

## The Gas Mask in Interwar Germany

Exploring the history of the gas mask in Germany from 1915 to the eve of World War II, Peter Thompson traces how chemical weapons and protective technologies such as the gas mask produced new relationships to danger, risk, management, and mastery in the modern age of mass destruction. Recounting the apocalyptic visions of chemical death that circulated in interwar Germany, he argues that while everyday encounters with the gas mask tended to exacerbate fears, the mask also came to symbolize debates about the development of military and chemical technologies in the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich. He underscores how the gas mask was tied into the creation of an exclusionary national community under the Nazis and the altered perception of environmental danger in the second half of the twentieth century. As this innovative new history shows, chemical warfare and protection technologies came to represent poignant visions of the German future.

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*Visions of Chemical Modernity*

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Peter Thompson

Michigan State University



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For Alison

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## Abbreviations

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BASF	<i>Badische Anilin und Soda Fabrik</i> (Baden Aniline and Soda Factory)
DChG	<i>Deutsche Chemische Gesellschaft</i> (German Chemical Association)
Degea	<i>Deutsche Gasglühlicht-Aktiengesellschaft</i> (German Gas Light Corporation)
Degesch	<i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Schädlingsbekämpfung</i> (German Company for Pest Control)
KRA	<i>Kriegsrohstoffabteilung</i> (German War Raw Materials Department)
KWG	<i>Kaiser Wilhelm Gesellschaft</i> (Kaiser Wilhelm Society)
KWI	<i>Kaiser Wilhelm Institut für physikalische Chemie und Elektrochemie</i> (Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physical and Electrochemistry)
KWKW	<i>Kaiser Wilhelm Stiftung für kriegstechnische Wissenschaft</i> (Kaiser Wilhelm Foundation for the Sciences of Military Technology)
MICC	Military Inter-Allied Control Commission
MPG	<i>Max Planck Gesellschaft</i> (Max Planck Society)
OHL	<i>Oberste Heeresleitung</i> (German Military High Command)
RLB	<i>Reichsluftschutzbund</i> (Reich Air Protection League)
TASCH	<i>Technischer Ausschuss für Schädlingsbekämpfung</i> (Technical Committee for Pest Control)
VDCh	<i>Verein Deutscher Chemiker</i> (The German Chemists Association)
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom