

elites. The postwar return of German-Jewish émigrés from the United States, as Riccardo Bavaj documents, played an important role in the transfer of “Western” values. German Conservatives were the most reluctant to embrace “the West.” Yet, as Martina Steber’s essay demonstrates, Cold War division and opposition to Communism forced conservatives to internalize Western ideas, so much so that by 1968 they articulated their opposition to left-wing radicalism as a defense of “Western” political institutions.

Aside from Katherine Pence’s excellent discussion of the tensions in East Germans’ views of “the West” and Dominik Geppert’s essay on “homeless” socialist intellectuals in the late 1940s, the Communist German Democratic Republic is not well integrated into the discussion. The volume also has little to say about the global dimensions of Germans’ engagement with “the West.” To be sure, Douglas McGetchin’s essay traces how “the West” figured in the ebb and flow of German orientalist’s fascination with “the East.” But one would like to know more about what “the West” meant to Germans outside of Germany (for example, colonial settlers in German Southwest Africa or German populations in Russia or South America) as well as to non-Germans with whom Germans interacted. Denis Sdvižkov’s fascinating contribution on nineteenth-century Russian intellectuals’ appropriation of German debates about “the West” shows how productive such an approach can be. But more could be said about the global impact of German concepts of “the West,” especially given the transition of Germany from an exporter of revolt against “the West” during the two world wars to one of the strongest promoters of “Western” democracy today. A global history of Germans’ engagement with the concept of “the West” remains to be written.

These criticisms only attest to the value of this well-researched and stimulating volume that will be of interest to specialist and nonspecialist scholars alike, particularly those working on transatlantic relations and intellectual history. Indeed, the editors’ remarkable introduction provides the best starting point for the exploration of Germans’ complex engagement with “the West” currently available. The volume also makes the contributions of prominent German scholars accessible in English for the first time. Finally, given the current rise of populist and authoritarian challenges to “Western” political institutions, understanding the contested history of this concept is more necessary than ever before.

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Berlin, the Mother of All Research Universities: 1860–1918. By *Charles McClelland*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017. Pp. xiv+272. \$95.00 (cloth); \$94.99 (e-book).

Historical reflection on universities has a long tradition, often expressed in publications prepared in connection with jubilees. Following and deepening this tradition, the University of Berlin issued a six-volume series on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of its founding in 2010.¹ Charles McClelland, a respected historian of universities and professions in Germany, contributed a book-length essay to volume 1 of the series, covering the history of the university during the Imperial period. The book under review is based on the original English version of this essay, with some framing remarks at the beginning, a

¹ The first three volumes were reviewed in these pages: Mitchell G. Ash, review of *Geschichte der Universität unter den Linden*, vols. 1–3, ed. Heinz-Elmar Tenorth, in *Journal of Modern History* 88, no. 1 (2016): 223–30.

brief chapter extending the story beyond 1918 at the end, and rather general references to the volumes in the series mentioned above added in a few places. Given the iconic significance of this university, referenced in the book's title, the study recommends itself not only to the small community of university historians but also to scholars more broadly interested in the politics and social history of academic institutions and professions.

McClelland's social historical approach continues and deepens work already done by himself and others, most notably Fritz Ringer. In topically organized chapters the book describes the rapid expansion of university enrollments and the growth in the number of research seminars and institutes resulting from disciplinary differentiation and specialization. McClelland also considers changes in the social recruitment of students along with curricula and student life and organizations in detail. In his final chapters he discusses the public political positions of professors and the impact of the First World War.

The book is competently written, though McClelland's heavy reliance on statistical data makes for difficult going in places. Much of this densely packed information refers to Prussian universities in general, including the technical colleges (*Technische Hochschulen*), which were accorded the right to issue doctoral degrees by Imperial decree in 1899. McClelland tries to locate the Berlin university in this wider context but does not always succeed in doing so. He also misses the chance to integrate the wealth of information in the other volumes of the above-mentioned series more specifically into his account. In the chapter on scholars' politics (*Gelehrtenpolitik*), McClelland focuses perhaps too heavily on the roles of historians and social scientists who mobilized their authority and eloquence in the service of Prusso-German nationalism, though he can hardly deny the political prominence of liberals such as Theodor Mommsen or medical men like Emil Du Bois Reymond and Rudolf Virchow. When he writes that scientists and medical men tended to withdraw from the public sphere into their institutes by 1900, he fails to note that such directorships had become positions of power in their own right.

In his chapter on the First World War, McClelland argues, correctly, that the earlier militarization of Imperial German society laid the foundation for high levels of student enlistment in 1914 and emphasizes, as others have done, the notorious "Declaration of the 93," a polemical response by cultural personalities to accusations of German atrocities in Belgium initiated in autumn 1914 by the press department of the Naval Office. Later he carefully differentiates between expansionist superpatriots like theologian Reinhold Seeberg, relatively "moderate" expansionists like historian Hans Delbrück, and the small group of dissenters, including Albert Einstein, who circulated critiques of imperialist plans without publishing them. Unfortunately, he largely overlooks the involvement of Berlin faculty in war-related research, which was more extensive than he states here.

As McClelland notes, in recent years historians have increasingly spoken of a "Humboldt Myth" (3). Unfortunately, he does not cite any of the scholarship involved directly or discuss the varied meanings of the term "myth" that have been advanced in this literature. Nonetheless, he agrees that the core group of neohumanist full professors in Berlin utilized references to Humboldt and others from about 1910 onward in order to affiliate themselves with their ideals and resist innovation. As he notes, the canonization of "Humboldt" began during the period covered by this book; he cites two of its progenitors, educationist Friedrich Paulsen and historian Fritz Lentz, both as sources of information and of romanticizing accounts of academic life.

Yet the message McClelland sends with regard to this recent turn in scholarship is mixed. The book's title makes it appear that he wishes to continue the traditional "Humboldt" story. That message is reinforced by the image on the cover, which shows the statue of Wilhelm von Humboldt that now stands in front of the Berlin university main build-

ing.² Yet in the text McClelland presents a more differentiated account. As he shows (and Heinz-Elmar Tenorth also states in his introduction to vol. 4 of the series mentioned above), the actual takeoff to the creation of a modern research establishment in Berlin did not begin until the 1860s and 1870s and thus cannot be traced back directly to Humboldt and his colleagues. They would surely have been astounded by the industrial-style knowledge production, heavily overenrolled seminars, and the predominance of academic credentialism at their institution in 1900. As he also shows, the introduction of state examinations for many professions in this period had the effect of restricting the vaunted “freedom of learning” supposedly central to the Humboldtian model. Discrimination against Socialists, Jews, Catholics, and especially women (who were excluded from university study in Prussia until 1909) demonstrated “the thinness of the veneer” of a university oriented to humanistic self-cultivation rather than professional training (143). Tellingly, McClelland also argues that the university’s innovative potential had peaked by the turn of the twentieth century, as conservative full professors blocked innovations such as the incorporation of science-based applied knowledge in agriculture and the social sciences that might have threatened their commitment to basic science and scholarship and therefore their high social status. All this strongly supports the critical historiography that McClelland appears at first to regard with disdain.

This book presents an informative, albeit rather densely written, overview of the social and political history of Germany’s leading university at the height of its significance and fame. But the author’s interpretation of this material sends a message that is perhaps more ambivalent than he realizes.

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Violent Sensations: Sex, Crime, and Utopia in Vienna and Berlin, 1860–1914. By Scott Spector.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016. Pp. viii+286. \$75.00 (cloth); \$25.00 (paper); \$10.00–\$25.00 (e-book).

It has become a commonplace in European history that a cult of violence emerged in Europe in the wake of World War I. The war was supposed to have unleashed a new type of masculinity in particular and, with it, new intellectual explorations in the nature of subjectivity itself—subjectivity now conceived as violent at its core. The *Freikorps* of Klaus Theweleit’s *Male Fantasies* are the exemplar of the former, while Sigmund Freud’s death-driven subject in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* typifies the latter. But there is a quandary built into this historiographical narrative: if the war had instigated the new fascination with violence, the theories of subjectivity that subsequently emerged were anticipated by pre-war investigations. It is the virtue of Scott Spector’s *Violent Sensations* to address that paradox, not only inverting the narrative by locating those violent fantasies in the years preceding the war, perhaps even contributing to its outbreak, but also laying bare the futile and violent nature of the quest for originating causes.

What exactly is a “violent sensation,” the book’s title phrase? The answer, which is Spector’s brilliant insight, unfolds subtly throughout the book. On the one hand, he covers

² The photograph omits Humboldt’s brother Alexander, whose statue also stands in front of the main building; the East Germans who renamed the university in 1948 had both brothers in mind.