

*Introduction*

## **From Ruination to Renewal**

Konrad Jarausch's Europe

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*Michael Meng and Adam R. Seipp*

Few contemporary historians have been more intensely involved in transatlantic conversations about the course of modern German history than Konrad Jarausch. This book honors his decades-long commitment to scholarly exchange across the Atlantic through chapters written by both colleagues who have worked closely with him over the years and by former students who have benefited from his remarkable gift of mentorship, known to his students by his uncanny ability to map out the intellectual interventions of a dissertation project on the spot. As one student recalled to another, Jarausch has the “extraordinary capacity for putting other people’s thoughts in order. I would go to his office, find him jet-lagged and buried under a stack of mail, lay out what I thought was a brilliant strategy for approaching my next chapter, and he would, off the top of his head, suggest a far more sensible approach.”<sup>1</sup>

Jarausch’s scholarly career has been shaped by a distinctive combination of breadth and focus. On the one hand, Jarausch seems to be in constant movement, literally and intellectually, in a dynamic interplay of transatlantic exchange about the past. The range of his intellectual interests in nineteenth- and twentieth-century German history and the diversity of the historical methods he has employed to study the past reflects not only a breadth of intellectual interest but also an openness to thinking about the past in fresh and creative ways. One might say that nearly every major debate about modern Germany over the past four decades has triggered some kind of intervention from Jarausch written from a desk in

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Chapel Hill, Potsdam, or somewhere between the two. On the other hand, his core contribution to the field lies in the twentieth century and particularly in the post-1945 period. His pioneering work on West, East, and reunited Germany has sought to understand the complex ways in which Germany can be said to have recovered from Nazism during and after the Cold War. Jarausch's scholarship has been animated by the "German problem," as Thomas Mann put it in May 1945, including in regard to his own father's relationship to Nazism.<sup>2</sup>

Like other émigré historians of the postwar era, Jarausch brings to this problem a distinctly transatlantic perspective. One can see traces of this perspective in both his writing and his teaching, but perhaps most notably in his commitment to transatlantic academic exchange. Shuttleing across the Atlantic several times per year, Jarausch has worked a great deal to develop and sustain institutional programs that bring North American and European scholars together to discuss the past. The list of his involvement in this area speaks for itself: he has played a central role in the intellectual activity of the Center for European Studies at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; he has been actively involved in the German Studies Association (serving as its president in 1985–86); he has been one of the leading faculty members of the Berlin Program for Advanced German and European Studies at the Free University; and he was codirector of the Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung (ZZF) Potsdam from 1998 to 2006. While codirector of the ZZF, Jarausch lived between Chapel Hill in the fall and Berlin in the spring, although he always returned one week each spring during what his colleague, Christopher Browning, called *Konrad-woche*, a week packed full of dissertation defenses and student meetings.

Reflecting his transatlantic work and his broad intellectual interests, we have commissioned essays from scholars on both sides of the Atlantic that capture both the wide scope and concentrated focus of Jarausch's work, with a particular emphasis on the post-1945 period, since that period has occupied his attention in a more sustained manner than any other, and it is within that period, we think, that his most distinctive interpretations can be found. The book includes chapters on protest cultures, gender policies in the university historical profession, migration, and German memory debates since 1989. Other chapters deepen Jarausch's contributions to the study of the professions, religion in the modern era, and historiographical approaches to the study of German history. A final two set of essays explore the problem of narrating personal family stories, reflecting Jarausch's own attempt to do so in *Reluctant Accomplice: A Wehrmacht Soldier's Letters from the Eastern Front* (2011). The chapters themselves are grouped into four unifying sections: theory and historiography; memory and professionalization; narratives of German history; and family histories. Together, the

essays seek to engage creatively with some of the central themes that have animated Jarausch's thinking with the aim of not only honoring a teacher and colleague but also advancing further the discussion about modern German and European history that he has played an important role in fostering on both sides of the Atlantic.

When we began assembling this volume, we sought to achieve three primary aims. First, we wished to pay tribute to the career of a scholar who is still very active in the field and whose arguments continue to shape and inspire new generations of historians of Germany. This volume is thus not a retrospective on an academic career that has ended but a conversation among scholars from Europe and the United States whose intellectual trajectories have intersected with Jarausch's life and work.

Second, we wanted to bring together a group of authors from a range of academic backgrounds and cohorts. We solicited essays from senior scholars who have worked with Jarausch at some point during his long career, including some of his professional collaborators and others who had worked with him as colleagues. We also solicited essays from his many PhD students, ranging from recent graduates of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill back to his days at the University of Missouri. Not only does this volume include contributions from them, but also it features a collaboration between a student and one of his colleagues. Perhaps this collaborative piece speaks to how Jarausch's ideas and mentorship have generated collaboration across generations.

Finally, we commissioned essays that do not summarize Jarausch's intellectual contributions, but reflect on the ways his scholarship has shaped the field of modern German history and continues to do so. This is no small task, since his writing and teaching have touched on many of the major thematic and interpretive developments in the field since the late 1960s. In some ways, the responses we received affirm the current trends in German history. We found it notable, for example, that none of our authors proposed essays on the period before 1914. Aside from that exception, the essays in this volume follow Jarausch's career-long exploration of the political and intellectual history of modern Germany from a transatlantic perspective.

Konrad Jarausch's life story closely reflects the themes our volume addresses. In 2016, a panel at the annual meeting of the German Studies Association in San Diego considered Jarausch's recently published history of twentieth-century Europe. In his comments, Jarausch told the audience that "the history of the twentieth century is in many ways the history of my parents and of me." He was born in August 1941 in Magdeburg, the son of a Protestant theologian and a teacher. His father died of disease on the Eastern Front in early 1942, and the absence of his father shaped his

personal and intellectual life, as he has noted when writing about his own trajectory.<sup>3</sup>

Raised by a single mother, Jarausch developed as a young intellectual when a generation of Germans in the Federal Republic began to question the attitudes and politics of their parents and grandparents. Seeking a different kind of education from what was on offer in Germany, he found himself in distant Wyoming, where he excelled as a student and began to develop an appreciation of the United States. This experience made him a keen observer of both the country of his birth and his second home, a mixture of engagement and critical distance that shaped him as a historian.

He completed his PhD at the University of Wisconsin at Madison under Theodore Hamerow, at the same time publishing his MA thesis as his first book.<sup>4</sup> His dissertation on Imperial Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg launched his academic career, beginning at the University of Missouri.<sup>5</sup> From there, he initiated a series of interventions in two languages on two continents.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, Jarausch became a pioneer of techniques like quantitative history and the new social history that have become established parts of the historical canon. His scholarship focused on the development of professionals in Germany as a way to understand the formation and durability of German elites. He also moved from Missouri to North Carolina, where he began a new chapter in his academic career.

He developed a talent for translating—in the capacious sense of that word—ideas from German-speaking and English-speaking scholars for the benefit of the other. This is part of what defines Jarausch as a member of the historical profession. He has been involved in building institutions on both sides of the Atlantic that have been fundamental in shaping conversations among historians. There can be few scholars working today whose careers have not at some point intersected with the German Studies Association (of which he was an early member and president), the Friends of the German Historical Institute, the ZZF in Potsdam, or the Center for European Studies at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, just to name a few.

The 1980s and 1990s saw Jarausch engaged in a sustained conversation about the development and demise of the German Democratic Republic, which in turn led to an interest in the intellectual and historiographical challenges of a united German state. When we studied with him at the turn of the millennium, he was wrestling with the problem of “master narratives” in German history and the equally thorny problem of explaining how Germany transitioned from dictatorship, murder, and defeat in 1945 to the liberal-democratic society of today with its attendant strengths and weaknesses. Over the past decade, he has turned his prodigious energy to

understanding the history of his own family and the intellectual journey of his father, as well as to bringing many of the threads of his long career together in a general history of twentieth-century Europe.

It is to that general history of Europe in the twentieth century that we should like to begin this volume. In what follows, we consider Jarausch's attempt to analyze and narrate Europe's trajectory from ruination to renewal across the twentieth century.

### Europe's "Benign Modernity"

To write an opening essay on Jarausch's work is no easy task given the sheer quantity and breadth of his oeuvre. We might be tempted to offer a grand summation of his work, following his intellectual trajectory from his first to his most recent book; we might produce a history of his histories that traces the continuities and discontinuities of his thought. Such an approach is of course common for volumes such as this one. Yet, Jarausch himself has already offered a developmental narrative of his work: he recently published an extensive overview of his intellectual development, an annotated bibliography of sorts, that we see no reason to supplant with one of our own.<sup>6</sup> Rather, we would like to offer some brief and general reflections on his most recently published book in order to consider his ongoing attempt to understand the "German problem" within a broader history of Europe's tumultuous twentieth century.

More than any other of his recent publications, *Out of Ashes: A New History of Europe in the Twentieth Century*, captures in one single volume his current intellectual concerns and overarching attempt to understanding modern European history. And, inspired by Jarausch's energetic commitment to critical dialogue about the past, our approach here is to engage with the book and write an essay that expands upon some of the themes in it. In so doing, we hope to make a modest historiographical contribution of our own or at the very least raise some questions that historians may find thought provoking; indeed, we can think of no better way to honor Jarausch than by seeking to advance the field of modern German and European history through a spirited reading of his work.

In *Out of Ashes*, Jarausch examines a central problem from four perspectives. First, he seeks to understand the "paradoxical trajectory of European history" during the twentieth century, exploring the continent's movement from extreme violence to relative peace over some one hundred years.<sup>7</sup> He explains this trajectory through the concept of modernity. While mindful of the difficulties that accompany this concept, Jarausch employs it to understand the competing ways that liberalism, fascism,

and communism offered profoundly different ways of organizing society.<sup>8</sup> Second, he wishes to understand the particular role that Germany played in the conflict and stability of the twentieth century. To write German history for him is to write European history. The two go hand in hand and cannot be separated from each other.

Third, he spends a substantial amount of attention on the postwar period, especially the period after the collapse of communism by which point he believes that most of Europe had come to embrace a social democratic, liberal vision of modernization centered on the values of peaceful cooperation and social welfare for all. And, finally fourth, Jarausch views a liberal-democratic society centered around the values of peace and egalitarianism as offering the most politically acceptable and progressive approach to “master[ing] the dynamicism of modernity in order to realize its benign potential.”<sup>9</sup> The book explicitly advances a normative claim about how European societies ought to govern themselves, uniquely combing historical analysis with a critical engagement with some of the most persistent challenges that the liberal-democratic order faces in the contemporary era. As Jarausch astutely recognizes, the two central values that divide Europeans, to this day, are equality and universalism: there are Europeans who oppose those ideals on the right, nationalists and fascists, while there are Europeans on the left who embrace them, if not in ways that always converge (hence, the split between Social Democrats and Communists over what precisely equality means).

Of these four tasks, the third and fourth tend to receive slightly greater emphasis from Jarausch, since understanding the continent’s postwar history appears to him as a striking transformation that deserves to be explained analytically and defended politically. Social democracy deserves to be defended as the most “benign” form of modernity that European history has to offer, and its ascendancy after the war deserves to be explained because, according to Jarausch, it has hitherto not received the attention it deserves from historians and general commentators alike. If most historians have been concerned with understanding how and why Europe collapsed into ruination from 1914 to 1945, Jarausch seeks to understand how and why the continent moved out of ruination from 1945 to the present.

To be sure, Jarausch devotes half his book to the first half of the twentieth century; he pays serious attention to the destructive forces that led to war, genocide, and dictatorship in his attempt to understand the “competing conceptions of modernity” that have animated modern European history.<sup>10</sup> He makes it clear, though, where his emphasis lies. Jarausch’s interpretation of the postwar period as a recovery from ruination distinguishes his book from other accounts of Europe’s twentieth century.<sup>11</sup>

Indeed, Jarausch sees in the postwar period “the search for potential redemption,” much as he did in one of his other synthetic works, *After Hitler: Recivilizing Germans, 1945–1999*. The history he narrates conforms to the basic pattern of a salvation narrative defined by the movement from destruction to renewal.<sup>12</sup> As Jarausch explains in his preface: “This book charts the framework of destructive forces that killed relatives, destroyed homes, threatened livelihoods—in short turned entire worlds upside down. But it also offers an encouraging record of recovery, reconciliation, and emancipation that inspires hope for the future.”<sup>13</sup> In short, the distinctiveness of Jarausch’s approach to studying twentieth-century German and European history hinges on what he views as Europe’s “hopeful recovery” after 1945.<sup>14</sup> The nature of this recovery, Jarausch claims, lies in the “restoration” of the political commitment and capacity to “master the dynamicism of modernity in order to realize its benign potential” after fascism and communism.<sup>15</sup> This kind of benign modernity did not emerge fully until after the collapse of Soviet communism when, so it seems, most of Europe came to embrace a peaceful and progressive vision of modernization after finally “learning the lessons of a murderous past.”<sup>16</sup>

The adjective is important here: what does Jarausch mean precisely by benign? Jarausch does not offer a succinct definition. While he briefly discusses his turn to the concept of modernity as the overarching framework for his book, he typically does not lay out in an explicit manner what he means by “benign modernity.” Rather, the reader must infer his meaning from the history he tells about Europe’s twentieth century.

Jarausch views twentieth-century European history as shaped by competing visions of the future offered by liberal democracy, Soviet communism, and fascism. Each of these different political systems attempted to master modernity in different ways: fascism strove to create a new kind of civilization beyond the liberal-democratic order based on a radically violent and exclusive form of nationalism that excluded the proponents of liberal modernity from the national community. Communism was more complicated. While Soviet communism attempted to develop a new kind of society that would transcend the central contradictions of the modern era by abolishing class privileges, creating a planned economy, and advancing technology, it became in reality a highly repressive regime under Stalin and, after his death, effectively turned into a massive bureaucratic machine that proved to be “a reform resistant dead-end.”<sup>17</sup> In contrast, liberal democracy has attempted over the twentieth century to offer a political system that allows for the development of individual freedoms, creates an egalitarian society through social welfare programs, and nourishes international ties with other liberal-democratic states to advance a more peaceful and tolerant world.

As Jarausch shows in the first half of the book, this liberal-democratic vision of the future was rejected by both the right and the left as fundamentally erroneous for either its embrace of or definition of equality. Few other issues since the French Revolution have divided European politics more fiercely than equality. Fascism rejected the egalitarian principle of liberal democracy and supplanted it with a worldview that emphasized the centrality of nationalistic and racial struggle. Embracing a politics of violence, fascism promised to rescue the national community from its feared end in the "last man" of liberal modernity.<sup>18</sup> It aimed to preserve struggle as the essence of history against the liberal-democratic striving to end conflict in a peaceful and egalitarian society. In contrast, communism embraced equality as its bedrock principle, but argued that liberal democracy could never produce the egalitarian society it claimed to be creating. Liberal democracy was hobbled by having conceptualized human emancipation in the bourgeois terms of granting and protecting individual rights. Following Marx's radical critique of liberalism, European Communists believed that the kind of emancipation offered by liberal democracy would only continue to perpetuate inequality in a society still profoundly divided by self-interest. The divisions produced by self-interest had to be overcome in a new Communist society that would nourish communal bonds among all members of society and spread the fruits of technological innovation to all.

In the end, these two rivaling critiques of liberal democracy lost supporters in Europe over the course of the twentieth century. Whereas fascism was defeated on the battlefield, communism eventually collapsed after decades of political repression and economic incompetency. In his celebrated essay, the "Power of the Powerless," Václav Havel perceptively identified the repression of the human as a free, creative being as communism's downfall.<sup>19</sup> Added to the repression of the individual was the inability of the Communist system, as Jarausch emphasizes, to provide "the consumer goods that the public really wanted."<sup>20</sup> While other historians have noted this point before, perhaps the irony of communism's defeat by material self-interests has not been fully drawn out: Europeans in the Soviet bloc wanted things, or commodities in Marx's language, that they could own and enjoy.<sup>21</sup> Communism had not only failed to fulfill materialist desires but failed, more deeply, to overcome consumerist desires in the first place. Contrary to Marx's vision of the Communist future, real existing socialism never succeeded in overcoming bourgeois materialism by having failed to change social habits and desires.<sup>22</sup>

With the collapse of Soviet communism in 1989, liberal democracy seemed to stand triumphant, even leading some, such as Francis Fukuyama, to declare insouciantly that history had come to an end with the

triumphant victory of liberal democracy. Jarausch certainly does not share this exuberant view of liberal democratic modernity; he is well aware of the many tensions and problems that Europe continues to face. Even so, he tends to see in the post-Communist spread of liberal democracy the arrival of a Europe that seems to have learned, if not all, then at least some of the lessons from its past. In this respect, he affirms Jürgen Habermas's conclusion that Europe—and not least of all Germany—can and has transformed itself in response to the catastrophes of the twentieth century.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, it is in having done so that Jarausch's concept of "benign modernity" comes to play a leading role: "the key lesson of a century of turmoil is therefore the need to master the dynamicism of modernity in order to realize its benign potential."<sup>24</sup>

This brings us back to our question: what is benign modernity? The closest Jarausch comes to stating a clear answer comes in his discussion of the European Economic Community, the institutional framework that would form the basis of the future European Union. In this chapter, it becomes clear that benign modernity represents a consensus of shared political principles that should govern and regulate European society. While these principles certainly existed prior to 1945 (and thus Jarausch often speaks of the "restoration" or "recapturing" of benign modernity), they became accepted as the regulative ideal for European politics and society only after the collapse of Nazism. As Jarausch explains:

Traumatized by the triple disaster of the world wars, the Great Depression, and the collapse of democracy, the founders of the EEC essentially attempted to recapture the benign aspects of liberal modernity: overcoming the hostility between France and Germany would guarantee continental peace; economic cooperation based on market competition and freed trade would ensure future prosperity; and the establishment of supranational self-governing institutions would cement democracy.<sup>25</sup>

The emergence of such a consensus after 1945—and its expansion into Eastern Europe after the collapse of communism—shapes Jarausch's overall interpretation of postwar European history as one defined by lessons learned after a traumatic past; hence, a great deal hinges on his claim about the ostensibly thorough acceptance of liberal modernity in Europe. If Jarausch is right that democratic principles have found support among Europeans as never before in their history, his interpretation of postwar European history in light of them nevertheless faces two questions: have Europeans lived up to the democratic aspirations they have set for themselves? And has benign modernity in fact become the consensus position in Europe that Jarausch suggests it has?

Jarausch deals with these questions directly in a number of chapters but especially in those on decolonization, revolts against modernity, and global challenges. The postwar history of the collapse of European empire poses a serious challenge to the extent to which Europeans have lived up to the principles of benign modernity, whereas the history of contemporary challenges and protests to liberal modernity raise significant questions about the breadth of that consensus.

In a chapter titled "Disappointing Decolonization," Jarausch sets out to steer between the "anti-imperialist" critique of postcolonialism and the "apologetics" of imperial defenders by illuminating the complex process through which national liberation took place.<sup>26</sup> He notes a central ambivalence to postcolonialism itself. Whereas the desire for national liberation sought to free itself from European domination, it ended up retaining a number of European traditions that remained as a legacy of empire. National liberation only went so far, a development that Jarausch appears to view positively: "the process of decolonization therefore involved a selective rejection *and* retention of the European legacy, which led to the creation of a new hybrid of postcolonial modernity."<sup>27</sup>

While Jarausch's account of decolonization focuses on its causes, challenges, and legacies, it also stresses the violent response of the European powers to national liberation in such places as India, Algeria, Kenya, and Angola, among others. If one must be careful not to reduce decolonization to violence, it is nevertheless of particular importance to Jarausch's argument, since a number of Europeans reacted to (post)colonial violence with a chastened appraisal of Europe's commitment to "benign modernity." Powerful examples that come to mind include Antonio Lobo Antunes's harrowing account of Portugal's bloody conflicts in Africa in *Os Cus de Judas* (1979) or Jean-Paul Sartre's polemic against the hypocrisies of Europe's commitment to universalism in light of imperial violence. Sartre wrote: "Let us quit this Europe which talks incessantly about Man while massacring him wherever it meets him, on every corner of its own streets, in every corner of the world. For centuries ... in the name of a supposed 'spiritual adventure,' it has been suffocating almost the whole of humanity."<sup>28</sup>

Such critical voices of European civilization also receive attention in Jarausch's chapter on "revolts against modernity." Discussing the various protest cultures during the 1960s and 1970s on both sides of the Iron Curtain, Jarausch reconstructs the history of intellectual critiques against liberal and Communist modernity. His treatment of these critiques, especially in Western Europe, offers a particularly vivid description of Europeans who rejected the liberal consensus of benign modernity; one such example is the philosopher Herbert Marcuse, one of many brilliant students trained by Martin Heidegger. A German Jew who escaped from Nazi Ger-

many in 1933 and settled in the United States for the rest of his life, Marcuse became one of the most trenchant and creative Marxist voices of the postwar era.

While he was part of the Frankfurt School, Marcuse eschewed the pessimism of his colleagues Max Horkheimer and Theodor W Adorno. Marcuse believed that the possibility of a revolutionary break from liberal capitalism was not only possible but also desperately needed now when the consumerist capitalism of the postindustrial era was turning the human into little more than a consuming being. The benign modernity of the postwar era was hardly benign in Marcuse's view, for it represented the colonization of the life and the mind of the human being by bourgeois society. Even the working class, which could now afford more consumer goods than ever before thanks to global capitalism, had been captured by the bourgeois belief that human freedom existed in ownership and consumption. Yet all hope was not lost for Marcuse. Critical theory could resist bourgeois domination and nourish the possibility of revolutionary change, so Marcuse argued in *An Essay on Liberation* (1969). Written at the height of the student protests, Marcuse believed that far-reaching change might be at bay. "For the world of human freedom cannot be built by the established societies, no matter how much they may streamline and rationalize their dominion," he wrote. "Their class structure, and the perfected controls required to sustain it, generate needs, satisfactions, and values which reproduce the servitude of the human existence."<sup>29</sup> Servitude to materialism might be coming to an end, or so Marcuse hoped.

Critiques of liberal modernity also came from the right but for different reasons. For the right, the problem was not the exploitative nature of capitalism and the goal was not the creation of a more egalitarian community. On the contrary, the problem was "minorities," and the solution was ethno-cultural nationalism. From the 1970s onward, a resurgence of ethno-cultural nationalism unfolded across parts of the European continent. In Western Europe, the context for the rise of nationalism was largely the growing diversification of European societies thanks to labor, asylum, and postcolonial migration since the 1950s.<sup>30</sup> In Eastern Europe, the context was significantly different in places such as Yugoslavia where the death of Tito in 1980 led to a power struggle that ended up favoring the ethno-cultural Serbian nationalist Slobodan Milošević who, when communism collapsed, unleashed horrific violence in Southeastern Europe.

While that kind of violent nationalism has so far proven to be an exception in post-1945 European history, the exclusive imagination of the nation that underpins it has been less than exceptional. Since the 1990s, there has been a significant growth in right-wing nationalistic parties across Europe, with Germany being an exception.<sup>31</sup> Yet the German case is complicated

because, while it has not yet seen a nationalistic party successfully appeal to the national electorate, ethno-cultural nationalism has nevertheless shaped discussions about migrants there like everywhere else in Europe.<sup>32</sup> In this sense, very few places in Europe seem immune to right-wing politics and nationalistic arguments against the international democratic order as the recent vote in the United Kingdom to leave the European Union has demonstrated perhaps most surprisingly. Just days after Britain's vote, Marine Le Pen, president of France's National Front party, wrote an op-ed piece for *The New York Times*: "The European Union Has Become a Prison of Peoples." Transnationalism, she explained, was capturing Europeans. "And what about the European Parliament? It's democratic in appearance only, because it's based on a lie: the pretense that there is a homogeneous European people, and that a Polish member of the European Parliament has the legitimacy to make law for the Spanish."<sup>33</sup>

As Jarausch notes, this "ugly nativist backlash" poses one of the most persistent challenges to the moderate politics of benign modernity, since egalitarianism and universalism remain its foundational principles.<sup>34</sup> If ethno-cultural nationalism continues to gain support as it has over the past several years, then the greatest threat to liberal modernity will once again come from the right, not the left.

## A Chastened Modernity, A Chastened Germany

Despite the challenges liberal modernity has faced since the 1960s, Jarausch remains impressed by the transformation that Europe—and particularly Germany—has undergone since 1945. Germany today stands as one of the strongest supporters of universalism in the world, a position that has been strengthened in the wake of Britain's vote to exit the European Union and the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States. This transformation is striking in view of the much different Germany that Jarausch left when he came to the United States in 1960 where he discovered his passion for the study of history while studying American studies at the University of Wyoming. He began his career as a professional historian attempting to understand why Germany collapsed into a dictatorship of war and genocide. While his effort to understand German history certainly stimulated a tremendous output of scholarship, it has been neither for him, nor for many of his colleagues on both sides of the Atlantic, merely an academic exercise in deepening historical knowledge. It has also been a deeply political exploration, confirming Theodor W Adorno's belief that "history is possible only as the philosophy

of history."<sup>35</sup> To ask, as Jarausch did in his early work, why nationalistic aggression had triumphed in Germany or why liberalism had failed was also to ask about the political strengths and weaknesses of both in the present.<sup>36</sup> In an interesting way, then, Jarausch contributed to the postwar history that he now analyzes, since he, like others of his generation, critiqued German nationalism by studying its past. By writing history, Jarausch has engaged in what Thomas Mann called "German self-criticism" and, like Mann, he has done so from his perspective as an émigré versed in both North American and European cultures.<sup>37</sup> Underlying this self-critical effort exists an appreciation for the role history plays in human life more broadly. Jarausch believes that societies can learn from their pasts, and here he recasts for the postwar context the old idea that history is to be life's teacher, *historia magistra vitae* in Cicero's words. Tellingly, he ends his book with two sections titled "lessons of history" and "the European alternative."<sup>38</sup>

One lesson stands out as particularly novel, the main lesson told in his book: "The bloody course of the twentieth century taught the Europeans a chastened outlook on modernity—a lesson some overconfident Americans have yet to learn."<sup>39</sup> If not all historians will agree with Jarausch on this point in light of the sheer complexity of contemporary European history that we touched on earlier, the argument in its own right is striking, especially the juxtaposition to the United States. As in his teaching, so too here in this work, more so than in any other, Jarausch brings North America and Europe into conversation with each other.

To speak of differences between the United States and Europe has by now become platitudinous, but Jarausch gestures at something beyond the clichés. He sees an important difference between how the United States and Europe currently comport themselves toward their respective pasts. At least generally speaking, parts of Europe and the United States deal with the lessons of their history in notably different ways at the present moment. Since the 1980s, Europe's catastrophic past has prompted efforts by some Europeans—particularly those on the left—to develop a kind of "postnational" memory culture that critically engages with their nation's history and rejects the glorious myths of the nation that have often underpinned nationalistic violence. In contrast, a public confrontation with the racist violence of the past seems far more hesitant in the United States where patriotic attachments to the nation generally dominate.

Whereas Europe has been chastened by its history, the United States has been less interested in reflecting on the errors of its past. The effect of this divergence seems clear to Jarausch: Europe has sought to learn the lessons of excessive pursuits of ambition and self-interest, whereas

the United States has been less inclined to do so.<sup>40</sup> To describe Europe's transformation, Jarausch turns to Goethe's *Faust*. We would like to offer a slightly different take on his point by invoking another commanding writer from the European past, Thucydides. If we look at the issue from the *longue durée*, we might say that Europe tends to act more like Sparta since 1945, while the United States tends to emulate itself more after Athens. Thucydides developed this famous dichotomy in his monumental study of the Peloponnesian War. In the so-called archaeology of book one, he identifies two different kinds of societies or ways of living. Athens represents human ambition and grandeur, while Sparta stands for modesty and simplicity; Sparta recognizes the fragility of human existence, while Athens seeks to overcome human vulnerability through monumental architecture and imperial pursuits. In a very different time period, Jarausch sees in contemporary Europe a place that, by recognizing the sufferings of history, now strives to embrace a more chastened approach to political life in the hope of building a more peaceful century than the one that has just passed. He sees in contemporary Europe a history worth telling for Americans and Europeans alike.

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## Notes

1. Elizabeth Heineman, "Crossing the Atlantic Divide with the Carrboro School: An Appreciation of Konrad Jarausch" (Washington, DC, 17 November 2006), 4.
2. Thomas Mann, *Germany and the Germans* (Washington, DC, 1945), 2.
3. Biographical details are taken from Konrad H Jarausch, "Contemporary History as Transatlantic Project: The German Problem, 1960–2010," *Historical Social Research*, no. 24 (2012): 7–49.
4. Konrad H Jarausch, *The Four Power Pact, 1933* (Madison, WI, 1966).
5. Konrad H Jarausch, *The Enigmatic Chancellor: Bethmann Hollweg and the Hubris of Imperial Germany* (New Haven, CT, 1973).

6. Jarausch, "Contemporary History as Transatlantic Project."
7. Konrad H Jarausch, *Out of Ashes: A New History of Europe in the Twentieth-Century* (Princeton, NJ, 2015), vii.
8. "Historians and the Question of Modernity," *The American Historical Review* 116, no. 3 (2011): 631–751.
9. Jarausch, *Out of Ashes*, 16.
10. *Ibid.*, 12.
11. Jarausch himself distinguishes himself chiefly from the accounts written by Mark Mazower and Erich Hobsbawm.
12. See Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History* (Chicago, 1949).
13. Jarausch, *Out of Ashes*, viii.
14. The first half of the book on the period from 1900 to 1945 offers a conventional narrative of Europe's collapse into ruination that one would be hard pressed to identify as distinctive. Jarausch moves from the history of European imperial hegemony to the Great War to fascism to World War II. He ties this history together by exploring the different visions of "modernity" offered by liberalism, Soviet communism, and fascism before then turning to the ascendancy of a social democratic, liberal form of modernity after 1945.
15. Jarausch, *Out of Ashes*, 16.
16. *Ibid.*, 16.
17. *Ibid.*, 449.
18. The "last man" of bourgeois civilization as described by Nietzsche in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. Adrian Del Caro, ed. Adrian Del Caro and Robert B Pippin (New York, 2006), 9–10.
19. Václav Havel, *Open Letters: Selected Writings, 1965–1990* (New York, 1992), 125–214.
20. Jarausch, *Out of Ashes*, 671.
21. This continuance of commodity fetishism in the Soviet Bloc is not the only irony of Soviet communism. Another important one is the inability of communism to overcome patriarchy. See Donna Harsch, *Revenge of the Domestic: Women, the Family, and Communism in the German Democratic Republic* (Princeton, NJ, 2007); Malgorzata Fidelis, *Women, Communism, and Industrialization in Postwar Poland* (New York, 2010).
22. A compelling study of this problem is Paul Bett's study on everyday consumer life in East Germany, which ultimately attempted to provide what one would be hard pressed not to identify as an essentially bourgeois life for its citizens but failed to do so. The failure of the state began, however, the very moment that it accepted, rather than continuing to resist, the consumerism of late capitalism. See Paul Betts, *Within Walls: Private Life in the German Democratic Republic* (New York, 2010).
23. See Jürgen Habermas, *The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historians' Debate*, ed. and trans. Shierry Weber Nichol森 (Cambridge, MA, 1990).
24. Jarausch, *Out of Ashes*, 16.
25. *Ibid.*, 508–9.
26. *Ibid.*, 482.
27. *Ibid.*, 483. See also page 505 where Jarausch reiterates this positive evaluation of decolonization.
28. Jean Pau-Sartre, *Colonialism and Neocolonialism*, trans. Azzedine Haddour, Steve Brewer, and Terry McWilliams (New York, 2001), 76.

29. Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* (Boston, MA, 1969), 6.
30. An impressive overview of this issue can be found in Klaus J Bade, Pieter C Emmer, Leo Lucassen, and Jochen Oltmer, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Migration and Minorities in Europe* (Cambridge, 2011).
31. David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (Cambridge, 2011).
32. Rita Chin et al., *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe* (Ann Arbor, MI, 2009); Heide Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler: Black Occupation Children in Postwar Germany and America* (Princeton, NJ, 2005); Sara Lennox, "Divided Feminism: Women, Racism, and German National Identity," *German Studies Review* 18, no. 3 (1995): 481–502; Uta G Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in Divided Germany* (Berkeley, CA, 2000). On German discourses on integration, migration, and foreigners, see Klaus J Bade, *Ausländer – Aussiedler – Asyl in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Hannover, 1992); Rita Chin, *The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany* (New York, 2007); Chin et al., *After the Racial State*; Katherine Pratt Ewing, *Stolen Honor: Stigmatizing Muslim Men in Berlin* (Palo Alto, CA, 2008); Deniz Göktürk, David Gramling, and Anton Kaes, eds, *Germany in Transit: Nation and Migration, 1955–2005* (Berkeley, CA, 2007); Ulrich Herbert, *Geschichte der Ausländerpolitik in Deutschland: Saisonarbeiter, Zwangsarbeiter, Gastarbeiter, Flüchtlinge* (Munich, 2001); Karin Hunn, "Nächstes Jahr kehren wir zurück ..." *Die Geschichte der türkischen "Gastarbeiter" in der Bundesrepublik* (Göttingen, 2005); Leo Lucassen, *The Immigration Threat: The Integration of Old and New Migrants in Western Europe since 1850* (Urbana, IL, 2005); Ruth Mandel, *Cosmopolitan Anxieties: Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany* (Durham, NC, 2008); Monika Mattes, "Gastarbeiterinnen" in der Bundesrepublik: Anwerbepolitik, Migration und Geschlecht in den 50er bis 70er Jahren (Frankfurt, 2005); Karen Schönwälder, *Einwanderung und ethnische Pluralität. Politische Entscheidungen und öffentliche Debatten in Grossbritannien und der Bundesrepublik von den 1950er bis zu den 1970er Jahren* (Essen, 2001).
33. Marine Le Pen, "After Brexit, the People's Spring Is Inevitable," *The New York Times*, 28 June 2016.
34. Jarausch, *Out of Ashes*, 735.
35. Theodor W Adorno, *History and Freedom: Lectures 1964–1965*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Malden, MA, 2006), 10.
36. On the politics of writing history in the early Federal Republic, see James Sheehan, "Paradigm Lost? The 'Sonderweg' Revisited," in *Transnationale Geschichte: Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien*, ed. Gunilla Budde, Sebastian Conrad, and Oliver Janz (Göttingen, 2006), 150–60. Jarausch's first major monograph, a revision of his dissertation completed at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, intervened in the Fischer controversy through a study of Hollweg. Jarausch, *The Enigmatic Chancellor*.
37. Mann, *Germany and the Germans*, 19.
38. Jarausch, *Out of Ashes*, 787.
39. *Ibid.*, 784.
40. As Jarausch puts it in his preface, Europe after 1945 rejected part one of Goethe's *Faust* for part two.

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