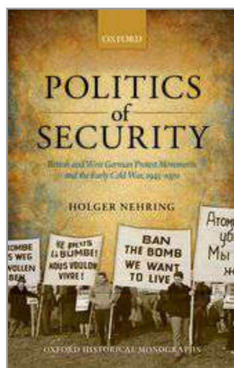

Politics of Security: British and West German Protest Movements and the Early Cold War, 1945-1970

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Redefining Solidarity

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter demonstrates the changing relationship between politics and culture within British and West German extra-parliamentary politics in the second half of the 1960s and especially around 1967 and 1968. The movements in both countries witnessed the protesters' emancipation from the rigid binary cold war system of thinking. This went hand in hand with the realization that it was impossible to discuss the state of world affairs without speaking about 'America'. The increasing focus across the Atlantic had profound implications for the mutual perception of the protests, the links between them, and the ways in which they conceptualized their relationship to the world. This chapter analyses this transformation in the British and West German protesters' politics of security, which had profound implications for the ways in which they conceived of the subjects and objects of these politics.

Keywords: Tariq Ali, Rudi Dutschke, politics from below, anti-Americanism, anti-Vietnam war protests, politics of solidarity

At the International Vietnam Congress, where activists from around the world gathered in West Berlin on 17 and 18 February 1968, participants issued a declaration arguing that the 'military cooperation between the leader of the colonial counter-revolution, the United States, and West European countries, must be broken, and their agency, NATO, must be crushed'.[1] Rudi Dutschke, one the leaders and main organizers of the West German protests, had declared in his address to the Congress that a 'second front' against colonialism and war was needed in West European capitals. At other occasions, he had already called for 'true revolutionary solidarity' and argued that a 'historically open situation'

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existed that made it possible for activists to succeed with their active resistance to support liberation struggles in the Third World.[2] Things were no longer secure, he pointed out in a TV programme in November 1967: ‘they have to be made secure by us.’[3] But at the same time, he vigorously spoke out against what he saw as ‘the existing order’. ‘Peace’, he said, could be realized only as a ‘vehement desire’ against that order, and it implied an ‘almost biological rejection of the total military complex that could neither guarantee peace, nor security nor happiness’.[4] Paradoxically, Dutschke also argued that ‘human beings have to become constantly insecure of themselves’, so that they can realize all potentialities in the world—human beings had to change, had to become different, for social and political change to be possible.[5] This was, then, the conscious attempt to create an agency of **(p.260)** solidarity. Other Western activists had already linked this explicitly to West Germany's post-war history, asserting that the liberation that had taken place in Germany from the outside in 1945 now had to be realized within West German society.[6]

Tariq Ali, the Pakistani Trotskyist who chaired the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC), was so inspired by the success of the Berlin events that he used his experiences as an argument to organize a British equivalent, plan a demonstration and attempt to occupy the American Embassy on London's Grosvenor Square. His VSC had called for ‘complete solidarity with the national liberation movement in Vietnam’. He had also been heavily critical of CND's position that sought to strengthen the United Nations’ role in the conflict. The UN, he argued, was part of the power structures of the international system that had to be subverted.[7] The demonstration took place on 17 March 1968 and, to many contemporary observers, seemed to turn London's street into the site of a civil war. Indeed, demonstrators employed tactics of passive resistance when trying to occupy the square and the embassy building. Some hurled stones and other objects at the police. Mounted police were even employed to disperse the protesters—the ‘peaceable kingdom’ seemed to have come to an end. It apparently inspired the Rolling Stones singer Mick Jagger to write his song ‘Street Fighting Man’.[8]

These two episodes demonstrate that the changing relationship between political considerations and culture within British and West German extra-parliamentary politics had resulted in—and had been influenced by—different positions of the role of the international system. The movements in both countries witnessed the protesters’ emancipation from the rigid binary cold war system of thinking. This went hand in hand with the realization that it was impossible to discuss the state of world affairs without speaking about ‘America’. The increasing focus on events across the Atlantic had profound implications for the mutual perception of the protests, the links between them, and the ways in which they conceptualized their relationship to the world.[9] This chapter traces this transformation in the British and West German protesters’ politics of

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security, which had **(p.261)** profound implications for the ways in which they conceived of the subjects and objects of these politics.[10]

Over the course of the 1960s, activists moved increasingly away from positions that assumed that communists were the main danger in world politics. By April 1965, in the wake of the US invasion of the Dominican Republic and while the US war effort in the Vietnam War grew substantially, a *Sanity* editorial called President Lyndon B. Johnson's policies ‘wicked, foolish and dangerous’ and singled out ‘Britain's grotesque subversion to Washington’ for a fundamental critique.[11] Such assessments went hand in hand with the increasing realization among some activists that the war in Vietnam, the nuclear arms race, were not single issues but linked to ‘American ruthlessness in seeking to maintain and increase its military and economic domination of much of the world’.[12] The International Committee for Disarmament and Peace that had emerged out of the European Federation for Nuclear Disarmament now also campaigned on an anti-Vietnam War platform, organizing meetings not only in Western Europe, but also in non-aligned countries, such as an anti-Vietnam War congress in Ljubljana from 25–28 August 1968.[13]

These changes also transformed the campaigns’ relationship to each other and to the world more generally. Whereas the British and West German anti-nuclear-weapons movements had had direct relationships with each other that lay at the root of the kind of political sociability they promoted, the changing relationship between politics and culture meant that the mutual reference points had transformed. While Britain continued to be an important focus for counter-cultural developments, British and West German activists turned increasingly to the United States for inspiration. This included direct networks between activists as well as the more general inspiration activists obtained from observing the civil rights movement and the protests at universities on the other side of the Atlantic. Alongside the relationships between mainstream groups, there existed a plethora of direct links between liberation movements on both sides of the Atlantic as well as in Africa, with the black power movement perhaps being the most prominent example.[14]

(p.262) Activists came to see their ‘other alliance’ with the better ‘other America’ as a key plank that was to challenge what they regarded as the United States’ militarist dominance in the international system.[15] Throughout their ‘internationalism was implicit and simply taken for granted’[16] and therefore did not require personal networks for its operation, but primarily general awareness to be part of a historical and historic movement. Protesters tried to write their own activism into what they regarded as a global movement that was linked to seeing the Third World as a political project. Thus *Black Dwarf*, the paper launched after the violent spring 1968 demonstrations by Tariq Ali and others close to Trotskyite circles and the VSC, exclaimed ‘Paris, London, Rome, Berlin. We will fight. We shall win,’ and they regarded these European cities as the

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equivalent to the fights in the Third World.[17] And even the writers of the May Day Manifesto, who sought to revive the New Left of the late 1950s from a more Western-centric angle, highlighted how their own 'ongoing experiment in development of consciousness' related to 'other revolutionary experiments in universities, communities, communes and direct action now taking place in Europe and America'.[18]

The United States as the centre of cold war politics

While most activists had regarded the nuclear arms race as the key symbol for the cold war, this symbolic position now pertained to the United States. While some of these assessments were already present in discussions of the late 1950s and early 1960s, they now assumed a more pivotal position. This had to do with two key transformations in the protesters' politics of security. Both had their roots in the late 1950s, but the different international climate now provided the condition that made it possible for them to be **(p.263)** discussed more concretely. First, with the Vietnam War, activists discussed whether US imperialism should replace European colonialism as the central subject for debates, as the search for radical alternatives to the existing world order began and the language of human rights was replaced by that of direct action. While the Marburg section of the *SDS* in particular opposed what they regarded as a move towards merely 'verbal radicalism', a general shift towards this form of campaigning nonetheless transpired.[19] But, by 1966, West German SDS activists passed a damning judgement on US politics and policies and stated apodictically that one could no longer argue with the United States and had to move towards more concrete forms of struggle.[20] Klaus Vack, who belonged to the first generation of Easter Marchers, accordingly remembered the protests against the Vietnam War as 'act[s] of patricide' against the United States. The Campaign for Disarmament took up the issue of the Vietnam War for fear of being sidelined by events, so that, 1965/66 saw more than 100,000 people taking the cause to the street in fourteen protest marches. Whereas descriptions of the United States had been rarely heard before, they had now become commonplace.[21]

In Britain, this shift took place, too, but it was accompanied by organizational transformations as well, which meant that 'solidarity' was unable to emerge as a master frame as it did in West Germany. CND and the British Council for Peace in Vietnam (BCPV) that was set up by a group of people close to CND had been the main campaign groups that addressed the Vietnam War until the mid-1960s. They campaigned primarily for the 'implementation of the 1954 Geneva agreements' and 'the holding of national elections in north and south Vietnam' in particular.[22] From 1966 the BCPV was overshadowed by Tariq Ali's VSC, which soon took over from CND as the main protest movement against the Vietnam War. The campaign had been inspired by the turn from civil rights issues towards anti-war protests within the US extra-parliamentary movements a year earlier.[23] Ali had good contacts with the American Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and personally met US student leader Carl Oglesby in Croydon in

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1965.[24] In spring 1966, after some Easter Marchers had ended up at the American Embassy and been arrested, they **(p.264)** sang 'We Shall Overcome', the song that had become the hymn of the US civil rights movement.[25]

Although CND activists, such as Canon Collins, had highlighted the UK's role as 'an American satellite' within NATO before, this theme now became one of the central themes of VSC campaigns.[26] This transformation had implications for the spaces of activism. The focus of protests now shifted to direct action campaigns at the highly symbolic site of the American Embassy on London's Grosvenor Square. The park in the middle of the square is the site of the memorials to President Franklin Roosevelt's commitment to the US–British alliance and the US Eagle Squadrons who helped to defend the British Isles from Nazi attack from a Lincolnshire airforce base. The memorials demonstrated UK–US cooperation in the Second World War. Protesters, by contrast, were drawn to a different symbol: the post-Second World War modernist embassy building that had been designed by the Finnish–American architect Eero Saarinen as an embodiment of American power: alongside the large golden American Eagle overlooking the square, the fence around the embassy building seemed to suggest the transition from US–UK cooperation to US domination and imperialism.[27]

Already in March 1962, protesters linked to the C100 defaced an abstract painting in an exhibition inside the embassy with the CND symbol.[28] And from March 1965, when a group of six men and one woman chained themselves to the embassy railings in protest against the Vietnam War, there were regular protests on the square, culminating in two major rallies in the spring and autumn of 1968.[29] In summer 1967, someone belonging to a 'Revolutionary Solidarity Movement' fired bullets through the windows of the American Embassy calling for the liberation of 'American negroes' and denouncing racism in the United States, which, the leaflet spelled out, amounted to fascism. In March 1968, a bomb, possibly planted by activists with links to Spanish anarchists fighting Franco's dictatorship, exploded at the American Officers' Club at Lancaster Gate.[30]

Over the course of the 1960s, the conflict between a positive picture of the 'other America' and the preponderance of power by the American government had also filtered through to less radical campaigners of the original New Left who were sceptical of the efficacy of the VSC's direct **(p.265)** action campaigns and imagined more of a consciousness-raising intellectual-cum-cultural movement. The May Day Manifesto, to which Michael Barratt Brown, E. P. Thompson, Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall, and others contributed, highlights the transformation of the politics of security quite clearly. While their focus, at the beginning of the 1960s, had been the stifling nature of the cold war as a system of power and knowledge production, they now targeted a particular aspect of that system: the role of the United States as an imperial power that

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sought to stifle liberation projects around the world and that had a detrimental impact on British political culture in particular: 'Our practical dependence on the United States, expressed in political and military alliances, locked in financial arrangements and the penetration of our economy by United States capital, and supported, as a planned operation, by many kinds of cultural and educational colonisation, makes any attempt at disengagement a fight from the beginning.'[31] At the same time, however, they still regarded the size and strength of anti-war and civil rights campaigns on US campuses as signs of encouragement.

For many more protesters than before, the Third World was a political project and a space in which they could develop political alternatives. The Cuban Revolution and Fidel Castro's coming to power on the Caribbean island in 1959 had already opened up such a space for transformation: it had highlighted the actual and real possibility of a revolution that did not follow the Leninist model to succeed.[32] This transformation unsettled cold war dichotomies, but was also made possible by the development of superpower détente in the first half of the 1960s.[33] These insights opened British activists for a more direct engagement with developments across the Atlantic. And the 1965 Oxford teach-in against the Vietnam War was directly influenced by similar events on the West Coast of the United States.[34] US movements now became examples for British activists in different ways as well: looking across the Atlantic, British activists clarified issues of race and class that were less evident and visible at home and also adopted specific forms of community organizing based on the US example.[35]

(p.266) The transformation of practices of protest

The second opening that undergirded this shift from human rights to active solidarity was the transformation of notions and practices of activism itself: liberation struggles in the Third World became more explicit models for the anti-Vietnam War campaigns in Britain and West Germany. Liberation fighters like Che Guevara became direct examples for the ways in which campaigns should be carried out; only through struggle and fighting could security ultimately be achieved. Only by means of struggle could activists be freed from the shackles of their society and realize their sovereign self. They regarded that sovereign self as the foundation stone of the politics of security.[36] Vietnam appeared as a victim of US imperialism, and the United States was now a perpetrator. Both turned into the main symbols of the West German politics of solidarity that developed over the course of the 1960s and that transformed the politics of security: it was now necessary to attack NATO as the central offspring of global US imperialism in Western Europe, so that the 'ruling apparatus' at home could be broken, too.[37] As Quinn Slobodian's important work has demonstrated, these transformations were not merely driven by discursive shifts, but stemmed from active contact between European and non-European activists. Tariq Ali was a particularly important actor in Britain, whereas the connections between West German protesters and activists who studied in the Federal Republic and came

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from South Africa, Latin America, and the United States were crucial for establishing awareness there.[38]

This engagement with the extra-European world was not entirely novel. In the early 1960s, the success of the National Liberation Front in Algeria against the French colonial power had served some protesters as an indicator for the success of a socialist politics of solidarity.[39] Some activists, such as Klaus Vack, had been involved in campaigns that sought to highlight practical solidarity by going underground to help Algerian deserters, who had been drafted to fight their own countrymen in the French army, flee to West Germany in order to escape the grip of the French authorities.[40] **(p.267)** Yet, unlike the later politics of solidarity, these efforts had been rather small scale and localized and took place in the context of more or less clandestine or at least private initiatives, rather than being shown through direct action. What was crucial for the 1960s was that more traditional anti-militarist groups also embraced these changes and began to combine anti-war rhetoric with efforts to coordinate humanitarian relief. A telling example of this was the ‘Assistance Action Vietnam’ (*Hilfsaktion Vietnam*) that Heinz Kloppenburg, the trade unionist Walter Fabian, August Bangel, Martin Niemöller, and Gottfried Wandersleb launched in early 1966, which sought to realize peace as a ‘true task’ rather than as a mere idea.[41] Many now demanded to ‘transform struggle against armament into a struggle for a genuine democracy’ and to recommend this as a policy to their friends in the American SDS.[42]

The shift was also, at least partly, driven by a more open engagement with ideas of activism from the ‘other German state’, the GDR, as détente allowed activists to discuss socialist ideas that had previously been taboo more freely. Socialism now re-emerged, after a short period in the late 1940s, as a counter model to affluent society, and its ties to Third World politics also turned this commitment to socialism into a symbol that opened up a space of resistance.[43] To many, the humanitarian commitment that the early Easter Marchers had developed now seemed hypocritical. This had fundamental consequences for the activists’ relationship with the GDR—and this was true for British as well as West German protesters. Some saw the East German state as a ‘communist Ersatz party’ (Christoph Kleßmann), and they regarded reunification not necessarily as the fulfilment of a national agenda, but primarily as a way to realize the transition to socialism in a demilitarized united Germany that was removed from the cold war.[44]

The way in which the memorialization of the German bombing campaign on Coventry was transformed over the course of the 1960s demonstrates the changing frames of resonance especially well and highlights that these developments echoed more widely in political culture as well as the campaigns. In the early 1960s, the GDR government had been **(p.268)** successful in its attempt to launch a commemorative partnership on the back of the already

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existing commemorative efforts launched by the British and West German governments in the early 1960s. These efforts had led to plans to rebuild Coventry Cathedral.

From around 1963 onwards, the GDR took a more active interest in more directly framing the ways in which the Coventry and Dresden bombing campaigns were remembered. This came in the context of the GDR attempts to institutionalize British–GDR relations below official diplomatic channels.[45] It developed scenarios of attacks on both cities that portrayed nuclear war as a corollary of capitalism. The memory of the air war thus became part and parcel of a fight against imperialism in the cold war. While such anti-fascist and anti-imperialist arguments had already characterized the activists of the Coventry–Dresden Friendship Society that had been founded by pacifists in 1956, their resonance far beyond the confines of Coventry was novel.[46] The forms of activism linked to the commemorations also had new accents: as part of ‘Operation Reconciliation’, twenty-five British students travelled to Dresden in March 1965 and attempted to demonstrate their active commitment and solidarity by helping to rebuild a hospital that had been destroyed in the attack.[47] In May 1965, a number of Coventry Christians travelled to Dresden to commemorate the twenty-year anniversary of the end of the Second World War and actively help with a rebuilding effort. This followed an initiative by the historian David Irving, whose book on the destruction of Dresden had come out in 1963.[48]

Protests and activism as conscious self-transformation

Many mainstream activists in the West German Easter Marches as well as those activists in the SDS in Marburg and Frankfurt did not adhere to an anti-authoritarian ethos, but to more traditionally socialist ideas. They **(p.269)** continued to argue in terms of a more mainstream politics of security, while the anti-authoritarians around Rudi Dutschke and Bernd Rabehl in Berlin and those groups in Munich that adapted Situationist ideas began to conceptualize the role of solidarity with the Third World more clearly. This happened concretely as a consequence of the visit by the Congolese Prime Minister Moishe Tschombé to the Federal Republic, which, according to Dutschke, was ‘our cultural revolution’.[49]

Dutschke's assessment highlights the specific ways in which the anti-authoritarian wing of the extra-parliamentary opposition successfully redefined the politics of security towards a very specific blending of cultural resistance and political demonstration. From the Tschombé demonstration onwards, activists pushed even more for a protest strategy that meant that ‘authorized demonstrations must be guided into illegality. Confrontation with state power is essential and must be sought out.’ Transgression for Dutschke, Rabehl, and others was more than a mere tactic. It was an ‘instrument of struggle for creating consciousness’ (‘Kampfinstrument für Bewußtseinswerdung’), and it

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allowed the group around Dutschke to bring into the open the hidden powers of manipulation that determined Western societies.[50] Similarly, Jürgen Horlemann, leader of the West-Berlin *SDS*, argued against traditional demonstrations. Describing Vietnam as a ‘slaughterhouse’, he pointed out that ‘mobilizing under liberal democratic demands did damage by preserving the semblance of tolerant civil society’: it merely thickened ‘the democratic veil … through the whole democratic performance of the splintering of protests, their partial placation, diversion, etc.’. The real challenge was, however, to unveil the hidden structures of power in order to destroy the roots of the arms race, war, and violence.[51]

While there were many different facets of this transformation that make it difficult to generalize, the significant characteristic of the politics of security of the later 1960s and early 1970s was that it moved towards a psychological view of society: activists began to focus on inwardness and singling out individual well-being as the fundamental condition for security, while avoiding individualism and retaining an awareness of the importance of society as a space for social action. From this perspective, demonstrations and other forms of protest turned into more than evidence **(p.270)** of mobilization. They assumed meaning, in a self-reflective turn, as acts of self-enlightenment on the part of the protesters and of society more generally. Within this framing of the politics of security, protesters’ direct action appeared rational and emotional at the same time: only through action would protesters turn into true activists and not mere consumers of the unfolding spectacles of demonstrations; but, in order to have an effect, demonstrations themselves had to be spectacular.[52] Dutschke's ‘cultural revolution’ in the politics of security was, therefore, not merely about highlighting culture, as opposed to political and economic structures, as central elements. It was, fundamentally, about directing protesters’ attention towards developing new forms of discussions and everyday forms of interaction and resistance that would undermine bureaucratic and military authority in society. For Dutschke, the root of the politics of security was, therefore, the individual. This also implied an increased attention to psychology and psychoanalysis amongst activists. The place of sociology as the discipline that could allow critical insights into society was supplemented by an attention to psychology and, in some sections of the movements, even turned into its substitute as a ‘depersonalized sociology’.[53] The politics of security, so the argument ran, had to begin with the personal conditions for aggression. Only thus could the ‘security neurosis’ that Germans suffered from be overcome.[54] Security could be achieved primarily through therapy. Self-determination, self-organization, and self-activity were the key words for this new politics of security that the hedonistic left developed in the second half of the 1960s.[55] Some sections of the movement came to this position through active engagement with Christian liberation theology, where they identified face-to-face encounters and practical deeds as fundamental to political renewal.[56] As in **(p.271)** West Germany, but here primarily inspired by R. D. Laing, psychoanalysis also emerged within sections of

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the British movements as a key form of exploration of society's ills as well as a security therapy of individual souls.

The transformation of the politics of security into a politics of international solidarity with its specific resonances in each country was key for the radicalization of each movement, as it replaced humanitarian arguments based on rational calculations and statistics with expressly emotional bonds with faraway victims. It converted passive care into active solidarity. In West Germany, this transformation had a specific resonance, as it appealed to more mainstream interpretations of Germans as victims of foreign powers and connected them to the martyrdom of revolutionaries, such as Che Guevara, in the extra-European world.[57] Activists' pronounced turn to international solidarity went hand in hand with a far more explicit visual representation of suffering in the context of the politics of security. This contrasted with both the movements of the early 1960s, which had mostly shied away from showing graphic images of human death in nuclear attacks, and from representation in the mass media. For example, the BBC had officially banned Peter Watkins's film *War Game* because images of nuclear destruction were deemed too horrid to show on television.[58]

Eventfulness

Actual events and the ways in which British and West German activists experienced them further accentuated the differences between the British and West German politics of security. Events had the potential to link active solidarity, the protesters' analysis of the political situation, and their experiences as activists as the basis for a politics of security and led to more sustained requests to forge stronger links between more traditional pacifists and students.[59] In West Germany, two events, in particular, heightened interpretations among activists that their cognitive framing of the politics of security was a true representation of reality: the shooting of **(p.272)** the protester Benno Ohnesorg by a Berlin policeman on 2 June 1967, and the attack on Rudi Dutschke on 11 April 1968 by a paranoid *Bild* reader that left Dutschke with a severe brain injury, were critical for the perception that a politics from below was the only possible response to a state that now appeared as a violent enemy. Activists also interpreted these events as vivid illustrations of what would happen if the emergency legislation were indeed introduced and implemented. It seemed to show the state of emergency in action, which did not leave protesters much time for reaction. Several activists recount how the events on 2 June 1967 lent reality to their theoretical perceptions that West Germany had become a 'fascist' state.[60] 'Comrades! We don't have much time left. In Vietnam, we, too, are crushed [*zerschlagen*] day by day . . . It primarily depends on our will how this period of history will end.'[61] Dutschke's and Krahl's arguments in September 1967 that any creation of security in terms of non-violence would have to start with radical steps to create the conditions for a non-violent society therefore received additional plausibility: the prevention of emergency laws

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would only paper over attention to the structural conditions in advanced capitalism.[62]

Activists' interpretations of the West German protests as a contestation between democracy and authoritarianism, between activist victims and the all-powerful government machine, meant that a dynamic could emerge that interpreted the Ohnesorg shooting and the attack on Dutschke as the real manifestations of what activists perceived as state violence. The percolation of phantasies of violence in West Germany society as a whole in the wake of the attacks heightened this frame of reference further: the direct action strand of the politics of security contributed to this dynamic of massive perceived insecurities. The Springer press published articles and letters to the editor that imagined bloodbaths against the protesters, and Rudi Dutschke received hundreds of letters with death threats that expressed these feelings.[63] Nonetheless, Dutschke himself, **(p.273)** Herbert Marcuse, and Oskar Negt developed their own phantasies of violence by equating the power of the law with real physical violence, and by broadening their understanding of violence to encompass not merely direct physical injuries but potentially all forms of power relationships within society.[64] This further deepened activists' understandings of solidarity with the Third World, as they now regarded themselves as equivalent to Third World revolutionaries who were subject to state violence. In this context, Ohnesorg became a martyr who symbolized this victimhood.[65] This led to what Quinn Slobodian has called 'corpse polemics', whereby Third World activism was 'transformed into speechless and mutilated bodies', as protesters sought to heighten their own sense of agency.[66] Oskar Negt recognized the dynamic potential within this novel semantics of violence when he commented sarcastically on the conditions that made the attack on Ohnesorg possible, alluding to the so-called pudding attack against US Vice-President Hubert H. Humphrey on 2 April 1967 that a few members of Kommune I carried out: while pointing to the 'state apparatus with its compact forms of violence', he excoriated the mainstream press for 'turning pudding into knives' and thereby creating the conditions of possibility of real violence.[67]

As in West Germany, spring and summer 1967 in Britain saw the 'lightning crackling behind the sunshine of the psychedelic movement'.[68] Two of the largest demonstrations in Britain since the Chartist movement in the nineteenth century took place on 17 March and 27 October 1968, with 10,000 and 20,000 protesters appearing respectively. When the occupation of the American Embassy on Grosvenor Square in March 1968 led to clashes between protesters and police, no comparable interpretative frame existed that would have enabled British protesters to see themselves as the victims of an authoritarian government.[69] This did not mean that the British police was necessarily less brutal than its West German counterparts, or that no violence occurred at the demonstrations. **(p.274)** The tabloid *Sun* developed phantasies of violence similar to the ones endorsed by the West German Springer press, evoking scenes

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of public disorder in the 1930s. Violence was, its journalist wrote, ‘the horror that comes with something akin to mass hysteria and leaves in its wake a trail of battered bodies, pummelled and trampled and kicked and bruised and bloodied in the countless “incidents” which leave a nasty taste in the mouth’.[70] But, after the October demonstrations that went more or less peacefully, interpretations changed and painted a far less radical picture of the protests, writing them into the *longue durée* of British history, focusing on their counter-cultural components rather than political meanings and thus pacifying them.[71] The *Guardian* had already set the tone in March 1968 by asking whether ‘the British student’ was a ‘democrat’ or merely a ‘layabout’ and identified a small minority as politically committed radicals who were bent on using violence.[72] The VSC nonetheless declared the October demonstration a victory: ‘that the demonstration did not become a riot was due to the fact that the authorities conceded our right to occupy the whole street unhindered.’[73]

The recollections of British protesters, therefore, had an air of playfulness, of the ritual cat-and-mouse game between protesters and authorities, which West German activists would have been hard pushed to evoke. Manchester student Dave Clark's testimony about his participation in the violent March 1968 protests in Ronald Fraser's oral history of 1968 is, in its difference from the West German sources collected in the same volume, remarkable. He recalls how he and a fellow demonstrator tried to drag a police horse to the ground:

We had worked out in advance how it could be done. There were theories around that lion's dung would scare police horses, and there was even an expedition planned to Manchester zoo to get some. But I and a bloke from Sheffield University planned that, as the horse charged, one of us on each side would grab the reins and pull down … After we’d done it the police went absolutely barmy, and I took a real beating from their fists, knees and boots.[74]

(p.275) Protests at some British universities continued into 1969, and some, like Warwick and Sheffield, saw their main protest activities only in the 1970s. One of the most spectacular protests at an institution that had already been the focus of student unrest earlier was the decision on 24 January 1969 by the LSE to build iron fences in order to protect its buildings against an occupation by students who wanted more direct representation in the School's governance. The LSE had to close for a month after a contested vote ended with 242 in favour of more action and 236 students against, with 76 abstentions.[75]

But there were no ‘critical events’ (Pierre Bourdieu) similar to the ones in West Germany in Britain. The actual protest movement was smaller and, more importantly, the mass media did not consistently identify the individual protest events as part of a larger movement. Protesters’ understanding of their activism therefore found little resonance in British political culture at large. Not least, the different relationship between culture and politics in the multiple movements in

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Britain meant that the Situationist idea of regarding protests as performances, on which the assessment of an event as ‘critical’ rested, was far less plausible to activists in Britain than it was in West Germany. Most British activists around the various campaigns agreed on defining ‘revolution as a way of life’, and thus continued to emphasize local cultural projects in the politics of security.[76] In West Germany, by contrast, the eventfulness of 1967 and 1968 meant that it took until the 1970s for this turn towards a conceptualization of politics as one primarily defined by cultural projects to take hold.[77] Activists could now look back and consider their individual activism as part of ‘the collective “we” of the movement’.[78]

Notes:

([1]) SDS Westberlin, Internationales Nachrichten- und Forschungsinstitut (ed.), *Internationaler Vietnam-Kongreß Februar 1968 Westberlin: Der Kampf des Vietnamesischen Volkes und die Globalisierung des Imperialismus* (Berlin, 1968), 159.

([2]) Rudi Dutschke, ‘Die geschichtlichen Bedingungen für den internationalen Emanzipationskampf’, reprinted in Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Dutschkes Deutschland*, 205–17; Dutschke, *Mein langer Marsch: Reden, Schriften und Tagebücher aus zwanzig Jahren*, ed. Gretchen Dutschke-Klotz et al. (Reinbek, 1980), 20–1.

([3]) Reprinted in Dutschke, *Mein langer Marsch*, 20.

([4]) *Kursbuch*, 14 October 1967, reprinted in Dutschke, *Mein langer Marsch*, 14–15.

([5]) Interview in *Der Spiegel*, 10 July 1967 and contribution to a panel discussion in Hamburg, 24 November 1967, reprinted in Dutschke, *Mein langer Marsch*, 13, 15.

([6]) Ekkehart Krippendorff, writing in the *Spandauer Volksblatt*, 14 May 1965, cited in his *Lebensfäden: Zehn autobiographische Versuche* (Nettersheim, 2012), 156.

([7]) *VSC Bulletin* (April 1967), 1; Nick Thomas, ‘Protests against the Vietnam War in 1960s Britain: The Relationship between Protesters and the Press’, *Contemporary British History*, 22 (2008), 335–54, here 341.

([8]) Tariq Ali, *Street Fighting Years: An Autobiography of the Sixties*, 2nd edn (London, 2005), 300.

([9]) For a differently accentuated analysis of the same process, see Oppenheimer, ‘Conflicts of Solidarity’.

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([10]) On this shift in the framing of peace protests towards ‘solidarity’, see Ziemann, ‘A Quantum of Solace?’, 372–3; Dorothee Weitbrecht, *Aufbruch in die Dritte Welt: Der Internationalismus der Studentenbewegung von 1968 in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Göttingen, 2012), 15, 38–41.

([11]) *Sanity* (April 1965), 1. On the debate about this shift, see the letters by Malcolm Caldwell, *Sanity* (June 1966), and by Tony Hetherington, *Sanity* (July 1966), 7.

([12]) Peggy Duff, *Left, Left, Left*, 268.

([13]) Klimke, *The Other Alliance,* 100.

([14]) Maria Höhn and Martin Klimke, *A Breath of Freedom: The Civil Rights Struggle, African American GIs, and Germany* (Basingstoke, 2010); for 1960s Britain, this (post-)colonial dimension still awaits a more thorough historical investigation. See, however, Anne-Marie Angelo, ‘The Black Panthers in London, 1967–1972: A Diasporic Struggle Navigates the Black Atlantic’, *Radical History Review*, 103 (2009), 17–35; Stephen Tuck, ‘Malcolm X's Visit to Oxford University: US Civil Rights, Black Britain, and the Special Relationship on Race’, *American Historical Review*, 118 (2013), 76–103; Ken Keable (ed.), *London Recruits: The Secret War against Apartheid* (London, 2012).

([15]) Klimke, *The Other Alliance*, 7.

([16]) Rowbotham, *Promise of a Dream*, 172; Vack, *Das andere Deutschland nach 1945*, 60–1.

([17]) Jonathon Green, *Days in the Life: Voices from the English Underground, 1961–71* (London, 1998), 266–7.

([18]) *May Day Manifesto Bulletin*, 2 (February 1968), 18.

([19]) Frank Deppe und Kurt Steinhaus, ‘Politische Praxis und Schulung im SDS’, *neue kritik*, 38/9 (1966), 31–9, here 32.

([20]) ‘SDS Information über Vietnam und die Länder der Dritten Welt’ (May 1966), 1.

([21]) Quoted in Werner Balsen and Karl Rössel, *Hoch die internationale Solidarität: Zur Geschichte der Dritte-Welt-Bewegung in der Bundesrepublik* (Cologne, 1986), 129.

([22]) Thomas, ‘Protests against the Vietnam War’, 340.

([23]) MRC, MSS 189/V, box 1, file 7; MSS 149, box 5, file 2; Ali, *Street Fighting* Years, 48–9.

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([24]) Ali, *Street Fighting Years*, 46, 61; Taylor and Colin Pritchard, *Protest Makers*, 46–7.

([25]) *The Times*, 13 April 1966.

([26]) Driver, *The Disarmers*, 111.

([27]) H. L. Malchow, *Special Relations: The Americanization of Britain?* (Stanford, CA, 2011), 48–52.

([28]) *The Times*, 23 March 1962.

([29]) *The Times*, 12 March, 6 April, and 18 October 1965; 19 February 1968.

([30]) *The Times*, 21 August, 4 September 1967; 5 March 1968.

([31]) *New Left May Day Manifesto* (London, 1967), 1–23, 31.

([32]) Ruth Glass, 'Cuba Week', *New Left Review*, 17 (1962), 3–8; J. M. Cohen, 'Culture in Cuba', *New Left Review*, 34 (1965), 78–81; 'Che Guevara', *New Left Review*, 46 (1967), 16. On local activities in West Germany, see Weitbrecht, *Aufbruch*, 253–75.

([33]) Slobodian, *Foreign Front*, 50.

([34]) Ali, *Street Fighting Years*, 50–1.

([35]) Rowbotham, *Promise of a Dream*, 24, 57–8, 68, 85, 98–9, 122, 124–5; Ali, *Street Fighting Years*, 216.

([36]) Leerom Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity* (Durham, NC, 2005), 323.

([37]) Dutschke, 'Die geschichtlichen Bedingungen für den internationalen Emanzipationskampf ', 213, 215–16.

([38]) Slobodian, *Foreign Front*.

([39]) 'Zweimal Zweite Internationale', *Sozialistische Politik*, 8 (1957), 4–5; Vack, *Das andere Deutschland nach 1945*, 59–62; Leggewie, *Kofferträger*, 109.

([40]) Ruth Fischer, 'Zur Diskussion über das Problem der unterentwickelten Länder', *neue kritik*, 2 (1964), 3; Herbert Tulatz, 'Nigeria, ein afrikanisches Entwicklungsland', *neue kritik*, 2 (1964), 16.

([41]) HStAD, RW338, 340: Walter Fabian and Heinz Kloppenburg, 'Die Hilfsaktion Vietnam, ihre Entstehung und Entwicklung'; Herbert Stubenrauch, 'Sittlichkeit—Gewalt—Sexualität', *zivil*, 11 (November 1966), 118–19.

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([42]) Note to Tom Hayden, n.d., cited in Klimke, *The Other Alliance*, 21–2.

([43]) Hans-Ulrich Thamer, ‘Sozialismus als Gegenmodell: Theoretische Radikalisierung und Ritualisierung einer Oppositionsbewegung.’, in Matthias Frese, Julia Paulus, and Karl Teppe (eds), *Demokratisierung und gesellschaftlicher Aufbruch: Die sechziger Jahre als Wendezeit in der Bundesrepublik* (Paderborn, 2003), 741–58.

([44]) Cf., for example, Helmut Lindemann, ‘Analyse der Deutschlandpolitik in Thesen’, *neue kritik*, 25–26 October 1964, 17–23, here 22–3; *Pinx*, 7 (1967), 36.

([45]) See Stefan Berger and Norman La Porte, *Friendly Enemies: Britain and the GDR, 1949–1990* (New York, 2010), 114–48 (on general cultural relations and exchanges with MPs) and 156–66 (on churches and the peace movement).

([46]) Stefan Goebel, ‘Coventry und Dresden: Transnationale Netwerke der Erinnerung in den 1950er und 1960er Jahren’, in Dietmar Süß (ed.), *Deutschland im Luftkrieg: Geschichte und Erinnerung* (Munich, 2007), 111–120.

([47]) ‘Coventry Appeal for Dresden’, *The Times*, 3 November 1964; ‘Dresden Bombing Atonement’, *The Times*, 15 March 1965.

([48]) HStAD, RW338, 340: Walter Fabian and Heinz Kloppenburg, ‘Die Hilfsaktion Vietnam, ihre Entstehung und Entwicklung’, and Merrilyn Thomas, *Communing with the Enemy: Covert Operations, Christianity and Cold War Politics in Britain and the GDR* (Oxford, 2005), 220–1.

([49]) Rudi Dutschke, ‘Die Widersprüche des Spätkapitalismus, die antiautoritären Studenten und ihr Verhältnis zur Dritten Welt’, in Uwe Bergmann et al. (eds), *Rebellion der Studenten oder die neue Opposition* (Reinbek, 1968), 33–57, 36.

([50]) Dutschke, ‘Widersprüche’, in Bergmann et al. (eds), *Rebellion der Studenten*, 36.

([51]) Jürgen Horlemann, ‘Referat zum Flugblatt “Informationen über Vietnam und Länder der Dritten Welt”, May 1966 ’, in Lönnendonker and Fichter (eds), *Hochschule im Umbruch*, v. 311.

([52]) Rudi Dutschke at the Hanover congress on the ‘Conditions for the Organisation of Resistance’, 9 June 1967, cited in Dutschke, *Mein langer Marsch* 89; APOA, 68er Interviews—Berlin, A-H: Interview with Wolfgang Fritz Haug on 27 January 1999 in Berlin.

([53]) Anthony D. Kauders, ‘Drives in Dispute: The West German Student Movement, Psychoanalysis, and the Search for a New Emotional Order, 1967–1971’, *Central European History*, 44 (2011), 711–31, here 720.

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([54]) See Peter Schneider's diary entry from May/June 1967, cited in Peter Schneider, *Rebellion und Wahn: Mein '68 (Cologne, 2008), 178.*

([55]) Dutschke, *Mein langer Marsch*, 12; 'Rudi Dutschke zu Protokoll (Interview mit Günther Gaus, 3 December 1967)', cited from *Mein langer Marsch*, 43–4.

([56]) Dagmar Herzog, 'The Death of God in West Germany: Between Secularization, Postfascism and the Rise of Liberation Theology', in Michael Geyer and Lucian Hölscher (eds), *Die Gegenwart Gottes in der modernen Gesellschaft: Transzendenz und religiöse Vergemeinschaftung in Deutschland* (Göttingen, 2006), 431–66, here 435; Annegreth Strümpfel, '"Theologie der Hoffnung—Theologie der Revolution—Theologie der Befreiung": Zur Politisierung der Theologie in den "langen sechziger Jahren" in globaler Perspektive', in Klaus Fitschen et al. (eds), *Die Politisierung des Protestantismus: Entwicklungen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland während der 1960er und 1970er Jahre* (Göttingen, 2011), 150–67.

([57]) For this interpretation, see Reimann, *Dieter Kunzelmann*, 301.

([58]) Tony Shaw, 'The BBC, the State and Cold War Culture: The Case of Televison's *The War Game* (1965)', *English Historical Review*, 121 (2006), 1351–84.

([59]) HStAD, RW 115 200/25: August Bangel to SDS, 25 November 1965.

([60]) APOA, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Bonn folder: Volker Rohde, 'Kuratorium Notstand der Demokratie Bonn', Notstandsinformation, 1, n.d. (*c*. June 1967); Helmut Lethen, *Suche nach dem Handorakel. Ein Bericht* (Göttingen 2012), 108–9; Schneider, *Rebellion und Wahn*, 192; cf. the analysis of conspiracies and counter conspiracies in Nick Thomas, *Protest Movements in 1960s West Germany. A Social History of Dissent and Democracy* (Oxford, 2003), ch. 10 and Hanshew, *Terror and Democracy*, 88–107.

([61]) Dutschke, 'Die geschichtlichen Bedingungen für den internationalen Emanzipationskampf ', 216.

([62]) Rudi Dutschke and Hans-Jürgen Krahl, 'Das Sich-Verweigern fordert Guerilla Mentalität (Organisationsreferat auf der 22. Delegiertenkonferenz des SDS, September 1967', in Rudi Dutschke, *Geschichte ist machtbar: Texte über das herrschende Falsche und die Radikalität des Friedens*, ed. Jürgen Miermeister (Berlin, 1992), 89–95, here 91.

([63]) *Briefe an Rudi D.*, ed. Stefan Reisner, Voltaire Flugschrift, 19 (Berlin, 1968); Dutschke, *Mein langer Marsch*, 123–37.

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([64]) See, for example, Oskar Negt, ‘Politik und Gewalt’ [speech in Frankfurt/ Main, 13 April 1968], *neue kritik*, 47 (1968), 10–23; Negt, ‘Strategie der Gegengewalt’, *Die Zeit*, 26 April 1968, 4.

([65]) Klaus Vack, cited in Balsen and Rössel, *Hoch die internationale Solidarität*, 181; ‘Die Studenten’, *Arbeitskreis Hannoverischer Kriegsdienstverweigerer DFG IDK VK* (August 1967), 1–2.

([66]) Slobodian, *Foreign Front*, 135; Otto Köhler, ‘Kongo-Müller oder die Freiheit die wir verteidigen’, *Pardon* (February 1967), 33.

([67]) Oskar Negt, ‘Benno Ohnesorg ist das Opfer eines Mordanschlags’, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 12 June 1967; Sara Hakemi, *Anschlag und Spektakel: Flugblätter der Kommune I, Erklärungen von Ensslin/Baader und der frühen RAF* (Bochum, 2008).

([68]) Jeff Nuttall, *Bomb Culture* (London, 1968), 69.

([69]) Paul Baker, ‘Portrait of a Protest’, *New Society*, 318, 31 October 1968, 631–4.

([70]) *The Sun*, 18 March 1968; Thomas, ‘Protests against the Vietnam War’, 342; on parallels with the inter-war period, see Tony Aldgate, ‘The Newsreels, Public Order and the Projection of Britain’, in James Curran, Anthony Sith, and Pauline Wingate (eds), *Impacts and Influences: Essays on Media Power in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1987), 145–56.

([71]) See Thomas, ‘Protests against the Vietnam War’, 341–9.

([72]) *The Guardian*, 7 March 1968; Thomas, ‘Protests against the Vietnam War’, 351.

([73]) ‘Editorial’, *VSC Bulletin*, 19 November 1968, 1; Thomas, ‘Protests against the Vietnam War’, 349.

([74]) Fraser (ed.), *1968*, 161–2.

([75]) Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE. A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science 1895–1995* (Oxford, 1995), 465–6; Helen Mathers, *Steel City Scholars. The Centenary History of the University of Sheffield* (London, 2005), 251–7; E. P. Thompson, *Warwick University Ltd.* (Harmondsworth, 1970).

([76]) David Fernbach, ‘Strategy and Struggle’, *New Left Review*, 53 (1969), 41.

([77]) Autorenkollektiv 19, ‘Beitrag zur Organisationsdebatte (I)’, in Lutz Schulenburg (ed.), *Das Leben ändern, die Welt verändern! 1968. Dokumente und Berichte* (Hamburg, 1998), 433–6, here 433.

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([78]) Anna von der Goltz, ‘Generations of 68ers: Age-Related Constructions of Identity and Germany's “1968” ’, *Cultural and Social History*, 8 (2011), 473–90, here 477.

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