

Letter from the Editors

With thanks to Frank Grüner and Ines Prodöhl, who acted as guest editors and who wrote the introductory article, this special issue features contributions by a number of specialists on the history of Harbin in northeast China. After this city was founded in 1898 it quickly became a major symbol of Russian influence in Manchuria. In this issue, Harbin's rich history—in particular its multicultural identity during the first few decades of its existence and the legacy thereof—is approached from various perspectives. Olga Bakich analyses the Sino-Russian pidgin that was spoken in Harbin and that facilitated communication between Russian-speaking and Chinese-speaking residents. Frank Grüner looks at the role that bazaars played with regard to cultural exchanges between the city's diverse inhabitants. In her contribution, Cornelia Knab examines the pneumonic plague that broke out in Manchuria in 1910-11, and its significance for scientific and medical internationalism. And finally, James Carter explores how the material remnants of Harbin's non-Chinese past, while symbols of imperialism, have become a valuable asset for the city today.

We are very proud that this issue features an interview with Jürgen Osterhammel, whose work covers an astonishing range of topics while at the same time being based on rigorous and detailed analysis. The many areas Professor Osterhammel has been working on include colonial and global history, Asian and European early modern and modern history, the history of intercultural relations, history of ideas, and historiographical theory. We are grateful to Andreas Weber and Jos Gommans for conducting the interview and preparing the interview article.

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