Summaries

Frank Bösch, Political Power and the Shaping of Society. The Path to Commercial Broadcasting during the 1970s and 1980s

The launch of commercial television and radio broadcasting is one of the central processes of transformation in Western Europe during the 1970s and 1980s. Based on previously inaccessible estate documents, protocols and public debates, the article explores this paradigm shift in the Federal Republic. It shows firstly that political and social objectives played a more significant role than technological change in the decision making process. Whereas Social Democrats argued in a conservative fashion, Christian Democrats used rather liberal arguments. Secondly, the article elaborates economic objectives, in particular with reference to the boom of the advertisement industry during the 1970s. Advertisement agencies in the Federal Republic feared international competition and foreign adverts broadcasted in German language via satellite. The paper shows thirdly how commercial broadcasting of other European countries acted as an example: Italy unanimously served as a cautionary tale; the Conservatives favoured the broadcasting system of the United States and Luxembourg, and British radio and television were predominantly seen as a positive example of regulated and limited commercial broadcasting.

Marc Buggeln, Taxes after the Boom. Public Finances in Western Industrial Nations and their Distributive Effects on Society

Researchers generally agree on the fact that the beginning of the 1970s constitutes a caesura in the history of the Western industrial nations. These broad interpretations usually ignore fiscal policy. The article outlines and compares the changing conditions of this policy by highlighting the tax policy in five countries. It firstly analyses changes of tax policy in the USA and Great Britain, countries which are seen as pacemakers of neoliberal tax reform by research literature. Afterwards it explores whether similar reforms occurred in the Federal Republic, in France and in Sweden. It is an important question whether or not it is beneficial to distinguish different groups of countries in order to define and classify the scope of change in these countries. In this context, the relationship between modern history and social sciences is up for debate. It is shown that, on the one hand, reforms in the five countries entailed multiple results with different objectives; consequently some generalising assumptions about the consequences of globalisation, such as a drop in tax revenues, do not hold true. Yet, on the other hand, there were examples of neoliberal convergence, in particular the reduction of the maximum tax rate. It should be noted that the suppositions of the social science research literature that categorises and groups different countries together can indeed be beneficial in order to explain different levels of reform. At the same time it raises a number of problems such as the inelasticity of the models caused by the assertion of path dependency, which takes far too little account of the changes in the respective countries.

Jacob S. Eder, A »Holocaust Syndrome«? Political Relationships between the Federal Republic of Germany and American Jewish Organisations in the 1980s

The article explores the change of political relations between the government of Chancellor Helmut Kohl and American Jewish organisations during the 1980s. West German diplomats and politicians held these organisations accountable for the increasing public presence of the remembrance of the Holocaust in the USA since the end of the 1970s. The Federal Republic interpreted this development as a strain on its reputation in terms

of foreign policy. The German-American/Jewish relationship seemed to be shaped by a »Holocaust syndrome«: Many American Jews perceived the Federal Republic predominately as the successor state of the ›Third Reich‹. German Conservative politicians, on the other hand, considered it a political problem that American Jews became increasingly engaged with the Holocaust and ignored the achievements of the democratic Federal Republic. From the perspective of the government of Chancellor Kohl, the increasing social and public attention paid to the history of the Holocaust was a twofold political challenge: On the one hand, it ran contrary to the intended deepening of trust between both states, on the other, it thwarted Kohl's politics of history in the Federal Republic. Based on the analysis of previously inaccessible German and American sources, the author outlines the cleavages and problems of perception in the relation between American Jewish organisations and the German government. The article not only approaches public conflicts such as the »Bitburg affair«, but also examines internal German analyses of the course of action of the Jewish organisations. Despite – or rather because of – numerous tensions, the dialogue between both sides considerably increased during the 1980s, which in the end beneficially affected the process of dealing with the NS past in the Federal Republic.

Larry Frohman, »Only Sheep Let Themselves Be Counted«: Privacy, Political Culture, and the 1983/87 West German Census Boycotts

The 1983/87 census boycotts were one of the main events in West German domestic politics in the 1980s. However, neither they nor the decision of the Constitutional Court In the legal challenge to the planned census have received the scholarly attention they merit. Without denying that the boycott was shaped by the memory of Nazi rule, the article argues that the protests were much more directly influenced by the new information technologies and the expansion of state population surveillance, that is, the large-scale collection of personal information for social planning and security purposes. The Court's reasoning in the case built upon the analyses of the normalising, disciplinary effects of the new information technologies set out by both the protesters and the liberals who challenged the census in court, and it codified a new conception of informational privacy. The boycotts themselves represent one element of a distinct privacy-based social movement comparable in origins, aims and significance to the other social movements of the time, and they were motivated by the ideas of authenticity and *Betroffenheit*. The protesters, however, were not content simply to criticise the logic of bureaucratic domination they espied at work in the census and other large collections of personal information, and the Greens tried to invert this logic and develop an alternate approach that would use such statistical data to serve what they regarded as the real needs and interests of the individual.

Philipp Gassert, Working Out a Consensus for Peace: The Nuclear Crisis of the 1980s as a Means of Social Self-understanding

The article analyses the controversy over the NATO dual-track decision, which threatened the deployment of additional nuclear arms – in German called *Nachrüstung* (additional armament) – as a pivotal political and social conflict of the early 1980s. It is referred to as a »nuclear crisis«, because issues of foreign and security policy were merely ostensible. The debate rather represented and mirrored the controversy on identification and self-understanding of the German society. Following Georg Simmel's theoretical thoughts on »Sociology of Conflict« (1908), the article argues that the »struggle over peace« was part of the process of working out a social consensus in the Federal Republic. Both sides of this debate argued from a position of principles that was – compared to previous decades – widely accepted in the political culture of the Federal Republic: Mul-

tiple references to the close relations with the United States from both sides of the debate and the extensive acceptance of certain forms of protest even on the part of the proponents of the dual-track decision indicated that the Federal Republic considered itself part of the political culture of the democratic West. Furthermore, both sides based their reasoning on the »historical experiences« of the Second World War which points to a broad rootedness in a post-Nazi consensus of remembrance. The fact that even the proponents of the *Nachrüstung* accepted the phrase »peace in freedom« and the overwhelming resonance of the topic »peace« in popular culture shows the extent to which Germany was considered as force for peace. In this manner, the controversy over the NATO dual-track decision and the *Nachrüstung* deepened the minimal consensus on the basic principles of West-German democracy rather than diminished it.

Jan Hansen, Between State and Street. The Controversy over the NATO Dual-Track Decision in the German Social Democratic Party (1979–1983)

In the early 1980s, German Social Democracy was affected by intensive conflicts over the NATO dual-track decision and the potential deployment of nuclear intermediate missiles in the Federal Republic and Western Europe as part of this decision. This »struggle over *Nachrüstung*« – a terminology which suggested that the NATO was only responding to prior Soviet armaments – is the subject of this article, which is based on the conceptual and theoretical reflections of a »New Political History«. Central to this piece is the premise that the debates within the Social Democratic Party (SPD) have to be interpreted as part of a cultural and societal history of the Cold War. The author advances the argument that the controversy over the dual-track decision effectively worked as a »catalyst for an inner agreement over core issues« within the SPD, and that it had consequences for the self-image of the party and the way it perceived its political environment. In seven distinctive steps, the article analyses the discussion and readjustment of political frames during the struggle over *Nachrüstung*. The key point is that within the SPD a »change of the political« can be identified, with regard to attitudes towards protest movements and cultures of protest within the party and to attitudes towards the conflict between the blocs in East and West, as well as with regard to the position on state governance and state power in the Federal Republic.

Philipp Hertzog, Pragmatic Politicisation. Traffic Planners and the Limits of Feasibility around 1980

Historiography on the history of planning in the Federal Republic has identified a caesura in the mid-1970s – from euphoria to scepticism. Contemporary sociologists and political scientists were already engaging with the meaning and consequences of the phrase »planning«. This article focuses on the actors of planning, those who dealt with its technical parameters, and investigates how they identified and discussed their social and political role in West Germany. As an example, traffic planners are scrutinised, a group of experts who had to carry through an idea from the heyday of planning euphoria – the high speed railway tracks of the »Bundesbahn« – vis-à-vis an increasingly critical public. In the process, these planning experts had less and less chances of retreating to a mere technical, facts-based form of engagement. The debate on the power of technology and of those who harnessed it – under the keyword »technocracy« – now also occupied professional journals of a genuinely technical nature. In reaction to protests against infrastructural projects – that is the key argument of this article – the planning experts were increasingly open for political debates. For instance, demands for higher environmental standards and safeguards were now integrated as a new challenge into the planning process. Initially, engineers thus entered the public debate on large-scale projects basically due to pragmatic

necessity. Yet more and more, they also challenged the legitimacy of grassroots initiatives by concerned citizens, whom the engineers perceived as having merely particular, vested interests. With such interventions, the engineers as custodians of technology, who in the past had mainly acted in the background, made a first, tentative step towards active engagement in the political process.

Claudia Kemper, International, National, Regional – The Organisation »International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War« and the Change of Anti-Nuclear Protest in the First Half of the 1980s

The article focuses on the peace movement of the 1980s and its possibilities and limits of international networking. As an example, it examines the organisation »International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War« (IPPNW) and investigates the question of how the common objective – nuclear disarmament – was discussed internationally, nationally and regionally and how it was put into practice. By exploring different levels of this international organisation, the article reveals the limits of international ideas, which narrowed the members' scope of action within their national framework due to the East-West conflict. At the beginning of the 1980s, physicians, who in general were rather reluctant to join an organisation, had the opportunity to successfully send out their international medical message. Subsequently, numerous national sections emerged from the initially American-Soviet initiative that championed the process of disarmament in their countries based on the idea of politics across the blocs. The piece shows that not despite, but because of changing political conditions and internal controversies the IPPNW differentiated and professionalised over patterns of its protest during the 1980s. This in consequence reveals insights on political change in the 1980s. By no means was this a development merely affecting the peace movement, which in the first half of the decade had already been mobilised. The process of change was predominantly advanced by the movement's inner debates and differentiations.

Christopher Kopper, The Long Farewell from the *Deutschland AG*? German Banks and the Europeanisation of the Capital Market in the 1980s

The article discusses the changes of the financial sector against the background of European integration and the pressure of the financial centres London and Luxembourg to liberalise the bank sector. Whereas tax and economic policies of the Federal government changed only gradually during the 1980s, the liberalisation of competition of the financial sector, undisputed in terms of European policy, entailed a Europe-wide deregulation drive. Prioritising liberalisation of competition over the alignment of market conditions favoured the growth of tax havens with lax bank regulations. Free movement of capital caused an increase in tax evasion and forced the Federal government to compromise on tax policy with dubious effects on budget and distribution policy. The high street banks started to question the system of the »Rhenanian Capitalism« (a type of corporatist capitalism based on consensus and the balance of interests between labour and capital) in favour of a profit-maximising Europeanisation strategy.

Nicole Kramer, New Social Movements, Social Sciences and the Expansion of the Welfare State: Family and Senior Citizens Policies during the 1970s and 1980s

Due to the social transformation processes during the 1970s and 1980s, social policy in the Federal Republic was facing new challenges and was shaped by a growing number of actors. The article focuses on two aspects: firstly the already established field of family policy, secondly the senior citizens policy as a new field of political action. Both were

characterised by special social political dynamics due to measures such as the introduction of a child raising allowance and of the so-called *Kinderjahre*, years of child raising, which were allowable both against statutory pension insurance entitlements and against the law on nursing homes. These measures also included the implementation of a statutory nursing care insurance within the framework of the law on the security and structural improvement of the statutory health insurance (»Gesundheitsstrukturgesetz«). The article explores the direction of the change of social policy and its driving forces. By expanding the perspective in terms of a societal history, the piece does not only take into account politics at the federal level and of political parties, but also scrutinises social scientists acting as policy advisers as well as actors in and around the New Social Movements. Although the latter sharply criticised the welfare state, their thinking remained within the framework of the welfare state, in as much as their ideas of a »better society« strengthened the adjustments and regulations of social politics. The change of social policy during the 1980s was predominantly the result of the influence of social scientific experts. They acted on behalf of the state for consultation purposes as authors of regularly published white papers on family related issues and developments, and as evaluation experts in departmental research institutions of the ministry of social affairs. Reforms of family and senior citizens policies were not merely an expansion of social services, they also entailed a change in the nature of core principles of social policy.

Peter Kramper, The End of Collective Economy. Crises and Scandals in Union-Owned Companies in the 1980s

Until the beginning of the 1980s, union-owned companies without a profit maximisation objective were an integral part of the economic system of the Federal Republic. Emerged from corporate self-help organisations, they had seen their heyday after the Second World War. The scandal of the local development and housing association »NEUE HEIMAT« in 1982 was the beginning of a profound crisis that until the end of the decade had spread to the retailer »Co op«, the »Bank für Gemeinwirtschaft« and the insurance company »Volksfürsorge«. It unleashed fierce public controversy and ultimately ended in the breakup and asset stripping of these publicly owned companies. The article interprets this caesura as a sign of transition from the economic system of the 1960s and 1970s, which was based on the reformist paradigm of growth and planning, to a new economic and management policy oriented to the concept of »shareholder value« and to the »self-regulating forces« of the market.

Reinhild Kreis, An Alliance with Recruitment Problems? The »New Generation« and American-German Relations in the 1980s

At the beginning of the 1980s, politicians, media representatives and scholars in the United States and in West Germany diagnosed an increasing alienation between the societies of both countries that allegedly threatened to weaken the Western alliance. The rhetoric of crisis was the starting point of a large number of private and state initiatives, which were supposed to foster mutual interest and understanding in both societies. The article examines the diagnosis of a growing alienation, the consequential solution strategies and the emerging narratives based on the notions of »generation« and »values« against the background of the East-West conflict. By means of these concepts it was possible to tie up different objectives and perspectives in the Federal Republic and the United States and to blind out the difficult present – at least to a certain extent – by interpreting current political controversies as part of a structural and demographic problem at a higher level. In the Federal Republic the narrative of a »new generation« politically alienated from the Western alliance was part of the discussion about German identity that histori-

cised the founding of the Federal Republic. The author shows that by championing the improvement of American-German relations, issues of the basics and the cohesion of the Western alliance in a period of conflict as well as the role of the two states within this framework were renegotiated.

Silke Mende, From »Anti-Parties-Party« to »Ecological Reform Party«. The Green Party and the Change of the Political

Subject of this article is the history of the Green Party in the Federal Republic. It relates the foundation and development of the party with the broader context of a change of the Political during the last two decades of the Bonn Republic. Firstly, it sums up the formation of the Green Party against the background of the extra-parliamentary protest movements that attracted attention by addressing new ideas and new forms of politics. Subsequently, the article points out the ideological and organisational development of the party: The highly heterogeneous »anti-parties party« with its initial foundation slogan »neither right nor left but ahead« turned into an »ecological reform party« with a progressive left-wing agenda gradually replacing the concept of »radical opposition« with *Realpolitik* (political realism). A specific green-alternative form of symbolic politics, which had emerged from the experiences of the protest movements, played an important integrative and mediating role. On the basis of three topics the article exemplarily highlights the issues and core themes that shaped the political agenda of the Greens. It examines to what extent they addressed new ideas and challenges that the society of the Federal Republic was facing »after the boom«. The positions of the Green Party towards growth and progress, two key concepts of industrial modernity, as well as the debates on the »multi-cultural society« and on the change of the welfare state are analysed. The latter underlines that the party approached newly emerging and changing policy areas beyond its initial core themes much earlier than the established political parties and organisations. In the face of the example of the Green Party, the 1980s seem to be part of a longer lasting period of political change that started in the late 1960s and that is, at present, still ongoing.

Gabriele Metzler, »A German Way«. Deregulation of Telecommunication in the Federal Republic and the Limits of Political Reform in the 1980s

One of the major projects of the government of Chancellor Helmut Kohl in the 1980s was the reform of the postal and telecommunication system which had been under debate since the 1960s. These plans drew on international developments such as in the UK, the U.S. and Japan where telecommunication had already been deregulated, yet fell far short of them. The example of telecommunication paradigmatically highlights specific elements of West-German policy change after the end of the social-liberal coalition: A new interpretation of society (»information society«, »communication society«), the limited adoption particularly of Anglo-American debates, the updating of traditional German basic concepts of policy such as *Daseinsvorsorge* (public service providing basic supplies) as well as the discussions and practical consequences of the »joint decision trap«, a notion coined by the political scientist Fritz W. Scharpf.

Morton Reitmayer, The Return of the Elite. Comeback of a Political-Societal Category

By examining the term »elite«, the article outlines the use of a key concept of the political history of ideas in Europe during the twentieth century. As the title suggests, the notion »elite« has been used more and more frequently in the political language of the Federal Republic since the beginning of the 1980s. The »comeback« of this category acted as a response to transformation processes which had started in the 1960s and had raised

problems since the 1970s. In the 1980s, the discussion of the »elite« focussed on higher education policy. Specific support of the most gifted students, that is to say the future »academic elite«, seemed to offer a practicable solution of the problem of overcrowding of these years. The widely feared innovation crisis of West German industry and the fear of economic decline of the Federal Republic were further topics of the public debate. Only by linking these two issues, the ideas and suggestions on developing an academic elite – respectively on re-enabling universities to produce these elites – gained vigour and led to the return of the term »elite« within the political language of the Federal Republic. The change of key concepts and the diagnosis of the present affected the setting of political objectives and therefore had an impact on political action itself. This is clearly illustrated by the shift of the aims of higher education policy in which context the term »elite« played a significant role. In this context, liberal and conservative ideas had converged. Even though they were still distinguishable from each other, they generated a new basic compromise within the political field, according to which the preservation of familiar social hierarchies and chances of appropriation could be handed over to the dynamics of the modern market society.

Michael Ruck, Steering through the Rough Sea of Structural and Value Change. Representation, Participation and Administration during the 1980s – An Outline of the Problem

The article describes the period of the 1980s from the perspective of regional differentiation as a not sharply contoured phase during which present policy structures and processes in Germany were initiated. It analyses significant aspects of transformation processes of the political culture and of structures of social representation, which increased in batches in the wake of the secular value change at the end of the 1970s. Conventional forms of policy making became of less and less importance in the parliamentary pluralistic Federal Republic dominated by parties and pressure groups. The conflict-laden contradiction between well-engineered planning scenarios and claims of participation was carried out not only within, but more and more frequently outside the existing institutions of democratic representation. A swiftly growing number of local and regional *Bürgerinitiativen* (campaigns initiated by concerned citizens) emerged. Initially, the West German party system was not yet affected by this development. But already during the early 1980s, traditional allegiances to different social milieux and parties began to erode, in particular where the »organised civil society« originated from the milieu of the New Social Movements took shape at regional and local level. This involved a loss of significance of the three main actors of the economic system of corporatism – employers, employees and lobbyists – which essentially shaped the Bonn Republic. As early as the 1980s, federal and local administrations as protagonists of the extensive provision of services for the public ceased seeing themselves merely as governmental agencies of modernisation in this scenario of change. Again, this functional change initially started at local and regional level and quickly gained importance across the board after the turn of the millennium.

Axel Schildt, The Last Decade of the Bonn Republic. Thoughts on Research of the 1980s

The article outlines the image of the ›old‹ Federal Republic during the 1980s as its last period. It argues not to mistake the inner peace of this decade – in contrast to the previous one – for a political graveyard peace. The process of »self-acceptance« of the Federal Republic involved some of the largest public demonstrations of its history. In its second part, the article discusses the 1980s as a construct of contemporary history and the resulting problems of this view. This concerns the specific framework conditions of the Cold War, which once again had been violently flaring up and then dying away since the mid-1980s, as well as some political and social developments and related contemporary discourses

from the »risk society« to the »event society«. The third part finally presents a layout of research areas compatible with issues of recent contemporary history and problems of the present time that can be seen as particularly urgent research desiderata on the late period of the ›old‹ Federal Republic.

Susanne Schregel, The »Power of the Mighty« and the Power of the »Powerless«. Refigurations of the Mindset of Power in the 1980s

After outlining the beginning historicisation of social movements and alternative milieux, the article examines the historical semantic of power in the context of alternative political interpretations. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a struggle over the concept of power emerged in the Federal Republic. Representatives of the alternative milieu considered the concept of power, and not merely in its conventional sense, as destructive. The critics of the concept of power also influenced the attempts of developing what was seen as an adequate form of power. This type of power was not supposed to be in the hands of the few, but should be shared socially; in this form it was seen as creative instead of suppressive. Emotionality in particular as well as the quality of social coexistence were regarded as a possible basis and source of this power. The often quoted orientation towards aims not related to possession such as the improvement of the quality of life was widely mentioned in the debates on the balance of power. These discussions on the »power of the mighty« and the power of the »powerless« show that the alternative milieu distanced itself from concepts of centres of power such as the nation state. This view was, at the same time, a strong motivation for the search for possibilities of alternative political action. In this sense, the change of the political in the 1980s can be understood as a change of the mindset of power.

Dietmar Süß, Clocking, Punching, Timing. Considering »Flexibilisation« as a Concept of Social History and the History of Ideas, 1970 to 1990

The article focuses on the history and semantic of the concept of »flexibilisation«, which shaped the political discourse on the needs of a globalised »modernity« more than any other political phrase. The history of »flexibilisation« draws attention to new social and political conflicts of modern societies and to the economisation of the social. The article aims at combining time as a concept of social history and of the history of ideas with a history of labour. A history of working time and of its assessment since the 1970s indicates a profound change of industrial modernity, its logic, its guiding principles and its temporal structure. Changes in the logic of production and semantic shifts are outlined as well as the way in which they served as basis of the alleged »necessity« of adjusting socially held views on time, as can be still observed today and in all debates on locational competitiveness (*Standortdebatten*). Time as a concept of social history and of the history of ideas makes it possible to historise the rhetoric of flexibilisation and to examine motives, interests and forms of social conflicts on normalisation of time since the 1980s. These controversies were decisively influenced by the caesura of 1989/90 and the extensive privatisations in East Germany.

Henning Tümmers, Aids Policy. How Bonn Dealt with a New Threat

In 1981, reports were published about a previously unknown disease. The deadly threat, which scientists called »AIDS« one year later, evoked a controversy on core topics of social coexistence among politicians and the public of the Federal Republic. The discussions focused on sexuality and death, ethics and values, security, but also on the limits of political action. On the basis of parliamentary debates on fighting the immunodeficiency

disease AIDS, the article analyses central guiding principles of this political action during the 1980s and early 1990s. It characterises different key phases of dealing with AIDS, outlines diverging views of fighting the HI-virus and inquires the process of political and social change caused by AIDS. The author describes the development of several governmental decisions as »AIDS policy«, decisions that were supported by a majority and based on democratic principles, yet remained fragile at all times. This »AIDS policy«, which took shape in the mid-1980s, combined different circulating ideas on public health and prevention, initiated a process of institutionalisation, offered new opportunities for at-risk persons and scientists to participate in political decisions and was characterised by innovative and traditional concepts of action in juxtaposition. The principle of mutual trust between government and people evolved into the maxim of the state that intervened in the health policy of the single states and, in so doing, became clearly visible as a political actor. Although in the last decade of the ›old‹ Federal Republic a policy of trust and rationality had priority over a restrictive regulatory policy, Bonn's liberal AIDS policy was yet a provisional solution continuously attacked by proponents of a strict disease control policy and therefore, since the beginning of the 1990s, constantly under pressure to prove itself.

Frank Uekötter/Claas Kirchhelle, How Seveso Came to Germany. Ecological Scandals and Debates, 1976 to 1986

The article reconstructs the development of ecological discourses in Germany in the 1970s and 1980s and investigates why ecological topics in particular were able to reach a broad consensus in the German public. On the basis of a media and discourse analysis focused on scandalised events, the article shows how environmental policy developed from a politically fixed policy field (being observed in the left-wing connoted anti-nuclear protests) into a cross-cutting issue due to the indignation over chemical accidents and dying forests beyond party lines. Particularly the dioxin disaster in Seveso, Italy, and its multiple media references turned Seveso into a template used for the classification of further chemical accidents in Germany and other countries. It is a peculiarity of the Federal Republic that international scandals were repeatedly discussed in a national frame of reference. Seveso, for instance, was used as a reference when Greenpeace activists protested against the chemical plant Boehringer in Hamburg and as template to classify the disaster at the Sandoz chemical plant in Switzerland. The indignation on Seveso and the following accidents furthermore indicates a changing culture of protest and an increasing importance of the media. Whereas demonstrations in the context of the nuclear conflict mirrored genuine public discontent, the protest campaigns of the 1980s primarily aimed for media impact.

Annette Vowinckel, *Neue Deutsche Welle*. Music as a Paradox Intervention against the »Spiritual and Moral Turn« of the Era Kohl

In terms of popular music, the last years of the social-liberal coalition in the Federal Republic were shaped by the *Neue Deutsche Welle*, which emerged in the late 1970 as quickly as it disappeared in the mid-1980s. Subject of the article is the development of this musical movement preformed by British Punk. According to public perception, its range reached from bands such as »Fehlfarben«, »Geier Sturzflug« and »Trio« to Nena. On the basis of contemporary books and articles in music magazines, interviews and song lyrics, the article examines the *Neue Deutsche Welle* as a phenomenon with characteristics of a youth movement on the one hand, yet which also mirrored the spirit of the years »after the boom« and before the era Kohl. It is particularly striking that simultaneously a movement emerged in the GDR that used similar stylistic devices and addressed the

same issues as its West German counterpart, namely the relation of nature and culture in the industrial society, everyday work life and boredom, the Cold War, the beginning of digitalisation, a radical critique of consumerism and a likewise radical critique of romanticism. The author argues that the *Neue Deutsche Welle* acted as a mirror of the Federal Republic in the years before the so called »spiritual and moral turn« in 1982/83, yet at the same time incorporated elements of modern everyday life which shaped the zeitgeist in the East and the West alike.

Christoph Julian Wehner, Limits of Insurability – Limits of the Risk Society. Nuclear Threat, Production of Security and Insurance Expertise in the Federal Republic and the United States of America

Using the example of the private insurance industry and its dealings with the risks of nuclear energy in the Federal Republic and the USA, the article historicises Ulrich Beck's diagnosis about the »risk society«. It especially discusses the assumption of the uninsurability of risks caused by technical disasters, which are at the basis of a narrative of modern sociology about the caesura between the era of an (insurable) industrial society and a (not any more) insurable risk society. The article examines the complex factors determining the rather restrictive risk policy of the insurance industry, particularly in context with the vigorously changing risk perception of nuclear energy in the 1970s. It becomes apparent that the controversies over nuclear energy put heavy public pressure on the insurance industry, because environmental movements pulled together the industry's risk adversity and the compensation interests of the people and interpreted it as a lack of trust in nuclear energy, according to the logic of the phrase: Not insurable equals not safe. An increasing critique of progress and technology concentrated in the issue of insurability – an interpretation taken up, objectivated and transformed into a theory of historical change by sociology. As a consequence it becomes obvious that the »risk society« is not a historical entity of real existence, but a process of problem definition in social and cultural terms originated in the societal history of the 1970s and 1980s.

Andreas Wirsching, An »Era Kohl«? The Contradictory Characteristics of German Government Policy 1982–1998

This article discusses the key tendencies in the economic, social and cultural policies of the government of Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Special attention is paid to the immanent contradictions of these policies, which claimed to have a »value-based« programmatic foundation, but effectively contributed to the dissolution of traditional conservative »values«. This contradiction is exemplified by an analysis of policies with regard to the family and to the mass media. At the same time, it becomes apparent that government Kohl/Genscher tended to overburden its own agenda. Thus, the government pursued »liberal« policies in fields where it wanted to boost the dynamics of structural change. At the same time, the government practised a »Christian-social«, all but quite »Social Democratic« form of politics in fields in which the consequences of accelerated change were putting increasing strains on different social groups, and where it hence seemed imperative to rebalance »social symmetry«. Finally, the Kohl government wanted to pursue a line of politics grounded in a »value-based Conservatism« wherever the consequences of increasing individualisation tended to endanger the social and cultural fabric of society. Yet the antinomies, which emerged from these contradictory aims, were by no means a mere peculiarity of German politics. Rather, they mirrored a general tendency in the evolutionary dynamics of Western societies.