainer Riemenschneider, 'Das Tandem Eckert-Schüddekopf und das Institutsgedächtnis', in: Becher and Riemenschneider (eds), *Internationale Verständigung. 25 Jahre Georg-Eckert-Institut*, 123.

From the 1960s onwards, however, Georg Eckert directed increasing energies towards achieving new institutional and financial foundations for his international work. The year 1964 brought a new opportunity in this direction, when those participating in the Council of Europe's conferences on the revision of geography books and atlases resolved, at their fourth session in Reykjavik, to establish a European centre of documentation for history and geography teaching at the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut*.¹⁴ The proposal received the proactive support of Gerhard Neumann, deputy director of the Council of Europe (CoE) Education Department, who was instrumental in the CoE's proposal to the Institute, made in December 1965, that it take on the role of an 'information and documentation centre for the improvement of history and geography textbooks'.¹⁵ The talks with the government of Lower Saxony around the establishment of such a centre led to tangible improvements in the Institute's facilities and funding, to the extent that it felt prepared to rise to the new task and did so from January 1966.

All his successes notwithstanding, Georg Eckert was unable during his lifetime to extricate the Institute from its organisational and funding ties to the Kant-Hochschule in order to endow it with the legal and financial independence he believed it needed in order to meet the international expectations now placed upon it. What he wanted most of all was for the Institute to pass, like the Institute for European History in Mainz, into the joint hands of the federal government and the *Länder*, or be covered by the *Königsteiner Abkommen*, an agreement among the *Länder* regarding the shared funding of research institutes, as was the Institute of European History in Mainz. His wish did not find fulfilment until after his death, when the combined efforts of policymakers and academics across Lower Saxony's political spectrum, with the state's premier Alfred Kubel at their head, led to the Institute's founding statute, issued on 26 June 1975, which conferred upon it the status of a foundation under public law possessed of legal capacity and, in renaming it, created an enduring association between textbook research and the name of Georg Eckert.¹⁶

The shape and form of cooperation: Bilateral communication and multilateral work on textbooks in Council of Europe and UNESCO programmes

Bilateral dialogue on textbooks was the core focus of the work that took place at the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut* during its early years. In July 1949, the textbook branch of the British military government's department of education worked with the Research Group on History Education to put on a conference in Braunschweig which brought British and German history teachers together and which gave rise to an agreement between the UK's Historical Association and the AGDL on history textbook revision. The

¹⁴ Cf. 'Recommendations of the Fourth Conference on Geography Teaching and the Revision of Geography Textbooks and Atlases (Reykjavik 1964)', in: E. C. Marchant (ed.), *Geography Teaching and the Revision of Geography Textbooks and Atlases*, Strasbourg: Council for Cultural Cooperation, 1967, 139.

¹⁵ Cf. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143N, Jg. 2009/069, Nr. 371/1.

¹⁶ Cf. Rolf Wernstedt, 'Die Gründung des Georg-Eckert-Instituts für internationale Schulbuchforschung aus politischer und parlamentarischer Sicht', in Becher and Riemenschneider (eds), *Internationale Verständigung. 25 Jahre Georg-Eckert-Institut*, 124-128; Eckhardt Fuchs and Steffen Sammler, 'The Establishment of the Georg Eckert Institute in the Summer of 1975: How Textbook Research Was Given A New Future in Braunschweig Following the Death of Georg Eckert', in: *Eckert. Bulletin* 15 (2015), 33-35.

conference marked the beginning of the bilateral textbook dialogues which were at the core of the Institute's work until well into the 1960s.¹⁷ Commencing in 1950, the Institute concluded, in rapid succession, a series of agreements on bilateral meetings, setting out fundamental terms of cooperation and communication on textbooks, with teachers' unions and history teachers' associations from Western Europe and with the National Council for the Social Studies in the US.¹⁸

Eckert also looked beyond the West, taking an attitude of openness towards dialogue with teachers, academics and publishers from Central and Eastern Europe and agreeing as early as 1951, at a UNESCO-run seminar on 'the teaching of history as a means of developing international understanding' held in Sèvres, on an exchange of textbooks with colleagues from the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia. A meeting with representatives of the Yugoslavian teachers' union laid the foundations for the commencement of bilateral textbook discussions agreed upon in 1952. In Eckert's later years, he initiated dialogue on textbooks with Romania, which began in 1973,¹⁹ alongside the textbook conferences between Poland and Germany, arranged in 1972, which became a key focus of the Institute's work.²⁰

Eckert's view was that these bilateral meetings were to be merely a first step on a path towards international communication and understanding around the issues facing a world of advancing globalisation.²¹ Accordingly, he joined Karl Dietrich Erdmann, chair of the German historians' association and editor of the periodical *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, on active work around the revision of history textbooks within the CoE's textbook conferences held between 1953 and 1958 in Calw, Oslo, Rome, Royaumont, Scheveningen, Istanbul and Ankara.²² In so doing, he met his own expectation of his work, that it might 'uncover the great commonalities of European history and culture' to the end of 'both overcom[ing] the nation state-centred view of the late nineteenth century and [promoting] the idea of Europe and a sense of European solidarity', as he put it in March 1958 in a letter to an official in the West German federal interior ministry's department of cultural affairs who was responsible for assigning the budget for the Institute's international textbook work via the European Fund.²³

With his Belgian, British, French and Norwegian colleagues Emile Lousse, E. H. Dance,

¹⁷ Cf. Rosemarie Rümenapf-Sievers, 'Georg Eckert und die Anfänge des Internationalen Schulbuchinstituts', in: Becher and Riemenschneider (eds), *Internationale Verständigung. 25 Jahre Georg-Eckert-Institut*, 116-122.

¹⁸ Cf. Steffen Sammler, 'Schulbuchgespräche in friedenspädagogischer Absicht', in: Corine Defrance and Ulrich Pfeil (eds), *Verständigung und Versöhnung nach dem 'Zivilisationsbruch'? Deutschland in Europa nach 1945*, Brüssel: Peter Lang, 2016, 605-624.

¹⁹ Cf. Siegfried Bachmann, 'Internationale Schulbuchrevision als systemübergreifende Kooperation. Bilaterale Schulbuchkonferenzen von Historikern und Geographen aus der Bundesrepublik Deutschland sowie aus Polen und Rumänien', in: *DGFK Jahrbuch* (1979/80), 822-825.

²⁰ Cf. Thomas Strobel, *Transnationale Wissenschafts- und Verhandlungskultur. Die Gemeinsame Deutsch-Polnische Schulbuchkommission 1972-1990*, Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2015, and the chapter by Thomas Strobel in this volume.

²¹ Cf. Georg Eckert, 'Improvement in Textbooks through International Co-operation', in: *The Yearbook of Education* 22 (1960), 577-586.

²² Cf. Édouard Bruley and E. H. Dance, *A History of Europe?*, Leyden: Sythoff, 1960.

²³ NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 178/2.

Edouard Bruley and Håkon Vigander, each representing their national history teachers' associations, Eckert worked towards the initiation, after the successful revision of textbooks in each country, of research-based projects for producing lexicons and teaching materials with European points of view at their core. At the CoE's second textbook conference in Oslo, the group formed a coordination committee for the CoE's work on history textbooks; they published the proceedings of the conferences held in the 1950s and a synthesis of the bilateral textbook dialogues in Europe to the end of mapping out subject-related and methodological processes for implementing the meetings' outcomes in the history classroom.²⁴ The requirements for the implementation were the subject of discussion in the summer of 1965 at the CoE's conference in Elsinore, Denmark; this was the same year as the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut's* nomination as the CoE's history and geography textbook centre and coincided with a change in the perspective and emphasis governing the CoE's work in this field, from history textbook revision projects to discussions around a shared European curriculum and how it might be implemented in day-to-day teaching in schools.²⁵

Georg Eckert perceived UNESCO as the ideal forum for an endeavour to incorporate Central and Eastern Europe and the rising new nation states of Africa and Asia into his textbook work in the service of international reciprocal understanding between nations. In 1961, he had joined the group planning UNESCO's long-term project 'Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values'; he was also involved in a study, initiated by the *Fédération internationale des associations d'instituteurs* (F.I.A.I.) and funded by UNESCO, of depictions of Asia in textbooks for primary education in Switzerland, France, Britain and the FRG, whose findings the Albert Limbach publishing house issued in 1964.²⁶ The experience he acquired in these endeavours provided him with the necessary grounding for his project 'Promoting International Understanding through School Textbooks', which he launched in 1971 and which was the first study to conduct systematic analysis of textbooks across continents and cultures with its reciprocal comparison of history, geography and social studies textbooks from Britain, the FRG, India, Kenya, Japan and Venezuela.²⁷

International textbook research in practice

When it came to organising bi- and multilateral textbook dialogues, Georg Eckert drew primarily on the experiences of Föreningen Norden, the cultural cooperation association of the Nordic countries, and the French teachers' union *Syndicat National des Instituteurs*,

²⁴ Cf. Bruley and Dance, *A History of Europe?*; Y.Cottaz, Jacques de Launay, Georg Eckert (eds), *World History Teachers in conference*, Oxford u.a.: Pergamon Press, 1964.

²⁵ Council of Europe. Committee for General and Technical Education. Course on History Teaching in Secondary Education held under the auspices of the Council of Europe organized by the Danish Government Elsinor, 21st August – 1st September 1965. Final Report, Strasbourg 1966.

²⁶ Cf. International Federation of Teachers' Associations; Robert Michel, *Die Behandlung Asiens in den Lehrbüchern der Volksschulen in der Schweiz, Frankreich, Großbritannien und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Braunschweig: Verlag Albert Limbach, 1964.

²⁷ Cf. Philip K. Boden, *Promoting International Understanding through School Textbooks*, Braunschweig: Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, 1977.

both of which had been active in multilateral textbook work during the inter-war period and had emphasised in this context the crucial nature of the involvement of civil society organisations for successful textbook revision on an international basis.²⁸ His 'simple and practical' arrangements for the meetings had struck the founder of the College of Europe in Bruges, Henri Brugmans, who made the observation in his 1958 speech on the occasion of Eckert's receiving the F.V.S. European Prize from the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung F.V.S. foundation. Brugmans was full of praise for the collegial, productive atmosphere that prevailed during the dialogues, which, consistently proceeding with their outcomes in mind, led not to 'empty closing communiqués', but instead to 'joint recommendations [...] composed among people of good faith, all of whom are passionate about the ethical ideas underlying their profession.'²⁹

The dialogues involved academic historians and history teachers from two countries each analysing the textbooks of the other, before meeting at textbook conferences to, in most cases, produce the joint recommendations to which Brugmans referred; as a rule, these recommendations, unlike those which emerged during the Franco-German textbook meetings between the wars, were products of consensus and did not explicitly set out controversial views.³⁰ The consensus method drew criticism, particularly from those associations of historians and history teachers which, like the Historical Association, upheld a liberal tradition emphasising teachers' and textbook authors' individual autonomy and responsibility for their content and their independence from state-issued recommendations.³¹ Representatives of France's *Société des Professeurs d'Histoire* and the Belgian history teachers' association, mindful of their countries' experiences of National Socialist occupation and the persecution and genocide perpetrated against their Jewish populations, warned against prioritising the search for a shared historical narrative centred around reconciliation and consensus over engagement and wrestling with difficult issues around the past. To the majority of contemporary stakeholders and to the field of textbook research, however, the methodical focus on consensus appeared as a decisive step on the path to sustainable mutual understanding and textbook revision due to its renunciation of adversarial opposition between mutually incompatible national points of view and its identification instead – to put it with Rainer Riemenschneider – of 'wording conceived and presented jointly by both sides', wording so emphatic that it

²⁸ There is a more detailed account of the Institute's work in Steffen Sammler, 'Die Institutionalisierung der internationalen Schulbucharbeit auf dem Gebiet der Geschichte. Das Internationale Schulbuchinstitut in Braunschweig (1951-1965)', in: Jürgen Elwert (ed.), *Geschichte jenseits der Universität. Netzwerke und Organisationen in der frühen Bundesrepublik* (Historische Mitteilungen – Beih. 94), Stuttgart: 2016, 178-182.

²⁹ Speech by the chairman of the Prize Board, Prof. Dr. Henri Brugmans, on the awarding of the Europe Prize to Georg Eckert in 1958, in: *Gedenkschrift zur Verleihung des Straßburger Europa-Preises 1958 der gemeinnützigen Stiftung F.V.S. zu Hamburg an Prof. Georg Eckert*, Hamburg: Stiftung F.V.S., 1958, 9.

³⁰ Cf. Wolfgang Jacobmeyer, "'Empfehlungen". Arbeitsform, Medium und Ergebnis der international vergleichenden Schulbuchforschung', in: *Zeitschrift für Geschichtsdidaktik* 4 (2005), 196-209.

³¹ The Historical Association withdrew from its institutional involvement in international cooperative textbook work in 1951; until the 1970s, bilateral textbook dialogues took place on the initiative of British history teachers and academics. Cf. Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf, 'Das deutsch-englische Historikergespräch Ostern in Braunschweig', in: *Pädagogische Blätter* 5 (1954), 193-195; E. H. Dance, 'Anglo-German Textbook Exchange: The first five years', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht* 4 (1955), 258-259.

augured well for future cooperation in the subject-specific and educational fields.³²

The Institute's international textbook collection: a key to successful textbook comparison and analysis

For Georg Eckert and his fellow members of the Research Group on History Education, international textbook research had never been an academic end in itself, but rather was vital to the production of new teaching and learning materials for a democratic society, in the spirit of mutual understanding and reconciliation among peoples and nations. They considered as crucial both critical analysis of textbooks in their own country and exploration of the points of view presented in those of other nations, and accordingly wished to provide teachers and textbook authors with access to an international collection of textbooks. The British military authority's textbook branch supplied indispensable assistance in helping the Institute establish its first holdings of textbooks and specialist literature from various nations, and the collection grew slowly but surely in the years that followed.³³ Eckert's early commitment to establishing and developing the collection proved felicitous for the Institute's further course; time and time again, the holdings served as a particularly powerful argument for expansions to the Institute in key phases of its early career. One example of this argument in action is the recommendations issued in 1964 by the participants of the CoE's programme for the revision of geography textbooks and atlases, which explicitly pointed to both the valuable experience in textbook revision residing at the Braunschweig institute and its extensive holdings of history and geography textbooks from across Europe, which had made it a preferred choice for a planned European centre for textbook improvement.³⁴ This addition to the Institute's remit saw its textbook holdings increase substantially, doubling from 20,000 to 40,000 volumes within a decade. Important contributions in this regard came from the CoE, which called upon its member states to supply the collection with newly published history and geography textbooks from their countries free of charge or at reduced prices, and from the Volkswagen Foundation, which in 1965 made a start-up donation of 100,000 DM to the textbook library's expansion; the German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*, DFG) subsequently took over funding its continuous growth.³⁵

³² Cf. Rainer Riemenschneider, 'Transnationale Konfliktbearbeitung. Die deutsch-französischen und die deutsch-polnischen Schulbuchgespräche im Vergleich, 1935-1997', in: *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 20 (1998), 74.

³³ Cf. Rümenapf-Sievers, *Georg Eckert und die Anfänge des Internationalen Schulbuchinstituts*, 117.

³⁴ 'The Conference would especially like to draw attention to the fact that the International Schoolbook Institute at Brunswick (Federal Republic of Germany), has already acquired valuable experience in this field and has a library of European history and geography textbooks as well as a collection of source material, concerning the revision of history and geography textbooks in Europe, and other parts of the world'. 'Recommendation of the fourth conference on geography teaching and the revision of geography textbooks and atlases (Reykjavik 1964)', in: E. C. Marchant (ed.), *Geography Teaching and the Revision of Geography Textbooks and Atlases*, 139.

³⁵ Cf. award letter from Stiftung Volkswagenwerk to Georg Eckert, 1 November 1965. NLA. Hauptstaatsarchiv Hannover Nds. 401 Acc. 92/85, Nr. 531.

Long-term exposure for the outcomes of international textbook projects: The Institute's publications

From the Institute's inception, Georg Eckert placed great value on publishing the findings and outcomes of the analysis and work it undertook. He wanted these publications to extend their audiences beyond the community of academic historians, providing practical support to teachers and textbook publishers, and therefore sought above all to help history teachers from Germany familiarise themselves with the ideas and views of their colleagues in other countries and in so doing to enable them to 'critically check their own traditional perspectives against the points of view put forward by other European historians and educators.'³⁶ Numerous owners and managers of German educational publishing houses shared his thoughts on the matter. From the 1960s onward, his collaboration with Carl-August Schröder, who headed the Georg Westermann publishing house, proved particularly productive; Schröder, a law graduate, had conducted research on 'textbook improvement via international intellectual cooperation', gaining his doctorate with a thesis on the subject in Bonn in 1961.³⁷

In 1951, Eckert launched the periodical *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht*, which published internationally comparative academic articles on the subject content and methodologies of school history and provided its readership with information on school systems, curricula and textbooks in a range of countries within and outside Europe. The journal's key purpose was as a publication vehicle for the textbook analyses that preceded the bilateral textbook conferences, summaries of the conferences' proceedings, and the recommendations that ensued. This content appeared in German and in the language of the other party to the dialogues. An extensive review section enabled readers to identify the implementation (or lack of it) of the recommendations in newly published textbooks.

Alongside these endeavours, Eckert and Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf established a series of publications entitled *Schriftenreihe des Internationalen Schulbuchinstituts*, which had issued twenty-one volumes by 1974. As well as placing the outcomes of the various bilateral textbook dialogues between West Germany and the US, Italy, and Czechoslovakia before interested readers, the series sought particularly to promote the work of researchers conducting comparative textbook analysis from a European perspective, examining the depiction of Jewish history in German textbooks, or – which drew considerable notice – providing an 'outsider's', in this case Polish, view of German history.³⁸

³⁶ In 1955, Georg Eckert and Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf published – under the title 'How others see us' – translations of text from Belgian, British, Danish, French, Italian, Norwegian and Swedish textbooks on key topics from German history, such as the revolution of 1848/49, the Franco-German War of 1870/71, the foundation of the German Reich and the age of imperialism, the First World War, the Treaty of Versailles and the National Socialist period. Georg Eckert and Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf (eds), *Wie Andere uns sehen. Die letzten 100 Jahre deutscher Geschichte in europäischen Schulbüchern*, Braunschweig: Verlag Albert Limbach, 1955.

³⁷ Cf. Carl August Schröder, *Die Schulbuchverbesserung durch internationale geistige Zusammenarbeit: Geschichte, Arbeitsformen, Rechtsprobleme*, Braunschweig: Westermann, 1961.

³⁸ Cf. Ernst Weymar, *Die Neuere Geschichte in den Schulbüchern europäischer Länder. Vom Ende des Mittelalters bis zum Vorabend der Französischen Revolution*, Braunschweig: Verlag Albert Limbach, 1956;

The commitment and energy put into the Institute's publications by the Braunschweig-based publisher Hans Eckensberger, a gifted organiser who secured ample supplies of paper and printed the findings of the Research Group and the proceedings and outcomes of the international textbook dialogues, were vital to their success. The *Beiträge zum Geschichtsunterricht* series marked the beginning of many years of working with Eckensberger's Albert Limbach publishing house, which began issuing the *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht*, supported by the AGDL, and the Institute's *Schriftenreihe* series in 1951. Georg Eckert's choice fell consciously on Albert Limbach 'because it [was] a publisher capable of high technical performance and above all because Limbach is not in the textbook business.' Eckert was of the view that he 'could not publish a yearbook which is to act as a sort of referee in one of the major textbook publishing houses'.³⁹

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the numerous political and financial difficulties they faced, Georg Eckert and Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf succeeded in giving international cooperative work on textbooks a home in the city of Braunschweig. The hurdles that confronted them on the way reflect the controversies in the FRG's early years around the relationship between the specialist academic study of a subject and the methodology of its teaching, as well as embodying the range of divergent views on how international work on textbooks aimed at generating mutual international understanding should be organised and funded. At the core of the debate was the matter of how much influence should pertain to the state or to civil society institutions, and to national as opposed to international organisations, in the course of this process. Georg Eckert's capacity for bringing together representatives of a range of discrete networks at national and international level – people from the AGDL, national history teachers' associations, the German Federal Foreign Office, UNESCO and the CoE - so that they might work together on joint projects, was instrumental to the institutionalisation of textbook research and cooperation. Those who knew and worked with Eckert see the primary driver of his success in this regard in his infectious faith in 'educational disarmament' as a promising route towards an international community founded on peace.⁴⁰ Eckert inspired his interlocutors from education policy, academia, the teaching profession and textbook publishers with this belief in the 'solidarity of all people of goodwill', as Robert Multhoff put it at the academic memorial for Eckert held on 14 January 1974, shortly after his sudden death.⁴¹ The honours conferred on him by

Saul B. Robinson and Chaim Schatzker, *Jüdische Geschichte in deutschen Geschichtslehrbüchern*, Braunschweig: Verlag Albert Limbach, 1963; Maria Wawrykowa, *Deutsche Geschichte aus polnischer Sicht 1815 – 1848*, Braunschweig: Verlag Albert Limbach, 1974.

³⁹ Cf. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 335.

⁴⁰ 'Professor Eckert and his assistant are a shining example of how a Schulbuchinstitut can be built up gradually from a very small beginning and with limited financial resources when the *faith in educational disarmament as a means to international harmony exists*.' Terence J. Leonard, 'Educational Disarmament as an important step towards Human Harmony', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht* IX (1963/64), 45.

⁴¹ Robert Multhoff, 'Rede auf der akademischen Trauerfeier zum ehrenden Gedenken an Prof. Dr. Georg

supporters of European integration, associations of textbook and teaching material producers, and the German Trade Union Confederation (*Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund*) bear articulate witness to this capacity for inspiration to efforts in a common cause.⁴² He is likely to have experienced particular joy over the gratitude for his international textbook work expressed in 1970 by Robert-Hermann Tenbrock, a highly successful history educator and textbook author, when he endowed an international award, to be presented in conjunction with the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut*, for ‘an exemplary didactic, methodological depiction, in a work of history, of the history of the European family of peoples, on the basis of the most current academic research’. The first award went in 1972 to the historian Gerhard Neumann, deputy director of the CoE’s department of education.⁴³

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⁴² Cf. *Gedenkschrift* on the presentation of the Europe Prize in Strasbourg 1958 of the F.V.S. foundation, Hamburg 1958; ‘Pestalozzi-Preis des Deutschen Lehrmittel-Verbandes an Professor Dr. Georg Eckert’ [Pestalozzi Prize award to Prof. Georg Eckert by the German Association of Teaching Aids Producers], in: *Blickpunkt Schulbuch. Zeitschrift für moderne Unterrichtsmedien* 6, 13 (1972), 19; Wolfgang Brüggemann, speech on the occasion of the presentation of the DGB’s cultural award. Internationales Schulbuchinstitut Braunschweig. Düsseldorf 1973.

⁴³ Robert-Hermann-Tenbrock-Preis. Certificate of endowment; presentation of the 1972 award to Dr Gerhard Neumann, Paderborn 1974.

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Georg Eckert, a 'man of goodwill': Franco-German textbook revision after 1945

There is little in the background of Georg Eckert up until the end of the war to indicate that he would advance to become an important mediator of Franco-German rapprochement in the post-war period. Other German historians of his generation had made regular visits to France before 1945 and shown an interest in it in their academic work, while Eckert's early experience of the country appears to have been limited to his involvement in the German campaign against it in the Second World War, serving in the spring of 1940 as an infantry signalman. Other historians in their early careers – notably the founders of the German Historical Institute in Paris, opened in 1958¹ – had made use of time spent studying in Bonn in the 1930s to learn more about France; Eckert's time in Bonn after 1933 seems not to have left any such traces. It is likely that the language barrier played a part here; he could read and understand French to a limited extent, but when writing to post-war cooperation partners in that country after the war, he usually did so in German or had his letters translated by a friend.²

Eckert began to build his reputation as a worker in the service of peace in the British-occupied zone of Germany, more precisely in Braunschweig: Here, he founded the *Geschichtspädagogischer Forschungskreis* (Research Group on History Education), later to accrue significant influence on curriculum design in the British zone,³ which gave rise to the 'Fundamental Propositions on Reforming History Education' Eckert issued in February 1948.⁴ Eckert was also a member of the Working Group of German Teachers' Associations (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Lehrerverbände*, AGDL) and at this time chair of its committee on history education, which had been founded in 1948 and which in the period that followed provided a remit for his activities in Franco-German textbook revision. Eckert's rapid advancement to a key figure in these incipient fora bears witness to the adaptability of his thinking and of his work in the context of civil society initiatives seeking to promote mutual understanding across borders in these post-war years. The extent of the initial distrust French historians felt towards their German colleagues is evident in the words, presumably from the year 1949, of the head of cultural policy in the French occupation zone of Germany, Raymond Schmittlein:

¹ Cf. Ulrich Pfeil (ed.), *Das Deutsche Historische Institut Paris und seine Gründungsväter. Ein personengeschichtlicher Ansatz*, Munich: Oldenburg, 2007; Pfeil, 'Die "Generation 1910". Rheinisch-katholische Mediävisten vom "Dritten Reich" zur Bundesrepublik', in: *Geschichte im Westen* 26 (2011), 61-87.

² Georg Eckert writing to Alphonse Dupront, 30 August 1950, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

³ Ulrich Mayer, *Neue Wege im Geschichtsunterricht? Studien zur Entwicklung der Geschichtsdidaktik und des Geschichtsunterrichts in den westlichen Besatzungszonen und in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1945-1953*, Cologne, Vienna: Böhlau in Komm., 1986, 183ff.

⁴ Hans-Peter Harstick, 'Georg Eckert (1912-1974). Wegbereiter einer neuen Konzeption von Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht', in Ursula A. J. Becher and Rainer Riemenschneider (eds), *Internationale Verständigung. 25 Jahre Georg-Eckert-Institut für Internationale Schulbuchforschung in Braunschweig*, Hanover: Verlag Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2000, 105-115, 109.

Some of them [the French historians] had been in concentration camps and [...] the others remembered well how their most eminent representatives, [including] Mr [Georges] Lapiere, Secretary-General of the history professors' union, had died in concentration camps, Marc Bloch had been shot dead by the Gestapo in Lyon and the entire Isaac family had perished in the incinerators.⁵

Eckert, however, was able to build new trust across the Rhine, as is evident from a letter of congratulation sent to him by the French historian Jacques Droz⁶ on the occasion of his receiving the *Prix de l'Europe*⁷ in 1958:

I have wished for some time to congratulate you on the honour rightly conferred upon you, acknowledging the services you have rendered to peace in Europe and to the reconciliation of our two nations.⁸

This chapter will centre on the process of post-war rapprochement by which French and German historians and history teachers successfully overcame deep distrust and embarked upon a process of history textbook revision.⁹ In addition to this, it will provide an analysis of how Georg Eckert established himself in the Franco-German networks of experts emerging at that time, proceeding from the 1950s onward to make a substantial contribution to reconciliation between the two countries.¹⁰

Georg Eckert and the historians' meetings at Speyer

Even before the Federal Republic of Germany came into being in May 1949, one of the first tasks undertaken in the process of Germany's reconciliation with its former enemies consisted in close and thorough examination of historiography and history textbooks. Nineteenth-century perceptions held relationships of antagonism between nation states to be fateful, par for the course, effectively dictated by nature, inevitable and inescapable. After the war, committed individuals and groups sought to demonstrate that it was possible to intellectually deconstruct historically-based ideas and images such as that of the entrenched arch-enmity linking France and Germany and in this way to resist 'mental mobilisation' of hostilities between the states. Martin Göhring,¹¹ director of the Institute

⁵ Archive of the Ministère des Affaires étrangères (MAE)/La Courneuve, fonds de l'occupation française en Allemagne et en Autriche ('fonds Colmar'), AC 146(2), memo from Schmittlein to the French ambassador in Berne, undated.

⁶ Cf. Ulrich Pfeil, 'Jacques Droz und die Geschichtsbilder der deutschen Geschichte', in: Michel Grunewald et al. (eds), *France-Allemagne au XX^e siècle – La production de savoir sur l'autre*, vol. 2, Bern u.a.: Peter Lang, 2012, 231-246.

⁷ 'Le Prix de l'Europe est attribué au Professeur Georg Eckert', in: *Le Monde*, 24 February 1958.

⁸ Jacques Droz to Georg Eckert, 20 March 1958, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/1.

⁹ There is a general discussion in Romain Faure, *Netzwerke der Kulturdiplomatie. Die internationale Schulbuchrevision in Europa, 1945-1989* (Studien zur Internationalen Geschichte, vol. 36), Berlin/ Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg 2015; Corine Defrance and Ulrich Pfeil, 'Deutsch-französische Historikerbeziehungen nach 1945', in: *Zeitschrift für interkulturelle Germanistik* 4 (2013) 2, pp. 61-79; Steffen Sammler, 'Schulbuchgespräche in friedenspädagogischer Absicht. Die Revision der Geschichtsbücher im Versöhnungsprozess nach 1945', in: Corine Defrance, Ulrich Pfeil (eds), *Verständigung und Versöhnung nach dem 'Zivilisationsbruch'? Deutschland in Europa nach 1945* (L'Allemagne dans les relations internationales 9), Brüssel, Peter Lang, 2016, pp. 605-624.

¹⁰ The political and sociocultural context is outlined in Corine Defrance and Ulrich Pfeil, *Deutsch-Französische Geschichte, Bd. 10: Eine Nachkriegsgeschichte in Europa 1945-1963*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2011.

¹¹ Cf. Heinz Duchhardt (ed.), *Martin Göhring (1903-1968). Stationen eines Historikerlebens*, Mainz: Verlag

of European History in Mainz and one of Georg Eckert's principal collaborators from the early 1950s onward, underlined the immense significance of a change in the historical images we hold of one another:

We historians know only too well the crucial value of an idea of history which places at its centre what we share and what links us, the Western peoples, in our history and our heritage. Once this revision [of the idea of history] has prevailed, the misjudgements that arise from national narrowness of mind are overcome, it will be possible one day to achieve history books that are genuinely European. What creative policy is striving towards today will then rest on an academic fundament.¹²

The importance of tackling these matters after twelve years of National Socialist dictatorship was likewise clear to Eckert, as he emphasised in 1950:

Our lack of history books, illustrative materials and so on was less troubling to us than was the dubiousity of the old ideas and images of history that had been handed down to us and that, in the face of the national and, as it seems to us, European catastrophe, have become profoundly problematic. Every educator found himself confronting the deeply unsettling question of whether history is nothing but an attempt to bestow meaning on that which has no meaning?¹³

Political will and the commitment of civil society stakeholders came together between 1948 and 1950 to lead historians from France, Belgium, Switzerland and Germany to the German town of Speyer for international meetings of historians who sought to take a first step along the path they envisaged by examining the historical accuracy or otherwise of history textbooks and teaching materials and harmonising their content. These activities were to lead to the next step along the road, that of transnationalising the ideas of history that resided in nation states or incorporating them into an overarching fabric that transcended individual countries.¹⁴ As they worked, these historians were acutely aware that ideas and images of history are a 'metaphor for established, fixed notions and interpretations of the past which reach far back into the past [and] which a group of people endow with validity'¹⁵ – and which serve as landmarks by which people locate their identities between past and future histories. In the past, divergent views and interpretations had influenced judgements of others and promoted discord; now, dialogues expressing these differences in points of view were to serve mutual understanding and smooth the path into a shared future. Their academic value was secondary, as a participant in the Speyer discussions noted:

Here, the detached calm that [generally] marks academic research was suddenly gone, and we felt the forces of history, active and decisive, among us and among nations and generations. Indeed, the strongest impression overall, for us participants [in the meeting], was not the one or other subject-related insight, but the sense of being able, as *homines bonae voluntatis*, to take a

Philipp von Zabern, 2005; Duchhardt, 'Martin Göhring und seine Beziehungen zur französischen Geschichtswissenschaft', in: Ulrich Pfeil (ed.), *Die Rückkehr der deutschen Geschichtswissenschaft in die 'Ökumene der Historiker'*. Ein wissenschaftsgeschichtlicher Ansatz, Munich: Oldenbourg, 2008, 255-263.

¹² Martin Göhring to deputy chancellor Franz Blücher, 16 February 1952; Archiv des IEG 135.

¹³ Manuscript (dating from November 1950) for an article by Eckert for the French periodical *L'Information historique*, edited by Émile Coornaert (Collège de France) and Albert Troux (Inspecteur général de l'instruction publique), NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

¹⁴ Cf. Corine Defrance, 'Die internationalen Historikertreffen von Speyer. Erste Kontaktaufnahme zwischen deutschen und französischen Historikern nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg', in: Pfeil (ed.), *Die Rückkehr der deutschen Geschichtswissenschaft in die 'Ökumene der Historiker'*, 213-237.

¹⁵ Karl-Ernst Jeismann, 'Geschichtsbilder: Zeitdeutung und Zukunftsperspektive', in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 52, 51-52 (2002), 13-22, 13.

substantive step in the journey of understanding and communication between peoples and nations.¹⁶

At the third of the meetings, held between 17 and 20 October 1949, Georg Eckert was in attendance, keen to help cleanse textbooks of nationalisms, but also, indeed primarily, eager to seize the opportunity to interact with French colleagues such as Alphonse Dupront, then *maître de conférences* at the University of Montpellier and later, as a professor at the Sorbonne, to become co-founder of the European University Institute in Florence.¹⁷ At the same time, Eckert wished to use the meetings to forge links to the newly founded Franco-German civil society communication and exchange initiatives such as the *Comité français d'échanges avec l'Allemagne nouvelle*, generally referred to as the 'Grosser Comité'.¹⁸ One particular encounter that pointed the way for Eckert's future activities was that with the influential French historian Henri Brunschwig, with whom he met on his visit to Paris in March of 1950 and who had initiated the contact to Edouard Bruley.¹⁹ The rapid and relatively broad emergence of contacts in Speyer and in the succeeding period both emphasises the internationality and momentum of Eckert's impetus to reform traditional historical images. Eckert was convinced that German history must be more firmly embedded in the context of world history and the West, 'if we are in the future not to see a lack in knowledge of the world and a dearth of comprehension of other peoples and cultures lead to undesirable developments and to narrow-minded chauvinism.'²⁰

¹⁶ 'Dritter Internationaler Historikerkongress vom 17.-20. Oktober 1949', in: *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 1 (1950), 52f.

¹⁷ Alphonse Dupront to Georg Eckert, 12 February 1950, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2. The context is set out in Marc Vénard, 'Alphonse Dupront et Charles Péguy', in: *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome – Italie et Méditerranée modernes et contemporaines* 124, 1 (2012), Online verfügbar unter <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrim.334>, [last accessed 16 February 2017].

¹⁸ On 6 April 1954, a panel discussion took place, organised by Alfred Grosser in the Sorbonne's main lecture theatre, on 'L'enseignement de l'histoire et la révision des manuels'; the participants were Édouard Bruley, Pierre Renouvin, Georg Eckert and Friedrich Walburg, and the Germanist Edmond Vermeil chaired the panel (Alfred Grosser to Georg Eckert, 9 March 1954; Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf to Alfred Grosser, 12 March 1954, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 212/1). Eckert was forced by a flare-up of a war injury (pulmonary haemorrhage) to most reluctantly stay away from the event; he asked Grosser to communicate to his French colleagues 'how greatly our generous and collegial cooperation with the French history teachers headed by Prof. Bruley and the textbook committee of the Fédération de l'éducation nationale under M^{lle} [Marie-Louise] Cavalier has eased our reform efforts in history education' (Georg Eckert to Alfred Grosser, 3 April 1954, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 212/1).

¹⁹ Georg Eckert to Henri Brunschwig, 6 April 1950, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

²⁰ Georg Eckert, 'Grundprobleme des Geschichtsunterrichts (Der Beitrag der Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft zur Reform des Geschichtsunterrichts)', in: Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Lehrerverbände (ed.), *Geschichtsunterricht in unserer Zeit. Grundfragen und Methoden*, Braunschweig: Verlag Albert Limbach, 1951, 147ff.

Georg Eckert and Édouard Bruley

The meetings in Speyer inspired a determination among French and German historian and history teachers 'to spin the threads of dialogue across [national] borders'.²¹ One of the cornerstones of this resolve was the relationship between Georg Eckert and Édouard Bruley, the chairman of the French history and geography teachers' association *Société des professeurs d'histoire et de géographie*,²² who had approached Terence J. Leonard²³, the education officer of the British occupying forces, at the end of 1949. Leonard, for his part, had met both Eckert and Bruley in Speyer. Eckert wrote to Bruley on 20 January 1950 expressing his pleasure at the unanimous resolution of the French history teachers' association to enter into dialogues on textbooks with their West German colleagues. By this time, Eckert had gained experience in the bilateral field via the meetings between the Historical Association and the teachers' association he chaired, the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Lehrerverbände*.²⁴ Bruley responded:

At our last general assembly, held on 24th of December last year (1949), I was authorised to organise with our German colleagues an exchange of textbooks, which will allow us to mutually specify those issues that we judge controversial and of a nature to provoke friction without cause.²⁵

Bruley and Eckert met in person for the first time at the end of March 1950, dining together and sightseeing in Paris;²⁶ the friendship that soon sprang up between them is evident in a letter written by Eckert in 1958 on the occasion of Bruley's leaving the chairmanship of his association: 'I myself shall never forget that first evening which I was privileged to spend in your home; [this was] my first contact with France after the war, which your hospitality made so pleasant and harmonious'.²⁷ A few days after this first meeting, the *Braunschweiger Zeitung* carried an article on the Franco-German agreement to textbook dialogues, alongside reporting that the first textbooks from France had already reached Braunschweig.²⁸ In the period that followed, France's major textbook publishers, such as Delagrave, Hachette, Hatier and Armand Colin, sent their newly issued works directly to the Institute.

The initial, cautious steps towards rapprochement which had taken place between France and Germany did not dispense with the need for the latter to make symbolic reparation to its neighbour. In 1950, the historian Walther Kienast composed a belated obituary for

²¹ Rainer Riemenschneider, 'Verständigung und Verstehen. Ein halbes Jahrhundert deutsch-französischer Schulbuchgespräche', in: *Jahrbuch für Geschichtsdidaktik* 2 (1990), 137–148, 142; cf. also Rainer Bendick, 'Irrwege und Wege aus der Feindschaft. Deutsch-französische Schulbuchgespräche im 20. Jahrhundert', in: Kurt Hochstuhl (ed.), *Deutsche und Franzosen im zusammenwachsenden Europa 1945-2000*, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2003, 73-103.

²² Alongside serving as chair of the *Association des professeurs d'histoire et de géographie*, Bruley, born in 1893, taught at the Lycée d'Orléans, and later at the Lycée Condorcet in Paris.

²³ From 1947, Georg Eckert termed himself a close collaborator of Leonard, who headed the British 'textbook section' in Bünde. Enquiry form, UNESCO, 23 January 1950; NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 212/2.

²⁴ Cf the letter from Georg Eckert to Édouard Bruley, 20 January 1950, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

²⁵ Bruley to Eckert, 26 January 1950, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

²⁶ Eckert to Bruley, 5 April 1950, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

²⁷ Eckert to Bruley, 20 January 1958, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/1.

²⁸ 'Prof. Dr. Eckert als Gast in Paris', *Braunschweiger Zeitung*, 5 April 1950.

Marc Bloch, the founder member of the Annales school who had been executed as a Resistance worker in 1944. The piece appeared in the *Historische Zeitschrift*, having been written at the prompting of the Freiburg-based historian Gerhard Ritter in response to the reproaches directed towards him by the French medievalist Robert Fawtier, a survivor of Mauthausen, and not least in the intent of enabling German historians to rejoin the *Comité international des sciences historiques* (CISH). Alongside these events, Eckert had asked a German history teacher, Elisabeth Rotten, to write an article for the first edition of his *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht* on Georges Lapierre and textbook revision in the 1920s, and made a request to the president of the *Fédération de l'éducation nationale* (FEN), Michel Martin (Lycée Condorcet, Paris) to supply him with publications of Lapierre's from this period so that he might have them translated and published: 'Please forgive this rather comprehensive request; we make it because we believe that it is our duty and a great honour to raise the profile of Lapierre's work'.²⁹ In November of 1951, Henry Spitzmuller, who managed cultural affairs at the office of the French High Commissioner, wrote to Schüddekopf, having read the *Jahrbuch*: 'I was greatly moved to read the homage you paid to Georges Lapierre on the first pages of this issue'.³⁰ The article may have been the reason for the order placed by the High Commissioner's office for 200 copies of the *Jahrbuch*.³¹

As the chapter thus far has indicated, Eckert's contacts in France extended beyond Bruley and the French history teachers' association; he also maintained links to textbook revision efforts undertaken by teachers' unions, launched in an international sphere as early as 1947 under the aegis of the *Fédération syndicale mondiale* or, more precisely, its French section, the *Fédération de l'éducation nationale* (FEN). This forum expanded its horizons beyond history textbooks to those of other subjects; an initial focus on textbooks from Germany soon widened to include works from further countries. The FEN was quick to establish contact with Eckert, and various conferences came to pass. Anxious as always to avoid mixing the various levels of textbook revision endeavours, Eckert assured Bruley that there were no overlaps between the international work and the Franco-German dialogues.³² He was nonetheless keen to generate synergies, and accordingly invited both Bruley and FEN representatives to Braunschweig in 1952.³³

The textbook revision processes that took place under UNESCO's aegis from 1946 onward developed particular momentum from the dawn of the 1950s onward.³⁴ There were occasions when Eckert's involvement in the various networks and fora of textbook work left him conflicted, faced in many instances with needing to be in two or more places at one time, as in June 1950, when he was forced to cancel his planned trip to the Franco-

²⁹ Georg Eckert to Michel Martin, 11 November 1950, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

³⁰ Henry Spitzmuller to Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf, 3 November 1951, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

³¹ DGAC, Chef du service du livre et de la documentation, to Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf, 21 November 1951, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

³² Eckert to Bruley, 1 June 1951, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

³³ Eckert to Bruley, 10 March 1952, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

³⁴ Romain Faure, *Netzwerke der Kulturdiplo-matie*, 98ff., 146ff.

German history teachers' conference to be held in Freiburg:

Now I suddenly find myself sent to an international textbook conference in Brussels [in August 1950] as head of the German UNESCO delegation. This being the first time that Germany has taken part in such a major conference since the war, I was not really in a position to decline this assignment.³⁵

It was at the Brussels conference that Eckert once again encountered Bruley, who was also involved in UNESCO activities; at Brussels he headed the French delegation, among other roles. At this event, and elsewhere, stakeholders spotlighted Franco-German cooperation in textbook revision time and again as an exemplary model for textbook revision worldwide.³⁶ The fragile mental and intellectual bridges these activities built over the Rhine were yet to prove their robustness and durability for successful textbook dialogue.

Georg Eckert and the Franco-German textbook recommendations of 1951

In preparing the upcoming meetings of the Franco-German textbook commission, to be held in the Sorbonne's faculty of philosophy and the Institut of European History in Mainz, Édouard Bruley and Georg Eckert did not need to start from scratch; instead, they were able to reference the tradition of the Franco-German textbook meetings that had been interrupted in 1935. Via correspondence, and particularly during the Paris meeting from 7 to 9 May 1951, the delegates revised the first eighteen theses that had emerged from these pre-war conversations, and were able 'to remove a major part of the reservations expressed on the German and French sides. A number of theses were formulated with considerably greater precision and some were extended in a manner very positive for us'. Eckert was surprised at the readiness to compromise shown by his French counterparts, and specifically by Pierre Renouvin, in the light of the tensions that had weighed upon Franco German relations in the inter-war period:

In the highly interesting discussion around Stresemann's policies, Renouvin expressed himself in an extraordinarily positive manner about Stresemann, whom foreign textbooks often attack due to his correspondence with the German Crown Prince. Renouvin, like us, regarded this correspondence as a purely tactical domestic policy manoeuvre. On this day, in particular, the discussion proceeded at an outstandingly high level. The contributions made to it by Renouvin and Droz were of especial interest to us.³⁷

The idea of discussing the 1935 theses had stemmed from Bruley and from Jean Sigmann, the Strasbourg-based historian and former member of the French military government's staff, who had also attended the Speyer meetings.³⁸ They vouched, in the changed conditions that now prevailed, for the 'continuity of the hermeneutic concept of understanding [stemming] from the period between the wars'³⁹ and had traced their influences back to the efforts, in 1926/27, of the French teachers' union, which, through

³⁵ Georg Eckert to Joachim Schmidt, 28 June 1950, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 212/2.

³⁶ Georg Eckert to the Hamburg official (*Obersenatsrat*) Max Traeger, 21 August 1950, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 212/2.

³⁷ Georg Eckert to Rudolf Salat, 14 May 1951, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 212/2.

³⁸ Bruley to Eckert, 27 January 1951, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

³⁹ Riemenschneider, *Verständigung und Verstehen*, 143.

Louis Dumas and Georges Lapierre, had combed French textbooks for nationalist content and led to the removal from use of 26 works. French and German historians had entered into dialogue in this spirit and were even able, two years after the National Socialists had seized power, to agree upon 39 theses on the depiction in textbooks of Franco-German relations between 1789 and 1925. The 'binding verbatim text of the agreement of German and French history teachers on the detoxification of the textbooks of both sides' highlighted 'problematic areas in the history of Franco-German relations from the 17th to the 20th century'. Rainer Riemenschneider has called them a 'sober assessment of the contemporary state of what connected [France and Germany], but also of what separated [them]'.⁴⁰ After the war, the theses of 1935 served as the basis for renewed dialogue between historians from France and Germany and as a model for the first textbook meetings between German and British experts, who discussed British-German relations between 1890 and 1914.⁴¹

In 1951, after having revised the 39 theses and made amendments and additions, the German and French historians issued their textbook recommendations, which the French side immediately published in the *Bulletin de la société des professeurs d'histoire et de géographie* to a unanimously positive response; Renouvin wrote to Eckert: 'We thus have good reason to believe that we have achieved our aims. And of course, this is a matter of great satisfaction to us'.⁴² On the German side, in sharp contrast to 1935, the 'agreement' of 1951 now found notable public resonance; the *Bundeszentrale für Heimatdienst*, today's Federal Agency for Civic Education (*Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*), published a special issue of the parliamentary weekly *Das Parlament* containing the theses and planned to distribute a print run of 90,000 copies to all schools in the FRG free of charge 'in order to familiarise the teaching profession with our work and endeavours'.⁴³ The theses also appeared repeatedly in other publications, one instance of which was a special print run, totalling 10,000 copies, of the 1952 *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht*, distributed for free to the members of the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Lehrerverbände*,⁴⁴ followed by a large-scale reissue in 1958, with a foreword by Hermann Heimpel, by the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut*.⁴⁵ The FRG's then president Theodor Heuss mentioned the theses – as Eckert noted in a letter to Bruley⁴⁶ –, in a speech to the Bundestag on 14 January 1952, marking the visit to West Germany of UNESCO's

⁴⁰ Ibid., 140.

⁴¹ Manuscript (November 1950) of an article written by Eckert for the French periodical *L'Information historique*, edited by Émile Coornaert (Collège de France) and Albert Trous (Inspecteur général de l'instruction publique), NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

⁴² Pierre Renouvin to Georg Eckert, 5 May 1952, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

⁴³ Georg Eckert to Pierre Renouvin, 4 November 1953, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

⁴⁴ Georg Eckert to Gerhard Ritter, 5 December 1951, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 212/1.

⁴⁵ *Deutsch-französische Vereinbarung über strittige Fragen europäischer Geschichte.*, Braunschweig: Verlag Albert Limbach, Neudruck 1958.

⁴⁶ Georg Eckert to Édouard Bruley, 22 January 1952, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

Director-General Torres Bodet,⁴⁷ as follows: 'I consider this seemingly small-scale process to be a central achievement, as a model of what is possible to the end of shedding the form of an image of history which has been accepted as inevitable via propaganda and has become an uptight petrification of a defunct reality'.⁴⁸

The more general, overarching function of the Franco-German recommendations appeared to Martin Göhring, director of the Institute of European History in Mainz, as one facet of a broader process of rapprochement, as he set out in a letter to the deputy chancellor of the FRG, Franz Blücher:

Both sides have committed unambiguously to the idea that Europe's continued existence depends on mutual Franco-German understanding, pursued with honesty and integrity. [Those involved in the textbook process] sought to prepare the way for this understanding by resolving the historical matters of controversy that have strained Franco-German relations in the past.⁴⁹

From recommendations to dialogues

Mainz's Institute of European History, seeking from 1951 onwards to refocus on promoting research, commenced at this time a successive withdrawal from its involvement in the textbook dialogues. On the French side of the incipient Franco-German textbook meetings, Jacques Droz began to take a leading role. He effectively replaced Pierre Renouvin at their head; the latter, however, remained influential, as became apparent in the proposal, made to Eckert by Droz in 1952 and enthusiastically received by the former, to 'draw up theses on Franco-German relations at the Saar'.⁵⁰ Droz communicated the affirmative response from Braunschweig to his mentor; a meeting followed in September 1952 between Renouvin, Droz and Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, then a professor at the University of the Saarland. On this occasion, Renouvin set out his concerns, noting that he considered such an initiative premature and that the contemporary problems around the Saarland were without historical origins.⁵¹ On the German side of things, meanwhile, Georg Eckert took over from Gerhard Ritter, using the textbook institute in Braunschweig over the years that followed to run an annual conference for early-career teachers from Germany and France⁵² to the end, as Eckert wrote at the time, of 'familiarising our young colleagues with specific problems of Franco-German relations'.⁵³

Documentation from the early phase of textbook dialogues is indicative of their primary purpose having been to restore the trust between the historians of the two countries that

⁴⁷ Cf. also Georg Eckert to Gerhard Ritter, 5 February 1952, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 212/1.

⁴⁸ Cited in *Internationales Jahrbuch* 2 (1953), 109, following the text of the agreement.

⁴⁹ Martin Göhring to deputy chancellor Franz Blücher, 16 February 1952; AIEG 135.

⁵⁰ Georg Eckert to Jacques Droz, 25 August 1952, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

⁵¹ Droz to Eckert, 22 September 1952, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

⁵² The conferences took place in the following locations: 1951: Mainz; 1952: Tübingen; 1953: Tours; 1954: Sankelmark; 1955: Sèvres; 1956: Bamberg/Munich.

⁵³ Georg Eckert, draft for the Franco-German historians' conference, May 1951, October 1951, July 1956; PA/AA, B 90-600, vol. 204.

the war had fractured; Hans Herzfeld concurs, commenting that it was ‘initially [about] clearing the rubble of the last one-and-a-half centuries [...] fundamentally preparing the ground for [a space in which] the two countries each underst[ood] the other’s historical language’.⁵⁴ In this context, the dialogues served as components of a pedagogy of peace whose aim was to fill in the deep mental chasms that had opened up during a prolonged period of confrontation as consequences of biased historical judgements which took insufficient account of the facts. The endeavour now was to dismantle animosity, antagonism and hatred in the name of a different future, transforming them as rapidly as possible into neighbourliness, amity and trust, with a particular emphasis on inspiring young people to carry Franco-German reconciliation forward. It was in line with this objective that the French consul in Munich noted in 1956:

Such meetings, however, show the efforts of intellectuals, both on the German side and that of the Allies, to unify the teaching of history and to avoid in this academic discipline in future everything with the potential to prolong conflicts which one must hope belong to the past.⁵⁵

Such civil society initiatives were in keeping with the spirit of the period and with the political objectives pursued by Adenauer, to whom cultural affairs were an important element of Franco-German relations;⁵⁶ cross-border encounters such as the textbook dialogues accordingly found political support.⁵⁷ Their party political differences notwithstanding, the conservative chancellor and the SPD-affiliated Eckert were in agreement on this, as Eckert wrote to Alfred Grosser: ‘Our work on greater Franco-German mutual understanding, with its, in our eyes, fateful significance, is and shall always be at the heart of our endeavours’.⁵⁸

Alongside these overarching issues, the dialogues very rapidly exerted effects on the internationalisation of history textbooks, as Eckert noted in a letter to Bruley in November 1951:

I hope I shall soon be able to send you the [text]book by Dr Mielcke, ‘History of the Weimar Republic’, in which all criticisms and suggestions made by Prof. Renouvin have been taken account of. We held a preliminary meeting in which we drew attention to Prof. Renouvin’s valuable contributions. To my knowledge, this is the first time that a German textbook has been submitted to colleagues from other countries, in this case France, England and America, before

⁵⁴ Contribution to a panel discussion by Hans Herzfeld in Martin Göhring (ED.), *Europa – Erbe und Aufgabe. Internationaler Gelehrtenkongress, Mainz 1955*, Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1956, 263. On 23 November 1951, Herzfeld had written to Ritter: ‘All in all, I am glad that this great task has come into being’; Bundesarchiv Koblenz (BAKO), N 1166/338.

⁵⁵ Robert de Nerciat, consul général de France à Munich, à Christian de Margerie, ministre plénipotentiaire, chargé d’affaires de France près de la RFA, 6 août 1956; Archiv des Ministère des Affaires étrangères (MAE)/Nantes, Bonn/Ambassade, 171.

⁵⁶ Cf. Corine Defrance, “‘Es kann gar nicht genug Kulturaustausch geben’: Adenauer und die deutsch-französischen Kulturbeziehungen 1949-1963”, in: Klaus Schwabe (ed.), *Konrad Adenauer und Frankreich 1949-1963. Stand und Perspektiven der Forschung zu den deutsch-französischen Beziehungen in Politik, Wirtschaft und Kultur*, Bonn: Bouvier, 2005, 137-162.

⁵⁷ At the inaugural meeting of the German members of the permanent joint committee on the Franco-German Cultural Agreement, held on 27 February 1957 in Bonn, Georg Eckert was asked to provide a brief written outline of endeavours towards ridding German and French textbooks of antagonisms; cf. record of the outcome of the inaugural meeting of the German members of the permanent joint committee on the Franco-German Cultural Agreement, held on 27 February 1957 in Bonn; Politisches Archiv Auswärtiges Amt (PA/AA), B 90-600, vol. 132.

⁵⁸ Georg Eckert to Alfred Grosser, 3 April 1954, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 212/1.

going to print.⁵⁹

It is also of note that the revision process got a mention on the back of the book's title page⁶⁰ which readers 'considered a sort of seal of quality', as Eckert explained to Alfred Grosser.⁶¹

The recommendations' principal critics were French historians of the Annales school, to whom Eckert had attempted to initiate contact via UNESCO and to whom he provided a forum in his institute in Braunschweig. On the prompting of UNESCO, Lucien Febvre and François Crouzet published an essay⁶² in the 1953 edition of the *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht* that gave Eckert occasion to hope it might be heeded in the FRG's process of history education reform.⁶³ The recommendations' most tenacious critic was Pierre Vilar (1932-2003),⁶⁴ a veteran of the Spanish Civil War who had endured a period during the Second World War as a German prisoner of war. Part of the Marxist tendency in French academic history, and drawing on the work of Ernest Labrousse and Fernand Braudel in his socio-economic approach, he unsurprisingly critiqued what he regarded as the excessive emphasis the recommendations placed on political history. Vilar's view was that the recommendations unjustly exonerated the ruling classes of their responsibility for the conflictual relations between France and Germany, avoiding casting light on problematic issues and artificially constructing instances of convergence in the name of bilateral rapprochement and reconciliation. Vilar denounced in particularly strong terms the recommendations' Eurocentric character, especially in relation to thesis number 12 and its recommendation to textbook authors to emphasise successful past instances of Franco-German cooperation, pointing to collaborative efforts at the end of the nineteenth century from which colonised peoples had suffered.

Georg Eckert's early engagement with the Annales historians' critique is evident in a letter he wrote to one of their number, Henri Brunschwig, in August 1950:

Here in Germany, we are further undertaking efforts to achieve greater consideration of cultural, social and economic history in the spirit of the matters you raise, although we are unable, for obvious reasons, to dispense entirely with political history.⁶⁵

In Eckert's view, the experience of the Third Reich and the emergence of the Cold War had

⁵⁹ Georg Eckert to Édouard Bruley, 26 November 1951, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

⁶⁰ Georg Eckert to Pierre Renouvin, 22 February 1952, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

⁶¹ Georg Eckert to Alfred Grosser, 3 April 1954, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 212/1.

⁶² Lucien Febvre and François Crouzet, 'Der internationale Ursprung einer Kultur. Grundgedanken zu einer Geschichte Frankreichs', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch* 2 (1953), 5-31. For an insight into these historians' thinking in another context, cf. Lucien Febvre and François Crouzet, *Nous sommes des sang-mêlés. Manuel d'histoire de la civilisation française*, [Texte de 1950, présenté par Denis et Élisabeth Crouzet], Paris: Éd. Albin Michel, 2012.

⁶³ Georg Eckert to François Crouzet, 23 June 1953, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

⁶⁴ There is a detailed discussion of the points of criticism raised by Vilar in Romain Faure, 'Frieden durch internationale Schulbuchrevision? Eine Debatte im Europa der 1950er Jahre', in: Till Kössler (ed.), *Frieden lernen. Friedenspädagogik und Erziehung im 20. Jahrhundert*, Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2014, 221-232.

⁶⁵ Georg Eckert to Henri Brunschwig, 26 August 1950, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

catapulted political history into a position of such importance within political engagement and debate 'that we are currently obliged to correct a large number of erroneous notions'.⁶⁶ It may be that the impression of undue emphasis on political history arose due to the preponderance at the first Franco-German Conference for History Education, held in Freiburg⁶⁷ between 8 and 19 August 1950, of the 'great men' of French and German history, such as Charlemagne, Richelieu, Napoleon, Bismarck and so on and of international relations. Eckert, however, was consistently concerned to look at history from a wider angle, as he wrote to Alfred Grosser in 1954:

We are of the view that this altered concept – more culture rather than purely political history, the embedding of national history in European, indeed universal history, and so on – will also create a crucial change in the depiction of the Franco-German relationship.⁶⁸

The undoubted potential merit in some of the criticisms brought forward by Vilar and others notwithstanding, they were not free of propagandistic motives linked to the French Communist party's opposition to Franco-FRG rapprochement in the 1950s. The French federation of teaching unions FEN called upon the French government to postpone the ratification of the Franco-German Cultural Agreement of 23 October 1954,⁶⁹ with particular ire being directed at its thirteenth article, which stipulated the removal 'from textbooks, particularly history books, [of] every value judgement [...] whose emotional character has the potential to damage good relations between the two peoples'.⁷⁰ The FEN's concern was that any and all memory of the three attacks on France launched by 'German militarists' within the space of seventy years might now be expunged from history textbooks, and references to Auschwitz and Oradour might find themselves swept under the carpet.⁷¹ Responding rapidly to these criticisms in *Le Monde*, Édouard Bruley highlighted the character of the textbook dialogues as civil society initiatives which had preceded and trailblazed for the political ones: 'The French and German historians thus did not have to wait for the 1954 [cultural] convention in order to jointly search for the historical truth while endeavouring to abstain from emotional judgments.'⁷² Nevertheless, criticism of the Cultural Agreement remained strong, particularly at universities, due to the limitation of its scope to the FRG and the lacking inclusion of official academic and scientific contact with East Germany.⁷³ In this way, the shadow of the Cold War fell on Franco-German textbook dialogue; the impact of these ideological confrontations is the subject of the next section.

⁶⁶ Eckert to Brunschwig, 22. Mai 1950, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/2.

⁶⁷ Draft for Freiburg, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 212/2.

⁶⁸ Georg Eckert to Alfred Grosser, 3 April 1954, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 212/1.

⁶⁹ Cf. Margarete Sturm, 'Un texte tombé dans l'oubli: l'accord culturel franco-allemand du 23 octobre 1954', in: *Allemagne d'aujourd'hui* 84 (1983), 9-22; Ulrich Lappenküper, "'Sprachlose Freundschaft'? Zur Genese des deutsch-französischen Kulturabkommens vom 23. Oktober 1954', in: *Lendemains* 21, 84 (1996), 67-82.

⁷⁰ 'Kulturabkommen zwischen der Regierung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Regierung der Französischen Republik, 23. Oktober 1954', in: *Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Frankreich: Dokumente 1949-1963, Bd. 1: Außenpolitik und Diplomatie*, ed. Horst Möller and Klaus Hildebrand with Ulrich Lappenküper, Munich: Saur, 1997, Nr. 40, 184ff.

⁷¹ 'Ce qu'il faut savoir sur la convention culturelle franco-allemande', in: *L'Humanité*, 5 November 1954.

⁷² Édouard Bruley, 'Les rencontres de professeurs français et allemands', in: *Le Monde*, 9 November 1954.

⁷³ Cf. Henri Reynaud, *Les relations universitaires entre la France et la République fédérale d'Allemagne de 1945 à 1978*, Bonn, Paris: Office allemand d'échanges universitaires 1979.

Georg Eckert and relations among historians in France, the FRG and the GDR against the backdrop of the Cold War

Pierre Vilar put his critique of the recommendations, 'Die Revision der Schulbücher, die internationalen Begegnungen von Historikern und die Völkerverständigungen',⁷⁴ to a German-language audience via the vehicle of *Schule und Nation*, a periodical Eckert believed⁷⁵ to be funded by East Germany. The journal was the organ of the '*Schwelmer Kreis*',⁷⁶ a group headed by the educational reformer Fritz Helling whose declared purpose was to improve communication and understanding between East and West. Unlike the *Gesamtdeutsche Volkspartei*, founded in Schwelm's close neighbour-city Wuppertal by Gustav Heinemann and his pupil Johannes Rau, Helling worked closely with the East German regime and defended it with an idealism blinded by enthusiasm. During Adenauer's chancellorship, the West German domestic intelligence service monitored his activities and he experienced attempts to hinder them, which did not deter him and the members of his grouping from accepting invitations to events and meetings in the GDR. From the mid-1950s onward, East Germany expanded its policies around the recognition of France as a 'focal country', alongside which the *Schwelmer Kreis* intensified its efforts to create links with France – successfully in many cases.⁷⁷ This is unlikely to have been down to coincidence, but instead points to coordinated activities on the part of Helling and of the relevant authorities in East Germany.

At the beginning of 1956, the town of Bad Salzuflen was the venue for a conference organised by the senior teacher Charlotte Niederhommert and attended by history teachers from East and West Germany alongside Pierre Vilar, a French colleague of his, and a 'historian affiliated to the Communist Party'.⁷⁸ Soon after this, in September of the same year, the *Schwelmer Kreis* put on a conference of its own in Braunschweig. The venue was doubtless a deliberate choice⁷⁹ in the intent of allowing the impression to arise that Eckert's institute was involved, evidently prompting Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf to write to Jacques Droz and André Bossuat in the following terms:

We therefore do not wish to fail to point out to our French colleagues in advance [of the event] that we have no connection whatsoever to the organisation or agenda of this conference. Our intent in informing you of this is to avoid the French gentlemen coming to Braunschweig with a

⁷⁴ Pierre Vilar, 'Die Revision der Schulbücher, die internationalen Begegnungen von Historikern und die Völkerverständigungen', in: *Schule und Nation* 1, 2 (1954/55), 15-28.

⁷⁵ Georg Eckert to Charles Hagenmüller (haut-commissariat français en Allemagne, DGAC, Service de l'enseignement et des œuvres), 20 October 1954, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/1.

⁷⁶ Cf. Burkhard Dietz (ed.), *Fritz Helling, Aufklärer und politischer Pädagoge im 20. Jahrhundert. Interdisziplinäre Beiträge zur intellektuellen Biographie, Wissenschaftsgeschichte und Pädagogik*, Frankfurt am Main etc.: Peter Lang, 2003; Fritz Helling, *Mein Leben als politischer Pädagoge*, ed. Jost Biermann and Burkhard Dietz, Frankfurt am Main u.a.: Peter Lang, 2007.

⁷⁷ Jacques Droz to Georg Eckert, 20 March 1958, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/1.

⁷⁸ Note on a conversation with Édouard Bruley, 17/18 February 1956, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/1.

⁷⁹ Georg Eckert to Marc Bonnet, 30 August 1956, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/1.

false impression.⁸⁰

Vilar travelled to Braunschweig nevertheless, unlike Jacques Droz and Georg Eckert, who declined their invitations; Eckert explained his decision thus:

I am not fundamentally opposed to dialogue with the East[ern Bloc] and would be most willing to meet and talk with Poles and, should the occasion arise, with Soviet Russians. I do not, by contrast, believe that there is any sense in meeting with cultural officials who have just at this time been coached to a most radical party line over in the eastern zone. Dr Helling is doubtless a great idealist, whom I respect, but I fear he is being exploited. [The conference] will hardly get West German history teachers attending who are representative of their profession.⁸¹

The activities of the *Schwelmer Kreis*, alongside their status as a chapter in the history of education in the two German states and their competition in this arena during the Cold War era, serve to underline once more, in light of the French involvement they encompassed, the triangular nature of relations between France and the two Germanys in these decades. Seeking to undermine the West German claim to sole legitimate representation of 'Germany' and the Hallstein Doctrine to which this claim gave rise, the GDR, in concert with the *Schwelmer Kreis*, undertook extraordinary efforts to establish official contact with historians and history teachers from France.⁸² Eckert repeatedly served Bruley and other non-Communist French colleagues in this context as a source of information on the competition between the two German systems. His own politics were aligned with the anti-Communist attitudes of Kurt Schumacher, who had died in 1952. At the outset of 1955, Bruley received an invitation from the East German history educator Friedrich Weitendorf to visit the GDR in order to establish a point of contact; he asked Eckert for his advice on whether accepting the invitation would upset his West German colleagues.⁸³ Eckert's response advised him against taking up an invitation from 'a Communist functionary':

Of course, we have no wish to influence you in any way, although I cannot see anything coming of such a contact except misinterpretations and perhaps difficulties for you, as you can never know how this sort of contact will be interpreted and used in propaganda terms in the East. I would therefore tend towards advising you to decline [the invitation].⁸⁴

The fact that, at Easter 1956, Bruley travelled notwithstanding Eckert's earlier advice to a conference in the GDR at which '2 Communist and 2 anti-Communist historians and history teachers' were in attendance⁸⁵ does not signify any sympathy or affiliation to the GDR on his part, but rather took place as a concession to the French history teachers' association, with its strong Communist faction. It does, however, point to an abatement of

⁸⁰ Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf to André Bossuat and Jacques Droz, 19 September 1956, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/1.

⁸¹ Georg Eckert to Jacques Droz, 31 March 1958, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/1.

⁸² Cf. the general discussion in Ulrich Pfeil, *Die 'anderen' deutsch-französischen Beziehungen. Die DDR und Frankreich 1949–1990* (Zeithistorische Studien des Zentrums für Zeithistorische Forschung Potsdam. Bd. 26), Cologne: Böhlau, 2004; Anne Kwaschik and Ulrich Pfeil (eds), *Die DDR in den deutsch-französischen Beziehungen*, Brüssel: PIE Peter Lang, 2013

⁸³ Édouard Bruley to Georg Eckert, 17 March 1955, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/1.

⁸⁴ Eckert to Bruley, 19 March 1955, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/1.

⁸⁵ Note on a conversation with Édouard Bruley, 17/18 February 1956, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/1.

the reservations towards Communism on the French side, as does Droz' acceptance in June 1959 of an invitation from Walter Markov to visit Leipzig, which he took up with his colleagues Albert Soboul, Maurice Baumont and Georges Castellan. Despite these initiatives, relations between historians from France and East Germany remained rudimentary throughout the latter state's existence, never taking root institutionally and therefore never giving rise to long-term frameworks for textbook dialogues.⁸⁶

Conclusion

But our efforts that we have undertaken together have borne their first fruit, and we may tell ourselves with great satisfaction that, perhaps thanks to our work, a better mutual understanding and amity between our two peoples has found its expression. We were men of goodwill, and that is a most excellent title. And I, too, wish to mention that evening on which, my dear Eckert, that collaboration began [and] rehabilitated this term [collaboration] that was so hated during the war.⁸⁷

This look back at shared endeavours, written to Eckert by Bruley in 1958, is highly illustrative of the Franco-German textbook meetings and of the status Georg Eckert had earned among his French colleagues and collaborators. During the post-war period, he was indeed one of a handful of 'men of goodwill' who, initially counter to the mainstream, set themselves the aim of using civil society activities to create new social and emotional foundations for Franco-FRG relations and their societies, scarred as they were by the horrors of the war.⁸⁸ In so doing, Eckert assured himself a place among a generation of mediating figures who, from the end of the 1940s, evolved with the structures of their work⁸⁹ and with those structures' effects, much marginalised by historians thus far, as transnational relations professionalised.⁹⁰ Eckert's commitment to revising ideas and images of history materialised into concrete activities at a point of intersection between the political, cultural and academic spheres and its analysis presents us with an actor-centred, microhistorical view of Franco-German communication, reconciliation and academic cooperation. In the past, questions targeted at pinpointing commonalities and differences had generally served to identify 'national characters'; after 1945, Eckert and those working with him had come to understand that 'foreignness' is not a known

⁸⁶ Cf. Ulrich Pfeil, 'Échanges et transfert culturel malgré le rideau de fer? Les relations entre historiens français et est-allemands', in: Pierre Behar, Michel Grunewald (eds), *Frontières, transferts, échanges transfrontaliers et interculturels. Actes du XXXVIe Congrès de l'AGES*, Bern: PIE Peter Lang, 2005, S. 579–594.

⁸⁷ Bruley to Eckert, 27 January 1958, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, 207/1.

⁸⁸ There is a general overview of the socio-cultural network between Germany and France that emerged after 1945 in Nicole Colin, Corine Defrance, Ulrich Pfeil and Joachim Umlauf (eds), *Lexikon der deutsch-französischen Kulturbeziehungen nach 1945*, Tübingen: Narr Verlag, 2nd ed. 2015.

⁸⁹ On 'mediating figures' (*Mittler*), cf. Katja Marmetschke, 'Mittlerpersönlichkeiten. Neuere biographische Arbeiten zur Mittlerfunktion zwischen Frankreich und Deutschland', in: *Lendemains* 25, 98/99 (2000), 239–257.

⁹⁰ Cf. Hans Manfred Bock, 'Vom Beruf des kulturellen Übersetzens zwischen Deutschland und Frankreich, oder Versagen die Mittler?', in: *Lendemains* 22, 86/87 (1997), 8–19, 12ff.; Dietmar Hüser, Ulrich Pfeil, 'Einleitung: Populärkulturelle Mittler und deutsch-französisches Verhältnis nach 1945. Spannungsfelder und Forschungsperspektiven transnationaler Populärkultur', in: Hüser and Pfeil (eds), *Populärkultur und deutsch-französische Mittler / Culture de masse et médiateurs franco-allemands. Akteure, Medien, Ausdrucksformen / Acteurs, médias, articulations* (Jahrbuch des Frankreichszentrums der Universität des Saarlandes, Bd. 14 (2014), Bielefeld: transcript, 2015, pp. 15–50.

quantity and not a property attaching to individuals or objects, but a form of relating to another entity. Ever since the nineteenth century, historical tropes and constructed myths of arch-enmity had metaphorically broadened the Rhine. The way forward pursued under Eckert's aegis sought to identify an interpretation of the past with the capacity to inspire consensus, which, rather than bringing forth a single view of what had been, could and would 'lead to compatible versions of [the two countries'] shared history'.⁹¹ Convergent political decisions and processes taking place in parallel to these efforts, such as the Schuman Plan, European integration and the gradual establishment of Franco-German cooperation at a range of levels, helped Georg Eckert in his mission of making history and its teaching into a vector of mutual understanding, reconciliation and joint endeavour between (West) Germany and France.

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⁹¹ Christoph Conrad and Sebastian Conrad, 'Wie vergleicht man Historiographien', in: Conrad and Conrad (eds), *Die Nation schreiben: Geschichtswissenschaft im internationalen Vergleich*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002, 11-45, 15.

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Georg Eckert and the FRG's *Neue Ostpolitik*: German-Polish rapprochements

'As long as general political developments refrain from throwing a spanner into the works, we can make a significant contribution to reordering relations between our two nations [Poland and Germany].¹ With these words, Georg Eckert, a few days after the first Polish-German textbook conference in March 1972, addressed Walter Mertineit, later to become his successor as chair of the bilateral textbook commission's German side. Georg Eckert's achievement in preparing the ground for and co-founding the Joint German-Polish Textbook Commission stands as one of the most influential and illustrative examples of his work in the context of the *Neue Ostpolitik* of rapprochement with Eastern Europe, embarked upon by the Federal Republic of Germany in the late 1960s and early 1970s after having been incorporated into government policy by the SPD in the grand coalition of 1966 to 1969. Eckert's field of international cultural policy brought him into diverse encounters with the shapes and forms taken by this *Neue Ostpolitik*, the changes it underwent and the setbacks it suffered. Signifying a shift in approach in its increased flexibility and proactivity, the *Neue Ostpolitik* rested on twin foundations, the first of which was the acknowledgement of the status quo as a basis for an exchange of views between the two systems; the second being the use of cooperation and dialogue, rather than the politics of strength and greater force, to bring the Warsaw Pact states closer to the West, encourage their increased economic and social openness and thus contribute to their transformation.²

This chapter will explore the extent to which Georg Eckert, who had no specialist knowledge of the history of Polish-German relations and did not speak Polish, became one of the key actors in West German/Polish cultural relations and policy between the mid-1950s and his death in January of 1974. Eckert was involved or instrumental in all central moments of Polish-FRG dialogue on textbooks during this period, from the first, tentative approaches in the 1950s, the establishment of contacts and the preparation of textbook conferences and dialogues under UNESCO's aegis in the 1960s, to their troubled beginnings and their cautious institutionalisation as the Joint German-Polish Textbook Commission in the early 1970s. This chapter will also explore the political assumptions and objectives that drove Eckert's work in this field, his use of his national and international networks of contacts to this purpose, and the essential nature of his significance to Polish-German dialogue on matters of education

¹ Georg Eckert to Walter Mertineit, 7 March 1972, archive of the Georg Eckert Institute, Braunschweig (AGEI), vol. 427. The numbering used for these volumes is that used before the archive's holdings passed to the Lower Saxony State Archive in Wolfenbüttel.

² Cf. Gottfried Niedhart, 'Revisionistische Elemente und die Initiierung friedlichen Wandels in der neuen Ostpolitik 1967-1974', in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* [Sonderheft], 28 (2002), 233-266, 236-243.

Georg Eckert and early textbook dialogue between Poland and Germany

Years before Willy Brandt's famous speech of 1961 advocating 'change through rapprochement', Eckert had taken initial steps towards forging links across bloc boundaries. In 1953, Enno Meyer, a secondary school teacher from Oldenburg, approached Eckert, who had founded the *Internationales Institut für Schulbuchverbesserung* (International Institute for Textbook Improvement) in Braunschweig two years earlier, and proposed an initiative to the end of overhauling depictions of Polish-German relations in West German history classrooms. Eckert's response was interested, but inconcrete:

The matter of German-Polish relations is of outstanding interest to us, and we have been thinking for a long time about what we might be able to do in this area. Sadly, we have yet to come to specific conclusions on this, as the émigré groups do not include any Polish historians that are really representative of their colleagues. We do not hold any Polish history [text]books in our archive.³

In the period that followed, Enno Meyer contacted Polish historians in exile alongside a range of experts in Eastern European studies working in the FRG and took their advice as he set out his thoughts and proposals.⁴ In the autumn of 1954, the *Schulbuchinstitut* (Textbook Institute) in Braunschweig, notwithstanding its rather non-committal response to Meyer's initial approach in 1953, offered to publish this work in its *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht* (international history teaching yearbook).⁵ The *Kuratorium Unteilbares Deutschland* (trustees for an indivisible Germany), with which Eckert was closely associated, eventually funded the offprint of the journal containing the article and enabled the convening, under the auspices of its 1955 annual conference, of a working meeting for the discussion and ratification of Meyer's theses with their author and, *inter alia*, Georg Eckert, his assistant Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf, Werner Conze (Heidelberg), Herbert Ludat (Münster) and Freiherr von Braun of the Göttinger Arbeitskreis.⁶

Enno Meyer's work⁷ drew substantial attention from and inspired lively debate among historians in Poland, in exile and in both Germanys; the tone was more moderate and reserved in the FRG, critical in Poland and strongly polemical in the GDR.⁸ An emphatic

³ Georg Eckert to Enno Meyer, 7 September 1953, cited from Enno Meyer, *Wie ich dazu gekommen bin. Die Vorgeschichte der deutsch-polnischen Schulbuchgespräche 1948-1971*, Braunschweig: Georg-Eckert-Institut für Internationale Schulbuchforschung, 1988, 22.

⁴ Those he contacted included Herbert Ludat (Münster) and Otto Forst de Battaglia (Vienna); Meyer, *Wie ich dazu gekommen bin*, 22-27.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁶ Eugen Lemberg (Wiesbaden), Werner Markert and Georg von Rauch (Marburg) had declined their invitations to the meeting, but indicated their agreement in principle to the theses; *ibid.*, 28f. The Göttinger Arbeitskreis, founded after the Second World War, was a working group of university teachers expelled from East Prussia, West Prussia, Pomerania, Silesia and the New March.

⁷ Enno Meyer, 'Über die Darstellung der deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen im Geschichtsunterricht', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht* 5 (1956), 225-243.

⁸ Cf. the following examples of responses: Gotthold Rhode, 'Einige Bemerkungen zu Enno Meyers Beitrag', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht* 5 (1956), 267-273; Gerard Labuda, 'Ein Versuch, die deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen im Unterricht neu darzustellen', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht* 6 (1957/1958), 311-324, Ewa Maleczynska and Kazimierz Popiołek, 'Zu den westdeutschen Thesen über die Darstellung der polnisch-deutschen Beziehungen im

majority of voices in the discussion expressed appreciation of Meyer's initiative and of his attempt to start a conversation between Poland and Germany around issues of their shared past. Nevertheless, the sharp divergence between the views of Polish and German historians on many matters soon became evident, as did the impossibility of closer links in light of the contemporary hardening of Poland's political line. While Meyer's 47 theses did contain some weaknesses and tended to take greater account of the German than the Polish perspective, this is likely not to have been the reason for the abrupt end to the dialogue after this first flurry of cross-border debate.⁹ The great demand for copies of the theses saw the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut* (International Textbook Institute) carry out two further print runs, the last of which was issued in 1960. Nevertheless, Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf was forced in May of that year to concede that any meeting of Polish and German historians interested in improving mutual relations was 'simply [doomed], for quite some time to come, to failure, due to the fact that the Poles won't be able to come if we don't also invite historians from the GDR, which is impossible for us. In other words, we are likely for the foreseeable future to be restricted to written discussion, regrettable as that is.'¹⁰ Eckert himself was in support of first circulating the revised theses among historians in the FRG and waiting for a more favourable political climate to set in:¹¹ 'In the current tense situation, we would only cause difficulties for our Polish friends', he advised in the summer of 1961.¹² It was not until 1963 that the *Schulbuchinstitut* returned to the project of revising Meyer's theses, prompted by a lecture given in Braunschweig by the Polish-German historian and specialist in Eastern European history Gotthold Rhode.¹³ The years that followed brought little progress, which Eckert explained thus:

The Poles are under great political pressure and, with the best will in the world, are unable to translate a West German work against which the authorities in the Soviet zone [i.e. the GDR] have launched the most vehement of attacks. As things currently stand, free and open discussion between Poland and academics from the Federal Republic [of Germany] is yet unthinkable. We will need a great deal of patience and to work with the long view in mind. What we need is for the intellectual leaders among historians to understand that there is a will towards mutual understanding on our side and that the distrust and hatred which have arisen over the last number of decades are being dismantled little by little.¹⁴

It is evident, then, that at the close of the 1950s and in the first half of the 1960s, Eckert, who had been in regular communication on Polish-German issues with Gotthold Rhode

Geschichtsunterricht', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht* VI, (1957), 337–346; Felix-Heinrich Gentzen, 'Rezension zu E. Meyer, Über die Darstellung der deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen im Geschichtsunterricht', in: *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 6 (1957), 1309–1319.

⁹ These more German-centred perspectives manifested, for example, in the theses' negative assessment of the Polish 'Noble Republic' and of the border arrangements between Poland and Germany in the wake of Versailles. Meyer, *Über die Darstellung der deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen im Geschichtsunterricht*, 235 and 239–241.

¹⁰ Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf to Enno Meyer, 4 May 1960; documents from Prof. Krzysztof Ruchniewicz (Wrocław), to whom I express my warmest thanks for sharing these documents with me.

¹¹ Eckert expressed this view through Schüddekopf; Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf to Enno Meyer, 15 June 1970; documents from Prof. Ruchniewicz.

¹² Georg Eckert to Enno Meyer, 15 August 1961, documents from Prof. Ruchniewicz

¹³ Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf to Enno Meyer, 10 January 1963, documents from Prof. Ruchniewicz.

¹⁴ Georg Eckert to Veronika Wolff, 4 November 1963, AGEI, vol. 433; Veronika Wolff, a teacher in the German town of Hofgeismar, had asked for a translation of Enno Meyer's theses into Polish.

since 1957,¹⁵ saw little prospect of meaningful advances from continuing to push for direct dialogue on textbooks between historians from Poland or the FRG or from first intensifying the work on the West German side; instead, he wished to refrain from action until a more auspicious political framework was in place: 'I think that the best thing in these circumstances is for us to continue the indirect conversation we are currently having for another 1-2 years, unless the general situation changes substantially.'¹⁶

Eckert and the policy of détente

Beginning in the early 1960s, key changes took place in the context within which the FRG and the Polish People's Republic conducted their relationship. On 14 June 1961, the German Bundestag set out its will to, 'without relinquishing vital German interests, achieve normalisation of the relations between the Federal Republic and the Eastern European states', working towards a 'further expansion [of relations] in the economic, humanitarian and cultural spheres'.¹⁷ During this period, Polish political strategists understood with increasing clarity that a resolution to the 'German question' that would be satisfactory to Poland would only be possible in the course of a long-term process of disarmament and détente. In both societies, attitudes towards the other country changed markedly during the 1960s. Documents bearing witness to this shift included the memorandum issued by the German Protestant Church on the situation of those expelled from formerly German regions of Eastern Europe after the war and the relationship of the German nation with its neighbours to the east; the correspondence that took place in 1965 between Polish and West German bishops; and the *Bensberger Memorandum* of 1968, which recommended the recognition of the Oder-Neisse line. The FRG commenced diplomatic relations with Romania in 1967 and with Yugoslavia in 1968. The violent end which Warsaw Pact troops put to the Prague Spring was a severe blow to the *Neue Ostpolitik* and served its critics as confirmation of their concerns. This notwithstanding, the formation of the German federal government in September 1969 by a coalition of the SPD and the liberal FDP presented an opportunity to overhaul the policies the FRG pursued towards its Eastern European neighbours. The signing on 7 December 1970 of the Treaty of Warsaw, just a few months after the Treaty of Moscow, by the Polish premier Józef Cyrankiewicz and the German chancellor Willy Brandt certified the intent and resolve of both sides to lay the foundations for the normalisation of their mutual relations and gave the 1970s' politics of détente momentum.

These developments left their traces in cultural policy. The sub-committee for textbooks in the education committee of the German Commission for UNESCO, whose chair Georg Eckert had taken on in 1956, had been examining matters of East-West relations since the

¹⁵ Cf. the correspondence in AGEI, vol. 433; BArch N 1445/146.

¹⁶ Georg Eckert to Gotthold Rhode, 13 January 1958, BArch N 1445/146.

¹⁷ Cited from Janusz J. Węc, 'Die Deutschlandpolitik Polens 1945–1991. Die deutsche Frage aus polnischer Sicht', in: Dieter Bingen and Janusz J. Węc (eds), *Die Deutschlandpolitik Polens 1945–1991. Von der Status-Quo-Orientierung bis zum Paradigmenwechsel* (= *Zeszyty naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego*: Nakładem Uniw. Jagiellońskiego, 1993), 11–117, 73.

early 1960s.¹⁸ In 1962, Eckert had proposed the idea of a memorandum compiling assessments of West German textbooks made by experts from other countries as a way of pre-empting potential attacks by Eastern Bloc states; in the years that followed, he undertook efforts to respond in a spirit of moderation to harsh criticism of the FRG's textbooks by the GDR and other nations under state socialism.¹⁹ The political department of the German Federal Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*, AA) had given the 'green light'²⁰ for the establishment of contacts between the FRG and Warsaw Pact states at UNESCO level and informed the German Commission for UNESCO (*Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission*, DUK) that there were 'no political concerns about contacts of this kind.'²¹ A resolution approved in 1964 at the DUK's twentieth general assembly served as a basis for Eckert, who had taken on the Commission's presidency in June of that year,²² to undertake conversations around potential future cooperation at the fringes of UNESCO's 1965 General Conference and at a conference of textbook publishers in Paris with representatives of Poland, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia; firm plans were made in relation to specific areas of work with his Czech, Romanian and Bulgarian interlocutors.²³ Minutes of a DUK General Assembly held in May 1965 cite Eckert as explaining that 'the coolest response came from the Secretary-General of the Polish commission, but in this case, in particular, an immediate result came about in the shape of an invitation to Poland for a German delegation.'²⁴ Eckert travelled to Warsaw for talks at the end of June 1965. Those he met there on the Polish side, who included members of the country's central committee of trade unions, stressed the immense importance of UNESCO's role as a peaceful intermediary between member states.²⁵ The president of the Polish Commission for UNESCO, Stefan Wierbłowski, sounded a more critical note, rebutting Eckert's optimism by observing that the goodwill evident in the DUK was that of a modest minority only and that the bulk of the FRG's population, including the SPD, was yet to renounce revanchist tendencies.²⁶

UNESCO: a forum of inter-bloc dialogue

In the years that followed, representatives of the Eastern Bloc states and the DUK continued to engage in dialogue, with the organisation's General Conferences of 1966 and

¹⁸ Cf. Minutes of the sub-committee's meeting, 1 July 1971, BArch B 336/281.

¹⁹ Severe criticism of the FRG's textbooks from the US had preceded this; cf. note on file re. preparatory meeting ahead of 12th General Conference, 1962, BArch B 336/280.

²⁰ Von Buddenbrock (AA/IV 2) to Reimers (DUK), 2 January 1964, PA AA, B 91, vol. 422.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Georg Eckert's election as head of the DUK took place on 4 June 1964.

²³ Minutes of the DUK's twenty-first general assembly, Braunschweig, 6/7 May 1965, 18, PA AA, B 91, vol. 171. In order to formalise the agreements reached, Eckert put the outcomes of the conversations in writing and sent them to the countries' national commissions for UNESCO. Cf. Eckert to von Buddenbrock (AA), 16 December 1964, PA AA, B 91, vol. 422.

²⁴ Minutes of the DUK's twenty-first general assembly, Braunschweig, 6/7 May 1965, 18, PA AA, B 91, vol. 171.

²⁵ Notes made from memory of the conversation with Mr Grela (central committee of Polish trade unions and head of department of international links), 27 June 1965, Nr. 3, PA AA, Zwischenarchiv, vol. 104523.

²⁶ Notes taken by Mechthild Fischer of the DUK's secretariat of a conversation between Wierbłowski and Eckert, 16 July 1965, Nr. 2, PA AA, Zwischenarchiv, vol. 104523.

1967 acting as venues for conversations about potential cooperation between Eckert and representatives of Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia.²⁷ There was no unbroken consensus on the German side as to how to respond to these countries' desire for closer contact and collaboration. The AA argued for the use of contacts in UNESCO commissions as 'sources of information', but contended that any official agreements on cultural exchange were matters for the two relevant governments in each case²⁸ and that 'bypassing the official German bodies' was unacceptable, as were multilateral cultural relations.²⁹ The FRG's permanent delegate to UNESCO disagreed, pointing out that, in a spirit of 'faith in our political and ideological resilience', multilateral intensification of cultural relations to the Eastern Bloc states was a desirable aim.³⁰ In 1968 and 1969, Georg Eckert, in his capacity as DUK president, signed agreements with the national commissions of Romania and Yugoslavia respectively, each containing clauses on textbook revision.³¹ The textbook dialogues with Czechoslovakia that had commenced in 1967 met an abrupt end with the crushing of the Prague Spring in 1968.³² The dialogues between East and West in the field of textbooks had an effect on the group of socialist states nevertheless; Poland, for example, commenced discussions on textbooks with eight socialist states in the late 1960s and early 1970s.³³ Looking back, Georg Eckert commented thus on this phase of the proceedings: 'Back then, we carried out the work very inconspicuously [...]. It is the firm and unquestioned belief of most Communist states that our textbooks fail to do justice to them, and this is in part an accurate assessment.'³⁴ Writing in February 1971 to Bernhard Tacke of the German Trade Union Confederation, Eckert outlined the situation in drastic terms:

The work which had borne visible fruit in 1967 and 1968, for instance in our cooperation with Czechoslovakia, fell off temporarily after the events of August 1968. The difficulties we faced in 1969 and to a degree in 1970 stemmed from the massive attacks launched by the GDR against me

²⁷ Haack, 14 June 1967 and 31 August 1967, PA AA, Zwischenarchiv, vol. 104.523.

²⁸ Dr Peckert (Referat IV/ZAB) to dept IV 2, 13 September 1967, PA AA, B 91, vol. 422.

²⁹ Dr Werz (dept IV 2) to the Permanent Delegate to UNESCO, 24 November 1967, 1, PA AA, B 91, vol. 422.

³⁰ Report by the Permanent Delegate of the FRG to UNESCO, 10 January 1968, 5, PA AA, B 91, vol. 422.

³¹ Joint Statement on future co-operation issued by the National Commissions for UNESCO of the Federal Republic of Germany and Yugoslavia on the occasion of the visit of the delegation of the Yugoslav National Commission to the Federal Republic of Germany from September 21-28, 1969 (signatories: Mrs Marija Vilfan, President of the Yugoslav National Commission for UNESCO and Prof. Georg Eckert, President of the German National Commission for UNESCO); notes made on 19 June 1968 after a meeting between the UNESCO commissions of the FRG and the Socialist Republic of Romania (signatories: Prof. Georg Eckert; Prof. Jean Livescu), PA AA, B 93, vol. 586.

³² On the meetings between German and Czechoslovakian historians that took place in 1964 and 1967, cf. Hellmuth Auerbach, 'Ein Colloquium tschechoslowakischer und deutscher Historiker in München', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichts- und Geographie-Unterricht* 12 (1968/69), 270-272; 'Empfehlungen zu den deutsch-tschechoslowakischen Beziehungen im 15. und 19. Jahrhundert', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichts- und Geographie-Unterricht* 12 (1968/69) 418-420.

³³ These states were: the Czech (commencing 1969), and Slovakian parts of Czechoslovakia (commencing 1970), the Soviet Union (commencing 1968), Bulgaria (commencing 1970), Yugoslavia (1970/1971), Cuba (1971), Romania (commencing 1969), Hungary (commencing 1970) and the GDR (commencing 1969). Notatka o stanie prac nad weryfikacją wiedzy o Polsce w zagranicznych podręcznikach szkolnych historii i geografii [Note on the current state of the verification of knowledge about Poland in foreign history and geography textbooks], undated (c. beginning of 1978), Archiwum Akt Nowych (AAN), L VIII/532.

³⁴ Georg Eckert to Wilhelm Wöhlke, 10 September 1972, AGEI, vol. 428.

and the Institute after the occupation of Czechoslovakia. We were accused of having conducted our work towards mutual understanding with Czechoslovakia with 'revanchist intent'. Our cooperation with colleagues in Romania, Hungary, Poland, and also the Soviet Union has now restarted and regained its stride.³⁵

At its core, Georg Eckert's achievement consisted in initiating dialogue and forging links in advance of the signing of bilateral treaties, alongside exploring possibilities for cooperation in the area of textbooks across the Iron Curtain, pushing ahead with such plans even without broad political backing.

Polish-German textbook conferences: the backstory

A key catalyst to the preparation of Polish-German dialogue on textbooks was a series of seminars under the joint auspices of West German and Polish stakeholders that took place in 1969/1970. A working group on textbooks had been created in 1969 at the *Evangelische Akademie* (Protestant Academy) in West Berlin, chaired by its head, the pastor Günter Berndt.³⁶ November of that year saw the *Akademie* host a conference on 'Poland in the classroom' in cooperation with the *Instytut Zachodni* (Institute for Western Affairs) in Poznań; a number of Polish academics were in attendance,³⁷ primarily exploring and discussing images of Poland in West German school textbooks,³⁸ which, in their contemporary state, the Polish authorities considered an 'obstacle to German-Polish understanding and communication'.³⁹ A similar conference took place at the Institute for Western Affairs in October 1970. The Polish Foreign Ministry was in support of these seminars and in favour of the dialogue due to its 'broad-based polemic against textbooks currently in use in the Federal Republic of Germany'.⁴⁰ The conference approved a resolution calling for the FRG's Standing Conference of Ministers of Education of the *Länder* (*Kultusministerkonferenz*, KMK) to withdraw the recommendations for curricular content around Eastern Europe they had issued⁴¹ and for a Polish-German textbook

³⁵ Georg Eckert to Bernhard Tacke, 24 February 1971, AGEI, vol. 517.

³⁶ Günter Berndt had served as a pastor in the town of Wolfenbüttel for many years and had links to the peace movement. Eckert had encountered him in the course of their mutual involvement in an initiative on 'peace for Israel'. Berndt joined the *Evangelische Akademie* in West Berlin in 1969 and took its chair in 1972. Interview with Günter Berndt conducted by the author, 7 July 2003. Other members of the working group included the educationalist Norbert H. Weber, Reinhard Strecker, and the journalist Jürgen Vietig.

³⁷ The participants from the Institute for Western Affairs were Prof. Gerard Labuda, Prof. Władysław Markiewicz, Prof. Maria Czeakańska, Prof. Stanisława Zajchowska and Dr Janusz Rachocki. Cf. Informacja o działalności Instytutu Zachodniego w związku z zachodnio-niemieckimi podręcznikami szkolnymi [Information on the activities of the Institute for Western Affairs in relation to West German textbooks], archive of the Institute of Western Affairs(AIZ), 60/1.

³⁸ Cf. Günter Berndt, 'Polen im Unterricht', in: *Kommunität. Vierteljahreshefte der Evangelischen Akademie* 14 (1970), 16f.

³⁹ Kopa (of the military mission in Berlin) to Staniszewski, Kosciół w NRF oraz Berlinie Zachodnim a problem normalizacji stosunków z Polską [The church in the FRG and in West Berlin and the issue of normalisation of relations with Poland], 7 October 1972, 9, archive of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (AMSZ), D IV 46/77, w. 13.

⁴⁰ T. Kuźmiński, Notatka dla Towarzysza Ministra A. Willmanna w sprawie pilnego podjęcia działań na rzecz zmian w informacjach o Polsce zawartych w podręcznikach szkolnych NRF [Note for Comrade Minister A. Willmann re. urgently necessary measures regarding the information about Poland contained in textbooks from the FRG], June 1970, AMSZ, D IV 32/82, w. 16.

⁴¹ These recommendations, approved on 13 December 1956, acknowledged the necessity of intensifying

conference to be convened.⁴² Gotthold Rhode was one of those to strongly criticise the resolution, writing to Pastor Berndt in October 1970: 'I cannot imagine that such a meeting [a Polish-German textbook conference] is actually [...] possible on the basis of the 27 November resolution', which, he continued, contained numerous inaccuracies, unduly simplified and demonised the policies of imperial Germany towards Poland, inadmissibly depicted the policies regarding Poland adopted by the National Socialists as a consequence of previous policies, and over-dramatised the current mood (in West Germany) towards Poland.⁴³ After the fact, in 1977, Rhode considered: 'Before we hand over such important things to these ideologists and ignorami, it would be better to take them on ourselves, in spite of all associated difficulties and obstacles.'⁴⁴ Eckert's concerns were not as absolute, but he did have reservations about the activities of the *Evangelische Akademie* with regards to Poland. A note on the AA files states:

In the matter referenced above, I spoke on 7.10. with the head of the Textbook Institute in Braunschweig, Dr [the correct title would have been Prof.] Eckert, who said the activities of the *Evangelische Akademie* in Berlin are something of a nuisance to him. He told me he is personally acquainted with the Akademie's director of studies, Mr Berndt, whom he considers a highly capable theologian with markedly idealistic attitudes who is keen to achieve reconciliation with Poland. He does, however, have concerns that the German participants will not be capable of engaging with the Polish experts on an equal footing.⁴⁵

Eckert's principal difficulty with the meetings in Berlin was his perception of their one-sided focus on evaluating the FRG's textbooks.⁴⁶ He wrote to the AA:

I fear that Prof. Labuda does in fact tend principally to critically analyse the German textbooks. I consider such a procedure to be out of order and am of the view that we should not be prepared to engage in it. Regrettably, the conferences in Berlin, which the German side has conducted with great idealism, but perhaps without the necessary realism, have led to only the German textbooks being assessed. [...] We will not, of course, reach complete agreement with the Poles, as the Polish textbooks are composed in a Marxist-Leninist spirit and there are therefore fundamental problems of method alongside the national issues.⁴⁷

This phase, then, was marked by conflict around correct interpretation and the leading position in the emergent dialogue on textbooks between Poland and Germany. Georg Eckert and Gotthold Rhode ascribed to themselves the status of 'experts' with the capacity to provide sound academic foundations and a political balance for the textbook dialogues, while accusing Günter Berndt's group of an ideological one-sidedness which would prevent them from adequately representing German interests to the Polish side of the

teaching on the languages and cultures of Eastern Europe; their demand for the historical memory of the former parts of East Germany to be kept alive drew criticism.

⁴² Resolution of the textbook conference 'Poland in the Classroom' (25-27 November 1969), in Günter Berndt and Reinhard Strecker (eds), *Polen - ein Schauernmärchen oder Gehirnwäsche für Generationen. Geschichtsschreibung und Schulbücher; Beiträge zum Polenbild der Deutschen*, Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1971, 107f.

⁴³ Gotthold Rhode to Günter Berndt, 10 October 1970, BArch N 1445/145.

⁴⁴ Gotthold Rhode to Walter Mertineit, 31 August 1977, BArch N 1445/145.

⁴⁵ Note by Wagner (AA IV 4), 7 October 1970, PA AA, B 93, vol. 585.

⁴⁶ There is, however, concrete evidence that Pastor Berndt did in fact intend to analyse Polish textbooks, in the form of his request to Władysław Markiewicz to compile a collection of copies of Polish textbooks; cf. Günter Berndt to Władysław Markiewicz, 6 October 1970, AIZ 60/1. This said, the conference that followed, held at the Institute for Western Affairs between 23 and 25 October 1970, again restricted its theme to 'Images of Poland in West German textbooks'; cf. conference schedule, AIZ 60/1.

⁴⁷ Georg Eckert to Carl-August Schröder (AA IV 4), 1 April 1971, 2, PA AA, B 93, vol. 585.

discussions. Eckert, Rhode and their collaborators prevailed, and Berndt's repeated requests for funding for his textbook seminars in 1970 remained without success.⁴⁸

How the German-Polish textbook conferences came to be

UNESCO's role on the path to Polish-German textbook conferences was key. It was at UNESCO's sixteenth General Conference, held in Paris in 1970, that Georg Eckert and Eugenia Krassowska, president of the Polish National Commission for UNESCO, had agreed to organise a joint conference on textbooks.⁴⁹ The Polish commission's Secretary-General had approached Eckert ahead of the General Conference and proposed the FRG become involved in the celebrations to mark the five-hundredth anniversary of Copernicus' birth in 1973 and that a joint textbook conference take place.⁵⁰ In December 1970, Eckert set out the plans to the AA as follows:

She [Eugenia Krassowska] was willing to organise [the textbook conference] immediately after the signing of the German-Polish treaty. As this signing has now taken place, we have the green light to proceed. [...] Mr Labuda, with whom I am in contact, has already [sent] me the list of Polish delegates [...] During the preliminary conversations around this, we received an invitation to Warsaw, which is still informal at present. All being well, I will travel to Warsaw at the end of January in order to conclude an agreement on a Polish-German conference in Braunschweig under the aegis of the two [countries'] commissions for UNESCO. Prior to this, the Secretary-General of the Polish Commission for UNESCO will visit me in Braunschweig to agree upon the details. My estimation of this conference's significance is all the greater for the severe and to a large extent justified criticism of Poland's treatment in our textbooks currently expressed by significant swathes of the German public.⁵¹

This was a signal from Eckert that the Polish-German dialogue could now begin formally and in earnest, and simultaneously that UNESCO's patronage of the meetings was a necessity. The DUK's textbook committee accrued greater importance during this period;⁵² several of its then members later took part in the first Polish-German textbook discussions.⁵³ An important contribution in this phase came from a visit to Warsaw by Alfred Kubel, Lower Saxony's state premier (1970-1976) in August 1971, during which Kubel was able to dissipate Polish doubts around the FRG's willingness to actually change its curricular content and prepare the political ground for the textbook discussions.⁵⁴ The AA added its voice with a clear commitment to the idea of textbook dialogue, as Hans-Georg Steltzer, the head of its department of culture, wrote to Eckert in December 1970: 'I consider the revision of German and Polish school textbooks to the end of removing

⁴⁸ Cf. Wagner (AA) to Günter Berndt (*Evangelische Akademie Berlin*), 7 October 1970, PA AA, B 93, vol. 585.

⁴⁹ Confidential note written by Georg Eckert, 20 October 1970, PA AA, B 91, vol. 916.

⁵⁰ Ibid. It is unlikely to have been a coincidence that, when it came to electing UNESCO'S Executive Board, the Polish delegation voted for the FRG's candidate.

⁵¹ Georg Eckert to Hermann W. Forster (AA), 14 December 1970, 3, PA AA, B 93, vol. 575.

⁵² Carl-August Schröder, director of the Westermann publishing house, stated at a meeting in July of 1971 that the West German association of textbook publishers had invited senior executives at the Polish state textbook publisher to come to the FRG on a ten-day study visit; minutes of a meeting of the sub-committee for textbooks, education committee, DUK, 1 July 1971, BArch B 336/281.

⁵³ Anton J. Gail, Walter Mertineit, Carl-August Schröder, Georg Eckert.

⁵⁴ Georg Eckert confirmed this outcome to Alfred Kubel on 1 March 1972, BArch B 336/286. Cf. also Notatka informacyjna A. Willmann [informational note, A. Willmann], 17 September 1971, 3, AMSZ, D IV 28/77, w. 4, and the summary of Kubel's speech held at the Polish Institute of International Affairs, AMSZ, D IV 28/77, w. 4, in which he gave a detailed account of the Braunschweig institute's work.

from them tendentious and distorted depictions of the other nation and its people and of historical events and processes as a notably important and urgent task in the interests of our policy of détente and peace.’⁵⁵

It is impossible to determine with any certainty which of the two sides was the actual initiator of the Polish-German textbook discussions and which supplied the initial ideas. Archive materials on the German side – the bulk of which is correspondence from and with Georg Eckert – leave little space for any conclusion other than the identification of the German contingent, and specifically Eckert, as the central mover in this matter. A note placed on file at the AA in 1973 states: ‘The German-Polish textbook conferences came into being in the context of the UNESCO programme at the initiative of the German Commission for UNESCO.’⁵⁶ Archive holdings on the Polish side, by contrast, suggest the opposite, with a report issued in 1972 by the Polish news agency *Polska Agencja Prasowa* asserting that ‘[i]t should, for completeness’ sake, be mentioned that the Polish side is the initiator of these conferences.’⁵⁷ What we know is that the two countries’ commissions for UNESCO provided the material impetus for an institutionalised dialogue on textbooks between Germany and Poland, secured the political support required, and recruited appropriate participants among, *inter alia*, Polish and German academics who had been in attendance at the seminars held by the *Evangelische Akademie* and the *Instytut Zachodni*; these last-mentioned institutions therefore also had a role in preparing the ground for official discussions by forging initial contacts and carrying out preparatory work.

The first Polish-German textbook conferences and their gradual formalisation

The signing of the Treaty of Warsaw in December 1970 put in place the essential precondition for an inaugural meeting on textbooks under the joint auspices of the two states’ political institutions, which took place in Warsaw between 22 and 26 February 1972, defined as the first of the ‘Polish-German meetings regarding the revision of school textbooks’;⁵⁸ the delegates were history and geography researchers, teachers, textbook authors and publishers, and ministry officials. It was by no means a certainty at this point that this group would solidify into a textbook commission and institutionalise itself as such. The textbook conference issued its first fourteen recommendations, covering the period from antiquity to the Second World War, in February 1972.⁵⁹ The Polish and

⁵⁵ Hans-Georg Steltzer (head of the AA’s department of culture) to Georg Eckert, 3 December 1970, 2, PA AA, B 93, vol. 585.

⁵⁶ Hergt (Ref. 611) to Referat 212 (internal AA communication), re. Deutsch-Polnische Schulbuchkonferenz, 25 September 1973, PA AA, B 91, vol. 501.

⁵⁷ Polska Agencja Prasowa, Pozytywna ocena polsko-niemieckiej konferencji w sprawie podręczników [Positive evaluation of the German-Polish textbook conference], 29 February 1972.

⁵⁸ Jan Druto (DWKN), Pilna notatka o przebiegu i wynikach polsko-zachodniemieckiego spotkania w sprawie weryfikacji podręczników szkolnych [Urgent note on the course and outcome of the Polish-West German meeting regarding the verification of school textbooks], 1 March 1972, poufne [confidential], 1, AMSZ, D IV 32/82, w. 16.

⁵⁹ 14 Empfehlungen zur Behandlung der deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen in den Schulbüchern der Volksrepublik Polen und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Bericht über die erste deutsch-polnische Schulbuchkonferenz der Deutschen und der Polnischen UNESCO-Kommission vom 22. bis 26. Februar 1972

German textbook experts met in Braunschweig between 10 and 17 April of the same year,⁶⁰ forming three working groups on the medieval and modern period, recent and contemporary history, and geography respectively and expanding the number of recommendations to seventeen.⁶¹

The next significant step on this journey was the formalisation in October 1972 of the discussions on the basis of an agreement between the two countries' commissions for UNESCO, which committed the parties to a continuation of the work via a joint committee of experts. The agreement in this form was amenable primarily to the Polish side, which assumed the potential for a still 'more official and authoritative' form to the commission's activities.⁶² The AA, however, initially had grave concerns regarding the agreement that Eckert had planned out; it saw it as effectively a 'mini-cultural accord'⁶³ with as yet unforeseen financial implications and as one-sided in places in favour of Polish ideas and interests. It also pointed out that it compelled the German side to demonstrate to its Polish counterparts that the German federal states had taken action. Further, the AA considered it still open to discussion whether an agreement on textbook revision was even necessary.⁶⁴ Various internal AA documents point to the view that Eckert had overlooked certain important facets of the issues 'in his understandable commitment and zeal';⁶⁵ while, for instance, he regarded the agreement as merely a recommendation, he failed, in the AA's eyes, to take account of the fact 'that the Poles, aware of the support enjoyed by the textbook conferences from the federal and *Länder* levels [in West Germany], will assume a binding nature to the agreements and arrangements made.'⁶⁶ Georg Eckert signed the agreement despite the AA's reservations.⁶⁷ The political damage arising

in Warschau, Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission (ed.), Cologne 1972.

⁶⁰ Cf. Władysław Markiewicz and Georg Eckert. 'Kommuniqué. Bericht über die zweite deutsch-polnische Schulbuchkonferenz der Deutschen und der Polnischen UNESCO-Kommission vom 10. bis 17. April 1972 in Braunschweig, 15.4.1972', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichts- und Geographie-Unterricht* 14 (1972/73), 247-263.

⁶¹ The recommendations covered the following topics: 1. Matters of terminology, 2. Silesia and Pomerania in Poland's ancient history, 3. Poland and the Teutonic Order, 4. Polish-German cultural and denominational relations in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, 5. The Polish state in the eighteenth century, 6. Prussia and the partition of Poland, 7. The First World War and German-Polish relations, 8. Poland and the October Revolution, 9. The collapse of the Central Powers and German-Polish relations, 10. Border issues, 11. Polish-German relations in the Weimar Republic. Finally, six untitled recommendations from the field of geography. Cf. *17 Empfehlungen zur Behandlung der deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen in den Schulbüchern der Volksrepublik Polen und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Bericht über die zweite deutsch-polnische Schulbuchkonferenz der Deutschen und der Polnischen UNESCO-Kommission vom 11. bis 16. April 1972 in Braunschweig*, Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission (ed.), Cologne 1972.

⁶² Pilna notatka o aktualnym stanie prac grup ekspertów Polski i NRF nad weryfikacją treści podręczników szkolnych [Urgent note on the current status of the work of the expert groups from Poland and the FRG on the verification of textbook content], 4 October 1972, 2, AMSZ, DWKiN 26/77, w. 1.

⁶³ Venzlaff (AA) to „Herr D6“, 12 October 1972, PA AA, B 93, vol. 586.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Emmel to the German Embassy in Warsaw, 23 November 1971, PA AA, B 93, vol. 586.

⁶⁶ Referat 620 (Holzheimer) to Referat 611 (both in the AA), 26 January 1973, 1, PA AA, B 93, vol. 813.

⁶⁷ Cf. Georg Eckert to Dr Grunwald, 17 October 1972, AGEI, vol. 428: 'We should, however, under no circumstances permit the Commission to be degraded to an adjunct of the Federal Foreign Office.' On the day of the agreement's signing, a member of AA staff telephoned Braunschweig's Old Town Hall, where the textbook conference was meeting, to inform it that the AA did not consider itself in a position to approve the agreement. It appears that Georg Eckert had issued instructions to his staff to the effect that

therefrom was limited due to the AA's view of the agreement's final wording as bearing the 'character of a recommendation' and encroaching 'now only to a negligible extent' upon areas properly pertaining to an official treaty on cultural affairs. The AA noted that 'passages which unambiguously serve Polish interests and ideas'⁶⁸ had disappeared from the agreement's final version. Its provisions for a long-term process and its formulation of a fundamental consensus on shared objectives made the UNESCO agreement a first step towards institutionalised textbook dialogue.

Eckert's interventions into the selection of textbook dialogue participants

During the initial years of the textbook commission's work, in which Georg Eckert was a dominating influence, the manner of its organisation on the West German side repeatedly came in for criticism from within and without. One of the central targets of censure was the supposedly rather random composition of the German delegation, alongside a lack of transparency in relation to its members' appointment and remits and an alleged underrepresentation of experts on the history of the formerly East German regions.⁶⁹ Concerned, the AA contacted Georg Eckert to request that 'the composition of the German delegation also [be] discussed' at an opportune time.⁷⁰ Eckert responded personally, leaving no doubt that he was not prepared to entertain any intervention or influence from the AA in this matter:

The composition of the German delegation, which, after all, is in no way, and can in no way be, an official delegation, arises from the practical constraints we are under. [...] In the 25-year history of our Institute, it has never been usual practice for the [Federal Foreign] Office to exert influence on the composition [of committees, etc.], and I would advise strongly against taking to doing so in future, as this might endow our conferences with an official character which would be incompatible with that of our institute's work.⁷¹

The AA relented, albeit underlining to Eckert the importance of giving precedence, when selecting members for the German commission, to thematic matters relating to schools and higher education and to the various federal states' information needs.⁷²

Reasons relating to the statutes of the German Commission for UNESCO mandated the division of the textbook commission's German contingent into the German Commission's

he was not willing to speak to any representative of the AA on the day of the agreement's signing: 'I received no response to this information, despite repeated requests for one. But there was no technical signal to be heard that might have indicated us having been cut off.' Note by Venzlaff, 17 October 1972, made after a conversation with Elfriede Hillers, a member of the Textbook Institute's staff, PA AA, B 93, vol. 586.

⁶⁸ Hermann W. Forster (AA) to the undersecretary of state, 23 October 1972, PA AA, B 93, vol. 586.

⁶⁹ Cf., for instance, Gotthold Rhode to Holzheimer (AA), Einige Überlegungen zum bisherigen Verlauf der deutsch-polnischen Schulbuchkonferenzen, [Thoughts on the progress of the German-Polish textbook conferences] 15 March 1973, 1, PA AA, B 93, vol. 750.

⁷⁰ Hermann W. Forster, deputy head of the AA's department of culture, to Georg Eckert, 2 March 1973, 2, PA AA, B 93, vol. 750.

⁷¹ Georg Eckert to Hermann W. Forster, 5 March 1973, 2, PA AA, B 93, vol. 750.

⁷² Holzheimer to Georg Eckert, 15 March 1973, PA AA, B 93, vol. 750.

textbook committee⁷³ and the expert group.⁷⁴ This formality contributed to maintaining the impression that Eckert was refusing to apply transparency in his appointment of delegates to the commission; even its Polish contingent was of this view, and is on record as having commented that, until Eckert's death, its German counterpart suffered from high turnover and was generally put together ad hoc.⁷⁵ Eckert's motives for not establishing a firm team and not providing greater transparency in his appointment decisions are likely to have been diverse. He was a talented networker who knew how to pull the right strings when required and, in accordance with the phase of work most relevant at the particular time, was keen to get new people on board in line with his strategic objectives. This manner of proceeding additionally secured his influence and his leading role in the commission. It is also possible, however, that he was concerned at this early stage to avoid creating a team that was too fixed and to ensure new ideas and impetus kept arriving as new members joined.

Eckert's role within the textbook commission

In the weeks and months that followed the first textbook conference in Warsaw, Eckert was tirelessly at work driving the project forward, engaging in vast amounts of correspondence to keep the academic, educational and political spheres informed of developments and endeavouring to recruit new supporters with great energy and on occasion a distinct degree of pathos. Among his key targets in this regard in the years 1972 and 1973 were the education authorities of the *Länder*, from whom he sought to gain agreement to official publication and rapid implementation of the commission's recommendations.⁷⁶ In Eckert's view, the essence of textbook revision consisted not least in the task of persuading, 'in both countries, the public, textbook publishers, authors and the teaching profession to support this work.'⁷⁷ An example of his dedication to this task is the letter he wrote in March 1972 to Erich Frister of the German Education Union (GEW):

As I previously wrote to you, we have achieved a breakthrough and laid the factual and psychological foundations for future academic cooperation. Hopefully the German nation will not miss this singular opportunity now offered. The consequences of it so doing would be horrific.⁷⁸

Part of Eckert's strategy around presenting the commission's work to outsiders involved minimising, or avoiding discussion of, internal difficulties it was experiencing, or exaggerating the degree of consensus or trust among the members. An example is his claim in a newspaper interview he gave one year into the Polish-German cooperation that

⁷³ The purpose of the DUK's textbook committee, resurrected on Georg Eckert's initiative in 1971, was to raise the profile of textbook revision processes within the DUK. Cf. minutes of a meeting of the sub-committee for textbooks, education committee, DUK, 1 July 1971, BArch B 336/281.

⁷⁴ Georg Eckert to Gotthold Rhode, 23 May 1973, BArch N 1445/145.

⁷⁵ The commission's Polish chairs considered themselves to have successfully stabilised the German delegation. Cf. Władysław Markiewicz and Marian Wojciechowski, Notatka, 28 March 1975, 2, AMSZ, D IV 32/82, w. 16.

⁷⁶ Cf. Georg Eckert's correspondence in AGEI, vol. 384, 405, 427, 428.

⁷⁷ III. German-Polish textbook conference, 1 to 5 April 1973, Braunschweig, transcript, 154.

⁷⁸ Georg Eckert to Frister, 10 March 1972, AGEI, vol. 427.

‘a complete basis of trust’ was in place.⁷⁹

Within the commission, Eckert’s style as chair of the meetings was authoritative and highly directive, as tape recordings of one of them demonstrate.⁸⁰ Likely connected to Eckert’s passionate commitment to the cause and his emotional approach, this had the unfortunate effect of pushing his Polish counterpart, Władysław Markiewicz, onto the defensive.⁸¹ Eckert’s communication style combined courtesy with an energetic manner that very much put his stamp on the meetings. His contributions to the discussion as facilitator incorporated long summaries of what had been said thus far, together with statements on procedure and assertions of his own views;⁸² he was therefore a leading and dominating influence on the commission. Walter Mertineit, his successor as chair of the German contingent, was to act in a distinctly different style, despite placing himself firmly in Eckert’s footsteps during his inaugural speech in April 1974:

In a conversation not long at all before he died, we spoke of long-term possibilities and also of the potential that one day he might be unable to carry out the task. And then he said something to me that made a profound and lasting impression on me, but that was entirely in keeping with the Georg Eckert I knew. He said: ‘When I am dead one day, then it’ll be like “man overboard”, but the voyage must go on.’⁸³

Observations in summary

Georg Eckert was more than just a supporter of the FRG’s *Neue Ostpolitik*; he was one of its most prominent and influential advocates, bringing it to life and pursuing it with great passion. His assumption in 1964 of the presidency of the German Commission for UNESCO was key to the development of his network of political contacts, above all in the SPD.⁸⁴ Eckert was considered to be a born cultural diplomat and courageous trailblazer in cultural foreign policy. He was not, by contrast, one of the *Neue Ostpolitik*’s theoretical masterminds. His work was practical in nature; the projects he designed and whose methods he determined enabled him to show that increases in communication between East and West did indeed lead to a policy of permeation of the Communist systems and to connections which changed them. In his Polish-German textbook activities in particular, Eckert’s contacts with the leadership of the SPD, the government of Lower Saxony, and the AA, which funded the dialogues, gave him crucial backing. Albeit no expert on Poland, he appeared to the Polish side of the discussions as a credible and reliable partner due to his clear repudiation of revisionist claims, his empathy for Polish sensitivities, his broad

⁷⁹ *Düsseldorfer Nachrichten*, 7 April 1973.

⁸⁰ Third German-Polish Textbook Conference, 1 to 5 April 1973, Braunschweig.

⁸¹ Georg Eckert repeatedly took over the chair at textbook conferences, although his Polish counterpart Władysław Markiewicz was actually lead facilitator of the relevant part of the meeting. Cf. Third German-Polish Textbook Conference, 1 to 5 April 1973, Braunschweig, transcript, 103.

⁸² An illustrative example is this: ‘Would you be agreeable to this solution? I think that would be the best, and we can talk more afterwards, if you like, about this or other matters in another context.’, *ibid*, 101.

⁸³ Walter Mertineit, V. German-Polish Textbook Conference, 1 to 3 April 1974, Braunschweig; transcript, 5.

⁸⁴ The SPD leaders Willy Brandt, Helmut Schmidt and Herbert Wehner marked Georg Eckert’s sixtieth birthday by sending him a telegram in which they wrote: ‘Your diverse pedagogical work has also contributed to overcoming the frontiers that divide us from our neighbouring states, particularly Poland.’, 14 August 1972, AGEI, vol. ‘Eckert 60’.

international experience and his aura of authority and integrity. Maria Wawrykowa, a survivor of Auschwitz who later became a professor at the University of Warsaw and was a founder member of the Polish-German Commission, wrote to Georg Eckert two months before his death, looking back on almost two years of textbook conferences between the two countries, thus:

Dear Georg, my warmest thanks for your letter. Every line you have written shows me ever more clearly that one does not need a long period of time to recognise an amicable heart and shared ideals. I have gained new friends who confirm my faith in humanity. And for this I am particularly grateful to you all.⁸⁵

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⁸⁵ Maria Wawrykowa to Georg Eckert, 12 November 1973, AGEI, vol. 405.

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As early as the 1950s, Georg Eckert had begun applying to international work on textbooks his project of transcending the nation-centred narratives typical of school history textbooks and expanding them to encompass a universal view of history.¹ Having commenced with the objective of advancing reconciliation in Europe through bilateral dialogue on school textbooks, Eckert soon extended his ambition to multilateral textbook analysis and revision with the purpose of promoting mutual understanding among peoples beyond Europe. During the 1950s and 1960s, his principal contacts in this regard were with countries in Asia. These activities had a threefold context, global, national and regional, which will provide the framework for the analysis that I will present in this chapter.

1. The global context

To properly comprehend the Asia-related work of Eckert's *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut* (ISBI), we need to look to the policies pursued in the 1950s by UNESCO, entangled as they were in a dual, occasionally overlapping set of tensions: first, the Cold War; second, the national independence movements burgeoning in South and South East Asia and in Africa. In Asia, the advent of decolonisation had brought about new states and processes of emergent national identity, with Indonesia gaining its independence in 1945, the Philippines in 1946, India in 1947 and Sri Lanka and Burma in 1948. In Bandung in 1955, what was later to become the Non-Aligned Movement of states issued a clarion call rejecting the West's Cold War dichotomies and advocating for their own interests, specifically through the promulgation of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence² and their demand for appropriate representation in the UN's organisations. These developments seemed to augur a second conflict alongside the Cold War, a political and cultural opposition between the West and the Asian East, posited within the framework of a strategy of boundary-drawing. Japan was among the first states to repudiate such an opposition, and was the initiator of a regional meeting, held in Tokyo in 1956, where the Asian national commissions for UNESCO, now representing almost half the parent organisation's members, called upon it to support mutual respect for and acknowledgement of cultural values between the global East and West. The idea had originated in India and Japan, which were in favour of Asia taking a more prominent role in UNESCO, but were simultaneously concerned about the threat of regional conflicts

¹ Georg Eckert, 'Improvements of Textbooks through International Co-operation', in *The Yearbook of Education* 22 (1960), 77-585; cf. Peter Bensch and Georg Eckert, 'Universalgeschichte im Unterricht', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht* 3 (1954), 41-50.

² The 'Five Principles' were: mutual respect for nations' territorial integrity and sovereignty; mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in the internal affairs of the other; equality and working to the mutual benefit of each; peaceful coexistence.

being sparked by the rise of nationalism in the wake of decolonisation.³

This initiative inspired a powerful response within UNESCO, which had begun in the early 1950s to overhaul its markedly Eurocentric focus, with significant milestones including a round-table discussion on 'The Concept of Man and the Philosophy of Education in East and West' between Asian and European academics in New Delhi in 1951, a conference of experts held in Paris in 1952, and the UNESCO resolution of 1953. Each of these gave voice to the necessity of revising textbooks, curricula and other teaching and learning materials and of exhorting all states to join in this effort.⁴ Accordingly, in 1953 UNESCO requested all its member states and national commissions in Asia and the 'West' to produce a quantitative and qualitative analysis of their school textbooks' depictions of the other region.⁵ Sixteen countries submitted reports, which were the subject of a large-scale UNESCO conference in Paris in 1956. In the following year, drawing on the proposals made by the Tokyo regional conference and the meeting in Paris, UNESCO established its 'Major Project on the Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values' - the 'East-West Major Project' for short -, whose purpose was to foster dialogue between the 'West' and the 'East' (the latter being defined as Africa and Asia) through the development of special programmes linking schools, universities, youth organisations, academics, museums, and so on.⁶

It is barely an exaggeration to credit Georg Eckert with a central role in the preparation and implementation of this UNESCO project. Eckert, a participant in the inaugural UNESCO textbook conferences in Brussels in 1950 and in Sèvres in the following year, joined the East-West Major Project's International Advisory Board in 1961; this body, composed of representatives of eighteen countries, had ratified a joint declaration in 1958 which outlined the project's key principles and aims. Eckert made proposals to UNESCO regarding cooperation in the textbook field between Asia and the West, with an emphasis on collaboration among teachers and academics through regional and transregional seminars. One of the core elements of his plans was the idea of UNESCO working with its national commissions to set up national centres dedicated to the study of issues in history

³ Japan had attained observer status at UNESCO in 1946 and gained admission as a member in 1951. See Laura Elizabeth Wong, 'Relocating East and West: UNESCO's Major Project on the Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values', in: *Journal of World History* 19, 3 (2008), 353ff. Japan was extremely active in textbook-related affairs, with its national commission for UNESCO carrying out analysis of the treatment of other nations in Japanese school textbooks and specifically a study on the depiction of the West. Cf. Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, *Report of a Survey of school textbooks in Japan*, Tokyo: Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, 1956. These endeavours notwithstanding, we should not overlook the fact that these activities were not in line with the official policy of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party, which is conservative in character and was in power from 1955 onward, and which issued legislation in 1956 banning any negative statements on Japan's role in the Second World War. Cf. Nozaki Yoshiko and Inokuchi Hiromitsu, 'Japanese Education, Nationalism and Ienaga Saburo's Textbook Lawsuits', in: Laura Henn and Mark Selden (eds), *Censoring History: Citizenship and Memory in Japan, Germany, and the United States*, Armonk, N.Y. etc.: M.E. Sharpe, 2000, 96-126), 105.

⁴ Georg Eckert, 'Die UNESCO und die Schulbuchrevision in Asien', in Willy Brandt, Otto Brenner et al., *Solidarität. Alfred Nau zum 65. Geburtstag*, Bonn-Bad-Godesberg: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, 1971, 165f.; Wong, *Relocating East and West*, 357f.

⁵ Eckert, *Die UNESCO und die Schulbuchrevision in Asien*, 167.

⁶ Cf. Wong, *Relocating East and West*, 349-374; Eckert, 'Die UNESCO und die Schulbuchrevision in Asien', 155-176.

and social studies teaching, with textbook archives attached.⁷

The inaugural conference, held in Paris in 1956, had revolved around the depiction of Asia in Western school textbooks; the second, two years later in Tokyo, looked at perceptions of the West in textbooks from Asia. As preparatory work for this conference, UNESCO commissioned the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut* in Braunschweig to coordinate the European delegates' self-presentation and agenda, with a meeting of experts held in Braunschweig in April 1958. In his invitation to the German participants in this meeting, Eckert set out the context as follows:

I barely need to mention that the congress in Japan will be complicated by numerous political difficulties. The discussion of European imperialism and colonialism, which, as we know, have dominated relations between these two cultural regions over the last 500 years, will not always be particularly pleasant for us Europeans. As Soviet Russians will also be in attendance, we will need to anticipate some hefty and polemical debates. The very diverse positions of the European nations in this regard only add to this.⁸

Accordingly, the intent of the meeting in Braunschweig was to draw up a working document for the purpose of 'smoothing' the discussions and endowing them with greater 'objectivity'.⁹ Eckert's aim here was to produce brief recommendations for the conference in Tokyo as a synthesis of European positions rather than on the level of divergent national depictions, i.e. to create a sort of bare-bones curriculum to present to the Asian side. The meeting indeed compiled a detailed catalogue of topics the Europeans believed should find a place in Asian school textbooks.¹⁰

In this way, Eckert and the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut* had a significant share in the preparations for the conference in Tokyo, which, at the invitation of the Japanese national commission for UNESCO, hosted 42 delegates from 25 countries, including education policymakers, university rectors, history teachers, researchers and publishing staff.¹¹ Eckert himself was elected to serve as one of the congress' four vice-chairs. The ideas and inspiration the conference generated reflect both the great enthusiasm of its participants in relation to the potential effects and therefore success of textbook revision processes and the attribution to UNESCO of a remit and role which it was not in a position to meet. Some examples of suggestions made include the proposals that UNESCO set up a clearing house for materials, contacts and information, compose a guide for producing handbooks on the histories and cultures of its member states, run seminars, organise conferences on important historical personalities and provide assistance in producing teaching and learning materials, and support the foundation of national centres for issuing information

⁷ Georg Eckert to Akira Mori, 17 November 1955, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, Nr. 292. In this communication, Eckert asks his Japanese colleague Akira Mori for his views on the idea of founding such textbook centres in Japan, India, an Arab country, etc. Subsequently, Eckert took part in the preparatory meeting for the East-West Major Project which was held in Paris in February 1956.

⁸ Invitation issued by Eckert, 28 January 1958, in 143 N Zg. 2009/069, Nr. 225.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Cf. 'Recommendations for the treatment of European history in the textbooks and the teaching of Asian countries', in *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 7 (1959/60), 169-192.

¹¹ On the meeting in Tokyo, with particular reference to the role of Japan, see Wong, *Relocating East and West*, 367ff.; Herbert J. Abraham, 'The UNESCO Conference in Tokyo', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 7 (1959/60), 117-121.

on other countries.¹²

Eckert was unable to attend the third UNESCO conference, held in 1960 in Wellington. Two years later, the fourth conference, held in Goslar and organised by the German Commission for UNESCO in cooperation with the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut*, marked the conclusion of the East-West Major Project, at least as far as textbook revision was concerned. At this conference, attended by 28 representatives of 21 UNESCO member states, Eckert once again served as a vice-chair.¹³ The conference's purpose was to assess the activities conducted up to that point as part of the East-West Major Project and to disseminate principles and methods of textbook work and recommendations for the future development of cooperation in this field.

2. The national context

Eckert's activities on the East-West Major Project were extremely closely linked with the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut*'s bilateral work on textbooks with Asian countries, which had commenced in late 1952. The progress of these collaborations gave Eckert reason to hope as early as 1953 – i.e. over three years prior to the official launch of the UNESCO project – ‘that our work represents a small contribution to mutual understanding between Japan and Germany and that it will be of use as preparatory work for the major Asian-European UNESCO seminar.’¹⁴ Eckert had a gift for harmonising his activities in the context of the German Commission for UNESCO (DUK), which he represented to the parent organisation, with projects at his Braunschweig institute. It is effectively the case that almost all activities with Asia in this arena took place in cooperation with, or under the aegis of, the DUK, which commissioned the ISBI to conduct the Japanese-German and Indian-German historians' conferences and supplied the requisite funding.¹⁵ The DUK provided Eckert with two key requirements for his activities in and with Asia. The first of these was the opportunity which arose at the UNESCO meetings he attended as the DUK's representative to forge important links with other stakeholders, as exemplified by his encounter at UNESCO's textbook conference in Brussels with representatives of India and Japan with whom he was subsequently to establish bilateral textbook discussions and who put him in touch with further potential partners. Eckert used his international travels, such as his trip to Japan in 1958 and to Indonesia in 1960, to visit a diverse range of academic, educational or education policy institutions. A second crucial advantage provided by UNESCO was its partnership or support to Eckert – via the DUK itself or its textbook committee – in launching bilateral textbook dialogues. UNESCO had fulfilled this vital role from the inception of the work; it, not the ISBI, had been convenor of the first

¹² 'Die Behandlung des Westens in Schulbüchern und Lehrmitteln Süd- und Ostasiens. Bericht einer Expertenkonferenz, Tokio, 22. September – 4. Oktober', in *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 7 (1959/60), 141f.

¹³ Cf. 'Meeting of experts on the improvement of Textbooks for the objectives of Unesco's Major Project on Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values', in *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 9 (1963/64), 184-210.

¹⁴ Eckert, circular, 23 November 1953, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 292.

¹⁵ See, for example, the discussion of the Indian/German meeting in *Internationale Zeitschrift für den Geschichtsunterricht* 3 (1954), 345.

and second Japanese-German historians' meetings in Braunschweig in May and September of 1953.¹⁶ In October of that year, the textbook committee officially commissioned the ISBI to intensify its work with Asia and to 'begin academic preparations for the planned East-West seminar'.¹⁷

Japan

Minna Specht of Hamburg's UNESCO Institute for Education had forged the first contact with a Japanese colleague, Akira Mori of Osaka University, in October of 1952.¹⁸ One month subsequently, Mori visited Braunschweig, and thereafter became one of the key points of contact between the ISBI and Japan. An exchange of textbooks soon followed this encounter, as did, a few months later, the first of two conferences of historians from Germany and Japan. The basis for discussion was the textbook analysis carried out by Peter Bensch of Marburg on German textbooks alongside the textbook *World History for Secondary Schools* by Chiyu Inoue of Kyoto University, one of Japan's leading history textbook authors.¹⁹ The meeting produced recommendations on the treatment of German history in Japanese school textbooks, with direct reference to Inoue's work.²⁰ The Japanese recommendations consisted in a brief outline of Japan's history.²¹ Subsequently to this, the DUK gave financial support to the production of a brief history of Japan aimed specifically at teachers, published in 1955 in the *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht*.²²

Japanese-German dialogue on textbook intensified in the years that followed, as reflected in active practices of textbook exchange and in the publication of long essays on the history of Japan and of its textbooks in the *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht*.²³ Inoue's history textbook was translated into German²⁴ and Eckert,

¹⁶ Georg Eckert, 'Die Ergebnisse der 1. und 2. japanisch-deutschen Historikertagung in Braunschweig', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 3 (1954), 92-93. Two conferences were required due to initial difficulties with funding and delays to the arrival of the Japanese history textbooks in Braunschweig.

¹⁷ Cf. *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 3 (1954), 344.

¹⁸ Minna Specht to Georg Eckert, 20 October 1952, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 292.

¹⁹ Cf. Peter Bensch, 'Die Behandlung der Völker Asiens in deutschen Schulgeschichtsbüchern', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 3 (1954), 118-147; Chiyu Inoue, 'Die Behandlung Deutschlands in japanischen Schulgeschichtsbüchern', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 3 (1954), 114-118.

²⁰ The recommendations appeared in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 3 (1954), 99-104.

²¹ 'Die japanischen Empfehlungen', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 3 (1954), 93-98.

²² Atsushi Kobata, 'Geschichte Japans', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 4 (1955), 27-62. See also, in the same issue, T. Shigematsu and K. Ueda, 'Historical Education in elementary and junior high school', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 4 (1955), 75-84.

²³ Atsushi Kobata, *Geschichte Japans*, 27-62; Tomitaro Karasawa, 'Eine Geschichte der japanischen Schulbücher und der Bildung des japanischen Geistes', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 7 (1959/60), 58-72; Akira Mori, 'Moralerziehung in Japan', in *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 7 (1959/60), 73-116.

²⁴ Excerpts were published in *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 3 (1954), 114-118.

drawing on the proposal he had formulated for the East-West Major Project, successfully encouraged his colleague Mori in Osaka to set up a textbook institute, which came into being as the 'Institute of Comparative Pedagogy' with a department covering textbook affairs.²⁵ The further bilateral conference Eckert had planned for the year 1965 failed to materialise.²⁶ It was then not until 1982 that the Georg Eckert Institute, as the ISBI had become in the meantime, entered into talks around the possibility of textbook dialogues with the Tokyo-based International Society for Educational Information. The upshot was a meeting in Braunschweig for bilateral textbook consultations in October 1987, this time on geography books.²⁷

India

At around the same time as contact with Japan was getting underway, India was becoming a partner of West Germany in textbook work. As with Japan, the first step consisted in the ISBI sending textbooks to the Indian embassy; this took place in 1953.²⁸ The proposal to hold a German-Indian historians' conference found the support of the DUK and of Baldoon Dhingra, the head of UNESCO's textbook section, and came to fruition in October 1954 – one year after the Japanese-German meeting - in Braunschweig. The objective was again to achieve more appropriate and balanced depictions of the other nation's history and culture in the two countries' textbooks. The German experts recruited by the ISBI had read the available Indian textbooks and formulated brief critiques. The 'German-Indian theses' which contained the ensuing recommendations appeared in the *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* in 1956. In the same year, Eckert contacted the Central Bureau of Textbook Research in New Delhi via the German embassy located in that city. Delighted that Eckert was seeking 'on [his] own initiative to work with their emergent Indian partner organisation',²⁹ the embassy arranged the delivery of 500 textbooks to the Bureau via its courier service. Eckert was able to intensify the links to his collaborators in India when he visited the country in October 1958 in the context of the UNESCO conference in Tokyo.

It appears that no continuation of the bilateral textbook dialogues took place in the years that followed this flurry of activity; their end, at least for the time being, and excepting the sending to India of publications issued by the ISBI, came in 1963. Eckert nevertheless repeatedly did his best to enable academics from India, such as the historian Jogindra Kumar Banerji, to travel to Germany and work at the ISBI.³⁰ It was not until after Eckert's

²⁵ 'Our delivery to Osaka arrived safely, and thereupon, Osaka University founded a new institute of comparative pedagogy.' Cf. Georg Eckert to Karl Pfauter (cultural attaché at the FRG's embassy in New Delhi), 14 June 1957, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 122/1.

²⁶ Cf. Georg Eckert to Embassy Secretary, 19 February 1964, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 291.

²⁷ Cf. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 403.

²⁸ Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf to the cultural attaché at the Indian Embassy, 26 October 1953, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 122/2.

²⁹ Alfred Würffel, department of culture, FRG embassy in New Delhi, to Georg Eckert, 29 September 1956, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 122/1.

³⁰ Cf. Romain Faure, *Netzwerke der Kulturdiplomatie. Die internationale Schulbuchrevision in Europa, 1945-*

death, however, that relations reactivated, at the prompting of Nikolaus Klein, secretary-general of the Indo-German Society, and K. Gopalan, the Indian Embassy's attaché for science and education who had approached the DUK to this end. At the fourth meeting of the Indo-German cultural committee in May 1977, the proposal was affirmed and received support from the AA:

In light of textbooks' importance to the promotion of cultural relations and mutual understanding between the two countries, both parties would welcome a joint initiative by the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research and the National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, to examine this matter together and set out specific proposals for the review of textbooks.³¹

Indonesia

German-Indonesian communication in the matter of textbooks commenced officially with the delivery of five school geography textbooks to the FRG's embassy;³² discussions on textbooks between the two countries first came onto the horizon when Eckert proposed them to the Indonesian embassy in 1955.³³ In the same year, Eckert met with Hochmat Hardjono, the new Indonesian cultural attaché, who brought textbooks from his country to the encounter and showed strong interest in related matters. February 1956 and January 1957 saw preparatory meetings for the first German-Indonesian historians' conference, which took place in Europe in May 1957, with the Indonesian cultural attaché in attendance; it was located within the framework of the East-West Major Project, whose coordinators in the FRG were the DUK and the ISBI.³⁴ In contrast to the Japanese-German textbook meetings, the recommendations that arose from these discussions were approved for German textbooks only and were comparatively brief, yet nevertheless issued as a stand-alone publication.³⁵

No second German-Indonesian conference followed the first, which is not to suggest that the meeting had no effect. Alongside the numerous contacts forged due to the recommendations' publication, there was additionally an invitation issued to Eckert by the Indonesian government to attend a conference. Evidently pleased, Eckert wrote to an Indonesian colleague: 'I am already very much looking forward to this possibility to meet the leading educators of your country, as well as to be introduced and become acquainted with some of the important pedagogical problem[s] of Indonesia.'³⁶ Regrettably, Eckert found himself forced for health reasons to abandon the trip two weeks in: 'The marked

1989, Berlin, Boston: DeGruyter, 2015, 158-159. Banerji's portrait of the ISBI was published in Braunschweig in 1957, entitled *Laying the foundation of 'One World'. The International Text-Book Institute*.

³¹ Hans Meinel, DUK, to Siegfried Bachmann, 27 May 1977; AA to GEI, 4 July 1977, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 307.

³² Cf. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 317/2.

³³ 24 October 1955, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 317/2.

³⁴ Die 1. deutsch-indonesische Historikertagung, in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* 5 (1956), 312-314.

³⁵ 'Empfehlungen der deutsch-indonesischen Historikertagung', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht* 6 (1957), 208-209. Indonesien-Deutschland: Empfehlungen der indonesisch-deutschen Historikertagung (Braunschweig 1957).

³⁶ Georg Eckert to Mr Sikin, 28 June 1960, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 317/1 (letter written by Eckert in English).

change in climate dangerously reactivated my old war injuries, and so I was obliged to take the advice of my doctor in Bandung and leave your country early', Eckert wrote in evident disappointment.³⁷ In the years after this, he poured considerable efforts into aiding Indonesian academics to take tours and research stays in the FRG and into textbook exchanges. In early 1960, for instance, he organised a nationwide collection of textbooks and academic literature for Indonesia.³⁸ The ISBI additionally acted as coordinator for the translation of Indonesian curricula into German in 1962 and the publication of a history of Indonesia for teachers in 1963. Four delegates from Indonesia, two of which were from the country's teachers' union, attended the UNESCO conference in Goslar. Additionally, in 1964 the ISBI concluded a cooperation agreement with Padjadjaran University.³⁹ In the late 1960s and especially in the early 1970s, with its oil crisis, the ISBI was often compelled to turn down requests for funding; on one such occasion, Eckert lamented: 'It is a dreadful state of affairs that we currently have absolutely no funds available and that I am having to advance the cost of running our institute and our conferences from my own funds.'⁴⁰

An additional dimension to the 1957 conference generated an effect that extended far beyond the activities that took place, for instance, with Japan. This related in part to Eckert's close working relationship with the Indonesian publisher Ganaco, via which the entire process of textbook exchange – as far as it related to the purchase of Indonesian textbooks – took place and which itself undertook efforts towards improving bilateral cultural relations by, for example, proposing translations of children's books and language learning resources from Germany.⁴¹ Further, the German-Indonesian textbook discussions quickly transcended the academic sphere and extended to encompass cultural relations in general. The section that follows, on the regional context of Eckert's work in Asia, will explain further.

3. The regional context

Indonesia's cultural attaché in Bonn, Hochmat Hardjono, had a strong interest in reciprocal cultural relations. He, Eckert, and the Indonesia specialist Irene Hilgers-Hesse, secretary-general of the Cologne-based German-Indonesian Society that had been founded in 1950 and on whose board Eckert sat, came to form a trio which gave German-Indonesian relations a distinct shape in Braunschweig and Cologne and initiated the twinning of Braunschweig and Bandung,⁴² an idea of Hardjono's proposed after the third

³⁷ Georg Eckert to Tjan, 22 August 1960, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 317/1.

³⁸ Cf. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 23.

³⁹ Cf. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 352. The cooperation was with the faculty of education and teacher education (FKIP), which separated from Padjadjaran University in 1965 and became an independent institution, effectively a tertiary teacher education college, consisting of five faculties and a research centre. Cf. T.S. Hardjapamekas (Bandung) to Eckert, 13 December 1965, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 318/1.

⁴⁰ Georg Eckert to Frau Hardjono, 19 March 1973, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 8.

⁴¹ The proposal was made in 1959. See NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 318/1.

⁴² At the end of the 1950s, the only significant sites of German-Indonesian cultural activities in the FRG were

'*Indonesientag*' in 1959 because Bandung had a technical university and a faculty of pedagogy like Braunschweig and was home to Asia's only German school.⁴³ The *Indonesientag*, put on annually since 1957 by the city of Braunschweig and the ISBI,⁴⁴ featured a comprehensive programme of public events about Indonesia; embassy and consulate staff were generally in attendance, the Kant-Hochschule and various secondary schools in the city hosted lectures and talks, and there were activities for German and Indonesian students, which in 1959 included a trip to Goslar. Eckert presented Braunschweig's then mayor, Martha Fuchs, with ideas for cooperation between the twin cities, which she forwarded to her counterpart in Bandung.⁴⁵ Fuchs had been held in the Ravensbrück concentration camp during the National Socialist period and was one of the strongest supporters of Eckert's endeavours and, as a Social Democrat, worked closely with him. Hardjono had been in touch with Bandung's mayor in advance, and the actual signing of the twinning agreement was effectively a formality. The *Indonesientag* of 1960 was a most appropriate venue for the announcement of the link, in the presence of the under-secretary of state from Indonesia's ministry of culture, Dr M. L. Soepardo, who attended alongside Martha Fuchs. During Eckert's visit to Indonesia, an event in Bandung 'officially sealed the twinning agreement in an impressive and dignified celebration'. The works of art Eckert brought back with him from Indonesia found pride of place in the Kant-Hochschule in two glass cases⁴⁶ and remained on display in the new Institute facilities it moved to in 1965; one of them hangs to this day in the director's office at the Georg Eckert Institute. We have no information, however, about the whereabouts of Elly, an Asian black bear – Eckert had been asked to enquire of the city of Braunschweig as to whether it would be prepared to accept a young bear of this type from Borneo as a gift.⁴⁷ In 1964, the year in which Eckert took the chair of the DUK, he did likewise at the Braunschweig-based new branch of the German-Indonesian Society in Lower Saxony that had been established during the *Deutsch-indonesische Kulturtage*, a bilateral cultural festival still held in Braunschweig.⁴⁸

Summary

Eckert's textbook revision mission was always dual in nature; he sought both to compare and improve textbooks and to raise awareness and understanding of other cultures in West Germany. To implement his activities and prompt the emergence of new projects, he made ample use of his fourfold sets of institutional connections with, respectively, the

Cologne and Recklinghausen, which had hosted the first annual *Indonesientag* in 1954. A German-Indonesian Society was founded in Bremen in January 1960. By 1971, there were societies in Cologne, Braunschweig, Munich, Bremen, Frankfurt and Hamburg.

⁴³ Hardjono to Georg Eckert, 1 July 1959, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 354.

⁴⁴ The event expanded to become a multi-day festival in 1960 and grew in length to a biennial week at the end of that decade; cf. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, nos. 243 and 354.

⁴⁵ See NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 23.

⁴⁶ Georg Eckert to Tjan, 22 August 1960, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 317/1.

⁴⁷ Bisanz to Georg Eckert, 27 November 1963, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 23.

⁴⁸ See NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 352. On the inaugural meeting, cf. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 243.

Braunschweig institute; the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) with its domestic network; the Working Group of German Teachers' Associations (AGDL) and the German Education Union (GEW) for exchanges of ideas and views with educators; and the DUK with its direct access to UNESCO HQ in Paris. During this period, the ISBI established itself as a reliable cooperation partner to the Council of Europe and UNESCO and, as such, as the central institution for the realisation of UNESCO's Major Project on Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values in relation to textbooks. Backed by the DUK, Eckert brought into being a network of experts; the German Federal Foreign Office (AA) provided him with links to embassy representatives; and he worked closely with cultural attachés and embassy counsellors from foreign missions in the FRG. He funded scholarships for colleagues and researchers from Asian countries in cooperation with the FES. The AGDL grew to become crucial in the organisation of exchanges with teachers from Asia.⁴⁹ Eckert chaired the AGDL's international committee, an umbrella body for all of its specific committees working for international communication, and its 'committee for the teaching of history'. It was at Eckert's initiative, for instance, that Akira Mori, a representative of the Japan Teachers Union, became the first representative of an Asian country to speak at a German teachers' and educators' congress in Flensburg in 1953. A short time subsequently, the AGDL and the Japanese teachers' union Nippon-Kyoin-Kumiai concluded an agreement on an exchange of textbooks.⁵⁰ More than once, Eckert asked colleagues from Asia to write essays aimed at teachers in Germany or to speak at their meetings. The GEW was involved in organising the bilateral meetings of historians from Germany and Asian countries.⁵¹

All this said, Eckert's activities in this regard focused on a handful of Asian countries, namely Japan, Indonesia, India and, to a lesser extent, South Korea.⁵² The Cold War prohibited interaction with China in this field, and the newly independent smaller Asian states were not part of Eckert's endeavours, owing perhaps to the absence of embassies or missions in the FRG and the concomitant effective impossibility of establishing contact. Africa, although it was covered by the East-West project, was also notable for its almost complete absence from Eckert's activities. Eckert did pay homage to the liberation movements in Asia and Africa in relevant bilateral textbook recommendations, considering the according of greater importance to them to be a significant originary contribution made by the FRG's cultural foreign policy. However, Eckert's correspondence with cooperation partners from Asia took no account of major events

⁴⁹ The FES provided two scholarships, covering four semesters each, to mark the twinning; cf. Georg Eckert to M. Fuchs, 16 November 1959, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, Nr. 23.

⁵⁰ Mori had linked Eckert up with Prof. Saburo Oka, the president of Nippon-Kyen-Kumiai, and Eckert then contacted him directly on 18 November 1952; cf. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 292. 'Die japanischen Lehrer schließen sich der internationalen Schulbucharbeit an', in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht* 2 (1953), 376.

⁵¹ Accordingly, the original title of the Japanese/German meetings was 'Japanese-German Conference of historians and history teachers'; cf. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 292.

⁵² The ISBI had arranged an exchange of textbooks with the Korean commission for UNESCO in 1956, and an analysis of German textbooks' depiction of Korea appeared in the *Internationales Jahrbuch* in 1959. The idea of translating passages relating to Germany in selected Korean school textbooks failed at financial hurdles. Cf. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 330.

such as the Bandung Conference of 1955; further, wars, as in Korea and Vietnam, and political unrest such as the Communist coup attempt of 1965 in Indonesia evidently remained unreferenced in the Institute's bilateral textbook work. Even when the mayor of Bandung, a co-organiser of the twinning project, was arrested in 1968, Eckert and the city of Braunschweig, acting on the advice of the AA, rejected the idea of intervening, citing the principle of non-interference in states' internal affairs.⁵³

The Cold War context of textbook work with Asia shines through in Eckert's response to activities undertaken by the GDR, which he regarded as a political adversary and a dangerous competitor in the international textbook revision field.⁵⁴ In 1960, he expressed himself as follows in this regard:

In the whole of Indonesia, particularly in Jakarta and Bandung, the Soviet zone [i.e. the GRD] is undertaking extraordinarily busy and sadly also highly successful activity. [Its] representatives are managing to pass themselves off as representatives of the true Germany and also as guardians of Germany's intellectual heritage. I have attempted to counter these influences. It is obvious, however, as [the Indonesians] are constantly being worked on in this regard [by the GDR], occasional rebuttals will barely achieve anything. The SBZ [Soviet occupation zone, i.e. the GDR] is not only extending generous invitations to Indonesian scholars to visit East Germany, but is supplying literary and specialist works free of charge or for symbolic amounts (in rupiah!).⁵⁵

We may observe what almost amounts to a standardised scheme at work in Eckert's international textbook activities. The establishment of contact, on an individual basis or via the AA or the diplomatic missions of the relevant countries in the FRG, was followed by exchanges of textbooks usually conducted via German embassies, then by initial exploratory talks at the political level. Eckert subsequently went on to identify suitable experts in the FRG and conduct preliminary meetings in Braunschweig; there followed the process of textbook analysis and finally a conference resulting in the approval of recommendations and a reception hosted by the city of Braunschweig. This may all seem rather formulaic today; there would, however, have been no other way of managing the enormous efforts involved in the coordination and organisation of these initiatives, which rested largely on Eckert, his secretary Dorothea Feige and his assistant Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf. The textbook conferences with Asian countries and Eckert's involvement in the East-West Major Project took place in parallel to the bilateral activities in Europe and the US. Eckert was heading the Institute, a task associated with an immense amount of travel, extremely extensive correspondence with his numerous cooperation partners and colleagues, large numbers of conferences, and all the associated publications, of which the *Internationales Jahrbuch* was but one. Then there were his activities in the DUK, the city of Braunschweig, the FES, and the GEW, and his teaching commitments at the Kant-Hochschule. It is beyond doubt that this diverse workload took its toll on Eckert's health,

⁵³ See NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 243.

⁵⁴ 'I feel this [the chance that Indonesia officially recognizes the GDR] is really shattering in view of what the city of Braunschweig has done for Bandung. Hopefully it will not come to this. And it all looks so opaque. Aidit's circles, of course, would welcome recognition of the GDR. There is continued talk of a planned major offensive in Malaysia.' Cf. Hilgers-Hesse to Eckert, 12 June 1965, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 318/1. Dipa Nusantara Aidit was the was a senior leader of the Communist Party of Indonesia, the largest political party in Indonesia at the time.

⁵⁵ Eckert to the physicist Dr Mönnig, 17 November 1960, NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N Zg. 2009/069, no. 23.

which was not perfect, partly due to the injury he had sustained in the war, but also in specific relation to his blood pressure. He had been compelled to abort his 1960 trip to Indonesia, after which he never returned to Asia despite receiving numerous invitations to do so; his correspondence of the 1960s bears witness to his ultimately fruitless attempts to restore his health via rest cures and periods of time away from work.

Overall, the ISBI viewed itself as a hub of international work on textbooks, and indeed it drew many visitors, academics, students and education policymakers from Japan, India, Indonesia, Korea, Singapore, the Philippines and other countries in Asia. It was also reaping the benefits of its continuously advancing reputation in Europe, where the initial phase of textbook revision, founded above all on bilateral relations, had concluded at the end of the 1950s. Looking back from the vantage point of 1958, Eckert observed:

In the last 10 years, we have succeeded, in cooperation with almost all free states in Europe, in discussing, and resolving, the historical controversies of above all the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, at least in relation to the main issues. This work, as has been generally acknowledged, has left visible traces in the textbooks of the various European countries, primarily in [those of] the Federal Republic [of Germany].⁵⁶

He continues:

This initial phase of our work was followed some years ago by a second. Working closely with the Council of Europe, we endeavoured to uncover the great commonalities of European history and culture and in this way both overcome the nation state-centred view of the late nineteenth century and promote the idea of Europe and a sense of European solidarity. We believe, notwithstanding our inclination to modesty, that in so doing, we have made a significant contribution to the policies pursued by the Federal Republic for over 10 years.⁵⁷

In 1965, the expansion of this bilateral work to a multilateral European level found expression in the Institute's designation as the Council of Europe's European Information and Documentation Centre for the Improvement of History and Geography Textbooks – an accolade that came after the award to Georg Eckert of the F.V.S. European Prize of the F.V.S. foundation. This new purpose turned the ISBI into 'the control centre connecting historical research, pedagogy and textbook production'⁵⁸, for Europe and beyond. The numerous conferences, the textbook exchanges and the distribution of the *Internationales Jahrbuch* and other ISBI materials to hundreds of academic, political and civil society institutions and private individuals endowed the Institute with a reputation that radiated across the globe.

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⁵⁶ Georg Eckert to Burian (official at the Federal Ministry of the Interior responsible for funding the Institute's Europe-related projects), 19 March 1958. NLA. Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel 143 N, Zg. 2009/069, no. 178/2.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ 'Das Schulbuchinstitut ist die Schaltzentrale', *Braunschweiger Zeitung*, 4 February 1971.

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