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978-0-521-88270-5 - Missiles for the Fatherland: Peenemunde, National Socialism, and the V-2 Missile

Michael B. Petersen

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## Missiles for the Fatherland

*Missiles for the Fatherland* tells the story of the scientists and engineers who built the V-2 missile in Hitler's Germany. This is the first scholarly history of the culture and society that underpinned missile development at Germany's secret missile base at Peenemünde. Using mainly primary source documents and publicly available oral history interviews, Michael B. Petersen examines the lives of the men and women who worked at Peenemünde and later at the underground slave labor complex called Mittelbau-Dora. His research reveals a complex interaction of professional ambition, internal cultural dynamics, military pressure, and political coercion, which coalesced in the texture of life at the facility. The interaction of these forces made the rapid development of the V-2 possible but also contributed to an environment in which stunning brutality could be committed against concentration camp prisoners who manufactured the missile.

Michael B. Petersen received his doctorate from the University of Maryland in 2005. He is currently a historian with Science Applications International Corporation, where he writes on intelligence and space history. He has also worked for the Nazi War Crimes and Japanese Imperial Government Records Interagency Working Group (IWG) at the National Archives and Records Administration, where he contributed to a collection of essays on Japanese war crimes records held by the National Archives.

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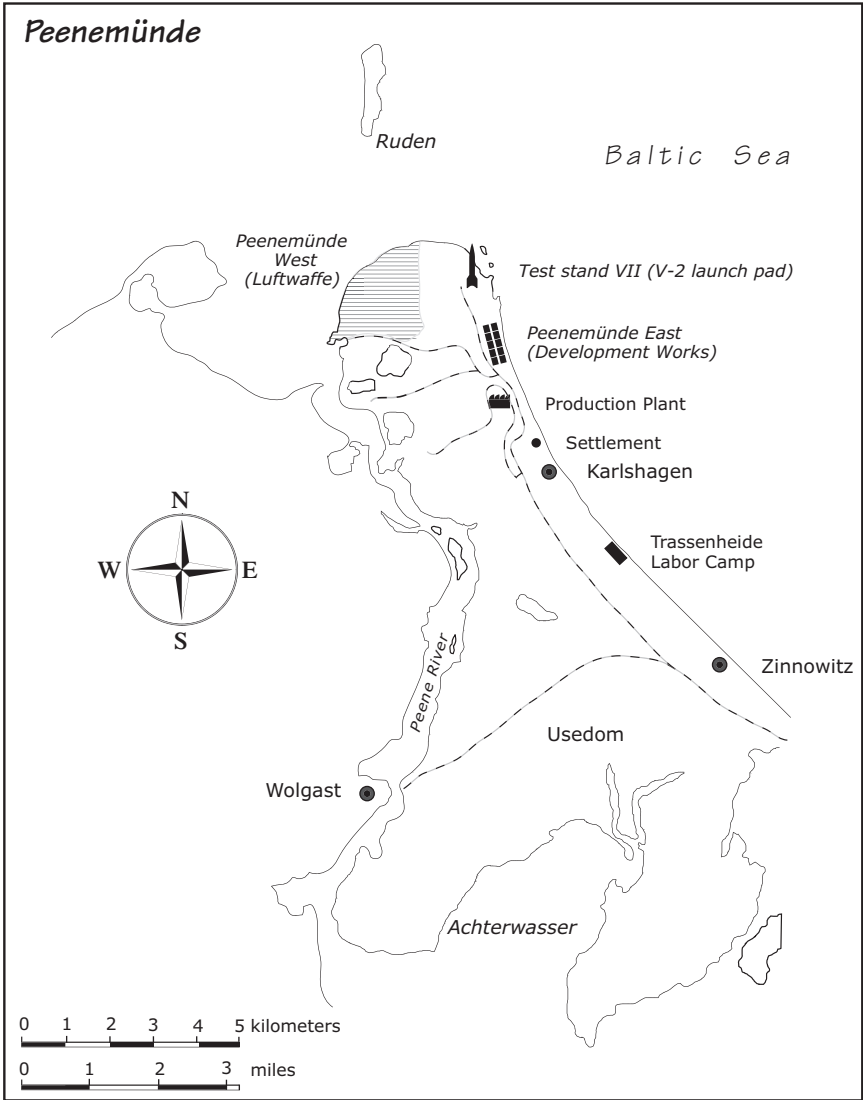
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Frontispiece: Map of Peenemünde missile base, Germany, 1943 (map by John Apinis).

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Michael B. Petersen  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
Introduction: The Community of Innovation and Culture of Consent in the <i>Raketen-Stadt</i>	I
1 “Help Build the Spaceship!”	13
2 “At Peenemünde, They Have Created a Paradise”	48
3 “It Was a Fantastic Life!”	88
4 “Production by Convicts: No Objections”	134
5 “At the Limits of Existence”	160
6 “We Still Had a Fatherland to Fight For”	209
Conclusion: Engineering Consent at Peenemünde	248
<i>Bibliography</i>	257
<i>Index</i>	269

Cambridge University Press  
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Michael B. Petersen  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

List of Illustrations

1. Rocket enthusiasts at the <i>Raketenflugplatz</i> in Reinickendorf, Berlin, 1932	page 32
2. Peenemünde security badges	72
3. Officers' mess hall at Peenemünde	92
4. Peenemünders at the beach, 1943	94
5. A cartoon produced at Peenemünde	97
6. Walter Dornberger	99
7. A-4 test launch, 1943	121
8. Cartoon placards produced in late 1944	189
9. Concentration camp inmates expanding the Mittelwerk tunnel, 1944	192
10. Civilians working with a skilled laborer at Mittelwerk	196
11. Concentration camp prisoners after their liberation, 1945	201
12. Tunnel B in Mittelwerk	204
13. <i>Meilerwagen</i> missile transporter	235
14. Dornberger and von Braun in Reutte, Austria, May 1945	246

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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978-0-521-88270-5 - Missiles for the Fatherland: Peenemunde, National Socialism, and the V-2 Missile

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xii

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