Historicising '1968'

WILFRIED MAUSBACH

Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, ed., *1968 – Vom Ereignis zum Gegenstand der Geschichtswissenschaft* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1998), 307 pp., €36.81, ISBN 3-525-36417-2.

Andrew Feenberg and Jim Freedman, *When Poetry Ruled the Streets: The French May Events of 1968*, with a Foreword by Douglas Kellner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001) 192 pp., $18.95, ISBN 0-7914-4966-1.

Gerhard Fels, *Der Aufruhr der 68er. Zu den geistigen Grundlagen der Studentenbewegung und der RAF* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1998) 286 pp., € 23,01, ISBN 3-4160-2816-3.

Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert and Detlef Junker, eds., *1968: The World Transformed* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 490 pp., $54.95, ISBN 0-521-64141-1 (hb) $18.95, ISBN 0-521-64637-5 (pb).

Ingo Juchler, *Die Studentenbewegung in den Vereinigten Staaten und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland der sechziger Jahre: Eine Untersuchung hinsichtlich ihrer Beeinflussung durch Befreiungsbewegungen und – theorien aus der Dritten Welt* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1996), 459 pp., €63.40, ISBN 3-428-08556-6.

Michael Kimmel, *Studentenbewegungen der 60er Jahre. Frankreich, BRD und USA im Vergleich* (Vienna: WUV-Universitätsverlag, 1998), 276 pp., €14.31, ISBN 3-8511-4378-7.

Gerd Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt: Unsere kleine deutsche Kulturrevolution 1967–1977* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2001), 554 pp., €25.51, ISBN 3-4620-2985-1.

Wolfgang Kraushaar, *1968 als Mythos, Chiffre und Zäsur* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2000), 370 pp., €24.54, ISBN 3-9309-0859-X.

Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, 1958–1974* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 903 pp., £25.00, ISBN 0-19-210022-X.

Lutz Schulenburg, ed., *Das Leben ändern, die Welt verändern. 1968. Dokumente und Berichte* (Hamburg: Edition Nautilus, 1998), 471 pp., €20.35, ISBN 3-8940-1289-7.

1998 brought yet another outpouring of jubilee literature marking the thirtieth anniversary of that momentous year 1968. This time, however, there was a noticeable increase in books with a definite scholarly agenda. Thus, the title Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey adapted for her edited volume from François Furet[1] may well

[1] François Furet, *1789 – Vom Ereignis zum Gegenstand der Geschichtswissenschaft* (Frankfurt a.M.: Ullstein, 1980).

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capture the gist of a growing feeling: historians are eager to overcome the time-worn recollections of movement apologists and their adversaries and they are beginning to subject the 1960s to more objective analysis. To be sure, authors whose work is to varying degrees informed, if not clouded, by personal experience of the 1960s and 1970s still abound (Schulenburg, Feenberg and Freedman, Koenen, Kraushaar, Fels, Marwick as well as some authors in the edited volumes under review). Some are ambivalent about or even outright dismissive of the fledgling scholarly competition. Thus, Lutz Schulenburg identifies 'academic star-gazers' disseminating 'distorted pictures' of the movement (pp. 5, 10) and Gerd Koenen mocks the 'guileless historical painting' of Gilcher-Holtey's endeavour (p. 23). Wolfgang Kraushaar entered the fray when Axel Schildt ironically remarked that there may exist a sort of natural enmity between contemporary witnesses and the writers of contemporary history (p. 324).[2] In fact, some of the witnesses have become historians in their own right, grounding their studies in substantial research into both primary and secondary sources. This is certainly true for Kraushaar and Marwick, to a much lesser degree for Koenen. They share the historians' desire to transcend both the romantic transfiguration and the ingrained condemnation of '1968'. Meanwhile, the unreconstructed sentimentalists (Feenberg and Freedmen, Schulenburg) collect and publish documents, thus contributing to the easy availability of primary sources that are otherwise sometimes difficult to unearth.

Much of what has recently been written about '1968' can be put under one or more of three headings: first, an attempt to explain the protest cycles of the 1960s by utilising concepts and analytical tools taken from social movement research; second, an interest in the ideological undercurrents of the political and cultural upheaval; finally, a fascination with the international or even global character of the revolt. I will take up each of these aspects in turn.

I

The protesters of the 1960s were first described as a new social movement when their revolt had only just reached its climax. It was French sociologist Alain Touraine who thus distinguished them from the traditional mass movements revolving around economic and class differences.[3] However, Touraine's approach remained largely uninfluential. Whereas scholars in the United States responded to the 1960s resurgence of protest movements by developing the resource mobilisation approach,[4] it took another decade and the reappearance of some of the earlier

[2] The reference is from a chapter that – like most others in Kraushaar's book – is the revised version of an earlier article: Wolfgang Kraushaar, 'Der Zeitzeuge als Feind des Historikers? Neuerscheinungen zur 68er-Bewegung,' *Mittelweg 36* 8, 6 (1999), 49–72. See also Schildt's reply and Kraushaar's response, *ibid*., 9, 1 (2000), 62–4.

[3] Alain Touraine, *Le Communisme utopique: Le mouvement de mai 1968* (Paris: Editions de Seuil, 1968); *idem*, *La société post-industrielle* (Paris: Denoël, 1969).

[4] Ralph H. Turner, 'Collective Behavior and Resource Mobilisation as Approaches to Social Movements: Issues and Continuities', *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change*, 4 (1981), 1–24.

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revolutionaries in the feminist, ecological and peace movements of the 1970s and 1980s to spur social movement research in western Europe. Moreover, this research was then largely confined to contemporary protest groups.[5] Only recently and with the emerging scholarly interest in the 1960s have such analyses been applied to that decade. At the same time, an increasing number of historians is exploring ways to utilise the theorems of social movement research in their own fields. A forerunner among them is Bielefeld historian Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, who in her study of the Paris May events developed an interactionist approach that, while continuing to take social structures into account, focuses on strategic objectives and the direct interactions of historical actors in order to arrive at a social history of ideas that inform movement actions.[6] In 1997, she invited nineteen American, French, German, and Italian historians, political scientists and sociologists to discuss the protests of the 1960s as social movement phenomena. In so doing, many participants followed Friedhelm Neidhardt's and Dieter Rucht's definition of a social movement as 'an organised and sustained effort of a collectivity of inter-related individuals, groups and organisations to promote or resist social change with the use of public protest activities.'[7] Several authors in the edited book quote this definition (pp. 12, 36, 256 n. 2).[8] The German translation however, is in fact identical to a definition given by Dieter Rucht elsewhere, which contains an inconspicuous but important nuance in explicitly referring to a 'collective *identity*' that reinforces the actions of movement networks.[9] Indeed, the interest of Gilcher-Holtey and most of her collaborators revolves around this collective identity and the way it is formed and shaped. The editor herself adapts Ron Eyerman's and Andrew Jamison's concept of identity formation through 'cognitive praxis',[10] meaning 'the development of an internal communication structure, a symbolic system of self-understanding and self-assurance that . . . is determined by a framework of rules drafted by intellectuals and

[5] Friedhelm Neidhardt and Dieter Rucht, 'The Analysis of Social Movements: The State of the Art and Some Perspectives for Further Research', in Dieter Rucht, ed., *Research on Social Movements: The State of the Art in Western Europe and the USA* (Frankfurt a.M. and Boulder, CO: Campus Verlag and Westview Press, 1991), 421–64. A good illustration of this early focus is Karl-Werner Brand, Detlef Büsser and Dieter Rucht, eds., *Aufbruch in eine andere Gesellschaft: Neue soziale Bewegungen in der Bundesrepublik*, revised edn. (Frankfurt a.M. and New York: Campus Verlag, 1986).

[6] Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, *Die Phantasie an die Macht: Mai 68 in Frankreich* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1995).

[7] Neidhardt and Rucht, 'The Analysis of Social Movements', 450.

[8] Likewise Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, 'May 1968 in France: The Rise and Fall of a New Social Movement, in Fink, Gassert and Junker, *1968: The World Transformed* 253–76, 254. This is actually a slightly shortened English translation of 'Mai 68 in Frankieich', in Gilcher-Holtey, 1968.

[9] 'Eine soziale Bewegung ist ein auf gewisse Dauer gestelltes und *durch kollektive Identität abgestütztes Handlungssystem mobilisierter Netzwerke* von Gruppen und Organisationen, welche sozialen Wandel mit Mitteln des Protests – notfalls bis zur Gewaltanwendung – herbeiführen, verhindern oder rückgängig machen wollen', Dieter Rucht, *Modernisierung und neue soziale Bewegungen: Deutschland, Frankreich und USA im Vergleich* (Frankfurt a.M. and New York: Campus Verlag, 1994), 76–7 (my emphasis). See also *idem*, 'Die Ereignisse von 1968 als soziale Bewegung: Methodologische Überlegungen und einige empirische Befunde,' in Gilcher-Holtey, *1968*, 116–30, 117.

[10] Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison, *Social Movements: A Cognitive Approach* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

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the transformation of those rules into relevant objectives . . . the cognitive constitution of the movement, the formulation of the problem, the resulting perception of reality, and the objectives that are established cause the movement to develop according to specific dynamics that distinguish it' (p. 256). She then proceeds to outline the formation of an intellectual New Left, which provided a cognitive orientation that served as the integrative element in the combined uprising of French students and workers triggered by the 'critical event' (Pierre Bourdieu) of the Night of Barricades (10–11 May). As sophisticated as this model is and notwithstanding the elegance with which Gilcher-Holtey employs it in this essay, the contention that students and workers shared a common cognitive orientation (even in Paris) needs to be grounded in more empirical research; neither does Gilcher-Holtey systematically trace the influence of New Left ideas among students. She makes up for this in a brilliant second essay on the Frankfurt School's critical theory and the New Left (pp. 168–87).[11] While largely focusing on the German student movement, it shows that only particular features of the critical theory permitted students to perceive themselves as a social avant garde, and it rightly stresses the importance of Max Horkheimer's and Theodor Adorno's studies on authority for the German movement.[12]

Applying the social movement approach to the German Extra-parliamentary Opposition (APO), Pavel Richter maintains that the theoretical postulates of the Socialist Students League (SDS) provided the cognitive orientation for the heterogeneous movement opposing the passage of emergency laws (pp. 45–6). But how many traditional peace activists, let alone labor unionists, really recognised their perception of reality in those intellectual postulates? Moreover, it may be plausible to distinguish between radical socialists and anti-authoritarians within the student camp and to suggest that the cognitive orientation of the movement changed when the latter gained control in 1967, but it is far too schematic to have the former end up in communist splinter-groups and the latter in alternative community projects (p. 55). In fact, the social movement approach seems not to be particularly well suited to explain the choices activists made after the movement fragmented. Although this is another area where we need more micro-level studies, Gerd Koenen's suggestion in *Das rote Jahrzehnt* that personal and circumstantial contingencies might have played a crucial role in the decisions of most individuals should not be rejected out of hand (pp. 257–315).

Overall, the application of social movement theory as a framework for historical inquiries into '1968' has yielded a considerable number of fresh insights and

[11] On the crucial, if increasingly uneasy, relationship between the Frankfurt School and the West German Student movement see also Wolfgang Kraushaar, ed., *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung: Von der Flaschenpost zum Molotowcocktail 1945–1995*, 3 vols. (Hamburg: Rogner & Bernhard, 1998), which is noteworthy less for the essays and comments by movement participants in the third volume than for the meticulous chronology and, above all, for the superb collection of documents in vols. I and II.

[12] In fact, it has recently been argued that Horkheimer was quite active in promoting the results of his Institute's analyses within the wider public. See Clemens Albrecht *et al.*, *Die intellektuelle Gründung der Bundesrepublik: Eine Wirkungsgeschichte der Frankfurter Schule* (New York and Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, 1999).

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provocative theses, especially where international comparisons have been undertaken. Thus Marica Tolomelli argues that protest movements in both Italy and Germany shared a cognitive orientation provided by the New Left, but that the genuinely Italian element of *operaismo* reinforced ties between students and workers whereas the Frankfurt School's scepticism towards the labour movement as an agent of social change impeded closer relations in Germany (Gilcher-Holtey, *1968*, pp. 82–100).[13] Michael Schmidtke analyses the social relevance of New Left ideas both for the German SDS and the American Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) (Gilcher-Holtey, *1968*, pp. 188–206). He identifies three strategies (direct action, counter-cultural transformation, anti-imperialist struggle) that were informed by both the critical theory and the thinking of C. Wright Mills. His important observation that these strategies and their corresponding objectives of reform, revolt and revolution were not developed consecutively but always coexisted within both movements merits elaboration and begets the question of proportional differences over time and across national boundaries.

Among authors shunning a social movement perspective, Wolfgang Kraushaar, in *1968 als Mythos, Chiffre und Zäsur*, finds strong American influences in German occurrences of civil disobedience but is obviously interested neither in channels of diffusion nor in possible reconceptualisations on the part of the recipient (pp. 53–80). In fact, he seems to suggest a simple one-way street – a proposition that has fallen into disrepute even among scholars of Americanisation. Donatella della Porta is much more sensible in this regard, when she argues that commonalties between collective identities facilitate the cross-national diffusion of movement ideas but also warns that this diffusion often merely consists of decontextualised fragments that, in addition, must pass through the filter of specific cultural traditions (Gilcher-Holtey, *1968*, pp. 131–50).[14] This becomes particularly difficult but all the more fascinating to analyse in cases of constant cultural amalgamation, as for instance among emigrants. The New Left in the United States did indeed draw substantially on German emigrant thought, and we still need a comprehensive study of the intellectual alloys resulting from this interaction.[15]

Michael Kimmel's effort in his book to provide an overview of interpretations of the movement and then move on to utilise the social movement approach to

[13] This argument of course loses its validity for the early 1970s when a considerable number of German activists joined the industrial work force in order to incite its revolutionary conscience. (See Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*, 319–25). It thus illustrates once more the fallacy of focusing exclusively on the cognitive orientation of the movement. Workers were certainly as wary of Maoists as they had been of Adornites.

[14] On the concept of cross-national diffusion see Doug McAdam and Dieter Rucht, 'The Cross-National Diffusion of Movement Ideas', *Annals of the American Association of Political and Social Sciences*, 258 (1993), 56–74; Donatella della Porta, Hanspeter Kriesi and Dieter Rucht, eds., *Social Movements in a Globalizing World* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

[15] See Claus-Dieter Krohn, 'Die Entdeckung des ''anderen'' Deutschland in der intellektuellen Protestbewegung der 1960er Jahre in der Bundesrepublik und den Vereinigten Staaten', *Exilforschung*, 13 (1995), 16–52; *idem*, 'Die westdeutsche Studentenbewegung und das ''andere Deutschland'' ' in Axel Schildt, Detlef Siegfried and Karl Christian Lammers, eds., *Dynamische Zeiten: Die 60er Jahre in den beiden deutschen Gesellschaften* (Hamburg: Christians, 2000), 695–718.

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distinguish between nationally specific and universal elements within the German, French and American movements quickly degenerates into a plethora of bulleted and often shallow sketches. Neither his stereotyped assigning of methodological paradigms to individual countries nor the definition of differing time capsules for movements in the United States (1960–70), West Germany (1965–70), and France (1968–70) are particularly convincing. The same is true for his decision to confine the concept of new social movement to the Western industrialised world. This ignores the global dimension of the sixties revolt, on which more later. Kimmel's observation that social movement research often tends to neglect the peculiarities of different protest groups is well taken, yet his aim to arrive at an ideal type of student movement by separating national from universal characteristics and his decision to rely solely on social-scientific literature without consulting historical analyses runs the same risk of missing important specifics. The book is useful, at best, as a quarry for sociological interpretations of the 1960s movement.

While the social movement approach clearly established itself as a promising framework for future research, it still comes with a number of drawbacks. One is the focus on collective identity, which de-emphasises individual experience, thereby foreclosing biographical approaches. Moreover, much of it is concerned with ideational processes and political protest, neglecting important counter-cultural features of the movement. It is no surprise, then, that Jakob Tanner's analysis of the movement's subcultural dynamics is one of only a few pieces in Gilcher-Holtey's collection which avoid the social movement perspective. Nevertheless, Tanner makes an important contribution in pointing out that mass media played a role not only in the diffusion of movement actions but also in the creation of the movement's self-perception and its allusion to the counter-culture's proneness to commercialisation (Gilcher-Holtey, *1968*, 207–23). Most importantly, however, social movement theory can not detail the impact of protest on political decision-making. By its very nature it is mostly uninterested in and often ignorant of the so-called establishment. Thus Ingeborg Villinger's provocative portrayal of both the thinking and the actions of the movement as mythological ends up in generally plausible but empirically unsubstantiated claims regarding its consequences for the West German political and social system (*ibid.*, pp. 239–55). However, it is especially in the realm of interaction between protesters and the political classes in different countries where newly opened archives promise abundant research opportunities and where traditional historical methods may have much to contribute.

II

Social movement research and its notion of the diffusion of movement ideas, be it across or within national boundaries, has been instrumental in recasting the debate on the ideological undercurrents of the political and cultural upheavals of the 1960s. In particular, the notion of a cognitive constitution of the movement has stimulated analysis of the precise relationship between theoretical mentors of the movement and the motivations of activists. One seemingly exotic but all the more important

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and, as it turns out, quite rewarding undertaking in this regard is Ingo Juchler's comparative history of the influence of third world independence movements and theories on the student movements in West Germany and the United States. Juchler adds a north–south dimension to Doug McAdam's and Dieter Rucht's observation of a cross-national diffusion of movement ideas. Whereas German students concerned with the 'Third World' first focused on Algeria[16] and the American SDS became fascinated by Castro's Cuba,[17] Afro-American students within the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) were infatuated early on with the newly independent African states and their leaders, such as Kenya's Oginga Odinga and Guinea's Sékou Touré. Juchler argues that it was this easy identification of Afro-American students with African independence movements which not only led SNCC and the Black Panthers to view themselves as anti-colonial guerrillas within their own country but eventually also propelled other American as well as West German student organisations to assume the mantle of metropolitan revolutionaries after being radicalised by the Vietnam War. He shows the crucial role of West German student leader Rudi Dutschke, first in constructing a relationship between circumstances in underdeveloped and in industrialised countries, then by applying Che Guevara's focus theory to the Western world. Accordingly, students would not have to wait any longer for the arrival of a revolutionary situation. Rather, they were asked to create that situation themselves by unreservedly accepting their role as revolutionaries.

In an essay published in 1967, Dutschke pointed to the liberation of West Berlin as a possible focus for the revolutionary transformation of the two German states, which would also bring about the reunification of the country.[18] This has recently led some authors to argue that he might have pursued a hidden nationalist agenda.[19] In his book Wolfgang Kraushaar is indeed able to marshal substantial evidence suggesting a serious concern on Dutschke's part with the division of Germany, particularly in the 1970s. Seeing therein a dialectic between nationalism and internationalism, his interpretive framework is also much more sophisticated than others. Still, his conclusion that there probably existed a hidden agenda among certain elements of the West German student movement seems overdrawn – and

[16] Unfortunately, Juchler declines to bring his own perspective to this subject, instead referring the reader to Claus Leggewie, *Kofferträger: Das Algerien-Projekt der Linken im Adenauer-Deutschland* (Berlin: Rotbuch, 1984).

[17] This fascination was furthered, to be sure, by *Western* intellectuals.

[18] R. S. [Rudi Dutschke], 'Zum Verhältnis von Organisation und Emanzipationsbewegung', *Oberbaumblatt*, 5 (12 June 1967), 1 and 4–6, reprinted in Kraushaar, *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung*, II, 255–60.

[19] Bernd Rabehl, 'Zur archaischen Inszenierung linksradikaler Politik', *ibid*., III, 34–64; *idem*, 'Nationalrevolutionäres Denken im antiautoritären Lager der Radikalopposition zwischen 1961 und 1980', *Wir selbst. Zeitschrift für nationale Identität*, 3–4 (1998), 113–20; *idem*, *Feindblick. Der SDS im Fadenkreuz des 'Kalten Krieges'* (Berlin: Philosophischer Salon, 2000). Rabehl, one of Dutschke's closest associates in the 1960s, has recently displayed strong right-wing affinities. Former companions of his and Dutschke's have, meanwhile, vehemently denied that there were any nationalist leanings within the SDS. See 'Nationalisten waren wir nie!! Ehemalige 68er SDS-Mitglieder distanzieren sich von Mahler und Rabehl', http://www.members.partisan.net/sds/sds00199.html

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even more so his contention that their internationalism was in fact meant only as a detour to reunification. It is indeed surprising that Kraushaar finally arrives at such a far-reaching conclusion after first putting forward the much more plausible supposition that Dutschke, in 1967, regarded reunification as an intermediate step on the road to global liberation rather than as an end in itself (pp. 89–129). All the same, the discussion seems to suggest the desirability of a comprehensive intellectual biography of Rudi Dutschke.

Gerd Koenen also stresses the prevalence of world revolutionary ideas over any purely national motives in Dutschke's thinking. He is more concerned, however, with the consequences of the German student leader's voluntaristic strategy and its ambivalence toward the problem of political violence (pp, 35–65). In fact, much of Koenen's book can be read as a treatise on the movement and its latent propensity to violence. Taking his own journey through these times and through a variety of movement groups as a road map, he goes from Dutschke to the movement's infatuation with Guevara's warlord machismo, then moves on to the SDS, the Kommune 1, feminists and a myriad of Marxist-Leninist, Trotskyist, and Maoist groups, only to find in all of them a naive innocence towards their own violence-prone rhetoric. However, Koenen maintains that this 'circular rhetoric of violence and resistance', far from being innocent, rather created a psychological susceptibility to take up arms in the revolutionary struggle. Thus the terrorists of the 1970s cannot be erased from the history of the 1960s movement. Writing in a lively, at times polemic, style that drifts into affectation only occasionally, Koenen is strongest in his discussion of the confusing so-called K-groups that sprang up after the dissolution of the movement, detailing their often minute differences and describing their character as self-contained biotopes. In line with his principal argument, he grants that even his own long-time companions in the Kommunistischer Bund Westdeutschlands (KBW) revealed a certain intellectual affinity to the terrorist Red Army Faction (RAF), yet at the same time and in a somewhat contradictory manner wonders how the authorities could have regarded the former as a recruiting camp for the latter. In the end, Koenen is unable to explain why a few activists turned ambivalent rhetoric into manifest deeds and why they exaggerated the movement's narcissism to such an extent that it finally ended up in an existentialist death spiral.

The same is also true for Gerhard Fels, who as a self-declared realist has little patience with the socialist pipe dreams of starry-eyed 1960s idealists. Discussing the ideological founding fathers of the movement (the Frankfurt School, Ernst Bloch, Georg Lukács, Jürgen Habermas), he insists that it has been grounded in the same intellectual tradition that bred the terrorists of the 1970s. Yet he cannot explain why the same roots produced quite different trees. However, rather than belittling the continuities between 1960s revolt and 1970s terrorism, as does Michel Wieviorka for France (Gilcher-Holtey, *1968*, pp. 273–82) it should be acknowledged that a systematic analysis of this relationship is overdue. It could start from Max Weber's insight that ideas are not simply translated into social action but are, on the one hand, themselves continually transformed by the ever-changing context of those actions and may, on the other hand, have unintended effects in situations that are

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essentially different from the environment in which the ideas were originally formulated.[20]

III

Another worthwhile project would be to analyse the intellectual ridges of the 1960s and their gentle slope into the 1970s in a comparative way across different countries. The prospects for such an undertaking seem to be promising, judging from the recent proliferation of comparative literature on the 1960s. A case in point is Arthur Marwick, who sets out to tell the story of a cultural revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United States the way it was, embracing the Rankean ideal in the face of the postmodernist hordes and their 'metaphysical history' that serves only left-wing causes. When Marwick is not chiding cultural theorists, he is dismissing the ideological foundations of the movement as a 'Great Marxisant Fallacy'. As Marwick tells it, this fallacy – the expectation that the demise of capitalism was imminent – had activists scrambling for a revolutionary subject, all the while missing the real cultural revolution that was under way among the vast majority of ordinary people. This epochal transformation in material conditions, lifestyles, family relationships and personal freedoms, moreover, was brought about not by anti-authoritarians but by a variety of subcultures that did not confront but rather permeated society. Also crucial were liberal elites, who reacted with 'measured judgement' to the challenges. These are, in fact, stimulating theses, and Marwick should be commended for exploding the usual dichotomies of much of the literature. Unfortunately, once he begins to present the evidence for his arguments in exhaustive (and sometimes exhausting) detail, it soon becomes obvious that his comprehensive multinational approach comes at a price. His initial overview of governmental systems, police force peculiarities, intellectual histories, and religious traditions turns out to be simplistic and hardly systematised. In the remaining 766 pages plus notes he dwells on a hotchpotch of apparently random issues ranging from fashion, art, music and novels (with sometimes tiring summaries of plots) to teen magazines, sexual rebellion, the motorisation of Italian villages, student unrest at the London School of Economics, an abortion scandal in Paris, sanitation workers in Memphis, and so on and so forth. Less would have been more. Nevertheless, this is the first monograph that attempts a truly international look at the 1960s, based on multi-archival research and acknowledging that we have to look back into the 1950s as well as forward into the 1970s in order to arrive at a well-grounded understanding of the 1960s.

Comparisons on a smaller scale have recently blossomed. Several of the already mentioned essays in Gilcher-Holtey's collection take a comparative approach, as do

[20] Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey has utilised these insights in her monograph on the French May events. While she has not extended them to the subject of terrorism, she points out in a recent textbook that the militants and terrorists of the 1970s in fact renounced both the New Left's basic values and its strategy for the transformation of society. See Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, *Die 68er Bewegung: Deutschland – Westeuropa – USA* (Munich: C.H.Beck, 2001), 122–3.

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the monographs by Juchler and Kimmel. Stuart Hilwig examines how students had to cope with a hostile press in both West Berlin and Turin (Fink, Gassert and Junker, *1968*, pp. 321–49); Gerd-Rainer Horn identifies a 'New Working Class' in France, Italy, Spain and Czechoslovakia (*ibid.*, pp. 351–71); and Harold Marcuse follows the largely simultaneous rise of Holocaust awareness in West Germany, Israel and the United States and its varying consequences for domestic developments (*ibid.*, pp. 421–38).

The last three authors' essays appear in a collection that looks at 1968 not merely from an international but from a global perspective. A global dimension has been accorded to the events of 1968 ever since contemporary activists themselves felt that they were part of a worldwide rebellion.[21] Wolfgang Kraushaar calls 1968 the first global revolution. But after commenting on the coincidence of May events in France and Germany, pointing to the role of mass media and discussing similarities in the development of West German and American student organisations (pp. 19–52), he somehow loses track of his subject and never gets back to it. Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker, on the other hand, put forward a coherent and impressive argument for viewing 1968 from a global perspective. In their introduction they concede that the events of 1968 took place within national contexts and that specific national traditions must therefore be taken into account. Yet they also point out that mass media created transnational and intercultural linkages for the global dissemination and reception of actions even if they originated in a specific national setting; they point to still largely unexplored networks between movement participants; they give credence to the activists' self-perception as participants in a worldwide struggle; and they allude to the movement's internationally shared ideological foundation.

With regard to the realm of politics, Fink, Gassert, and Junker try to establish 1968 as a major watershed separating a period of confrontation from an era of détente. This, however, seems less convincing. From an East–West perspective, one could already assert an US–Soviet rapprochement in the first half of the decade. Whereas the crushing of the Prague Spring and the meek US reaction thereto might well have accelerated Bonn's Ostpolitik, as Gottfried Niedhart argues (pp. 173–92), a reorientation of West German diplomacy had been under way for some time. More importantly, despite the fact that the Tet offensive had a major impact on the popular perception of the Vietnam War particularly in the United States and thus indirectly also on US policy as is impressively illustrated again in this volume by George C. Herring, (pp. 31–53) and Chester J. Pach Jr (pp. 55–81), Asians and Africans will hardly have experienced 1968 as a turning point, given that many anti-colonial and post-colonial struggles extended well into the 1970s.

Nevertheless, it is a major contribution of this volume to place the challenges to the domestic order in various countries within the international context of the Cold

[21] See Robert V. Daniels, *Year of the Heroic Guerrilla: World Revolution and Counterrevolution in 1968* (New York: Basic Books, 1989); George Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968* (Boston: South End Press, 1987).

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War. Of particular value is the inclusion of essays on central and eastern Europe as well as the Far East. Thus Mark Kramer provides an extensive and outstanding account of the Kremlin's response to the Prague Spring, based on archival research in Czechoslovak, German, Polish and Russian collections (pp. 111–71). Similarly, Nancy Bernkopf Tucker can establish a direct connection between events in Czechoslovakia and Beijing's redirection of both domestic and foreign policies (pp. 193–216).

Many contributions to the volume, especially in its third part dealing with protest movements, implicitly challenge the fixation on 1968 and take a longer-term perspective. Far from disrupting the unusual coherence of this collection, however, this actually proves to be a strength by locating 1968 firmly within the political, social, and cultural context of 'the long 1960s'. There is no doubt that the volume's endeavour to integrate international relations, the role of the media and the cross-cultural exchange of people, images and ideas in order to arrive at a transnational and potentially global perspective that might help explain the simultaneity of similar eruptions around the globe is largely successful.

Anyone who still questions the global dimension of the 1960s protest movement should take a look at Lutz Schulenburg's instructive collection of documents. While this is, once again, a far cry from a critical collection of counter-cultural sources and the editor, an unreconstructed former activist, might in fact have intended to create the impression of a universal spirit among the myriad international protest movements, the wide range of reprinted documents is nevertheless as impressive as it is commendable. There are illustrative pieces from groups as heterogeneous as the Weiberrat and the Aktionskomitee der Fussballer in West Germany, from Provos in Amsterdam, workers in Turin, communards in West Berlin and revolutionaries in Paris. Other documents originate in places as varied as Vienna and Zurich, Spain and Mexico, Cuba and the United States. Unfortunately, Schulenburg confines the collection to documents from 1966–9, thereby ignoring the multiple faultlines of later years.

Whereas in the future much more attention should be paid to the 1970s, we should not succumb to the temptation to construct simple continuities between 1968 and 1989 or even regard the former as some kind of dress rehearsal for the latter. Konrad Jarausch, in his epilogue to Fink, Gassert and Junker's volume, painstakingly isolates connections between both caesuras but is careful not to place the origins of the latter in the former (pp. 461–77). What clearly binds both years together, however, is the fact that historical reappraisals of '1968' will inevitably be informed by the epochal changes of the late 1980s and early 1990s. If historians are conscious of this, they will be able to escape many of the pitfalls that lie ahead in their endeavour to historicise '1968'.

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