

Introduction

THERE WERE FEW REASONS FOR OPTIMISM in Germany in the summer of 1948. Three years after the most destructive war in history, German cities still lay in ruins, dislocated refugees and wounded ex-soldiers wandered the streets, and widespread hunger sparked unrest and protest. Although Marshall Plan aid had begun to arrive from across the Atlantic, most Germans expected long years of poverty and desolation. To make matters worse, it was becoming evident that the emerging Cold War would cast a dark shadow over Germany's future. As the world's new superpowers—the United States and the Soviet Union—transitioned from wartime alliance to postwar hostility, both were determined to fasten their grip on Germany, even at the price of the defeated nation's division. In June 1948 the world held its breath as Germany drew ever closer to military conflict. After Soviet troops placed Berlin's western sectors under military blockade, American and British planes dropped supplies into the besieged city, marking the end of superpower negotiations. The blockade would end nine months later, but it firmly demonstrated that the Americans and Soviets would be unable to overcome their mutual mistrust. The specter of Germany's division into two separate states loomed large. After the devastation and humiliating defeat of the Third Reich, the century-old dream of a united Germany now lay in tatters.

Yet Carl J. Friedrich (1901–1984), chief legal adviser to General Lucius Clay, the U.S. military governor of Germany, was strikingly cheerful. In August 1948, two months after the start of the Berlin blockade, Friedrich happily reported to Clay that his mission to restructure Germany's western occupation zones into a decentralized, democratic, and peaceful West German republic was coming to a successful conclusion. Having supervised countless meetings of German legal scholars, elected local politicians, and Allied occupation personnel on Clay's behalf, Friedrich had helped complete drafts of democratic constitutions at the regional and national level. The German parliaments that the U.S. and British authorities created in their occupation zones would soon ratify these constitutions, turning them into West Germany's foundational legal contracts for the remainder of the century. Friedrich was also energetically engaged in constructing new educational programs designed to train Germans in democratic thought. With the assistance of Rockefeller Foundation officials and U.S. diplomats, he helped found a new university in West Berlin, developed a new democratic research center in Heidelberg, and drafted new curricula that would soon be embraced by universities across Germany. For Friedrich, the impending

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tragedy of Germany's Cold War division was marginal compared to the exhilarating prospect of democratization. The creation of a democratic West German state out of the rubble of Nazism and war was a source of great promise and optimism.

Friedrich's faith in Germany's radical transformation was not merely the product of enormous personal ambitions. His confidence also stemmed from decades of intimate links to the United States. Although he was born in Germany, Friedrich spent the 1930s and 1940s as an émigré scholar in Harvard University's Department of Government, where he cultivated extensive connections to U.S. academic leaders, politicians, military leaders, and philanthropists. The graduate programs, research centers, and training institutions that he founded, such as Harvard's School of Overseas Administration, educated thousands of future policymakers and military personnel for postwar careers and, more broadly, American global hegemony. Friedrich's prominence increased further after the end of Germany's occupation in 1949, when he became a renowned anti-Communist intellectual in both the United States and West Germany. His flurry of writings, which warned against the evils of global communism and called for a firm German-American alliance, electrified the minds of many readers and inspired intellectuals and politicians such as David Riesman, Hannah Arendt, and Henry Kissinger. Alongside his role as an agent of German democratization, Friedrich was also a major figure of Cold War thought and international politics.

To many of Friedrich's contemporaries, these two campaigns—democratizing Germany and forging an anti-Communist international alliance—were a response to the miseries of World War II and the dreadful threat of Soviet power. For Friedrich, however, these efforts marked the resurrection of older ideas and networks formed as a young German political theorist during the Weimar period (1918–1933). Years before the National Socialists' rise to power, Friedrich developed an idiosyncratic theory of democracy and international cooperation. Democracy, Friedrich wrote, emerged not from the Enlightenment but from seventeenth-century German Protestant political thought. Democracy therefore had authentically German roots, which Germans had to embrace. Friedrich further maintained that Protestantism and democracy had spread from Germany to the United States with the Puritan migration. Germans and Americans thus shared natural religious and political foundations. These two nations had to form an international, Protestant, and democratic alliance, one that would help ensure the survival of democracy in Europe. Throughout the Weimar era, Friedrich sought to spearhead the creation of this alliance through the drafting of a pro-democratic curriculum and German-American educational and cultural exchange programs. Blazing a trail he would walk twenty years later, he convinced American philanthropists and policymakers to support these

programs. For Friedrich, then, the post-Nazi world did not require new ideas. The democratic theories, networks, and institutions that he had first developed in the 1920s would serve as the recipe for German democracy and international stability after World War II.

In this blend of distinctive intellectual visions from the Weimar era, bold aspirations for democratic reform, and service with the U.S. political establishment, Friedrich was not alone. Countless German émigré thinkers drew on ideas first formed in Germany's interwar ferment to participate in both Germany's reconstruction and the formation of American Cold War hegemony. Among them were Ernst Fraenkel (1898–1975), a Socialist theoretician who served as a senior official in the U.S. occupation of Korea after World War II, participated in Korea's division, and became one of the most important writers on democracy and labor in West Germany; Waldemar Gurian (1902–1954), a Catholic journalist who worked for the Rockefeller Foundation's cultural outreach programs to Germans after World War II, coined the anti-Communist "theory of totalitarianism," and became one of the foremost specialists on the Soviet Union in the United States; Karl Loewenstein (1891–1973), a liberal lawyer who during the war worked at the U.S. Department of Justice, where he led a campaign of mass incarceration in Latin America, and then became one of the leading pro-democratic and anti-Communist thinkers in postwar Germany; and Hans Morgenthau (1904–1980), whose "realist" theory of international relations was highly influential among anti-Communist U.S. diplomats. These émigrés hailed from varied religious, political, and intellectual backgrounds. They all pursued a distinctive ideological mission. But in different ways and through diverse institutions, they were all crucial architects of both democratization and anti-Communist mobilization. Their ideas, policies, and institutional connections stood at the heart of the postwar Atlantic order.

The unlikely paths that led these émigrés from Weimar to the center of American power are far more than mere biographical curiosities. They illustrate three crucial intellectual and political trends that helped shape the world after World War II. First, these German émigrés, who spent the dark years of the Third Reich in exile, were vital yet often unrecognized players in Germany's postwar reconstruction. With support and funding from American authorities, they introduced comprehensive theories of democracy and anti-communism, took part in constitutional and cultural reforms, and founded pro-democratic academic curricula and institutions. By the end of the 1950s, their teachings about the legitimacy of democratic institutions and the need for anti-Communist mobilization had become cornerstones of the new Federal Republic of Germany (or West Germany, as it was colloquially called). Equally important, their conception of democracy, based on strong state institutions, spiritual consensus, and vigilant suppression of Communists, helped delegitimize and exclude alternative political

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visions. Their ideas marked the harsh limits and brutality of postwar imagination. The stories of German émigrés thus chart the ideological contours of Germany's postwar political order, both its vibrancy and its constraints. They uncover the forces that facilitated what historian Tony Judt called "the most dramatic instance of political stabilization in post-war Europe."¹

Second, the long careers of these émigrés show that the intellectual roots of Germany's democratization lay not in the postwar era, nor was this dramatic change merely a response to the trauma of Nazism. Rather, these émigrés drew their thinking about politics from their experiences during Germany's short-lived first democracy, the Weimar Republic, which emerged from the destruction of World War I and ended with the Nazis' rise to power in 1933. Weimar was an era of great democratic promise but also of intense violence and instability. Its rocky years generated passionate intellectual debates about the nature of democratic politics. As young men, the future émigrés took part in these debates. They spawned a stream of innovative theories about the nature of democratic institutions, democracy's relationship to welfare and religion, and necessary responses to anti-democratic political forces. They ambitiously argued that democracy was the sole legitimate regime, one that had the right to violently crush its enemies. Decades later, as they participated in Germany's rebuilding, they reached back to these ideas and plans. They resurrected older thought patterns, educational institutions, and political rhetoric. Weimar was thus far more than a cautionary tale of democratic collapse. When Germans once again sought to build democracy after the trauma of World War II, Weimar provided powerful intellectual models for political reconstruction.

Third, and least recognized by scholars, the stories of Friedrich, Fraenkel, Gurian, Loewenstein, and Morgenthau shed light on the nature of U.S. power and policymaking during World War II and the early Cold War. Their careers exemplify how the rising American leviathan absorbed European political thought and helped disseminate it around the world. As the global conflicts with Nazism, Japanese militarism, and then communism evolved, German émigrés accompanied the U.S. military, State Department, and private American organizations to unexpected locations. They became political advisers in Korea, legal reformers in Latin America, officials in philanthropic foundations in the Rhineland, and consultants at the State Department in Washington, D.C. Equally important, their writings and theories provided some of the most influential intellectual frameworks that mobilized American democracy for a crusade against communism. In an avalanche of journals, books, and lectures, these five émigrés framed Communist regimes as evil, violent, and ever-expanding tyrannies and explained how democratic states could defeat and destroy them. Though these ideas ostensibly celebrated

¹ Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 265.

democratic principles, they often led to ironic, tragic, and brutal consequences. As the following pages show, the emigrés' conceptions of democracy often ironically led to repression. Yet for these individuals, the democratization of Germany and the defeat of global communism were inseparable campaigns that informed and fueled each other. By taking part in both, they combined two major transformations of the postwar era—Germany's reconstruction and the emerging Cold War—into a single international structure.

The intellectual foundations laid in Weimar were thus fundamental to the architecture of postwar politics in both West Germany and the United States and to the Cold War alliance between them. The ideas originally crafted to support the fragile Weimar Republic helped facilitate Germany's turn to democracy as well as German and American mobilization to combat communism. Each chapter of this book focuses on an individual from a particular background and the political theory he developed in Weimar Germany; his integration into wartime American political, intellectual, and diplomatic networks; and his participation in recruiting institutions and populations to aid in the creation of a democratic Western alliance. Each offers a window onto broad intellectual and political currents within West Germany and the United States during the postwar era. Together, these stories uncover the ideas, ironies, organizations, and experiences that shaped the early Cold War on both sides of the Atlantic. They explain the intellectual origins of titanic political projects.

THE "MIRACLE" OF GERMANY'S RECONSTRUCTION

The rapid and colossal transformation of postwar Germany, from racist dictatorship to liberal democracy, was one of the most exceptional sagas of the modern era. Having fought for the Nazi regime with ferocity throughout the war, even in the face of impending defeat, Germans performed a volte-face and, within just a few years, embraced democracy. With astonishing speed, this previously polarized and violent society developed democratic institutions, electoral organs, the rule of law, vibrant democratic norms, and an active participatory public. This transformation was especially astounding given the deep penetration of Nazism into German society. Hitler and his followers had not merely controlled state institutions (as all dictatorships do) but had also aggressively Nazified and supervised Germany's school curricula, cultural institutions, largest corporations, and voluntary associations, from book clubs to hiking groups. Germany's shift to democracy has thus continued to stir the minds of political leaders, theorists, and reformers. When the American authorities planned the occupation of Iraq in 2003, for example, specialists studiously consulted the literature on the occupations of Germany and Japan. In the eyes of many, Germany's politi-

cal reconstruction in the aftermath of 1945 remains one of the greatest “miracles” of the twentieth century.²

What explains this rapid change? What accounts for the speed with which Germans of diverse political and religious backgrounds came not only to tolerate democratic institutions but to embrace democratic norms of open debate and peaceful competition as the key legitimate political standard? The many historians who have sought to answer these questions generally embrace one of two perspectives. The most common interpretation focuses on the decisive role of the United States. First, during the occupation of Germany (1945–1949), and later as part of the Cold War, the new superpower heavily invested in the reconstruction of Germany’s political institutions, economy, and educational system as part of a frenzied effort to secure Europe from the threat of Soviet dominance. From 1945 on, an army of American educators, labor unionists, businessmen, and philanthropists rushed to join the project of restructuring the ruined country. For over a decade, with massive financial, logistical, and political support from the U.S. government, this web of activists founded new educational programs, invested in political education, and flooded the country with pro-democratic, anti-Soviet magazines, books, and radio shows. Many historians maintain that this prolonged and multifaceted campaign profoundly influenced Germany’s transformation into a stable and democratic culture. Its mistakes and setbacks notwithstanding, the United States successfully imposed its own ideas and norms that led Germans to abandon their extreme nationalism and violence and instead embrace peaceful political competition.³

In contrast, a second interpretation of Germany’s transformation sees it primarily as the work of Germans. Despite the scale of their efforts, Americans quickly recognized that they could not single-handedly transform the cultural and intellectual terms by which Germans understood the postwar

² The term “miracle of democracy” is borrowed from Konrad H. Jarausch, Arnd Bauerkämper, and Marcus M. Payk (eds.), *Demokratiewunder: transatlantische Mittler und die kulturelle Öffnung Westdeutschlands* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005). On recalling the occupation of Germany and Japan during the planning of the invasion of Iraq, see James Dobbins et al., *America’s Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Monograph, 2003).

³ The scholarship on American influence on Germany is vast. For classic and helpful examples, see Volker R. Berghahn, *The Americanisation of West German Industry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Klaus Naumann (ed.), *Nachkrieg in Deutschland* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2001); Jeffrey M. Diefendorf, Axel Frohn, and Hermann-Josef Rupieper (eds.), *American Policy and the Reconstruction of West Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Hermann-Josef Rupieper, *Die Wurzeln der westdeutschen Nachkriegsdemokratie: der amerikanische Beitrag 1945–1952* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1993). On the debates concerning the Marshall Plan, see the essays in Charles Maier and Günter Bischof (eds.), *The Marshall Plan and Germany* (Oxford: Berg, 1991).

world. As many frustrated observers have noted, West Germans might have consumed American culture, listened to American radio stations, and flocked to watch American movies, but they just as often condemned what they saw as “foreign” American culture and values. Indeed, both during and after the occupation, Germans frequently ignored American cultural diplomacy. They even interpreted its content as an affirmation of anti-American sentiments.⁴ Many historians therefore argue that Germans embraced democracy primarily because of postwar domestic conditions and experiences. The defeated nation, they claim, came to value peaceful democratic competition owing to its shame over Nazi crimes, the economic prosperity it enjoyed in the 1950s, or the growth of a new generation after the war. According to this narrative, Germans found their own path to democratic ideas and norms.⁵

Both of these interpretations are helpful in understanding Germany’s dramatic turn. Yet they overlook several crucial factors that played a decisive role in the making of a democratic Germany. First, democratization was not the product of the individual activities of American *or* German agents. It was the outcome of prolonged collaboration, in which both sides were crucial players. No group embodies this synergy better than the émigrés who returned to postwar Germany. In the decade after 1945, they worked for the U.S. military, diplomatic establishment, foreign aid programs, academic institutions, and philanthropic foundations. They established academic centers for the study of democracy in Heidelberg, Berlin, and Munich, conducted public outreach campaigns aimed at workers, and published a stream of democratic theories in books and journals. But despite their dependence on American wealth and might, they did not merely transmit American ideas or values. Rather, they utilized their positions in order to disseminate their own ideas. The complex project of building democracy was the product of symbiosis. It was a process in which consistent American pressure and the efforts of German actors were inseparable.

Second, scholars of Germany’s reconstruction privilege economic and political measures, such as the Marshall Plan, the introduction of the West German currency (D-Mark) in 1948, or the writing of the West German Constitution in 1949. In doing so, they often ignore the role of ideas and democratic theories in shaping action. In fact, scholars have often claimed that Germany’s democratization evolved without any intellectual infra-

⁴ On the limits and failures of American cultural diplomacy in Germany, see, for example, Mary Nolan, *The Transatlantic Century: Europe and America 1890–2010* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 154–266; Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in Divided Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

⁵ See, for example, Konrad H. Jarausch, *After Hitler: Recivilizing Germans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Axel Schildt, *Ankunft im Westen: ein Essay zur Erfolgsgeschichte der Bundesrepublik* (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 1999); Axel Schildt, *Zwischen Abendland und Amerika: Studien Zur Westdeutschen Ideenlandschaft* (Oldenbourg: Wissenschaftsverlag, 1999).

structure. Mark Lilla echoed a widespread notion when he asserted that Germany's democratization was a "revolution without ideas," a strange re-birth of democracy without democratic thought.⁶ But postwar Germany was shaped by vibrant intellectual debates and theories. As the following pages show, returning German émigrés provided new intellectual frameworks for democratic reform and offered a plethora of political languages and terminologies. They argued that democracy was rooted in older German religious traditions and called on Germans to strengthen democracy against the Communist enemy. These German thinkers took it upon themselves to convince their countrymen that democracy was not a foreign system imposed by the victorious Allies but rather the product of indigenous ideas. In a multifaceted campaign of lectures, publications, and teaching, they sought to demonstrate that German cultural traditions were naturally and organically democratic. In doing so, they helped reshape German political behavior. And as evidence shows, these émigrés' ideas resonated powerfully among many. The people who read their works, listened to their lectures, or passed through the institutions they helped build explicitly acknowledged their influence. In order to understand how people thought about and understood democracy, one must therefore examine the development and implementation of émigré ideas and theories. They provided a crucial intellectual arsenal for Germany's democratic transformation.⁷

Finally, historians of Germany's democratization generally begin their stories in 1945, obscuring longer continuities. They tend to agree that, in the words of one scholar, "it was catastrophe that rendered the Germans capable of democracy."⁸ But the political ideas that shaped West Germany were not a product of the postwar world. Rather, this book contends that many of the intellectual foundations of Germany's democratization, its possibilities and limitations, lay in the intense discussions of the Weimar era. As

⁶ Mark Lilla, "The Other Velvet Revolution: Continental Liberalism and Its Discontents," *Daedalus* 123:2 (1994): 129–157.

⁷ Several excellent studies have begun to explore the intellectual reconstruction of Germany. Most, however, focus primarily on questions of national identity and historical memory rather than on democratic theory per se. See, for example, Dirk Moses, *German Intellectuals and the Nazi Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Jens Hacke, *Philosophie der Bürgerlichkeit: Die Liberal-konservative Begründung der Bundesrepublik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006); Jan-Werner Müller (ed.), *German Ideologies since 1945: Studies in the Political Thought and Culture of West Germany* (New York: Macmillan, 2003); and Clemens Albrecht et al. (eds.), *Die Intellektuelle Gründung der Bundesrepublik: eine Wirkungsgeschichte der Frankfurter Schule* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1999). For an exception, which explores the works of several liberal thinkers in postwar Heidelberg, see Sean Forner, *German Intellectuals and the Challenge of Democratic Renewal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming). See also the special forum edited by A. Dirk Moses, "The Intellectual History of the Federal Republic," *German History* 27:2 (2009): 244–258.

⁸ Peter Graff von Kilemansegg, *Nach der Katastrophe* (Berlin: Siedler, 2000), 10.

historian Daniel Rodgers has noted, moments of crisis and upheaval rarely generate new ideas and new policies. When societies experience radical transformation and old hierarchies and institutions collapse, “men are much more prone to fall back on inherited and instinctive values in an effort to cope with a totally unprecedented situation.”⁹ Despite the cataclysmic effects of total war and devastating defeat, the democratic concepts that replaced Nazism were not simply a response to the trauma of war, although they gained a new appeal in the postwar era. When thinkers sought to democratize Germany, they dipped into an intellectual reservoir developed in the 1920s and the early 1930s, when the country had first experimented with a democratic system. While historians have devoted considerable energy to uncovering continuities between the Third Reich and the postwar Federal Republic, the earlier and more obscure forces that linked the two German republics were equally if not more significant for Germany’s stabilization. Had it not been for the existing ideas and traditions of the Weimar era, Germans would not have quickly embraced democracy as their own project.¹⁰

It was no coincidence that German émigrés were among the principal conduits for Weimar’s democratic language and theories. Prior to 1945, the Nazis had relentlessly suppressed or co-opted alternative cultural and intellectual traditions.¹¹ Some three hundred thousand Germans whom the Nazi regime defined as “un-German” or “Judaic” fled or were forced out of central Europe during the six years between the Nazi revolution in 1933 and the outbreak of war in 1939. The émigrés who fled Nazi oppression, however, carried with them a democratic language and institutional frameworks that the Third Reich could not reach. Of these exiles, a small fraction, fewer than fifteen thousand, returned to Europe after 1945 to take part in Germany’s reconstruction. Though these numbers may seem vanishingly small, returning émigrés profoundly contributed to the development of intellectual alternatives to disgraced Nazi ideology by invoking earlier theories of German democracy as a source of national renewal. While scholars have produced innumerable studies of German émigrés’ contributions to culture, music, journalism, medicine, and art during their exile, historians have only recently begun to explore the vital role that these individuals played in the postwar reconstruction of Europe. Through their agency,

⁹ Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998), 413.

¹⁰ For a representative and excellent example, see Norbert Frei, *Adenauer’s Germany and the Nazi Past: The Politics of Amnesty and Integration* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

¹¹ The scholarship on the Nazification of German thought and culture is enormous. For an overview of Nazism’s relationship with different fields of thought, see the excellent essays in Wolfgang Ihalainen and Anson Rabinbach (eds.), *Nazi Germany and the Humanities* (Oxford: One-world, 2007).

Weimar-era ideas returned to Germany and provided crucial building blocks for political stabilization.¹²

In addition to drawing attention to the crucial continuities driving Germany's democratization, the stories of German émigrés demonstrate how different groups *inside* Germany came to think about democracy. Like all nations, Germany was never a homogeneous entity and comprised diverse communities—Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, conservatives, liberals, and Socialists—that developed autonomous cultural, religious, and political traditions. Friedrich, Fraenkel, Gurian, Loewenstein, and Morgenthau were rooted in different political and cultural milieus. Each crafted a democratic theory that borrowed heavily from ideas and concepts unique to his background, and devoted considerable effort—both before and after the war—to mobilizing his own community in support of democratic politics. Each of these men therefore serves as a window for tracing the broader shifts that led Protestants and Catholics, Socialists and liberals, to understand and embrace democracy. They reflect the intellectual efforts, glaring lacunae, and disturbing political neglectfulness that enabled these broad transformations. Taken together, these stories show that there was no single foundation for West Germany's postwar transformation. No one key idea, event, or group was the sole architect of postwar thought and politics. Rather, Germany's reconstruction is best understood as the amalgamation of varied individual and collective transformations. It is only by observing these changes as a whole that one can fully understand Germany's path to democratic norms and values.

German émigrés not only took part in Germany's domestic transformation; they also helped steer West Germany's broad international shift. In the years following the end of American occupation, West Germany unequivocally renounced its earlier quest for continental hegemony and instead became a staunch member of the "Western alliance." Under the banner of "Western integration," the West German government subordinated its military power to NATO, forged a firm alliance with the United States, and willingly compromised its sovereignty by hosting American military forces,

¹² Scholarship on returning German émigrés has begun to develop in recent years. For important sociological overviews, see for example Marita Krauss, *Heimkehr in ein fremdes Land: Geschichte der Remigration nach 1945* (Munich: Beck, 2001), and Irmela von der Lühne and Axel Schildt (eds.), *"Auch in Deutschland Waren Wir Nicht Wirklich Zu Hause": Jüdische Remigration nach 1945* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2008). On German émigrés and political science in postwar Germany, see Alfons Söllner, "Normative Verwestlichung. Der Einfluss der Remigranten auf die politische Kultur der frühen Bundesrepublik," in Heinz Bude and Bernd Greiner (eds.), *Westbindungen: Amerika in der Bundesrepublik* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1999), 72–92; and Alfons Söllner, *Deutsche Politikwissenschaftler in der Emigration* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1996). For an excellent study on the intellectual role of German émigrés in the country's cultural reconstruction, see Noah Strote, *Emigration and the Foundation of West Germany 1933–1963* (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2011).

abandoning the bellicose aspirations that had characterized German politics for decades. In the eyes of many Germans, including Konrad Adenauer, West Germany's chancellor from 1949 to 1963, this diplomatic reorientation transcended economic, security, or anti-Soviet considerations and was integral to the country's domestic democratization. By participating in a broad transnational alliance, many believed, Germans would gain a new sense of national mission and would associate democracy with international prestige and security.¹³

German émigrés were paramount in this postwar reformation. Having lived in exile in the United States and participated in its war effort, these individuals blended an awareness of German culture with intimate knowledge of the American establishment. They acted as mediators between these two worlds and presented the American reconstruction and anti-Communist efforts in Europe in familiar terms, compatible with domestic traditions. By claiming that its alliance with the West stemmed from “natural” similarities between Germany and other nations, they helped moderate Germany's intense nationalism and imperialism in favor of supranational commitments. Aware of the émigrés' unique position, both the American authorities and the West German government actively encouraged them to expand their work in Germany. Through state institutions and private programs, the émigrés were regularly brought to Germany and placed in key educational and cultural centers. Émigrés often served as a connecting tissue, key actors that linked domestic democratization with the forging of the West-ern alliance. They stood at the center of the German-American symbiosis.

The stories of the German émigrés that form the core of this book thus trace two major and interdependent forces that drove Germany's democratization: the convergence of German and American efforts and the resurrection of ideas and theories from the Weimar period. Their efforts do not provide a comprehensive or exhaustive account of Germany's democratization. But their trajectories show how intellectual and institutional models from Weimar survived in exile and, through the enormous investment and pressures of the United States, returned to shape German political values, practices, and traditions for years to come.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF POSTWAR THOUGHT: THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC AND ITS DISCONTENTS

The revolution that rocked Germany in November 1918, ending World War I and leading to the foundation of Germany's first democracy—the Weimar

¹³ Ronald J. Granieri, *The Ambivalent Alliance: Konrad Adenauer, the CDU/CSU, and the West, 1949–1966* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002).

Republic—meant different things to different people. For the workers and soldiers who stormed state buildings in Berlin, Munich, and across Germany, it was a moment of hope after four miserable years of senseless war. Impeaching the German kaiser and establishing a republic, they believed, would smash the authority of the dominant Prussian nobility, bring political equality, and end the war. For conservatives and nationalists, on the other hand, the revolution marked Germany's horrific downfall. The destruction of the monarchy, and Germany's subsequent surrender to the Allies, was a humiliating end to a decades-long quest for world power and glory. For German intellectuals, the Weimar Republic raised as many questions as it answered. It inspired intense debates about the fundamentals of democratic politics, such as sources of political legitimacy, the role of welfare and religion, and the content of education in a democratic polity. For Carl J. Friedrich, Ernst Fraenkel, Waldemar Gurian, Karl Loewenstein, and Hans J. Morgenthau, the Weimar revolution—which one observer called “one of the most memorable and dreadful [events] . . . in German history”—and the political and intellectual debates it generated were the intellectual motors that drove their entire careers and ambitions.¹⁴

The creation of Germany's first democracy was unanticipated, to say the least. Although strikes and anti-war demonstrations had proliferated throughout the increasingly unpopular war, no one expected them to morph into a revolution. The abysmal failure of the kaiser, the Prussian nobility, and the military to lead Germany to victory ignited a widespread sentiment that more power should be transferred to the parliament and elected politicians. Yet few called for the total abolition of the monarchy. Thus on 9 November 1918, when Socialist politician Philipp Scheidemann stood on the balcony of the Reichstag and proclaimed Germany to be a republic, he did so without any planning or consulting with his party. His declaration was merely an attempt to quiet angry demonstrators who demanded the kaiser's resignation. But the revolution could not be stopped, as soldiers' and workers' riots swiftly spread across Germany. The kaiser and his family fled the country, and revolutionaries took over the state and declared an end to the war. Within a year, a coalition of Socialists, Catholics, and liberals had composed a new democratic constitution—the Weimar Constitution—in which authority stemmed from the people. During its fourteen years, the Weimar Republic opened up new democratic horizons by granting equal rights to women, establishing a comprehensive welfare state, and making all religions equal under the law. It undermined old ideas about the divine legitimacy and authority of the monarchy and aristocracy

¹⁴ The quotation is from the diary of Count Harry Kessler, the German diplomat and writer, cited in Peter Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 88.

and allowed new political actors, including Jews, Socialists, and Catholics, to hold positions of power for the first time. Even those who opposed the republic recognized that it fundamentally broke with the past, and that Germany would never again revert to monarchy. Essayist René Schickele mused that November 1918 “would remain unforgettable.”¹⁵

At the same time, Weimar also inaugurated a decade of misery and anxiety that threatened to tear apart the German nation. In 1919 the victorious Allied Powers forced Germany to sign the humiliating Treaty of Versailles, which severed a massive amount of territory from Germany, obliged it to pay draconian reparations, and subjected its western regions to foreign allied occupation. Bedeviled by the treaty’s toxic legacy, Weimar revealed the hollow promises of four years of wartime sacrifice. For millions of Germans who, in the words of Erich Maria Remarque, “even though they may have escaped its shells, were destroyed by the war,” the republic never overcame these weaknesses.¹⁶ In the following years, Germans also experienced devastating economic disasters, such as hyperinflation, that destroyed the savings of millions. They also observed recurring attempts at violent coups and waves of political assassinations. The republic was plagued by the rise of revolutionary forces that sought to violently restructure society. On the left, the new Communist Party envisioned a Bolshevik dictatorship, which would abolish private property and dismantle democratic institutions. On the right, a burgeoning hypernationalist ideology prophesied a new racial order and renewed imperialist expansion. Both openly challenged the republic’s legitimacy and often resorted to violence in their attempt to overthrow it. The Germany of the Weimar era was more polarized, violent, and anxious than ever before. With its cocktail of utopian visions and deep anxieties, Weimar was the epitome of the “age of extremes.”¹⁷

Although Weimar was Germany’s first democracy, historians have long debated the depth of German democratic thought in this time period. Because Weimar generated such intense anger and frustration and collapsed in 1933 with little resistance, historians have often attributed Weimar’s catastrophic demise in part to the lack of a developed intellectual framework. The traumatic defeat in World War I and Weimar’s chronic instability, they claim, dealt a harsh blow to Germans’ faith in progress, peaceful political

¹⁵ Cited in Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis*, 109.

¹⁶ Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1982), preface.

¹⁷ The term is borrowed from Eric Hobsbawm’s *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991* (New York: Vintage, 1994). The scholarship on Weimar is of course enormous and beyond the scope of this study. The best overviews of the period’s inner tensions and conflicts are Eric D. Weitz, *Weimar Germany: Promise and Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); and Detlev Peukert, *The Weimar Republic: The Crisis of Classical Modernity* (London: Penguin Press, 1991).

life, and liberal self-confidence. Liberal ideology and constitutional democracy seemed bankrupt and predicated on discredited convictions. According to this narrative, the intellectual energy generated by the disintegration of the monarchy and traditional authority contributed to innovations in aesthetics, literature, and philosophy but left German democracy intellectually crippled. As one scholar put it, German democracy's downfall in 1933 "was in part prepared by the demise of [liberalism's] . . . cultural and intellectual forms" after World War I.¹⁸

This interpretation of Weimar and its collapse, however, neglects the wide array of democratic theories, debates, and projects developed during the Weimar period. Despite what many scholars have argued, Weimar was not "a democracy without democrats."¹⁹ Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, various intellectuals embarked on diverse campaigns to strengthen the fragile German republic's intellectual foundations. In a stream of publications, the figures that stand at the center of this book offered new democratic theories and terminologies. Unlike previous thinkers, they did not merely call for modest reforms that would increase electoral participation. Instead, they argued that a democracy based on elected officials was the *only* truly legitimate political system.²⁰ These thinkers also sought to put their ideas into action by establishing a variety of educational organizations. In Heidelberg, Berlin, Frankfurt, and Munich, they founded and joined new educational centers for students and adults and cultural exchange programs, all aimed at strengthening and stabilizing the Weimar state. These efforts did not enter mainstream German thought in the 1920s, and most intellectuals and political theorists did not embrace them. Nevertheless, they constituted an important feature of the era's intellectual landscape. No portrait of Weimar thought is complete without these attempts at democratization.²¹

¹⁸ The quotation is from Benjamin Lazier, *God Interrupted: Heresy and the European Imagination between the World Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 5. See also Rüdiger Graf, *Die Zukunft der Weimarer Republik: Krisen und Zukunftsaneignungen in Deutschland, 1918–1933* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2008); Rüdiger Graf and Mortiz Föllmer (eds.), *Die "Krise" der Weimarer Republik: zur Kritik eines Deutungsmusters* (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, 2005); Bernd Widdig, *Culture and Inflation in Weimar Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

¹⁹ The famous quote appears in many scholars' writings. See, for example, Jan-Werner Müller, *Constitutional Patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 18.

²⁰ As several scholars have shown, Germany developed many democratic institutions and practices throughout the imperial era, such as parliamentary elections, universal male suffrage, and political autonomy; however, German thinkers vested little effort in developing a comprehensive democratic theory. See Margaret Levinia Anderson, *Practicing Democracy: Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

²¹ For an exceptional study of democratic thought in the Weimar era (which does not explore the thinkers covered in this book), see Kathrin Groh, *Demokratische Staatsrechtslehrer in der Weimarer Republik* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010).

These campaigns to bolster the republic were not abstract reflections, but responses to burning and concrete political questions. Each of these thinkers grappled as a young man with a key problem wrought by Germany's democratic transition. How, for example, could Weimar produce a democratic elite in a country where business, political, and academic leaders had long supported the monarchy? What was the relationship between economic conditions and political rights, and was democracy obliged to spread wealth equally? What was religion's role in the new democracy; was the separation of church and state strengthening or weakening Germany? How should Weimar treat those who called for its overthrow, such as Communists and extreme nationalists? And how should the young republic engage with the nations surrounding it, through cooperation or imperial competition? Each of these questions generated fierce debates among Germany's thinkers and politicians. By trying to provide concrete answers, pro-democratic thinkers touched raw nerves in German political culture.

Friedrich, Fraenkel, Gurian, Loewenstein, and Morgenthau each focused on a different dilemma of democratic politics; their questions about democracy drew from their diverse political, religious, and intellectual backgrounds. Ultimately, however, they shared a fundamental agreement. In contrast to the claims of German nationalists, they all believed that democracy was not a foreign imposition, nor a legacy of weakness and humiliation. They feverishly sought to show that a division of power, electoral politics, and group participation in peaceful political competition stemmed from domestic German thought and traditions. The republic's young defenders further argued that democracy did not divide the nation from within. The ultimate goal of politics was not national unity and homogeneity but vibrant competition between groups, parties, and associations. Democracy enabled a multitude of groups to live alongside one another and flourish in a pluralist environment. It allowed citizens to come together through mutual interests and joint political action and coalition building. While these ideas appear obvious to a twenty-first-century reader, they were profoundly innovative in Weimar's intellectual landscape. Such theories introduced new thinking about politics, offering an intellectual arsenal that was unfamiliar to German readers.

This support for free political competition, however, was deeply limited by virulent anti-communism. Long before the Cold War, anxieties over Communist domination permeated German life, cutting across class, region, and political affiliation. The shocking success of Russia's Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 and the subsequent emergence of militant Communist parties across Europe sparked widespread fears that Communists would soon take over the state, abolish private property, destroy traditional social hierarchies, and violently suppress religion. In the eyes of these five future

émigrés, communism posed an overriding threat because it explicitly sought to destroy their visions of democracy. During the 1920s, German Communists openly opposed elections and the division of power, lambasting them as veils for capitalist exploitation. These five men therefore conceived of democracy as continually subject to domestic and foreign threats. Democratic institutions required constant mobilization and innovative defense mechanisms to combat potential Communist aggression and subversion. For this generation, anti-communism and democracy were thus deeply intertwined. Their hostility to communism underpinned a comprehensive democratic project.²²

These ideas and experiences continued to guide the work of these five men decades after Weimar's collapse. And the central role that these émigrés and their ideas played in Germany's democratization after World War II thus necessitates a fresh assessment of the legacies of the Weimar Republic, both its liberating and its limiting effects. Scholars have frequently noted how Germany's first democracy served as a negative model for post-World War II attempts to revive German thought and democratic politics. Haunted by the memory of its collapse, German intellectuals, journalists, and politicians developed a "Weimar complex" or "Weimar syndrome," namely, an obsessive need to juxtapose and contrast current goals and actions with the 1920s. Indeed, throughout the 1950s, the catchphrase "Bonn is not Weimar" appeared not only in books and articles but also in political slogans and election campaigns.²³ Weimar, however, also offered *positive* models, theories, and terminology. Despite its weaknesses, many of the architects of postwar democracy regarded the republic as an unfinished yet admirable venture. Because of Weimar's tainted reputation, the intellectual architects of the postwar order rarely commented on the origins of their democratic thought. They often presented old ideas as new and fresh. But Weimar was not merely a cautionary tale. It generated long-lasting models for postwar thought and was an incubator of democratic theory.

²² As recent scholarship has shown, anti-communism constituted a crucial intellectual and political force long before the Cold War in many societies and cultures. See, for example, Giuliana Chamedes's excellent "The Vatican and the Making of the Atlantic Order" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2013); Alex Goodall, *Loyalty and Liberty: American Countersubversion from World War I to the McCarthy Era* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013); Markku Rutsila, *British and American Anticommunism before the Cold War* (London: Frank Cass, 2001).

²³ Sebastian Ullrich, *Der Weimar-Komplex: das Scheitern der ersten deutschen Demokratie und die politische Kultur der frühen Bundesrepublik* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009); Christoph Gusy (ed.), *Weimars lange Schatten: "Weimar" als Argument nach 1945* (Baden: Nomos, 2003); A. Dirk Moses, "The Weimar Syndrome in the Federal Republic of Germany," in Holgar Zaborowski and Stephan Loos (eds.), *Leben, Tod und Entscheidung: Studien zur Geistgeschichte der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2003), 187–207. The origin of the slogan "Bonn is not Weimar" is the title of the book by journalist Fritz René Allemann, *Bonn ist nicht Weimar* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1956).

At the same time, these émigrés also carried close and long-standing ties between democracy and anti-communism with them when they returned to Germany. This connection explains not only the profound hopes invested in democratic possibilities but also the limits and ironies of Germany's postwar reconstruction. Against a Europe increasingly divided along ideological lines, this generation reintroduced to the postwar era a highly combative and dichotomous conception of democratic politics: one was either democracy's friend or its mortal enemy. As a result, the figures at the center of this book anxiously sought to delegitimize and suppress ideas that challenged their own. They deemed anyone who doubted whether the West German state should persecute Communists or bind itself to the Cold War Western alliance an anti-democratic agent, to be stripped of the right of legitimate democratic participation. This profound inflexibility meant that Weimar democratic ideas constrained the postwar political imagination just as much as they enabled it. Their liberating effect was profoundly diminished by their rigid nature.

Moreover, in a disturbing irony of postwar culture, these agents of democracy rarely recognized how their zeal for anti-communism perpetuated elements of Nazi thought. The hatred of communism was one of the Nazis' central ideological foundations, a profound source of their legitimacy and popularity. The fierce anti-Semitism of Hitler and his followers was partially fueled by the perverse conviction that Jews were the cunning vanguard of a global "Judeo-Bolshevik" revolution. The émigrés' anti-Communist phobias stemmed from radically different worldviews. They predated the Third Reich and were divorced from its racism. But in their attempts to harness Germany's anti-Communist fervor in the service of democracy, these émigrés helped preserve and perpetuate this Nazi obsession. Ideas from Weimar, then, not only enabled democratic revolutions but also constrained postwar democracy by their anti-communism. The democratic revolution that the émigrés helped unleash was a bittersweet one, simultaneously heroic and tragic.²⁴

ÉMIGRÉS AND THE AMERICAN COLD WAR: KNOWLEDGE AND POWER

The stories of these German émigrés, however, have implications beyond German history. By tracing the influence of these individuals on American thought, diplomacy, and institutions, this book contends that Weimar traditions also helped shape the United States' ambitious efforts to construct

²⁴ On the links between Nazi and postwar anti-communism, see Maria D. Mitchell, *The Origins of Christian Democracy: Politics and Confession in Modern Germany* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), esp. 76–104; Frei, *Adenauer's Germany and the Nazi Past*.

global hegemony during the early Cold War. Their stories reveal the European origins of terminologies, ways of thinking, and institutional structures that undergirded American pursuit of the Cold War at home and overseas.

The Cold War unleashed the most ambitious diplomatic campaign in human history. Intent on preventing what they perceived to be an imminent Communist threat to an American “way of life,” U.S. policymakers did not confine themselves to military means. They enlisted philanthropists, academics, businessmen, and artists as they sought to recruit entire nations to an anti-Communist alliance. Indeed, few spheres of human activity remained untouched by this recasting of international outreach and the broad employment of American resources. From psychology and the economy to education, entertainment, and sports, U.S. international campaigns altered norms and institutions as the United States engaged in what one scholar has accurately described as a “total Cold War.”²⁵ Germany became a central site of this titanic campaign. For American policymakers, overcoming the hostilities of war and occupation by recruiting Germany’s enormous industrial capacities and popular resources were the key to security and triumph in Europe and around the globe. Germany was among the countries that would determine whether the United States would ascend to world leadership and if the twentieth century, as Henry Luce famously mused, would become “the American Century.”²⁶

This monumental effort ignited a radical reconfiguration of the relationship between ideas and power, between intellectuals and policymaking. Many Americans believed that the Cold War was a clash of ideas and ideologies; to their minds, the most effective “free world” alliances drew from the ideological education and consent of entire populations. The United States therefore conducted an unprecedented “cultural offensive” in galleries, cinemas, publications, and universities. Authors, scholars, and artists founded international organizations and traveled the world, lending their ideas, works, and prestige to the service of “total diplomacy.”²⁷ Equally impor-

²⁵ Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower’s Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006). See also Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

²⁶ Henry R. Luce, “The American Century,” *Life* (17 February 1941): 61–65. On Germany in U.S. Cold War strategy, see John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005 [1982]), esp. 24–86; James McAllister, *No Exit: America and the German Problem* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

²⁷ The term “total diplomacy” was coined in 1946 by Dean Acheson, then under secretary of state. See Robert L. Beisner, *Dean Acheson: A Life in the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 236–251. On cultural diplomacy and the Cold War, see, for example, Volker Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Penny M. von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); David Cauter, *The Dancer Defects: The*

tantly, the Cold War opened up new paths for thinkers to join the practice of international politics. American policymakers' urgent need for knowledge and analysis of foreign cultures led them to consult and rely on historians, literary scholars, and political theorists. Scholars, for their part, directed their research, teachings, and cultural production toward the needs of the American state. During the early years of the Cold War, the demarcation line between scholarship and state power was fundamentally blurred, as ideas and individuals flowed between the two worlds as never before. More so than in any previous or subsequent period, this was the era of intellectuals in power.²⁸

German émigrés were among the most direct beneficiaries of this process, as the Cold War propelled them to the centers of American power. They were quick to recognize the opportunities presented by the occupation of Germany, the German-American alliance, and the broader Cold War, and both state institutions and private organizations were eager to secure their services. During the 1940s and 1950s, Friedrich, Fraenkel, Gurian, Loewenstein, and Morgenthau made the transition from penniless and uprooted refugees on the margins of society into members of the American diplomatic, educational, and cultural leadership. They served as chief legal advisers in the occupations of Germany and Korea; consultants to the State and Justice Departments; founders of area studies programs in American universities; and senior officers in the foremost American philanthropic organs, such as the Rockefeller Foundation. Their writings, memoranda, and reports circulated extensively among American diplomats and policymakers. While other American minorities and women continued to suffer from harsh discrimination, German émigrés enjoyed remarkable mobility and rapidly became part of the American elite. Some historians have noted this process, but they have focused on the work of émigrés at the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during World War II, where their advice was largely ignored. It was the Cold War that opened up the most important spaces for German émigrés and endowed them with new influence.²⁹

Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Michael Hochgeschwender, *Freiheit in der Offensive? der Kongress für Kulturelle Freiheit und die Deutschen* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1998).

²⁸ I discuss this transformation (and the scholarship pertaining to it) in further detail in chapter I. For an overview, see Mark Solovey and Hamilton Cravens (eds.), *Cold War Social Science: Knowledge Production, Liberal Democracy, and Human Nature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Jeremi Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 92–137; David Engerman, "Rethinking the Cold War University," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 5:3 (2004): 80–95.

²⁹ The groundbreaking study on émigrés and the OSS is Alfons Söllner, *Zur Archäologie der Demokratie in Deutschland*, vol. 2, *Analysen von politischen Emigranten im amerikanischen Außenministerium und Geheimdienst* (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 1986). Joachim Radkau's classic study of German émigrés' efforts to shape U.S. foreign policy does not extend to the postwar era. See his

Beyond their fierce anti-communism, three key factors drove American diplomats and intellectuals to take such exceptional interest in German émigrés. Understanding these factors sheds light on broader transformations wrought by the Cold War. The first, as several scholars have noted, was the émigrés' international background. In the immediate postwar era, American policymakers lacked the systematic expertise to engage in large-scale alliance building and anti-Communist diplomacy. Unlike European empires, which had obsessively explored, mapped, and analyzed their colonized possessions for decades, the United States had not yet developed such an apparatus of global knowledge. With their language skills and knowledge of European history and politics, German émigrés were a rare asset. They were able to translate, analyze, and explain foreign cultures. Their experience in crossing national borders and enthusiasm for international cooperation made their work and advice indispensable to Americans desperate to build and maintain international hegemony.³⁰

The second reason for the allure of German émigrés in the Cold War establishment stemmed from the dramatic expansion of the state. The Cold War solidified the rise of state power that had begun in the New Deal and advanced during World War II. The U.S. government aggressively intervened in the economy, expanded its military capabilities, and mobilized resources and people on an unprecedented scale. Crucial to this Cold War mobilization was the close cooperation that emerged between the state and private organizations. Countless philanthropists, academic institutions, and private associations came to view the state's interests as their own. They voluntarily joined forces with the government in suppressing Communist activities and forging bonds with foreign nations. The German thinkers at the center of this book provided both intellectual justification and practical models for such voluntary mobilization. Since their early years in Germany, they believed that the state was the natural vehicle for collective improvement. In their vision, institutions such as universities, labor unions, or philanthropies were not autonomous bodies; rather, they were organs of the democratic state. Whether working for government branches such as the State Department or mobilizing philanthropic foundations and universities to support state activities, these five émigrés helped expand the boundaries of state authority during the early Cold War. Historians have recently devoted much attention to nonstate actors as crucial agents of international

Die deutsche Emigration in den USA: ihr Einfluss auf die amerikanische Europapolitik, 1933–1945 (Düsseldorf: Bertelsmann Universitätsverlag, 1971). See also Barry Katz, *Foreign Intelligence: Research and Analysis in the Office of Strategic Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

³⁰ While my focus is different, my thinking about German émigrés and the opportunities that the Cold War opened up for them has been deeply influenced by Jeremy Suri's excellent *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*.

interactions. Yet the careers of these German émigrés demonstrate how such interactions did not undermine the American state's authority. On the contrary, the state became even more powerful by co-opting new actors for its own needs and goals.³¹

Finally, émigré influence was so profound because the mid-twentieth century was a time of extensive thinking about democracy. During the 1930s, the global Great Depression precipitated monumental and unprecedented threats to democracy. The economic catastrophe of the Depression, which brought about social upheaval and widespread misery, led to fears that elected institutions and the separation of power could not survive capitalism's failures. Moreover, the growing might and economic vitality of anti-democratic regimes in the 1930s, such as Italian Fascism, German Nazism, and Soviet Communism, seemed to confirm the inferiority of democracy and liberal-capitalism. The political scientist Pendleton Herring spoke for many when he nervously wondered in 1940: "Can our government meet the challenge of totalitarianism and remain democratic?"³²

The shock of the Great Depression was quickly followed by the unprecedented mobilization of World War II and the threat of permanent conflict that came with the Cold War. Many Americans deeply feared these shifts, which demanded constant sacrifices from civilians, entailed ongoing confrontation with "subversive" enemies, and dramatically expanded the reach and responsibilities of the American state. In particular, they were concerned that, faced with the existential threat of the Cold War, democratic institutions would morph into a "garrison state" focused on a constant mobilization and militarization that would ruin the democratic and capitalist American values that it purported to protect. This anxiety over democracy's fragility generated substantial debates about the mechanisms that would guarantee its survival. Many U.S. leaders, scholars, and intellectuals sought to fashion new norms, institutions, and ideas that could enhance and protect American democracy. What constituted a healthy democratic regime was thus thrown open to debate.³³

³¹ On the cooperation between the State Department and independent groups, see, for example, Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford (eds.), *The U.S. Government, Citizen Groups, and the Cold War: The State-Private Network* (London: Routledge, 2006). On the rise of state power in the United States during World War II, see James T. Sparrow, *Warfare State: World War II Americans and the Age of Big Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). I discuss this issue in further detail throughout the book, and especially in chapters I and III. For the role of non-state actors during the Cold War, see Akira Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

³² E. Pendleton Herring, *Presidential Leadership* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1940), x.

³³ For a vivid description of these debates from the New Deal through the Cold War, see Ira Katznelson's magisterial *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time* (New York: Liveright, 2012). For a focus on the Cold War, see Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry Truman*

In this atmosphere of uncertainty, Friedrich, Fraenkel, Gurian, Loewenstein, and Morgenthau had much to offer. From Weimar they brought comprehensive theories on democracy and its enemies, institutional models for democratic education, and personal histories of living through democracy and its destruction. Many Americans saw these experiences as instrumental to their own quest to strengthen democracy. In the writings and narratives of German émigrés, they found helpful models for democratic renewal. During the 1930s and early 1940s, these émigrés' efforts concentrated on the United States' domestic sphere. Some German émigrés—especially Carl J. Friedrich—helped restructure U.S. bureaucracy and education in response to the Great Depression. But it was the outbreak of World War II, the reconstruction efforts that ensued in Europe and Asia, and the beginning of the Cold War that rendered the ideas of the émigrés especially influential. Their writings all sought to show how democracy and anti-Communist mobilization were not antithetical to each other but were, in fact, complementary processes. Both at home and abroad, U.S. leaders and diplomats sought their advice and invested substantial authority in them.

The intersection between Weimar democratic theory and U.S. diplomacy thus sheds light on the role of democracy in the early Cold War. Scholars of the era have frequently downplayed the United States' commitment to democracy at home and overseas. While American leaders and diplomats may indeed have been interested in democracy in the early years of occupying Germany and Japan, historians maintain that this interest was soon replaced by a focus on anti-Communist mobilization. In this narrative, American policymakers concluded that democracy provided an opening for subversive forces which, once in power, would dismantle Cold War alliances and even turn against the United States. It was therefore legitimate to limit democratic freedom and support authoritarian and despotic leaders in the name of anti-Communist security.³⁴

Yet the intense attention paid to German émigrés and their theories demonstrates that American diplomats, scholars, philanthropists, and political leaders were often convinced that democracy played a crucial role in their domestic and international anti-Communist crusade. As historian Jennifer M. Miller has shown, they believed that effective anti-Communist mobilization required the willing consent of strong and vibrant societies,

and the Origins of the National Security State (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Melvyn Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

³⁴ For representative works, see, for example, the essays in Ellen Schreck (ed.), *Cold War Triumphalism* (New York: New Press, 2004); Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop* (New York: Metropolitan, 2006). On how this point of view led several politicians and policymakers to claim that public participation in policymaking should be limited not only abroad but also in the United States itself, see Daniel Bessner, *The Rise of the Defense Intellectual: Hans Speier and the Transatlantic Origins of Cold War Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, forthcoming).

which could not be achieved exclusively through the coercive authority of dictators. To be sure, these aggressive American efforts to instill their version of democratic norms did not stem from benevolence. American leaders' conceptions of democracy rarely translated into a desire to build egalitarian societies or to empower people at the grassroots. Drawing on the émigrés' dualistic ideas, their visions of democracy were rigid, fixated on stability, and tragically paranoid. Like the architects of Germany's reconstruction, many Americans were convinced that those who challenged their militant understanding of democracy were necessarily cunning Communists, and they did not hesitate to vigilantly limit their rights at home or abroad, employing brutal violence. But it is impossible to fully comprehend their hysterical conduct and their conception of American self-interest without considering these genuine debates regarding democracy, their limits, and failures. Precisely because they inspired such disturbing actions and remained a crucial force in shaping policy, they must be fully understood.³⁵

In the process of absorbing these German émigrés, the apparatus of American power did not remain unaltered. While German émigrés worked to promote and expand American power around the world, they also utilized their positions to implement and promote their own agendas. German émigrés drew on their earlier writings when they provided the language and ideas for the United States' global mission. The anti-Soviet "theory of totalitarianism," the theory of "militant democracy," and many other dominant Cold War concepts embraced by Americans were coined by Germans years before the global conflict with the Soviet Union had begun. Essentially, the agents who provided the language of democratization in West Germany were also instrumental in shaping the language of anti-Communist mobilization. Through their writings, these two intellectual projects became inseparable and inherently connected to each other. The symbiosis of German thought and American power shaped not only postwar Germany's reconstruction. It crossed the Atlantic and helped fashion American institutions, language, and self-understandings.³⁶

These multidirectional influences offer a more nuanced portrait of Cold War politics, not only as a projection of American power but also as the

³⁵ My thinking about the place of democracy in the Cold War is deeply shaped by Jennifer M. Miller's work on this topic and on the role of democracy in the shaping of the U.S.-Japanese alliance. See her *Contested Alliance: The United States, Japan, and Democracy in the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, forthcoming).

³⁶ Several scholars have begun to uncover the continuities between interwar-era central European theories and the Cold War paradigm, although these remain largely confined to a single individual or concept. The most important of these is Malachi Haim Hacoheh's pioneering work, *Karl Popper, the Formative Years, 1902–1945: Politics and Philosophy in Interwar Vienna* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). See also William David Jones, *The Lost Debate: German Socialist Intellectuals and Totalitarianism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999).

absorption and revival of European ideas and traditions. Although anxieties about communism were certainly crucial in shaping American thought and policy, the Cold War was more than an anti-Communist crusade. By uncovering the diverse ideological forces that drove American actions, historians have recently come to understand Cold War policies as the continuation and expansion of earlier American traditions, such as the spreading consumer culture, visions of “civilization,” religious ideologies, and belief in progressive “development.”³⁷ Alongside these forces, however, German thought and political traditions played a part in molding American Cold War hegemony. The writings and actions of German émigrés created an important channel through which the United States’ engagement with the world returned to the United States itself. Their stories reflect how the global conflict was not merely a clash between polarized opponents that drew the world into its magnetic fields. It was also a space for the renewal and pursuit of European intellectual traditions, enabling foreign actors to shape the world.

In part, then, this is a book about the foreign impulses at the heart of the “American Century” and their role in charting the ideological and institutional contours of American global power after 1945. The stories of German émigrés do not by any means encapsulate all or even the most important forces that shaped U.S. outreach in the postwar era. But they do help to better understand the role of international experiences, the state, and democracy in this global conflict. They show how the Cold War provided unexpected opportunities to non-Americans, who had their own plans and goals. Through the institutions of U.S. power, they pursued intellectual projects that preceded the Cold War and were independent of American geopolitical considerations. German émigrés were always servants of U.S. institutions. Their influence both at home and abroad depended on the consent of their American superiors. Yet by injecting their own ideas into the Cold War, they made “the American Century” their own. In short, they made it also “the Weimar Century.”

³⁷ On the role of consumer culture and free-market capitalism, see Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America’s Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005). On religious ideas, see Jonathan P. Herzog, *The Spiritual-Industrial Complex: American’s Religious Battle against Communism in the Early Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). On the role of “development” and progressive ideas, see David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); and David Engerman, *Modernization from the Other Shore: American Intellectuals and the Romance of Russian Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).