
**Reviewed by Joyce Marie Mushaben, Political Science, University of Missouri-St. Louis**

Known for her work on the incorporation of newly enfranchised easterners into the all-German political system, Louise Davidson-Schmich goes national with her new book on party recruitment strategies and electoral mechanisms. A number of years in the making (but worth the wait), this text focuses on Germany as an “early adopter” of gender quotas dating back to the 1980s; it utilizes a pathway-case research design to explore the impact of diverse, internal quota mechanisms across the political spectrum. The ability to investigate their potential impact at national, state, and local levels in major and minor parties supplies a kind of living laboratory for assessing changing elite behaviors and concept diffusion over multiple decades.

Supplying a compelling blend of qualitative and quantitative elements, Davidson-Schmich integrates theoretical and empirical concerns, all of which she manages to present in a refreshingly jargon-free manner. Her sources include a wide array of federal, state and party data-bases, combined with 465 responses (by mail) to her self-designed Candidate Interest Survey and roughly forty personal, in-depth interviews with state and local party actors. Consisting of the highest-ranking male and female executive board members tied to the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Greens and the Free Democratic Party (FDP), her interview sample speaks to quality of the preliminary field research and networking she has invested in this project. Indeed, this text could be used to introduce students in social science courses to the value of a “mixed
methods” approach, while highlighting the crucial role of foreign language skills in comparative research. The appendices supply an English translation of her questionnaire and a summary of her descriptive statistics. Curiously absent from the Table of Contents is a detailed listing of more than fifty-two tables and figures for quick reference. While scholars already familiar with German Quotierung debates might find the book a bit repetitive at times, the author’s frequent summaries will no doubt be useful to students less likely to read the book in only one or two sittings.

Following a model developed by Richard E. Matland and Kathleen A. Montgomery (exploring women’s access to political office in post socialist systems after 1989), Davidson-Schmich disaggregates the stages and actors involved in candidate recruitment, nomination, and election processes under diverse party requirements. The core argument runs as follows: quota systems of various kinds have pushed parties to seek out women for party-internal leadership positions, grooming them for successful electoral runs to a degree not seen among (self-selecting) men. In numerical terms (descriptive representation), women’s physical presence in European legislative chambers has increased dramatically, compared to the United States, where women are not expected to reach parity in Congress until 2117.

German quota mechanisms are still a long way from bringing about substantive representation, however. The latter would routinize efforts to ensure the balanced participation of women and men in all facets of political life, by reconfiguring a persistently unequal gender division of labor at home, for starters. Quotas alone “have been unable to spur equal numbers of women and men to join political parties and to aspire to elective office in the first place” (4). Women continue to face a variety of socially constructed, environmental barriers (e.g., the double burden), rendering them unwilling and/or unable to develop the extra, male-normed qualifications deemed necessary for nomination. This remains one of the biggest impediments to women’s ability to bring their own needs, interests, and policy preferences directly to the legislative table, irrespective of class, ethnicity, and other factors.

The text consists of an introduction and five substantive chapters, the first of which picks up the theme of “missing mechanisms,” looking to disaggregate the multilevel nature and stages of the political recruitment process. For readers interested in gender issues but lacking background in German politics, this section provides a useful primer on the main parties and the country’s complex “personalized proportional” electoral system. Chapter 2 compares demographic factors and background traits among male and female party members who comprise the class of “Eligibles”
likely to enter the candidate pool. The third chapter draws on the author’s interviews with party executives, sorting out the factors that motivate or impede women’s political engagement. The first task of “Aspirants,” individuals sufficiently motivated to run for office, is to demonstrate loyalty and engagement to party gatekeepers, usually by taking on jobs that other members avoid, e.g., taking minutes as local party secretaries and plastering neighborhoods with campaign posters, no matter how miserable the weather. They are also expected to develop substantive policy knowledge, public speaking skills, and visibility vis-à-vis potential voters. Because these “qualifications” require a lot of time and more unpaid work, it is easy to see why women are politically stymied by a persistently unequal division of domestic labor.

Chapter 4 centers on the paradoxical role of “Gatekeepers,” under increasing pressure to meet party-specific quota requirements while complying with federally mandated nomination rules. Their searches commence at the grassroots level, where women are often in short supply, particularly in light of declining party memberships across the board. Given gatekeepers’ vested interest in having their candidates win, they have been forced to overcome their own prejudices in identifying ambitious women and grooming them for party leadership positions—a launching pad for elective offices at higher levels. Gatekeepers hoping to fill near-parity quotas are more likely to accord women winnable positions on the list-ballot, giving them certain advantages over larger numbers of men who deem themselves qualified to compete. In chapter 5, Davidson-Schmich reports on findings derived from her Candidate Interest Survey, comparing nomination experiences among candidates and elected officials across five different Länder.

Describing the outcomes to date as a case of “the glass half full,” Davidson-Schmich finds that quotas have helped to increase women’s physical presence in political decision-making bodies, though not in equal measure across the parties. The “threshold at which quotas acquire ‘teeth’” (235) depends a lot on whether they are binding (as opposed to voluntary), and whether the quantitative goals they set approach parity. Employing “the zipper principle” (alternating female and male candidates, ensuring close to 50 percent), the Greens have registered the most progress to date, followed by the SPD, aiming for 40 percent. Lower targets, such as the CDU’s 33 percent quorum, convey the illusion of greater opportunity for female candidates but do not guarantee them secure ballot slots. Not surprisingly, the two parties that have eschewed quotas the longest, the Christian Social Union (CSU, until 2010) and the FDP (still resisting), evince the smallest share of female delegates at all levels.
In addition to demonstrating the critical significance of informal norms and channels at the earliest stages of recruitment, this text pinpoints two unanticipated consequences of quotas that complicate the pursuit of substantive representation. Over time, the diffusion effect (coupled with generational change) has clearly chipped away at the “token” status initially attributed to women who entered politics through the 1980s and 1990s. Local and regional party sections that fail to meet their own goals may be subject to “shame and blame” not only by their female executives and women’s committees but also by various “watchdogs” like NGOs, media outlets and partisan opponents. Correspondingly, even the most resistant parties have seen more female members throwing their hats into the electoral ring. Davidson-Schmich does not elaborate on the “role model” effect implicit in Angela Merkel’s three-term reign.

More important than formal adherence to self-imposed proportion rules is the extent to which quotas have triggered changes in the attitudes, behaviors and recruitment strategies of powerful party gatekeepers. They have been forced to re-evaluate old selection criteria long rooted in the traditional Ochsentour, requiring years of slogging one’s way through a long chain of party institutions and functions requiring a number of decades. Gatekeepers have gradually recognized that women’s domestic and care-giving obligations lie at the root of their inability to accrue unbroken records of engagement, which used to serve as the ultimate test of party loyalty. Their search for ambitious, “winning” women has moreover impelled them to look beyond the usual occupational pools (professional, business, or sports associations) and to offer effective training and mentoring programs that have also been known to benefit men (221).

The author’s intriguing description of the “elevator effect” holds important lessons for all quota fans. Gender-unfriendly climates and a dearth of female members at the local level tend to catapult women of true grit and ambition into party leadership positions at higher levels, enhancing their prospects for nomination as candidates. Comprising an elite group, these women advance quickly without fundamentally changing the cultures they (understandably) hasten to leave behind; this holds deleterious consequences for those hoping to achieve substantive representation, that is, ensuring that a wide spectrum of female values, interests, and needs are actually incorporated into decision-making processes.

Another logical yet not so obvious finding might be dubbed the “location effect.” Geography and the degree of urbanization contribute to disproportionate male control over candidacies, qualifications and issues: the less densely populated and (presumably) more rural the community, the less
likely local party officers are to comply with even self-imposed quota requirements. The relative share of successful female aspirants who are sent to represent Germany’s smallest towns and villages under the banner of quota-less parties “has hardly budged since the mid-1980s” (224). Control of local party meetings, agendas and nominations remains a source of status and power for “long-winded, self-promoting” males whose discourse favors “verbosity and pomposity” over inclusive substance; this explains vicious cycles of male domination in Bavaria (CSU) and other agrarian Länder, where recent policies meliorating the gendered division of labor have not yet filtered down. Sparsely settled regions are less likely to offer child- or elder-care, due to a lack of concentrated demand; it is also harder to outsource farm-based domestic burdens to professional services (e.g., tending animals versus house-cleaning). Women find better participatory opportunities at higher levels, but their exit from local chapters makes it easier for male-dominated party cultures to keep reproducing themselves.

I concur that it will nonetheless “take more than free time to attract women to parties” (230). The dilemma is that while quotas have indeed rendered formal and informal opportunity structures much more inclusive, women must now avoid being sucked into the vortex of Politik- und Parteiverdrossenheit (political and party vexation). Scary populist currents notwithstanding, Germany currently affords more strong female role models in national positions, has voters who evince a greater appreciation for “government” and conducts significantly less misogynist election campaigns than those we continue to witness in the U.S. The conclusion offers concrete recommendations for recasting and demasculinizing nomination procedures, e.g., allowing would-be candidates to offer sample, policy-focused stump speeches instead of compelling female candidates to “sell” their qualifications for office. It also notes ways in which her methodology might be deployed by future researchers in other national settings.

Davidson-Schmich demonstrates not only a profound understanding of German electoral processes and party dynamics but also an impressive familiarity with the gender and politics literature that has shaped the field both in Europe and the United States. In this respect, she outshines many of her contemporaries who undertake broadly comparative studies without attending to the role of informal power bases and particularistic party cultures. Although it was written by a scholar who entered the field a decade after unification, I have learned a great deal from this book; having spent 35 years of my own career looking for ways to secure the “balanced participation of women and men” in political decision-making, this is the highest compliment I know how to pay.
including Bradley Naranch’s introduction, this anthology, which consists of 18 contributions from prominent and emerging historians of modern Germany, exemplifies the vitality of research on German colonialism that has surfaced over the past 15 years. It covers the 100-year history of Germany as, in Bradley Naranch’s words, an “expansion-oriented imperial state” (4) from imagining unification in the 1840s to National Socialism. Despite its title, this collection deals not only with colonialism as territorial control and/or settlement but also imperialism and empire in the broadest sense from the migration of Germans globally, to the informal economic penetration of Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia, to (finally) the Nazi occupation of eastern Europe. It also explores a broad range of topics through which the contributors probe the depths of global and imperial imaginings in German politics, society, and culture. Although most chapters concentrate on Imperial Germany, this collection implicitly addresses the ongoing debate regarding the links between Imperial Germany as “empire” and that of the Third Reich. In Geoff Eley’s words, the “genealogies of Nazism” (39) make little sense apart from the “connective dynamics” of periods that preceded it. Nation and empire-building went hand in hand.

It is difficult to do justice to each chapter in this brief review. Yet, as a whole, this collection stands out for its analytically and conceptually rich contributions. It includes George Steinmetz on the complex cultural fields and variations in individual opportunities that informed sociologists’ approach to colonialism; Deborah Neill on tropical medicine as the instrument of the German “civilizing mission,” even after Germany was stripped of its colonies after World War I; Andrew Zimmerman on agricultural science and labor regulation as crucial to dominating colonial spaces; Heike Schmidt on “honor” and “propriety” as articulated in court cases as the linchpins of colonial German masculinity; and Klaus Mühlmann on the German colony of Qingdao and its departure from the “classical” colonial model of territorial control (Klaus Mühlhahn). Jennifer Jenkins presents the fascinating story of Germans in Iran and the emergence of a national consciousness among a seemingly incompatible group of experts, migrants, and refugees, while Sebastian Conrad argues that global integration through imperialism shaped the racialization and attempted colonization of Prussian Poland. Other chapters zero in on the domestic social impact of empire. Jeff Bowersox analyzes the role of geography in elementary and secondary
schools in normalizing empire and its core concept—racial difference—while David Ciarlo explores the “commercialization of politics” through the mass marketing of colonial fantasies, which grew especially prominent during the Herero war in Southwest Africa between 1904 and 1907. John Phillip Short acknowledges that the Social Democratic Party was susceptible to Germany’s claims to a global and imperial status, yet his analysis of popular Social Democratic anticolonialism during the Herero War complicates oversimplified assessments of the party leadership. The links between colonialism and imperialism among Germany’s antisemitic parties, argues Christian Davis, were mixed. Advocating colonialism simultaneously boosted their political clout as political antisemitism declined, but ironically it generated internal strife in the process. After World War I, as Brett van Hoesner shows, visual images conveyed postcolonial fears of “reverse colonialization” when France used its colonial troops to occupy the Rhineland.

Despite its historical scope, *German Colonialism* suggests discontinuities as well as connections, to which the following examples attest. Dirk Bönker’s analysis of German and American naval strategy before World War I finds common ground between keeping sea lanes open to preserve global commerce, unlike more radical British blockade plans targeted especially against Germany. Imperial Germany adhered to international law while Nazism did not. Dennis Sweeney’s chapter on the Pan-German League, argues that its racist and biological definition of imperial space, which fused a blue water and continental imperium, subsequently entered the discourse the right. Yet as Birthe Kundrus suggests in the anthology’s last chapter, National Socialism granted more importance to continental *Lebensraum* and the extermination of the Jews than colonialism or empire per se. Instead, she makes the case for Nazism’s departure from 19th and 20th century empires. Nazism, she suggests, was “imperialistic” without being “imperial,” for instead of creating a poly-ethnic and multireligious entity, it sought *völkisch* homogeneity. At most it was, in the words of Frederick Cooper (343), a “would-be empire.” Kundrus is undoubtedly right about the nature of *Lebensraum* in the east. Yet, in addition to the east’s being a target of German colonization, German rule, however vicious, did not achieve such extremes in other parts of occupied Europe. Might “empire” or “imperialism” apply in those cases?

To sum up, this collection provides excellent examples of the recent reexamination of imperialism and colonialism in modern German history. In addition to illustrating the variety of ways that the “expansionist-oriented imperial state” influenced many Germans, it forces readers to once more confront questions of continuity and rupture in the German past.
Europe’s Contending Identities is an ambitious and timely volume featuring work by leading scholars in the field. The point of departure for the analyses presented is the prospect of a collective European identity supportive of the increasingly supranational European polity. The chapters in the volume are divided into four substantive sections, each focusing on particular issues surrounding the possibility of such an identity. Although the contents of each section are fairly disparate—addressing inter alia issues of regionalism, nationalism, and religion—they are arranged logically and each builds on the previous section. The introductory remarks are rich and multifaceted and warrant the diversity of the contributions. By triangulating a vast array of evidence at several units of analysis, this volume offers novel insight into perhaps the most fundamental issue in European Union politics, and suggests considerable possibilities for future researchers.

The editors begin with the premise that a collective European identity is necessary to facilitate European-level policymaking and engender a “true political community” (7). In Chapter 1, Anthony Messina suggests that a more robust European political community might militate against the Euroskepticism, apathy, and “economic utilitarianism” currently afflicting the project of European integration. A host of obstacles are presented that impede greater integration, including divergent understandings of European history among European Union (EU) member states and lack of a common language. These and other issues are reaffirmed as considerable in the volume’s concluding pages. In the interim, however, three dominant streams in contemporary scholarship—pertaining to ethnoregionalism, Muslim immigrant integration, and a “new nationalism”—are interrogated to provide insight on the prospects for “an ever closer union” given these many impediments. Incorporating these diverse literatures within a single volume is a considerable accomplishment. The theoretical richness of the introductory and concluding chapters serve to tether the intervening sections to the central research topic, and adequately compensate for any insularity imposed by including several largely disconnected scholarly traditions.

The first section builds on the introductory chapter by examining Europeans’ propensity to identify with their individual nation-states as well as with Europe itself. The two chapters in this section by Jack Citrin and
Matthew Wright and Messina both stress the difficulties associated with extending the frontiers of European integration into social and political realms. Although the propensity for Europeans to identify with Europe in addition to their nation-state has increased, national identity enjoys considerable staying power (Chapter 2). Both have obvious political relevance, as Chapter 2 also suggests mass publics are resistant to EU authority with respect to national culture and language. This observation is furthered by Messina’s observation that the politicization of Europe is largely carried out in the language of the radical right. Chapter 3 also telegraphs the importance of regional parties and increasingly diverse publics for the development of a supranational political identity.

Digging within the nation-state, the second section considers the interaction of regional politics and political parties with European-level institutions, finding evidence of an “anti-state alliance” between sub- and supranational institutions (232; Chapters 4 and 5), though one of questionable durability (Chapter 6). That is, to the extent that ethnoregional parties, like the Scottish SNP consider independence “within Europe” a viable option and are successful in relaying that position to their constituents, subnational and supranational interests align (Chapter 4). Generally, the processes of devolution and European integration are mutually reinforcing as ethnoterritorial parties become credible players in both regional governments and the European Parliament (Chapter 5). In contrast, Chapter 6 suggests an ephemerality to this partnership, implying a fragmented quality to any collective identity formed by European-level regional representation, reflective of the ideological diversity within the regional party family. With its exclusive focus on regional parties and their supporters, Part II of the volume is the most internally unified. Given the different foci and conclusions of this section’s contributors, there are clear avenues for future scholarship.

The third section considers the impacts of Muslim immigration to Europe after World War II, with analyses of voters, parties, and elites. The first two chapters by William Miller and Asifa Hussain and Marco Cinnirella and Saira Hamilton are trained on the United Kingdom. In the former, Scottish survey respondents are shown to have more exclusive attitudes against Muslim (Pakistani) immigrants than against English immigrants, but also persistent Anglophobia in other areas and the two measures are correlated. That exclusive Scottish national identity “increases phobias” (168) dovetails with findings from Part I of the volume. Similarly, in Chapter 8, British nationality negatively predicts identification with Europe among white Britons, but that impact is absent for Asian migrants. In both cases the importance of an “historic” other is evident. Chapter 7 also indi-
icates the importance of education in predicting Islamophobic attitudes, which is consistent with other literature on attitudes toward European integration, including literature on the radical right parties examined in the next section.

Unlike the first two chapters in this section, Andrew Gould considers the opinion leaders cited by Muslim elites in Portugal, Spain, and Ireland, and finds evidence that European figures are cited as often as non-European Muslims, although Islamists are also frequently cited as influential. This is taken to be evidence of a European identity developing from within a community of European Muslims, at least in part. Taken together, Part III is noteworthy for the ambivalent picture it paints of immigrant integration in Europe. There is also a clear shortcoming with respect to the generalizability of analyses in this section, given that the focus on the British Isles and Iberia leaves much of Europe untouched.

The final section considers two issues related to “new nationalism:” the rise of far right populism and European enlargement. Although each of these topics warrants (and has received) extended consideration elsewhere, for the purposes of this project they neatly relate the question of European identity to the institutions of the EU itself. Chapter 9 recounts how the election of the far right counterintuitively facilitated passage of the EU’s racial equality directive, despite restrictive immigration policies adopted at the national level (the latter in keeping with Chapter 3). This institutionalized repudiation of racism, along with the political-economic trajectories discussed in Chapter 10, suggest a particular character to European institutions, perhaps indicative of a nascent European identity. These two chapters also highlight considerable tension between domestic policy preferences and those promoted supranationally.

A difficulty with this volume is one associated with any work that deals with contemporary politics—it is harder to hit a moving target. The volume itself was published in 2014, but many of the papers come from before 2009 (Preface). Although there are references throughout to the Eurozone crisis, much of these analyses should be reconsidered as the numerous crises besetting Europe wear on. Other shortcomings seem entirely due to the enormity of the problem posed. After the volume is read, the principles on which a European identity might be founded remain (admittedly) nebulous. This is only a shadow of a criticism, given the importance, complexity, and scope of the topic, but a more thorough treatment would have improved this already impressive contribution.
This companion could not have arrived at a more auspicious moment as people around the world are celebrating the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther’s protest in the form of 95 theses. Our world seems steeped anew in protest – from “PEGIDA” to “Ende Gelände” in Germany to “NOKXL” and “NODAPL” protests organized by the climate movement in the U.S. to the unprecedented participation by millions of Americans in “women’s marches” on the day after President Donald Trump’s inauguration. At the same time Donald Trump and his supporters claim themselves to be a protest movement against the political/media establishment. Although we think of protest typically as a movement against something, it can of course also be in support of something, as T.V. Reed points out in his entry to this volume: “protest, as the prefix ‘pro’ suggests, can also be presentational, putting forth a positive alternative or creative vision” (77).

It seems that the time is ripe for more careful scholarly examination of protest culture, and the current volume with its stock-taking of scholarly achievements and desiderata invites that and offers at the same time “both a theoretical and methodological introduction into the scholarly analysis of protest cultures” (1). The editors, who themselves are coming from work on the labor and student movements of the 1960s and 1970s, favor a cultural studies approach, which serves to make this volume a uniquely rich trove of investigation and open questions that one does not typically find juxtaposed.

The work is the result of an “international, transdisciplinary research network with more than 250 affiliated researchers from over 35 countries” (2). It is arranged as a reference work more than an anthology, beginning with Perspectives on Protest, followed by four parts about the Morphology of Protest: Constructing Reality, Media, Domains of Protest Actions, and Re-Presentation of Protest, and concluding with three parts about The Pragmatics of Protest: Protest Practices, Reactions to Protest Actions, and Long-Term Consequences.

With a total of 57 brief entries of 6 to 16 pages in length it covers a wide and diverse set of issues from the various dimensions of social movements to artistic/media expressions to fashion, cyberspace, civil disobedience, suppression of protest, as well as gender roles and clandestinity, narrative, insult and devaluation, or political correctness, to name only a few. Although
Jana Günther’s entry on “Protest as Symbolic Politics” (48–64) for example mentions protest by individuals like Henry David Thoreau, the volume is primarily concerned with collective protests by social movements. The entries follow a systematic pattern. A closer look at one representative example shall serve to illustrate: Kathrin Fahlenbrach’s entry about “Protest as a Media Phenomenon” begins with a careful definition of medium/media, followed by a clarification of protest communication with the help of Harry Pross’s model of primary, secondary, and tertiary media of communication. She then goes on to provide a “specific phenomenological distinction between different aspects of mass media and online media in protest communication” (97) with the help of four dimensions: institutions, technologies, semiotic systems, and products. In the second section, Fahlenbrach provides a historical overview of the development of the “Role of Protest as a Media Phenomenon in Culture and in Protest Culture” (100). This is followed by a section on “Research Perspectives” (104) in which she summarizes, evaluates and contrasts the findings of the relevant studies. She concludes with a section on “Research Gaps” (107), which lists missing systematic approaches, implications, and areas of growing interest and importance culminating in her call for “more interdisciplinary research, combining approaches and methods from sociology, history, media and cultural studies, and humanities” (108). Each entry ends with a short author bio, followed by detailed notes and a list of “Recommended Readings.”

The book is too densely packed with information to read through leisurely unless you enjoy reading dictionary entries. Indeed, at times, it feels as though it could have been edited a bit more stringently, for example, when authors explain what seems intuitive—“Outdoor protests differ from indoor protests” (29). Another question is whether the volume could not have benefitted from a simpler (for example alphabetical) structure. But, there is no question that this volume is a required purchase for any reference library. It should also serve any scholar from any discipline well who is in search of a new project, and it will be an extremely useful reference work for courses on social movements. Indeed, one of its particular strengths lies in the fact that it presents its content in a way that is accessible to both uninitiated undergraduates and advanced scholars, especially those interested in breaking new interdisciplinary ground. Many entries build on seminal work by Charles Tilly, Jürgen Habermas, Pierre Bourdieu, Walther Benjamin and others, and the authors take care to situate their assessments in that larger theoretical context. The index provided is very helpful, as are the illustrations. It would have been nice to have an alphabetical list of the referenced literature, or alternatively an author index as well.
Book Reviews

As protest culture seems to spread into the mainstream not only in Western societies it is high time that it receives the scholarly attention it deserves. After all, Luther’s is not the only example of protest radically changing the course of history. As Dieter Rucht reminds us: “quite a number of constitutional rights as well as various contemporary political parties have their origins in social movement struggles” (27). Although Paul G. Nixon and Rajash Rawal claim in their entry entitled “Cyberspace” that “protest is a human activity” (303), in times of social bots influencing election results, the role of the internet and artificial intelligence in new forms of protest will no doubt change even some of the foundational notions of protest in the years ahead.

This volume definitely provides an important starting point: It helps explain how different protest movements construct their own reality, use media in novel ways, organize actions across all spheres of public life, and involve various representations, their very own language, as well as different forms of rule breaking. And it repeatedly reminds us how much work there still is to be done—how little we actually know about why and how protest occurs. One desideratum that is frequently mentioned, for example, is the lack of studies on female protesters. Although many of the issues presented are universal in nature, and non-Western protests like Mahatma Gandhi’s salt march are mentioned (see Matthias Reiss’ “Street Protest,” 355) there is certainly room to expand the examination to protest cultures outside the West as well.


Reviewed by Stephen Milder, European Languages and Cultures, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen

In his prize-winning book, The Weimar Century, Dartmouth historian Udi Greenberg shows the importance of political theories developed during the Weimar Republic for the foundations of West German democracy and the development of the Cold War world order. Analyzing the ideas and mapping the career trajectories of five Weimar thinkers who emigrated to the United States during the Nazi dictatorship, Greenberg challenges the common wisdom that the United States took a fundamentally American approach to world affairs after 1945. Likewise, he argues that the ideas that
these thinkers began developing in the 1920s and 1930s underpinned democracy in the postwar Federal Republic of Germany.

Greenberg’s book is well structured and his main arguments are made clearly and repeatedly throughout the text. Each of the book’s five chapters is devoted to one of the five émigrés, detailing the origins of his theories in the embattled Weimar Republic and following his rise to influence in the United States during and after World War II. A brief conclusion assesses the rise and fall of the émigrés’ influence as a whole.

Greenberg’s émigrés are an interesting group. Loosely linked on account of their shared hopes for the success of Weimar democracy, these thinkers were pushed into exile when the Nazis rose to power. Though the trajectories their lives followed were similar, the émigrés moved in different intellectual circles, ranging from Catholic personalism to social democratic legal theory.

Even within their respective Weimar intellectual groupings, however, four of Greenberg’s five thinkers dissented from the mainstream. Carl Friedrich rejected leading Protestants’ unease with democracy. Ernst Fraenkel formulated a socialist legal theory that emphasized individual rights. Waldemar Gurian dissented from personalism by proposing that democracy could defend Catholic rights. Karl Loewenstein rejected mainstream liberal thinkers’ unwillingness to promote democracy by force. Though all four were democrats, their support for democracy was tempered by their distrust of certain aspects of liberal democracy and motivated particularly by a shared emphasis on anticommunism. Ironically, Greenberg points out, that latter motivation underpinned the Federal Republic of Germany’s democratic order despite its parallels to Nazi thought. In contrast to these four thinkers’ deep-seated anticommunism, Greenberg portrays their support for democracy as pragmatic. Rather than extolling universal participation or governance by the people as such, they saw democracy—to paraphrase Winston Churchill—as the least bad form of government, and as the only available bulwark against the destruction of the rights of particular groups and individuals under communist rule.

Though his life followed a similar trajectory, Greenberg sets Hans Morgenthau, the final émigré he describes, apart from the other four in three ways. First, Morgenthau is not portrayed as a dissenting member of a particular, well-defined intellectual circle; second Greenberg sees Morgenthau’s anticommunism as less fundamental to his ideas about democracy; and third, Greenberg emphasizes the fact that Morgenthau alone eventually challenged the fundament of the Cold War world order by becoming a vocal critic of the U.S. war in Vietnam. These traits are linked, since it was
Morgenthau’s willingness to differentiate amongst communisms and his belief that moral motives could play a meaningful role even within the sphere of international power politics that caused him to criticize American intervention in Vietnam. Morgenthau’s unique position is emphasized further in the book’s conclusion, where Greenberg posits that the émigrés’ influence was concentrated in the late 1940s and 1950s as the new West German state was formed and the Cold War order took shape. This influence is well documented throughout the book: while Friedrich created academic institutions like Harvard University’s School of Public Administration that trained a new generation of bureaucratic elites, Fraenkel served in the U.S. occupation of Korea and helped to write the Korean constitution. Gurian helped build up Sovietology as an academic discipline in the United States and promoted the U.S. as an ally to European Catholics. Loewenstein, who played a key role in the Emergency Advisory Committee for Political Defense, is singled out for criticism by Greenberg since his “hysterical” (192) defense of democracy led to the internment and eventual deportation of thousands of innocent civilians throughout the Americas.

But, despite their postwar influence, Greenberg concludes, by the 1960s, the émigrés had, as a group, become “symbols of a disgraced order” (257) that was challenged by a new wave of protest movements—only Morgenthau managed to wield influence amongst both the founders of the Cold War world order and its 1960s critics. Since the Cold War endured for another three decades, however, the émigrés’ ideas hardly disappeared with the advent of the antiwar movement. Probing this fall from grace, and exploring the consequences of building up democracy—in West Germany and elsewhere—on the basis of theories that espoused democracy out of largely pragmatic motives would add heft to Greenberg’s proclamation of a Weimar Century by prompting further consideration of the significance of Weimar’s influences on the Cold War world. Likewise, Greenberg’s well-documented claims about the émigrés’ influence in postwar Germany could be strengthened by some consideration of the relationship between these particular thinkers’ prominence and the circumstances in Central Europe after the war. To name just one example, Germany’s postwar division, which is hardly mentioned in the text, both gave West German anticommunists a natural foil and greatly enhanced the role of Catholic political thought in the Federal Republic. It stands to reason that other theorists and other ideas may have been more persuasive in a united Germany.

By describing the vibrancy of Weimar era debates on democracy and carefully mapping the impressive influence of a handful of the failed republic’s dissenting democratic theorists, Greenberg has succeeded in exposing
important roots of postwar Germany’s democratization and revising our perspective on the “American Century.” His clearly written and well-argued book is essential reading for those interested in the ideas that shaped democracy’s career in Europe after 1945 and underpinned the Cold War.


*Reviewed by Volker Prott, Historical and Philosophical Studies, University of Melbourne*

Hitler’s seizure of power in January 1933 figures as the key turning point for Western history in Heinrich August Winkler’s *The Age of Catastrophe*. Reviewing the period between 1914 and 1945, Winkler argues that this event proved to be decisive not just for Germany, but for the “West” as a whole. Not only did the National Socialists plunge the world into a global war on an unprecedented scale of destruction, but almost all the major developments and events after 1945—including the Cold War, decolonization, and the demise of Europe—can be traced back directly or indirectly to Hitler’s rise to power and his subsequent actions.

For Winkler, Hitler epitomizes the defining element of this entire period: the German challenge to what he calls the “normative project of the West.” This German aberration from the democratic, liberal, and humanitarian ideals of the American and French Revolutions of 1776 and 1789 began in 1914, when the German army committed numerous atrocities in Belgium and northern France. It continued in the breakdown of the Weimar Republic and the rise of National Socialism, before it culminated in the fundamental “breach in civilization” that was the Holocaust.

Heinrich August Winkler is the author of the best-selling *Der lange Weg nach Westen* (“The Long Road West”), a two-volume history of Germany that traces the country’s difficult but ultimately successful integration in the Western community of states.1 *The Age of Catastrophe* builds on this previous work and extends the view from Germany to the Western world. It is the translation of the second of four volumes published in German between 2009 and 2015, spanning “Western” history from antiquity to the present time in a total of more than 4,500 pages.2

In the first of the four volumes, Winkler defines the “West” as encompassing a historically fluctuating region that in the 20th century roughly
coincided with non-Orthodox western, northern, southern, and central Europe as well as the United States of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Israel. This region is, according to Winkler, characterized by the rule of law, the separation of church and state, individual liberty, and, since the American and French Revolutions of the late 18th century, the universal values of self-government and human rights.

The Age of Catastrophe follows this definition of the West only loosely. The states that receive most attention are Germany, Great Britain, France, the United States, Italy, and the Soviet Union. Several chapters present the history of all other European states more cursorily in regional groupings across the years from 1914 to 1945. Winkler also addresses the history of some African, Latin American, and Asian states, albeit primarily within the European political and colonial context. Japan is the only non-Western state that is dealt with in some detail, although this is limited mostly to the final section on World War II. Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are only rarely mentioned. For Winkler, the history of the West in the first half of the 20th century is essentially a transatlantic history.

The great strength of Winkler’s monumental study is its almost encyclopedic ambition of breadth and precision of fact. Although the book focuses on political, diplomatic, and intellectual history, it also discusses economic, social, military, and, to a lesser extent, cultural developments across all the European states, the United States, and, in passing, also a range of non-Western regions. Winkler presents these diverse historical settings with astonishing accuracy. In particular, the book contains an excellent comparison of the intellectual origins and dynamics inherent in National Socialism, Soviet communism, and Italian fascism (333–335, 502–503, 796–797).

Several larger themes emerge from Winkler’s panoramic treatment of Western history. Perhaps the most dominant is the fundamental crisis of liberalism, both in an economic and a political sense—what Robert Boyce has called the “Great Interwar Crisis.” Winkler shows how the different European states struggled with similar economic and political pressures, most of them succumbing to some form of authoritarian rule by the early 1930s. To account for these different national trajectories, Winkler alludes to the “close connection between social backwardness and an authoritarian solution to the crises that beset the countries in question” (277). “Backwardness,” for Winkler, is the result of several factors, including high illiteracy rates, a predominantly agrarian economy, a strong role of the church in politics, and the lack of liberal democratic traditions.

In the German case, it was not backwardness but “normative deficiencies” (888) in Western integration that caused the country to slide into a dic-
tatorship. In the tradition of the *Sonderweg* ("special path") thesis, Winkler argues that Germany was plagued by a “lopsided process of democratization” (421), by which rapid economic modernization and expansion of voting rights had not been “properly synchronized” (475) with the authoritarian monarchical and militaristic structures. Consequently, the majority of Germans viewed the Weimar Republic as “un-German” (421), were skeptical of the new democratic regime, and harbored desires for a strong figure at the top of the state, reminiscent of the Kaiser.

The principal weakness of *The Age of Catastrophe* is the absence of a more explicit analytical red thread. Combined with the ambition of precision and completeness that inspires the book, this lack of analytical direction results in some lengthy descriptive passages—such as the chapter on the Spanish Civil War or several of the chapters on the smaller European states—that seem rather disconnected from the overall narrative and that are, at the same time, too general to provide empirical insights into individual cases that could stand on their own. Moreover, Winkler rarely engages in any controversies or scholarly debates. For instance, he deems Hitler’s alleged statement on 22 August 1939, “Who nowadays speaks of the extermination of the Armenians?,” despite its disputed character, to be “entirely credible” (673).\(^5\) On another occasion, Winkler remarks that it is “untrue” that the Soviet Union carried out genocide against the Ukrainians in the early 1930s, making the case that the deaths of six million people were the results of the “collectivization of agriculture and of forced industrialization” (394). This is a valid argument, to be sure, but without further discussion or evidence, the reader is left to trust the author’s judgment.

Ultimately, the lack of analytical and empirical depth produces several inconsistencies with regard to the big questions of the period under study. Winkler claims that democracy collapsed in Germany but not in France and Great Britain because of the latters’ strong democratic traditions as opposed to the former’s “lopsided” democratic development. While this may be a useful interpretive framework, it is not fully clear what these stable democratic traditions were and where exactly we need to draw the line between “Western” and “non-Western” states. The Holocaust, in Winkler’s account, is both the result of improvisation and Hitler’s long-held plans—just how precisely “intentionalism” and “functionalism” are to be reconciled remains unclear, however (733). The Allied complicity in the partition of Europe and the mass expulsions that followed World War II, finally, are at times presented as an inevitable temporary effect of the war (828, 850), while at other times, Winkler refers to the Lausanne agreement of 1923 as a precedent of internationally-sanctioned population transfer (867).
Winkler thus leaves unresolved whether Allied policies in 1944–1945 are to be seen in the context of a more general international authoritarian turn, or whether they were a brief interlude in an otherwise successful defense of liberal values against aggressive dictatorial regimes. Winkler tends to favor the second interpretation, when other authors such as Mark Mazower, Michael Mann, and Eric Weitz, among others, have in recent years emphasized the transnational reach of authoritarian rule, effectively questioning the neat distinction between liberal and authoritarian states.

In *The Age of Catastrophe*, Winkler avoids engagement with these larger issues and debates, leaving them shrouded in the analytical vagueness that is the “normative project of the West” and Germany’s (temporary) aberration from it. Readers will nevertheless benefit from this precise and well-written synthesis of European and American history, which places the great events and developments of the years between 1914 and 1945 in a framework of impressive scope and nuance. Winkler’s study is therefore an excellent basis on which to build fresh and challenging explanations of historical questions that continue to trouble us today.

**Notes**

5. On this controversial matter see recently Stefan Ihrig, *Justifying Genocide: Germany and the Armenians from Bismarck to Hitler* (Cambridge, 2016), 347–349.


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The English title of Philipp Ther’s award-winning 2014 book is misleading. The ten chapters of various length offer not so much a history of Europe after 1989, but rather a history of Eastern and Southeastern Europe. In particular, Ther, who teaches history at the University of Vienna, offers a cri-
tique of the way that neoliberal approaches to reducing the state through liberalization, deregulation, and privatization—the “Washington Consensus” (17)—have shaped and affected the transformational developments since the revolutions of 1989/1990. Sketching out the ascendency of the Chicago School’s neoliberal anti-state market dogma (first developed to address financial crises in South America) and its lasting influences on economic policy in international financial organizations (World Bank, IMF, etc.), the U.S., and the United Kingdom, Ther describes three phases of the developments in Eastern Europe. The first decade after 1989, he sees as the first wave of neoliberalism as it takes hold of the dismantling of the state economic sectors in former communist states and the slashing of social security regimes. The second phase aligns with the decade of neoliberal excess leading up to the financial meltdown that began in 2007 with the third and final phase of (partial) rollback of the neoliberal reforms still evolving.

Ther’s methodological approach integrates New Cultural History, i.e., one that is aware of the linguistic turn and takes into account discourses and legitimation strategies, with a “more data-based social history” (260), as well as economic history. Importantly, he can also rely on his varied, multilingual experiences and observations. Ther is keenly aware of the plasticity of the term “neoliberalism,” to which he ascribes “ideological characteristics” (26) but not thorough ideological coherence. (In fact, he thinks of this ideological malleability as one of the outstanding features of neoliberalism, which allows it to constantly adjust in narratives of success.)

Rather than trying to blame neoliberalism for all problems, Ther proposes “to use it as a neutral, analytical term, and to distinguish between its intellectual history, its implementation (which always depended on the given context), and its social and political consequences” (x). This opens up welcome interpretive space that shows both some of the successes as well as the central failures of the neoliberal approach to organizing the political and economic spheres. Ther spells out the dilemma that confronted policy makers in the mid 1990s:

Because gradualism had failed with perestroika, the “Third Way” had been discredited by Yugoslavia’s disintegration, and the Western European welfare model was too expensive, the only life buoy floating in the pool was neoliberalism. The reformers saw no other choice than to cling to it. (82)

Ther describes in great detail the different ways in which the Baltic states, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, as well other countries east of the old Iron Curtain tried to reform their lands. The longest chapter (161–208) compares the changes and transformations in capital cities which either
took advantage of newly gained opportunities (Warsaw, for example) or remained stuck in their old way of thinking (Berlin).

Especially for the time after 2008, the book sometimes reads more like an engaged contemporary commentary than a history. There is nothing inherently wrong with this but it does lead to a certain datedness, obvious today in the fast-changing constitutional make-up of countries like Poland and Hungary. Ther puts a welcome emphasis on the role played by the European Union “in establishing the rule of law in former Eastern Bloc countries” (160) and the enormous financial aid that flowed east (see 113, 145) contradicting critics who characterize the EU as some neoliberal firebrand. Surprisingly, there is almost nothing about the economic effects of the introduction of the euro. The brief discussion of “cotransformation” is limited to a case study of Germany. While Ther discusses the startling fact that with Joachim Gauck and Angela Merkel, two East Germans where soon at the very helm of the united Germany’s political establishment, he does not mention the Social Democrat Wolfgang Thierse who, as President of the Bundestag served in the second highest political office in Germany starting in 1998 already, seven years before Merkel’s election. Ther rightly admires Tony Judt’s history of postwar Europe. In both historians’ books, there is a similarity in that they minimize the roles of the United States in postwar Europe and of the USSR’s importance for what occurred in 1989/1990 in Eastern Europe, lacunae in the understanding of what happened.

As mentioned at the beginning, this is not a history of post 1989 Europe but of the eastern parts of Europe and it is very valuable for that. At the same time, the datedness of some of the assessments shows already—I mentioned current developments in Poland and Hungary above. The translation is serviceable but at times clunky. Some assessments are contradicted a few pages later—a good copy editor could have made a difference. For example, Ther suggests that, after a slow start, financial aid to the eastern countries became more significant than Marshall Plan transfers. But, later on, he identifies Western Europe’s “reluctance to share its wealth” (312) as one of the reasons for its unwillingness to change. In the final chapter, “The Roads Not Taken” (288–337), Ther muses about some of the missed opportunities that might have opened up had Western Europe more fully engaged with the East’s revolutionary energy. Ther, however, does not make an argument why “Western Europeans’ failure to participate in the revolutions of 1989” (289) was a failure at all—he just seems to think that given the enormity of the events, this is what should have happened. There is a certain melancholic atmosphere about these pages.
Reading these final pages stimulated me to look once again at the famous pamphlet *Für unser Land* (1989) in which writers and intellectuals of the German Democratic Republic, most prominently Christa Wolf, pleaded for maintaining a separate East Germany. The values that were to be embodied in that separate Eastern Germany II are those that animated the political protests and are listed as social justice, peace, freedom, freedom of movement, and the protection of the environment. Arguably, all of these were a lived reality (warts and all) in the old Federal Republic of Germany, guaranteed by the *Grundgesetz*, the political institutions, regulatory regimes, and governance systems. This might explain why there was little reason for West Germans to feel the revolutionary itch. Depending on where their political alliances rested, they certainly would have liked to see changes to their system, but not radical revolutionary change. Given the momentous occurrences every day brought during those historic months in 1989/1990, it is still surprising how little violence these changes brought upon the people. As things happened, there was no certainty with any of that. As Ther makes clear, there was a good amount of luck involved as things could have turned out very differently. That most western political players at the time were inclined to play it as safe as possible while trying to get in front of the revolutionary events might not have been so much an indication of intellectual laziness and western arrogance, but one of prudence.