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Cold war liberalism in West Germany: Richard Löwenthal and 'Western civilization'

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ABSTRACT

Richard Löwenthal's response to the challenges of '1968' was more complex than that of most of his liberal colleagues. He did not simply remain beholden to the interpretative patterns of a German 'special path' (Sonderweg). He also, and increasingly so, drew on the conceptual framework of 'Western civilization' to make sense of and cope with the socio-cultural transformations of his times. What many like-minded intellectuals perceived solely as a 'deviation from the West', he also viewed as a 'crisis of the West'. This article argues that this transnationally 'Western' stance was part and parcel of Löwenthal's intellectual profile as 'cold war liberal'. This was a relatively rare species in Cold War Germany, and Löwenthal was rather exceptional in his sustained engagement with the topic of 'Western civilization'. Compared with luminaries such as Carl Joachim Friedrich, Ernst Fraenkel or Karl Loewenstein, Richard Löwenthal may be lesser known in English-speaking scholarship, but he makes for a particularly instructive case when discussing 'cold war liberalism' in West Germany. With its focus on the spatialization of political thought, and 'the West' as a spatial imaginary, this article also seeks to contribute to the growing discussion of how to 'spatialize' intellectual history.

KEYWORDS

Liberalism; the West; spatial imaginaries

'The West' was in crisis, and Richard Löwenthal was deeply worried. The socio-political order of the Federal Republic of Germany had been challenged by the student revolt, and its impact was felt particularly strongly at the Free University Berlin where Löwenthal, born in 1908, had been professor of International Relations from the early 1960s. West Germany's intellectual foundation had been attacked, and for someone like Löwenthal, who had experienced the demise of Germany's first experiment in liberal democracy, it seemed as though Weimar's shadows were hanging over the Federal Republic deeper than ever before. The fateful tradition of German romanticism, 'anti-liberal and anti-Western', as he put it, appeared to have resurfaced once again. This time, however, it was not right-wing authoritarianism but a leftist renaissance of romantic-utopian thought that seemed to be haunting the 'second republic'.¹

Avowed advocate of what he saw as 'Western values', Löwenthal was one of West Germany's most prominent exponents of cold war liberalism. For cold war liberals like Löwenthal, whose self-imposed mission was to anchor the Federal Republic firmly in the realm of what had come to be known as 'Western democracies', nothing less than the success of their main political project was at stake. It seemed as though West Germany's stability had been seriously undermined, and its security jeopardized.

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Liberal scholars in the Federal Republic typically viewed the student activism of the mid and late 1960s as yet another fatal deviation of German history from ‘the West’.² While this may be surprising given the transnational scope of the student protest, West German liberals often fell back on the critical ‘special path’ paradigm that had gained currency in the previous decade.³ They had been determined to drag the Federal Republic away, through incorporation in a ‘Western value community’, from what they perceived as the murky currents of a ‘German special consciousness’, and they saw their goal torpedoed by radical students who had a rather ambiguous relationship to ‘the West’.⁴

Löwenthal’s response to the challenge of student activism was, however, more complex than that of most of his liberal colleagues.⁵ He did not simply remain beholden to the interpretative patterns of a German ‘special path’; he also, and increasingly so, drew on the conceptual framework of ‘Western civilization’ to make sense of and cope with the socio-cultural transformations of his times. What many like-minded intellectuals perceived solely as a ‘deviation from the West’, he also viewed as a ‘crisis of the West’. This article argues that this transnationally ‘Western’ stance was part and parcel of Löwenthal’s intellectual profile as ‘cold war liberal’. This was a relatively rare species in Cold War Germany, and Löwenthal was rather exceptional in his sustained engagement with the topic of ‘Western civilization’. Compared with luminaries such as Carl Joachim Friedrich, Ernst Fraenkel or Karl Loewenstein, Richard Löwenthal may be lesser known in English-speaking scholarship, but he makes for a particularly instructive case when discussing ‘cold war liberalism’ in West Germany.

One of the key issues this article seeks to address is the extent to which a cold war liberal’s intellectual trajectory, as well as the space of action and opportunity available to a cold war liberal, was shaped by some of the principal dynamics of the cold war. Certainly, ‘cold war liberalism’ drew on intellectual resources that predated the cold war. But the question this concept prompts us to ask is how those resources were activated, adapted, and redeployed in specific cold war contexts. In line with much other scholarship,⁶ this article highlights the mid and late 1960s as a watershed moment, and socio-cultural transformations at that time were no doubt also driven by factors beyond any cold war dynamics. The point this article aims to make, however, is that, in Löwenthal’s case, the framework used as a sense-making strategy to come to grips with those transformations had been appropriated and forged very much in response to the crystallization of cold war bipolarity.

The article first provides an overview of various conceptual approaches to West German liberalism, before reflecting on the concept of ‘cold war liberalism’ as a heuristic device and organizing principle. It then offers a profile of Richard Löwenthal as cold war liberal, firstly demonstrating how he appropriated the spatio-political framework of ‘the West’, as well as elucidating which spatial contexts were key to this transformation, and secondly exploring the ways in which he deployed this framework to make sense of the socio-cultural transformations of the 1960s and 1970s. With its focus on the spatialization of political thought, and ‘the West’ as a spatial imaginary, this article also seeks to contribute to the growing discussion of how to ‘historiciz[e] conceptions of space’⁷ and of how to “spatialize” intellectual history.⁸

Cold war liberalism

‘Cold war liberalism’ is not a prominent concept in the historiography on West Germany. If distinctions are made between different variants of liberalism, they typically include ‘social liberalism’, ‘left liberalism’, ‘ordoliberalism’ or ‘neoliberalism’.⁹ Scholarship on West Germany’s avowed standard-bearer of liberalism, Ralf Dahrendorf, usually avoids the label ‘cold war liberalism’,¹⁰ and so do studies that, in principle, would make for likely candidates in this regard, such as *German Émigrés and the Ideological Foundations of the Cold War*, or *Bringing Cold War Democracy to West Berlin*.¹¹ The same is true for the important research, carried out in the 1990s, that emerged from the Tübingen-based ‘Westernization’ project. Focussing, for instance, on the Congress for Cultural Freedom, or the contribution of socialist émigrés to the ‘Westernization’ of German Social Democracy, the

project examined intellectual transfers between the United States, Britain and West Germany. The main purpose was to explain West Germany's intellectual transformation between 1945 and 1970; the key argument was the emergence of an 'Atlantic value community' grounded in ideas of 'consensus liberalism'.¹²

The term 'consensus liberalism', which had not been a reference point among West Germans at the time, was imported from US scholarship as an analytical tool to capture both a 'liberal consensus' holding sway in US political culture between the late 1940s and early 1960s *and* a consensual compromise between individual freedom and social equality more generally.¹³ As an ideal type, 'consensus liberalism' was defined as a distinct if multi-faceted mode of thought consisting of an anti-totalitarian and especially anti-Communist standpoint; a commitment to pluralism, parliamentary democracy, and the market economy; an orientation towards political freedom and a social reformist welfare state. Rooted in 'New Deal liberalism' (which was another crucial concept for the Tübingen group),¹⁴ this cluster of political ideas and attitudes corresponded with an understanding that notions of 'negative freedom', i.e. freedom from governmental restraint, were modified and complemented by notions of 'positive freedom', especially the notion of a government actively creating the conditions necessary for individuals to be self-sufficient or to achieve something approaching self-realization, or self-actualization.

Research on 'consensus liberalism' has been complemented, both chronologically and thematically, by the now vibrant scholarship on post-1970 'neoliberalism',¹⁵ as well as studies exploring, from various methodological angles, the shifting relationship and cross-fertilization between liberalism and conservatism during the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁶ Of particular note is Jens Hacke's investigation of the so-called Ritter School, named after the Münster philosopher Joachim Ritter, whose students Hermann Lübke, Odo Marquard and Robert Spaemann, very much in response to the New Left and student activism, formulated a political philosophy Hacke calls 'liberal conservatism'. Dismissed as 'neo-conservative' by their intellectual rivals at the time, this philosophy was held together by a scepticism towards grand schemes of societal transformation and a resistance to 'neo-Marxism'. More specifically, it consisted of a range of predispositions such as a belief in 'common sense' and 'practical reason'; political stability and parliamentary government; academic freedom and civic norms such as tolerance, self-discipline and achievement (*Leistung*); and the imperative to put the burden of proof on those who sought change as opposed to those keen to preserve the status quo. Not least, it encompassed a proclivity for historical tradition, regional heritage, religion and culture as counterpoints, or counterbalances, compensating for the repercussions of modernization and technical progress. Most notably, 'liberal conservatism' is not only identified as an important building block for the 'intellectual foundation of the Federal Republic'; it is also placed in the transnational context of 'cold war liberalism'. Hacke is, in fact, one of very few scholars of twentieth-century Germany engaging with this term.¹⁷

Contrary to 'liberal conservatism', however, the term 'cold war liberalism' remains underdefined. To be sure, scholars such as Jan-Werner Müller have elucidated with great subtlety a number of key features – features that mostly dovetail with adjacent concepts such as those discussed above: a philosophical stance of 'value pluralism and antideterminism'; a political standpoint informed by 'negative liberty, liberal constitutionalism and social security'; a preference for continuous adjustment, balance and compromise; and an anti-Rousseauistic commitment to a 'constraint form of democracy'. Crucially, 'cold war liberalism's' kinship with Judith Shklar's 'liberalism of fear' (1989) has been plausibly stated, and there is little doubt about the significance of the 'experience of totalitarianism'.¹⁸ What is less clear, though, is the significance of the cold war itself.¹⁹

Shklar's emphasis on 'historical memory' and 'never again', while pertinent, may not be specific enough for an ideal-type definition of 'cold war liberalism'. It is no coincidence that the term 'cold war' is conspicuous by its absence in her reflections on 'the liberalism of fear', which are much more oriented to the temporal ('the history of the world since 1914') and the universal ('the evil of cruelty and fear') than the spatial and geopolitical peculiarities of the cold war.²⁰ I would argue, instead, that ideological bipolarity, the geopolitical competition between 'East' and 'West', and the

unambiguous commitment to fighting Soviet communism, though not sufficient features in themselves, ought to be at the core of any analytical framework of ‘cold war liberalism’.²¹ This was not only a ‘liberalism after the failure of liberalism’; it was also a liberalism shaped by the very current exigencies and delimitations of the cold war.²²

As indicated, there is much overlap between the terms ‘consensus liberalism’, ‘New Deal liberalism’, ‘liberal conservatism’ and ‘cold war liberalism’ – to which one could add other neighbouring terms such as ‘Vital Center liberalism’, ‘social democratic liberalism’ and ‘tempered liberalism’.²³ What matters is that each of them, as analytical tool or heuristic device, opens up slightly different avenues of research and enables slightly different conversations. Which term to choose is primarily a matter of geographical and chronological scope, as well as analytical emphasis and argumentative thrust. Not everything during the cold war was about the cold war, and not every liberal in the cold war was a ‘cold war liberal’. The term ‘cold war liberalism’ directs attention to the ‘intellectual cold war’ of the time,²⁴ and prompts scholars to determine ‘how far intellectual life *in* the Cold War was *about* the Cold War’.²⁵

The remainder of this article hones in on Richard Löwenthal as a German intellectual who in many ways can be seen as prototypical of a ‘cold war liberal’ – both in thought and action. He was involved in the work of a whole range of cold war agencies; his intellectual trajectory was significantly shaped by the cold war; and he became West Germany’s most prominent defender of ‘Western civilization’. He very much fits the image of the ‘politically engaged’ thinker described by Müller in his *Reflections on Cold War Liberalism* – both ‘militant’ and ‘dialogic’ – and he was also typical of those continental European figures who shied away from the ‘I-word’ and primarily understood themselves as social democrats.²⁶

The article’s main argument is that for Löwenthal the language of ‘Western civilization’ offered an effective way to appropriate the ideology of ‘cold war liberalism’ without resorting to the terms ‘liberal’ or ‘liberalism’, which among socialists and non-socialists alike were much discredited in early cold-war West Germany.²⁷ In contrast to the US discourse on ‘the West’, which from early on also comprised conservative ‘Western’ self-assertions,²⁸ German conservatives of the early cold-war years were still enthralled by explicitly anti-‘Western’ notions of the *Abendland* (‘land of evening’, or Occident).²⁹ In other words, positive renderings of ‘the West’ typically conveyed liberal norms and ideas (rule of law, separation of powers, parliamentary government, and so on), as well as progressive meanings of temporalized space: ‘moving westward’ meant ‘moving forward’.³⁰ ‘Fear’ was neither a central category for Löwenthal nor a characteristic temperament (contrary, for instance, to his fellow intellectual Ernst Fraenkel), and it is one of this article’s contentions that ‘cold war liberalism’ was neither by default one-sidedly defensive nor necessarily without a critical edge towards the status quo.³¹ Like many West German liberals, Löwenthal had conceived of himself as part of a progressive force pushing for political reform and offering intellectual critique, and it is no wonder that he first saw student activists as harbingers of a much-needed democratization of West Germany’s political culture. It was only when gradually realizing that the most articulate exponents of student protest envisioned a ‘democratized’ society very different from his own visions of the future that he became increasingly concerned about the stability of the Federal Republic’s still fledgling political order and placed more and more emphasis on preserving rather than changing the status quo – a status quo, of course, that was looking rather different after West Germany’s passing of the democratic litmus test of a peaceful change of government in 1969 and with a social-liberal coalition under Chancellor Willy Brandt.

Profile of a cold war liberal

Who was Richard Löwenthal?³² As mentioned, he taught as Professor of International Relations, with a focus on world communism, at the Free University Berlin – a main conduit of transatlantic knowledge transfer, and part and parcel of West Berlin’s liberal cold-war image as an ‘outpost of freedom’³³ and ‘showcase of the West’.³⁴ In the 1920s, Löwenthal had studied economics, law,

and sociology in Berlin and Heidelberg, and had been a member of the Communist Party before being ostracized, as he did not toe the new party line that declared ‘social fascism’ to be the party’s ‘main enemy’. In 1933, he joined a left-socialist resistance group called ‘New Beginning’ (*Neu Beginnen*).³⁵ He soon had to leave Germany and spent most of his exile in London, where he started working for the news agency *Reuters* and was later hired by the liberal weekly *The Observer*. In 1947, he became a British citizen. While working for the *Observer*, Löwenthal became a regular contributor to various high-brow journals such as *Der Monat*, *Encounter*, *The Twentieth Century*, and *Dissent*. From the mid-1960s, he frequently wrote for the liberal weekly *Die Zeit* as well as the *New York Times Magazine*. He appeared on the Berlin-based Radio in the American Sector (RIAS), which like the ‘America Houses’ had been created by the U.S. military government following the end of the war, and also worked for its international sibling Radio Free Europe.³⁶ A self-stylized ‘voice of the West’, RIAS sought to convey cultural norms and political values from the so-called ‘free world’ to the zones of Communist oppression.³⁷

Löwenthal’s commitments to transnational networks of ‘cold war liberalism’ were manifold. He was part of the Trilateral Commission, the International Council on the Future of the University, the Salzburg Seminar in American Studies, and was also an early member of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, widely known as the ‘quintessential institution of Cold War liberalism’.³⁸ Löwenthal became part of a transnational elite, firmly embedded in the networks of prominent ‘cold war liberals’ such as Edward Shils, Daniel Bell and Raymond Aron. Most of his major works and essay collections found publishers on both sides of the pond. With fellowships at Harvard, Columbia, Berkeley and Stanford, Löwenthal established a presence in the U.S. in the overlapping fields of journalism and academia. Against this background it is hardly surprising that the political scientist and éminence grise of U.S. foreign policy, Zbigniew Brzezinski, recruited Löwenthal for the think tank of the Trilateral Commission.³⁹ The Trilateral Commission was formed in 1973 to discuss current problems common to Western Europe, Japan, and North America. In 1977, Löwenthal served as principal drafter of a trilateral task force on East–West relations.⁴⁰

At the same time, Löwenthal was an integral part of West Germany’s Labour Movement and in high demand as a political adviser and programmatic thinker in the Social Democratic Party.⁴¹ The former intellectual leader of ‘New Beginning’ played a vital role in defining the SPD’s relationship to communism and in drafting a catalogue of basic values which was meant to inform Social Democratic policy. Most importantly, he authored an intensely-debated discussion paper on the ‘identity and future’ of German Social Democracy, which delineated the boundaries of the SPD’s core constituency in response to the foundation of the Green Party in 1980. His programmatic work for the SPD was very much informed by his commitment to ‘Western values’, which in his understanding comprised a commitment to pragmatic reason and the Weberian work ethic. It was on these grounds that he dismissed the Greens’ critique of industrial society, as well as attempts, especially by party leader and former Chancellor Willy Brandt, to open up German Social Democracy to trends of ‘subculture’ and ‘counterculture’ (*Gegen- und Aussteigerkultur*).⁴² Löwenthal’s engagement in party politics received wide press coverage, with peaks of attention around 1968 and 1980. This made him a central reference point both in the closed associational publics of the SPD and the spheres of public debate and mass media.

Long road West

The path of Löwenthal’s intellectual journey to ‘the West’ was long and circuitous. He started off as the member of a Communist student association in the Weimar Republic, and found himself signing up, in 1950, as a founding member of the Congress for Cultural Freedom. How can we account for this intellectual transformation? Three factors stick out: first, the shock waves sent out by the Soviet Union; second, the specific circumstances of Löwenthal’s time in exile; and third, the spatial logic of the cold war that became apparent in 1946–47.

Typical of many Communist and left-socialist intellectuals, Löwenthal became increasingly disenchanted with the social experiment of the Soviet Union's Communist Party. It was the combination of the Moscow 'show trials', the persecution of anti-Stalinist Marxists by the Soviet secret police during the Spanish Civil War and, of course, the Hitler-Stalin-Pact, which caused a lasting alienation from a country initially perceived as a beacon of promise. While, in 1936, he still praised the Soviet Union as a 'tremendously progressive state [...] freed from the fetters of capitalism',⁴³ he increasingly castigated the 'totalitarian degeneration' of Stalin's dictatorship.⁴⁴ His critical stance to the Soviet Union, however, did not imply the embrace of a system of parliamentary government nor did it include a more conciliatory attitude towards capitalism. It was not until the second half of the war that he gradually abandoned his belief in a proletarian dictatorship as the essential prerequisite of socialism.

There were two main reasons for this transformation of Löwenthal's political thought: first, the close interaction between German socialist organizations in London, which included the moderate leadership of the Social Democrats, and which fostered an atmosphere of constructive discourse and political compromise. Formed in 1941, the 'Union of German socialist organizations in Great Britain' provided a particularly important venue of intellectual exchange.⁴⁵ However, as left-socialist émigrés who fled to America underwent similar intellectual transformations without engaging in a closer cooperation with leading Social Democrats, a further influencing factor must be found.

Emigration studies – and this is the second reason – have stressed the importance of acculturation, i.e. the transformation of norms and beliefs through cultural contacts.⁴⁶ Richard Löwenthal provides a good example of this process. He adapted to the new environment with an ease for which some of his friends admired him. He stood out not only because of his job at Reuters but also because of his contacts to British socialists, which were much closer than those enjoyed by most of his friends from 'New Beginning'. From the middle of the Second World War, Löwenthal became a regular contributor to *Tribune*, Labour's independent weekly, and to Victor Gollancz's monthly *The Left News*. And he also joined the newly-founded International Bureau of the Fabian Society, a key forum of intellectual exchange, to which he remained committed for many years to come.

By the end of the war, however, Löwenthal had not yet fallen for 'the West'. In his book *Beyond Capitalism*, which came out in 1947, he demanded the formation of a socialist Europe as a 'third force' situated *between* the two world powers of 'East' and 'West'.⁴⁷ This demand was firmly rooted in previous socialist discussions and was part of several schemes of a European 'third force', which were popping up like mushrooms in various political camps following the end of the war.⁴⁸ The more evidently the binary logic of the cold war began to crystallize, though, the less plausible these schemes became. His adaptation to the new realities of international relations manifested itself in an article he wrote for *Tribune* in October 1947, which he concluded by stating that 'Communist intransigence' was forcing socialists to confine their work to the 'Marshall sphere' and 'to act as a progressive force *within* the Western World rather than as an independent third entity trying to mediate between the forces of West and East'.⁴⁹ Already in a letter from December 1946 he had pointed out that the conception of a 'third force', while envisioning a Germany independent of all occupation powers, did *not* imply *neutrality* between 'East' and 'West', as long as 'West' meant 'democratic Europe': 'Germany is part of Europe, namely a Europe to which Russia does not belong'.⁵⁰ Here already, we see signs of a container-space rhetoric that would become characteristic of Löwenthal's spatio-political framework. As he put it in another letter, Russia had manoeuvred itself into the 'dead end of world history', while America had the potential to develop in all directions.⁵¹ As so often in the conceptual history of 'the West',⁵² it was the increasing antagonism towards Russia that contributed to a westward shift of spatio-political imaginations.⁵³

Löwenthal had certainly arrived in 'the West'. His concept of the West, however, was not static but dynamic, and provided a cipher for various visions of the future. Later he even highlighted this

inner dynamic of ‘Western civilization’ as its defining feature.⁵⁴ He would bring to bear a previously dormant facet of his intellectual socialization at the University of Heidelberg, as his writings on ‘Western civilization’ would owe much to Max Weber’s theory of Occidental rationalization and the Protestant ethic of capitalism.⁵⁵ More important still was the impact of his political mentor, the Vienna-born historian Franz Borkenau, who was the former leader of the Communist student association (*Kommunistische Studentenfraktion*) that Löwenthal had joined in 1926. In the early cold-war years, Borkenau developed a strong interest in the evolution of ‘Western civilization’, and Löwenthal, after discarding his preference for building a socialist Europe as a ‘third force’, largely adopted Borkenau’s spatio-political framework.⁵⁶ One of its key characteristics was a container-space rhetoric that distinguished between a dynamic, creative Western and a static, ‘invertebrate’ Eastern civilization. Again, particularly striking was the mental mapping of Russia: the creation of a timeless, fast-frozen image of barbaric Russian authoritarianism.⁵⁷

Typical of the discourse of ‘Western civilization’ in general, Borkenau was not merely concerned with the beginnings of ‘the West’ but also with its (potential) end. In 1947, he published an article in the British monthly *Horizon* which carried the laconic title ‘After the Atom’. In it, he painted the dark scenario of the ‘real possibility’ of an atomic war leading to the collapse of Western civilization. The assumption that its European heartland was ‘already in a process of decline’ strengthened his belief that Western civilization, devastated by an atomic war, would enter an age of disintegration and ‘relapse into barbarism’.⁵⁸

Both Löwenthal and Borkenau were influenced, moreover, by the British historian Arnold Toynbee, who reached the height of his fame in the early cold-war years – at a time when the frequency of references to ‘Western civilization’ soared.⁵⁹ Toynbee’s gargantuan, multi-volume study of world civilizations, which to this day has remained unmatched though certainly not unchallenged, elaborated the view that ‘Western civilization’, alongside twenty or so other civilizations in world history, was an ‘intelligible unit of historical study’ – a statement that was repeatedly quoted by both Borkenau and Löwenthal.⁶⁰

Crisis of the West

When Löwenthal tried to make sense of the rapid transformation of ‘Western societies’ from the mid-1960s,⁶¹ he resorted to a political language that was shot through with Toynbeean notions of ‘rhythms’, ‘crises’, and ‘breakdowns’ of civilizations. From that time on, it was his mantra that ‘the West’ was facing a ‘cultural crisis’ – a situation of collective anomie. He first turned to this subject in 1965 while on a one-year fellowship at Columbia University. There he prepared a lecture, broadcast on Radio Free Europe, on ‘totalitarianism and the future of civilization’, in which he discussed ‘symptoms of moral and cultural crisis’ that ‘were now visible in the most advanced Western countries’.⁶² He further elaborated on this theme while on a research visit to Stanford University in 1968–69, during which he gave a lecture at the RAND Corporation in Santa Monica, entitled *Unreason and Revolution*⁶³ (a play on the title of Marcuse’s Hegel book⁶⁴). For the rest of his life, Löwenthal remained preoccupied with the subject of ‘Western civilization’ – its defence and preservation. He engaged with it most prominently in a collection of essays titled *Social Change and Cultural Crisis* that first appeared in German in 1979. A revised version was published in English five years later.⁶⁵

For Löwenthal, the disaffection of the ‘young Western intelligentsia’ with parliamentary democracy in ‘1968’ was merely an epiphenomenon of a ‘long-term cultural crisis’. He was particularly worried about ‘West-wide phenomena’ such as a decline in work ethic and social cohesion, which in his view pointed to severe problems in identity formation. Far more serious than the abstract sloganeering of a ‘Great Refusal’ during the student revolt, these symptoms of social ‘decay’ revealed a serious ‘cultural crisis’ that undermined the authority of ‘Western’ institutions.⁶⁶ In Löwenthal’s view, the loss of belief in a meaningful course of history had led to a ‘loss of world orientation’ (*Weltbildverlust*). The faith in a continual progress of reason had become discredited by

a ‘series of historical shocks’ – not least the Vietnam War, but also a growing awareness of the ecological costs and natural limits of economic growth: ‘We are living in an age of Western self-doubt’.⁶⁷

Löwenthal’s worries about ‘the most important part of the young generation’⁶⁸, as he frequently put it, were exacerbated by the sociological diagnosis advanced by Daniel Bell that industrial societies were undergoing a far-reaching transition, which gave well-educated elites greater societal importance.⁶⁹ Like Löwenthal he worried about ‘crises of belief’ and ‘societal instability’ – a ‘loss of nerve’ and a ‘widespread questioning of the legitimacy of institutions, especially on the part of the young who would normally move into elite positions’. Again like Löwenthal, he was concerned about the waning ‘continuity of generations’: ‘Who today defends tradition? And where is the power of the past to hold back any tides of the new?’⁷⁰ While the social structure was still ruled by economic principles, the realm of culture had become dominated by an ‘anti-rational, anti-intellectual temper’: ‘Being straight by day and swingers by night’ was probably Bell’s most graphic description of what he dubbed the ‘cultural contradictions of capitalism’ – ‘a radical disjunction of culture and social structure’. It was this disjunction that amounted to nothing less than a ‘historic cultural crisis of all Western bourgeois society’.⁷¹

The rhetorical construct of ‘crisis’, it has been suggested, is marked by an inner ambiguity, as it may provide a tool for pushing an alternative, future-oriented agenda, which lends the ‘crisis’ notion a forward-looking meaning.⁷² In fact, if one were to turn to socialist intellectuals such as Michael Harrington or Irving Howe, one would indeed see ‘crisis’ rhetoric used with the intention of opening up the horizon of expectation.⁷³ ‘Cold war liberals’ like Richard Löwenthal, however, deployed the ‘Western crisis’ paradigm from a purely defensive angle. Far from widening the space of possibility, they were trying to narrow it down. Their concern with the future of ‘Western democracies’ became a concern about their survival. Whatever they suggested to change, from the mid-1960s, it was for the purpose of preserving the status quo.

Conclusion

The spatio-political language of ‘Western civilization’, which since the nineteenth century tended to thrive in situations of international conflict, crisis, and war (with shifting Orientalist antonyms), gained considerable traction in the context of cold-war bipolarity and East–West antagonism. Long intertwined with notions of progress, liberty, and reason, it also offered an intuitive way of appropriating the ideology of ‘cold war liberalism’ and negotiating the future of industrially advanced pluralist societies. Confronted with the socio-cultural transformations of the 1960s and 1970s, including the mounting challenges to the model of ‘self-disciplined democracies’ (Jan-Werner Müller), ‘cold war liberals’ such as Löwenthal resorted to rhetorical patterns of ‘crisis’, ‘demise’, and the fear for ‘survival’. Their central goal was to preserve socio-political stability by bolstering an identity ‘nested’⁷⁴ in the narrative community of ‘Western civilization’. This stabilization strategy became especially important with rising tensions between East and West from the mid-1970s: the more strained the relationship between East and West, the more important the socio-cultural cohesion and ideological ‘confidence’ of ‘Western democracies’.

This example illuminates a wider point about the function, appeal, and usefulness of the spatio-political framework of ‘the West’. ‘The West’ is not only a cipher for political values, cultural norms, and (Weberian) religious traditions. It is also an effective rhetorical tool to mobilize people for a cause, to fight for a political agenda, and to forge national, as well as transnational, identities. What needs to be recognized is the spatiality of the concept. Spatial concepts – once they metamorphose into socio-political ones (which for ‘the West’ occurred in the early nineteenth century)⁷⁵ – are distinct from non-spatial ones in their specific ability to reduce complexity, create orientation, and shape identities. They do so by homogenizing space. They evoke an ‘imagined community’ (Benedict Anderson) and form part of processes of inclusion and exclusion – determining who is part of this community, and who is not (e.g. Russia, or the Soviet Union). They create a sense

of cultural, historical and ideological belonging, which is attached to a certain geographical area. Sometimes, the boundaries of this area are defined very clearly; often they are amorphous, and they also tend to shift over time. In Löwenthal's case, the spatio-political framework of 'the West' was deployed in a way that conveyed meanings of temporalized space (dynamic, progressive, creative), while based on a frozen, 'logo map'-like image of the West as a geographically delineated, Latin Christianity-infused world region: the Occident – with a clear polemical edge against 'Eastern barbarism' and 'Oriental despotism'.⁷⁶

A spatially attuned analysis of 'cold war liberalism' and 'Western civilization', with a focus on the spatialization of political thought and the spatial contexts of intellectual change, may help to gauge the 'added value' of spatial concepts in political and public discourse: What were the advantages of using spatial concepts? What was the difference between political languages that were spatialized and those that were not? Which historical contexts facilitated, or indeed required, the use of particular spatio-political concepts?⁷⁷ The question of when, how and why historical actors appropriated spatio-political frameworks may probably not mark 'the final frontier for intellectual history'⁷⁸; but it is one deserving of greater attention – in studies on 'cold war liberalism' and beyond.

Notes

1. Richard Löwenthal, 'Vorwort', in id., *Der romantische Rückfall. Wege und Irrwege einer rückwärts gewendeten Revolution* (Stuttgart, 1970), 5–10, here 8. This article takes further some of the arguments first advanced in Riccardo Bavaj, "'Western Civilization" and the Acceleration of Time. Richard Löwenthal's Reflections on a Crisis of "the West" in the Aftermath of the Student Revolt of "1968"', *Themenportal Europäische Geschichte* (2010), URL: <http://www.europa.clio-online.de/2010/Article=434>.
2. For the broader context see Riccardo Bavaj and Martina Steber (eds.), *Germany and 'the West'. The History of a Modern Concept* (New York and Oxford, 2015; paperback 2017).
3. See A. Dirk Moses, *German Intellectuals and the Nazi Past* (Cambridge, 2007); Philipp Stelzel, *History after Hitler. A Transatlantic Enterprise* (Philadelphia, 2019).
4. See most recently Michael Frey, *Vor Achtundsechzig. Der Kalte Krieg und die Neue Linke in der Bundesrepublik und in den USA* (Göttingen, 2020); see also Timothy Scott Brown, *West Germany and the Global Sixties. The Anti-Authoritarian Revolt, 1962–1978* (Cambridge, 2015); Martin Klimke, *The Other Alliance. Student Protest in West Germany and the United States in the Global Sixties* (Princeton and Oxford, 2010); Ben Mercer, *Student Revolt in 1968. France, Italy and West Germany* (Cambridge, 2020); Quinn Slobodian, *Foreign Front. Third World Politics in Sixties West Germany* (Durham and London, 2012); for a concise overview of West German ambiguities towards the United States and 'the West' see the chapters by Philipp Gassert in Detlef Junker (ed.), *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1945–1990. A Handbook* (Cambridge, 2004), vol. 1, 627–634 ('Neither East Nor West. Anti-Americanism in West Germany, 1945–1968') and vol. 2, 502–509 ('With America Against America. Anti-Americanism in West Germany').
5. See Riccardo Bavaj, 'Verunsicherte Demokratisierer. "Liberal-kritische" Hochschullehrer und die Studentenrevolte von 1967/68', in *Streit um den Staat. Intellektuelle Debatten in der Bundesrepublik 1960–1980*, eds. Dominik Geppert and Jens Hacke (Göttingen, 2008), 151–168; Nikolai Wehrs, *Protest der Professoren. Der 'Bund Freiheit der Wissenschaft' in den 1970er Jahren* (Göttingen, 2014).
6. From the vast literature, see only Howard Brick, *Age of Contradiction. American Thought and Culture in the 1960s* (Ithaca and London, 2000); Ulrich Herbert (ed.), *Wandlungsprozesse in Westdeutschland. Belastung, Integration, Liberalisierung 1945–1980* (Göttingen, 2002); Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided. The Civil War of the 1960s* (New York, 2000); Axel Schildt et al. (eds.), *Dynamische Zeiten. Die 60er Jahre in den beiden deutschen Gesellschaften* (Hamburg, 2000); see also the closing paragraph of the important article by Gary Gerstle, 'The Protean Character of American Liberalism', *The American Historical Review* 99 (1994), 1043–1073, here 1073.
7. David Armitage, 'The International Turn in Intellectual History', in *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History*, eds. Darrin M. McMahon and Samuel Moyn (Oxford and New York, 2014), 232–252, here 244.
8. John Randolph, 'The Space of Intellect and the Intellect of Space', in *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History*, eds. McMahon and Moyn, 212–231, here 218. Key contributions to this discussion include Jürgen Osterhammel, 'Weltordnungskonzepte', in *Dimensionen internationaler Geschichte*, eds. Jost Dülffer and Wilfried Loth (Munich, 2012), 409–427; Or Rosenboim, *The Emergence of Globalism. Visions of World Order in Britain and The United States, 1939–1950* (Princeton and Oxford, 2017). The concept 'spatial imaginaries' is often used interchangeably with the concepts 'mental maps' or 'imaginative geographies' (Edward Said). A

classic reference is Derek Gregory, 'Imaginative Geographies', *Progress in Human Geography* 19 (1995), 447-485. For overviews see Konrad Lawson, Riccardo Bavaj, and Bernhard Struck, *A Guide to Spatial History. Areas, Aspects, and Avenues of Research* (2021), URL: <https://spatialhistory.net/guide/>, section on 'Spatial Imaginaries'; Josh Watkins, 'Spatial Imaginaries Research in Geography. Synergies, Tensions, and New Directions', *Geography Compass* 9/9 (2015), 508-522; and Frithjof Benjamin Schenk, 'Mental Maps', *Europäische Geschichte Online* (EGO), 2013-07-08, URL: <http://www.ieg-ego.eu/schenkf-2013-en>.

9. See, for example, Anselm Doering-Manteuffel and Jörn Leonhard (eds.), *Liberalismus im 20. Jahrhundert* (Wissenschaftliche Reihe der Stiftung Bundespräsident-Theodor-Heuss-Haus, vol. 12) (Stuttgart, 2015); Frank Bösch, Thomas Hertfelder and Gabriele Metzler (eds.), *Grenzen des Neoliberalismus. Der Wandel des Liberalismus im späten 20. Jahrhundert* (Wissenschaftliche Reihe der Stiftung Bundespräsident-Theodor-Heuss-Haus, vol. 13) (Stuttgart, 2018); Moses, *German Intellectuals and the Nazi Past*. Likewise, German intellectuals tend to be conspicuous by their absence in work discussing 'Cold War liberalism'. Jan-Werner Müller's reflections on this have, of course, drawn some inspiration from Ralf Dahrendorf's *Versuchungen der Unfreiheit* (2006), but Dahrendorf is not part of Müller's sample of 'cold war liberals'. See, e.g., Jan-Werner Müller, 'Fear and Freedom. On "Cold War Liberalism"', *European Journal of Political Theory* 7 (2008), 45-64.
10. See Franziska Meifort, *Ralf Dahrendorf. Eine Biographie* (Munich, 2017); Marius Strubenhoff, 'Materialist Method, Agonistic Liberalism. Revisiting Ralf Dahrendorf's Political Thought', *History of Political Thought* 39 (2018), 541-567.
11. Udi Greenberg, *The Weimar Century. German Émigrés and the Ideological Foundations of the Cold War* (Princeton, 2014); Scott H. Krause, *Bringing Cold War Democracy to West Berlin. A Shared German-American Project, 1940-1972* (London and New York, 2018).
12. See especially Julia Angster, *Konsenskapitalismus und Sozialdemokratie. Die Westernisierung von SPD und DGB* (Munich, 2003); Anselm Doering-Manteuffel, *Wie westlich sind die Deutschen? Amerikanisierung und Westernisierung im 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 1999); Michael Hochgeschwender, *Freiheit in der Offensive? Der Kongress für kulturelle Freiheit und die Deutschen* (Munich, 1998); see also Holger Nehring, "'Westernization". A New Paradigm for Interpreting West European History in a Cold War Context', *Cold War History* 4/2 (2004), 175-191.
13. The Tübingen-project's key reference points for 'consensus liberalism' were the studies by Godfrey Hodgson, *America in Our Time* (New York, 1976) and Richard H. Pells, *The Liberal Mind in a Conservative Age. American Intellectuals in the 1940s and 1950s* (New York, 1989).
14. Most influential here was Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle (eds.), *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order* (Princeton, 1989); see now also Gary Gerstle, *The Rise and Fall of the Neoliberal Order. America and the World in the Free Market Era* (Oxford, 2022); Gary Gerstle, Nelson Lichtenstein, and Alice O'Connor (eds.), *Beyond the New Deal Order. U.S. Politics from the Great Depression to the Great Recession* (Philadelphia, 2019).
15. For a recent assessment from a German point of view see Paul Nolte, 'A Different Sort of Neoliberalism? Making Sense of German History since the 1970s', *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute (Washington DC)* 64 (Spring 2019), 9-25; particularly influential in this context has been Anselm Doering-Manteuffel and Lutz Raphael, *Nach dem Boom. Perspektiven auf die Zeitgeschichte seit 1970* (2nd enlarged ed. Göttingen, 2010; first published 2008); for a critical appraisal see Ariane Leendertz, 'Zeitbögen, Neoliberalismus und das Ende des Westens, oder: Wie kann man die deutsche Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts schreiben?', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 65 (2017), 191-217; most recently, see Julia Angster, 'Das Ende des Konsensliberalismus. Zur Erosion einer Werteordnung "nach dem Boom"', in *Die offene Moderne – Gesellschaften im 20. Jahrhundert. Festschrift für Lutz Raphael zum 65. Geburtstag*, eds. Christian Marx and Morten Reitmayer (Göttingen, 2020), 189-213.
16. See Jens Hacke, *Philosophie der Bürgerlichkeit. Die liberalkonservative Begründung der Bundesrepublik* (Göttingen, 2006); Wehrs, *Protest der Professoren*; Martina Steber, *Hüter der Begriffe. Politische Sprachen des Konservativen in Großbritannien und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1945-1980* (Munich, 2017).
17. See Hacke, *Philosophie der Bürgerlichkeit*, esp. 21, 55, 60, 267, 281, 293; see more recently id., 'Liberalismusgeschichte als Ideengeschichte. Überlegungen zum Verständnis von Kontinuität und Wandel einer Ideologie', in *Liberalismus-Forschung nach 25 Jahren. Bilanz und Perspektiven*, eds. Ewald Grothe, Jürgen Frölich and Wolther von Kieseritzky (Baden-Baden, 2016), 123-143, here 141; id., *Existenzkrise der Demokratie. Zur politischen Theorie des Liberalismus in der Zwischenkriegszeit* (Berlin, 2018), 29, 396; the phrase 'intellectual foundation of the Federal Republic' was first coined, with reference to the Frankfurt School, by Clemens Albrecht et al., *Die intellektuelle Gründung der Bundesrepublik. Eine Wirkungsgeschichte der Frankfurter Schule* (Frankfurt/Main, 1999); for a commentary on the relationship between 'liberal conservatism' and 'cold war liberalism' see the review of Hacke's book by Jan-Werner Müller, 'Merken, nicht ableiten. Zum Liberalismus der Ritter-Schule', *Merkur* 61 (2007), 68-72.
18. Jan-Werner Müller, 'Calming the Ideological Storms? Reflections on Cold War Liberalism', in *Ideological Storms. Intellectuals, Dictators, and the Totalitarian Temptation*, eds. Vladimir Tismaneanu and Bogdan C. Iacob (Budapest, 2019), 465-485, here 468-470, 472, 476, 481; see also, however, the nuanced readings of Shklar's earlier work, which illuminate rather less fear-centred facets: Katrina Forrester, 'Hope and Memory

- in the Thought of Judith Shklar', *Modern Intellectual History* 8 (2011), 591-620; Samuel Moyn, 'Before – and Beyond – the Liberalism of Fear', in *Between Utopia and Realism. The Political Thought of Judith N. Shklar*, eds. Samantha Ashenden and Andreas Hess (Philadelphia, 2019), 24-46.
19. This point has been made – in relation to Müller, 'Fear and Freedom' – by Matthias Oppermann, 'Ein transatlantisches *Vital Center*? Raymond Aron und der amerikanische Liberalismus (1945-1983)', *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 65 (2014), 161-176, here 166-7.
 20. Judith N. Shklar, 'The Liberalism of Fear', in *Liberalism and the Moral Life*, ed. Nancy L. Rosenblum (Cambridge and London, 1989), 21-38, here 27, 30. This is also the sense conveyed in Jan-Werner Müller, *Furcht und Freiheit. Für einen anderen Liberalismus* (Frankfurt/Main, 2019), 26-32 ('Liberalism of Fear, First Act'), 71-102 ('Shklar's Map').
 21. See also the comment in Hacke, *Existenzkrise der Demokratie*, 396; id., 'Liberalismus jenseits des kaltkriegerischen Konsenskitts? Kontinuität und Neubeginn in der Bundesrepublik', in *Vermessungen einer Intellectual History der frühen Bundesrepublik*, eds. Alexander Gallus et al. (Göttingen, 2020), 147-163, here 149; as well as Holger Nehring, 'What Was the Cold War?', *English Historical Review* 127 (2012), 920-949, here 923, with the critique that 'cold war studies' might, in part, have 'lost sight of one of the key elements of the "Cold War": its war-like character'. The importance of the cold war for intellectual (self)positionings in the 'old' Federal Republic has been emphasized by the late Axel Schildt, 'Der Zwang zur Parteinahme. Die Intellektuellen im Frontstaat des Kalten Krieges', in *Vermessungen einer Intellectual History*, eds. Gallus et al., 36-52. Relatedly, a 'bellicose posture' has been identified as 'one significant legacy of Cold War liberalism' by Michael Brenes and Daniel Steinmetz-Jenkins, 'Legacies of Cold War Liberalism', *Dissent* 86/1, Winter 2021, 116-124, here 117.
 22. Müller, 'Calming the Ideological Storms?', 471. I am not suggesting, by the way, that Müller is somehow unaware of the cold war context. See, for instance, his excellent essay 'The Cold War and the Intellectual History of the Late Twentieth Century', in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, vol. 3: Endings*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge, 2010), 1-22; as well as his *Contesting Democracy. Political Ideas in Twentieth-Century Europe* (New Haven, 2011), and my review in *H-Soz-Kult*, 18 November 2011, URL: www.hsozkult.de/publicationreview/id/reb-16699.
 23. On the latter term see Joshua L. Cherniss, *Liberalism in Dark Times. The Liberal Ethos in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, 2021).
 24. Volker R. Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe. Shepard Stone between Philanthropy, Academy, and Diplomacy* (Princeton and Oxford, 2001).
 25. Peter Mandler, 'Deconstructing "Cold War Anthropology"', in *Uncertain Empire. American History and the Idea of the Cold War*, eds. Joel Isaac and Duncan Bell (Oxford, 2012), 245-266, here 246 (emphasis in the original); see also David C. Engerman, 'Social Science in the Cold War', *Isis* 101 (2010), 393-400.
 26. Müller, 'Calming the Ideological Storms?', 477-8, 482-3.
 27. Implicitly, this also points to the limits of a 'word history of liberalism', as carried out, with great erudition, by Helena Rosenblatt, *The Lost History of Liberalism. From Ancient Rome to the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton and Oxford, 2018), 3. 'Ideology' is understood here as a relatively coherent set of interlocking ideas about a crucial range of political phenomena and contested concepts such as 'state', 'democracy', 'freedom', 'equality', and so on. See Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory. A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford, 1996); id., *Liberal Languages* (Princeton and Oxford, 2005).
 28. On this subject see now Michael Kimmage, *The Abandonment of the West. The History of an Idea in American Foreign Policy* (New York, 2020).
 29. See, for example, Axel Schildt, *Zwischen Abendland und Amerika. Studien zur westdeutschen Ideenlandschaft der 50er Jahre* (Munich, 1999); Vanessa Conze, *Das Europa der Deutschen. Ideen von Europa in Deutschland zwischen Reichstradition und Westorientierung (1920-1970)* (Munich, 2005); Michael Hochgeschwender, 'Abendland', in *Staatslexikon. Recht, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft, vol. 1*, ed. Görres-Gesellschaft (Freiburg/Breisgau, 8th rev. ed. 2017), col. 14-21.
 30. See Riccardo Bavaj, "'The West". A Conceptual Exploration', *Europäische Geschichte Online*, 2011-11-21, URL: <http://www.ieg-ego.eu/bavajr-2011-en>; Bavaj and Steber (eds.), *Germany and 'the West'*; as well as Riccardo Bavaj and Martina Steber, 'Globale Universalität und zivilisatorische Begrenztheit', in *Zivilisatorische Verortungen. Der 'Westen' an der Jahrhundertwende (1880-1930)*, eds. Riccardo Bavaj and Martina Steber (Berlin and Boston, 2018), 7-25; on the origins of 'the West' as a socio-political concept, see the important articles by Georgios Varouxakis, 'The Godfather of "Occidentality". Auguste Comte and the Idea of "the West"', *Modern Intellectual History* 16 (2019), 411-441; id., 'When did Britain join the Occident? On the Origins of the Idea of "the West" in English', *History of European Ideas* 46 (2020), 563-581.
 31. The original definition of 'Cold War liberalism' by New Left critics of the 1960s and 1970s as 'a defensive liberal ideology that linked social democratic welfare states to US military superiority and NATO' still captures, of course, an important facet. Daniel Steinmetz-Jenkins, 'Yesterday's Men. Cold War Liberalism, What Is It Good For?', *The Baffler*, 16 December 2021 (my emphasis).

32. For a biographical treatment see Oliver Schmidt, 'Meine Heimat ist – die deutsche Arbeiterbewegung'. *Biographische Studien zu Richard Löwenthal im Übergang vom Exil zur frühen Bundesrepublik* (Frankfurt/Main, 2007); Uwe Backes, 'Richard Löwenthal (1908–1991)', in *Deutsche Politikwissenschaftler – Werk und Wirkung. Von Abendroth bis Zellentín*, eds. Eckhard Jesse and Sebastian Liebold (Baden-Baden, 2014), 511–523; Mike Schmeitzner, *Richard Löwenthal. Widerständler – Wissenschaftler – Weltbürger (Jüdische Miniaturen, vol. 211)* (Berlin, 2017).
33. Stefanie Eisenhuth and Scott H. Krause, 'Inventing the "Outpost of Freedom". Transatlantic Narratives and the Historical Actors Crafting West Berlin's Postwar Political Culture', *Zeithistorische Forschungen/Studies in Contemporary History* 11 (2014), No. 2, URL: <https://zeithistorische-forschungen.de/2-2014/5093>; for the broader context see Stefanie Eisenhuth, *Die Schutzmacht. Die Amerikaner in Berlin 1945–1994* (Göttingen, 2018), here esp. 182–196, 277–306.
34. Philip Broadbent and Sabine Hake (eds.), *Berlin, Divided City, 1945–1989* (New York and Oxford, 2010), 113.
35. On *Neu Beginnen* and its role in rebuilding the SPD in post-1945 Berlin see Tobias Kühne, *Das Netzwerk 'Neu Beginnen' und die Berliner SPD nach 1945* (Berlin, 2018).
36. See Nicholas J. Schlosser, *Cold War on the Airwaves. The Radio Propaganda War against East Germany* (Urbana-Champaign, 2015); on the 'America Houses' see Reinhild Kreis, *Orte für Amerika. Deutsch-Amerikanische Institute und Amerikahäuser in der Bundesrepublik seit den 1960er Jahren* (Stuttgart, 2012); Schildt, *Zwischen Abendland und Amerika*, 167–195.
37. See Michael Lemke, *Vor der Mauer. Berlin in der Ost-West-Konkurrenz, 1948 bis 1961* (Cologne, 2011), 515; on West Germany's media landscape and the place of intellectuals within it see Axel Schildt, *Medien-Intellektuelle in der Bundesrepublik*, eds. Gabriele Kandzora and Detlef Siegfried (Göttingen, 2020), 107–213.
38. Martin Conway, *Western Europe's Democratic Age, 1945–1968* (Princeton and Oxford, 2020), 3 (with the relevant literature).
39. There now is a sizeable literature on this institution. See, for example, Dino Knudsen, *The Trilateral Commission and Global Governance. Informal Elite Diplomacy, 1972–82* (London and New York, 2016); Martin Deuerlein, *Das Zeitalter der Interdependenz. Globales Denken und internationale Politik in den langen 1970er Jahren* (Göttingen, 2020), 265–278; Frank Reichherzer, 'Trilateral Commission', in *Den Kalten Krieg vermessen. Über Reichweite und Alternativen*, eds. Emmanuel Droit and Jan Hansen (Berlin and Boston, 2018), 279–296.
40. Jeremy R. Azrael, Richard Löwenthal, and Tohru Nakagawa, *An Overview of East-West Relations. Report of the Trilateral Task Force on East-West Relations to the Trilateral Commission* (New York, 1978).
41. See, for instance, Bernd Faulenbach, *Das sozialdemokratische Jahrzehnt. Von der Reform euphorie zur Neuen Unübersichtlichkeit. Die SPD 1969–1982* (Bonn, 2011), where Löwenthal's name appears frequently.
42. See Richard Löwenthal, 'Identität und Zukunft der Sozialdemokratie. Lassen sich die "Aussteiger" integrieren?', *Die Zeit*, 11 December 1981, 9–10.
43. Ernst [i.e. Richard Löwenthal], 'Stand und Tendenzen der Sowjetökonomik' (25 November 1936), in Richard Löwenthal, *Faschismus – Bolschewismus – Totalitarismus. Schriften zur Weltanschauungsdiktatur im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Mike Schmeitzner (Göttingen, 2009), 149–183, here 166.
44. Paul Sering [i.e. Richard Löwenthal], 'Zwanzig Jahre Kommunistische Internationale' (11 and 25 March 1939), in Löwenthal, *Faschismus – Bolschewismus – Totalitarismus*, 184–198, here 197.
45. See Ludwig Eiber, *Die Sozialdemokratie in der Emigration. Die 'Union deutscher sozialistischer Organisationen in Großbritannien' 1941–1946 und ihre Mitglieder. Protokolle, Erklärungen, Materialien* (Bonn, 1998). Implicitly, Löwenthal still approved of the installation of a temporary dictatorship in June 1942: Richard Löwenthal, 'Unsere Taktik gegenüber den Kommunisten' (6 June 1942), *Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (IISG), Neu Beginnen Archives* 40, 1; see also Uwe Backes, 'Vom Marxismus zum Antitotalitarismus. Ernst Fraenkel und Richard Löwenthal', in *Totalitarismuskritik von links. Deutsche Diskurse im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Mike Schmeitzner (Göttingen, 2007), 327–354, here 343–344.
46. See especially Angster, *Konsenskapitalismus und Sozialdemokratie*; see more broadly Marion Berghahn, *Continental Britons. German-Jewish Refugees from Nazi Germany* (rev. ed. Oxford, 2007; first published 1984); Gerhard Hirschfeld (ed.), *Exile in Great Britain. Refugees from Hitler's Germany* (Leamington Spa, 1984); Claus-Dieter Krohn et al (eds.), *Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration 1933–1945* (Darmstadt, 1998).
47. Paul Sering [i.e. Richard Löwenthal], *Jenseits des Kapitalismus. Ein Beitrag zur sozialistischen Neuorientierung* (Lauf bei Nürnberg, 1946 [published 1947]), 247, 251, 256–257.
48. See Christian Bailey, *Between Yesterday and Tomorrow. German Visions of Europe, 1926–1950* (New York and Oxford, 2013); Rainer Behring, *Demokratische Außenpolitik für Deutschland. Die außenpolitischen Vorstellungen deutscher Sozialdemokraten im Exil 1933–1945* (Düsseldorf, 1999); Talbot C. Imlay, "'The Policy of Social Democracy is Self-Consciously Internationalist". The German Social Democratic Party's Internationalism after 1945', *Journal of Modern History* 86 (2014), 81–123, here esp. 97–99; Wilfried Loth, *Der Weg nach Europa. Geschichte der europäischen Integration 1939–1957* (Göttingen, 1990), 28–34; Boris Schilmar, *Der Europadiskurs im deutschen Exil 1933–1945* (Munich, 2004); see also Sean A. Forner, *German Intellectuals*

- and the Challenge of Democratic Renewal. *Culture and Politics after 1945* (Cambridge, 2014); Terence Renaud, *New Lefts. The Making of a Radical Tradition* (Princeton and Oxford, 2021), 183-193.
49. Paul Sering [i.e. Richard Löwenthal], 'The Exhumation of the Comintern', *Tribune*, 10 October 1947, No. 561, 7-8, here 8. My own emphasis.
 50. 'Richard Löwenthal to Waldemar von Knoeringen, 30 December 1946', *Archiv der sozialen Demokratie der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (AsD), Waldemar von Knoeringen Papers*, vol. 84.
 51. 'Richard Löwenthal to Karl B. Frank, 18 October 1947', *AsD, Richard Löwenthal Papers*, vol. 4.
 52. See Bavaj, "'The West'"; Bavaj and Steber (eds.), *Germany and 'the West'*.
 53. See 'Richard Löwenthal to Karl B. Frank, 30 December 1946', *AsD, Richard Löwenthal Papers*, vol. 4.
 54. See Richard Löwenthal, 'Die Intellektuellen zwischen Gesellschaftswandel und Kulturkrise', based on a lecture given at the Salzburg *Humanismusgespräch* in September 1976, published in Oskar Schatz, ed., *Abschied von Utopia?* (Graz, 1977), also in Richard Löwenthal, *Gesellschaftswandel und Kulturkrise. Zukunftsprobleme der westlichen Demokratien* (Frankfurt/Main, 1979), 21-36, here 26-27.
 55. For the intellectual context of interwar Heidelberg see Reinhard Blomert, *Intellektuelle im Aufbruch. Karl Mannheim, Alfred Weber, Norbert Elias und die Heidelberger Sozialwissenschaften der Zwischenkriegszeit* (Munich, 1999), 239-240, 243-244.
 56. See the posthumous edition of writings that largely stem from the 1940s: Franz Borkenau, *End and Beginning. On the Generations of Cultures and the Origins of the West*, ed. Richard Löwenthal (New York, 1981; German edition 1984); see also Franz Borkenau, 'Luther. Ost oder West?', in id., *Drei Abhandlungen zur deutschen Geschichte* (Frankfurt/Main, 1947), 45-75; on Borkenau's political thought see Birgit Lange-Enzmann, *Franz Borkenau als politischer Denker* (Berlin, 1996).
 57. The bulk of Borkenau's reflections on 'Western civilization' was to remain unpublished for decades. That it finally saw the light of day in 1981 was due to the initiative of two people: Richard Löwenthal and Daniel Bell. Bell mentioned Borkenau as an unjustly neglected author in the *Times Literary Supplement* and provided the stimulus for publishing a manuscript that had been in Löwenthal's possession since the death of his friend. See 'Reputations Revisited', *Times Literary Supplement*, 21 January 1977.
 58. Franz Borkenau, 'After the Atom. Life out of Death or Life in Death?' (1947), in id., *End and Beginning*, 437-448, here 439, 441, 444.
 59. See Philipp Sarasin, 'Die Grenze des "Abendlandes" als Diskursmuster im Kalten Krieg. Eine Skizze', in *Das Imaginäre des Kalten Krieges. Beiträge zu einer Kulturgeschichte des Ost-West-Konfliktes in Europa*, eds. David Eugster and Sibylle Marti (Essen, 2015), 19-43, here 38; for the broader context see now Paul Betts, *Ruin and Renewal. Civilising Europe After the Second World War* (London, 2020), 125-172.
 60. Arnold J. Toynbee, 'The Unit of Historical Study' (1934) in id., *The Study of History. Abridgement of Volumes I-VI* by D.C. Somervell (Oxford, 1946), 1-11.
 61. The literature on socio-cultural transformations from the mid-1960s is vast. In addition to the literature cited above (fn. 6) see here especially Andreas Wirsching, 'From Work to Consumption. Transatlantic Visions of Individuality in Modern Mass Society', *Contemporary European History* 20 (2011), 1-26; Doering-Manteuffel and Raphael, *Nach dem Boom*; Bernhard Dietz, Christopher Neumaier, and Andreas Rödder (eds.), *Gab es den Wertewandel? Neue Forschungen zum gesellschaftlich-kulturellen Wandel seit den 1960er Jahren* (Munich, 2014); Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies. The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (New York, 2001).
 62. Richard Löwenthal, 'The Totalitarian Revolutions of our Time. Manuscript written for the series "The 1965 Keynote Lectures" broadcast on Radio Free Europe in 1965', in Löwenthal, *Faschismus - Bolschewismus - Totalitarismus*, 475-545, here 541.
 63. Löwenthal gave the lecture in February 1969. It was published several times in German and English: 'Unvernunft und Revolution. Über die Loslösung der revolutionären Praxis von der marxistischen Theorie', *Der Monat* 21 (1969), No. 251, also in Löwenthal, *Der romantische Rückfall*, 41-87; see also the interview with Löwenthal on the 'worldwide revolt of the young' in Irving Howe's journal *Dissent*, May-June 1969, 214-224.
 64. Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution. Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* (London, 1941; rev. ed. New York, 1954; 6th ed. Boston, 1968).
 65. Löwenthal, *Gesellschaftswandel und Kulturkrise*; id., *Social Change and Cultural Crisis* (New York, 1984).
 66. Löwenthal, *Gesellschaftswandel und Kulturkrise*, 29-30.
 67. *Ibid.*, 15, 30-34.
 68. Löwenthal, *Der romantische Rückfall*, 5.
 69. Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society. A Venture in Social Forecasting* (New York, 1973, 2nd ed. with a new foreword 1976, special anniversary ed. with 'The Axial Age of Technology Foreword' 1999). While the book came out in 1973, it was a collection of articles that had already been published. The idea of a 'post-industrial society' had first been aired when Bell circulated a paper in 1962.
 70. Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (20th anniversary ed. with a new afterword, New York, 1996; first published 1976), 168, 170-1, 176-7, 244. The German title read: *Die Zukunft der westlichen Welt [The Future of the Western World]* (Frankfurt/Main, 1976); see also the discussion forum 'America Now: A

Failure of Nerve? – A Symposium’, *Commentary* 60 (July 1975), 16-87, in which Bell did not participate, however. On the process of ‘generation building’, with a focus on Richard Löwenthal and Erwin K. Scheuch, see Riccardo Bavaj, ‘Young, Old, and In-Between. Liberal Scholars and “Generation Building” at the Time of West Germany’s Student Revolt’, in *Talkin’ ’bout My Generation. Conflicts of Generation Building and Europe’s 1968*, ed. Anna von der Goltz (Göttingen, 2011), 177-194.

71. Bell, *Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, XXV, 37, 53-5, 84.
72. See, for instance, Moritz Föllmer and Rüdiger Graf (eds.), *Die ‘Krise’ der Weimarer Republik. Zur Kritik eines Deutungsmusters* (Frankfurt/Main and New York, 2005); and more recently Rüdiger Graf and Konrad H. Jarausch, “Crisis” in Contemporary History and Historiography’, *Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte*, 27 March 2017, URL: http://docupedia.de/zg/Graf_jarausch_crisis_en_2017.
73. See Irving Howe and Michael Harrington (eds.), *The Seventies. Problems and Proposals* (New York, 1972), especially the articles by the editors: Michael Harrington, ‘American Society. Burdens, Problems, Solutions’, 1-51, and Irving Howe, ‘What’s the Trouble? Social Crisis, Crisis of Civilization, or Both?’, 52-72.
74. Guntram H. Herb and David H. Kaplan (eds.), *Nested Identities. Nationalism, Territory, and Scale* (Lanham, 1999).
75. See the literature cited above (fn. 30).
76. The expression ‘logo map’ is borrowed from Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York, 2nd revised ed. 1991), 175.
77. This set of questions, as well as the context of cold war liberalism, may usefully complement the stimulating research design suggested by Kiran Klaus Patel and Sonja Levsen, ‘The Spatial Contours of Transnational Activism. Conceptual Implications and the Road Forward’, *European Review of History* 29 (2022), 548-561, who, with a focus on political activism ‘in Europe’s long 1970s’, explore ‘imagined spaces of belonging’; ‘spaces of knowledge circulation’; and ‘spaces of social experience and political action’.
78. Armitage, ‘International Turn in Intellectual History’, 239: ‘Space is now the final frontier for intellectual history’.

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