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Anthony D. Kauders. *Democratization and the Jews: Munich, 1945-1965.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004. $55.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8032-2763-7.

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Liberal Democratization and the Confrontation with the Past in Munich

In recent years, much of the focus of German-Jewish studies has shifted to the period after 1945. Additionally, some scholars have argued that Germany's relations with its Jewish residents and its handling of Jewish issues were critical to the process of *VergangenheitsbewÃ¤ltigung*.[1] In this vein, Anthony Kauders, a *Wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter* in Jewish history at the University of Munich, has written a carefully researched and considered study tracking the changes in the way political parties and church groups in Munich handled Jewish issues as they came to terms with the legacy of the Nazi years.

Kauders claims that the adoption of liberal democratic ideals related directly to dealing with German antisemitism. For a liberal ethos to accompany the acceptance of democratic institutions, German sentiments regarding the Holocaust and the Jews, including antisemitic attitudes, needed to change. An honest confrontation with the past and dialogue with the Jewish community were a critical part of liberalization. To demonstrate the change over two decades, Kauders examines and compares three political parties in Bavaria (CSU, SPD, FDP), the Catholic Church, and the Protestant Church of Germany in Munich. Kauders also considers Jewish leaders' opinions of German efforts at *VergangenheitsbewÃ¤ltigung*. Two factors distinguish Kauders from many others who have addressed similar issues. In considering *VergangenheitsbewÃ¤ltigung* and the memory of the Holocaust, he examines German interactions with Jews in Germany. Additionally, his examination of the Jewish community in Munich goes beyond internal developments and considers relations with non-Jewish Germans, particularly reconciliatory political relations that, he claims, were fundamental to a liberal democratization of society.[2]

The core of Kauders's analysis is an examination of the three most successful and enduring political parties in Munich. The SPD was clearly the strongest proponent of reparations and supporter of the Jewish community. Despite its nearly unqualified support for the Jews and commitment to fight antisemitism, the party tended to blame not the German people as a whole, but the principal wrongdoers. In fact, the SPD's espousal of Jewish causes gave it some leeway in soft-pedaling issues of *VergangenheitsbewÃ¤ltigung*, including culpability for events of the

past, as the party tried to win more popular support. By the 1960s, the Munich SPD, under mayor Jochen Vogel, pressed the issue of reconciliation, which aided in the liberalization of postwar democracy in Bavaria. Kauders argues that the CSU's political strategy precluded an examination of German-Jewish relations. In a climate marked by claims of victimhood, the CSU argued that Germans had suffered alongside Jews, and party members were still fixated on Jews as racially alien. Many party members and supporters retained a pre-Nazi, non-racial antisemitism (see below). The party also opposed denazification. By the 1960s, the CSU had qualitatively changed its attitude towards *VergangenheitsbewÃ¤ltigung* and the Jews. It had stopped comparing the fate of Jews and Germans under Nazi dictatorship, and the party press commented favorably upon German Jewish (and Israeli) efforts at dealing with the legacy of the Holocaust. By contrast, the Free Democrats took the longest to engage in an honest confrontation with the past, and as Kauders notes, this process had barely begun by the mid-1960s. As the ostensible champion of the individual, the early FDP opposed statements of collective responsibility and collective reparations, preferring individual justice and individual compensation. The party's rhetoric on "Jewish audacity" was calculated to appeal to former Nazis and fellow travelers, Kauders writes. However, ever more left liberals, including Hildegard Hamm-Bruecher, made their voices heard and challenged their party colleagues' views on *VergangenheitsbewÃ¤ltigung*. Unfortunately, Kauders does not examine the Bayernpartei and the Gesamtdeutscher Block/Bund der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechteten, both of which were much stronger than the FDP in Bavaria until 1962.

In contrast to political parties, the transformation within the Christian churches was more subtle, but, according to Kauders, possibly more important. After the war, the churches displayed a notable lack of enthusiasm for liberal democracy and rejected denazification. Additionally, church leaders persisted in relativizing German crimes, pointing out Allied "crimes" in occupied Germany. In many instances, the churches' confrontation with the past was suspect. Sermons and editorials denounced Nazi violence and secularism at the same time they disseminated theological antisemitism. By the mid- to late-1950s, there was a slight paradigm shift among priests and pastors, who were not beholden to voters. In the early 1960s, the Catholic Church stressed the Jewish nature of Jesus and minimized the claim of Jewish guilt for Jesus's death. Jews were seen as different, but worthy of respect. Protestants made similar changes, but the Protestant Church also denounced the just-following-orders mentality among those who had participated in Nazi crimes. Moreover, it added that the history of Christian Judeophobia had culminated in the Holocaust. Kauders argues that church leaders, not facing the potential wrath of voters, were free to explore the nature of German (and Christian) culpability and attitudes towards Jews. Ultimately, the churches' revised attitude towards Jews altered the ethical climate in Munich, according to Kauders.

Parallel to his arguments about antisemitism and democratization, Kauders presents the history of the Jewish community's reconstitution after 1945 and its institutional development. As was the case throughout postwar Germany, the Jewish community in Munich was deeply divided between German Jews and eastern European Jews (primarily displaced persons, or DPs). German Jews looked to local officials to whom they even stressed their Germanness, while Eastern European Jews maintained closer ties to foreign Jewish groups. Kauders also recounts in detail the now familiar story of poor relations between GIs and DPs, many of whom were deeply involved in the Munich black market, a source of renewed or continued antisemitic sentiment. After 1949, Jewish reactions to the growing pains of German democracy, including antisemitic outbursts and public insensitivity to Jewish concerns, drew further negative reactions from non-Jewish Germans. Jews demanded special consideration, while Germans demanded that Jews receive no special treatment. Christians did not understand the Jews' sentiments or sense of outrage. By the 1960s, the Jews' faith in democracy was still shaky, but, as Kauders notes, West Germany was developing into a liberal society. The establishment of the Central Office for the Pursuit of National Socialist Crimes of Violence, the long-term reaction to the desecration of the Cologne synagogue, and West German reactions to the Eichmann trial all demonstrated maturity in dealing with the past. Even the city of Munich began erecting plaques in memory of destroyed synagogues and deceased prominent Jewish citizens.

By the mid-1960s, political society in Munich had changed fundamentally. Liberal democracy was dominant and a major factor was a change in the public perception of the Nazi past, including the Holocaust and related Jewish issues. Why the transformation? Kauders believes that the source of this critical change was not economic stability, structural change, or generational change. He believes that the public discourse, largely among elites, led to a critical revision of the ethical climate, including an acceptance of responsibility for com-

munal actions under the Nazis. The "ethical transmutation in the late 1950s" led to the "political transmutation of the late 1960s," and the " 'cant of liberalism' merged with the spirit of democracy" (p. 280).

One of Kauders's more interesting arguments regards the nature of antisemitism in the wake of the Holocaust. Kauders shows that most postwar Munich residents felt that moderate antisemitism was appropriate and continued to use language that categorized Jews and made negative distinctions (e.g., eastern vs. western, foreign vs. local). In essence, Kauders traces a reversion to Weimar-era attitudes, ignoring the intervening Nazi years. This practice represented almost a retreat to a "safe" antisemitism while others were held technically (i.e., legally) responsible for the crimes against the Jews. Meanwhile, the Jewish community itself was not immune to the use of cliches. In the postwar struggle for control of the Jewish community, both native German Jews and eastern European Jews invoked stereotypes to bolster their own position. That mobilization of stereotypes, however, did not stop Jewish leaders from demanding that an examination of antisemitism accompany restitution and democratization.

Intriguing and convincing as these arguments are, *Democratization and the Jews* has a few weaknesses. The basic structure of the chapters can seem a little monotonous. Three of the book's four chapters are organized identically: an initial section on the Jewish community, followed by sections on the SPD, CSU, FDP, Catholic Church, and Protestant Church. While organizationally coherent, this technique prioritizes analysis over narrative. Additionally, much of the introduction is laden with jargon and parsed definitions with reference to scholars of linguistics and history of philosophy. With an excursus on Freud, Adorno, and others, the author explores and dissects the psychological theory behind debates on collective repression of the memory of the Holocaust and on philosemitism. Some historical readers may find that, rather than clarifying the foregoing examination, these circumlocutions seem a distraction. Throughout the book Kauders mistakenly refers to the Jewish community's principal newspaper as the *Allgemeine Wochenzeitung des Judentums* rather than the *Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden in Deutschland*. It is possible that Kauders simply conflated the correct name with that of the famous nineteenth-century newspaper *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums*. However, the newspaper's name, like that of the Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland, did have significance, denoting that the postwar Jewish community was comprised of "Jews in Germany," not "German Jews."

Readers not specifically interested in postwar German-Jewish history or Bavarian history should not be put off by the study's seemingly narrow focus or small faults. Kauders's larger claims about *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, Jewish issues, and democratization merit consideration and will, hopefully, encourage additional debate. Furthermore, the transition that he documents in Munich very closely parallels developments elsewhere in the Federal Republic. Kauders's study might also serve as a point of departure for a comparison with Berlin or the Rhineland. Kauders's book is a useful addition to a growing and increasingly nuanced literature.

Notes

[1]. For example, Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); Jay Howard Geller, *Jews in Post-Holocaust Germany, 1945-1953* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[2]. Cf. Juliane Wetzel, *Jüdisches Leben in München, 1945-1951: Durchgangsstation oder Wiederaufbau?* (Munich: Stadtarchiv Muenchen, 1987); Norbert Frei, *Vergangenheitspolitik: Die Anfänge der Bundesrepublik und die NS-Vergangenheit* (Munich: Beck, 1996); Michael L. Hughes, *Shouldering the Burdens of Defeat: West Germany and the Reconstruction of Social Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).