



Upcoming book about the fascinating life and works and times of **Kurt Baschwitz (1886-1968)**. Post-war founder of the influential cluster of journalism education and communication research at Amsterdam university, and a major pioneer of mass and media psychology. As well as a key figure in the first emerging European and global networks in these same fields. (In English and Dutch, Jan. 2018).

It was a century ago, that a young Jewish-German journalist rushed overnight from Hamburg to Rotterdam, to replace a predecessor correspondent who had been arrested and accused of espionage – halfway he First World War. Baschwitz was appalled by the mass propaganda he witnessed, and began to develop a book about ‘mass delusions’ - that became an immediate bestseller upon his return. Thereafter, he became a respected journalist, rose to become the editor-in-chief of he influential weekly of newspaper publishers, later published a book about the key role of the mass press in history. But with the coming to power of Hitler, he was fired as an opponent and a Jew, fled to Amsterdam, where he published another book about the dangers of mass politics – a kind of warning against things to come. In these books, he developed a range of concepts that preceded notions similar to ‘opinion leadership’ and ‘cognitive dissonance reduction’ – later made famous through Americans like Festinger, Katz and Lazarsfeld.

In Amsterdam, Baschwitz was made ‘private lecturer’ at the university, worked for a confidential agency gathering information about the rise of Anti-semitism in Germany: resulting in the ‘Wiener collection’, and the current Holocaust Museum in London. And then for a new Institute for Social History that smuggled out the papers and archives of Marx and Engels, Bakunin and Kropotkin, and other socialist luminaries. Halfway the war and occupation, Baschwitz was arrested in a raid, sent to the notorious Westerbork transit camp, for deportation to the East and certain death. But his daughter procured him papers that got him out for the time being. He then went into hiding, whereas the daughter and her brother joined the resistance. Baschwitz set to work on a series of books about mass persecutions.

After Liberation, Baschwitz was finally made professor, and helped found the new faculty for political and social science in Amsterdam. Within it, he built a series of key institutions: a rejuvenated press museum, a national press library and a press studies department, as well as journalist courses and polling research. He also got former German and other foreign colleagues to join a first international society for ‘publicistics’, founded the scholarly journal *Gazette*, and ultimately helped the worldwide International Association for Mass Communication Research come about.

The biography was researched and developed by Jaap van Ginneken, who started out as a student and assistant of what was then called ‘The Baschwitz Institute’. He has since published two dozen books on related subjects, in both English and Dutch. The complete English academic version will be published by Amsterdam University Press, a simplified Dutch version by AMB. (Contact: jaapvanginneken@free.fr).