

# Book Review: The Weimar Century: German Émigrés and the Ideological Foundations Of The Cold War by Udi Greenberg

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### Recommended Citation

Sorensen, Ben () "Book Review: The Weimar Century: German Émigrés and the Ideological Foundations Of The Cold War by Udi Greenberg," *International Social Science Review*: Vol. 93 : Iss. 1 , Article 19.  
Available at: <http://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/issr/vol93/iss1/19>

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**Greenberg, Udi. *The Weimar Century: German Émigrés and the Ideological Foundations Of The Cold War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015. xii + 276 pages. Hardcover, \$35.00.**

Philosophy, sociology, education, politics, and international relations are all fields that benefit from the study of the historical phenomenon of the Cold War. Every nation wrestles with narratives to describe their experiences; each narrative demonstrates the national worldview of the country that participated or the nation that the Cold War affected. The German historian Olivia Greise skillfully examined the cultural politics in West and East Germany in *Auswärtige Kulturpolitik Und Kalter Krieg*; however, in *The Weimar Century: German Émigrés and the Ideological Foundations Of The Cold War* Udi Greenberg attempts to bring a new perspective into the realms of both German and American Cold War experiences. Greenberg, an Associate Professor of History at Dartmouth College, demonstrates how American educational and political philosophies modified German political realities while allowing German scholars and political philosophers to transform the American approach to the Cold War.

In his discussion of this American-German interchange, Greenberg focuses on five people: the Weber School Protestant political scientist Carl J. Friedrich, the Socialist theorist Ernst Fraenkel, a Catholic publicist Waldemar Gurian, the exceedingly liberal lawyer Karl Loewenstein, and the international relations scholar and theorist Hans Morgenthau. These five intellectuals' legacies are all but forgotten, but Dr. Greenberg not only reminds modern scholars of their contributions, but puts their accomplishments into a new historical narrative that touches on philosophy, education, and political theory while highlighting their influences on American Cold War policies.

Dr. Greenberg begins this seminal work by documenting the basis for Carl Friedrich's political and social philosophies, hearkening back to the Late-Renaissance Calvinist philosopher Johannes Althusius' writings to demonstrate that democracy is in fact a very German concept—at least in Friedrich's eyes. Greenburg provides an account of Friedrich's struggle to fit the concept of the 'Responsible Elites' into democratic structures. He shows how Friedrich did not believe that the egalitarian ideas of democracy and the stratified German concepts of ideal social structures were mutually exclusive; instead, Friedrich stipulated that a democracy would have to rely on the genius of a higher class for it to operate efficiently.

Greenberg also draws sharp contrasts between Ernst Fraenkel's Socialist-Democratic ideals, which are based in the political thought of the Weimar Republic, and Communist nations as well as the Nazis who came into power. This is a point that would normally be lost in an American perspective on the Cold War as many American theorists would miss the differences between Socialism and Communism. Greenberg demonstrates that Fraenkel influenced American international policy at the end of World War II and the onset of the Cold War. He shows that Fraenkel's Socialism was compatible with 'bourgeois' concepts, an idea that found

traction especially in Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal Era, and helped drive American democratic diplomacy even into the 1960s.

Due to the fact that Greenberg explains Friedrich's effect on America solely through ties to Harvard University and the Rockefeller Foundation, this reader began to wonder if the book was looking at exceptions to define the rule, or worse, defining the rule by using only the exception. However, this fear was alleviated as Greenberg strategically describes not only how Friedrich and Fraenkel, but the other three German émigrés as well, did in fact help define American policy at the beginning of the Cold War. The German idea of closely tying educational institutions and government did travel to the United States, for better or for worse.

What is truly remarkable in Greenberg's work is the level of nuance that he provides the reader. He does not always praise America's acceptance or implementation of this 'Weimar' influence; he reminds us that the ideal from the Weimar Republic, the idea of forcing a very specific form of democracy and political ideology, had both "liberating and dark manifestations" (p. 260). Greenberg takes the time to show that Lowenstein's aggressive democracy helped America define its policies in Latin America, policies that often had very dark consequences.

This work is an important contribution to the historiography of the Cold War. At first it might seem to be just another look at American hegemony in West Germany, but Greenberg quickly fills a gap in the Cold War literature. Using German and American archives, he focuses on the German intellectual immigrants that helped shape American policies. Though some may call the twentieth century "America's Century," the origins of American policy throughout the Cold War arose in the Weimar Republic and immigrated to the United States. Therefore, this book is a seminal work for all social scientists, political philosophers, and historians that focus on the Cold War, and offers a fresh understanding of German and American international politics. In fact, the work has convinced this reviewer that the twentieth century was "The Weimar Century."

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