

THE THIRD WORLD IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Chronology of the long-term project (1985 - 2025)

1985:

During research for the book **Hoch die internationale Solidarität – Die Dritte Welt-Bewegung in der Bundesrepublik** (a history of the Third World movement in the Federal Republic of Germany), the authors of the Rheinisches Journalistenbüro (a collective of freelance journalists) in Cologne realise that the solidarity of people from Third World countries in the fight against the fascist Axis powers in the Second World War is largely ignored in historiography.

1990s:

The staff of the Rheinisches Journalistenbüro decides to always gather information about the role of the Third World in the Second World War when researching current political issues in these countries.

2000:

Research over ten years in 30 countries in Africa, Asia and Oceania yields hundreds of hours of interviews with veterans and contemporary witnesses as well as extensive historical country studies, non-fiction books, novels, archive material, photos and films. In order to complete and analyse the collected materials, the association **recherche international e.V.** is founded and the lengthy search for funding begins. A comprehensive project application is drawn up in several languages.

2003:

After dozens of foundations in Germany and abroad have turned down funding over the course of more than two years, the newly established North Rhine-Westphalia Foundation for Environment and Development approves the application. It allows follow-up research in Asia, in particular on China's role in the Second World War, and in Latin America, as well as the evaluation and summarisation of the research in a book.

2005

The book **Unsere Opfer zählen nicht - Die Dritte Welt im Zweiten Weltkrieg** (Our Victims don't count – The Third World in World War II) is published by *Assoziation A* (Hamburg / Berlin) with 444 pages and 415 photos. It is voted the 'most important non-fiction book of the year' by 25 critics from the press, radio and television. After four hardcover editions, the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* (Federal Agency for Civic Education) publishes several unabridged paperback editions of the book from 2015. The book is still available in 2025 and serves as a catalogue for the exhibition.

2008

In order to give non-European perspectives on the consequences of the Second World War the attention they deserve in schools and universities, *recherche international*, in cooperation with didacticians and educators, produces the teaching materials **Die Dritte Welt im Zweiten Weltkrieg** (The Third World in World War II). A second expanded edition - with a world map of the colonies and colonial powers as well as a CD with original sounds from 32 contemporary witnesses - is published in 2012 (232 pages).

In order to interest a wider public in the topic, work is beginning on the production of a (travelling) exhibition on the subject.

2009

The May/June issue of the internationalist magazine *iz3w* features a thematic focus on **Nazi collaborators in the Third World** and their German apologists.

On 1 September, the 70th anniversary of the start of the war in Europe, the **exhibition** *The Third World in World War II* had its premiere in Berlin.

In addition to a large version of the exhibition, *recherche internationale* is providing two smaller versions with the same content in A1 and A2 for schools and initiatives that do not have sufficiently large rooms.

Although the content of the exhibition had been known to the organizers in Berlin for over a year, the curators from *recherche internationale e.V.* received the news a week before the exhibition premiere that the director of the *Werkstatt der Kulturen der Welt* in Neukölln, where the presentation was to take place, wanted to prevent panels about Arab Nazi collaborators from being exhibited in 'her house' 'by domestic authority'. In order to be able to show the exhibition uncensored, the premiere had to be moved to the *Uferhallen* in Wedding at short notice.

The censorship scandal receives widespread local, national and international media coverage. The opening is already attended by 400 interested people and several thousand follow in the month after. The reactions of the visitors are consistently positive, as can be read in the guestbook from Berlin.

After Berlin, the three different sized versions of the exhibition will be shown in more than 60 locations in Germany and Switzerland until 2025.

2011

As a 'supplement' to the presentation of the exhibition at the VHS Essen, a 90-page special edition of the journal *Südostasien* (3/2011) on 'history and coming to terms with the past in Southeast Asia' is being published

2012

The longest exhibition presentation, lasting seven months, takes place at the Historisches Museum (Historical museum) in Frankfurt am Main. For Anglophone visitors, the museum has the exhibition translated into English and offers English-language brochures for loan.

2016

Excerpts from the English-language version of the exhibition are shown at the *Cinekambiya International Film Festival (CIFF)* in The Gambia, accompanied by a film programme recommended by *recherche internationale*.

2017

In January, a complete English-language exhibition, produced in cooperation with ANC veteran Denis Goldberg, can be sent to South Africa. It premiered at the *Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town* on 28 February.

Further exhibition venues in South Africa are: *Freedom Park in Pretoria*, the *Holocaust & Genocide Centre in Johannesburg*, the *Steve Biko Centre in King Williams Town* and the *Desmond & Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation in Cape Town*. From 2025, the exhibition will be on permanent display at the *Castle Museum in Cape Town*.

2020

Due to the tour in South Africa, people from Mozambique are also interested in the exhibition. With the support of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, recherche international produces a Portuguese version of the exhibition for educational institutions in Mozambique, albeit – due to the Covid pandemic – only as a booklet.

2025

Completion of the long-term project with the presentation of an expanded German version of the exhibition at the *NS-Dokumentationszentrum der Stadt Köln* (Cologne Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism) from 8 March to 1 June. Collaborative events in Freiburg, Hamm, Göttingen, Hamburg, Münster, Wuppertal and Darmstadt.

Release of online versions of the exhibition in German, English, French and Portuguese.

Handover of the recherche international e.V. project archive to the *Archiv für alternatives Schrifttum (afas)* in Duisburg.