

Introduction

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“I want to learn how to be myself,” wrote five seventeen-year-old girls from West Berlin in a 1977 report about their experiences in a women’s group. The group had helped them learn, they claimed, to relate to their feelings and their bodies in a different, more positive, and authentic way.¹ Similar groups existed throughout Europe. Consciousness-raising groups in the women’s liberation movement in England and elsewhere offered their members opportunities to express themselves and thus develop a new sense of self-awareness.² Meanwhile in France, the radical gay activist Guy Hocquenghem proposed a reconceptualization of politics that would foreground “personal transformation in daily life.” Expressing “what we are, what we feel” and thus being able to express an authentic sense of selfhood became essential for the politics Hocquenghem demanded.³ Radical activists in Italy worried about “inner harmony” that political activism might restore. For the authors of *Atraverso*, one of the leading radical magazines in the 1970s, liberation was a form of “de/lirium,” because being in a state of “de/lirium” meant leaving a predestined order behind.⁴ All over Western Europe, radical activists believed that they lived in a world that destroyed inner harmony and in which expressing one’s true feelings and desires was impossible. Restoring the sense of inner harmony and expressing feelings and desires thus became a central facet of their politics. In the process, activists developed both a new understanding of the political and new political practices for which questions of subjectivity became central.

We find strikingly similar arguments on the other side of the Iron Curtain. Indeed, one could argue that due to both the repressive nature of state socialism and the state’s demand for conformity, questions of self-awareness and self-realization became one of the paramount concerns for

individuals of every stripe. From punks to feminists, there was increased focus on bodies, feelings, questions of selfhood, and how the state and society sought to regulate and limit them.⁵ As early as the 1950s, intellectuals were problematizing how to act independently within a repressive regime. To give but two examples, Nobel-laureate Czesław Miłosz stated in 1953 that the “intellectual elite” had become “actors” in the various people’s democracies.⁶ The individual had grown so accustomed to his roles—the defamations of Western culture or proclamations of socialist internationalism—that he could “no longer differentiate his true self from the self he simulates, so that even the most intimate of individuals speak to each other in Party slogans.”⁷ At the time of writing, having escaped the East bloc in the early 1950s, Miłosz suggested that behind the façade of each individual lies the potential of self-realization. Perhaps most famously, Czechoslovak writer and dissident Václav Havel, in his own self-searching exploration of being labelled a “dissident,” depicted living under communism as “living in a lie” and thus called for “living in the truth” as a means to resist the communist regime. Similar to Miłosz, for Havel living in truth meant acting according to one’s consciousness. Using the parable of the greengrocer, he argued that, by putting up a state-issued sign declaring that “workers of the world, [should] unite,” the storekeeper was accepting his life within the system, and even if he did not accept the “lie,” he was still giving the communist system legitimacy. Remarkably, however, Havel also referred to Western consumer capitalism as another form of “living in the lie.”⁸ Miłosz, too, remarked that life in the West was not as perfect as one might expect: “Westerners, and especially Western intellectuals, suffer from a special variety of *taedium vitae*; their emotional and intellectual life is too dispersed. Everything they think and feel evaporates like steam in an open expanse.”⁹ While Miłosz and Havel are the two most-prominent intellectuals, others individuals—like Lyudmila Zhivkova in Bulgaria or Nina Hagen in East Germany—reveal how self-realization was a problem in both East and West.¹⁰

That is, of course, not to deny differences between the political contexts of the East and West. One crucial difference was the presence of a super-power in the East bloc that would stop at nothing to ensure the loyalty of a client state. The East bloc had witnessed any number of revolts as early as 1953 in Plzeň or East Berlin. Thereafter, almost each East bloc country tried to either reform the communist state or jettison the camp altogether. Without exception, the reforms suggested both by political leaders or grassroots activists were abandoned and movements violently suppressed.¹¹ After the largest attempt at reform was forcibly put to an end in Czechoslovakia in 1969 with the occupation of the country by troops from its neighbors, an era of normalization brought citizens of the East in greater contact with

consumer goods and higher wages in return for political loyalty (or at least subservience). It was arguably this tacit agreement between the governments of the East bloc with their subjects that fed the dissatisfaction many individuals had toward the communists and their system. Although the experiences of the 1960s were drastically different depending on which side of the Iron Curtain one lived, the resulting quest for authentic subjectivity was, we argue, remarkably similar.

Including case studies from both sides of the Iron Curtain, this book explores how more or less radical activists tried to respond to the sense of living in an inauthentic world in various contexts, ranging from the women's liberation movement to pop and counterculture. On both sides of the Iron Curtain starting in the 1960s, but particularly in the 1970s, individuals from all social strata were looking for an answer to the question of how one might live "authentically" in a world that seemed increasingly commercialized.¹² In West Berlin and Warsaw, Paris and Prague, people were searching for ways to "live in truth." Although there were significant differences from movement to movement and country to country, the following chapters highlight similar desires for authenticity in different places and independent of political and economic systems. With a focus on similarities, the book challenges postwar histories that tend to reproduce Cold War divisions. Engaging in practices such as joining consciousness-raising groups, listening to rock and punk music, or making bodies and sexuality a central aspect of politics, members of countercultural and protest milieus across Europe developed similar styles that can be read as attempts to live more "authentically." Not least, this facilitated communication across the Iron Curtain. As the popularity of the Czechoslovak underground among Western protestors, or (in the case of music) the fascination with the Ramones in the East reveals, the allure of would-be foreign countercultures was prevalent across Europe.¹³ Rather than taking states and sociopolitical systems that allegedly shape and confine (counter-)cultural movements as the starting point, this volume inquires how states and societies responded in different ways to similar challenges.

These similarities raise a series of questions. Given the concomitant reassertion of national boundaries after 1945, as well as the attempt to reinforce national identity (particularly in the case of the East bloc, but also in the case of France and Italy), how did people of all walks of life identify with people beyond the state, creating remarkably similar movements and would-be "countercultures"? Should historians argue that such movements were a case of parallelism, or were groups creating transnational networks, global interest groups, or at least consuming goods and reflecting ideals that, in their scope and goals, communicated with others on the opposing side of the Iron Curtain? Our assertion is that the narratives underlying most counterculture

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groups are too similar to claim parallelism. There were deeper connections, even if they were only tangentially related. Surely, listening to the music of the Ramones in West Berlin was drastically different than listening to the same music group in the East. But the desires were the same: ordinary individuals were seeking to find their authentic selves in movements that spanned traditional nation-state boundaries. Identifying with Western punk groups, youngsters were looking for ways to express themselves outside of typical (national or ideological) molds. Both the narratives as well as the transnational exchanges affirm that counterculture was more deeply interconnected than has been suggested in the past.

In what follows, we first briefly outline what we consider the predominant interpretative frameworks of protest cultures in Europe from the late 1960s to the late 1980s, and how a book focusing on questions of authentic subjectivity engages with these interpretations. Second, we discuss the concept of “politics of authentic subjectivity,” before finally presenting some major themes that the chapters in the book address.

Narratives of Democratization and Transnational Exchanges

Scholarship on political and cultural protests from the 1960s to the 1980s abounds. Historians, sociologists, and political scientists have explored themes ranging from terrorism, urban squatting, countercultures like hippies and punks, sexual politics, gay rights and women’s movements, tinkering clubs, and all the way to computer geeks.¹⁴ Beyond this plethora of themes, certain general analytical and narrative trends in the historiography can be identified, some of them peculiar to either side of the Iron Curtain, some of them addressing both East and West.

Perhaps the most important narrative framework places protest movements into a context of political democratization, cultural liberalization, and pluralization.¹⁵ Discussing the protests of 1968 in their global dimension, Philipp Gassert notes that activists around the globe shared a “common cause” by “opposing the domestic and international status quo in the name of participatory democracy, political freedom, and personal self-determination.” A more radical form of democracy was in the streets in Paris as much as in West Berlin and in Prague.¹⁶ In the West, radical activists and thinkers developed concepts of democracy that went beyond state institutions, demanding what historian Gerd-Rainer Horn has called “participatory democracy” at the workplace or at universities.¹⁷ Thinkers like Johannes Agnoli held state institutions responsible for limiting people’s

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democratic and participatory rights.¹⁸ But demands for radical democracy were not realized, and the revolutions failed, it seemed, since they did not change the government or its structures. Nevertheless, many scholars and other intellectuals regard the revolts around 1968 and in subsequent years as crucial moments for the establishment of liberal and democratic societies in Western Europe. While institutions did not change, cultural and social attitudes did. Democratic values were socially engrained, and especially continental, postfascist Europe became, finally, safe for democracy, the argument goes.¹⁹ Claus Leggewie has, for example, suggested that “1968” constituted a “second foundation” of the Federal Republic of Germany. Only then was democracy truly established in Germany.²⁰

In Eastern Europe, critics opposed Stalinist regimes in all their iterations, yet without embracing Western-style parliamentary democracy. On the contrary: reformers (be they within the state administration or outside of it) consistently called for a different form of socialism. Ironically, the goal of many oppositionists was to make the state more participatory and “genuinely” socialist. An interesting parallel developed in the 1960s and 1970s, when opposition figures on both sides of the Iron Curtain called for more democracy in their respective regimes. Polish dissidents Jacek Kuroń and Karol Modzelewski argued against “parliamentary regimes” and instead called for “workers’ democracy,” a demand many Western protestors would have found appealing.²¹ In Czechoslovakia, Alexander Dubček also called for a “Third Way,” calling for a more open and democratic form of socialism rather than Western democracy.²² In Yugoslavia, students went to the street demanding more autonomy from the state, so as to make the university more communal and socialist in nature.²³ Visions for a radically democratic society that developed in the 1960s informed dissidents and ordinary people of the 1970s and 1980s and thus contributed, in the long run, to the fall of communism in 1989.²⁴ After the fall of state socialism, leaders in almost all East bloc countries initially called for a political system that guaranteed personal freedoms, but which did not slavishly adopt total market capitalism. That is what Václav Havel meant in his speech to the Polish parliament in 1990 when he said that East Central Europe had “spiritual and moral incentives” to offer the West after the various revolutions.²⁵ Thus, while neither protestors in the East or the West accomplished their immediate political goals, their actions ultimately made Europe a more democratic and pluralist continent.

Along similar lines, scholars have proposed that the protesting and countercultural milieus that evolved out of 1968 contributed to changing values and a cultural liberalization.²⁶ Whereas students had lost politically, they seem to have succeeded culturally, as former leading activists from both

France and West Germany frequently claimed.²⁷ Most famously, attitudes towards sexuality, especially pre- and extramarital intercourse and (eventually) homosexuality, changed dramatically, not least due to the women's and gay rights movements.²⁸ Yet, it should be noted that processes of cultural liberalization had already begun earlier in the context of the postwar economic boom in Western Europe, and that communist authorities in Eastern Europe did not place particular importance on cultural puritanism to begin with.²⁹ In particular, the growing youth generation benefited from the economic boom and often joyfully participated in the emerging consumer culture that would become the target of left-wing critics on both sides of the Iron Curtain.³⁰ Indeed, in the 1970s, postmaterial values, ideals of self-actualization rather than materialistic consumption became increasingly popular. At the same time, an increasingly diversified number of sub- and countercultural scenes emerged with different music and fashion preferences, which indicates a diversification of acceptable lifestyle choices.³¹ Whereas men wearing shabby cloths and long hair had caused outrage in the 1960s, by the 1970s, this had become a normal sight not only in large cities, but also in the provinces.³² All in all, these interpretations suggest a political and cultural success story that ends with the stable liberal democracies that characterize Europe, the rise of populist right-wing parties notwithstanding, at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

These were deeply transnational developments. Protests took place in cities all over Europe and indeed across the globe, and countercultural styles rarely stopped at national boundaries.³³ Activists in different countries learned from each other, making use of protest forms they had encountered, directly or via media, in different places. Young people traveled throughout Europe to sites of protest like the Larzac in France, or full of hope for a better society to Portugal after the Carnation Revolution of 1974.³⁴ In Eastern Europe, travel restrictions also liberalized in the early 1970s. By 1972, millions of foreigners were visiting Prague, Budapest, or East Berlin in search of the exotic. In this atmosphere, activists met at the Czechoslovak-Polish border to celebrate grassroots contacts, just as Slovak and Hungarian groups formed to protest environmental degradation on the Danube.³⁵ Numerous studies have thus produced an image of deeply intertwined protest movements and countercultures where a transnational and even European identity developed.³⁶ Yet, with few notable exceptions, scholars have treated both sides of the Iron Curtain separately.³⁷ Given the division of the continent into two adversarial economic and political blocs, it seems only natural that opposing these systems and regimes radically differed. Without denying national peculiarities, the studies presented in this volume challenge this perspective.

This scholarship has yielded valuable insights. Yet, it has also faced criticism. Recasting the story of 1968 and the movements that followed as a story of cultural liberalization, Kristin Ross has argued in the French case, obliterates the radical political challenge that 1968 constituted.³⁸ Ross thus endeavors to restore what she considers the political meaning of the protests, that is, a critique of social categories imposed upon people. In her reading, May 1968 was, above all, an experiment in radical social declassification that is still meaningful in the present. For Ross as well as for other scholars, there is still “unfinished business,” issues that were raised in 1968 and not yet solved, such as demands for radical, participatory democracy.³⁹ Similarly, Jonathan Bolton has reexamined the rise of opposition movements in post-Prague Spring Czechoslovakia, arguing that the role of the dissident in Western historiography has overshadowed most of the country-specific and extensively debated controversies within the opposition.⁴⁰ Rather than the typical image of a would-be dissident bloc, his exemplary study reveals the ways that individuals in the underground identified with opposition and how organically groups (and ideas) were formed. These debates indicate how politicized discussions about 1968 still are. A range of scholars have thus expressed skepticism whether looking at these protest movements in terms of democratization and liberalization is ultimately productive. Scholars of West Germany, in particular have drawn our attention to less overt, more, as it were, microscopic forms of power.⁴¹

The conceptually most innovative and empirically grounded study has been provided by Sven Reichardt, who has studied the West German “Alternative Milieu” during the long 1970s.⁴² Reichardt seeks to develop an alternative to the dominant interpretations of the Alternative Left as either “loosening up, liberating and liberalizing,” or “totalitarian, restricting and controlling.” To this end, he analyzes the Alternative Left as a regime of subjectivity that required its members to be “authentic.” Leftists, he argues, wanted to express themselves and their feelings freely; they wanted to be authentic and autonomous subjects, liberated from the impositions of a capitalist economy that only produced false desires and needs. However, rather than taking the rhetoric of authenticity and self-liberation at face value, Reichardt inquires into the relationship between elements of freedom and coercion in creating authentic subjectivities. In the alternative milieu, activists not only had the right to live in a “self-realized” way, but had the “obligation to render account of themselves” and to convey these accounts to others. “Self-therapeutization was intended as a project for the liberation of the alienated individual, but in the practice of the democratic panopticism, it unfolded a normative effect and became a management of the self. The freely chosen culture of self-thematization thus did not only mean ‘freedom

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for', but also an 'obligation to,'" Reichardt writes.⁴³ In line with other studies of the contemporary self, Reichardt thus inquires about the practical implications of the alternative search for authenticity.⁴⁴

The approach taken in this book is indebted to Reichardt's work, as the title suggests. At the same time, we draw on the path-breaking work of Padraic Kenney, who has argued that a crucial reason people went to the streets in the late 1980s was thanks to the *konkretny* generation who had been fed by activists in the 1970s and early 1980s. "The *konkretny* activists matched support of the practical with a new attitude toward pluralism. This was not simply a tolerant pluralism of parties or movements ... [but] *internal pluralism*: one mixed and matched identities, and issues, as necessary, depending on what was necessary to defeat the communists."⁴⁵ What was crucial for these new activists was that they were a group of people who coalesced around a collective identity (and, frequently, lifestyle) who sought "to mobilize others around a set of issues."⁴⁶ Addressing case studies from all over Europe, the volume argues that searching for an authentic subjectivity and trying to practice and express this authenticity was a common phenomenon throughout Europe. The contributions inquire how authenticity was practically created in a variety of more or less politically and culturally subversive contexts. Studying authenticity in multiple contexts allows us to see that there was not a single regime of authentic subjectivity, but several and often competing visions of what it meant to be authentic and how one could be authentic. What was at stake with this politics of authenticity?

The Politics of Authenticity

In a famous article published in 1982, Michel Foucault noted that a new kind of struggle was becoming "more and more important." Throughout history, Foucault found "three kinds of social struggles": first, struggles "against forms of domination"; second, "against forms of exploitation which separate individuals from what they produce"; and third, struggles "against that which ties the individual to himself and submits him to others in this way." With the rise of the women's and gay movements of the 1970s, Foucault saw the third kind of struggle on the rise. He tied the rise of this kind of struggle to a peculiar form of political power that he saw emerging with the modern state. Contrary to what most people thought, the state did not ignore individuals, but combined "individualization techniques" and "totalization procedures" in the "same political structures." In a way, the state secularized a Christian form of "pastoral power" that was concerned with individuals' eternal salvation. To ensure this salvation, the Church needed to

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know about one's inner thoughts and feelings. The modern state, in contrast, concerned itself with individual's worldly well-being, both physically and psychically. Indeed, various state and nonstate institutions seek to shape our sense of self. In this situation, the preeminent philosophical question is no longer "who are we," rather, the political task is, Foucault argues, "to refuse what we are," and to imagine what we could be.⁴⁷

What Foucault is noting here is a fundamental transformation of political struggles that took place in the 1970s across Europe and, arguably, in the United States. Of course, Foucault's writings, which were widely read in leftist circles at the time, contributed themselves to these changes.⁴⁸ At the core of these struggles were not merely questions of political participation or the rights of marginalized groups, but questions of subjectivity. The contributions to this volume detail this transformation by discussing a variety of struggles against what Foucault termed "governments of individualization." In different ways, and more or less explicitly, the people that populate the pages of this book, political and countercultural activists as well as ordinary people, questioned and refused who they were supposed to be: heterosexual men or women, productive citizens, or eager consumers.⁴⁹ They imagined what they could be: abject subjects who transcended local boundaries while simultaneously remaining grounded in specific and meaningful places, as the squatters of Hamburg's Hafenstraße discussed by Jake Smith suggest; lesbian and gay subjects who embraced their desires and demanded their public recognition, as the case studies on lesbians in the GDR by Maria Bühner and Antoine Idier on gay politics in France show; or "young proletarians" mocking traditional politics by engaging in practices of falsity and nonsense, as the chapter by Danilo Mariscalco on the artistic products of the Italian movement of 1977 shows. By imagining who they could be, activists also inquired who they "really" were. In their understanding, capitalist and socialist societies prevented them from being who they really were, from living a self-realized life "in the truth," as Václav Havel had put it. Creating authentic subjectivities was the central goal of politics.

What does "authentic" mean in our context, and what does a "politics of authenticity" imply? This is not the place to offer a sustained philosophical discussion of what authenticity "really" is.⁵⁰ Instead, we would like to offer an albeit brief exploration of the discursive field of authenticity. Above all, the term implies a sense of truthfulness, in contrast to the falsehood that characterized, in the activist perspective, the modern world. More specifically, it refers to being true to one's own personality, to one's own individual "nature," to one's desires and dreams. What mattered for being authentic was, in other words, not only being able to tell the truth, but to tell truth *about oneself*, about one's (sexual) desires, feelings, or dreams, and to act

accordingly. Importantly, the desire for authenticity had a deeply emotional and bodily dimension. In a society that seemed to sanction the open expression of feelings, doing so became a way of being authentic. Similarly, activists tried to shape and experience their bodies without social norms or modern technology imposing inauthentic norms. Being authentic, in other words, was also an emotional and bodily way of being.⁵¹ Indeed, it is telling that we can find a rhetoric of desires in many contexts, in part certainly inspired by the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari.⁵² Pursuing a politics of authenticity was thus about creating the possibilities for living a life that was “true to itself”; it was about enabling people to no longer hide behind “masks,” but instead express who they “really” were. This conceptualization of a politics of authenticity means that we do not limit our investigations to actors explicitly using the term “authentic.” Even if protagonists did not use the term, we argue that the movements under investigation all pursued a “politics of authenticity,” that is, that they tried trying to develop ways of living that would allow people to be true to themselves. Studying the politics of authenticity thus entails examining what people did in order to both create authentic selves, and to create the conditions, not least spatial conditions, that would facilitate authenticity. In different ways, the chapters of the book thus employ praxeological approaches by inquiring in detail how authenticity was practically created in a multiplicity of contexts.

While chapters in this book note that ideals of authenticity came with expectations what one had to do in order to be authentic, and to be recognized as authentic, the book’s emphasis lies elsewhere. First, its chapters suggest a fundamental transformation of the political within protest cultures that cannot be grasped in terms of political democratization or cultural liberalization, nor is it sufficient to refer to an “extension of the political.” Political struggles, as it were, moved to the self. Hence, forms of activism changed. Expressing one’s feelings in consciousness-raising or therapy groups became as important as communal dwelling in abject spaces because both practices would facilitate an authentic self. The book thus seeks to contribute to a “genealogy of the politics of subjectivity,” as Antoine Idier writes in his chapter. Indeed, this is neither an exclusively European story, as the influence of US Beat poets and later hippies indicates, nor was it an entirely novel phenomenon in the 1970s, as Angelo Ventrone’s remarks about similar desires for harmony around 1900 in Italy indicate.

Second, the chapters highlight how contested questions of authenticity were. Whether in the consciousness-raising groups of the English women’s liberation movement, among the squatters of the Hafensstraße in Hamburg, or among lesbians in the GDR: what it meant to be “authentic” was always contested, not least because activists were often quite aware of the impositions

and requirements that being recognized as authentic entailed. Recognizing these “external” requirements, the “policing” of authentic subjectivities, as it were, put the very notion of a “genuine” and personal authenticity into question. While some longed for an inner harmony, others in playful and satirical activities mocked any sense of harmony. The chapters in this book thus indicate how creating a sense of authenticity was a process of trying out, often full of conflict. Paying attention to these conflicts, the contributions to this book thus paint a more fluid and unstable picture than merely focusing on regimes of subjectivity would.

Third, the book does not investigate the politics of authentic subjectivity in oppositional or countercultural movements in isolation from mainstream society. As Benjamin Möckel’s chapter on the Live Aid concerts and other humanitarian projects indicates, questions of authenticity came to play a role in mainstream pop culture as well, though the role of politics and political criticism in such events was questioned. The desire for authenticity was not limited to oppositional scenes, but it tended to lose its political dimension outside of these scenes. Whereas integrating elements of what constituted an alternative authentic subjectivity into mainstream society seemed to be possible in Western Europe, the reactions by the state in Eastern Europe were notably different, as Manuela Marin discusses in her contribution about Romania. Here, the state felt threatened by the visions of a different, in its mind Western and destructive, authenticity that questioned its own vision of what it meant to be a good communist citizen. What these examples suggest is that we cannot only observe similarities between East and West, but also a crucial difference with regard to the consequences the new form of struggling had. It would be worthwhile to inquire if they were one factor in the fall of communism.

In the West, in contrast, the desires for authentic self-realization, for creative self-expression and spontaneity contributed to a transformation of capitalism itself, as scholars such as Luc Boltanski, Eve Chiapello, and Ulrich Bröckling have suggested.⁵³ Creativity, autonomy, and the ability to work in a team, rather than subordination and fulfilling repetitive tasks, are the qualities the “new spirit of capitalism” (Boltanski/Chiapello) requires. And these were also the qualities that alternative activists and cultural critics in countries such as Italy, France, and West Germany celebrated. In this sense, Ulrich Bröckling locates one of the origins of what he calls the “neoliberal self” in the alternative milieus of the 1970s. If this is indeed the case, then observing similar desires in communist Eastern Europe raises the question of how alternative movements contributed to the transformations in Eastern Europe after 1989. Can we observe a “neoliberal” subject in these societies as well, and if so, does it have anything to do with the oppositional

and countercultural movements of the 1970s and 1980s? What role did, for example, an emerging Do-It-Yourself culture in these countries play?⁵⁴ Answering such questions, though they are outside the scope of this volume, might help us understand European history beyond the East-West divide.

Chapter Overview

Usually, edited volumes such as this one group chapters thematically or geographically. This book, in contrast, proceeds roughly chronologically. The way chapters are arranged might thus seem somewhat incoherent, as the volume jumps from investigations of subcultures to gay and lesbian activists to political movements and back and forth. Yet, by disrupting the common thematic arrangements, for example grouping all chapters dealing with issues of gender and sexuality, we seek to underline the book's central argument, namely that we can find similar themes and problems, that is, the challenging search for authenticity and the development of a new politics of subjectivity, across countries and movements, differences notwithstanding. We need to understand individual movements such as the women's movement or punk in relation to each other.

The book begins with an investigation of revolution as a quest for an authentic life in Italy during the 1960s and 1970s by Angelo Ventrone. Young, radical activists and even terrorists longed for an inner harmony, Ventrone argues, that seemed to have been lost in modern, industrial society. Importantly, Ventrone draws our attention to the fact that this was by no means an invention of the 1960s. Already at the turn of the century, both left- and right-wing critics of capitalist modernity had bemoaned the destruction of human solidarity, excessive individualism, and social isolation, all themes that would recur in the 1960s and 1970s, again on both sides of the political spectrum. Whereas violence as a means to create authenticity plays a fundamental role in Ventrone's chapter, Barış Yörümez, in his study of Czechoslovakia during the 1970s, examines nonviolent small-scale acts of honesty and integrity, not least by telling jokes about the regime, as transgressions that facilitated a sense of authenticity among Czechoslovak citizens who otherwise had to put on "masks" in their public lives. In the third chapter, Kate Mahoney provides an investigation of women's consciousness-raising groups in England during the 1970s. Relying on oral history interviews, her analysis complicates narratives that portray these groups as purely liberating experiences. Instead, she highlights how ambivalent the experience of being in a consciousness-raising group could be: groups could foster feelings of solidarity and liberty, but also create new norms and rules women

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had to follow. Antoine Idier then turns to the political biography of French gay activist Guy Hocquenghem to examine the “genealogy of a politics of subjectivity” in the French context. Drawing on feminist thought, and indeed early on in collaboration with feminists, Hocquenghem formulated a politics for which expressing (homosexual) desires became central. Zsófia Lóránd discusses similar issues in a Yugoslav context in her investigation of New Yugoslav Feminism. While women in Yugoslavia did not use the term “authenticity” (indeed, not all movements under investigation used the term), they nevertheless asked similar questions as their counterparts in Western Europe. They, too, longed for ways to express their (sexual) desires; they, too, worried about a medicalized health system that alienated them from their bodies, for example when giving birth. They shared these concerns with West German women, as Jane Freeland’s chapter on women’s bodies in the women’s movement shows. She, too, highlights how important it was for women to experience their bodies in a nonalienating and hence authentic way, for example by exploring their bodies in groups, or by learning how to achieve sexual pleasures without men.

Turning from West Germany to the GDR, Maria Bühner examines lesbian activism in East Germany. Similar to what women in Western Europe had longed for, and in some cases making explicit use of Western texts, women in East Germany developed practices, such as consciousness-raising groups, that facilitated “safe spaces” where women could express their (homo-)sexual desires and indeed develop a language for them in the first place. In this sense, lesbians in the GDR, too, tried to create an authentically lesbian subjectivity that questioned hegemonic gender ideals. Danilo Mariscalco’s chapter brings us back to the Italian Left. He examines the cultural production of the Autonomist movement of 1977 that made extensive use of techniques of falsity and nonsense as a way to bring “hidden” desires and dreams to the fore. Institutions like Radio Alice sought to develop ways to make “free language” and thus let the body and desires speak directly. Whereas Ventrone emphasizes the longing for inner harmony, Mariscalco’s chapter suggests an interpretation of the movement as a struggle for liberating desires. With Manuela Marin’s chapter, we move to youth subcultures in Romania. Her chapter suggests that young Romanians turned to Western but also, importantly, Hungarian subcultures to develop an alternative sense of selfhood that challenged the ideals of the “new” socialist man, labor, order, and productivity. Marin also investigates the state’s reactions to these youth phenomena, arguing that the alternative subjectivity these youngsters developed was seen as a political threat by the security apparatus, notably the Securitate. Jeff Hayton’s chapter turns to another subculture, punk in the late 1970s and early 1980s, in both East

and West Germany. Punks in both Germanys rejected, Hayton argues, not only the seemingly boring and monotonous world of Western consumerism and Eastern socialism, but also “alternative” hippies and their search for an authentic inner core. Instead, Hayton explores how punks pursued visions and practices that exposed the instability of authenticity whose genuineness and meaning came not from within but was continuously shifting in response to external conditions.

Whereas punk clearly challenged mainstream aesthetic and cultural norms, the humanitarian pop concerts, namely Live Aid, which Benjamin Möckel discusses, tried to reach as mainstream an audience as possible. His chapter addresses the challenging question of what happened with a sense of authenticity in a consumerist context that was far removed from any radical political activity. Now, what mattered was an “authentic” expression of empathy in the face of suffering, but devoid of (political) rebellion. In the last chapter, Jake Smith turns to the squatters of Hamburg’s Hafenstraße in the late 1980s, arguing that we can observe among them two interrelated but also contradictory visions of authenticity that he calls “auratic” and “transcendent” authenticity. He relates both of them to a sense of dwelling, and thus places them in long-term perspectives of a sense of home in West Germany. The often violent struggles of the occupied buildings were, he argues, more than just a struggle for living space: they were a struggle over structures of meaning of urban existence.

Altogether, the chapters suggest that a desire for a more “authentic” life in societies deemed alienating and inauthentic existed throughout Europe, in capitalist countries of the West as much as in socialist countries of the East. Arguably, we could find a similar search for authenticity in cases not addressed in the chapters of this volume, for example in the New Age movement or in alternative medicine.⁵⁵ And while political and cultural activists across Europe in many ways agreed on what they criticized—the boredom of urban landscapes, the alienation from feelings and the impossibility of expressing them, the oppression of spontaneity and desires—there was no consensus about what it meant to be authentic and how a more authentic state of being might be achieved. While some engaged in violence, others engaged in self-observation to feel more authentic. Importantly, these were debates within countries or even movements. Opposing “Eastern” and “Western” authenticities would thus miss the point. Not least, this diversity of authenticities should caution us not to buy into the rhetoric of being more authentic. Indeed, authenticity is nothing to be uncovered, but it needs to be practically created, and it is always woven into a network of power.

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Notes

1. Ulla/Birgit/Susan/Sabine/Barbara, “Ich möchte lernen, ich selbst zu sein.” Siebzehnjährige Oberschülerinnen schreiben über sich,” in *Kursbuch* 47, March 1977: 143–158.
2. See Kate Mahoney in this volume.
3. See Antoine Idier in this volume. See also Antoine Idier, *Les vies de Guy Hocquenghem: Politique, sexualité, culture* (Paris, 2017).
4. See Angelo Ventrone and Danilo Mariscalco in this volume. On the Left in Italy, see Angelo Ventrone, “*Vogliamo tutto*”: *Perché due generazioni hanno creduto nella rivoluzione 1960–1988* (Rome, 2012); Phil Edwards, *More Work! Less Pay! Rebellion and Repression in Italy, 1972–7* (Manchester, 2009); Robert Lumley, *States of Emergency: Cultures of Revolt in Italy from 1968–1978* (London, 1990).
5. Cristofer Scarboro, *The Late Socialist Good Life in Bulgaria: Meaning and Living in a Permanent Present Tense* (Lanham, MD, 2012).
6. Czesław Miłosz, *The Captive Mind* (New York, 1990), 54.
7. *Ibid.*, 55.
8. Václav Havel, “The Power of the Powerless,” in *From Stalinism to Pluralism: A Documentary History of Eastern Europe Since 1945*, ed. Gale Stokes (Oxford, 1991), 172.
9. Miłosz, *Captive Mind*, 79.
10. Ivanka Nedeva Atanasova, “Lyudmila Zhivkova and the Paradox of Ideology and Identity in Communist Bulgaria,” *East European Politics and Society* 18, no. 2 (2004): 278–315; Timothy W. Ryback, *Rock Around the Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (Oxford, 1990).

11. For an overview of revolts and the communist response to mass protest, see Grzegorz Ekiert, *The State against Society: Political Crises and Their Aftermath in East Central Europe* (Princeton, NJ, 1996).
12. See, for example, the contributions in Pascal Eitler and Jens Elberfeld, eds., *Zeitgeschichte des Selbst: Therapeutisierung—Politisierung—Emotionalisierung* (Bielefeld, 2015); Juliane Fürst and Josie McLellan, eds., *Dropping Out of Socialism: The Creation of Alternative Spheres in the Soviet Bloc* (Lanham, MD, 2017); Uffa Jensen and Maik Tändler, eds., *Das Selbst zwischen Anpassung und Befreiung: Psychowissen und Politik im 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 2012).
13. Paulina Bren, “1968 East and West: Visions of Political Change and Student Protest from across the Iron Curtain,” in *Transnational Moments of Change: Europe 1945, 1968, 1989*, ed. Gerd-Rainer Horn and Padraic Kenney (Lanham, MD, 2004).
14. See, to name only a few studies, Martin Klimke, Jacco Pekelder, and Joachim Scharloth, eds., *Between Prague Spring and French May: Opposition and Revolt in Europe, 1960–1980* (New York, 2011); 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); Timothy Brown and Lorena Anton, eds., *Between the Avant-Garde and the Everyday: Subversive Politics in Europe from 1957 to the Present* (New York, 2011); Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried, eds., *Between Marx and Coca-Cola: Youth Cultures in Changing European Societies, 1960–1980* (New York, 2006); Alex Vasudevan, *Metropolitan Preoccupations: The Spatial Politics of Squatting in Berlin* (Chichester, 2016); Timothy Brown, *West Germany and the Global Sixties: The Antiauthoritarian Revolt, 1962–1978* (London, 2013); Padraic Kenney, *A Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe 1989* (Princeton, NJ, 2002); Michèlleful Zancarini-Fournel and Philippe Artières, eds., *68, une histoire collective (1962–1981)* (Paris, 2008); Belinda Davis, “What’s Left? Popular and Democratic Political Participation in Postwar Europe,” *American Historical Review* 113, no. 2 (2008): 363–390.
15. For a critical perspective on these debates in France, see Kristin Ross, *May ‘68 and Its Afterlives* (Chicago, 2002). For the West German context, see the discussions in Joachim Scharloth, *1968: Eine Kommunikationsgeschichte* (Paderborn, 2011); Quinn Slobodian, *Foreign Front: Third World Politics in Sixties West Germany* (Durham, NC, 2012).
16. Philipp Gassert, “Narratives of Democratization: 1968 in Postwar Europe,” in *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956–1977*, ed. Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth (New York, 2008), 307.
17. Gerd-Rainer Horn, *The Spirit of ‘68: Rebellion in Western Europe and North America, 1956–1976* (Oxford, 2007).
18. Johannes Agnoli, “Die Transformation der Demokratie,” in *Die Transformation der Demokratie*, ed. Johannes Agnoli and Peter Brückner (Frankfurt a. M., 1968), quoted in Gassert, “Narratives,” 314.
19. See the discussion in Scharloth, *1968*, 14–20.
20. Claus Leggewie, “1968 ist Geschichte,” *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B 22–23 (2001): 3–6.
21. Jerzy Eisler, “March 1968 in Poland,” in *1968: The World Transformed*, ed. Carola Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker (Cambridge, 1998).

22. Kieran Williams, *The Prague Spring and Its Aftermath: Czechoslovak Politics, 1968–1970* (Cambridge, 1997).
23. Madigan Fichter, “Yugoslav Protest: Student Rebellion in Belgrade, Zagreb, and Sarajevo in 1968,” *Slavic Review* 75, no. 1 (2016): 99–121.
24. James Krapfl, *Revolution with a Human Face: Politics, Culture, and Community in Czechoslovakia, 1989–1992* (Ithaca, NY, 2013).
25. Václav Havel, “The Future of Central Europe,” *New York Review of Books* 29 March 1990: 18
26. See, in addition to the discussion in Ross, *May ’68*, Scharloth, *1968*, and Slobodian, *Foreign Front*, for the West German context the contributions in Ulrich Herbert, ed., *Wandlungsprozesse in Westdeutschland: Belastung, Integration, Liberalisierung 1945–1980* (Göttingen, 2002).
27. Silja Behre, *Bewegte Erinnerung: Deutungskämpfe um “1968” in deutsch-französischer Perspektive* (Tübingen, 2016), 363–364.
28. See Peter-Paul Bänziger et al., eds., *Sexuelle Revolution? Zur Geschichte der Sexualität im deutschsprachigen Raum seit den 1960er Jahren* (Bielefeld, 2015); Joachim C. Häberlen, “Feeling like a Child: Visions and Practices of Sexuality in the West German Alternative Left during the Long 1970s,” *Journal for the History of Sexuality* 25, no. 2 (2016): 219–245; Gert Hekma and Alain Giami, eds., *Sexual Revolutions* (Basingstoke, 2014); Dagmar Herzog, “Syncoated Sex: Transforming European Sexual Cultures,” *American Historical Review* 114, no. 5 (2009): 1287–1308; Dagmar Herzog, *Sex after Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Princeton, NJ, 2005).
29. See Gassert, “Narratives,” 315; Andrzej Friszke, *Prl Wobec Kościoła: Akta Urzędu Do Spraw Wyznań 1970–1978* (Warsaw, 2010); Ulrich Herbert, “Liberalisierung als Lernprozess: Die Bundesrepublik in der deutschen Geschichte—eine Skizze,” in *Wandlungsprozesse in Westdeutschland: Belastung, Integration, Liberalisierung 1945–1980*, ed. Ulrich Herbert (Göttingen, 2002), 7–49.
30. See Timothy Brown and Andrew Lison, eds., *The Global Sixties in Sound and Vision: Media, Counterculture, Revolt* (Basingstoke, 2014); Ewa Mazierska, ed., *Popular Music in Eastern Europe: Breaking the Post-War Paradigm* (Basingstoke, 2017); Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley, CA, 2000); Schildt and Siegfried, eds., *Between Marx and Coca-Cola*; Detlef Siegfried, *Time Is on My Side: Konsum und Politik in der westdeutschen Jugendkultur der 60er Jahre* (Göttingen, 2006).
31. See the contributions in Brown and Anton, eds., *Between the Avant-Garde and the Everyday*; Brown and Lison, eds., *Global Sixties*; Fürst and McLellan, eds., *Dropping Out*.
32. See for West Germany, David Templin, *Freizeit ohne Kontrollen: Die Jugendzentrumsbewegung in der Bundesrepublik der 1970er Jahre* (Göttingen, 2015). For Eastern Europe, see Mark Keck-Szajbel, “A Cultural Shift in the 1970s,” *East European Politics and Society* 29, no. 1 (2015): 212–225.
33. See, for example, Slobodian, *Foreign Front*; Daniel A. Gordon, *Immigrants & Intellectuals: May ’68 & the Rise of Anti-Racism in France* (London, 2012); Gerd-Rainer Horn and Padraic Kenney, eds., *Transnational Moments of Change: Europe 1945, 1968, 1989* (Lanham, MD, 2004); Richard Ivan Jobs, “Youth Movements:

- Travel, Protest, and Europe in 1968,” *American Historical Review* 114, no. 2 (2009): 376–404; Martin Klimke, *The Other Alliance: Student Protest in West Germany and the United States in the Global Sixties* (Princeton, NJ, 2010).
34. See, for example, Robert Gildea and Andrew Tompkins, “The Transnational in the Local: The Larzac Plateau as a Site of Transnational Activism since 1970,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 50, no. 3 (2015): 581–605.
 35. Kenney, *A Carnival of Revolution*; Mark Keck-Szajbel, “Shop Around the Bloc: Trader Tourism and Its Discontents on the East German–Polish Border,” in *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, ed. Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger (Oxford, 2012).
 36. Jobs, “Youth Movements.”
 37. For a notable exception, see Robert Gildea, Mark James, and Anette Warring, *Europe’s 1968: Voices of Revolt* (Oxford, 2013).
 38. Ross, *May ‘68 and Its Afterlives*.
 39. See, for example, Brown, *West Germany*; Horn, *Spirit*.
 40. Jonathan Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe, and Czech Culture under Communism* (Cambridge, MA, 2012).
 41. See the notable works Scharloth, 1968; Sven Reichardt, *Authentizität und Gemeinschaft: Linksalternatives Leben in den siebziger und frühen achtziger Jahren* (Berlin, 2014). While the former focuses on communicative styles, the latter explores how a regime of “authentic” subjectification functioned in the Alternative Left.
 42. Reichardt, *Authentizität*. See also the contributions in Sven Reichardt and Detlef Siegfried, eds., *Das Alternative Milieu: Antibürgerlicher Lebensstil und linke Politik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Europa 1968–1983* (Göttingen, 2010).
 43. Reichardt, *Authentizität*, 71.
 44. See, with a focus on West Germany, Eitler and Elberfeld, eds., *Zeitgeschichte*; Jensen and Tändler, eds., *Selbst*; Sabine Maasen et al., eds., *Das beratene Selbst: Zur Genealogie der Therapeutisierung in den “langen” Siebzigern* (Bielefeld, 2011).
 45. Kenney, *A Carnival of Revolution*, 13.
 46. *Ibid.*, 14.
 47. Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” *Critical Inquiry* 8, no. 4 (1982): 785.
 48. On Foucault’s popularity in the Left, see Philipp Felsch, *Der Lange Sommer der Theorie: Geschichte einer Revolte* (Munich, 2015); Julian Bourg, *From Revolution to Ethics: May 1968 and Contemporary French Thought* (Montreal, 2007).
 49. See in this context also the reflections in Joachim C. Häberlen, “Conclusion: Dropping Out of Socialism? A Western Perspective,” in *Dropping Out of Socialism: The Creation of Alternative Spheres in the Soviet Bloc*, ed. Juliane Fürst and Josie McLellan (Lanham, MD, 2017).
 50. For a discussion of the term, see Reichardt, *Authentizität*, 60–64.
 51. See, for example, Joachim C. Häberlen and Jake Smith, “Struggling for Feelings: The Politics of Emotions in the Radical New Left in West Germany, c. 1968–84,” *Contemporary European History* 23, no. 4 (2014): 615–637. For a theoretical perspective on emotions and bodies, see Pascal Eitler and Monique Scheer, “Emotionengeschichte als Körpergeschichte: Eine heuristische Perspektive auf religiöse Konversionen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*

- 35, no. 2 (2009): 282–313; Monique Scheer, “Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (and Is That What Makes Them Have a History)? A Bourdieuan Approach to Understanding Emotion,” *History and Theory* 51, no. 2 (2012): 193–220.
52. See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, MN, 1987). For their influence, see Philipp Felsch, “Merves Lachen,” *Zeitschrift für Ideengeschichte* 2, no. 4 (2008): 11–30; Felsch, *Lange Sommer*; Bourg, *Revolution to Ethics*. For the rhetoric of “desires” in Italy, see Pablo Echaurren, *La casa del desiderio: '77—Indiani metropolitani e altri strani* (Lecce, 2005).
53. See Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (London, 2005); Paul du Gay and Glenn Morgan, eds., *New Spirits of Capitalism? Crises, Justifications, and Dynamics* (Oxford, 2013); Ulrich Bröckling, *Das unternehmerische Selbst: Soziologie einer Subjektivierungsform* (Frankfurt a. M., 2007); Thomas Lemke, Susanne Krasmann, and Ulrich Bröckling, eds., *Gouvernementalität der Gegenwart: Studien zur Ökonomisierung des Sozialen* (Frankfurt a. M., 2000).
54. On neoliberal Eastern Europe, see Philipp Ther, *Europe since 1989: A History*, trans. Charlotte Hughes-Kreutzmüller (Princeton, NJ, 2016). Questions of subjectivity remain, however, unexplored in his work.
55. On New Ageism and alternative medicine, see for example Pascal Eitler, “‘Alternative’ Religion: Subjektivierungspraktiken und Politisierungsstrategien im ‘New Age’ (Westdeutschland 1970–1990),” in *Das alternative Milieu: Antibürgerlicher Lebensstil und linke Politik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Europa, 1968–1983*, ed. Sven Reichardt and Detlef Siegfried (Göttingen, 2010); Pascal Eitler, “‘Selbstheilung’: Zur Somatisierung und Sakralisierung von Selbstverhältnissen im New Age (Westdeutschland 1970–1990),” in *Das beratene Selbst: Zur Genealogie der Therapeutisierung in den “langen” Siebzigern*, ed. Sabine Maasen, et al. (Bielefeld, 2011); Irina Costache, “The Biography of a Scandal: Experimenting with Yoga during Romanian Late Socialism,” in *Dropping Out of Socialism: The Creation of Alternative Spheres in the Soviet Bloc*, ed. Juliane Fürst and Josie McLellan (Lanham, MD, 2017). We should also note that movements such as feminism or punk were not limited to the countries studied here. While both case studies on Italy focus on male actors, the Italian women’s movement played a leading role in Europe, see, for example, Maud Bracke, *Women and the Reinvention of the Political: Feminism in Italy, 1968–1983* (New York, 2014). See also the important study by Luisa Passerini, *Autobiography of a Generation: Italy, 1968* (Hanover, NH, 1996).

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