

## Review Essays: The Sixties Then and Now

Hans Kundnani, *Utopia or Auschwitz. Germany's 1968 Generation and the Holocaust*, Hurst, 2010; Richard Wolin, *The Wind from the East. French Intellectuals, the Cultural Revolution, and the Legacy of the 1960s*, Princeton University Press, 2010; Martin Klimke, *The Other Alliance: student protest in West Germany and the United States in the Global Sixties*, Princeton UP, 2010; Sven Reichardt und Detlef Siegfried, eds., *Das Alternative Milieu. Antibürgerliche Lebensstil und linke Politik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Europa 1968-1983*, Wallstein, 2010; Anna von der Goltz, ed., "Talkin' 'bout my generation". *Conflicts of generation building and Europe's 1968*, Wallstein, 2011.

The recent spate of scholarship on the radicalism of the 1960s—"1968" for short—shows little sign of abating, and indeed, as a new crop of books indicates, continues to grow. The reasons are not far to seek; until very recently, and to an extent, still, scholarship on the 1960s has been dominated by former participants writing from necessarily somewhat skewed perspectives. The recent upsurge in scholarly interest is part of a reassessment driven in many cases, although not exclusively, by a younger generation of scholars writing from a more objective viewpoint. At the same time, the fact that the sixties continue to be a politically-charged issue on both sides of the Atlantic helps validate their continuing status as an object of scholarly inquiry. Most important of all, as the wave of scholarship associated with the recently-passed fortieth anniversary of the crisis year 1968 indicates, there seems to be general agreement that the time for the historicization of the 1960s has come.

Increasingly, scholarship has focused on the transnational exchanges that helped to fuel sixties activism in Europe, while attempting to move beyond a narrow focus on students and universities to explore other actors and other venues of radicalism. An important example of the new scholarship is Martin Klimke's *The 'Other' Alliance: Student Protest in West Germany and the United States in the Global Sixties*. Klimke seeks to transnationalize two individual national student movements—the West German and the American—exploring how their transatlantic "alliance" mirrored the Cold War alliance between their two respective governments. More of a study of West Germany than America, the book nevertheless makes an important contribution to attempts to think outside of the national box. Klimke shows how the West German student organization SDS (Socialist German Student League) constructed itself in dialogue with its American counterpart (SDS—Students for a Democratic Society). Showing how this relationship unfolded through personal connections achieved through student travel and other means, including common work on the intellectual underpinnings of the student revolt—Mike Vester, a West German SDS member, contributed to the founding document of the American SDS, the Port Huron statement—Klimke nicely demonstrates how increased mobility facilitated the transnational exchanges at the heart of "1968." Klimke also highlights the importance of the local reception of globalized phenomena, with special emphasis on the importance of the American Black Power movement to West German radicals. At the same time, Klimke brings the authorities into the picture, showing how the threat of student unrest was assessed by the intelligence analysts of the American CIA. The study has little to say about the counterculture and the arts, and other venues of the sixties rebellion that extended outside of the student circles that concern Klimke, but in nicely demonstrating some of the ways in which the historian can deal both concretely and conceptually with the transnational, *The Other Alliance* makes a major contribution to future research.

In contrast to Klimke's focus on the transnational, Hans Kundnani takes a relentlessly national approach in *Utopia or Auschwitz. Germany's 1968 Generation and the Holocaust*. A journalist, Kundnani is especially concerned with the trajectories of those 68ers who eventually took leading positions in Germany's post-unification government. Thus, although ostensibly a

study of “Germany’s 1968 generation,” the book’s chief concern is actually the “red-green” coalition that took power in Germany at the end of the 1990s under Gerhard Schröder. The policies of this coalition, Kundnani claims, can only be understood in relationship to the 68er generation of which leading figures like Schröder’s Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer were a part. Kundnani deserves praise for his attempt to write this longer trajectory into the historical record, and for offering a richly-researched and exceptionally readable account of the West German student movement that will appeal to laymen and undergraduates alike. His approach is problematic however, on several levels.

On the first page of the preface, Kundnani announces his intention “not to produce a comprehensive study of the 1968 generation but to write a narrative history that focused specifically on the relationship of leading Achtundsechziger with the Nazi past.” Quickly dispensing with the complexities surrounding the concept of generation—“I am aware that the 1968 generation is a somewhat nebulous concept” (xiii)—Kundnani offers that he uses the term “simply as a shorthand for the small group of characters about whom I write...” (xiii). Yet this approach, centering on already well-researched figures like Rudi Dutschke, Dieter Kunzelmann, and Ulrike Meinhof, conflates the mass movement of the sixties and seventies with the personal biographies of a small group of protagonists who, by implication, are made to stand in for an entire generation. This trend of creating a generational monolith that can then be judged *in toto* for its “successes” and “failures” underpins much of the scholarship written by former 68ers with second thoughts about their youthful indiscretions, giving it an inevitably partisan character. Although Kundnani is generally nuanced in his account, his approach also runs against some of the more recent scholarship that has emphasized the intergenerational character of 1968 or explored the complex function of generation within it. The notion of a “68er generation,” as the volume by Anna von der Goltz reviewed below demonstrates, is a project of self-invention as much as a social reality, one that should be treated with skepticism rather than casually reified.

Another problem has to do with the nature of Kundnani’s claims. His assertion that “most books in English on the 1968 generation...” (which books?—none are cited in this passage) “...have tended to ignore recent research in Germany that has shown the history of the student movement to be more complex and contradictory than had long been thought,” is overstated at best. Nick Thomas has already written a nuanced and well-researched account of the West Germany student movement in English.<sup>1</sup> Martin Klimke has published extensively on the movement in both English and German even before the publication of the monograph reviewed here.<sup>2</sup> The primary shortcoming of this scholarship, from Kundnani’s perspective, seems to be that it fails to give pride of place to the highly debatable assertions that lie at the heart of *Utopia*

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<sup>1</sup> Nick Thomas, *Protest Movements in 1960s West Germany: A Social History of Dissent and Democracy* (New York: Berg, 2003). For other important work in English see the essays in Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried, *Between Marx and Coca-Cola. Youth Cultures in Changing European Societies* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> See for example Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth, eds.: *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956-77* (New York/London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); “Between Berkeley and Berlin, San Francisco and Frankfurt: The Student Movements of the 1960s in Transatlantic Perspective,” in: Jim Downs and Jennifer Manion, eds., *Taking Back the Academy: History as Activism* (New York: Routledge Press, 2004), 35-56; and with Belinda Davis, “Remembering Global Protest: The Sixties in the U.S. and West Germany,” in: Conference Proceedings, XIIIth International Oral History Conference, “Memory and Globalization,” Rome, Italy, June 23-26, 2004.

or *Auschwitz*. Kundnani informs us that the West German student movement had a strong nationalist current (because of Rudi Dutschke's supposed "preoccupation with the division of Germany"—p. xii); that it contained significant strands of "left wing anti-Semitism" (because of the attempted bomb attack on the Jewish Community Center in West Berlin in November 1969 by a small group of drug-crazed anarchists supplied with a bomb by a government agent—p. xii); and that, in highlighting a brand of fascism analysis focusing on the connection between the capitalism and fascism—a trend of analysis that long predated Hitler's Final Solution—68ers "tended to marginalize the Holocaust" (18). Ironically, the association of these claims with highly problematic figures such as Bernd Rabehl and Klaus Rainer Röhl—the former an erstwhile comrade of Rudi Dutschke's turned extreme-rightist, the latter a red-baiting protégé of the right-wing historian Ernst Nolte—is cited as proof of the author's claims about the 68er generation, rather than as evidence that the claims are themselves flawed.

Kundnani's overall thesis—that the shadow of the Nazi past hung over the West German student movement in a host of sometimes destructive ways—is hardly new. The role played by the Nazi past in the West German "1968" is a prominent feature of the existing scholarship.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the nation-centric focus of Kundnani's approach is out of step with current trends of research. Kundnani's contention that while "young people in some other countries were driven by a dream of creating a better society, in West Germany they were driven by a nightmare that Nazism was about to recur" (17), is an oversimplification at best. The claim that West German radicals confronted "an all-or-nothing choice: Utopia or Auschwitz" is dramatic but hopelessly overdrawn. "Utopian" longings—dreams of world revolution that it is easy to criticize with the benefit of hindsight—made up only a part of the impetus of the West German "1968;" equally important were the concrete initiatives—the founding of publishing houses, bookstores, childcare collectives, every sort of cultural-political project from below—that sought to remake the face of daily life in the here and now. To equate what activists actually achieved with a "utopia" that could, by definition, never be achieved is to do violence to the historical record; to counterpoise this "utopia" with "Auschwitz," with all the not-so-subtle insinuations that this juxtaposition entails (the cover of the book features the Nazi slogan "Arbeit macht Frei" splayed across student leader Rudi Dutschke's forehead) is to create an ahistorical either/or scenario. Thus, as an argument about the legacy and meaning of the West German "1968" Kundnani's book is heavily flawed; as a highly readable account of a recent period in German history by a fine writer with an eye for the telling detail, however, it may be judged a qualified success, one that should be both read and debated.

Inescapably, all accounts of the West German student movement have to grapple, implicitly or explicitly, with the Federal Republic's relationship to the Third World: not only did student radicals embrace the model of Third World revolution stemming from figures like Che Guevara and Ho Chi Minh, but the visits of Third World dictators—most notably the Shah of Iran in June 1967—played crucial roles in synergizing student protest. Indeed, the role of the Third World in the "global 1960s" has become an increasingly important topic of inquiry, not only because of the prominence of anti-colonial liberation struggles for western radicals, but because of the increasing salience of (previously overlooked) instances of student/youth rebellion in the Third World itself. The 1960s can only be "global," indeed, to the extent that the Third World is integrated into the scholarship, both as symbol and as event. It is welcome, then,

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<sup>3</sup> See for example Alan E. Steinweis, *Coping with the Nazi Past: West German Debates on Nazism and Generational Conflict, 1955-1975*, co-edited with Philipp Gassert. Berghahn Books, 2006.

that scholars are increasingly beginning to work along these parallel lines of inquiry. The Third World figures prominently in two forthcoming works—Quinn Slobodian’s *Foreign Front: Third World Politics in Sixties West Germany* (UNC press, 2012), and Samantha Christiansen and Zachary Scarletts’ *The Third World in the Global Sixties* (Berghahn, 2012)—as well as in Richard Wolin’s recently-published *The Wind from East. French Intellectuals, the Cultural Revolution, and the Legacy of the 1960s*. Whereas Slobodian’s book deals with the concrete presence of Third World radicals active in the West German metropole, and Christiansen and Scarletts’ volume with the individual national rebellions in the Third World itself, Wolin’s study treats the reception of a key Third World *idea*—Maoism—in France during and after the May events of 1968.

*The Wind from the East* signals the emerging importance of Maoism as a topic of inquiry into the transnational exchanges and global imaginings that fueled the radicalism of the 1960s. Wolin, an intellectual historian with previous works on Benjamin, Heidegger, and Marcuse to his credit, examines the impact of Maoism on France’s “1968” with mixed results, a necessary consequence of the fact that Maoism’s influence on the “French May” was marginal at best. Wolin acknowledges this dichotomy in the book’s approach, writing that “*Wind from the East* represents a modest attempt to capture the meaning of the 1960s via ‘indirection’: through attention to an exotic, alternately serious and playful political departure taken by French youth—or a prominent segment thereof—during the 1960s and 1970s, the infatuation with Cultural Revolutionary China....” (xii) This strategy of indirection does offer to capture the meaning of “1968” if only because the Maoists Wolin examines were so out of step with its central impulses. As Wolin himself points out, “the 1960s generation was in fact singularly moral. For many activists, the imperatives of social justice became an obsession, and ‘living in truth’ a veritable credo” (7). Yet it was precisely this “living in truth” that conflicted with the Maoist enterprise, for western Maoism was nothing if not a politics of delusion; French Maoists saw in Mao’s brutal Cultural Revolution what they wanted to see—an anti-authoritarian moment of revolutionary authenticity that was both free of the deformations of Soviet Communism and available for export.

It was no surprise, moreover, that many of the most influential French Maoists began as students of the Stalinist philosopher Louis Althusser, who stood in direct opposition to the libertarian-Dionysian spirit of May ’68. The key intellectual forebears of May ’68, the Situationists, the Arguments group, and the group Socialism or Barbarism—all wonderfully sketched out by Wolin—were committed critics of orthodox Marxism who rejected Stalinism out of hand and who recognized that the “deformations” of Soviet Communism did not begin with Stalin but had their roots in Leninism itself. Similarly, the key figure of the student uprising, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, lucidly recognized the ways in which the Vanguard party tradition had destroyed the positive potential of the revolutionary left in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Europe. Citing the Bolshevik crushing of the Kronstadt revolt of 1921 as only one of the most prominent examples, Cohn-Bendit argued that Communism had historically played a *counterrevolutionary* rather than a revolutionary role, a situation that persisted in the response of the French Communist party to the May events. Indeed, both the PCF, and the Maoists who saw themselves as would-be opponents of the party’s pro-Soviet “revisionist” stance, missed their historical moment, sure that a revolt of any consequence could only be launched by workers, not students. This position stood in direct contradiction to one of the central insights of the New Left: that the “revolutionary proletariat” was no longer revolutionary, and that if the new and evolving forms of capitalism

were going to be combatted, it would have to be done by other groups (e.g. students and youth) motivated by concerns other than those of the hidebound Old Left.

Wolin spends pages demonstrating the irrelevance of Maoists and Maoism to the May events; a small sect, without substantial connections either to the students or to the workers who they regarded as the only legitimate agents of revolution—they dithered, aloof, while students battled police in the streets. Convinced that middle class students could not be heralds of the revolution that could only rightly be led by the proletariat, they saw the May events as a false start, even indulging in paranoid fantasies that the revolt was an elaborate ruse to lure workers into the street to be massacred by the government. “[A]s the May events unfolded,” writes Wolin, “the Maoists were nowhere to be found. Prisoners of their own ideological dogmatism, they had difficulty fathoming the idea that what had begun as a student revolt might become a catalyst for a general political uprising” (15-16).

Given this background, Wolin’s argument for the relevance of Maoism in France—a relevance, to be fair, that he ascribes to the post-May period—seems forced. His basic argument is that Maoists, faced by an authentic uprising that they had at first dismissed, learned how to shape their anti-authoritarian fantasies about Mao’s China into a legitimately anti-authoritarian political praxis at home. “Ultimately,” Wolin writes, “what began as an exercise in revolutionary dogmatism was transformed into a Dionysian celebration of cultural pluralism and the right to difference” (xii). Elsewhere he explains: “In the post-May period, the Maoist[s]...tempered their ardor in order to merge with a variety of libertarian currents and groups. Thereby, the Chinese trope of cultural revolution assumed an entirely new direction and meaning” (356). It is true, as Wolin demonstrates, that certain Maoists began to adopt more libertarian perspectives into their thought and activism, but these perspectives hardly derived from Maoism; rather, they represented a belated recognition of the way the wind was blowing, which was not “from the East,” but from a lost tradition of radical-democratic humanistic activism rooted in past “moments” of *kairos* like the Kronstadt Uprising and the anarchist collectives of the Spanish revolution toward the personal-political ecumenalism of the New Social Movements.

It seems clear, indeed, that Wolin gives the Maoists too much credit; it is highly debatable, for example, whether “[in] the post-May period, the Situationist focus on everyday life fused with the Maoist notion of cultural revolution,” and that out of this articulation, “the project of a revolution of everyday life was born” (77). Nor does sleep deprivation (96) serve as a convincing explanation for the delusions and misjudgments of Maoist leaders like Robert Linhart, who rejected the May events as a plot by the government to draw workers into the streets to be massacred. Rather, such fantasies should be seen as a necessary outcome of a belief system that glossed over the anti-human history of authoritarian Communism, a history that, as the case of Cohn-Bendit demonstrates, was readily available for those who wanted to look. Similarly, the intellectual Mandarins who Wolin examines in the second section of the book consistently got things wrong, from Sartre—who supported the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 and wrote repeatedly in support of revolutionary violence—to the intellectuals of the journal *Tel Quel*. The link between these Mandarins and Maoism seems tenuous, however, in any case. To be sure, Sartre supported imprisoned Maoists at the beginning of the 1970s and admired Maoists for their activism; Foucault worked together with Maoists in the Prison Information Group (GIP), and also became drawn into the fevered debates around popular justice that seemed to inform the French Maoist approach to activism. But the focus on the often-tenuous relationship of leading intellectuals to Maoism begs the question of who the Maoists

were, really. Wolin provides sketches of leading Maoists like Robert Linhart, but the reader never gains any familiarity with the Maoist rank and file.

Whatever the case, as far as “1968” itself is concerned, what comes out more than anything else in the end is the extent to which Maoists and intellectual mandarins alike (with the exception of Foucault, whose inclusion among the “Maoists” is in any case questionable) were unable to meet the ethical and ideological challenge it posed. In the end, French Maoism was of very temporary importance, for highly contingent reasons: the high-Sixties prestige of Third Worldism; the appeal of a model offering a new voluntarist approach to left-wing radicalism according to which revolution could still be possible; and the credulity of young radicals who failed to grasp the essence of the new form of politics unfolding before their eyes in the streets of the Latin Quarter until the moment was passed. This interpretation reinforces the extent to which “1968” must be seen as a mixed project, one in which the radical democratic, anti-authoritarian, and humanistic impulses pointing toward the diversity of the New Social Movements were intertwined with the same authoritarian impulses that fueled the failed East bloc Communist experiments that the New Left largely rejected. Neither wholly new or wholly old, the diverse impulses fueling “1968” contributed both to its mixed results and to the complexity confronting scholars hoping to understand it.

One area of complexity, the concept of “generation,” is taken up with a new level of historical specificity and analytical rigor in Anna von der Goltz’s *Talkin’ ‘bout my generation’*. *Conflicts of generation building and Europe’s ‘1968.’* Although the idea of 1968 as a generational revolt has been criticized in recent years—notably in the work of scholars like Arthur Marwick and Mia Lee, who have argued forcefully for the intergenerational character of the sixties explosion—Von der Goltz and her contributors convincingly demonstrate the continued relevance of generational models of social change.<sup>4</sup> In a splendidly-written and richly-sourced introduction, Von der Goltz explores the subtle interplay between two sometimes-competing but ultimately complimentary understandings of the generational model—the generation as social cohort and the generation as imagined community. If, as Von der Goltz argues, it is the latter that lies closer to the cutting edge of the scholarship—generation as a “relationship” rather than a “thing”—the essays in the volume, as she acknowledges, make use of both conceptions. One of the most important observations made by Von der Goltz and confirmed by the volume’s contributors is that the groups that counted as “68ers” or the “sixties generation” varied markedly in different national settings. Not only did the social makeup of the protagonists vary from country to country, but the process of retroactive identity formation that gave rise to the notion of a “68er” generation took place according to its own logic and according to its own timetable. Moreover, as a number of the essays indicate, the social valence of the generational label varied considerably from location to location. Thus, for example, as Péter Apor and James Mark point out in their essay on Hungary, the valence of “generation” with respect to 1968 evolved over time in response to changing political realities of Communist and post-Communist society.

At the same time, as Von der Goltz demonstrates in her essay in the volume on conservative students in West Germany, in some cases “different groups of ‘68ers’ with varying generational narratives . . . [have vied] for recognition within a single country (12).” The Federal Republic, the subject of close to half of the volume’s essays, including Holger Nehring’s rich

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<sup>4</sup> Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States 1958-1974*, New York 1998; Mia Lee, *Art and Politics in West Germany: The Cultural Origins of 1968* (forthcoming).

comparative study of West Germany, France, and Italy, offers a compelling case study for the formation of generations around “1968.” Generation, as Nehring points out, functioned “as [a] political argument” (73) in all three countries, but nowhere more than in West Germany, where it allowed protesters to position themselves with respect both to Germany’s fascist past and its Cold War present. Generation was not an ex post facto creation in West Germany, but was actively constructed by its protagonists while the revolt was going on as part of its battle with the establishment. The other essays on West Germany reinforce the extent to which the formation of generations around “1968” was an active project, or, in the case of Knud Andresen’s essay on the apprentice movement, was not. In answering the question of “why there is no ‘68er generation’ of young workers,” Andresen puts his finger precisely on a key point of the volume: that “generations” did not exist until they were invented. Lacking the need or the means to do the necessary “promotional” work, young workers relinquished the interpretational high ground to their better-placed student comrades, even those, as Andresen shows, they too took part in, and were shaped by, the revolt. Dominik Geppert’s examination of the West German writers’ group Gruppe 47, demonstrates that models of generation conflict pitting younger writers against their socially-critical elders in Gruppe 47 have been somewhat overdrawn, while highlighting, again, the social constructedness of the generation around “1968.”

In increasing the analytical clarity around the concept of generation, and providing an assessment of the construction of generations on both sides of the Iron Curtain, *Talkin’ ‘bout my Generation*’ makes a valuable contribution to the literature on the 1960s. In addition, in seeking to break out of the model via which “generation” becomes a function of the post-war posterity boom according to which, in Von der Goltz’s words, “underlying socio-economic factors...determined the behavior and experiences of a ‘generation’ of student protestors across the Western world,” (16) the volume points the way toward a less deterministic reading of the genesis of the protest cultures that shook societies around “1968.”

In *Das Alternative Milieu. Antibürgerlicher Lebensstil und linke Politik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Europa 1968-1983*, Reichardt and Siegfried present essays examining one of the key outcomes of “1968” in West Germany, the formation of an “alternative scene” in which the emancipatory possibilities opened up by the rebellion of the 1960s found concrete expression. This scene, most strongly associated with the 1970s, and often treated as a successor to the student rebellion, was in fact a strengthening and solidification of trends already extant in the “high sixties”: a turn away from “iron laws of history” toward personal subjectivity; an emphasis on new values of honesty and authenticity; a focus on rank and file initiative and participatory democracy; an orientation toward self-organization from below; and a focus on independent cultural production (independent presses and publishing houses, bookstores, distribution networks, record labels, and so on) aimed at circumventing official channels of knowledge and cultural production. A focus on what Reichardt and Siegfried call the “alternative milieu” takes the analysis outside the narrow confines of the small group of radicals in the student movement, on whom so much analytic weight is often hung—to reveal the rich new forms and approaches characterizing the period beginning in 1968. For as much as the year 1968 was an end-point marked by the crushed dreams of the high period of the mass movement, it was also a starting point for the rich unfolding of new directions and perspectives.

Deriving from a conference that took place in Copenhagen in 2008, the book is divided into five sections, each highlighting a thematic area and its associated theoretical concerns. Section One, “Theoretical Approaches,” features essays from the political scientist Michael Vester and the sociologist Dieter Rucht, both of whom emphasize the heterogeneity and scope of

the alternative scene. While Vester lends analytic rigor to the “milieu” concept, Rucht explores the historical development and scholarly reception of the alternative movement. Sections two through five deal respectively with “Transnational Spaces and Ethnicity,” “Consumption and Criticism,” “Gender relations and processes of Subjectivation,” and “Alternative Milieu and New Social Movements.” Several key themes cut across these various sections. First, the role of the transnational comes strongly to the fore, in particular, the importance of the local adoption of globalized affinities, attitudes, and cultural products. Thus Detlef Siegfried highlights the importance of “alternative travel” as a key crystallization point for the alternative sensibility. Alongside the personal experience of travel, which had changed, Siegfried argues, from an early period in which personal knowledge of foreign countries was achieved through mass activities like military service or package tourism, young people also came into contact with foreigners in the spaces of the alternative milieu itself. “Afro-American GIs, southern-European migrant workers and exiles with radical political ideas, students from other countries,” writes Siegfried, “made up an international network that was domiciled in this milieu” (89). New religious groups oriented on Eastern philosophies contributed to this exchange, as did the media, which spread ideas and images of the alternative scene far and wide (89-90). Siegfried goes on to examine one key relationship, between West Germany and Denmark, as an example of the “transnational interdependencies” that characterized the alternative scene (113).

Second, the interpenetration of culture and politics in the 68er and successor movements occupies center stage in a number of the essays, notably Pascal Eitler’s treatment of the New Age movement, Ilse Lenz’s piece on the relationship of the women’s movement to the alternative milieu, and Uta Poiger’s examination of ideals of feminine beauty in the multisided relationship between punk, the women’s movement, and the cosmetics industry. As Poiger shows, challenges to traditional beauty ideals by the punk and feminist subcultures were closely tied to debates about authenticity and commodification with much broader ramifications. The prominence of such debates make up a third key theme of the volume highlighted notably in the essays by Sven Reichardt on sexuality and Alexander Sedlmaier on anti-consumerism and political violence. Finally, the volume emphasizes the importance of independent cultural production, which not only characterized much of the activity in the alternative scene, but was seen to serve as an antidote to the prescribed patterns of consumption associated by the student movement and its successors with more general forms of authoritarian control.

Its subtitle notwithstanding, most of the book deals with West Germany, although some of the essays—notably those by Siegfried, Klaus Weinhauer, and Belinda Davis—open up transnational and/or comparative perspectives. Nevertheless, in its detail and thematic breadth, the volume sits very well amidst a raft of new scholarship emphasizing the not-only pan-European but truly global dimensions of “1968.” By extending the analysis of “1968” to encompass the successor movements of the 1970s and 80s, Reichardt and Siegfrieds’ volume marks an important addition to the scholarship on the global sixties while continuing to a new and developing historiography on the way the revolt played out in subsequent decades.

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