Philipp Gassert

Conflict as a Moment of Integration

The Role of Transatlantic Protest Movements since the 1960s

20th-century transatlantic history in general and German-American relations in particular have been ripe with situations of conflict, including two wars that have been fought between the United States and Germany.¹ Yet even during that long “golden era” of post-1945 German-American friendship, of which older German leaders like Helmut Kohl or Hans-Dietrich Genscher sing such praise, suspicions on both sides often ran deep.² In political crises like the epic struggles over the “German question” during the détente phase of the 1960s or the controversy over the NATO double track decision during the early 1980s, the bonds between these two countries seemed to be unraveling.³ Moreover, the history of transatlantic exchange has been shaped by perpetual trade wars over goods such as pork, chicken, bananas, and – more recently – genetically-modified food.⁴

Trade has been a particularly tricky business. Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber’s 1968 book “Le Défi Américain” (“The American Challenge”) famously echoed a series of many publications that had come out since the 1920s in which Europe was portrayed as having succumbed to dollar imperialism. “Le Défi Américain”, however, was an untimely publication. The gold crisis of 1968 marked the begin-

¹ This paper was originally presented as a paper at the conference that forms the basis of this volume. The text largely remains that of the oral presentation, to which references have been added.

² See Geir Lundestad: *The United States and Western Europe since 1945. From “Empire” by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift.* Oxford 2003; Ronald J. Granieri: *The Ambivalent Alliance. Konrad Adenauer, the CDU/CSU, and the West, 1949–1966.* New York 2003; Thomas A. Schwartz: *Lyndon Johnson and Europe. In the Shadow of Vietnam.* Cambridge, MA 2003; Tim Geiger: *Atlantiker gegen Gaullisten. Außenpolitischer Konflikt und innerparteilicher Machtkampf in der CDU/CSU 1958–1969.* München 2008.

³ See Jeremic Suri: *Power and Protest. Global Revolution and the Rise of Detente.* Cambridge, MA 2003; Matthias Schulz/Thomas A. Schwartz (eds.): *The Strained Alliance. U.S.-European Relations from Nixon to Carter.* New York 2010; Kiran Klaus Patel/Kenneth Weisbrode (eds.): *European Integration and the Atlantic Community in the 1980s.* New York 2013; Christoph Becker-Schaum et al. (eds.): *The Nuclear Crisis. The Arms Race, Cold War Anxiety, and the German Peace Movements of the 1980s.* New York 2016.

⁴ See Harold James: *Cooperation, Competition, and Conflict. Economic Relations Between the United States and Germany, 1968–1990.* In: Detlef Junker (ed.): *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War. Vol. 2: 1968–1990.* Cambridge 2004, pp. 187–202.

ning of the end of the undisputed American hegemony over the world financial system.⁵ The collapse of Bretton Woods was only a few years away. Yet again, during the 1990s, fears were running high that an American “hyperpower”, spurred on by the triumph over the Soviet Union during the Cold War, and armed with a triumphant ideology of neo-liberalism as well as a host of new electronic media would come to dominate the world.⁶ Looked at in hindsight twenty years later these fears never actually materialized.

After the September 11 attacks, moreover, a divided Europe and a divided America seemed to be moving in different political directions.⁷ The America of George W. Bush was taking a more robust approach to international relations than the Europe of Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schröder. As was being said at the time, Europeans seemed to be living on a different planet in a Kantian dream world of perpetual peace.⁸ Yet, in the context of the political protests against the Second Iraq War, European intellectuals like Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida developed a critique of the Republican plans for a new world order by invoking “America’s best traditions”.⁹ Speaking in the name of enlightenment, pragmatism, and the rule of the law, they wholeheartedly sided with a democratic internationalism à la Woodrow Wilson. This rediscovery of Wilson was a bit of a surprise. Wilson had been the poster-boy for both left and right-wing criticism of democratic imperialism during the 1920s. Now, he was being turned into the patron saint of American neo-conservative intellectuals as well.¹⁰

In the U.S., many critics of the neo-Wilsonian internationalism of Dick Cheney and George W. Bush such as Susan Sontag or Noam Chomsky eagerly sided with Habermas and Derrida.¹¹ During the heyday of the Iraq controversy, numerous proponents of self-critical perspectives within American Studies including Donald E. Pease, a professor of English at Dartmouth, traveled to Germany and other European countries to lend their support to those resisting the Republican efforts

⁵ See Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber: *Le Défi américain*. Paris 1968; Hubert Zimmermann: *Unraveling the Ties That Really Bind. The Dissolution of the Transatlantic Monetary Order and European Monetary Cooperation, 1965–1973*. In: Schulz/Schwartz (eds.): *Alliance* (see note 3), pp. 125–143; Robert O. Keohane: *After Hegemony. Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. Princeton 1984.

⁶ See Hubert Védrine: *France in an Age of Globalization*. Washington 2001; Niall Fergusson: *Colossus. The Rise and Fall of the American Empire*. London 2005; Josef Joffe: *Überpower. The Imperial Temptation of America*. New York 2006.

⁷ See Stephen F. Szabo: *Parting Ways. The Crisis in German-American Relations*. Washington 2004.

⁸ See Robert Kagan: *Of Paradise and Power. America and Europe in the New World Order*. New York 2003.

⁹ See Jacques Derrida/Jürgen Habermas: *Der 15. Februar – oder: Was die Europäer verbindet*. In: Jürgen Habermas: *Kleine Politische Schriften*. Vol. 10: *Der gespaltene Westen*. Frankfurt a.M. 2004, pp. 43–51.

¹⁰ See Tony Smith: *America’s Mission. The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century*. Princeton 1995.

¹¹ See Noam Chomsky: *Hegemony or Survival. America’s Quest for Global Dominance*. New York 2003.

at worldwide democratization and nation-building. Many, in Europe become witnesses of this U.S. American “protest imperialism”. On the other hand, German conservatives were quite happy to use the political outrage over Iraq to score political points by portraying the looming transatlantic rift as the ultimate consequence of a deeply ingrained culture of anti-Americanism that had emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. As former chancellor Kohl famously put it in an unprecedented critique of his successor in a 2003 interview: “Unfortunately the whole debate about Iraq in Germany has been ignited by the unbelievable anti-Americanism of the political Left. Many of those who are in high government office today demonstrated against America in the 1970s and 1980s. I need only mention the debate over the NATO double track decision. Gerhard Schröder, Johannes Rau, and Joschka Fischer were the most prominent representatives of this anti-Americanism.”¹²

Fischer, in turn, defended himself against such claims by explaining his view of the U.S. in the 1960s and 1970s. The foreign minister and former street protester made the obvious point that “America” was not one united entity speaking with one voice; rather, he maintained, America had been, and still was, as divided as Europe:

“With the beginning of the Vietnam War, the image of the United States as the liberator of Europe suffered a radical blow. As a consequence of that, a two-faced America had emerged: one side was waging a war in Vietnam as a colonial oppressor while the other side was protesting this war and resisting against it. For me and other like-minded people, it was never a question of being against the U.S.A. as a country. Rather, we saw ourselves as part of this protest movement that was especially powerful in the United States.”¹³

As I will argue, contrary to the established opinion, the kind of conflicts experienced during the late 1960s as Vietnam shocked many young Americans and Europeans, or during the 1980s when the controversy over the NATO double track decision was at its peak, or during the early 21st century when protests against the Second Iraq War erupted, contributed toward the deepening of transatlantic relations. In the long run, protest movements did not undermine the Atlantic alliance.¹⁴ To the contrary, they were a sign of the strength of the Western community as a whole. This is true even if we look at the most recent period in which protests such as those following the worldwide banking crisis were subject to transatlantic cross-pollination. Moreover, the growth of physical interaction

¹² Kohl: Gerhard Schröder ist ein Antiamerikaner. [Interview from Nikolaus Blome and Stephan Haselberger with Helmut Kohl]. In: *Die Welt*, 3. 4. 2003, <http://www.welt.de/print-welt/article/578484/Kohl-Gerhard-Schroeder-ist-ein-Anti-Amerikaner.html> (last accessed: 25. 5. 2016) (translated by the author).

¹³ Ein unheimliches Gefühl. [Interview from Hans-Joachim Noack and Gabor Steingart with Joschka Fischer]. In: *Der Spiegel*, 18. 5. 2002, Nr. 21, <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-22644250.html> (last accessed: 25. 5. 2016) (translated by the author).

¹⁴ See Philipp Gassert: *The Anti-American as Americanizer. Revisiting the Anti-American Century in Germany*. In: *GPS* 27 (2009), pp. 24–38.

that has taken place over the past twenty years despite these political conflicts is truly astonishing. There is more transatlantic trade and travel than ever before. America has once again become a highly attractive travel destination for Europeans, even though many complain about the kind of scrutiny that they have to undergo at the point of entry into the U.S.

In addition, interest in the United States still runs very high in academia. Although there is a growing attention for Asian Studies – and rightfully so – the increased funding for projects dealing with China, India, and other Asian countries does not mean that the U.S. no longer attracts scholarly interest. Research is not a zero-sum game. Within my own field, transatlantic history and U.S. international relations, never has there been a decade with so many scholarly publications on U.S. related topics than the first decade of the 21st century.¹⁵ This is not surprising because conflict calls for explanations. It raises interest. Transatlantic rift has been good for American Studies in Germany. The membership of the German Association for American Studies is at an all-time high.¹⁶ The U.S. is still very much a worthwhile subject of scholarship.

The Sociology of Conflict

In my paper, I would like to suggest that political struggles and societal conflicts like the 1968 protests or the controversy over the NATO double track decision might be seen as part of an ongoing effort in transnational community building. Here, I find Georg Simmel's *Soziologie des Streits* ("Sociology of Conflict") a useful theoretical concept that allows me to highlight an often overlooked and underestimated quality of political controversies.¹⁷ Originally developed in the years before World War I, Simmel's ideas about the *Vergemeinschaftungsfunktion von Streit* ("sociability of conflict") were picked up by postwar sociologists and representatives of peace and conflict studies, such as Lewis Coser, Ralph Dahrendorf, Marcel Gauchet, or more recently Helmut Dubiel.¹⁸ I found the specific reading

¹⁵ See Philipp Gassert: Writing about the (American) Past, Thinking of the (German) Present. The History of U.S. Foreign Relations in Germany. In: *AmSt* 54 (2009), pp. 345–382.

¹⁶ The German Association for American Studies welcomed its 1000th member in November 2012, see: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Amerikastudien: About the DGfA/GAAS, <http://dgfa.de/about/welcome-to-dgfa/> (last accessed: 25. 5. 2016).

¹⁷ See Georg Simmel: *Der Streit*. In: id.: *Soziologie. Untersuchungen über die Formen der Vergemeinschaftung*. Berlin ³1923, pp. 186–255; see also Carsten Stark: *Die Konflikttheorie von Georg Simmel*. In: Torsten Bonnacker (ed.): *Sozialwissenschaftliche Konflikttheorien. Eine Einführung*. Wiesbaden ⁴2008, pp. 83–96.

¹⁸ See Lewis A. Coser: *Continuities in the Study of Social Conflict*. New York 1967; Ralf Dahrendorf: *Gesellschaft und Demokratie in Deutschland*. Stuttgart 1965; id. (ed.): *Konflikt und Freiheit. Auf dem Weg zur Dienstklassengesellschaft*. München 1972; Jörn Lamla: *Die Konflikttheorie als Gesellschaftstheorie*. In: Bonnacker (ed.): *Konflikttheorien* (see note 17), pp. 207–229; Helmut Dubiel: *Integration durch Konflikt?* In: Jürgen Friedrichs/Wolfgang Jagodzinski (eds.): *Soziale Integration*. Opladen 1999 (= special issue of *KZfSS*, Vol. 39), pp. 132–143.

of Simmel in the latter particularly helpful in understanding of how conflict may actually help integrate society.

Georg Simmel argued in his classic work of sociology in 1908 that social expressions of conflict, such as *Hass* ("hate"), *Konkurrenz* ("competition"), and even *Mißgunst* ("resentment", "malevolence"), should not be seen as purely *soziologische Passiva* ("negative sociological entities").¹⁹ Conflicts may (but they do not always) contribute to the creation of society if they are played out within a context in which certain basic rules are accepted. If two parties struggle with each other in a conflict situation, they tend to accept the legitimacy of the other side. This creates moments of societal integration.²⁰

The Simmel thesis makes sense if you look at it from an Anglo-American common law and case law tradition in which laws are created by act of Parliament or Congress, but also through conflicts that are fought out in front of the courts. In such a legal and political tradition, little law is engendered without a preceding conflict that needs to be settled. Through situations of conflict, general rules emerge that then bind society at large. However, in the traditional German and continental European legal tradition, this connection has been less obvious.²¹ More recently, this process is becoming more apparent in the German context as well because the legal system seems to have moved into the direction of the Anglo-American one. The Federal Constitutional Court is now playing a more active role in society, and the various European courts of justice are also creating new levels of law. Yet, in the tradition of a German political culture that stressed community and consensus building over competition and conflict, the Simmel thesis (originally published in 1908) offered a wholly new perspective.

In 1960s Germany, the Simmel thesis was picked up (among others) by the young German sociologist Ralph Dahrendorf. Dahrendorf regarded Simmel's ideas about conflict as helpful in understanding society and applied them in the context of his analysis of German political culture. He forcefully argued against this German desire for synthesis and social integration, which he framed as a left-over of an anti-liberal, authoritarian streak in German political thought. This social need for synthesis, he claimed, had expressed itself in the fondness for the famous binary opposition of community versus society. Moreover, he noted, these ideas ran counter to the modern, religiously and ideologically neutral constitutional state, which regulates ethnic, cultural, and religious conflicts through legal

¹⁹ Simmel: Streit (see note 17), here: p. 187.

²⁰ See *ibid.*, here: p. 194; Simmel accepts that there are struggles, in which there almost no commonalities and during which the total annihilation of the other side may be the goals. These borderline cases normally do not occur in democratic societies, however.

²¹ See Manfred Berg/Dieter Gosewinkel: Law, Constitutionalism and Culture. In: Christof Mauch/Kiran Klaus Patel (eds.): *The United States and Germany During the Twentieth Century. Competition and Convergence*. New York 2010, pp. 52–69.

mechanisms. Thus, according to Dahrendorf, conflict is regulated, but it is neither abolished nor covered up by an ideology of community.²²

Marcel Gauchet and Helmut Diebel can also be placed in this liberal tradition that sees conflict as the great regulator and creator of communities. Both are critics of communitarism. Diebel goes against the older German public law tradition of Rudolf Smend and others, which understands the state's main function as an integrator of society from above.²³ Following Simmel's lead, they highlight the role of conflict in building societies. In this context, Gauchet even speaks of the "miracle democratique" as an institutionalized conflict mechanism.²⁴ Conflict engenders society as it turns out to be the glue of democracy. In the French tradition, Gauchet's conflict-driven idea of democracy is pitted against Tocqueville's influential consensus model of democracy.

Scholars of peace and conflict studies have found the conflict model that was originally developed by Simmel to be quite useful in explaining certain aspects of social integration on the level of the nation-state. I would suggest, however, that it can also be employed usefully in international and transnational contexts as well. Therefore, my questions are: Does the postwar transatlantic world present an example of community building that transcends the constituent nation states and that has been created in part through open conflict and discord? Under what circumstances did such discord turn out to be more integrating than disintegrating? How did a transatlantic community emerge through the hedging of political, social, and economic struggles? Does the transatlantic community have a "conflict culture"? These questions bring me to third part of my paper, in which I would like to look at a few examples of consensus-driven interpretations that have denied the sociability of conflict.

Discord in the West

If one examines the scholarly literature on transatlantic relations, one does not find too many authors who would support the argument that conflict can turn out to be a motor of integration. Most of the considerable number of syntheses that have been published so far judge conflict in German-American relations as an overwhelmingly negative force.²⁵ In short: transatlantic dispute is unproductive

²² See the works by Dahrendorf quoted above in note 18; see also Paul Nolte: *Die Ordnung der Gesellschaft. Selbstentwurf und Selbstbeschreibung im 20. Jahrhundert*. München 2000.

²³ On this traditional view of the state in the German public law tradition see: Frieder Günther: *Denken vom Staat her. Die bundesrepublikanische Staatslehre zwischen Deziision und Integration 1949–1970*. München 2004; on the general context see: Anselm Doering-Manteuffel: *Wie westlich sind die Deutschen? Amerikanisierung und Westernisierung im 20. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen 1999.

²⁴ Gauchet quoted by Albert O. Hirschman: *Wieviel Gemeinsinn braucht die liberale Gesellschaft?* In: *Leviathan* 22 (1994), pp. 293–304, here: p. 295 (translated by the author).

²⁵ In addition to the works quoted above see: Frank Ninkovich: *Germany and the United States. The Transformation of the German Question since 1945*. New York 1995; Klaus Larres/Torsten

and dangerous for NATO and the German-American friendship. Often, these interpretations seem to be following the general contemporary viewpoint. For obvious political reasons, however, contemporary actors have often highlighted the conflict-ridden nature of certain issues. They have also been quick to blame the other side for the supposedly negative consequences of transatlantic disputes. This was especially true if these actors were in the opposition like the German Social Democrats in the 1960s or the Christian Democrats in the 1970s and early 1980s.

During the Soviet ascendancy of the 1960s and the transatlantic ruptures that came after the building of the Berlin Wall, Adenauer's and Kennedy's positions seemed to clash. Détente seemed to leave the Germans out in the cold, at least with regard to their cherished issue of national unity.²⁶ This conflict ran even deeper as the aging chancellor, in part driven by inner-party struggles over his succession, was starting to play the Gaullist card.²⁷ Then, in the 1960s, the Vietnam War pushed the Atlantic alliance into an existential crisis. According to the federal chancellor at the time, Kurt Georg Kiesinger, NATO had been on the verge of collapse had not the Soviet crackdown during the Prague Spring in August 1968 given NATO a new lease on life.²⁸ During the 1970s, "confusion and discord in the West" was a typical phrase used to describe the state of the Atlantic alliance. Finally, during the 1980s, both the transatlantic peace movement and Ronald Reagan's more aggressive stance toward the Soviet Union seemed to be doing away with final rest of a consensus that had survived the turbulent 1960s and 1970s.²⁹

If one looks through the contemporary literature as well as more recent scholarly writings, the "long crisis of the 1970s" rarely emerges as the expression of "normal" discussions about foreign and domestic policy preferences. In particular, the conflicts that cropped up after the return of East-West tensions during the second half of the 1970s have often been interpreted as a symptom of fundamental processes of social, political, and cultural fragmentation and transatlantic alien-

Oppelland (eds.): *Deutschland und die USA im 20. Jahrhundert. Geschichte der politischen Beziehungen*. Darmstadt 1997.

²⁶ See Franz Josef Strauß: *The Grand Design. A European Solution to German Unification*. New York 1965.

²⁷ See Klaus Larres: *Eisenhower, Dulles und Adenauer. Bündnis des Vertrauens oder Allianz des Mißtrauens? (1953–1961)*. In: Larres/Oppelland (eds.): *Deutschland* (see note 25), pp. 119–150; Geiger: *Atlantiker* (see note 2); Granieri: *Alliance* (see note 2), pp. 192–194; see also Rainer Marcowitz: *Option für Paris*. München 1993.

²⁸ See Philipp Gassert: *Kurt Georg Kiesinger 1904–1988. Kanzler zwischen den Zeiten*, München 2006, pp. 660–681; Schwartz: *Johnson* (see note 2).

²⁹ In a widely read book, the Atlanticist Garthoff painted a very critical image of Reagan's policies, see: Raymond L. Garthoff: *Détente and Confrontation*. Washington ²1994 (first publ. 1985); Harald Mueller/Thomas Risse-Kappen: *Origins of Estrangement. The Peace Movement and the Changed Image of America in West Germany*. In: *IS* 12 (1987), pp. 52–88; Robert Palmer: *Europe without America? The Crisis in Atlantic Relations*. Oxford 1987; see also Leopoldo Nuti: *The Crisis of Détente in Europe. From Helsinki to Gorbachev, 1975–1985*. London 2009.

ation. In recent decades, there has been a field of scholarship devoted to demonstrating that the gap between Europa and America has been widening. Observers tend to focus on the rise of (neo-) conservatism that started to become more visible during the Regan era. More recently, pundits have also pointed to the role of religion, claiming that America has allegedly become more religious as Europe has allegedly become more secular. How Europeans deal with violence and the death penalty also has been used to demonstrate a widening social and cultural gap.³⁰

During the 1970s, many pundits and politicians were searching for empirical material to argue their point that this “transatlantic drift” was leading to alienation and the ultimate disintegration of the alliance. It seemed as if a transatlantic “clash of civilizations” was in the making. The editors of a mid-1970s volume entitled “Atlantic Community in Crisis”, for example, stated that Europe and America were growing apart in terms of the foundations of their civilizations.³¹ Shortly thereafter the Council on Foreign Relations published an investigation into the state of the alliance with the wonderful title “Atlantis Lost”.³² The authors invoked the powerful metaphor of a Platonian ideal world, which now seemed to be sinking on the bottom of the Atlantic as tectonic continental shifts were pushing Europe and America into different directions.

This kind of literature was in even higher demand as it became clear that Helmut Schmidt and Jimmy Carter were not getting along with each other. What could have been seen as a normal debate about policy preferences at the time was explained in individualistic terms. Their conflict seemed to be grounded in diametrically opposed world views stemming from different educational and social backgrounds. On the one side, we have the informal southern Democrat Carter, who wanted to appear as a man of the people, and who walked to the White House after his inauguration, mimicking Jefferson – another Southern aristocrat who had fashioned himself as a representative of the common man. Moreover, Europeans did not quite know what to do with a Southern evangelical Christian in the White House, while Chancellor Schmidt, although an observant protestant as well, represented rationalism and hanseatic solidity. The irony, of course, was lost, that it was Schmidt who had risen from lowly beginnings, whereas Carter came from a well-established Georgia family.

Looking back from the vantage point of 1984, the then former German Ambassador to the U.S., Berndt von Staden (who held this post during the second half of the 1970s), spoke of the “golden age” of the postwar alliance, which had ended

³⁰ See Detlef Junker: *Der Fundamentalismus in den USA und die amerikanische Sendungsidee der Freiheit*. In: Katarzyna Stoklosa/Andrea Strübing (eds.): *Glaube – Freiheit – Diktatur in Europa und den USA. Festschrift für Gerhard Besier zum 60. Geburtstag*. Göttingen 2007, pp. 643–657; Günther Heydemann/Jan Gülzau: *Konsens, Krise und Konflikt. Die deutsch-amerikanischen Beziehungen im Zeichen von Terror und Irak-Krieg*. Bonn 2010.

³¹ Walter F. Hahn/Robert L. Pfaltzgraff: *Atlantic Community in Crisis. A Redefinition of the Trans-Atlantic Relationship*. New York 1979.

³² Klaus Wiegrefe: *Das Zerwürfnis. Helmut Schmidt, Jimmy Carter und die Krise der deutsch-amerikanischen Beziehungen*. Berlin 2005, p. 25.

with the turbulent 1970s.³³ Some American actors like the former U.S. Ambassador to Germany, Arthur Burns, argued along similar lines. In 1987, for example, he urged Congress to establish a youth exchange program to reignite the younger generation's interest in transatlantic topics. He, too, feared that Europe and America were growing apart due, in part, to generational change. According to Burns, the older generation had lived through the war, and because of its wartime experiences, it had become the bedrock of transatlantic amity and understanding.³⁴

These are surprising statements. This is not to say that von Staden and Burns had forgotten that their generation had fought two violent wars. But, if one takes social and economic indicators into account, the U.S. and Europe had been quite far apart during the 1940s and 1950s as well. During 1960s, however, Europe had seen its breakthrough to a consumer society, about ten years later than in the United States. Yet, beginning with the 1970s, European per capita incomes were drawing level with those of the U.S. Moreover, European households reached a comparable saturation with durable consumer goods. Even though attitudes toward consumption and particular products like fast food seemed to have remained different in Europe and the United States, never was the material basis of life more similar between the old and the new worlds than during the last decades of the 20th century.³⁵ Finally, during the 1980s and 1990s, Europe was becoming more diverse and more multi-cultural, which meant that it began to share some of the challenges that had long existed in the U.S.³⁶

Even though a number of macro-social factors were pointing toward convergence, cultural differences seemed to become even more visible for observers on both sides of the Atlantic. Again, to a certain extent, this is surprising because the founding fathers of the transatlantic alliance such as Konrad Adenauer and Dwight D. Eisenhower had been united in their fight against communism. Yet, culturally speaking, they lived in quite different worlds. As is well known, it cannot be said that Adenauer did not harbor traditional anti-American sentiments and express ideas of European cultural superiority. In fact, he even argued that America did not have the intellectual capital to resist Soviet Communism. When German youngsters were streaming into cinemas to watch "Rock around the Clock" and cheer Bill Haley and the Comets on the dancing floor afterwards,

³³ See Berndt von Staden: *Deutsche und Amerikaner – Irritationen*. In: *Außenpolitik* 35 (1984), pp. 44–53.

³⁴ See Arthur Burns: *How Americans Look at Europe*. In: Hans N. Tuch (ed.): *Arthur Burns and the Successor Generation. Selected Writings of and about Arthur Burns*. Lanham 1988, pp. 13–19; on the debate about the successor generation, see: Reinhild Kreis: *Bündnis ohne Nachwuchs? Die „Nachfolgegeneration“ und die deutsch-amerikanischen Beziehungen in den 1980er Jahren*. In: *AfS* 52 (2012), pp. 611–635; Giles Scott-Smith: *Reviving the Transatlantic Community? The Successor Generation Concept in U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1960s–1980s*. In: Patel/Weisbrode (eds.): *Integration* (see note 3), pp. 201–225.

³⁵ See Heinz-Gerhard Haupt/Paul Nolte: *Market. Consumption and Commerce*. In: Mauch/Patel (eds.): *United States* (see note 21), pp. 121–143, here: pp. 140–142.

³⁶ See Tobias Brinkmann/Annemarie Sammartino: *Immigration. Myth versus Struggles*. In: *ibid.*, pp. 85–101.

conservative cultural critics were having a difficult time in accepting that these freedoms were pillars of the transatlantic alliance, too.³⁷

After the building of Berlin Wall in August of 1961, mistrust of the Americans in general, and the Kennedy administration in particular, was running sky high among German conservative politicians. Kennedy's "strategies for peace" seemed to relegate the German problem to the back burner.³⁸ But, this also helped the German Social Democrats to fashion themselves as the new party of Atlanticism. *Ostpolitik*, as the German version of détente would soon be called, brought the Federal Republic back into the game. The SPD (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, or Social Democratic Party), now was the new "Atlantic party", whereas the CDU (*Christlich-Demokratische Union*, or Christian-Democratic Union) was struggling to hold on to the transatlantic train that was fast rolling toward détente. LBJ left Erhard out in the cold, and Erhard's successor Kiesinger was publicly calling for more consultations among the allies. But, this did not go down well with the American president.³⁹

The "Other Alliance"

The growing number of protests and political street demonstrations against U.S. foreign policy now needs to be added to the picture. Vietnam is the classic case study for those who see NATO as an increasingly conflict-ridden alliance.⁴⁰ Many established politicians harbored deep doubts about the war in South-East Asia. But, they would not dare to criticize Johnson in the open. As the New Left took to the streets in protest against the war in Vietnam, politicians within the establishment suddenly found themselves in a position in which they needed to defend a war in which they themselves no longer believed. Yet, for a long time, criticizing the United States war effort in Vietnam was seen as a taboo, especially for mem-

³⁷ See Hans-Jürgen Grabbe: Das Amerikabild Konrad Adenauers. In: AmSt 31 (1986), pp. 315–323; Philipp Gassert: Neither East Nor West. Anti-Americanism in Germany, 1945–1968. In: Junker (ed.): The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War. Vol. 1: 1945–1968. Cambridge 2004, pp. 627–634, here: p. 630; Vanessa Conze: Abendland gegen Amerika! „Europa“ als antiamerikanisches Konzept im westeuropäischen Konservatismus (1950–1970). In: Jan C. Behrends/Árpád von Klimó/Patrice G. Poutrous (eds.): Antiamerikanismus im 20. Jahrhundert. Studien zu Ost- und Westeuropa. Bonn 2005, pp. 204–224; Uta Poiger: Jazz, Rock, and Rebels. Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany. Berkeley 2000.

³⁸ See Ronald Granieri: Odd Man Out? The CDU-CSU, Ostpolitik, and the Atlantic Alliance. In: Schulz/Schwartz (eds.): Alliance (see note 3), pp. 83–101; Judith Michel: Willy Brandts Amerikabild und -politik 1933–1992. Göttingen 2010; Daniela Münkler: Als „deutscher Kennedy“ zum Sieg? Willy Brandt, die USA und die Medien. In: ZF 1 (2004) 2, pp. 1–16.

³⁹ See Schwartz: Johnson (see note 2).

⁴⁰ See Suri: Power (see note 3); Wilfried Mausbach: America's Vietnam in Germany – Germany in America's Vietnam. On the Relocation of Spaces and the Appropriation of History. In: Belinda Davis et al. (eds.): Changing the World, Changing Oneself. Political Protest and Collective Identities in West Germany and the U.S. in the 1960s and 1970s. New York 2010, pp. 41–64.

bers of a generation that had been part of the German imperial project before 1945. They had a hard time criticizing the U.S., while the protest generation seemed to be devoid of such uneasiness.⁴¹

As we have seen in Joschka Fischer's retrospective statement during the immediate 9/11 aftermath, we have been confronted with two Atlantic alliances since the 1960s: the official one, and the unofficial "other alliance" of those protesting in the streets. Members of the "other alliance" imagined themselves in solidarity with those who were discriminated against and persecuted as minorities in the United States. As has been studied in great detail by Martin Klimke, Maria Hoehn, and other scholars, the German and European New Left saw itself in a united front with the U.S. civil rights movement and its student peers in the U.S.; it often copied protest techniques from the demonstrators in the U.S., which – as we have to remind ourselves – are to some extent a common heritage of an old transatlantic Leftist protest culture, making them circular in nature. But in the 1960s, these techniques were re-appropriated and often re-imported under their American labels, as have become obvious in terms that have never been translated into German such as "sit-in", "teach-in", "walk-in", and so on.⁴²

In West Germany, the shock over the Vietnam conflict and the racial discrimination in the U.S. was so great because imperialism and racism could not be understood outside the framework of the country's Nazi past.⁴³ West German youth had not yet realized that, historically-speaking, imperialism and Western democracy have often gone hand-in-hand. For example, some historians have argued that those countries that have seen early domestic democratization and liberalization have also been the most efficient and most successful imperial powers, which includes all the classic Western democratic countries such as France, England, the Netherlands, and the United States. This critical stance against the U.S. in particular, and Western imperialism in general among the youth, allowed conservative forces in Germany to point out that it was unbecoming for young Germans to put themselves on a pedestal above the United States. This controversy over the alleged anti-Americanism of the New Left allowed the conservative camp to make

⁴¹ See the lecture by Max Horkheimer, Amerikahaus Frankfurt, 7 May 1967. In: Wolfgang Kraushaar (ed.): *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung. Von der Flaschenpost zum Molotowcocktail 1946–1995. Vol. 2: Dokumente.* Frankfurt a.M. 1998, p.230 (doc.115); Kiesinger's speech 2 March 1968. In: Kurt Georg Kiesinger: *Reden und Interviews 1968.* Bonn 1969, pp. 82–93, here: p. 85.

⁴² See Martin Klimke: *The Other Alliance. Global Protest and Student Unrest in West Germany and the U.S., 1962–72.* Princeton 2009; A. N. J. den Hollander (ed.): *Contagious Conflict. The Impact of American Dissent on European Life.* Leiden 1973; Doug McAdam/Dieter Rucht: *The Cross-National Diffusion of Movement Ideas.* In: *AAAPS* 528 (7/1993), pp.56–74; Wolfgang Kraushaar: *Die transatlantische Protestkultur. Der zivile Ungehorsam als amerikanisches Exempel und bundesdeutsche Adaption.* In: Heinz Bude/Bernd Greiner (eds.): *Westbindungen. Amerika in der Bundesrepublik.* Hamburg 1999, pp.257–284; Claus Leggewie: "1968". *A Transatlantic Event and its Consequences.* In: Junker (ed.): *United States. Vol. 2* (see note 4), pp.421–429.

⁴³ See Quinn Slobodian: *Foreign Front. Third World Politics in Sixties West Germany.* Durham 2012.

its peace with the westernized Federal Republic during the 1970s and 1980s to some extent.⁴⁴

This strange dialectic continued to play itself out during the 1980s. Because of the harsh criticism that was voiced by many members of the peace movement of the 1980s, the defenders of the “official” alliance often retorted with the polemical accusation that the peace movement was espousing a prejudice-laden anti-Americanism. This really struck a raw nerve with the peace movement. Many of the leading lights of the West German peace movement of the 1980s vehemently rejected this accusation of anti-Americanism.

As the writer and Nobel laureate Heinrich Böll stressed during a major peace rally in Bonn on October 10, 1981, he had been liberated by the Americans in 1945. In fact, as he put it, German literature had been liberated by American literature. Böll claimed that he, as a demonstrator against NATO’s double track decision, was more pro-American than some German Christian Democrats. From Böll’s point of view, members of the CDU, who were parroting Reagan’s policies, had not understood the nature of the controversy in the United States.⁴⁵ “No, it is no anti-Americanism”, exclaimed the Tübingen professor of rhetoric, Walter Jens, to “name the hubris of the Reagan regime by its name” and “do this in complete concordance with the U.S. civil rights movement”.⁴⁶

In order to highlight this transatlantic meeting of the protesting minds, the organizers of protest demonstrations made sure that the “other alliance” became visible at peace rallies in Germany. Through the visual presence of foreign peace activists, they sought to drive the point home that the anti-Nuclear camp extended well beyond the borders of Germany. As such, members of the U.S. protest movements were particularly welcome at protest events in Germany.⁴⁷ During the 1970s, for example, Angela Davis was the constant focus at events in Germany to which she was invited to speak.⁴⁸ Movement publications about the peace demonstrations of the 1980s always highlight the number of foreign protestors who had been present. Moreover, those Germans who were blockading U.S. military installations in Germany (as in Mutlangen), always made it clear that they were not demonstrating against individual GIs, but rather against the military leadership

⁴⁴ See, e.g., Memo of conversation between Nixon and Kiesinger, 8.8.1969. In: AAPD 1969/II, p. 906f.; Helmut Kohl: Bericht des Parteivorsitzenden Dr. Helmut Kohl, 29. Bundesparteitag der Christlich Demokratischen Union Deutschlands. Niederschrift. Mannheim, 9.–10. März 1981. Bonn 1981, p. 34f.

⁴⁵ See Heinrich Böll: Dieser Tag ist eine große Ermutigung. In: Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste/Aktionsgemeinschaft Dienst für den Frieden (eds.): Bonn 10. 10. 1981. Bonn 1981, pp. 159–162, here: p. 159.

⁴⁶ Walter Jens: Appell in letzter Stunde. In: id. (ed.): In letzter Stunde. Aufruf zum Frieden. München 1982, pp. 7–26, here: p. 13 (translated by author).

⁴⁷ See, e.g., Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste/Aktionsgemeinschaft Dienst für den Frieden (eds.): Bonn (see note 45), photos.

⁴⁸ See Maria Hoehn/Martin Klimke: A Breath of Freedom. The Civil Rights Struggle, African American GIs, and Germany. New York 2010, pp. 123ff.

and the U.S. politicians who were using these American soldiers for their own purposes.⁴⁹

While the “other alliance” grew stronger again during the 1980s, the massive protest against the NATO rearmament decision allowed members of the political establishment to reemphasize their pro-American stances as well. Thus, by supporting the NATO double-track decision and by rejecting the massive criticism of Reagan, the CDU/CSU was shoring up its transatlantic credentials. The Christian Democrats succeeded in regaining their title as the “Atlantic party”, which they had lost during the 1960s and 1970s. Taking up with his perceived role as the true heir of Adenauer, Helmut Kohl warned of the “illusion of a third way”, and of a “special role of Germany” between East and West. He also blasted the anti-Americanism of the peace movement. According to Kohl, the controversy over Atlantic security was souring the mood in Washington. The SPD was unleashing the “bad spirit of Anti-Americanism”, and SPD heavyweights like Lafontaine and Eppler were more “Soviet than the Soviets”.⁵⁰ For conservatives, the double track controversy was an opportunity to rediscover their transatlantic history.

Conclusion

Since the 1960s we have been confronted with two Atlantic alliances. On the one hand, there is the “pomp and circumstance” of the “official alliance” with chiefs of state, heads of government, politicians and diplomats interacting with each other in a host of formal and informal ways. On the other hand, we have the unofficial anti-alliance of the “other alliance”, of the social movements and protestors on both sides of the Atlantic. They, too, were busy making contacts across the ocean. Thus, even though these alliances differed in their political outlooks, they were both engaged in transnational community building. It seems to be the nature of debate and conflict that it brings people together even when they agree to disagree. This evidently is the case within nations. But these mechanisms also work across national borders as the history of 20th century transatlantic relations demonstrates.

When Habermas stated at the beginning of the 21st century that a deep division was running through the West in both Europe and North America, he was in fact summarizing what had been the normal state of affairs for most of the Cold War period in which the Soviet threat was supposedly the glue holding NATO together. As I would see it from today’s point of view, as long as Europeans and Ameri-

⁴⁹ See Volker Nick/Volker Scheub/Christof Then: *Mutlangen 1983–1987. Die Stationierung der Pershing II und die Kampagne Ziviler Ungehorsam bis zur Abrüstung*. Mutlangen 1993.

⁵⁰ Kohl: Bericht (see note 44), pp. 34f.; see also Andreas Rödter: Bündnissolidarität und Rüstungskontrollpolitik. Die Regierung Kohl-Genscher, der NATO-Doppelbeschluss und die Innenseite der Außenpolitik. In: Philipp Gassert/Tim Geiger/Hermann Wentker (eds.): *Zweiter Kalter Krieg und Friedensbewegung. Der NATO-Doppelbeschluss in deutsch-deutscher und internationaler Perspektive*. München 2011, pp. 123–136.

cans are having serious debates within the limits of an open and democratic public sphere, they are engaged in the crafting of transnational communities.⁵¹ At many times, conflict has been a positive driving force that did not contribute to a widening (as many feared) of the gap between Europe and the United States, but rather helped construct bridges across the Atlantic.

⁵¹ This even holds true for the recent debate about the role of the NSA and spying.