

**Title: The Prussian Primate Research Station in Tenerife: its complex origins and remarkable achievements.**

**Abstract:** The island of Tenerife, the largest of the Spanish Canary islands, is off the northwest coast of Africa, in the mid atlantic ocean. Nowadays Tenerife is chiefly known as a major European tourist resort. However due to its non-polluted atmosphere and Mount Tieda's elevation, it is a major site for European astronomical research, particularly on sunspots. Further it is well known for being the site where Wolfgang Köhler undertook his research on the role of cognition in primate behaviour in 1913. The impact of this work had an immediate effect on research on neural mechanisms of behaviour, and paved the way for the creation of a new branch of cognitive neuroscience.

The end of the nineteenth century had seen an ever expanding amount of research in the anatomical and physiological sciences on the identification of the central neural pathways in the brain involved with the cortical control of movement and vision. To this end the use of primate models gained increasing attention at the beginning of the twentieth century, and thought to be a major impetus behind the establishment of the Tenerife Primate Station.

The historical origins of the the primate research station in Tenerife (1912 - 1920) are, however far more complex than is commonly realized. Although the Primate Station in Tenerife is widely known for Köhler's experiments, the Research Station was founded in 1912 by Max Rothmann, a distinguished comparative neuro-anatomist at the University of Berlin, with the financial support and sponsorship of the Prussian Academy of Sciences.

The present paper will evaluate six topics: **(a)** the interesting change in the sudden availability of funding after the initial rejection of the proposal by the Academy of Sciences. **(b)** the circumstances and urgent appointment in 1913 of Eugen Teuber as the founding director of the Station. He was a graduate student without a thesis topic. **(c)** Teuber's remarkable achievements in establishing the Station as well as in research **(d)** Köhler's later appointment and activities at the Station **(e)** As Köhler was an active reserve Naval Officer. During the Great War (1914-1918), was he also a naval intelligence agent for Prussia in Tenerife? **(f)** the role of serendipity in all of these events.

