

Scott H. Krause, *Bringing Cold War Democracy to West Berlin. A Shared-German American Project, 1940–1972*, Routledge, London/New York 2019, X + 284 pp., hardcover, 105.00 £, ISBN 978-1-138-29985-6.

Over the past four decades, if not before, network theory has been an influential approach in sociological research with a predominant focus on quantification. Business sociology provides a good example. Looking at management and supervisory boards of companies, the task was to identify which key people of major corporations also had seats on the boards of other companies and thus to establish the connections between them. What was to be reconstructed were the ties between them and to plot them graphically as often highly complex structures of two- or even three-dimensional networks. It did not take long for network theory to attract historians, but from the start they were more interested in the qualitative aspects of ties between individual actors, and instead of studying business networks, they also turned to political and cultural ones. The aim was to examine the interactions of individuals involved in a particular network and to tease out the quality of relationships as well as mutual perceptions. This was perhaps less rigorous, but it certainly opened a window to a world of ties that were different from the older research on the history of »circles«, such as the *George-Kreis*, that tended to be exclusive and inward-looking.

Scott Krause has made network theory his starting-point, but as a historian decided to work with Peter M. Haas's notion of epistemic communities, marked by a »shared set of normative and principled beliefs which provide a value-based rationale for social action« (p. 8) His epistemic community gathered in West Berlin, and he traces, as a first step, its »experiences of the fight against National Socialism, exile, and disillusionment with Soviet-style Communism«. This, he argues, constituted the set of convictions that the German members of the Berlin network shared despite their different backgrounds. No less important, Krause introduces a second group, i.e., the remigrés who, together with the first group, created the »common policy enterprise of portraying Berlin's western sectors as the showcase of Cold War Democracy« against »totalitarianism«.

Krause believes that »discovering and examining this network of propagandists of »freedom« will allow him first of all to add »nuance to the conception of democratization as a distinct transfer of cultural attitudes from a newly minted superpower to a shattered society through the translation of cultural concepts by remigrés. Secondly, he highlights »the challenges the political left encountered in postwar Germany and the extent to which American officials contributed to the restructuring of an anti-Communist Left in Germany.«

If this is the conceptual framework that Krause puts forward, what is the empirical backup that he provides for his examination of such major political figures as Ernst Reuter, the governing mayor of Berlin, and Willy Brandt, his successor on the German side, and, on the American side, Shepard Stone, the Public Affairs director under US High Commissioner John McCloy, the American journalists around the RIAS radio station, or Hans Hirschfeld, who returned from New York to West Berlin as Reuter's public relations manager. The author shows how they became members of a network with a political agenda of fostering West Berlin's international position as an »outpost of freedom«.

The book starts with a depressing account of Berlin at the end of the war, devastated by bombing and fierce street fighting. Early visitors to the city had conflicted reactions to the city, once the hub of Weimar culture, but after 1933 the nerve center of a brutal dictatorship that had planned and unleashed a world war and the murder of millions of Jews and other minorities in the Holocaust. The contrast is perhaps best summed up by a quote from John J. Maginnis, a US general, who remarked in November 1945: »I could sit in my office and say with conviction that these Germans, who had caused so much harm and destruction in the world, had some suffering coming to them, but out here in the Grunewald, talking with people individually, I was saddened by their plight. It was the difference between generalizing on a faceless crowd and looking into one human face.«

Krause then moves swiftly from the city's history in 1945/46 to the escalating crisis of 1947/48 when East-West tensions mounted and the Cold War began in the middle of Berlin. However, before dealing with the Berlin Blockade and the role of Ernst Reuter, he takes the reader across the Atlantic to discuss the »origins of the Outpost network« in New York between 1933 and 1949. Here, he introduces two refugees from Nazi Germany as the linchpins of this particular network, Paul Hertz and Hans Hirschfeld. Before 1933, the latter had been

charged with coordinating the media relations of the Social Democratic Prussian government, but his career ended abruptly in the summer of 1932 in the wake of Reich chancellor Franz von Papen's *Preussenschlag*. Having escaped to the United States, Hirschfeld became quite frustrated with the passivity of the American population toward the Nazi threat. But the New York intellectual milieu also enabled the formation of strong ties, guiding the refugees towards a »new esteem for liberal democracy and the renunciation of Soviet Communism«, transforming »an initially anti-fascist consensus into an anti-totalitarian« one.

In the meantime and after several bureaucratic delays, Ernst Reuter had returned to Berlin with his family from his Turkish exile in November 1946. Trying to establish himself politically in Berlin, he promoted his notion of *freieitlicher Sozialismus*. This was »the conviction of sharing fundamental political ideals of liberal democracy [that now] facilitated the formation of the Outpost network that linked returned Social Democrats and American officials«, posted in West Berlin. Enter Shepard Stone and his wife Charlotte who had become close friends of the Hirschfelds in New York. After the war, this particular »network reconstituted itself in Berlin, where it incorporated new German and American members and successfully couched its political aspirations within the narrative of the Outpost of Freedom in the opening Cold War.«

It was Paul Hertz and Stone who persuaded an initially reluctant Hirschfeld to return to Germany. But it was Reuter's return that paved the road to Berlin for a number of other members of the network, among them Willy Brandt who with his Norwegian passport became the press attaché with the Norwegian Military Mission before he decided to reacquire German citizenship. Another important network figure was the US Army Major Karl F. Mautner. Hailing from Vienna, his family had moved to Hungary in 1938 whence he emigrated to the United States, while his parents stayed behind and in 1944 perished in the Nazi Holocaust. What was remarkable about him and others who had lost family in camps is that they were prepared to set aside their bitter memories about the past and to commit themselves to the rebuilding of Berlin under Reuter's leadership.

What greatly reinforced the ties among them was the imposition by Stalin of the Berlin Blockade in June 1948 whose success was thwarted by Washington and London when they ordered their air forces to fly close to 278,000 missions to Tempelhof with a total freight of 2.3 million tons of food and other vital supplies for Berlin's embattled inhabitants. When Stalin abandoned the Blockade in September 1949, he had helped not only to forge a strong sense of Berlin's position as an »outpost of freedom« inside the Soviet Bloc, but also to create solidarities with the American public that made it possible for the city to weather the next three crises in 1953. First there was McCarthy's anti-Communist witch hunt which put individuals like Stone and institutions, such as the Berlin *Amerikahaus*, under a cloud. In June followed the uprising of workers against the Ulbricht regime in East Germany that was brutally suppressed by Soviet tanks. Finally, there was the death of Reuter on 29 September 1953 which slowly opened the way for the rise of Brandt to the position of Governing Mayor. In 1962, he and his American network were confronted with the next dangerous crisis when Ulbricht decided to stop the free movement of Berliners between the four Allied sectors and to build the Wall right through the middle of the city.

Krause subsequently provides many valuable details and insights into Brandt's policies and the hostility he faced from Konrad Adenauer's Christian Democratic Party and into the origins of his *Ostpolitik* and reconciliation with West Germany's eastern neighbors. The other illuminating chapter is the story of the RIAS radio station and the networks of American and German journalists who broadcast Berlin's position as the Outpost of Freedom around Europe.

Overall Krause's book may not offer anything that was not known before in broad outline. But his network approach makes it possible for him focus not only on the top decision-makers but also on the second layer of experts and network specialist without whom the policies at the top cannot be understood. It is a deeply researched book that makes it a worthwhile and illuminating read.

Volker Berghahn, New York

Recommended Citation:

Volker Berghahn: Review of: Scott H. Krause, *Bringing Cold War Democracy to West Berlin. A Shared-German American Project, 1940–1972*, Routledge, London/New York 2019, in: *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* (online) 59, 2019, URL: <<http://www.fes.de/cgi-bin/afs.cgi?id=81902>> [15.8.2019].