

other occultists in 1940, though broader than earlier efforts, was a response to the purported role that astrological readings had on Rudolf Hess's May 1941 flight to Scotland. The release of virtually all those arrested shortly thereafter corroborates the situational rather than ideological aspect of the crackdown. The lack of consistent and ongoing persecution of occultists belies the claim of Goodrick-Clarke and others that National Socialism, once in power, became increasingly hostile toward occultism.

Finally, Kurlander addresses the roles of border scientists and supernatural thinking during World War II and the Holocaust. Moving beyond archive-based accounts of personnel, projects, and the, at best, inconclusive results of their attempted application, such as Joseph Goebbels's use of astrology in the propaganda war, the work becomes more speculative when attempting to ascribe a significant role to the supernatural imaginary with regard to the regime's genocidal actions. Kurlander's sources do not always support his claims about its alleged influence: for example, the "Slavic-Jewish vampire" is absent from the cited study (282 and note 175) on German fears of vampiric Slavic partisans. Further, Kurlander's references to "faith-based" sciences (i.e., ones based on a belief in the supernatural) veil both an apparent conflation of a belief in magic with the psychological condition of "magical thinking" (that saying something will make it so), and a failure to address German philosophical ideas about the will creating the conditions for its own actualization. There is something even more troubling: that the threat of monsters appeared in occultist works and "border science" folklore studies and was also ascribed to "the Jew" in National Socialist discourse does not justify Kurlander's assertion that the Holocaust was "only possible in its scope and severity because of the elision [sic!] with *völkisch*-esoteric, fantastical, even magical conceptions of Jewish monstrosity" (252). He notes that "the Jew" had been demonized in the Christian imaginary, but he more asserts than argues that it was subsumed and superseded by the supernatural imaginary. That there was a "decades-long" addition of "pagan and occultist" demonization does not mean that, without such supplementation, "the radical conception and solution to the 'Jewish Question' would most likely not have occurred" (252). Just as unwarranted is Kurlander's claim that, since Hitler employed the "quasi-biological, quasi-scientific metaphor" of the "Jewish virus," "Auschwitz, in this sense, is the border scientific byproduct of the Nazis' faith-based vision" (259). In the end, such claims undercut the historical value of the "supernatural" material that Kurlander has conjured from the archives and made available to his readers.

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*Interrogation Nation: Refugees and Spies in Cold War Germany.* By Keith R. Allen. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017. Pp. xxxii + 276. Cloth \$95.00. ISBN: 978-1538101513.

Throughout the Cold War, the Western parts of Germany and Berlin were bursting with secret agents. They were also awash with wave upon wave of new arrivals: expellees, returning prisoners-of-war, escapees from East Germany, resettlers from Poland, and stray defectors

from Soviet-bloc touring companies. A myriad of trajectories could catapult individuals across the border to some processing camp or other: Marienfelde in West Berlin, Friedland near Göttingen, “Camp King” in the Taunus, or dozens of other facilities. Some sites were well known to the public; others are revealed for the first time in this publication. Keith Allen’s book offers an entry point for understanding how competing intelligence agencies sought to exploit newcomers in order to gain detailed information about economic operations, military technology, and troop deployments on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

Allen’s main interest is procedure. What sorts of interrogations did newcomers undergo, and by whom? He identifies a long list of interested parties: US agencies such as the Army’s Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC); West German institutions such as the Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND) and the Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (BfV); British spies from the Scientific and Technical Branch (STIB). As Allen shows, these groups expended a significant amount of energy trying to poach one another’s sources and displace each other at the principal interview sites. Certain US agencies partnered well with German counterparts, but Allen finds more instances of unnecessary duplication and nonsensical infighting. Relations between the British and American authorities were unexpectedly poor, particularly in the early Cold War years.

Depending on circumstances, subjects were interviewed for as little as a half-hour, or for a period of several days, sometimes even weeks. Persons of interest often did not know the identity or even the nationality of their interrogators. What did the agencies do with all this data? In some cases, the information contributed to monthly estimates about economic activity in East Germany—material that may not have had any use at the policymaking level in Bonn. In other cases, agents sought to recruit the newcomers as intelligence assets. Many brave or foolhardy souls wound up returning to their original homes entrusted with delicate missions as Western spies.

Allen makes plain his disapproval of this recruiting, and of the interrogation process in general—particularly the reliance on emotional manipulation to elicit information. He situates his study within the context of Edward Snowden’s 2013 revelations about the National Security Agency (NSA) and its clandestine listening posts. Yet, Allen does not address moral issues in detail, leaving unexplored the many differences between uninvited mass eavesdropping, on the one hand, and, on the other, face-to-face cooperation often underpinned by shared Cold War sympathies. To be sure, incoming refugees faced pressure to comply; in the early years, they were frequently misled into believing that their final admission to West Germany depended upon providing complete information about family members and work situations they had left behind. By the 1970s, however, a significant number of arrivals managed to elude the official reception facilities, and they faced no penalties for ignoring subsequent “summons” from interview boards. Those involved in extended sessions with US agencies were compensated for their time. The greatest harm seems to have come from double agents: the Stasi paid handsomely to acquire information about the families of those who had fled the East. Data leaks of this sort do suggest parallels with digital forms of surveillance in the present day.

It takes painstaking work to compile and cross-reference records across multiple agencies, as Allen has done, relying mainly on declassified documents from the British, American, and German national archives in Kew, College Park, and Koblenz, along with the German state archives in Berlin, Hesse, and North Rhine-Westphalia. He also delves into Stasi records to see just what the East German side was able to piece together about Western methods. The most engaging passages of this study involve brief case studies highlighting the cross-border

networks that could “push” or “pull” desired informants into Western hands. A particularly vivid case takes Allen to the Archive of the Security Services in Prague. The source material illuminates all manner of Cold War fates, pointing the way toward a social history of border-crossers. Other scholars are beginning to pursue such avenues as well, such as Jeannette van Laak in her 2017 *Habilitation (Einrichten im Übergang. Das Aufnahmelager Gießen 1946-1990)*.

Allen’s main contribution is to deepen the institutional history of the security state in West Germany, a locus of intensive research over the past decade. He breaks considerable new ground by documenting the internal workings of “Joint Interrogation Centers,” known in German as “Befras” (*Befragungsstellen*). As Allen points out, salacious stories about the Befras did make headlines in West Germany from time to time, leading to angry condemnations in the Bundestag. But they have yet to feature prominently in political history narratives, and Allen’s monograph advances the rewriting of the Federal Republic as initiated by Josef Foschepoth in his pathbreaking study *Überwachtes Deutschland. Post- und Telefonüberwachung in der alten Bundesrepublik* (2012). Given the continuities that mark West German administrative procedures across the decades, Allen is surely right to wonder whether comparable interrogation practices have been foisted upon the latest wave of migrants, namely, the refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, and elsewhere.

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*Cultural Topographies of the New Berlin*. Edited by Karin Bauer and Jennifer Ruth Hosek. New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. Pp. ix + 411. Cloth \$120.00. ISBN: 978-1785337208.

Recent developments in Berlin continue to inspire a flood of research and publications, and aspects of the fascination with Berlin can be gleaned from a compendium of work by many scholars. This collection of fifteen essays, with a substantial introduction, is not fundamentally a work of history: few of the twenty contributors are trained in the field. It can better be classified under the heading of “cultural studies.” The contributors claim roots in several disciplines, but most were trained in German literature, and many of the essays examine Berlin sites through the lenses of novels, graphic novels, comics, and film. The historical events they discuss reach back only to the 1990s. Major structural developments since then, such as gentrification and changing real estate and labor markets, receive passing reference, particularly in terms of their effect on artists, but contributors do not claim to analyze them. The same is true of ethnic change and its political repercussions. The book probably would not serve well as an introduction to Berlin culture, much less to its history: it offers more a meta-narrative than a narrative of the developments in post-Wall Berlin.

The title phrase “cultural topographies” offers the reader little guidance, but it does suggest the central role of urban places in the various essays. And the resonance of Berlin’s history echoes throughout them. Disputes over sites with a deeper history are the central topic of one essay, the book’s most historical: Stefanie Eisenhuth and Scott H. Krause on echoes of the Cold War at Checkpoint Charlie, the Stasi headquarters in the