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David Kuchenbuch

Globalisms: The Past and Present of Global Thinking



Globalismen. Geschichte und Gegenwart des globalen Bewusstseins
ca. 25 000 words / 150 pages
ISBN 978-3-86854-370-4
Paperback, May 2023

Available rights
All languages

A concise historical survey of globalism and its critiques as a discursive battleground

Disrupted supply chains, flight and migration, critiques of »cosmopolitan elites«: controversies over globalization as well as, more recently, deglobalization, have become ubiquitous in recent decades. But debates about the advantages and disadvantages of global interdependencies in fact have a more than 150-year history. The dominant perspectives were at times euphoric, at times mostly pessimistic, especially since the profound shift in Western European and American concepts of the global in the 1970s and 1980s. David Kuchenbuch's concise historical survey dissects and defuses these highly charged debates. His approach centers on »globalisms« — in the plural form — as global ways of thinking, indeed as a kind of global consciousness, and from the outset incorporates critiques of globalization into this account.

Kuchenbuch retraces the changing history of global thinking within transatlantic modernity by reconstructing the social milieus, cultural constellations, and political processes of mobilization from which globalisms emerged. He reconsiders phenomena such as the utopian hopes associated with the post-1945 notion of a peaceful »One World« or the widespread concerns in the 1970ies about »global interdependencies«. Experts' attempts to address social, economic, and environmental problems globally met with countercultural criticism of the ideologies of growth, materialism, and ethnocentrism. This concise and readable book reveals just how deeply various facets of the history of global thinking continue to shape contemporary discourse and agendas in the era of global warming and other worldwide issues.

David Kuchenbuch is a historian who lectures and conducts research in the Department of History at Justus-Liebig-University, Giessen, and is also the research coordinator of the department's Working Group on the History and Theory of Global Capitalism.

Lars Döpking

Fiscal Rule: Power Struggles in the Italian Tax State since 1945



Fiskalische Herrschaft.
Machtkämpfe im italienischen
Steuerstaat seit 1945
Ca. 155 000 words / 512 pages
ISBN 978-3-86854-371-1
Hardcover May 2023

Available rights
All languages

A historical-sociological account of how the Italian tax state selectively expanded fiscal control

The impacts and effectiveness of tax states as social forces are all too often underestimated. By forcing citizens to interact, tax states influence wages, consumption, and investment decisions as well as inheritances, relocations, or marriages much more than is apparent at first glance. Moreover, the fiscal relationships that constitute tax states are constantly being transformed. In the course of profound social shifts and power struggles in the twentieth century, the opportunities available to some groups within society to evade fiscal control shrank dramatically, at the same time others were able to reduce their tax burden to a minimum.

Sociologist Lars Döpking retraces the history of fundamental changes in the post-1945 Italian tax state. His analysis shows how four factors interacted and contributed to generating huge increases in Italian tax revenues: administrative capacity building, ongoing measures to combat tax evasion, transnational entanglements, and domestic political conflicts. Döpking's book enhances our understanding of the controversial technical and political processes that determine the nature of contemporary tax states. And it explains why not only the Italian population pays more taxes today than ever before – and why that is unlikely to change.

Lars Döpking joined the research staff of the German Historical Institute in Rome in 2022. He previously conducted the study that forms the basis for this book as a member of the Research Group Democracy and Statehood at the Hamburg Institute for Social Research.

Ariane Leendertz

The Exhausted State: A Different History of Neoliberalism



Der erschöpfte Staat. Eine andere Geschichte des Neoliberalismus
ca. 152 000 words, 480 pages,
7 images
ISBN 978-3-86854-365-0
Hardcover, September 2022

Available rights
All languages

The role of academic discourse on complexity in shaping neoliberal policymaking

»An ambitious and successfully executed undertaking.«

Michael Hochgeschwender, professor of North American cultural history, Munich

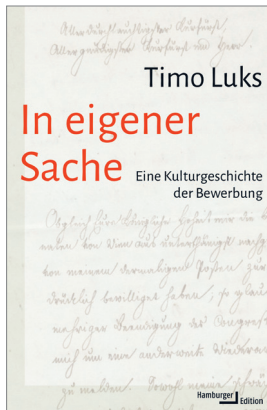
In the 1960s, many Western states adopted new and seemingly daring approaches to governance. Together with modernized social and political institutions, policymaking was to more effectively predict, monitor, and manage all manner of crises. U.S. president Johnson launched an ambitious domestic agenda targeting poverty and racial injustice called the Great Society, including what came to be known as the War on Poverty. Ronald Reagan's inauguration as president marked another sea change. The new administration quickly moved to act on its rejection of large-scale, federally funded programs, especially in the social sphere, a strategy it termed »starving the beast«.

Ariane Leendertz's major study focuses on an underlying and little-appreciated element of this critique of the state: the discourse on complexity. According to this discourse, the social world is far too complicated and unmanageable and state intervention will thus always result in unintended consequences and merely exacerbate the problems addressed. Belief in the state's capacity to solve social problems, she asserts, has been eroding since the 1960s. Her study traces this process through the debates on complexity and governability, focusing on the history of urban policy in the United States. Leendertz offers a convincing analysis of the transformation of statehood and the connections between neoliberal theory and political practice.

Ariane Leendertz is a historian and currently a member of the research staff of the Historical Commission Munich. She was previously head of the Research Group on the Economization of the Social and the History of Complexity at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies in Cologne. Her research focuses on twentieth-century German and American history, in particular on the links between intellectual history and political history.

Timo Luks

A Personal Matter: A Cultural History of Job Applications



In eigener Sache. Eine Kulturgeschichte der Bewerbung
ca. 125 800 words / 432 pages
ISBN 978-3-86854-366-7
October 2022

Available rights
All languages

A new perspective on the history of the job market

Modern individuals are job seekers—and specific skills are essential in order to prevail on today's competitive job markets. In the nineteenth century, written job applications became a key cultural skill in modern work societies that emerged from the older tradition of petitions. Over time, applications became a kind of personal advertising brochure. Whereas applicants in earlier decades felt compelled to justify applications with extensive accounts of their personal fate, they later increasingly emphasized their skills and qualifications in resumes documenting education and training.

Historian Timo Luks tells the story of written job applications from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century, a story that also reveals changes in social relationships. This vivid and elegantly written account illuminates the workings of the labor market—not as an abstract, macroeconomic reality, but as a point of reference in the daily struggle to make a living.

Timo Luks is a historian and researcher in the Department of Modern History at Justus-Liebig-University, Giessen.

Joachim von Puttkamer

»I will never get used to the violence.«

Police Brutality and Society in the People's Republic of Poland



»Ich werde mich nie an die Gewalt gewöhnen«. Polizei-brutalität und Gesellschaft in der Volksrepublik Polen
176 500 words / ca. 550 pages
ISBN 978-3-86854-367-4
Hardcover, December 2022

Available rights
All languages

Probes the dynamics of police violence in Poland since the early 1950s, shifting public responses, and their impact on the stability of the regime

The People's Republic of Poland had a serious problem with its police. The police forces were generally seen as unusually violent, and people were repeatedly killed during arrests or while in police custody. This police brutality was exacerbated by a rapid-response police unit established in the 1950s, which soon became a forceful and repressive anti-riot force deployed in particular to quell political and economic protests.

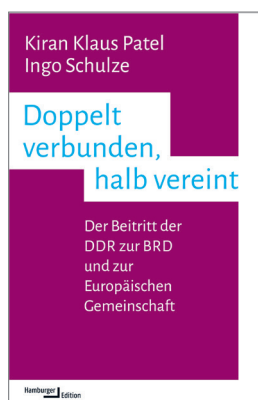
Historian Joachim von Puttkamer probes the causes and forms of this police brutality. His book examines the half-hearted attempts of Polish police leadership to control police officers as well as the defensive reactions of domestic security authorities to such measures, especially in times of crisis.

Von Puttkamer mines a broad array of historical sources to analyze the role that responses to flagrant attacks on citizens played in reconstituting Polish society from the 1970s on. Such responses were a major stimulus of oppositional activism throughout the 1980s and a significant issue during negotiations at the Polish Round Table Talks of 1989. The book offers new insights into how people in Poland ceased to view police brutality as a given and increasingly denounced it as morally wrong. The author retraces a key element of the process in which the communist dictatorship gradually destroyed its own basis.

Joachim von Puttkamer holds a chair in eastern European history at Friedrich Schiller University Jena. He codirects, together with Michal Kopeček, the Imre Kertész Kolleg Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century: Comparative Historical Experience, a federally funded institute of advanced studies cofounded by von Puttkamer in 2010 in Jena.

Kiran Klaus Patel / Ingo Schulze

Twice Connected, Half United: East Germany's Accession to West Germany and to the European Community



Doppelt verbunden, halb vereint. Der Beitritt der DDR zur BRD und zur Europäischen Gemeinschaft
ca. 19 000 words, 128 pages
ISBN 978-3-86854-353-7
Hardback, February 2022

Available rights
All languages

Three decades after the Maastricht Treaty, German-British scholar Kiran Klaus Patel and award-winning writer Ingo Schulze reflect on the impacts and interactions of German unity and European integration

»These two very different forms of union were inextricably intertwined. They expedited and fed on one another; they were at once mutual exigencies and responses, relief and burden.«
— Kiran Klaus Patel

»Western Europe played a specific role in our conversations at the time, not only as a place we longed for. It represented, very generally speaking, the hope that we could advance German-German rapprochement by pursuing European integration.« — Ingo Schulze

»In this unusual book, an intertextual conversation of a very special kind emerges.«
— Thorsten Holzhauser, *H-Soz-Kult*

When the former German Democratic Republic was united with the West German state, East Germany also became part of the European unification process. This process had gained momentum, beginning in the 1980s, and accelerated when the Maastricht Treaty establishing the European Union was signed in February 1992.

Much has been written about the fall of the Berlin Wall. But the interactions between the »establishment of German unity« and European integration have failed to attract similar attention, despite their far-reaching impacts. German unification played a crucial role the much-discussed, controversial project of a European monetary union—an undertaking implemented without the direct participation of citizens in eastern and western Europe. And within the borders of the former East German state, economic actors had to quickly adapt to the rules and regulations of the European Community. How did these and associated developments affect people in the former East Germany?

Historian Kiran Klaus Patel, a leading expert on the history of the European Union, and award-winning German writer Ingo Schulze explore these and other questions in complementary essays and reflect on burdens and opportunities, on common ground and differences. The result is an impressive, instructive, and very personal book that sheds new light on Europe and the watershed years that came in the wake of 1989.

Kiran Klaus Patel, born in Villingen in West Germany in 1971, is a German-British historian and professor of nineteenth- and twentieth-century European history at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich. His acclaimed book Project Europe: A History was published in German in 2018 and in English in 2020. Patel was the Scholar-in-Residence in Hamburg in 2021, as part of a program conducted by the Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt Foundation and the Europa-Kolleg.

Ingo Schulze, born in Dresden in 1962, is an internationally acclaimed writer and essayist who lives in Berlin. His numerous novels and short stories have been translated into thirty languages and received national and international awards. Schulze is a member of the Academy of Arts, Berlin, the German Academy for Language and Poetry, Darmstadt, and the Saxon Academy of Arts, Dresden.

Laura Wolters

Doing Violence, Suffering Violence: A Sociology of Gang Rape



Vom Antun und Erleiden.
Eine Soziologie der Gruppen-
vergewaltigung
ca. 92 000 words, 312 pages
ISBN 978-3-86854-360-5
Hardback, April 2022

Available rights
All languages

A pioneering, in-depth sociological study of gang rape that offers fundamental insights for research on other forms of violence

»But what is most impressive is how patiently, respectfully, sensitively, and yet always clearly and precisely Laura Wolters gleans from the case studies she has selected new and important insights into the phenomenon of group rape—insights that are highly significant for trans-disciplinary research on violence.« – Catherine Davies, *Soziopolis*

»These analyses make a contribution to understanding such crimes—and perhaps also to preventing them.« – Oskar Piegsa, *Die Zeit online*

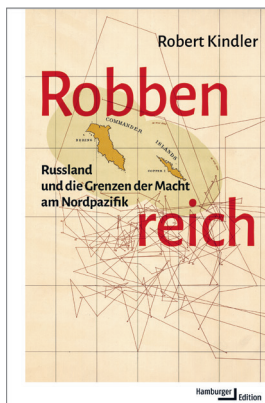
When public attention is aroused by events like the mass assaults on women on New Year's Eve 2015/16 in Cologne, »why« is inevitably a key question. But despite such outbursts of public outrage and the associated discussions about what leads to gang rape, there is still relatively little research on collective sexual violence. And research to date is all too often marked by a significant blind spot: the violent acts as such are hardly considered.

In her pioneering study of gang rape, Laura Wolters brings the interactions and practices of sexualized violence into focus. She argues that questions about collective sexual violence call for empirical approaches grounded in an understanding of violence as a social process. On the basis of court records, autobiographical testimonies, autobiographical texts, and victim and eyewitness accounts, she takes a close look at sexualized and collective uses of force, as a special form of doing and suffering violence. Wolters presents the first sociology of gang rape and makes an important contribution to advancing our insights into a highly relevant phenomenon, with implications for research on other forms of violence.

Laura Wolters is a social scientist who works in the Research Group Macro-Violence at the Hamburg Institute for Social Research.

Robert Kindler

Seal Kingdom: Russia and the Limits of Power in the Northern Pacific



Robbenreich. Russland und
die Grenzen der Macht am
Nordpazifik
ca. 145 000 words, 464 pages,
11 images, 5 maps
ISBN 978-3-86854-359-9
Hardback, March 2022

Available rights
All languages

A gripping microglobal account of resource conflicts and imperial domination in the Northern Pacific region

»Easily forgotten: Russia and the United States waged battles over power and influence in the nineteenth century. Robert Kindler is to be commended for reminding us of a chapter of Russian history that is virtually unknown in Europe ... This book reads like a prelude to the present, for it mirrors ongoing conflicts over influence, power, and resources.«

– Thomas Speckmann, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*

Tsar Alexander II's decision to sell Russian America, now Alaska, to the United States in 1867 marked a watershed for the Northern Pacific region. Whereas Russia had attempted to maintain a minimum of imperial authority on its periphery, state and private actors from the United States, as well as Great Britain and Japan, sought to gain access to the region's scarce resources. Seal pelts, in particular, were in demand on the world market, with furs important status symbols for the emerging bourgeoisie in metropolises from London to New York and Moscow.

In his new book, historian Robert Kindler focuses on the history of seal hunting in the Northern Pacific to retrace a story of transnational conflicts and entanglements. His analysis furthers our understanding of the interactions and legacies of fragile statehood, the oppression of indigenous peoples, and ruthless exploitation of resources. Not only were seal herds in the region decimated within a few decades. The impacts of massive interventions into Northern Pacific ecosystems are still being felt to this day

Robert Kindler is a historian specializing in Eastern European history at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Freie Universität Berlin. His work focuses on the transnational history of the Russian Empire, the history of Stalinism, and the history of post-Soviet memory cultures. His earlier award-winning book, originally published in German by Hamburger Edition, has also appeared in Russian (Rosspen) and English translation (University of Pittsburgh Press, Stalin's Nomads: Power and Famine in Kazakhstan).

Till van Rahden

Multiplicity: Jewish History and the Ambivalences of Universalism



Vielheit. Jüdische Geschichte
und die Ambivalenzen des
Universalismus
ca. 67 000 words, 224 pages
ISBN 978-3-86854-358-2
Hardback, October 2022

Available rights
All languages

On the claim to equality and the right to difference: a new perspective on Jewish and European history since the Enlightenment

Since the Enlightenment, thinkers throughout the world have grappled with the idea of the »unity of the human race« and humanity's diversity. How can the promise of equality for all be reconciled with tolerance for diversity?

Till van Rahden examines two centuries of Jewish history in Europe within the framework of this recurrent theme of European modernity. As the ideal of equality gained ascendancy, so did disputes over cultural and religious difference intensified, which fueled discussions on Jewish emancipation and the Jewish experience of equality and discrimination, in particular since the late 18th century. Illuminating the history of contested concepts such as assimilation, minority or majority, ethnicity, and tribe, the author's perspective on European Jewish history offers a story of plurality that remains highly relevant in the present day.

Contents

- 1 Minorities and Majority: From the Ideal of Democratic Equality to the Dream of National Purity
- 2 Jewish Life and the Ambivalences of Bourgeoisie Society in Germany
- 3 »Germans of Jewish Descent«: Common Ideas between Nationalism and Particularism, 1850 to 1933
- 4 Situative Ethnicity or Socio-moral Milieu: Jews and Catholics in the German Imperial Era
- 5 Betrayal, Fate or Opportunity: Controversies over the Concept of Assimilation

Till van Rahden is a historian and professor of German and European Studies at the Université de Montréal.

Klaus Holz / Thomas Haury

Antisemitism Against Israel



Antisemitismus gegen Israel
ca. 137 000 words, 450 pages
ISBN 978-3-86854-355-1
Hardback, October 2021

Available rights
All languages

A highly topical examination of contemporary manifestations of modern anti-Zionism and antisemitism that targets Israel

»Space is too limited in this review to do justice to the richness of historical context, the astute argumentation, and the wealth of material that have been brought together in this well-structured volume.« – Micha Brumlik, *zeitzeichen*

In 2020, remarks made by postcolonial theorist Achille Mbembe rekindled public debate in Germany about antisemitism and criticism of Israel. This most recent in a long line of similar controversies raises numerous issues—not the least of which is the fundamental question of what is meant by antisemitism that targets Israel—that are starting point for this book.

With this systematic, historically grounded study, Klaus Holz and Thomas Haury demonstrate why antisemitism expressed as a critique of Israel is not a special form of contemporary antisemitism but is rather rooted in the fundamental principles of modern antisemitism. The authors reconstruct the various manifestations of contemporary antisemitism and the self-representations with which they are associated. They scrutinize antisemitism on the left, antiracist identity politics, Christian positions that support and oppose Israel, and the politics of the New Right and dissect the many links connecting these disparate positions. Their analysis lays bare the underlying patterns shared by anti-Zionism, antisemitism focused on Israel, and antisemitism as a more general phenomenon.

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- VI. Identity Politics: Antisemitism or Racism?
- VII. Christians For and Against Israel
- VIII. The New Right: A Return to Weltanschauung
- IX. Conclusion: Conditional Universalism

Klaus Holz is the secretary general of the Evangelische Akademien in Deutschland (Protestant Academies in Germany) and has been involved in research on antisemitism for many years. Two of his earlier books were published by Hamburger Edition: Nationaler Antisemitismus and Die Gegenwart des Antisemitismus.

Thomas Haury works in education. He holds a degree in sociology and history and a doctorate from the University of Freiburg. His study of antisemitism in East Germany, Antisemitismus von links, was published by Hamburger Edition.

Silke van Dyk / Tine Haubner

Community Capitalism



Community-Kapitalismus
ca. 38 000 words, 176 pages
ISBN 978-3-86854-354-4
Hardback, September 2021

Available rights
All languages

Examines the new culture of unpaid work from a sociological perspective, focusing on shifts in the interactions between care work, the welfare state, and the economy

»Their book is a significant contribution to the analysis of contemporary capitalism and a strong appeal in favor of maintaining state-guaranteed infrastructure that is strictly anchored in society.« – Tania Martini, *die tageszeitung*

Neighbors helping neighbors, volunteer fire fighters, care sponsorships, food banks, initiatives to aid refugees, crowdsourcing: unpaid work has many faces and a positive image—and it occurs throughout society, not just in private households. With the creation of »care gaps« due to demographic and social change and the restructuring of the welfare state, associations, clubs, initiatives, and neighborhood or digital networks are increasingly being called upon to step in. Functions previously fulfilled by public entities or professionals are delegated to civil society, and social rights are reframed as social gifts.

Silke van Dyk and Tine Haubner use the term »community capitalism« to label these developments and to point to a key question: what changes are reconfiguring the relationship between the market, the state, families, and civil society? Are we witnessing an informalization of work and care in the guise of new communality? What role do social movements play in this ongoing process? And what are the impacts on our understanding of social rights? The authors not only analyze the downsides of community capitalism and address their significance in the face of neoliberal crises. They end by considering prospects for alternatives based on solidarity.

Silke van Dyk is a professor of political sociology and director of the Institute for Sociology, Friedrich Schiller University Jena.

Tine Haubner is a researcher in the Department of Political Sociology, Friedrich Schiller University Jena.

Pablo Schmelzer

»Black and White, unite and fight«: The West German Leftist Movement and the Black Panther Party



»Black and White, unite and fight«. Die deutsche 68er-Bewegung und die Black Panther Party
ca. 73 000 words, 248 pages
11 images
ISBN 978-3-86854-356-8
Hardback, September 2021

Available rights
All languages

Focuses on a to-date neglected alliance formed in the 1960s in West Germany and sheds new light on more recent debates on cultural appropriation and identity

»A book that is absolutely worth reading and one that enriches debates about the left movement of 1968.« – Werner Buhrer, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*

**»Schmelzer is to be lauded for having dared to explore the unknown terrain between barracks and campuses to give a voice to previously overlooked experience.«
– Jörg Später, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung***

In the late 1960s, Black Panther Party activists brought together white West German leftists and African American soldiers stationed in West Germany and established the Black Panther Solidarity Committee in Frankfurt am Main. Writing in underground newspapers, GIs called for a »black revolution«, scandalized racial discrimination within the U.S. Army, and claimed to represent the Black Panther Party in Germany. As Pablo Schmelzer's analysis shows, these newspapers and their reception sheds light on the relationship between African American GIs and their German support scene to reveal a dynamic culture of protest, with which the Black Panther Party made strategic use of aspirations of the German radical Left.

Schmelzer's book deconstructs the purportedly passive role of people of color and non-European actors within the German leftist movement of the late 1960s to reframe dominant narratives of the concepts and practices of leftist and student internationalism. The transnational alliance Schmelzer explores was for a time politically productive, with local groups active near US military bases collaborating to stage rallies and campaigns until the mid-1970s. But the German radical left's ambivalent fascination with *Afroamerika* also spawned considerable friction and struggles over questions of identity and cultural appropriation. The movement's fight against racism ultimately remained focused on the United States and failed to address issues closer to home. Indeed: within class struggle as it was defined by West Germany's radical left, racism was considered a »secondary contradiction«. This brand of antiracism proved to have significant blind spots, which persisted for decades after the end of the alliance.

Pablo Schmelzer studied history, literature and cultural studies in Bonn, Paris and Göttingen. He is a research fellow in the Democracy and Statehood Research Group at the Hamburg Institute for Social Research. His current research focuses on right-wing violence and discourse on political order in both German states between 1970 and 1993.

Patrick Hönig

An End to Impunity?

Mobile Courts in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo



Ein Ende der Straflosigkeit?
Mobile Gerichte im Osten der
Demokratischen Republik Kongo
ca. 95 000 words, 320 pages,
5 maps
ISBN 978-3-86854-350-6
Hardback, March 2021

Available rights
All languages

Examines the operations of Congolese mobile courts to reveal the shortcomings of a program aimed at administering justice in a society plagued by armed conflict and (sexualized) violence. These courts have undermined survivors' faith in legal process, by failing to address victims' expectations and their desire for witness protection and reparations.

»Recommended reading for all those who engage with the issues of protecting human rights and perpetrators' impunity.« – Annette Wilmes, *Deutschland Funk*

For years, the Democratic Republic of Congo has repeatedly made headlines with reports of serious acts of violence. These human rights violations and crimes against humanity are perpetrated by members of various armed groups, the Congolese army, or even by members of the victims' own families. Introduced in 1979, mobile courts aimed to increase the numbers of perpetrators brought to justice and deal mostly with serious criminal cases: homicide, manslaughter, and or rape or other forms of sexualized violence.

Mobile courts operate like regular stationary courts but ad hoc and in remote rural areas or urban areas with little or no access to adequate justice services. Various international organizations help fund the system. As Patrick Hönig argues, the complex web of actors that has developed in this context offers advantages for state and non-state actors—but all too often none for the victims of major crimes seeking justice.

In extensive on-site research, Hönig observed the courts in action and spoke with Congolese judges, prosecutors, and defense lawyers, with the staff members of the international organizations involved, and with victims and plaintiffs. *An End to Impunity* is an unsparing analysis and critique of the mobile court system as a legal device that purportedly increases access to justice and strengthens people's confidence in the rule of law. In practice, this system primarily benefits those who have the material and other means to pursue a case and falls short of accepted standards of the rule of law and legal process. More importantly, the interventions of mobile courts, which are supported by international actors that pursue their own agenda based on the principles of complementarity, universality, and uniformity, often run counter to the aims of rehabilitating survivors, promoting conflict resolution, and addressing structural problems of postconflict situations.

Patrick Hönig is a legal scholar who has worked at universities and academic institutions in Europe, North America, and Asia and for international governmental and non-governmental organizations, mainly in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. He served as a political affairs officer of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo. His research interests and numerous publications center on peace and security, human rights law, and conflict resolution and dispute settlement.

Oliver Eberl

Barbarism and the State of Nature: The Legitimation and Critique of State Order in the Context of European Colonial Expansion



Naturzustand und Barbarei:
Begründung und Kritik staatlicher
Ordnung im Zeichen des Kolonial-
ismus
ca. 164 000 words / 552 pages,
11 images
ISBN 978-3-86854-349-0
Hardback, March 2021

Available rights
All languages

Honored as Best Book in Political Science 2022 by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Politikwissenschaft and Stiftung Wissenschaft und Demokratie

»Eberl's book impresses with its clarity of thought and transparent approach to the history of ideas. The author does not mince words when it comes to the far-reaching consequences of his historical findings for the present. He shows how both the justification and the critique of state order have been aligned with a conception of barbarism that was shaped by colonialism—and remains so to this day.« – Milos Vec, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

In recent years, fundamental ideas of European thinking have been subjected to critical scrutiny, to determine how they contribute to perpetuating racism and repression. »Barbarism«, as a key element of European political discourses on »civilization«, is one such idea. Barbarism is firmly rooted in notions of »non-civilized Others« seen as not sharing European values and ideas of political order. Barbarians are represented as threatening the civilized way of life, and the term barbarian continues to be used to label crimes deemed especially horrific and morally reprehensible. But the concept's more fundamental significance for political theory has hardly been addressed.

Barbarism and the State of Nature addresses this desiderata and the fundamental entanglement of Western political thought with the discourse on barbarism, from the Enlightenment to twentieth-century political philosophers like Adorno. Oliver Eberl aims to contribute to decolonizing discourse on political theory by analyzing how it continues to draw on concepts about barbarism and the »state of nature«. He begins by retracing the principles and genealogy of discourse on barbarism from antiquity on, highlighting its connection with European colonialism and the role of this discourse in denigrating the colonized.

As modern states emerged in Europe, political thinkers held that barbarism had been overcome, but emphasized the danger of relapsing into this »uncivilized« status. Thomas Hobbes described the »natural state« as the opposite of modern statehood. This transformation of the colonial concept into a critical notion enabled Enlightenment thinkers to criticize the existing absolutist states or, later, anti-fascists to decry the Nazi state as »barbaric«. This shift secured the role of the concept of barbarism in contemporary theoretical thinking, as we continue to refer to terrorism as barbaric and civil war as a »return to the state of nature«. Eberl ends by pointing to differentiated concepts of genocide, crimes against humanity, and other violations of human dignity that have increasingly replaced the barbarism discourse and should be the basis for future work in political theory.

Oliver Eberl is a political scientist and co-directs a research project at the Technical University of Darmstadt: »Der Blick nach unten. Soziale Konflikte in der Ideengeschichte der Demokratie«. He has previously worked at the universities of Frankfurt, Indiana, and Oslo. His research focuses on political theory, Kant's political philosophy, the history of ideas in colonialism, political semantics, and EU citizenship.

Marcel Berni

Out of Action: Life and Death of »Communist Prisoners« in Vietnam's American War, 1965–1973



Ausser Gefecht. Leben und Sterben »kommunistischer Gefangener« in Vietnams amerikanischem Krieg 1965–1973
ca. 160 000 words / 442 pages
ISBN 978-3-86854-348-3
Hardback, September 2020

Available rights
All languages

Recipient of the André Corvisier Prize 2020, awarded for an outstanding doctoral thesis in military history by the International Commission of Military History.

»Marcel Berni's excellent work can be credited with having significantly advanced this field of research [on prisoners taken in asymmetric armed conflicts].« From the Corvisier Prize jury statement

»Berni ... warns against monocausal explanations, instead discussing a cluster of causes, including structural and situational, institutional, group dynamic, and individual factors. The result is a study of great importance, far beyond the Vietnam War, for the history of violent »asymmetric wars«, and a book that should certainly be published in English.«
– Christian Koller, *Portal Militärgeschichte*

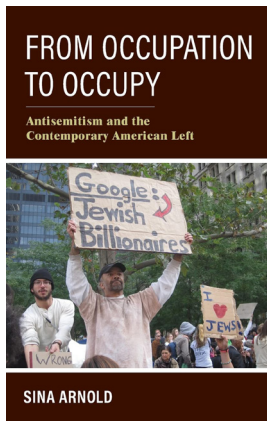
The fate of communist captives in Vietnam's American War (1965–1973) has not been the focus of a comprehensive, comparative historical study. In contrast to captured U.S. soldiers, little is known about treatment of their counterparts south of the Bamboo Curtain. Based on a vast amount of primary sources from three continents, evaluation of personal accounts, and comprehensive analysis of secondary research, this is the first monograph on communist captives. Their fate illustrates the considerable discrepancies that emerged during the Vietnam War between legal demands and military realities, and between civilian and military law in theory and informal practices on the ground.

Swiss historian Marcel Berni develops multifactorial explanatory variables to analyze the broad spectrum of interpersonal violence that these captives were subjected to, from simple harassment to abuse, torture, sexual violence, murder, and mutilation. Characteristically, such crimes were not only committed by soldiers engaged in combat but also in the rear areas. In the perception of many American and South Vietnamese soldiers, enemy prisoners were only worthy of treatment according to international laws and agreements if they themselves also respected such standards and fought according to »conventional, civilized rules«. Where this was not the case, as in South Vietnam, the perceived opponent frequently became the target of merciless violence. Belligerent nations often manipulated definitions of combatants and prisoners to serve their own military strategies and advance their larger goals.

Because it addresses the decisive issue of how enemy combatants are categorized or defined, in particular as irregulars not protected by the Geneva Conventions and other international standards, this study could hardly be more topical.

Marcel Berni is a historian and postdoctoral researcher in the Strategic Studies Department of the Swiss Military Academy at the ETH Zurich in Switzerland. He assumed this position after completing his doctorate at the University of Hamburg. His current research examines the political, strategic, and social reorientations that shaped developments in Switzerland after the end of the Cold War.

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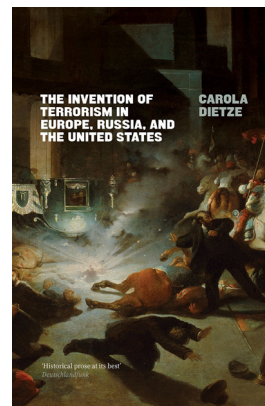
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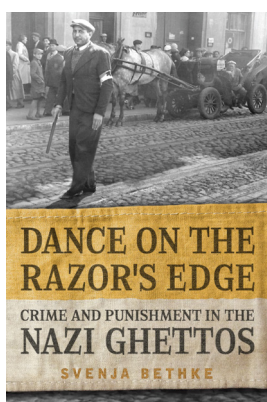
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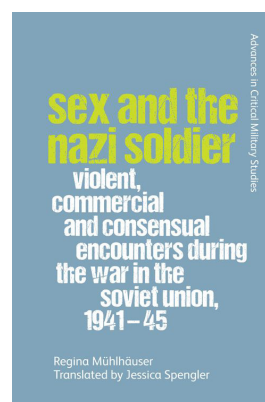
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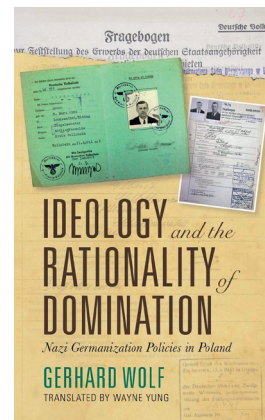
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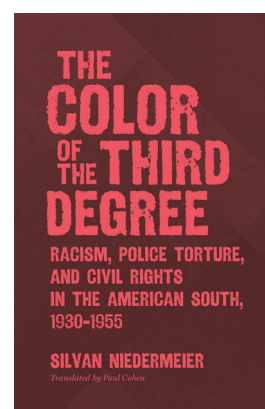
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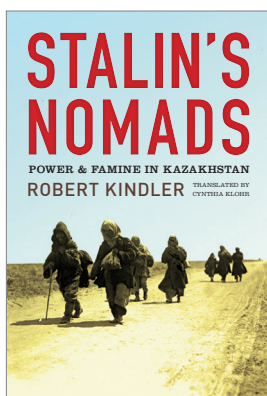
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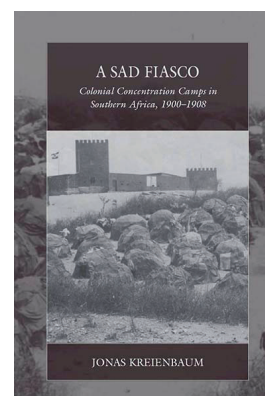
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