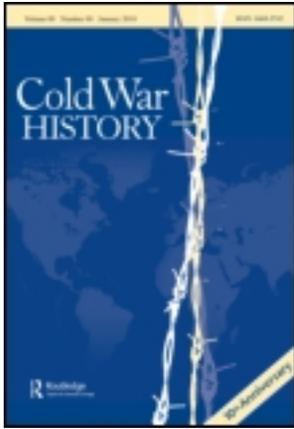


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The strained alliance: US-European relations from Nixon to Carter

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(and to a far lesser extent, the USA) and his footnotes are primary-source rich. This is a substantive contribution to the leading chronological edge of European Community history, with significance for the greater subject of transatlantic relations in the changing Cold War world of the early to mid-1970s. Part one of the book deals with EPC against the background of enlargement from 1969 to 1972; part two uses 1973 as the hook upon which to hang a wider chronological analysis of EPC's activity in the face of three significant challenges, namely the CSCE, Kissinger's Year of Europe proposal, and the Yom Kippur war. Finally, part three deals with EPC's decline in 1974 as the new EC Nine failed to agree on a common energy policy and were split over the February 1974 Washington Energy Conference. Möckli approaches these events as an international historian interested in the 'psychology of cooperation' (pp. 7–9) and he has made a foray into a fledgling field as he points out in a sparse literature review on pp. 9–11.

Möckli's arguments are ultimately clear and compelling: a shift in the balance of intra-European power combined with a new generation of leaders to produce energy towards EPC, especially with Heath's Britain now a member state. Indeed, Möckli rests much weight on the conventional argument about Heath's Europeanism. The new Anglo–French–German triangle enabled EPC to flourish, briefly, as pragmatic cooperation was pursued instead of grand designs (they had produced little in the 1950s and 1960s). The 1973 peak of Cold War détente enabled EPC's progress just before it was Kissingered as the Year of Europe idea reopened the enduring questions of Europe's role in the West and how the EC and the US should relate. War in the Middle East only served to expose the inherent lack of intra-European consensus on foreign policy and the result was EPC's demise. Much of this will sound familiar to those who know this period and Möckli's major contribution has been to add heavily researched detail, clarity, and to some extent confirmation. There will be challenges to his views (not least of the British), but his is an important book which should be praised for its intent – rather like EPC.

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The strained alliance: US–European relations from Nixon to Carter, edited by Matthias Schulz and Thomas A. Schwartz, Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009, xiv + 383 pp.

Relations between the United States and Western Europe in the 1970s began with the turbulent Nixon period – a time when both European readiness to follow

Washington's foreign policy lead and America's longstanding support for European integration seemed to be wavering, and a spell of transatlantic misunderstanding that would culminate with the ill-fated 'Year of Europe' in 1973 – and ended with acute tensions between Jimmy Carter and his main European counterparts, Helmut Schmidt and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in particular. In between, however, lay a period during the Ford Presidency when West–West relations seemed almost unnaturally good and characterised by important joint steps taken to address the global economic downturn. Such is the fascinating and highly contoured landscape which *The Strained Alliance* undertakes to explore.

The approach taken by this volume is a blend of the geographical, the chronological, and the thematic. Part I thus comprises four chapters focusing on the US–West German relationship and in particular the tensions that arose over the Brandt government's *neue Ostpolitik*; part II switches the focus to economic and monetary affairs, looking at the EC's development, the breakdown of the Bretton Woods monetary system, and Anglo–American tensions and cooperation in the aerospace sector; part III has three essays probing the Year of Europe affair plus a piece on transatlantic harmony and discord over the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe; while part IV includes pieces looking at Schmidt and Carter in some detail, as well as a chapter examining the NATO Dual Track decision. All of this is topped and tailed by a thoughtful introduction and epilogue co-written by the editors.

Unsurprisingly such an approach does not make for an entirely even coverage of the decade. The space devoted to the start of the decade is significantly greater than that allocated to the middle and the end; West German–US relations are better served than either the ever-problematic rapport between Washington and Paris or the 'special relationship' between the US and Britain. The role of smaller countries meanwhile gets a look in only in so far as those marginalised by the United States and the European 'big three' became the strongest, if largely frustrated, advocates of a more multilateral approach including a greater role for the Community institutions. But to a very large extent such imbalances of coverage accurately reflect the current state of scholarship – much more work *has* been done on the early 1970s than the later period – and the underlying realities of a relationship where Washington has tended to prioritise dialogue with those most likely to be able to help or hinder its designs rather than devoting equal space to all Western allies. Furthermore the volume does successfully capture the sheer complexity and multi-layered nature of West–West cooperation. The fact that rather different chronologies emerge from those chapters looking at economics than from those looking at security, or from pieces examining Anglo–American ties rather than US–German ones, helps guard against facile generalisations about transatlantic relations and remind readers of the recurrent tendency of contemporary commentators to make sweeping judgments about the state of US–European relations that seldom are robust enough to survive detailed scrutiny. All told, therefore, the editors have given us a volume that demonstrates the interest and

importance of West–West ties during the Cold War and whets the appetite for further detailed research.

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Behind the Berlin Wall: East Germany and the frontiers of power, by Patrick Major, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2010, xiv + 321 pp.

The Berlin Wall – symbol for so long not only of the division of Germany but of Cold War Europe and indeed of the world – has long been the subject of both scholarly and popular fascination. Whether in spy thrillers or the works of diplomatic historians, in documentaries, films or museums, in personal memories or political instrumentalisation (in both West and East), in post-unification tourist kitsch or ironic re-appropriation through graffiti and wall art, not to mention individual hacking away for personal mementoes, the Wall has attracted public attention in a multiplicity of ways.

Patrick Major's book provides a fascinating new synthesis of insights into its significance not only for those Germans who had to live with the division of their country for several decades, but also for its wider role in the popular imagination. Major provides an intriguing and interesting account not only of the pre-history and history but also the political and cultural afterlife of the Wall. The principal contribution of Major's analysis however lies in his detailed exploration of the significance of the Wall for East Germans and hence for the history of the GDR. Extensively deploying Albert Hirschman's typology of 'exit' and 'voice', Major convincingly traces the changing possibilities for and implications of 'exit' in relation to questions of loyalty and challenges to the regime from within, under ever-changing domestic and international circumstances. Using a wealth of sources from the East German archives, Major explores not only the high politics but, more importantly, popular perceptions of and responses to the East German 'frontiers of power', understood in more than just the (literally) concrete sense of the Berlin Wall itself. Divided into three parts – chronologically organised as 'before', 'behind', and 'beyond' the Wall – the analysis shows how the short-term stabilisation of the GDR effected by the erection of the Wall in 1961 was displaced by the medium- and longer-term undermining of the fragile social peace that it had initially bought. Domestic pacification through consumer-oriented social and economic policies could only be negotiated through repeated concessions with respect to the West, particularly