

Countless Germans continued to adhere to Nazi statism and racism, unmoved by the prominence of former Nazis in public institutions; only in the 1960s did a new generation call for a serious and reflective commitment to democracy. This narrative remained especially powerful among historians of ideas, who paid little attention to postwar democratic thinkers and theories. If postwar Germany was but a shell of a “true” democratic society, what value could possibly be found in studying its intellectual foundations?

Sean A. Forner’s *German Intellectuals and the Challenge of Democratic Renewal: Culture and Politics after 1945* joins a growing body of scholarship that offers a refreshing challenge to this story. It grippingly surveys a galaxy of scholars and journalists who spent the occupation years (1945–1949) crafting intellectual support for a new democratic society. According to Forner, this period witnessed a blast of intellectual energy, as diverse thinkers furiously theorized and discussed democratic politics. These “engaged democrats,” as he calls them, organized conferences, founded magazines, and initiated a variety of political campaigns (for example, in effort to shape the electoral process in local state constitutions). Forner mourns that this wave of activity rapidly declined with the onset of the Cold War, as the Communist regime in the East and the conservative republic of the West marginalized these thinkers. But, he insists, these democratic thinkers left an ideological legacy that would inspire democratic Germans for decades.

To be sure, these democratic activists were a diverse lot who more often than not disagreed over the essence of democracy. Catholic journalists like Walter Dirks, for example, extolled religious communities and families as the foundation of free society, while liberal political theorists such as Dolf Sternberger celebrated parties and parliaments, and Marxist authors such as Ernst Bloch were interested in a utopian reordering of the economy and society. Yet as Forner convincingly shows, all these figures were united in their firm belief in the German people’s need to actively participate in public life and self-rule. Only continuous engagement with other Germans and the acceptance of compromise would guarantee that Nazi authoritarianism and extreme violence never returned. Moreover, the engaged democrats shared a conviction that democracy was first and foremost a moral project. At the core of their writings was not a coherent political theory—their ideas on institutions or legislation often remained painfully vague—but a belief that participatory self-rule would curb selfishness and foster respect for other humans. For this reason, they were among the few who openly called for remorse over Nazi atrocities, a rare utterance at the time. Democracy was first and foremost a tool for critical self-reflection.

As this description makes clear, Forner is unabashedly sympathetic toward his protagonists. And for all the book’s considerable achievements, this admiration at times stands in the way of more critical reflections on their obvious blind spots. Take, for example, the democrats’ collective obsession with “high” culture and the lower classes. One of Forner’s principal claims is that his

central figures were the first to finally shed their class’s longstanding hostility toward the “the masses.” For the first time, postwar thinkers came to view the underprivileged not as dangerous riffraff, but as legitimate and vital participants in the serious business of politics. Yet almost all of them remained steadfast in their belief that the key to the masses’ political “maturation” was indoctrination in “high” culture, especially an appreciation of sophisticated literature and poetry. In their publications they repeatedly declared that reading works by Friedrich Schiller or Wolfgang von Goethe would instill in the people the necessary democratic values. Even those sympathetic to this belief in art’s humanizing potential would be struck by how little energy the engaged democrats spent in actually trying to understand their non-intellectual fellow citizens, or learning about their needs, concerns, and hopes. None of them actively wondered whether it might be worth listening to the masses, or what type of institutions could actually fulfill their economic, political, or other desires.

The absence of a more critical take on these democrats’ shortcomings places similar limits on Forner’s depiction of their marginalization during the early Cold War. This global conflict appears in the book largely as an externally imposed, anti-democratic force that repressed democratic visions. Both the East and West German regimes, Forner claims, believed in elite rule and feared internal subversion, and thus showed little interest in the engaged democrats’ calls for critical discussion. While there is some truth to this story, it is also crucial that both German states participated in the era’s vibrant and aggressive contest over democracy, a term whose meaning was far from settled. Both rooted their legitimacy in “the people” and claimed to fulfill the promise of “real” democracy: economic equality in the East, and conservative Christian hegemony in the West. If both these regimes managed to win over or at least gain the loyalty of many followers while the engaged democrats failed to do so, it was not only due to their repressive nature. Just as important, their definition of democracy may have proved more commanding and appealing than the scholars’ focus on moral questions or Schiller’s poetry. The engaged democrats’ marginalization, that is, was not just a symptom of other people’s failures. It also reflected the limitations of their own concepts.

In this regard, Forner’s excellent book not only reveals inspirational ideological paths not taken. Just as significantly, it shows how well-meaning democrats paid the price of their inability to turn their critical eye on themselves.

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TIMOTHY SCOTT BROWN. *West Germany and the Global Sixties: The Antiauthoritarian Revolt, 1962–1978*. (New Studies in European History.) New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. x, 397. \$99.00.

“1968,” widely used to mark the vast transformations of the decade of the 1960s and some years beyond, has long

been the subject of obsessive German reflection and vast scholarly production. In *West Germany and the Global Sixties: The Antiauthoritarian Revolt, 1962–1978*, Timothy Scott Brown has given scholars studying the period a great gift: a masterful synthesis of swirling currents of rebellion placed in a groundbreaking conceptual frame. Exhaustively researched and elegantly argued, the book functions both as a comprehensive account of a major swath of postwar history and a provocative rethinking of the terms in which scholars have represented it.

Chief among Brown's ambitions is to bring under one roof the disparate forms of political dissent and cultural ferment that together made up the antiauthoritarian revolt. Rudi Dutschke, the chief ideologue of Germany's Socialist German Student Union, and Dieter Kunzelmann, cofounder of Berlin's Kommune I, loom large in Brown's study. As occasional allies, each sought to unite political vanguardism and the cultural avant-garde and thus distinguish the new German radicalism from its leftist forebears, who were soberly trained on issues of political power.

Brown does far more, however, than chronicle how the vision of these much-studied figures played out. In chapters evocatively titled "Space," "Time," "Word," "Sound," and "Vision," he presents a sprawling tableau of spontaneously conceived and only loosely coordinated modes of rebellion, often organized as highly local "scenes." These range from the ubiquitous *Gammler*, who scandalized adult society with their long hair, drug use, and indifference to both work and traditional standards of propriety; to the radical print collectives that transformed German media and intellectual life; to the rock bands and arts outfits that sought to obliterate distinctions between art, politics, and everyday existence. Brown successfully makes sense of the visual culture of the antiauthoritarian revolt. Its frequent use of collage and juxtaposition of discordant images reflected the sheer abundance of signs in an age of rapidly globalizing media, often bearing news of an "ill-defined set of 'revolutions'" both at home and worldwide (214).

Together, these insurgent energies represented "a new democratic politics of self-reinvention from below . . . marked by an explosion of creativity across a range of artistic and political media" (6). "This global imagined community of youth," Brown elaborates, used "music, fashion, and lifestyle" to create "a new emphasis on feelings and emotion" (7–8). In Germany, as elsewhere, the union of the personal and the political has long been a presumed hallmark of the 1960s. In Brown's deft hands, we see the intricacy of efforts to wed the two in rewriting seemingly every staid rule of society.

Brown's second great ambition is to integrate West Germany in new ways into understandings of the "global Sixties." Rather than compare events in Germany to those elsewhere, Brown explores the "intersections of global vectors across one local terrain" (5). Germany's literal partition made it an intense site both of East-West tensions and of flows of people and ideas across the Iron Curtain. Foreign students, present in West Germany in unusually high numbers, educated German leftists in the

politics of anti-imperialism as well as the implication of the Federal Republic in global patterns of domination (typified by the state visits of Third World despots, which met vigorous protest). Finally, given the historic taint of Nazism, young Germans had difficulty finding a "usable past" to frame their own revolt. As a result, they looked to political and cultural rebellions abroad—perhaps uniquely so among global lefts—to cobble together their own identity. Throughout, Brown shows how the global was actually already contained *within* West German society. This new way of locating the global may well guide research on other national histories that cover the 1960s or other periods.

The very few limitations of Brown's study are a consequence of its strengths. Brown is so focused on plumbing the world of subcultures that a sense of the larger West German society fades from view. The "long Sixties" also were a time of limited rapprochement with the East and forms of liberalization not reducible to the influence, or cooptation, of the antiauthoritarian revolt. The challenge of making dramatic change in a society that is already changing might have been a theme of the book. Intent on bringing to brilliant life a distant past, Brown mutes the retrospection of the people he studies. Their assessment, decades out, of success, failure, and everything in between may have further shaped possibilities for viewing this highly charged past.

Nonetheless, *West Germany and the Global Sixties* is a titanic accomplishment. It at once forecloses the need for this kind of synthetic study ever to be done again while opening up new vistas for research on local, global, and national destinies.

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EDINA BEĆIREVIĆ. *Genocide on the Drina River*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2014. Pp. xx, 237. \$65.00.

LARA J. NETTELFIELD and SARAH E. WAGNER. *Srebrenica in the Aftermath of Genocide*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Pp. xxi, 418. Cloth \$110.00, paper \$39.99.

The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina claimed some one hundred thousand lives and displaced about one million people. Between 1992 and 1995, Bosnian Serb forces, organized by and supported from Belgrade, murdered and expelled Bosnian Muslim and other non-Serb civilians from their homes en masse in an effort to create an ethnically "cleansed" "Serbian" territory contiguous to Serbia. In response to this criminal project, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) indicted the highest-ranking Serbian state and military officials (both those in Belgrade and in Bosnia-Herzegovina) on the gravest charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including genocide. To date, fourteen individuals have been convicted in genocide trials before ICTY. Two recent contributions to the expanding body of literature that probes the diverse aspects of the history of mass violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and its legal and political