

Post-Script

Sharing experiences – the title of this volume is well chosen. In this collection of essays, researchers from the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) and the Bundeswehr Center for Military History and Social Sciences (ZMSBw) “share” insights into the current projects of both institutes.

The book showcases both institutes’ activities and a wide range of topics. But “sharing” also hints at another dimension: All participants of the workshops came into conversation with each other. And besides the different themes and approaches of the papers edited in this volume, there is an overarching pattern: We can discuss and contribute aspects and deliver new insights to each case. We can, for example, talk about the process of how the war in Asia came to an end in 1945. We saw many differences to the end of World War II in Europe – but similarities to Germany in 1918. Researchers from the ZMSBw became keen on the Japanese grand strategy and inner conflicts in the military about how Japan should fight World War II and started to link this with the strategic decision making of Germany and other belligerent powers. Even recent aspects of multinational force design were of interest for both sides. After every workshop, my colleagues and I realized that working with our Japanese friends helps us think “out of the box”.

Hence “sharing” refers to the long-lasting relationship between Japan and Germany and decades, even centuries of “shared histories”, which in its ups, downs and catastrophes are much more closely intertwined than a first glance would suggest. This volume shows the benefit of bringing Japanese and German history, European and Asian history, and current affairs together. On behalf of the ZMSBw (and even personally), I want to thank the contributors and our Japanese partners and friends from the NIDS. Thank you all for “sharing” your ideas. Thank you for your restless activity to bring life to this book. Thank you for providing abundant food of thought. Hence, this work makes us hungry, hungry for more!

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