Norbert Frei and Dominik Rigoll, eds., **Der Antikommunismus in seiner Epoche. Weltanschauung und Politik in Deutschland, Europa und den USA**. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2017. 267 pages. ISBN 978-3-8353-3007-8

In the last few years, we have observed a growth of historiographic research on anti-communism that a few years ago was unthinkable. Arising from research into transnational anticommunist networks, the collection of essays here reviewed documents the results of a symposium held at the Jena Center 20th Century History and the Imre Kertész Kolleg, which took place in November 2014.[1] The fourteen papers, some written in German and some in English, are structured into three parts. They examine the genesis, the impact and the meaning of anticommunism as an ideological worldview in Germany, Europe and the United States. In the preface to the collection, one of its editors, Norbert Frei, says that the focus of the work is to explore how anticommunism became the common political denominator of certain institutions, individuals and political parties. What made anticommunism a popular lens with which to view so many political, social and cultural issues in the twentieth century? What linked and what distinguished the anti-Bolshevism that followed Russia's 1917 revolution from Cold War anticommunism (p. 8)?

The opening paper by Anselm Doering-Manteuffel is separate from the three parts of the book that follow it. The author discusses the stabilizing effect anticommunist mobilization had on its adherents, which stemmed from their fear of economic and political revolution. Doering-Manteuffel seeks to integrate the philosophy of anticommunism into the history of ideas. He draws upon Ernst Nolte's expertise and the so-called "westernization" of Western Europe in the middle of the twentieth century.[2] Nolte described the phenomena that emerged during the industrial revolution in the nineteenth century.[3] Social dislocation in that period caused feelings of anxiety among Western Europeans. The threat to their material and ideological values awakened the hidden driving force of anticommunism (p. 11). The author has developed a four-phase model of social and economic breakdown in the anticommunist era, based on the development of anticommunism in Germany. Doering-Manteuffel distinguishes the following periods in the history of twentieth century anticommunism: the period of "changing enemy images" up to the beginning of the 1930s; the anti-Bolshevist policy of extermination pursued by the Nazi regime; Cold War-era anticommunism in Germany and the West; and finally, anticommunism faced with the policy of détente with the Soviet Union. This exposition of Doering-Manteuffel's original theoretical approach could have been a successful conclusion to this collection of essays. Unfortunately, for various reasons, such collections of essays often lack a concluding chapter.

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[1] See the report on this conference in *H-Soz-Kult*, January 8, 2015, https://www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-5759.

[2] See Anselm Doering-Manteuffel, "Amerikanisierung und Westernisierung," version 1.0, in *Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte*, January 18, 2011, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.14765/zzf.dok.2.311.v1.

[3] Ernst Nolte, *Marxismus und industrielle Revolution* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1983).

In the first part of the book, the authors analyze the creation of a pan-European anti-communist movement and how it was used to create national identities in the new states formed after World War I. Dominik Rigoll compares early forms of anticommunism that appeared in Germany and France from a transnational genealogical perspective. He views anticommunism as a timeless phenomenon that always emerges when capitalist exploitation and governance are in peril (p. 32). His deconstructive approach shows how the 1917 Bolshevist revolution was retrospectively styled as the so-called nucleus of the Cold War.

In the next contribution, Robert Gerwarth points out how different narratives that portrayed Bolshevism as the nemesis of European culture led to the association of revolutionary communist ideas with Jewishness. Gerwarth argues convincingly that in Europe after 1919, dissemination of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*[4] heated up those narratives, even though the *Protocols* were an invention of the Czarist police (p. 61). He concludes that the idea of being encircled by nihilistic forces led to varying types of anti-Bolshevism, because between 1918 and 1945, in Central and Eastern Europe, the extent and longevity of anticommunism depended on the given political context.

Likewise, Grzegorc Krzywiec places the rise of anti-Bolshevism, fueled by anti-Semitism during the Polish-Soviet war of 1919, in the context of producing a Polish national community. The author also reflects on the image of the Bolsheviks that shaped a cultural code between 1917 and 1923, which still exists in some social circles today (pp. 72–73).

Attila Pók shows this same continuity in his contribution describing the genesis of anticommunism in Hungary. Pók traces plebeian anticommunism in today's Hungary back to a long tradition in Hungarian political thinking that began in the nineteenth century (p. 75). After 1918, during the Republic of Councils, anticommunism was the central element of political culture in Hungary (p. 90). The author concludes by raising an interesting question: in the formulation of Hungarian post-communist identity, can anticommunism play the role of the "Constituting Other"?

In the second part, the authors highlight anticommunism as a worldview serving two globalisms: liberal internationalism and communism. Michael Wildt focuses on the anti-Bolshevist anti-Semitism of the Nazi regime and retraces the core concept of so-called Jewish Bolshevism that was the central ideology of the National Socialists after 1919. Wildt discusses the unknown origins of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and their propagandistic role as an anti-Semitic treatise (pp. 98–99). Furthermore, he argues that we cannot understand the Holocaust without acknowledging the Jewish Bolshevist phantasm, which was rooted in the end of World War I (p. 109).

In his essay that follows, Anson Rabinbach refers to Hanna Arendt's philosophical emphasis on structurelessness and terror as being the essence of totalitarianism (p. 112), and her acknowledgment of the theory of communism as a secular religion (p. 117).[5] Arendt warned that the reinvestment of political life with religious passion was

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[4] In these protocols, the Jewish Elders were supposed to have discussed their plans for destroying the world order.
[5] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1951).

a dangerous strategy. The author relates to anticommunism as a phenomenon of the modern age and its eschatological heritage unfolded in the idea of progress. Rabinbach comes to the conclusion that Arendt recognized the danger of communism as a project to transform human nature and render human beings superfluous (p. 122). Rabinbach, a specialist in the European thought of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, stresses the ominous nature of the anticommunist phenomenon and how dangerous this heritage still is.

Siegfried Weichlein's essay focuses on the transformation of Catholic anticommunism in West Germany and the United States after World War II. The author delivers a critical view of the antiliberal and fascist origins of Catholic anticommunism. After the Holocaust, anticommunism was confronted in West Germany with the obligation to open up to democratic values and human rights in light of the so-called Cold War liberalism (p. 127).

In the final paper of the second part, the authors Iris Schröder and Christian Methfessel discuss the commonalities of anticommunism and internationalism, and the mobilization of both by international organizations. In a convincing way, the authors locate both the League of Nations and the United Nations in traditional ideas of liberal internationalism of the nineteenth century. Surprisingly, the authors conclude that it was not the exclusion of the Soviet Union, but precisely its inclusion in the international agenda and cooperation (such as 1975 in Helsinki) that fostered its destabilization (p. 154).

In the third part of the book, entitled "Anticommunism in Power," the researchers examine concrete anticommunist practices of Italian and Spanish fascism, the Adenauer era in West Germany and the McCarthy and Reagan years in the United States. Amedeo Osti Guerazzi argues that, similar to National Socialism, fears that Christian European civilization was being subverted turned into hysteria that proved to be constitutive of anticommunism under Italian fascism. This fear was expressed in the effective anticommunist restructuring of the Italian police. Guerazzi underlines that the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* founded the myth that the triumph of evil communism would result in bloody chaos as Asiatic subhumans rape and kill the ruling class (p. 160).

Stefanie Schüler-Springorum's thesis is that in Spain, it was precisely anticommunism that campaigned for communism, even if the communist victory in 1977 did not last for long. Schüler-Springorum describes anticommunism during the Spanish Civil War and the 40 years of dictatorship that followed as the most violent movement in the country's history, which created the most victims. Thus, the author considers Spanish anticommunism as the most persistent of all ideologies, the heritage of which still burdens Spanish democracy today (pp. 175 and 185).

Axel Schildt attempts to trace the continuities in anticommunism from Hitler to Adenauer. He examines the transference of the now forbidden anti-Semitic components of Cold War constellations and the Christian framework.

In the last two papers, the researchers focus on anticommunism in the United States. Jörg Nagler traces its development from the first Red Scare to the McCarthy era. He finds that the cooperation of civic actors, state officials and elites is constitutive of U.S.

anticommunism. The collective delusions of certain political groups were thereby deliberately intensified. This was done in order to legitimize stronger control of society. Ever since then, the long-term impact of McCarthyism as a culture of control has shaped U.S. domestic and foreign policy (p. 212).

Thomas A. Schwartz illustrates the continuation of these policies of control into the Reagan presidency. Schwartz refers ironically in his title to one of the most popular American films, *Back to the Future.* One scene of the movie suggests a connection between 1950s America, when Ronald Reagan was just an actor, and the America of 1980s, in which Reagan was the President (p. 218). According to Schwartz, this scene demonstrates that anticommunism in the Reagan era was merely a hollow shell of what it had been in the 1950s (p. 219). However, somewhat indelicately, the author closes with a quotation from Karl Marx, who argued that great world-historical facts appear twice: the first time as tragedy and the second time as farce (p. 233).

Most of the contributions to this book identify the common source of anticommunist policy in opposition to internationalism, liberalism and socialism. The instrumentalizing of anxiety led to a plethora of oppressive measures that encoded anti-Bolshevist and later, anticommunist images of hate in the political and religious culture of the European nations as well that of the United States. In addition, the authors illustrate the partly hallucinatory excesses (p. 176) and exclusion strategies that were turned against parts of countries' own populations, like the bloody anticommunist terror of the Nazi regime (p. 188) and the sacrifice of civil rights in order to combat communism during both of the Red Scare eras in the USA (pp. 116, 216 and 226).

In the field of research on anticommunism, this collection is an insightful and highly recommended contribution that reveals the twentieth century to be an age of extremes, which stimulates contemplation of the presence of the anticommunist past.

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