

Chapter VI

American and Soviet policy in German universities, mid-1960s to 1990: German university conservatism, and the failure of American and Soviet cultural imperialism

Introduction

A new period in the educational policy of the United States and the Soviet Union towards German universities was bound up with new realities of the Cold War. The building of the Berlin Wall in August of 1961 and the Cuban Missile Crisis in October of 1962 culminated in tense relations between the United States and the Soviet Union that had been escalating since 1945. A gradual normalization and reduction of tension began after these events and grew into the period of political relaxation between the United States and the Soviet Union known as the period of *Détente*. This period lasted from the end of the 1960s until the end of the 1970s and had a significant impact on the educational policy of both superpowers towards German universities.

Normalization of American-Soviet relations made it possible to bring about a specific policy towards the East Block, conceived of by Willy Brandt, who became Chancellor of Germany in 1969, serving until 1974. Brandt proposed to Washington to agree with the position of the USSR that the political borders instituted after the end of World War II between West and East Germany be recognized in exchange for the establishment of closer economic and cultural contacts between West Germany and East Germany. The policy of close economic and cultural ties or *Ostpolitik*, as Brandt claimed, would lead to gradual improvement in the relations between the Soviet Union and West Germany, and to a final reunification of Germany.⁷²⁸ His policy aimed at rapprochement between the Western and Eastern European countries expanded cultural relations between West and East, and the American government was able to begin a cultural offensive in East German universities. The period of *Détente*

⁷²⁸ “Document 191. Memorandum of Conversation. December 14, 1966,” in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. XV. Department of State. Office of the Historian, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-1968v15/d191> (accessed 5 April 2009).

together with Brandt's Ostpolitik contributed to the collapse of Soviet ideology in Germany.⁷²⁹

Such cardinal changes in the political arena in Europe led to a successful signing of the Helsinki Accords in 1975 that established two very important agreements between West and East: The Accords recognized the political borders that had appeared after the end of the Second World War in Europe and thus Western European countries and the United States recognized the German Democratic Republic (GDR) as a sovereign state. It was a real diplomatic victory for the Soviet Union; yet, in exchange for this agreement the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were urged to support a political concept of the advancement of human rights in their countries that opened up the era of a semi-legal existence for opposition groups, expansion of travel, and the arrival of some international organizations in the East which would monitor the situation in this sphere. The signing of this agreement partially opened the "Iron Curtain" between West and East and allowed non-governmental organizations from the United States and Western European countries to communicate with the opposition, to expand cultural exchanges, and to take control over implementation of the Accords. It was a great success for American and European diplomacy that paved the way for a channel of influence to a part of the population of the East Block, which, in turn, gave impetus to the development of dissident movements.

The Helsinki Accords, the promotion and popularity of the human rights concept, and the growth of cultural contacts between the United States and Eastern European countries made the breach in the "Iron Curtain" so wide that the events of the early 1980s, such as the cooling of American-Soviet political relations because of the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan, which begun in 1979, and the refusal of the US Congress to ratify the treaty on limitation of strategic ballistic missile launchers, signed by Leonid Brezhnev and Jimmy Carter in 1979, the cooling of relations between Western and Eastern European countries due to the deployment of new ballistic missiles in Europe and repressive measures undertaken by the Soviet and Polish regimes against the dissident movement in Poland could not stop the cultural offensive and

⁷²⁹ New documents and research in regard to the period of Détente can be found in the *Cold War International History Bulletins*, no 1-16 published at the web-page of the Woodrow Wilson International Institute for Scholars, Washington, DC <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index/>

expansion of new values in the East. Ronald Reagan's aggressive cultural policy in the East finally crushed Soviet ideology in the Eastern European countries during the period of economic crisis that developed from the early 1980s onwards.

However, before those events of the end of the Cold War period the universities of West and East Germany were faced with a new attack from American and Soviet educational policies. The attack by both superpowers on the separate halves of Germany had a similar motive: to stop oppositional and negative attitudes expressed by students and professors against the imposition of ideology, whether the American ideology in the West or the Soviet one in the East.

The United States and the Soviet Union in their own way resolved the problem of losing control over academic life in both countries. The American government attempted to influence the student body which had initiated wide protest against the United States in West German universities. To eliminate student opposition, in 1969 Washington compelled the government of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) to introduce a new package of reforms proposed by American experts for the German universities; however, these reforms finally became bogged down due to the strong resistance of the conservative old professoriate. This segment of German professors initiated a successful counter-offensive against the models of university life imposed by the United States in the mid-1970s. The unexpected strength of the German professors and their success in resisting American influence was followed by a return of some of the old characteristics of the traditional German university system that had been eliminated by American reforms in the period of the Occupation and in 1969. The professors were able to return to their powerful influence within the professoriate in terms of the essence of education and training, and their freedom to make decisions over academic programs and curriculum despite the desires and intentions of the student body. They also have instilled again the idea of the isolation of academic life from politics. After this victory by the conservative professoriate, cooperation between the US and Federal Republic of Germany in the area of education has been seriously collapsed until the end of the Cold War.

The Soviet government also conducted a fresh ideological attack on East German universities through its conventional means, which was the expansion of Marxism in the disciplines, curriculum, and even in the behavior, and the life of students and professors. This new attack in the 1970s was brought about by the concern of the Soviets with a specific

position held by East German students and professors. Though demonstrating outward obedience to the indoctrination and ideology of the ruling regime, they had never become loyal and convinced followers of communism and never accepted the imposition of a Marxism foundation for academic life. This was clearly understood by both Moscow and Berlin, and they attempted to make the university people accept these imposed values by all possible means. However, neither was able to achieve this.

Moreover, the East German professoriate and students fell under the influence of incoming American and Western culture. During the period of *Détente* and during in the early 1980s, the United States arranged for a steady influence to be imposed on a segment of East German students and professors, and the intelligentsia as well. American educational exchange programs reached the universities of the GDR starting in the mid-1970s, and many cultural programs, radio, and TV from the FRG became popular among East Germans. However, the German professoriate demonstrated restraint towards the new ideology and values coming from the West. University professors and a segment of the students, in contrast to religious young people and most of the intelligentsia, who became members of the broad dissident movement supported by the West, did not fall into American arms.

Hence, to demonstrate the development of these different components inherent in American and Soviet educational policies – their reforms in German universities, the internal resistance to them, the American offensive towards the East and, finally, the failure of superpowers' cultural imperialism – the segments of this chapter will be arranged in the following order. The first part of the chapter will discuss American policy and the second part will analyze the Soviet policy in German universities from approximately 1965 until the end of the 1980s. The third part will investigate American attempts to influence East German academia as well as the place of East German students and professors in the dissident movement that developed during the period of *Détente*. The conclusion to this chapter will answer the question of why the cultural imperialism of them failed during this period.

I. American policy in West German universities

After the erection of the Wall, the West German university system underwent both huge and well-documented shake-up and reforms

provoked by the student movement and American interference in German universities. As is well known in the historiography, the student movement was rooted, first of all, in the need to expand access to the institutions of higher education and in the need to improve the standard of living and study of students. The reforms implemented coped with the overcrowded educational institutions, and the government of West Germany opened many new universities. The second source of the student movement grew from the leftist and anti-American mood that had developed in Europe and, in particular, in the universities. The leftist student movement laid the foundation for permanent demonstrations by students and radical young lecturers, and not only against the Vietnam War. American government documents, however, now shed new light on the events that occurred in West German universities, revealing information that had previously remained hidden from contemporary historiography. In this segment of the chapter, we will clarify the American interpretation of the student movement. We must begin by noting that, first of all, the American government referred to “student movement” – a scholarly term with a definition – as *student radicalism*.⁷³⁰ The United States did not stand on the sidelines while events were happening in the FRG at the end of 1960s through the early 1970s: Washington tried to eliminate student radicalism and to impose new reforms. However, the final results of this policy were controversial and witnessed the final failure of the American government in its attempt to transform the German university system according to the American model.

American policy in the West German universities in the period of the mid-1960s through to 1990 can be divided into three stages. The first is 1965-1970, when the United States struggled intensively with the student movement or student radicalism and participated in the elaboration and implementation of new reforms. The second is 1971-1975, when that segment of the professoriate known as the conservatives was able to revise or rollback the reforms made in West German universities. The third is 1975-1990, when educational contacts between the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany declined to zero.

⁷³⁰ University of Arkansas Libraries. Special Collections. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Historical Collection. Manuscript Collection 468. Box 317. Folder 17. Germany, Federal Republic of, 1963-1970.

1. Student radicalism and the American response, 1965-1970

The situation in West German universities

On the territory of West Germany before the mid-1960s, eighteen universities operated in Kiel, Hamburg, Göttingen, Cologne, Münster, Bonn, Marburg, Giessen, Frankfurt am Main, Mayence, Saarbrücken, Freiburg, Tübingen, Heidelberg, Munich, Erlangen, Würzburg, and in Berlin with the Frei Universität (Free University). From 1965 until 1975 twenty-five new universities were opened, and the total number of universities encompassed about 300,000 students. This was actually a huge number of students, much more than in other European countries. The American government is reported to observe the development of all these universities. However, according to archival documents, the universities, previously located in the American Zone of Occupation, turned out to be the primary target of the American interest and policy. Seven universities in Berlin, Heidelberg, Frankfurt-am-Main, Munich, Marburg, Erlangen, and in Würzburg were in the focus of American educational policy and we therefore emphasize the American policy in these universities.

Evidently, the great size of the student body created both expected and unexpected problems as observed by those American experts and diplomats who remained in Germany. The first visible problem reported concerned overcrowding in the universities. This problem was especially acute at the Free University, where students could not find places in the dormitories and in lecture halls.⁷³¹ By 1964, the problem of too many students amid an inadequate university infrastructure went national and included every university. American diplomats recounting the opinion of German experts in the area of education reported that the basic problem of the Germany university system was an increase in student population without a commensurate increase in staff and facilities. This had resulted in a low teacher-student ratio and very limited access to professors. While the number of university students had increased during the 1960s, faculty size at universities had remained relatively constant. For example, in the University of Munich only fifteen professors of law were available for a total of 2,626 law students, and only two professors of English for 689 students of that subject.⁷³² The number of students had risen for a wide

⁷³¹ NARA. Record Group 59. Confidential US Department of State Central Files. FRG. Internal Affairs 1955-1959. Microfilm. Reel 30.

⁷³² W. Stahl, *Education for Democracy in West Germany: Achievements, Shortcomings, Prospects* (New York: Frederick & Praeger, 1961), 156.

variety of reasons. Among the most important were the high birth rate and the fact that access to university education had become more widely available, hence more and more families sought to give their children a higher education. However, the number of professors remained extremely small, as American diplomats emphasized as early as 1961-1965.

At the same time American observers noted other problems which took on a national scope by the end of 1960s. One problem concerned the attitude of a segment of students towards the values of democracy imposed by the United States and also towards the international situation at the time. One segment of the students fell easily under the influence of communist ideology and the leftist movement.⁷³³ The other students, on the contrary, demonstrated strong political apathy and discouragement, and often chose to withdraw from the political arena rather than be subjected to intimidation and the “politicization” of leftists.⁷³⁴ Initially, before 1965, the American government had remained silent and did not react to the various attitudes of the students. Yet, as soon as the mood of the students became mixed up with the growing problems in the universities and the students began marching in the streets to demand certain university reforms, the United States decided to interfere.

The first surge of the student resentment which attracted the attention of Washington was a student demonstration at the University of Munich. In early 1965, students demonstrated for better educational opportunities and for the opening of new departments. Nearly 5,000 students gathered in the courtyard of the university to hear speeches by students and professors. The demonstration was organized by the University Student Organization, ASTA. They marched through Munich’s streets. The rector and professors understood that new departments and new universities were necessary in order to improve student life, and they promised to do something about this.⁷³⁵ In 1966, students of the Free University protested against decisions by some departments regarding “mandatory Exmatrikulation.” The students who did not fulfill the requirements for a degree within nine semesters were to be dropped and those remaining were required to notify a dean of a department at the end of every semester whether they wished to take the examinations or apply for an extension. The reason for this was that some students studied up to

⁷³³ NARA. Record Group 59. Confidential US Department of State Central Files. FRG. Internal Affairs 1955-1959. Microfilm. Reel 30.

⁷³⁴ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 392.

⁷³⁵ NARA. Record Group 59. Confidential US Department of State Central Files. FRG, 1963-1966. Microfilm. Reel 34.

twenty-eight semesters without ever reporting for exams. The students, however, argued that the academic load and the content of the curriculum were steadily increasing and that, as a result, an average student had no chance at all of getting a degree within the period prescribed by the departments. The students demanded therefore a reduction in the amount of time students spent at the university, a revision of the obsolete curriculum, and, more importantly, admission on an equal footing with professors in the special curriculum commissions set up to make these changes. On top of this, they were dissatisfied with overcrowded seminars, poor student counseling, lack of student-professor contact, and a shortage of study materials.⁷³⁶

The United States completely supported these demands by the students, because they reflected American ideas about student representation in administrative bodies and about the revision of the curriculum, and so student unrest was exploited to pressure the German government into transforming German universities still further along the lines of the American model.

However, the situation soon changed quite quickly, and, instead of moderate demands, the students began calling not only for equal participation of students in the composition of the curriculum commission (three professors and three students from every department) but also for including the study of the philosophy and works of New Left scholars such as Herbert Marcuse in the university curricula and the dismissal of the old, conservative professors. In order to achieve these goals, they began boycotting lectures in the departments of philosophy, political science, and law. Some professors had to hold their lectures in overalls due to the constant pelting with eggs and tomatoes. Some professors suffered sudden heart attacks and numerous lecturers sought for medical assistance due to the physical and psychological stress.⁷³⁷

At the same time, the students were turning severely anti-American and were involved in the protests against the Vietnam War. Students from the universities of Frankfurt, Berlin, and Hamburg were the first to demonstrate against American intervention in a divided Vietnam. Their cry was “*Today Vietnam, Tomorrow us.*” The leaders of these demonstrations were said to be part of the leftist intelligentsia, from leftist organizations such as the *Socialist German Student Federation*, and from the Communist Party which by then existed illegally in West

⁷³⁶ Ibid.

⁷³⁷ Ibid.

Germany. In September of 1965, a leader of the student organization at the Free University, Wolfgang Lelevre, and a son of West Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt disseminated a letter against the war among the students. The American government would never have paid any attention to such an action, if American diplomats had not known that this initiative had come from a communist organization (The Committee for Peace and National and International Understanding) connected to the East Berlin Communist Party. The Committee was led by Erich Engel, a West Berlin resident, who was a movie director in East Germany. American diplomats stated that this organization was directed by an SED bureaucrat who lived in West Berlin. Such behavior on the part of the students, specifically their ties to the East German Communist Party, could not be ignored by the American government and was considered dangerous as opposed to the previous student demonstrations against the poor conditions of study and life in universities.

Hence, *anti-Americanism*, rather than the demands of the students for improvements in and expansion of the universities or for participation in the university decision-making process, was how the Americans now defined the student movements and upheavals in 1966. Initially diplomats on the grounds and back in Washington assumed that any anti-Americanism could be quickly circumvented by the propaganda work of the pro-American, loyal student organizations established by the United States during the Occupation. However, when they counted the number of anti-American and pro-American student groups, the Americans were stunned to see a ratio of 12:1.⁷³⁸ Moreover, establishing new Institutes or a Chair of American Studies at every new university in West Germany, presented the American government with a brand new problem: the low growth in student numbers in these American studies programs during a period when all other departments in the universities were overcrowded. The shortage of students was especially acute in Marburg, Saarbrücken, and Würzburg.⁷³⁹ As a result, American policy of the previous twenty years aimed at establishing loyal, apolitical student groups had failed in fell swoop.

The other term applied by Washington to define all the things happening both in German universities and in the universities of such countries as the United States, France, and Japan, was *student radicalism*. The movement of student radicalism encompassed many universities in

⁷³⁸ NARA. Record Group 59. Confidential US Department of State Central Files. FRG, 1963-1966. Microfilm. Reel 35.

⁷³⁹ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files, 1967-1969. Box 345.

the countries mentioned; however, in the universities of West Germany, this movement was the most radical and dangerous for the political stability because of the geographic closeness of West Germany to the communist regime of East Germany which influenced the student body in the West. For Americans, the radicalism was not demonstrations and demands of students to revise the curriculum or dismiss professors, but the student radicalism as defined as a pro-Marxist stance by the students. The term was first mentioned in American documents in 1967 and explained as follows: “The radical German university student has emerged as a visible and vocal factor of the German political stage, serving as the prime mover for the New Left – Dissident Mao-Marxist students, intellectuals, and artists.”⁷⁴⁰

American diplomats stated that student radicalism was appearing in such universities as Berlin, Frankfurt, Heidelberg, and Marburg. We should emphasize that in these universities mentioned the United States had conducted the bulk of their reforms and had previously imposed American models in management, teaching, and curriculum. The most radical faculties were the humanities and social sciences that had been transformed by the Americans during the period of the Occupation.⁷⁴¹

The Americans were concerned that the students, who flirted with Marxism, Maoism, communism, and Castroism, would establish close and direct contacts with the East German and Soviet communists. Washington, in our opinion, had realistic reasons to think so: first, most of the West German student movement’s leaders like Rudy Dutschke⁷⁴² had come from East Germany and its universities and this might have left an imprint on their mode of thinking in terms of communism and behavior. Although the leaders of the students proclaimed their dislike for the Soviet Union and Soviet ideology, they expressed a commitment to Castro or Maoist communism that sounded just as dangerous for the United States in the context of the cultural Cold War. Second, the SED has actually expanded its influence in West Berlin and West Germany by establishing not only a network of pro-communist and radical student

⁷⁴⁰ Special Collections. University of Arkansas Libraries. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Historical Collection. Manuscript Collection 468. Box 317. Folder 17. Germany, Federal Republic of, 1963-1970.

⁷⁴¹ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 392.

⁷⁴² Rudi Dutschke was the most prominent spokesperson of the German student movement of the 1960s. On April 11, 1968, Dutschke was shot in the head. Dutschke reentered the German political scene after protests against the building of nuclear power plants activated a new movement in the mid-1970s. He also began working with dissidents opposing the communist government in East Germany. He died in 1979.

organizations there, but also by opening legal political training schools in West Berlin such as the Reichsbahn Party School for Marxism-Leninism in 1966.⁷⁴³ Third, the government of the USSR maintained very close contacts between student groups in the Soviet Union and West Germany. The Soviet students came to West Germany by official invitation of leftist student groups such as *the Socialist German Student Union* (Sozialistischen Deutschen Studentenbund, (SDS)).⁷⁴⁴ These contacts are mentioned in both American and Soviet documents.⁷⁴⁵

Hence, the American government, while supporting the moderate demands of students relative to reforming the universities, could not ignore the radical slipping of a segment of the student body into Marxism.

University reforms

This radicalism and anti-Americanism impelled the government of the United States to find some common thread to the behavior of students in order to help eliminate the main roots of such dangerous behavior. The American government spent several years painstakingly observing the students and elaborating a new policy towards them. In 1969, American experts sponsored by Washington investigated the causes behind student

⁷⁴³ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files 1964-1966. Educational and Cultural Exchange. Box 385.

⁷⁴⁴ The *Sozialistischen Deutschen Studentenbund*, SDS, was a radical-left group. It succeeded in developing a massive student protest movement, beginning around 1965 based on the discontent of students, and capitalizing on blunders by the authorities, while carefully developing more general political issues of an inflammatory nature (war, persecution, and injustice). Its philosophical underpinnings were certainly Marxist, but – like its spiritual mentor, Herbert Marcuse – it was anti-authoritarian in principle, and hostile to the bureaucratic communism of the Soviet Block. They studied the tactics of the American civil rights and student protest movements. Membership nationwide never exceeded 2,500, though the right issue would bring out the students en masse to demonstrate: 15,000 after the death of the student Benno Ohnesorg - shot by a plainclothes policeman during an earlier demonstration - in July 1967; 40,000 after Rudi Dutschke was severely wounded – shot by a right-wing student – in May 1968. The SDS dissolved itself in 1969 in the face of external pressures – it was, for example, outlawed at Heidelberg – and in conformity with its own anti-authoritarian determination to avoid bureaucratization. Since that time, work has been concentrated at the grass roots level in “basic groups” and “red cells,” developing Marxist political indoctrination. // NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 392.

⁷⁴⁵ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files 1964-1966. Educational and Cultural Exchange. Box 396; Russian State Archive of Modern History. Record Group 5. Inventory 35. File 102: 120.

radicalism in German universities. They pinpointed three reasons that had led to it.

The first concerned *the conservative nature of German universities*, which the American government had attempted to eliminate for the past twenty years. Just as they had twenty years earlier, American experts reported to the government that the German University remained traditional and elitist, reserving an exalted status and power for full professors, and admitting only a small number of students. University life and study were organized around small seminars, with close personal association between professors and students, all of whom came from the aristocracy. The conservative structure has broken down in the twentieth century; as the old social coherence of the university was disturbed by an influx of students from the middle class and – to a lesser extent – from lower social groups, and as the numerical growth of the student body rendered impracticable a close professor-student relationship the old professors could no longer lead their students.⁷⁴⁶ The experts especially pointed out that the leadership in the universities had been assumed by the survivors of the pre-Nazi era and for twenty years they had not comprehended their own obsolescence.⁷⁴⁷ This segment of professors was defined by *German conservatism*, which maintained obsolete norms of teaching methods and behavior on the part of professors. This conservatism was unacceptable to the students and, hence, they were demonstrating primarily against this.

The second cause of student radicalism was defined as *mistakes of educational policy made by the United States during the Occupation period*. The experts and American diplomats emphasized that the German educational system after 1945 was reestablished essentially in the old liberal mold. American policy, aimed at granting the universities full independence from the German federal government, had contributed to the crisis situation of the 1960s “by permitting the central government virtually no competence in the field of education, thus leaving the burden of reforms on the competing state governments and universities themselves.”⁷⁴⁸ In other words, the lack of state control over the

⁷⁴⁶ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 392.

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁸ Actually, Basic Law Article #74 allowed the federal government joint competence only in the “promotion of scientific research” and Article #70 conferred exclusive competence on the state governments in areas not subject to exclusive federal or joint federal-state competence.

universities had created “superfluous freedom for students and professors.”⁷⁴⁹

The third root was the *isolation of the student body from any deep understanding of how democracy works* and of political science as imposed previously by Americans.⁷⁵⁰ The government of the United States admitted that the introduction of new disciplines embracing the American political ideology of the supremacy of the constitution and the law and of the separation of powers had failed. The West German students had not become confirmed liberals.

While the United States had been investigating the causes of student radicalism, German students had won a transformation in their position in university administrative bodies. Their success concerned the diminishing of that very power of the professoriate that had been urged by the United States. The first student victory over the administration of a university was a 1967 decision at University of Tübingen to admit students and teaching assistants to the university’s policy-making councils, where previously only full professors had been admitted.⁷⁵¹ The reduction in the full professor’s power in the German university was a radical departure from the long-standing practice of making all academic groups totally dependent on the professors. The second success was a decision by the municipal government of West Berlin to adopt a so-called “third-party” plan of control for the Free University in 1968. At the center of the new university was the powerful office of the president elected for a seven-year term. At each stage below him governing councils comprised a number of professors, junior instructors and teaching assistants, and students, with no single group commanding a majority of the votes. In practice, the students joined with the instructors and assistants to force the tenured professors, long the sole power within the structure, into a minority position. Versions of the new “Berlin model” were adopted in other universities including Bremen, Hamburg, and Hessen.⁷⁵² The third achievement of the student movement without a doubt was the establishment of the Curriculum Revision Committees, which featured equal membership by students, professors, and junior teaching staff. Hence, the students now had the possibility of influencing the content of academic programs and university curricula, and where there was an

⁷⁴⁹ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 392.

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁵¹ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files, 1967-1969. Box 345.

⁷⁵² R.L. Merritt, E.P. Flerlage, A.J. Merritt, “Democratizing West German Education,” *Comparative Education* 7, no. 3 (1971), 129-130.

alliance created between the students and the junior teaching staff, which very often occurred, the younger generation had a voting majority and could abolish any proposal made by the professoriate. These changes were welcomed by the United States. Finally, the fourth victory of student radicalism in the eyes of the American government was the election as president of the Free University of a 31-year-old graduate student in sociology named *Rolf Kreibich*, who had no administrative experience but was liked by the students. Rolf Kreibich had been born in Dresden in 1939. He had studied at the Humboldt University in East Berlin from 1958 to 1960, and then had fled to the West before the eve of the building of the Wall. He continued his studies (sociology) at the Free University and graduated in 1964. At the time of his election to the presidency of the Free University in 1969, Kreibich was working on his dissertation in the Economics and Social Sciences Department and delivering lectures as an assistant. While in East Germany, Kreibich had been a member of the communist Free German Youth, but he had left this organization and East Germany because socialism – according to his own words – of the GDR variety did not suit him. After his election, he promised to change the Free University's organizational structure in accordance with modern management principles, to expand the experimental reforms, and to resign from the presidency if massive opposition to this program developed.⁷⁵³

Welcoming these first victories of the student movement and calling them as moderate changes in the conservative German universities, the American government soon worried about the most radical students who were inclined to extremism and communism. It was the most leftist and most radical of the students who wished the universities to be centers of Marxism and communism. Actually, the small number of students supported from the GDR was able in some cases to turn the dissatisfaction of moderate German students with their living and study conditions towards a political struggle against the West German political system. Students of the most radical vein conducted rude attacks against the professoriate, the administration of universities, and against the political and social system of the West during peaceful discussions of internal university problems between professors and students. The American government was sure that these activist students with strong leadership potential would soon influence part of the apolitical student

⁷⁵³ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files, 1967-1969. Box 345.

body and turn them into militant socialists, which would lead to catastrophe.

The Americans, in support of the moderately radical students and professor-reformers, therefore demanded that the administration of the universities exercise tight control of this two percent of the most radical students. What kinds of measures were proposed to take control of them? First of all, the American diplomats wished to eliminate the communists from the West Berlin universities. They asked the government of West Berlin to curb illegal public demonstrations and to take control of the Free University if the administration was unable to do this by itself. Also, it was proposed to withdraw permission for the SDS to operate at the Free University.⁷⁵⁴ The West Berlin government implemented these proposals: the demonstrations were dispersed by the police, socialist and communist groups of students were forbidden, unauthorized meetings of students were no longer permitted, and the lecture halls could not be used for student political activities such as anti-Vietnam exhibitions.⁷⁵⁵

To advance the decision to take control of students at the Free University, Hans-Joachim Lieber, a rector of the university before the tenure of R. Kreibich, was invited to Washington. After his return in December of 1968, he initiated disciplinary procedures against fourteen leftist students, including ASTA chairman Jürgen Treulieb, for inciting or participating in protests that led to disruption of classes. These students were expelled, and a new wave of expulsion began to affect all the universities in 1969. This provoked a new and strong reaction from the students, and more importantly, from some of the apolitical and moderate students who were becoming the members of leftwing as well as socialist and communist groups, along with junior teaching staff began supporting the students. The policy of student expulsion initiated by the United States reminds us of the Soviet policy towards opposing students in 1949-1955. Strong protest and the pro-communist position of the West German students, which could undermine the political system implanted and fostered in the FRG by the United States, caused a tough response on the part of the American government at the end of the 1960s; resistance by East German students to Soviet indoctrination and their pro-liberal position had caused the same response from the Soviet Union twenty years earlier.

⁷⁵⁴ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files, 1967-1969. Box 345.

⁷⁵⁵ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files 1964-1966. Educational and Cultural Exchange. Box 385.

Finally, on April 2, 1969, the United States Vice-President arranged a talk with Chancellor Kurt Kiesinger, a leader of the Grand Coalition, on the question of student radicalism. Kiesinger was invited to the American Embassy in Bonn where he was directly asked about the continuing student unrest in German universities. The Chancellor replied that the situation had become less violent for a while because the universities expelled the militant elements. American diplomats asked a further question about the possibility of an alliance between workers and students that could bring about a revolutionary situation. The Chancellor answered that there was no fear that German workers would ever side with the students as the French workers. The Chancellor also added that "if anything, German workers were spoiling for an opportunity to lay their hands on the students."⁷⁵⁶ He was most likely right, because one year earlier a worker, Josef Bachmann, had shot the leader of the West Berlin leftist students, Rudi Dutschke, three times. Dutschke survived, but he never fully recovered before his death in 1979.⁷⁵⁷

A gentler way of stopping the radicalism was proposed by the United States after the expulsion of most of the radical students from the universities. One of these was quite conventional and concerned the training of selected groups of students in American universities. As I mentioned in previous chapters, students had been involved in special educational programs sponsored by the government since the early 1950s. During the entire period of the 1960s and early 1970s the number of students was the largest among all other categories of West Germany citizens.⁷⁵⁸ Training the students in the United States, the government pursued the goal of implanting the American model in German universities such as student governance, and the campus system and of urging this select segment of the student body to study the principles of youth leadership, youth organizations, group techniques, and so on.⁷⁵⁹ However, the American government was interested in involving students of a pro-democratic and pro-American stance in these programs, while neglecting the remaining mass of students and leftists. This situation continued until 1968; American experts recruited the five to seven percent of the student body that did not belong to the student radical

⁷⁵⁶ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files, 1967-1969. Box 345.

⁷⁵⁷ J. Suri, "The Cultural Contractions of Cold War Education: The Case of West Berlin," *Cold War History* 4, no. 3 (2004): 1-20, here 11.

⁷⁵⁸ NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural Affairs. Lot 98D 252. Box 169-172, 205-206.

⁷⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

movement, while the broad majority of students as well as radicals were not included in American educational, information, and cultural programs.⁷⁶⁰

When student radicalism began its national movement in 1965, the government of the United States continued its previous projects and programs aimed at the future leaders of Germany, who studied at the universities. Washington was absolutely sure in 1965 that university students and the Berlin university students, in particular, would become hard-working, intelligent leaders, who would consciously avoid becoming extremist. These students with leadership potential were educated by the Americans to be leaders of political parties or first-rate reporters or editorial writers. In 1968, however, American diplomats insisted to Washington that past programs and priorities were no longer adequate. Germany has become increasingly caught up in political and social problems. However, university students – who constitute only seven percent of total German youth, but almost every future leader will come from this group – have become the center of the ‘New Left’ and this group of students falls into categories. The first is the leadership of moderate young people and student organizations. The second is the hard core membership of radical organizations.⁷⁶¹ American diplomats proposed emphasizing the student leadership, both radical and moderate. But to understand who was who, and to estimate correctly the values, desires, and goals of German students, Washington launched a specific diplomatic project aimed at direct communications between American diplomats accredited in Bonn and German students.

The American Embassy in Bonn established *The Youth Committee*. It accumulated, first of all, some biographical data (Embassy’s Youth Register) on those students with whom the United States needed to speak in order to influence on their behavior. These students were radicals, though not the most leftist and extremist among them, and numbered 300 throughout West Germany. They were selected according to their moderate interest in Marxism and their dislike for the Soviet Union. The goal was to keep them from slipping into more radical forms of thinking and behavior.⁷⁶²

After having created this biographical database, the American diplomats started acting: they established personal contact with the

⁷⁶⁰ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files 1964-1966. Educational and Cultural Exchange. Box 395.

⁷⁶¹ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files, 1967-1969. Box 363.

⁷⁶² NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files, 1967-1969. Box 363.

students, invited them to the embassy, initiated discussions about radicalism, the leftist movement, democracy, and so on.⁷⁶³ Actually, for the first time in the history of American educational policy, politicians spoke with the targets of their policy personally. Again, this policy turned out to be similar to Soviet policy aimed at establishing open and individual contacts with students to convince them to be more loyal and more obedient. The newest and most intriguing instrument for influencing students became the junior staff of the American diplomatic corps specially selected in the United States. Washington assumed that younger diplomats called Junior Foreign Service Officers, who had just graduated from American universities, could come to an understanding faster with the German students.⁷⁶⁴ The political job of a Junior Foreign Service Officer was to go to these students and student organizations, visit those key students who participated in discussion groups, and arrange to entertain them privately. Many young American officers actually established close personal contact with German students. These Junior Foreign Service Officers hosted student conversation groups in order to learn how to influence German students. The American officers regularly attended meetings of some of the student organizations.⁷⁶⁵ After establishing personal contact, the diplomats proposed giving talks on the necessity of the German-American partnership and on American foreign policy. In addition, every student received a book explaining Lyndon Johnson's policy.⁷⁶⁶ The universities of Frankfurt, Marburg, Berlin, and Munich became favorite places for American diplomats to deliver these talks.⁷⁶⁷ This contact provided valuable information on student affairs which was then reported to Washington. And German students showed a willingness to discuss their ideas, including even such sensitive matters as their organization's plans, with these young American officers.

American diplomatic documents, however, regularly mentioned that efforts to reach the mass membership of German young people and student organizations were clearly beyond the American Embassy's capabilities, and inconsistent with its priorities.⁷⁶⁸ Student organizations outside the universities, which remained the most radical, were reached

⁷⁶³ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files 1964-1966. Educational and Cultural Exchange. Box 395.

⁷⁶⁴ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files, 1967-1969. Box 363.

⁷⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁶ NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural Affairs. Lot 98D 252. Box 169-172, 205-206

⁷⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁸ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files, 1967-1969. Box 363.

by the United States. Hence, it is difficult to evaluate to what extent these programs countered the pro-Marxist position of students and converted them to the American side. But one thing can be clearly seen: the most radical groups of students, those who called themselves Maoists, Castroites, Trotskyites, and anarchists were not covered by the new youth policy of the United States. The latter addressed their programs to those students who led moderate student organizations. Estimating the final result of its youth project through polling of the political attitudes of German students in 1971, the US government stated that democratic attitudes of young people had diminished: students had not developed positive adherence to the political values of the Bonn Republic, and demonstrated dissatisfaction with the political reality and democratic ideals. Washington did not blame the junior diplomatic corps for the failure of this project but did blame the earlier project of introducing political science into German universities that was carried out from 1949 to 1955 for the weakness of belief of students in democracy and liberalism as revealed in the early 1970s. Political science, in the opinion of American experts in 1971, had not taught German students to be democrats.⁷⁶⁹ We assume that these American experts had not understood the actual desires and intent of moderate German students: most young German university people considered the term “democracy” as meaning a “political ideology” and “party government” that undermined the concept of “academic freedom” in German universities. The younger generation regarded American activities in the universities as a sort of interference in their traditional concept of “academic freedom” and they therefore repudiate the term “democracy.”

Moreover, the United States insistently encouraged the government of the Federal Republic to carry out a program of reforms in 1969 that would end overcrowding, increase the percentage of young people in the universities, re-establish a high degree of personal rapport between students and professors, and adjust study programs to minimize personal student disorientation. Such a package of reforms was considered to be an effective response to legitimate student grievances. In addition, the government of the Federal Republic was asked to retire the pre-war generation of professors and replace them by a younger generation of teachers more in tune with the prevailing democratic ethos and more sophisticated in the complex ways of parliamentary democracy. All these

⁷⁶⁹ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 392.

proposals were elaborated by the American government for immediate implementation by the federal government of West Germany.

These proposals were met with disappointment and reluctance by German politicians and professors. The professors were especially displeased with the American initiatives aimed at reducing their power. Nevertheless, the new Chancellor Willy Brandt showed some signs of including the American package of reforms in his own initiatives aimed at putting education and training, and research and science at the top of the reforms to be made. He promised to provide financial assistance to the *Länder*, the individual German states, for construction projects, to remove obsolete hierarchical structures in the universities, and to speed up expansion of the universities. Actually, he was able to revise the system of control over universities: Responsibility was transferred from the Bundesrat and Land Affairs Ministry to the new Education and Science Ministry.⁷⁷⁰ Moreover, his reforms proclaimed such important things as 1) democratization of the decision-making process at all levels, and a sharing of power by three or four groups: professors, middle-level academic staff, students, and in some cases nonacademic employees of the university; 2) replacement of the rector serving a one-year term by a president elected for a term of five to seven years, and 3) the establishment of departments to take the place of the large faculties.⁷⁷¹ These initiatives by Brandt were obviously influenced by the United States, which in turn disrupted the power of the professoriate.

How indeed did the United States make the Brandt government introduce these reforms despite the protest of professors in 1969? Washington counted on those administrators and professors in the universities who had previously participated in American exchange programs and had demonstrated their general allegiance. In 1969, the American government stated that the aim of the educational exchange program should be to contribute to educational reform. The moving forces behind these reforms were the many returnees from the International Visitors and Fulbright Programs who held important positions as minister presidents, cultural ministers or education specialists in the *Länder* governments and in prestigious educational bodies such as the Council for the Promotion of Science and Humanities and the German Educational Council which were established to make recommendations for educational reform. In North Rhine-Westphalia, for example, the

⁷⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid.

University of Bochum was allowed right from the start to deviate from the old system as a result of the efforts of its young, forward-looking rector Kurt Biedenkopf. The rector, a 1949-1951 student grantee, who was known for his liberal thinking, introduced the departmental system and other facets typical of the American university into his new university. Another good example of how the United States lobbied its package of reforms was Dr Heinz Autenrieth, head of the University Department at the Ministry of Education in Baden-Württemberg. When he visited the United States in 1962, the Ministry was planning to establish new universities in Ulm and Konstanz. Heinz Autenrieth at that time was responsible for the preparatory work and the planning for these universities. He undertook his study trip with the purpose of inspecting a cross-section of American universities and investigating all aspects of their organization and structure in order to determine which of these factors might be applied to the new universities. Both the University of Konstanz and the University of Ulm used the departmental system, both had a president instead of a rector, and both had adopted American university methods.⁷⁷² Moreover, Brandt himself, who assigned education and universities as a top priority of his policy, had participated in the special student leadership program in the early 1950s; the Minister of Education and Science, Prof. Hans Leussink, a 1961 International Visitor Program grantee, and Dr Hildegard Hamm-Brücher, a 1949-1950 student grantee and 1966 International Visitor Program grantee turned out to be the key decision-makers who presented a plan of reforms based largely on American experiences and American educational concepts. As to university education, the plan stipulated the expansion of equality of educational opportunity, a key force in American education that had impressed Dr Hamm-Bücher during her 1966 visit. Hence, the people who admired the American university system became the first reformers and so there was a strong United States influence to promoting more liberal reforms in West Germany. Actually, the governmental documents state that the American government looked at the reforms as a chance to democratize the German university system and promote the curricula reform in the social sciences that it had been attempting to achieve since 1949.⁷⁷³

⁷⁷² University of Arkansas Libraries. Special Collections. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Historical Collection. Manuscript Collection 468. Box 317. Folder 17. Germany, Federal Republic of, 1963-1970.

⁷⁷³ Ibid.

Hence, proposing these transformations modeled on American university models in 1969, the American government was absolutely sure that the reforms would stop student radicalism and reduce the power of the German professoriate. However, the final results of the reforms that appeared in the early 1970s became controversial and were a disappointment for the American government.

2. The victory of German conservatism and the rollback of reforms, 1971-1975

In 1971-1972 the American government judged the results of the reforms conducted by the Willy Brandt government in German universities as deplorable. The transformation initiated in 1969 was still very much under way, and far from complete, in 1971-1972. Washington observed that, insofar as reforms had led to a direct resolution of specific radical student group demands, the reforms also tended to confirm those in positions of power. Those leftist students sliding into a Marxist and communist stance had unexpectedly taken power in university administrative bodies. This was determined by the fact that leftist students through the system of “three-way parity” in Berlin institutions, which gave them and junior teaching staff substantial representation in the governing councils of the university, had gained a direct voice in the nomination of professors and the development of courses. Moreover, in Berlin, the calculated harassment of the more conservative professors had in many cases succeeded in literally driving them to other more tranquil universities in the Federal Republic, thus leaving the leftist voice stronger among those staying behind. After Berlin, the most radicalized universities were Frankfurt and Marburg, and further down the scale, Heidelberg and Freiburg.⁷⁷⁴ That the most radical students and teaching staff had gained more power than the moderates in the universities was what bothered the American government the most.

Moreover, and contrary to American predications, radicalism had been growing in the early 1970s. The “leftist-radicalism” defined as opposition to the fundamental principles of the system of government in the Federal Republic now became an opposition with Soviet roots. In 1971, students of University of Bonn established a pro-Soviet group called *Spartacus* led by Christoph Strawe.⁷⁷⁵ Thirty-five student groups at

⁷⁷⁴ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 392.

⁷⁷⁵ Dr. Christoph Strawy now works in the Institute for Present-Day Social Questions in Stuttgart and continues to be a representative of socialist thinking in Germany. He is engaged in the movement campaigning for fair globalization.

the university level met in Bonn in May of 1971 and chose to unite under the umbrella of this organization. It became the first national organization of communist university-level students in post-war Germany. Spartacus was reported to be the result of more than two years' work by the German Communist party. The leader declared that the organization would be involved in the fight in the universities to make all students "ready Marxists." Such groups played skillfully with the difficulties of student life – dormitory problems, bad study conditions, financial problems, unemployment, and so-called "black lists" on some doctoral candidates allegedly in circulation – and so attracted students to become members of Marxist organizations. Spartacus officially proclaimed its support for the SED in East Germany and for Soviet ideology; it favored the international recognition of East Germany (this happened in 1972), the ratification of the Moscow and Warsaw Treaties concerning the recognition of post-war borders in Europe (this also happened in 1972) and the convocation of a Conference for European Security (this happened in 1975).⁷⁷⁶ In 1973, this communist student organization had several thousand members in Germany out of 400,000 students.⁷⁷⁷ Moreover, it was uncovered that the Marburg University students had become involved in a close financial relationship with the SED in East Germany. Hence, this segment of the student body inclined ideologically to the Soviet Marxism-Leninism, and rejected, for example, Maoism, which had attracted them at the end of 1960s. These groups united in 1973 under the auspices of two of the most radical and near-terrorist organizations, the *Communist Student Group* (KSV)⁷⁷⁸ representing the Maoist ultra-radicals and the *Action Group for Democrats and Socialists* (ADS), a disciplined and goal-oriented tool of the Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin (SEW).⁷⁷⁹

Undoubtedly, the popularity of these groups varied from German state to German state, and from university to university, and thus the universities differed markedly from each other in the degree to which they had been affected by the spirit of reform and the spirit of leftist radicalism. According to an analysis by the Americans, Germany's 43 universities could be grouped in terms of leftist influence as follows: four universities were deeply affected by leftist radicalism and its disruptive

⁷⁷⁶ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 392.

⁷⁷⁷ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 392.

⁷⁷⁸ KSV or *Kommunistischer Studentenverband* was a pro-communist and Maoist group.

⁷⁷⁹ SEW or *Sozialistische Einpartei West-Berlin* was a wing of the SED, the Communist Party of East Germany.

tactics; five were seriously affected; while thirty-four were comparatively little affected. Seventy percent of Germany's students were enrolled in this last group. The deeply affected universities such as the Free University, the University of Marburg, the University of Bremen and Technical University in Berlin, had already developed a pro-Marxist curriculum in the social science and humanities; however, those pro-Marxist tutors who were in a position to make an impact on the curriculum were neo-Marxist idealists rather than Marxists of the Soviet variety. Political science especially suffered at the hands of these tutors more than the other disciplines.⁷⁸⁰

Hence, reforms proposed by the United States did not diminish the radical mood of this segment of university people. This was the first and most unfavorable result of American efforts to transform universities, according to the American line.

Another enduring result became the problem of the "*Marxification*" of the university academic program and curricula. The social sciences and political science came under pressure from Marxism. "Marxification" of the social science and humanities curricula was a process of bringing the content of teaching, research, and publishing activities under the influence of Marxist (or rather neo-Marxist) ways of thinking. This process turned out to have gone quite far at the Free University, much further than at most of the other German universities. There were a number of departments and institutes (such as the Psychology Department, the Economics Department, the German Department, and the Otto-Suhr Institute, which specialized in political science) where between fifty and ninety percent of all courses taught were Marxist-oriented.⁷⁸¹ Insofar as the Marxification of German universities contributed to the growth of anti-democratic tendencies, weakened the German-American alliance within NATO, and contributed to anti-Americanism, this was of real concern to the American government.⁷⁸² However, the American experts could not come up with anything to counter Marxification, which demonstrated to the federal government the failure of their policy aimed at giving the students more power than the professors.

Another important consequence of the 1969 reform was the resignation of old and traditionally minded professors from the universities. Some of them left for research institutes, preferring the more

⁷⁸⁰ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 392.

⁷⁸¹ Ibid.

⁷⁸² Ibid.

quiet life of a scientist than the wild life of a professor at the universities; some of them were offered retirement by the rectors; and some of them left for the United States. The American experts reported to Washington that “teaching and research activities at several universities, such as Berlin, Frankfurt, Heidelberg, Hamburg, and others have been seriously impeded, that an increasing number of scholars have either moved to universities less affected by the unrest or looked for jobs outside the universities, and that to an increasing extent research tasks are being transferred to non-teaching research institutions such as the various institutes of the Max Planck Society.”⁷⁸³

The professors at the Free University were the first to leave the university circle. As a protest against the enactment of the law on reforms, some professors resigned publically from the staff of the university.⁷⁸⁴ Other professors were reported to have left the university in a demonstrative fashion or to have refused to hold their classes.⁷⁸⁵ In 1972, the situation surrounding the retirement of conservative professors became intolerable: the departments of political science, German studies, philosophy and social sciences were left to be governed by leftist teaching staff. Rector R. Kreibich promoted Marxists to these positions, while proposing that the old professoriate resign; the students helped the rector by disrupting the lectures of old conservative professors. Some of these professors were even forced to escape through a window to escape physical injury.⁷⁸⁶ Documents hold a letter from one of the professors forced to resign that reveals the situation. This letter was written by Professor G. Knauer, who taught Classics at the Free University of Berlin for twenty years and was a scholar of international reputation. He explained to the Senate and Mayor of Berlin the main reasons for his resignation from the University in 1974. He wrote:

“<...> I have been a member of
the Free University for 20 years, but
as a result of the university law of
1969, it has become a travesty of a
university. <...> I am leaving Berlin

⁷⁸³ Special Collections. University of Arkansas Libraries. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Historical Collection. Manuscript Collection 468. Box 317. Folder 17. Germany, Federal Republic of, 1963-1970.

⁷⁸⁴ NARA. Record Group 59. Central Files, 1967-1969. Box 345.

⁷⁸⁵ R.L. Merritt, E.P. Flerlage, A. J. Merritt, “Democratizing West German Education,” 129-130.

⁷⁸⁶ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 403.

because the university law has destroyed the basis on which the academic profession can function. The destruction of the University has not been caused by “radical” or more precisely communist students or by that rather negligible figure who for the time being happens to be the president of the Free University (Rolf Kreibich – *N. T.*). The distraction is attributable only to the erroneous and deceptive ideas of “reform” as laid down in the university law. In a university invaded by politics, everyone is forced to take sides. In the long run, this is incompatible with the duties of a university teacher. <...> My colleagues and friends are being treated in the most offensive manner by so-called students and colleagues, as well as by the university authorities. I cannot understand why the major, who by virtue of his office is also chairman of the Kuratorium of the Free University, has failed to protect and support those loyal members of the University <...> After Mr. Kreibich’s election was so hastily confirmed, we came to see it as our civic and academic duty to warn – as best we could – the public, which did not then have the slightest idea of what was going on. <...> “anti-authoritarians,” “the Maoists,” etc. would only be the forerunners of the “law-and-order” communists of the SEW. No wonder that the president of the Free University, who has

repeatedly confessed to collaboration with groups in the University which are dominated by the SEW, denounces the disruptive, ultra-radical KSV and *Notgemeinschaft für eine freie Universität* (this organization was established by professors to stop the influence of radicals in the universities – N. T.) as “the enemies of reform.”

If, however, Chancellor Willy Brandt...says:

There are a number of opponents of the democratic process of reform. These include not only backward-looking holders of privileges, but also criminal fanatics. We shall not have our reforms hampered by yesterday's men, nor will we suffer them to be slain by rioters – either in the universities or anywhere else...

then I am unable to discover any real difference between the attitudes of the President of the Free University and the Federal Chancellor, in so far as their identification of loyal citizens with enemies of the constitution <...>⁷⁸⁷

Professor Knauer left the Free University and accepted a professoriate at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. This letter is reminiscent of some letters sent by German professors to the Soviet Occupation authorities at the end of the 1940s. By that time the East German professoriate had concluded and declared to the Soviets that it was not possible to teach and work at the universities under ideological pressure. Now, in the 1970s, the West German professoriate also declared the same but this time to West German government, that is, that it was

⁷⁸⁷ “Professor Knauer’s resignation from the Free University of Berlin,” *Minerva* 12, no. 4 (November 12, 1974): 510-514.

not possible to work in the aftermath of the reforms that had been implemented.

However, in contrast to the East German professors, the conservative segment of West German professors united around the idea of revising and rolling these reforms. In his letter, the professor mentioned the organization of university professors known as the *Emergency Committee for a Free University* (*Notgemeinschaft für eine freie Universität*). It successfully lobbied the rollback policy through German government channels. In addition, moderate students and professors in 1973-1974 organized groups to oppose to oppose this leftist radicalism. The two most famous and influential groups were *The Emergency Committee for a Free University* and *The Alliance for Freedom and Science*.⁷⁸⁸ They were able to begin the counter-offensive movement that succeeded in changing the 1969 reforms.

Following that, the Government of West Germany reviewed the amendments to the university reform law instituted in 1969. The amendment bill promoted by the professoriate demanded that the administrative structure be tightened up by reducing the number of elected councils, increasing the power of the senate, and recasting the student tutorial program to reduce the misuse of small classes for political agitation and Marxist indoctrination. However, these amendments provoked the opposition of both the radical and the moderate left, especially the idea of changing the voting parities in various university councils where the professors were often outvoted by the combination of students and teaching assistants.⁷⁸⁹ The professoriate was attempting to return to their previous all-powerful position in the universities. The leader of this segment of the professoriate was Richard Löwenthal, the internationally-renowned political scientist and the director of the Otto Suhr Institute, who had been forced to resign by Rector R. Kreibich. They declared that the 1969 University Law had become the root of the current politicization of university affairs and the source of the institutional power of extremist forces. Therefore, a revision of that law was urgently needed in order to restore authority over academic matters to those faculty members and administrators with experience and qualifications.⁷⁹⁰

The bill was discussed for a long time, up until the spring of 1973. However, a new wave of student demonstrations protesting the bill and

⁷⁸⁸ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 392.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁰ Ibid.

the rollback of reforms only contributed to the final success of the conservative professors. The federal government had only been barely able to tolerate the leftists: After a boycott of classes by 20,000 students in all the Berlin universities and demonstrations held by younger faculty, Rector Kreibich, under pressure from the German government and professors, took a firm stand against the extremists' use of force and used disciplinary measures against forty activist students, members of the Communist Student Group.⁷⁹¹ The actions of the students and the turnaround in the Rector's stance demonstrated to the German professors that the reforms could be rolled back. In March of 1974, American diplomats finally informed Washington that the prospects for enactment of this bill had become "favorable for professors and unfavorable for us."⁷⁹² The bill was augmented by new amendments such as a provision for full power of the university senate over the disciplinary committees responsible for the enforcement of internal university regulations and for the authority of the senate to make appointments to university positions.⁷⁹³ And in 1975, the Framework Act on Higher Education, enacted by both federal and state governments, was the product of these conservative efforts. New institutions, such as the participation of students in the work of the curriculum committees, senate and other important administrative bodies, were nullified and everything reverted to the traditional university system.

Consequently, those radicals and Marxists who had gained power in university administrative bodies repudiated their previous stance and adopted moderate and even traditionally-minded ways of thinking. An especially surprising conversion was that demonstrated by the rector of the Free University, Rolf Kreibich. As early as 1972, he solicited the American Embassy about the possibility of taking part in one of the government exchange programs in order to visit American universities and become acquainted with their life. In a letter sent to the American embassy, he stated that he held an important office in the most important Berlin educational institution and that he had a keen interest in seeing the United States at first hand and in discussing with his American colleagues their own experiences with problems of curriculum, governance, student dissent, and faculty relations. Washington hesitated about whether to invite or not invite this controversial man, but, having obtained his promise that the Rector would re-establish the work of J.F. Kennedy

⁷⁹¹ Ibid.

⁷⁹² Ibid.

⁷⁹³ Ibid.

American Institute at the Free University, which had been terminated by student radicals, Washington was inclined to let him visit, but only in 1975.⁷⁹⁴ However, his possible visit incited severe protest by both American academia and the conservative segment of the German professoriate. The latter was dissatisfied with his policy towards full professors who had lost much of their traditional power with the university as a consequence of the 1969 university reform law, and of the policy of the young Kreibich, which had promoted a new generation of assistants, often Marxists, to key positions at the Free University, resulting in a number of conservatives withdrawing from participation in university governance. The challenge made by the American and German academics to the visit of the Rector was smoothed over Kreibich's statement that he needed to come to American universities in order to see what might be useful for a solution to his own difficulties and to strengthen the Free University's ties with US institutions. The visit took place in March of 1975, and upon his return Kreibich declared that he was no longer a Marxist anymore and that extreme elements could not really be expected to be part of any kind of meaningful cooperation in university matters. Consequently, moderate elements gained a majority in the university council, and this body subsequently elected moderate candidates to key positions in the administration of the Free University in 1975. Moreover, the Free University's old professoriate again re-established final authority over many of the appointments made by council presidents and the senate was able to eliminate the courses set up young, often Marxist-oriented, tutors.⁷⁹⁵

In short, we can safely state that it was in 1975 that those reforms proposed by the United States in 1968-1969 came to grief in such domains as expansion of the student and junior teaching staff, representation in administrative bodies, and reduction of the power of the old professoriate. This failure of the American-sponsored reforms was, in our opinion, caused by following factors. First, the United States was likely to have discovered that the reforms had only led to the power gained by radicals, Marxists, socialists, and communists in the universities, estimated as dangerous for the political stability of the Federal Republic. Deciding between reforms and stability of the universities and political life, they chose the latter. Second, the German professoriate which had lost its position and power had managed to bring

⁷⁹⁴ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 403.

⁷⁹⁵ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 392.

about a counter-offensive policy against the reforms. They were able to cooperate with the moderate segment of students in revising the reforms by introducing a new law concerning higher education. Third, the replacement of the Brandt government had also impacted the revision of the 1969 reforms. The new Chancellor of West Germany, Helmut Schmidt, on taking power in 1974, had no intention of flirting with radical elements and supported the conservative professoriate.

3. Decline of American-West German university cooperation, 1975-1990

The cooling of American-West German relations in the domain of education emanated from the raging years of 1965-1975. Both governments reduced financial support for bilateral educational contacts starting in 1976. German politicians, following the opinion of the professoriate, openly stated to the American government that educating German students in the United States was undesirable. Professors were highly skeptical about any real need to cooperate with American universities in the field of social science, in the belief that the reality of the academic scene in two nations (such as the wide qualitative difference between American and German universities, the lack of real equivalencies between the universities of both countries in terms of degrees and credits, and with little guarantees that students returning to Germany would be admitted to German universities) diverged too much to develop cooperative relationships.⁷⁹⁶ This skepticism was the one officially stated, but there were unofficial statements from professors insisting that it were the United States which had infected German young people with radicalism and had exploited this to transform German universities.

In order to eliminate this image, the United States encouraged American universities at the end of the 1970s to develop private partnerships and affiliations with German universities in order to improve their library holdings, strengthen language departments, develop area studies, establish new departments, and conduct exchanges of students and faculty members.⁷⁹⁷ However, such projects developed too slowly to have much bearing on the German university system.

⁷⁹⁶ University of Arkansas Libraries. Special Collections. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Historical Collection. Manuscript Collection 468. Box 317. Folder 17. Germany, Federal Republic of.

⁷⁹⁷ NARA. Record Group 59. Records of the US Board of Foreign Scholarships, 1971-1980. Box 7, 27.

By the early 1980s, the American government concluded that their policy aimed at transforming German universities had failed. This appraisal occurred during the most depressed period in American-West German bilateral relations, when power in Germany was assumed by the “Sixties” generation. These former anti-American radicals, the very ones who had attacked the *Amerika Häuser* (the American Institutes) and disrupted lectures, had become politicians, successful businessmen, professors, and editors. American diplomats found that “the German television coverage of the US continuously negative reflecting the ascendancy of ‘60’s-generation Germans to editorial positions as German TV networks. This creates ‘an ever increasing gap’ between Germany, NATO ally, and the negative American on German TV.”⁷⁹⁸ During this period, there was considerable degree of misconception and misunderstanding about the US in Germany and the FRG in the United States. American experts again stated that this poor state of affairs was due to a deficit of knowledge, resulting from the quality of teaching about each other in both countries.

President Ronald Reagan endeavored to improve this situation by proposing that the federal government enhance American-German educational ties by simulating the development of American studies at German universities and German studies at American universities, and through the exchange of students and professors. By 1988, the Reagan Administration was able to improve the situation as a result of the student exchanges: about 800 German students participated in American governmental programs in 1988 versus just 100 in 1970. The professors, however, continued to boycott the American programs: about twenty German professors participated in the American programs in 1988 versus eighty in 1970.⁷⁹⁹ As a result, West Germany sank to the last place in the statistics relative to West European professors invited by the American government.

There is no doubt that the American government had every intention of correcting this situation, but suddenly the events occurring in East Germany seemed far more important than the problem of the victory of the conservative professoriate over reforms.

⁷⁹⁸ NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural Affairs. Lot 98D 252. Box 169-172, 205-206.

⁷⁹⁹ *International Exchange and Training Programs of the US Government. Annual Report, 1988, 1989* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, United States Information Agency, 1988 and 1989).

II. Soviet Policy in East German universities

East Germany took a priority place in Soviet international educational policy during the period of mid-1960s through to 1990. No other country in the East Block was involved so intensively in Soviet educational exchanges as the German Democratic Republic. It became the leading country for numbers of students, professors, scientists, and specialists in higher education trained in the USSR. Moreover, German universities had most of the Soviet experts in the field of higher education sent by Moscow to foreign countries.⁸⁰⁰ Evidently, the focus of attention by the Soviet government on Germany was determined by its strategic and specific location on the European Cold War map. The Soviets could not allow East Germany and East Berlin to fall prey to the American and West Germany cultural offensive. Hence, Moscow tried to gather a majority of students and professors through the ideological indoctrination.

Soviet policy towards East German universities can be divided into two phases. The first phase was 1965-1972 when the political regime in East Germany implemented new reforms in universities that increased the ideological pressure on students. The second phase was 1972-1990, when the Soviet government, dissatisfied with the reforms made by the GDR regime, decided to implement its own reforms aimed at German universities, which ultimately failed.

1. Preventive reforms against student radicalism in the universities, 1965-1972

The situation in East German universities

In contrast to West Germany, where new universities and new departments were rapidly expanding in mid-1960s through to the mid-1970s, the number of universities in East Germany increased very little degree: from six in 1945 to seven in 1962, and that due to the renaming of the Higher Technical School in Dresden as the Technical University.⁸⁰¹ The number of East German students was less than that of West German students. However, in contrast to the situation in West Germany, where the number of potential students was much greater than the universities

⁸⁰⁰ The Russian State Archive of Modern History. Record Group 5. Inventory 69. File 578. Page 4; Record Group 5. Inventory 55. File 55: 29.

⁸⁰¹ The total number of higher educational institutions in East Germany was 54 vs. 228 established in West Germany before the end of the Cold War.

could admit, the situation in East Germany was just the opposite. The number of high school graduates could not provide for the needs of universities of numbers of fresh students. East German universities and social sciences, departments, in particular, were permanently short of students, because a great number of students, originated in lower social groups, demonstrated weak knowledge and could not graduate from universities. In order to resolve this problem, the government of East Germany recruited workers and students from vocational schools to become students in universities. However, even this did not resolve the problem of the university student shortage.

The building of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 was the turning point that forced intellectuals and university people to adapt to the political regime in the German Democratic Republic. The majority of East Germans most likely remained anti-communist, albeit with decreasing emotional fervor.⁸⁰² The popular temper among university people was no longer one of potential revolt. Many of the truly dissatisfied professors and students had been able to flee through the open Berlin border before the Wall was built.⁸⁰³ Those who remained in East German universities found themselves under permanent ideological pressure, and the regime fought hard to prevent intelligentsia from challenging the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism.

In contrast to West German universities, where the student movement boiled up against the United States and against the conditions of student life and teaching, the East German universities led a wretched existence. Students did not march in the streets to demand academic freedom and did not publicly denounce the Soviet Union as an imperialistic country as West German students did. Students in the GDR did not pelt professors with tomatoes. It would appear that students and the professoriate in the East remained largely silent. However, that silence concealed tacit disobedience and protest. This masked and soundless opposition frightened the governments of both the Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union during the period of student demonstrations occurring in the West. The political regime understood that the events going on in West German universities could not help but influence part of the East German student body. Thus, as long as the

⁸⁰² "Document 113. Special Report Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency, May 28, 1965," in *Foreign Relations of the United States 1964-1968*, vol. XV. Department of State. Office of the Historian, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-1968v15/comp1> (accessed 5 April 2009).

⁸⁰³ *Ibid.*

student upheavals that had started in Berlin and Munich in 1965 went on, the Ulbricht government and Moscow discussed the need for new reforms in the universities in order to prevent any possible development of events on the Western model.

University reforms

The idea of reforming the universities was introduced by the SED in 1965. The main goal of reforms was to exert more rigorous control over students in the universities and to prevent them from being influenced by the West through expanding the teaching of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. To achieve this goal, the government of East Germany sought to alter the structure of the universities by establishing larger departments, known as *Sections*, instead of faculties, by reducing the study period from five years to four years, and by revising once the curricula in every university. The revision of curricula was introduced by a mandatory inclusion of Marxist-Leninist philosophy in every academic program, every syllabus, and, of course, lectures, including courses in mathematics, physics, and other applied sciences. Students were therefore compelled to study Marxist-Leninist philosophy as part of every discipline, not just through a separate course on Marxism-Leninism, as had been the case earlier. Moreover, to prevent any possible student opposition, the political regime applied the Soviet pedagogical idea of the unity between academic knowledge and so-called educative work.⁸⁰⁴ This meant that a university student should not only absorb specialized knowledge in various subjects, but he or she had to be fostered by or educated through everyday indoctrination.

This package of reforms was elaborated by the German communists, but the Soviet government did not initially pressure the SED to initiate these reforms as the United States had done it with respect to the West German government in 1969. Soviet diplomats, however, on examining this plan of reforms in detail forecast that open and deep indoctrination in every discipline could arouse the opposition among the German professoriate. In reality, professors simply refused to introduce these additional segments devoted to Marxist-Leninist philosophy in their lectures. Discussing potential opposition to the new reforms, Soviet diplomats encouraged the Germans to negotiate with the professoriate in

⁸⁰⁴ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9518. The Committee on Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries at the Council of Ministers. Inventory 1. File 883: 93.

advance and to convince them of the need to increase the amount of academic hours for the ideological part of their lecture courses.⁸⁰⁵

Discussions about reforms and negotiations with the professors lasted for a long time. However, the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968, notably the student demonstrations and arrests at the University of Prague, became a catalyst for accelerating the reforms. By the end of 1968, all discussions were terminated, a governmental commission was established, and during the following four years the reform plan was formally implemented despite opposition from the universities and part of the professoriate.

The traditional German subdivision of the universities was reorganized into a number of more manageable departments (sections). These departments reduced the number of faculties: for example, instead of 167 faculties and institutes, 23 departments were established at Humboldt University. Every university established general departments of Marxism-Leninism, economics, sports, foreign languages, a pedagogical department, and several departments for specializations. However, two faculties kept their previous structure and formal title: the Faculty of Medicine and the Theological Faculty. Instead of a rector, the position of the director was introduced.

To the extent that the establishment of the departments had been discussed beforehand with the universities, this aspect of the reforms was not rejected by the universities. Yet, following this transformation, the government then introduced a new set of changes in the structure of the universities, which had not been proposed and discussed previously. The senate, a traditional structure of the German university system, was eliminated in 1969. The communists liquidated this organ of possible mobilized opposition and established three different semi-academic and party organizations instead of the senate: Public and Academic Councils and a University Assembly. The SED now completely controlled these broken, disconnected, and weakened segments of academic life. There is no doubt that this came as a strong blow against those voice of professors who wanted to stop reforms and any further Marxification of the curriculum. By breaking up the senate, the communists intended to prepare the universities for the main transformation of curricula that would end up causing new discord with the professoriate.

Following these transformations, the government of the GDR began revising university academic programs and curricula. This was to be a

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid., 23-25.

new stage in the ideological indoctrination of every student. The SED proclaimed that the task of the universities was to give students an all-round education and instruction in order to develop socialist character through political education, socialist military training and Marxist-Leninist studies. The departments of social studies and Marxist-Leninist philosophy became the main instruments for fostering this new generation of loyal intellectuals and intelligentsia. The departments were responsible for requiring all students to study Marxist-Leninist philosophy, and the history and contemporary policy of the SED, so deeply that the philosophy would become a *personal conviction* of everyone. Thus, the idea of making Marxism-Leninism the personal belief and value system of every student became an essential factor of the 1969 reforms in East Germany. The students were compelled to study the Marxist-based social sciences such as the history of the workers' movement in Germany, political economics, and Marxist-Leninist philosophy throughout the full period of their university studies. Before 1969, East German students had studied these subjects only during their first two years. Thorough indoctrination was also achieved through controlled reading, discussions, the writing of numerous papers, and summaries of books, etc. Every student had to participate in student competitions featuring research papers on its Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Moreover, to convince students that the Western philosophy and value system were not appropriate for a student in a socialist society, every student had to write a paper criticizing so-called bourgeois ideology. This approach was centered on a new pedagogical concept from the Soviet Union designated to foster a student who was an active fighter against the West.

More importantly, all professors specializing in Marxist-Leninist philosophy, history and other social disciplines, as well as in mathematics, physics, chemistry and other applied disciplines, had to expand or introduce additional lectures on Marxism-Leninism. Those students who studied applied sciences and carried out research in the field of technical disciplines had to somehow apply their knowledge of Marxist-Leninist philosophy in order to resolve the theoretical and practical problems of their applied fields of studies.

Hence, all university curricula and every syllabus, both in the arts and the applied sciences, were revised in 1969 to contain additional information about Marxist-Leninist philosophy. However, this was a formal revision, and functionaries could not really ensure that this

addition to their lecture courses would actually be articulated by the professors. To control every class was not possible, even for the Stasi.

The final innovation concerned university admission requirements and was introduced in 1971. Like the elimination of the senate, the new reform of admission requirements was begun without any prior negotiations with the universities. These new admission regulations made it more explicit that political orthodoxy was the main prerequisite for admission to universities. While political criteria had been included in previous admissions requirements introduced during the Occupation period, the prevailing emphasis had remained on academic qualifications. The new regulation now clearly manifested the primary consideration for the ideological needs of the state. The preconditions for application and admission were: 1) active participation in socialist society and a readiness to actively defend socialism; 2) a readiness to fulfill all demands of a socialist society and, upon completion of studies, to submit to the established procedures for job placement. Applications contained an evaluation of the applicant's total personality written by a former supervising school, factory, or army official, in consultation with a political functionary. Moreover, strong political control was injected into the admission process by the new provision that the admission panel of each institution should include one representative each from the FDJ and SED. The new regulations eliminated the panel of three educators which previously made the initial recommendation for admission on strictly academic grounds.

By 1972, these reforms were formally being carried out, and there is no evidence of public, open opposition from professors and students. Only the introduction of compulsory military service for university students and university courses on military training, caused open disaffection among students at Leipzig University. A few students marching near the university were arrested and expelled from the university.

The government of East Germany seemed to be satisfied with the outcome of the reforms. The Soviet Government through its diplomats in Berlin, however, showed displeasure with the reforms made. The Soviets, after making their own secret analysis of the reforms, found that the German professoriate did not really implement the mandatory inclusion of Marxist-Leninist philosophy in their courses. The Soviets noted that those professors, who told the students how this philosophy could be applied in mathematics, physics, and other sciences, did so without any personal conviction, and often ironically. The Soviet government was

convinced that East German professors were repudiating the indoctrination of students, contrary to what the reforms required. Still, the Soviet experts considered that the professors were not an oppositional force as they had judged them to be during the Occupation period. They reported that these academics simply did not want change in their lives and professions and preferred to maintain the old German traditions in education such as academic freedom and isolation of university from politics, which ran counter to the Marxification policy. Thus, their position vis-a-vis the proposed innovations was known as the *conservatism of the German professors*.⁸⁰⁶ In response to this, the Soviet Government elaborated its own plan of reforms to overcome this strong conservatism on the part of the German professoriate, and after brief negotiations with the SED, their plan was carried out by means of Soviet visiting experts and professors during the ensuing following years.

2. The conservatism of the German professoriate and the failed Soviet response, 1973-1986.

Soviet visiting experts at every East German university reported to Moscow in the early 1970s that there was no university where the curriculum or syllabus for every discipline had been organized according to the requirements of the reforms of 1969. As we mentioned, the reason for this failure was the conservatism of the German professoriate, most notably their persistent reluctance to change university academic programs and to indoctrinate students. This reluctance was difficult to control, because professors did introduce the required elements in the syllabi and some of them also included remarks about Marxist-Leninist philosophy in their lectures to students, but without any so-called personal conviction, the Soviet experts noted. The professors, in the opinion of the Soviet visiting experts, did not believe in Marxism-Leninism, and this feeling was transmitted to the student body. Moscow concluded that “the German professors did not indoctrinate students, and they did not know how to indoctrinate them; moreover, they themselves needed to be indoctrinated in the spirit of socialism.”⁸⁰⁷ The worst situation emerged in the departments of pedagogy and Russian studies where anti-Soviet feelings ran rampant. This sort of conservatism was the chief obstacle to fostering new socialist generation, and it was subjected to be uprooted.

⁸⁰⁶ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9563. The Ministry of Education of the USSR. Inventory 1. File 4974: 36-37.

⁸⁰⁷ Ibid.

Following on this state of affairs, the Soviet Government made a decision to revise the curriculum of every university once again. Selected Soviet professors were assigned to implement this new project. According to the plan, they were to visit every university and, through collaboration and personal contact, convince every professor to honestly revise the syllabi along the lines of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. In addition, these Soviet experts were to urge their East German colleagues to insert changes into the curriculum at those universities where the professoriate had been to weaken the ideological courses. The Soviets paid special attention to personal contacts between German and Soviet professors as they had done during the Occupation period. The visiting professors attempted to establish contacts based on trust with their partners, to organize a friendly environment, and to convince Germans to become Marxists according to the Soviet model. There is no doubt that this was pure utopian fantasy on their part, but the three actors in this projects – the Soviet government, Soviet professors, and their colleagues at East German universities – played this game from 1973 until 1986. The project was finally terminated in 1986 due to its failure and a lack of financial resources in the Soviet budget.

During the period of 1973-1986, the number of Soviet professors and specialists in the domain of higher education continued to increase from year to year. This changed the parameters of statistics for the academic exchanges between the Soviet Union and East Germany: the professoriate but not the student body took top billing in the statistics. Every year 100 Soviet professors on average were sent to seven universities.⁸⁰⁸ So, every department in an East German university included a number of Soviet experts who worked with the teaching staff. The Soviet professors received the new title of “consultant” in the field of higher education. In addition, German professors were invited by the Soviet government to learn models of curricula and indoctrination. Every year, twenty to thirty professors visited Soviet universities.⁸⁰⁹

The Soviet experts were able to make a lot of revisions. By 1974 they had reformed the curriculum of all academic programs. First, universities increased the academic hours for the Marxist-Leninist studies both in the applied science and humanities departments, however, this

⁸⁰⁸ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9606. The Ministry of Higher and Vocational Education of the USSR. Inventory 1. File 301: 2-28.

⁸⁰⁹ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9518. The Committee on Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries at the Council of Ministers. Inventory 1. File 741: 226.

was only on paper. Second, the number of academic hours allocated to both specialized disciplines and ideological ones became almost the same in every departments. For example, future engineers in building and construction studied mathematics and the history of the German labor movement in an almost equal hourly load (*Table 9*).

Table 9
*Distribution of the week's hourly load for first-year students specializing in building and construction studies (an excerpt)*⁸¹⁰

| Semester | I | | II | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Discipline | Lectures | Seminars | Lectures | Seminars |
| History of the German labor movement | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Mathematical analysis | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |

The third achievement of the Soviet visiting experts concerned an increase in the general number of hours allocated to Russian language studies in both the humanities and the applied science departments of the universities. Before 1974, students in the Slavic Studies departments alone studied the Russian language. In 1974, Soviet professors were able to insert the discipline in every department of the university. Hence, those departments where the ideological disciplines were not the disciplines of specialization increased their number of classes for students (*Table 10*).

⁸¹⁰ G. Taukach, *Vyssshaya Shkola GDR (The Higher School of the GDR)* (Kiev: Vischa Shkola, 1973), 85.

Table 10
 The hourly load for students specializing in agriculture (an excerpt)⁸¹¹

| Discipline | Total hours per 8 semesters | Total hours in % |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Marxism-Leninism | 296 | 8 |
| Russian language | 128 | 3.5 |
| | | |
| Total number of classes of all disciplines | 3640 | 100 |

As follows from Table 10, ideological disciplines including Russian language studies accounted for more than eleven percent of total academic hours allocated for a student during one semester. Earlier, these disciplines composed three percent of the total component of disciplines of an academic program. If we compare this data with the number of hours allocated for Marxist-Leninist studies in the humanities and, therefore, in the most indoctrinated of the departments, the pedagogical departments, for example, we see that the hourly load was almost equal between the departments of applied science and humanities (cf.: *Table 11 and Table 10*).

Hence, the Soviet idea that Marxism-Leninism should be a deep personal belief for every student was realized through an increase in the number of lectures, seminars, and other classes in both the applied science and the humanities departments of the universities.

⁸¹¹ R. Keler, *Vysshee Obrazovanie v GDR (Higher Education in the GDR)* (Berlin: Nauchno-Issledovatel'skiy Institut Vushego Obrazovaniya, (Research Institute of Higher Education), 1973), 26.

Table 11
 The hourly load for students specializing in pedagogy (an excerpt)⁸¹²

| Disciplines | Total hours per eight semesters | Total hours in % |
|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Marxism-Leninism | 320 | 7 |
| | | |
| Total hours | 4720 | 100 |

As follows from Table 10 and Table 11, students at universities spent seven to eleven percent of their university time attending such courses as “Dialectical and Historical Materialism,” “Scientific Communism,” and “History of Workers’ Movement” and another four to five disciplines of this sort, and wrote summaries of almost all the works by Marx, Engels, and Lenin within the framework of special seminars.⁸¹³ In order to enforce the ideological education of students, Soviet professors wrote and published a number of new textbooks translated into German in the GDR such as “Dialectical Materialism and its Enemies,” “Critique of Falsifiers of Marxist-Leninist Philosophy,” “History of the Soviet Union for Students of the GDR,” and others.⁸¹⁴

On introducing these additional revisions to the curriculum, the Soviet government and Soviet experts paid special attention to the departments of history and the pedagogical departments in the universities. These departments taught future teachers in schools and carried out important research projects in the field of German history and pedagogy. In addition, these departments attracted the greatest number of students, because diplomas from these ideological departments ensured a good party career in a socialist society.

The departments of history were turned into centers of so-called scientific collaboration between German and Soviet historians in 1974–1975. Scientific collaboration in the field of history meant carrying out cooperative research projects by German and Soviet university teaching staff concerning certain questions, holding conferences and seminars, and also editing monographs. The aim of this cooperation was a conventional one: to take control of the mainstream of historical research carried out by Germans and to convince them at last to apply Marxist-Leninist

⁸¹² Vorobjev, *Vysshee Obrasoovanie (Higher Education)*, 120.

⁸¹³ Keler, *Vysschee Obrasoovanie (Higher Education)*, 25.

⁸¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 48.

philosophy in their investigations. Such control was determined by the fact that the part of the German professoriate known as the conservatives continued doing research on irrelevant themes (in the opinion of Soviet ideologists) such as the “Development of a German National Language from the 16th to 18th Centuries.”⁸¹⁵ Instead of this and other irrelevant topics, the Soviets proposed “Modern Bourgeois Historiography and its Critique,” “The Role of the People at Different Stages of History,” “The Laws of Historical Process,” “The Policy of the USSR on the German Question,” “The History of the International Movement,” etc.⁸¹⁶ Research questions were elaborated and approved by Soviet politicians in Moscow and then recommended to German colleagues. This cooperation helped maintain “an ideological vitality” among German intellectuals, and from year to year themes for joint research projects were repeated. All scholarly developments in history were placed under the control of Soviet scientists. Even if German scientists had positive views concerning Western philosophy or their own treatment of history, they would not have any opportunity to report this to a larger audience. Almost all publications about history were the result of scientific cooperation with the USSR or were reviewed by Soviet scientists. As a result of this scientific collaboration, historians of the Soviet Union and GDR published 400 scholarly papers, 67 books, and prepared 116 new lecture courses for students by 1977.⁸¹⁷ By 1976, all departments of history at German universities and faculties of history at Soviet universities had formed new, standard and similar academic programs with the same number of disciplines.⁸¹⁸

However, in the mid-1980s the Soviet government, evaluating the results of the scientific collaboration with German historians, stated that the historians in German universities were not yet true Marxists, the implantation of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy had not succeeded, and the German professoriate still resisted carrying out collaborative research projects on such topics as revolution, people’s movements and others of a

⁸¹⁵The Russian State Archive of Modern History. Record Group 5. Inventory 35. File 102: 10.

⁸¹⁶Ibid., file 223: 121-149.

⁸¹⁷The Russian State Archive of Modern History. Record Group 5. Inventory 69. File 578: 4.

⁸¹⁸State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9563. Inventory 1. File 2032: 116-122.

similar nature.⁸¹⁹ Hence, some historians were able to escape Soviet indoctrination and maintain their old traditions of studying history.

Pedagogy became the new target for Soviet intervention during the entire period from the 1970s until the mid-1980s. This field of studies became the area of the closest contact between German and Soviet professors. The Soviets viewed pedagogues and pedagogical education as an effective instrument in educating future socialist teachers for schools who, in turn, would be able to foster new generations of socialist schoolchildren. This collaboration was therefore aimed at propagating and implanting German pedagogical education the Soviet idea of rejecting the individuality of a person in a socialist society.

In contrast to German historians, German professors of pedagogy constantly emphasized that they bowed to the leading role of Soviet socialist pedagogues. At the expense of German universities, they sent students to be trained at the Soviet pedagogical institutes.⁸²⁰ In this area, the German professors themselves proposed a lot of projects that bore witness to their true orientation around the Soviet school of pedagogy. They studied such questions as “Communist education in the Soviet Union,” “Youth in the USSR,” “The Problems of Youth in West Germany” and so on. To the Soviet diplomats, Germans themselves proposed establishing collaboration between the pedagogical journals in the GDR and USSR. Two famous journals, the “Herald of Higher Education” in the USSR and “Das Hochschulwesen” in the GDR, began a project of joint writing and publishing of scholarly articles. The project folded in 1986 because of financial problems due to the Soviet budget.⁸²¹

Despite such intensive Soviet interference in German universities, Soviet experts involved in the implementation of joint projects in the field of pedagogy encountered a problem relative to the teaching of students, who were perspective teachers of the Russian language in schools, colleges, and universities. In early 1970s, Soviet experts noted and reported to Moscow that the level of knowledge of Russian of the students was dropping year on year. Students who studied Russian language and culture in the pedagogical departments of the universities and their professors openly articulated unfriendly opinions about the

⁸¹⁹ *SSSR-GDR: Sotrudnichestvo i Sblizhenie (The USSR-GDR: the Cooperation and Rapprochement)*, 140.

⁸²⁰ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9563. Inventory 1. File 2032: page no # and 2033: 1-89.

⁸²¹ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9518. Inventory 1. File 883: 138.

Russian language and the Soviet culture imposed on East Germany. One of the Soviet observers reported in 1974: "The old German intelligentsia boasts of German history, the past of Germany, and continues to consider Russians as savage people. The attitude to the Russian language in the families of professors is bad and, therefore, the students do not want to study the language. Teachers of the Russian language have been poorly trained, German schools and universities require too low a level for knowledge of Russian, and propaganda from the West through TV has an enormous influence on German students."⁸²²

After this report, in 1975 the Soviet government sent a group of experts to the pedagogical departments of the German universities to inspect the situation. They reported back about the miserable situation in terms of training of students in the Slavic divisions of the department: "Contemporary and effective textbooks of Russian are absent and no professor is writing one; students study the language only seven to eight hours per week and extra classes outside the university have never been arranged; students and their professors speak Russian very seldom, and their knowledge is very weak; students do not watch movies in Russian, do not organize parties of Russian culture, and do not prepare a student newspaper in Russian; finally, students are admitted to the Slavic division of the pedagogical departments without entrance examinations due to the low popularity of the division and the shortage of students."⁸²³

Moscow was shocked by this state of affairs. Even Slavic studies developed in Nazi Germany were evaluated by the Soviet government as a field of sincere scientific interest for the Germans. The Soviets in comparison to the Americans, who imposed American Studies and maintained the viability of this field in West Germany, had neglected this area. Moscow had established chairs of Russian language and Slavic studies during the Occupation and then let them take their own course. In 1975, the Soviet government decided to correct this mistake by sending a number of Soviet specialists to change the situation by revising the curriculum and writing new textbooks for students.

This group of Soviet specialists in the fields of education, philosophy, pedagogy and the teaching of Russian for foreigners elaborated a detailed plan for cultivating love for Russian in German universities. Initially, they moved from university to university where

⁸²² State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9563. Inventory 1. File. 4974: 36-37.

⁸²³ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9563. Inventory 1. File 4974: 1-60.

they delivered special seminars for professors about the Soviet approach of preparing a teacher of Russian for a socialist school. The Soviet specialists demonstrated curriculum models composed in the Soviet Union, proposing that German colleagues apply them in their universities. According to the documents, the Soviet experts spent one year convincing the German professoriate to revise the academic curriculum of the Slavic divisions. Consequently, they managed to increase the hours allocated for Russian classes. During the next four years, these Soviet experts prepared and published new textbooks for Russian for German students in Slavic studies in the GDR;⁸²⁴ they made students speak Russian outside the universities, involving them in parties, concerts, etc.⁸²⁵ They sent about twenty German teachers, who taught Russian to the Soviet universities annually, and distributed the Soviet teachers who arrived among various universities and schools; this latter universities number reached 100 per year in 1976-79.⁸²⁶

Such intensive projects for the revision of the university curricula should seemingly have been enough to encourage the German professoriate and student body to believe in Marxism-Leninism and therefore to put an end to the influence of old German traditions on the students. However, in 1982 the Soviet government stated that the revision of the curriculum seemed to have been insufficient and, hence, the teaching of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy needed to be further stressed in the pedagogical departments of the universities. This statement was motivated by the events that had occurred in Czechoslovakia and Poland where human rights movements, demonstrations and the popularity of “Charter 77” and “Solidarity” had gained in strength and were destabilizing the regimes. Moscow and Berlin seized upon the danger inherent in these events which could possibly incite the German student body and professoriate as well. In as much as the students and professors of the pedagogical departments had been evaluated as less educated in the field of communism philosophy, the Soviet government was determined to exert its influence on them.⁸²⁷ In 1982-1983, the number of students and professors in the pedagogical departments to be trained in the USSR was doubled. The students were sent into Soviet youth camps where they

⁸²⁴ Ibid., 1-120.

⁸²⁵ Ibid., 1-60.

⁸²⁶ *SSSR i GDR. 30 Let Otnosheniy, 1949-1979. Dokumenty (The USSR and GDR. 30 Years of the Relationship, 1949-1979. Documents)*, 307-308.

⁸²⁷ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9563. Inventory 1. File 4150: 15.

oversaw Russian schoolchildren and studied Soviet approaches to educating the young people. Every student was provided with a special pocket vocabulary containing political terms both in Russian and German and their translation and interpretation.⁸²⁸ The professoriate of the departments was involved in these projects now being initiated by the Soviets; the format of the conferences in the field of pedagogy was selected as being the most effective. German and Soviet colleagues discussed questions as to the ideological education of students, impetuses for boosting the socialist character of students and others, all of which became further annoyances for scholars. Engaging in these conventional measures, the Soviet Union attempted to win the allegiance of the professors; however, it was too late, because, as we will show below, the West's cultural offensive, dissident movements in the East, and the growing economic crisis were destabilizing the strength of the Soviet regime.

Finally, in 1986, the Soviet government recognized once again the fact that the collaborative projects with German specialists in the field of pedagogy, including conferences and other efforts to make them believe in the communist ideology, had failed. The ideology of Marxism never became a personal and deep belief for German students and professors.⁸²⁹ All Soviet projects were seen to be implemented on paper. The curriculum contained the extended hours allocated to ideological disciplines and Russian language, and the German professors published articles devoted to the German revolutionary movement of the working class, and to the ideological education of students, but neither students nor professors truly believed in the imposed ideology. Moscow was inclined to blame the Soviet visiting experts for this failure. Since the early 1980s, Soviet visiting experts and professors were said to have failed to really instill their ideological work in the German professoriate.⁸³⁰ Close to the end of the Cold War, Soviet documents mentioned more and more often the fact that the Soviet Union and Marxism were losing popularity in the GDR, that the professors had become orientated towards the West, and that the United States was effectively imposing its values on the East German intelligentsia through exchange programs, radio, and TV.

⁸²⁸ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9563. Inventory 1. File 4974: 1-120.

⁸²⁹ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9563. Inventory 1. File 5186: 1-44.

⁸³⁰ *Ibid.*

3. German students in the USSR and the failure of Marxification

While the United States believed that students in West Germany had become true Marxists by the end of the 1960s, the Soviet Union was permanently dissatisfied with the low level of Marxification of the students in East Germany. To reinforce the ideological allegiance of East German students – the future ruling elite – the government of the Soviet Union took various steps. Long-term training in Soviet universities was always considered to be the most direct way to influence those students who aimed at making a career in GDR society.

As we mentioned above, the Soviets began training the German student body from 1952. And in 1961 the Democratic Republic occupied the first place among other Eastern European countries in numbers of students educated in the Soviet Union.⁸³¹ The same situation was observed in 1972,⁸³² and in 1979 the number of the East German students studying in Soviet universities became the largest in the entire history of GDR-USSR educational exchanges: 4000 students were studying at that time in the Soviet Union.⁸³³ After that the numbers began to fall; however, in 1989, among other socialist countries, the Democratic Republic sent the most students out of the total number of foreign students who studied in the USSR: 2300.⁸³⁴

In contrast to West German students who studied in the United States for six to twelve months, East German students spent a full period of studies of five to seven years. The majority of them tried to enroll in the applied science faculties of the universities, where ideological indoctrination was strongly outweighed by the disciplines involved, and only fifteen percent of the students agreed to study in the social science faculties. Students were selected by the German government through the one-year special institute at University of Halle established for these students and for high school graduates.⁸³⁵ This institute provided a basic knowledge of Russian and offered the students vacant places at Soviet

⁸³¹ The Russian State Archive of Modern History. Record Group 5. Inventory 35. File 180: 82.

⁸³² State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9606. Inventory 1. File 5349: 2.

⁸³³ *SSSR-GDR: Sotrudnichestvo i Sblizhenie (The USSR-GDR: the Cooperation and Rapprochement)*, 137.

⁸³⁴ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9661. Inventory 1. File 589: 12.

⁸³⁵ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9396. Inventory 19. File 30: 1-11.

social science faculties. However, the government of the GDR continued to report to Moscow that students preferred studying engineering, medicine, and music rather than studying history, sociology, and pedagogy in the Soviet Union. Hence, the aim of the Soviet government to reinforce Marxification through education in the Soviet Union was limited by the fact that students rejected offers to study social sciences in the Soviet Union.

The political events of 1968 in Prague had a great influence on the training of German students in the Soviet Union. After the Prague student demonstrations, the political education of the students arriving from the socialist countries of Europe became of primary importance. Soviet universities had to indoctrinate these students by all possible means. Classes on Marxism-Leninism became compulsory for attendance from 1968 onwards.⁸³⁶ Students studied the Russian language intensively, with an emphasis on the Soviet political terminology; they were sent to summer labor camps to work with Soviet students; they lodged with Soviet families, etc. However, during the ensuing years of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, party observers at the universities reported to Moscow that German students studying the Marxist-Leninist disciplines and passing exams successfully remained the most opposed to Soviet ideology among all the other students arriving from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, and did not believe in the doctrines of this philosophy.⁸³⁷

In 1985 the Soviet government attempted once again to reinforce ideological indoctrination by proposing the idea of a compulsory final examination on Marxist-Leninist disciplines. After long discussion, the government of the Soviet Union introduced this final examination in 1988, in the belief that it would help the students become eager believers in communism.⁸³⁸ However, it was unable to shift the attitude of the students towards this falling ideology: Not one of them took the classes seriously. Classes were not attended, the exams became a formal procedure, and most of the students continued listening to American radio stations like Voice of America and looked towards the longed-for West,

⁸³⁶ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9606. Inventory 1. File 336: 15.

⁸³⁷ The Russian State Archive of Modern History. Record Group 5. Inventory 35. File 180: 185.

⁸³⁸ G. Philippova, *Obuchenie Inostrannuh Studentov i Stazherov v SSSR I Zarubezhom. (The Training of the Foreign Students and Tranees in the USSR and Abroad)* (Moscow: University of the People Friendship, 1991), 27.

which had become closer during the period of Détente and Gorbachev's rapprochement policy.

Hence, without any open opposition such as occurred in West Germany, the professoriate and students were able to more or less repudiate this new ideological attack from the Soviet Union. Although studying Marxism-Leninism, passing examinations, revising curriculum, publishing articles and books, and doing the other mandatory things to survive, both professors and students still did not believe in this imposed ideology. In short, the Soviet policy of cultural imperialism, aimed at fostering a sincere ideological allegiance in students and professors in particular, did not succeed due to the failure of Marxist ideology to be convincing during a time of cultural influence from the United States and the West European countries on the GDR.

III. East German universities: silent opposition towards the Soviet Union and restraint of the German professoriate towards the American cultural offensive

Beginning in the mid-1970s, two new phenomena became visible in the countries of Eastern Europe. The first was a steady expansion of American programs in culture and education, and, the second was the gradual development of a dissident movement among intellectuals. The emergence of these new tendencies was caused by the important political events that occurred in high-echelon international politics during the 1970s. The détente in bilateral relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, and between Western and Eastern Europe as well, brought about the development of cultural contacts between the West and the East; and the development of the international movement in the domain of the advancement of human rights as stimulated by the Helsinki Accords of 1975 contributed to the growth of opposition groups which began demanding more freedom and more civil rights in the countries of the Socialist Block. The agreements signed by all the European countries and the Soviet Union in Finland required respect for civil rights and an expansion of cultural contacts between Western and Eastern Europe. As we mentioned above, the Soviet Union signed these mandatory agreements because the political borders established in Europe after the Second World War were recognized, which increased the prestige of the Soviet Union. Although, the Soviet government exchanged the diplomatic recognition of borders for diplomatic support of the idea of the

advancement of human rights, assuming that this would not be a crucial question for the high-echelon politics, such new phenomena – the presence of American culture and the emergence of human rights groups in Eastern Europe – made a valuable contribution to the collapse of communist ideology.

These two new phenomena emerged in the German Democratic Republic as well. However, the East German case was very specific and distinct from the other countries of Eastern Europe. The main specific features were lack of consolidated and mobilized opposition among intellectuals and university people as well (in contrast to, for example, the development of opposition movements in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia) and the too slow (in contrast to other Eastern European countries) improvement in the East German-American contacts in the domain of culture and education. However, the documents allow the evolution of these two phenomena in East Germany to be traced from 1961 until 1990 and to arrive to the conclusion that the American cultural offensive and internal growth of opposition movements contributed to some extent to the fall of the political regime in East Germany. However, we should emphasize that the German professoriate demonstrated unexpected restraint towards American cultural influence starting in the GDR at the end of the 1970s through to the early 1980s.

Our story about the development of university opposition to the advent of American educational and cultural programs into East German universities could be divided into three periods. The first is 1965-1971: During this period a new sort of university opposition was formed and, separately, the United States indirectly affected the development of the opposition mood of East German intellectuals through a special cultural program. The second period is from 1971 until 1977: The United States began a process of approach towards the East German universities through complex negotiations with the government of the Democratic Republic, and the students showed some signs of opposition activity under the influence of the internal dissident movement. The third period is 1977-1990: The presence of American and West German culture increased enormously in East Germany in the context of the fading influence and popularity of Soviet ideology that finally had a partial effect on a few students and professors who joined the dissidents in 1989.

1. Internal and external sources of university opposition, 1965-1971

Specifics of East German university opposition

The opposition of the university people, defined as open demonstrations and the active position of dissidents groups in university as occurred in Poland or Czechoslovakia, was almost absent in East German universities. The majority of the historians in the field of the dissident movement in Eastern Europe are convinced today that it is incorrect to speak of an opposition in the GDR prior to the opening of the Hungarian border in 1989.⁸³⁹ We, however, consider that the opposition did exist in the GDR but it was another sort of opposition, quite different from the opposition movements existing in other countries of the East Block that could be defined here as *silent and nonviolent disobedience* to the political regime and to the imposition of Soviet indoctrination. This sort of opposition touched only a part of the critical students and professors, and it was associated with the Protestant church, activists on issues such as peace, human rights, women's rights, and ecology.

The erection of the Wall in 1961 stopped the development of the opposition in the GDR since contacts between the two parts of Germany and Berlin were cut, and those in academia who had earlier put up opposition left the GDR before the building of the Wall. Actually, resistance was so thoroughly destroyed by the communists that, for example, the students, professors and staff of Humboldt University were reported to have elected the SED member and former Stasi spy, Heinrich Fink, as Director of the University even in 1990. After the purge in the early 1950s, the universities comprised both those who either believed blindly in communism as devoted members of the SED or those who aimed at making any career that demanded the membership in the Party, and those who accepted the political environment reluctantly but were compelled to remain in the Eastern part of Germany. Such a configuration of academia would not very likely form a new resistance movement against the penetration of Soviet ideology. Moreover, the weakness of the university opposition was determined by the effective policy of the SED vis-à-vis the university professors and students. They could be excluded from the higher education system, which would derail any positive future career and life. As a result, those who felt some

⁸³⁹ S. Pfaff, "The Politics of Peace in the GDR: The Independent Peace Movement, the Church, and the Origins of the East German Opposition," *Peace and Change* 26, no. 3 (2001): 280-300, here 280.

opposition attitudes preferred to be more integrated in the elite than to be excluded from the ruling class.

Nevertheless, covert, hostile attitudes on the part of a substantial segment of the university teaching staff towards socialism, the GDR, and the USSR had been growing after the building of the Wall. The Soviet diplomats reported in the mid-1960s that "...the significant part of intelligentsia, which consists of a number of scientists and university teachers, adheres to hostile attitudes. The majority of teachers adhere to bourgeois views and this negatively affects the social order of the GDR and the socialist transformations implemented in it."⁸⁴⁰ Soviet diplomats, on the basis of conversations with German teachers and German propagandists, noted the following mood of the intellectual elite of the GDR: "...the work among the intelligentsia faces still greater challenges. The old scientific and technical intelligentsia is starting to change its attitude when there are strong political earthquakes... Its representatives affected young intellectuals ... Many oppose the social order by keeping silent... The German intelligentsia is partially incited against the USSR and does not recognize the value of the role of our communication with the USSR."⁸⁴¹

The articulation of a hostile mood was the specific stance of East German university people. Gradually, this mood became the foundation for the birth of a new university resistance movement in the mid-1960s, which continued its development during the entire period of the 1970s, and, finally, crystallized in the middle and end of the 1980s.

Internal sources of university opposition: professors of Marxism-Leninism and students in the theological faculties

It was the communist elite and the professors of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy at the universities who became the real danger to communist ideology toward the middle and end of the 1960s. The professoriate of the universities, being in the service of the ruling party, recognized the fact that the GDR was in need of economic reforms of a non-socialist type and that German party ideology needed to reject some tenets of the philosophy imposed by the Soviet Union. The governments of the GDR and the USSR were concerned about these revisionist ideas flowing from a segment of the professoriate which was member of the SED and taught

⁸⁴⁰The Russian State Archive of Modern History. Record Group 5. Inventory 35. File 102. P. 8

⁸⁴¹ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9518. Inventory 1. File 883. P. 109-110

Marxism philosophy. Soviet diplomats noted that the grounds for this revisionism lay in the weak belief of the professoriate in communism. According to Soviet observations, the members of this opposition were the lecturers who articulated various critical comments about Marxism and who were estimated to be *unconvinced lecturers* in Marxism-Leninism.⁸⁴² The representatives of the German government also noted that even the professor-members of the SED resisted indoctrination. They complained to the Soviet diplomats: “We have a rough time working with the professors in the universities. They are constantly dissatisfied with the situation in the GDR and impart to students their negative attitudes about the party and its ideology. The difficulties with our communication with the intelligentsia are defined by the fact that we have become accustomed to pressure the intelligentsia but not to convince them.”⁸⁴³

Special popularity among the professoriate and student body was attained by a professor of physical chemistry at Humboldt University, Robert Havemann, who was expelled from Humboldt University for his criticism of the SED and for publishing his papers in West Germany in 1966. He was reported to have a strong influence on students because his lectures in the early 1960s became a forum for discussion about revisionism in Marxism. However, he, like some other professors, was a true believer in socialism and communist dogma; he collaborated with the Stasi and heralded the building of the Wall. The SED tolerated him until he published an article in *Der Spiegel* in 1964. He was expelled from the party and dismissed from academic establishments. No protests in the universities ensued, and Havemann was kept under virtual house arrest until his death in 1982.⁸⁴⁴ The regime in the GDR struggled successfully against this first round of opposition that arose roused after the building of the Wall. Some of the professors lost their positions. However, these professors influenced the critical part of the student body, and then organized secret circles to discuss the political situation.

Other signs of new opposition during that period rippled through the theological faculties of the universities, theological academies, seminaries, and the church as a whole.⁸⁴⁵ The reason for the serious

⁸⁴² The Russian State Archive of Modern History. Record Group. 5. Inventory 35. File 102. P. no #

⁸⁴³ The Russian State Archive of Modern History. Record Group 5. Inventory 55. File 55: 21.

⁸⁴⁴ J. Rodden, “The Galileo of the GDR: Robert Havemann,” *Debatte* 14, no. 1 (2006): 37-48.

⁸⁴⁵ The Lutheran Church became the primary shelter for opposition groups. The East German Catholic Church did not support the opposition groups as the Protestant Lutheran

dissatisfaction of the theological faculties was the introduction of universal compulsory military service in 1962. Students at universities found themselves under pressure from the this law. Some researchers mentioned that “there were no exceptions for pacifists until the introduction of an unarmed alternative military service in 1964, still under the auspices of the army. Those students doing this alternative service had to suffer considerable social disadvantages, such as being excluded from university and being conscripted at an older age, thereby risking being torn away from their young families.”⁸⁴⁶ Scholars now assume that the introduction of military service contributed to the civil rights movement in the GDR. Students in the theological faculties were the first to protest against the introduction of this law by marching in the streets near the University of Leipzig. They also became the first to protest against the planned deconsecration of the parish church at the University and against the Soviet intervention in Prague in 1968.⁸⁴⁷ Years later, as is well known, they were the ones who organized the first demonstration against the collapsing regime in 1989. The centers for this sort of opposition were three theological establishments of higher education in Leipzig, Naumburg, and Berlin.⁸⁴⁸ Still, the government was successful in suppressing this opposition: Students from the theological faculties were excluded from the universities and sent to factories to join the ranks of the working class. The church did, however, play an important role in the mobilization of protest in the fall of 1989.

External sources of university opposition: the American cultural offensive against East Berlin

Undoubtedly, what weak opposition there was in German university circles was fed by various contacts (letters, parcels, and personal meetings) between Germans of West and East, as well as by the American presence in West Berlin. Since the early 1960s, German propagandists and Soviet diplomats noted the fact that West German

Church did. In 1985 the Lutheran Church had 6.95 million members, whereas there were only 1.2 million Roman Catholics.

⁸⁴⁶ A. Hadjar, “Non-Violent Political Protest in East Germany in the 1980s: Protestant Church, Opposition Groups and the People,” *German Politics* 12, no. 3 (2003): 107-128, here 108, 124.

⁸⁴⁷ See the memoirs of one of the participants in the demonstration at Leipzig University: D. Koch, *Das Verhör. Zerstörung und Widerstand* (Dresden: Verlag Christoph Hille, 2000).

⁸⁴⁸ E. Neubert, *Geschichte der Opposition in der DDR: 1949-1989* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 1997), 467.

propaganda was irresistible and that it was impossible to stop the decline of German intellectuals' and professors' interest in Soviet culture: "The impact of West Germany on university teachers is not limited by two radio stations. The main thing is family relations between teachers from West Germany and the GDR that comprise millions of letters, parcels, and phone calls. Influence through these channels is much stronger than that of radio propaganda."⁸⁴⁹

Some of the cultural programs of the United States in West Berlin, already forgotten in contemporary scholarship, had a definite influence on the intelligentsia of East Berlin and East Germany. One such program was so-called *Viability Program for Berlin* sponsored by the US government. This program stipulated that West Berlin had to be developed culturally to such a high degree in order to demonstrate to the population of East Berlin the advantages and superiority of Western brand of culture and education over the socialist one. The cultural development of West Berlin was centered on the enlargement of the cultural, scientific, and educational establishments in West Berlin, and on transforming the city into an international center of science, cultural institutions, and education. This project was a constant irritation for Moscow which clearly saw the dangerous influence that the culture of West Berlin represented for intelligentsia of East Germany.

Even before the erection of the Wall, those American experts and politicians who stayed in West Germany stated that culture and education had a role of critical importance in demonstrating the capacity of a free society. The American government considered that the development of universities and research centers in West Berlin (the Free University and Technical University, various pedagogical institutions, and state libraries) should be the tool for making West Berlin a developed and integral part of the West. After the Wall went up in August of 1961, the leader of the American Mission in Berlin, Lucius Clay, sent a letter to the Department of State about transforming Berlin into the most important cultural and educational center in the Western World. The Department of State responded to this letter proposing an increase in the number of young American students in the creative arts studying in West Berlin, and the additional grants for the Free University and international educational programs, cultural conferences and additional projects as part of the exchange program. In February of 1962, Secretary of State Dean Rusk

⁸⁴⁹The Russian State Archive of Modern History. Record Group 5. Inventory 55. File 55: 18-19.

reiterated this proposed program for Berlin and the term “Berlin Viability Program” was coined. Additional financial support was given to the Free University and Technical University, to art and music academies, and to theological seminaries and colleges. The program of the recruitment of West German professors and their dispatch to Berlin was begun. And the American proposal to increase the number of foreign students in Berlin was supported by European politicians. Finally, American universities prepared and realized a project to increase the number of international conferences.⁸⁵⁰

During the ensuing years and until the end of the Cold War, the Berlin Viability Program was developed into a long-range undertaking which helped to restore the confidence of West Berliners in their future through promoting Berlin’s cultural significance for West Germany as a whole. The government of the United States encouraged American private investments and halted emigration from West Berlin so that by the end of 1960s there was a net gain of immigration over emigration. In area of education, the Free University, its American Institute, the Technical University, and the Pedagogical Center were expanded substantially to become international centers for research.⁸⁵¹

Until the end of the Cold War, the Soviets officially articulated their disaffection with this program stating that the cultural development of West Berlin had a political and propagandistic influence on the population of East Germany. The Soviets demanded the transfer of international cultural and educational centers to Bonn in order to maintain the calm around West Berlin. As usual, the actual Soviet answer, as with similar projects before, was to harass travelers connected with the newly established cultural and educational centers.⁸⁵²

Hence, the Viability Program fed the mood of pessimism and criticism of the East German intelligentsia and made the political regime of the GDR suppress the negative attitude of the part of the intelligentsia even more. This skeptical and pessimistic mood on the part of the intelligentsia had a profound impact on a segment of the student body,

⁸⁵⁰ NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural and Public Affairs. Subject Files 1945-1997. Educational and Cultural Agreements, Germany, 1948-1968. Box 123.

⁸⁵¹ NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural Affairs. Lot 98D 252. Box 169-172, 205-206.

⁸⁵² NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural and Public Affairs. Subject Files 1945-1997. Box 124.

who listened, analyzed, and established secret circles in the mid-1970s until early in the 1980s.⁸⁵³

2. America's approach to East Germany, 1971-1977

During the first seven years of the 1970s, the GDR as well as Europe underwent political and cultural changes that affected the behavior of university professors and students.

Initial contacts between the United States and East Germany

Erich Honecker, who assumed the position of head of the East German state in 1971, began introducing some liberal reforms. The intelligentsia at that time hoped to gain more freedom, especially in the domain of censorship. But, as a result, some professors and students began to voice critical observations as to the economic situation in the country. Honecker, however, had no intention of being a liberal, and his toying with liberalism was just to demonstrate to the West on the eve of the international festival of youth, planned for East Berlin in 1973, that socialism could be more democratic. Many students and professors did not understand this tricky policy of Honecker's and the result was that those who demanded more freedom or provoked the people into open demonstrations were interned in psychiatric hospitals.⁸⁵⁴

Nevertheless, Honecker's toying with liberalism, initiated in the context of the politics of Détente was exploited by the United States government as a motive for beginning a dialogue with East Germany. Another formal reason for the political rapprochement between East Germany and the United States concerned the diplomatic recognition of the GDR as a sovereign and independent state by the United States. Hence, the general political situation in Europe and the world was affected by the establishing of contacts between them in the early 1970s.

Before these events the United States, as is well known, rejected any possibility of initiating official contacts with the client country of the Soviet Union. The American government, for example, negatively reacted to initiatives by American academic circles that wanted to initiate cultural contacts with East Germany in 1965. The Department of State disseminated a letter to all American universities about the reasons

⁸⁵³ State Archive of the Russian Federation. Record Group 9518. The Committee on Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries at the Council of Ministers. Inventory 1. File 883: 125-130.

⁸⁵⁴ See in detail the opposition among the intelligentsia during the period 1971-1985: R. Woods, *Opposition in the GDR under Honecker, 1971-85* (London: Macmillan, 1986).

behind the impossibility of contact with East Germany, indicating that “the US does not recognize the so-called German Democratic Republic as a sovereign and independent country and, therefore, has no diplomatic relations with that regime. For this reason, we cannot encourage any relationship between an educational institution here in the US and an East German organization or institution. We have found that East German efforts to foster such relationships, however innocent they may appear on the surface, are usually designed to do no more than enhance the prestige of the communist regime of the Soviet Zone.”⁸⁵⁵ Soon afterwards, German universities began encouraging the US Government to elaborate a more dynamic educational policy with respect to East Germany. The rectors of the Free University, as well as Universities of Frankfurt, Hildeburg and Marburg aspired to sign bilateral agreements with universities in East Germany. In 1970, the rector of the Free University, Rolf Kreibich, initiated the establishment of academic contacts with East German universities. Americans stated that this initiative could cause political repercussions related to Bonn’s Ostpolitik, and the representatives of the West German Ministry of Education publicly criticized this initiative for overstepping the limits of their [rectors] mandate, claiming that the Ministry had no intention of supporting this initiative.⁸⁵⁶

Nevertheless, these external pressures and a certain improvement in the relations between the superpowers allowed the Nixon Administration to consider the expansion of contacts with East Germany. The American administration elaborated on its policy aimed at developing cultural relations between the United States and the countries of Eastern Europe to further ultimate goal of their independence from Soviet control, and to help alleviate the fear and distrust of Germany among the people of Eastern Europe.⁸⁵⁷ In 1972 exhaustive talks about the exchange of university teaching staff and students between the governments of the United States and East Germany were initiated by the government of the United States.

IREX (International Research and Exchange Board), the American non-governmental agency and the principal organizer of governmental East-West academic exchanges since 1968, was selected to the talks. Its

⁸⁵⁵ NARA. Record Group 59. Bureau of European Affairs. Records relating to Berlin and Eastern Affairs 1957-1968. Box 2.

⁸⁵⁶ NARA. Record Group 59. Culture and Information, 1970-1973. Box 392.

⁸⁵⁷ NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural Affairs. Lot 98D 252. Box 169-172, 205-206.

director, Professor Allen Kassoff, went to East Berlin in October of 1972. He was very skeptical about any prospects for early progress. However, upon his return he reported to the American government that GDR officials had evidenced great interest in concluding an agreement in the not-too-distant future. The main negotiators were the East German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, on other side, IREX, together with the Department of State of the United States. The talks took place both in East Berlin and Washington, and lasted three years, from 1972 until 1975. The main and continual line of the talks was about the number of citizen to be sent and to be admitted in both countries as well as the areas of cooperation. The United States insisted on the number of 75 East German professors and students to be sent to American universities annually. The United States demanded that the participants of the exchange agreement specialize in the social sciences, and, vice-versa, the GDR in science and technology.⁸⁵⁸ Finally, Kassoff was able to convince the government of the Democratic Republic to send 25 professors and students, and to allow a parity of participants between the social sciences and the applied sciences.⁸⁵⁹ Actually the government of East Germany and chief of the Cultural Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Wener Bettin, considered that 75 candidates from East German universities could undermine the stability of academic life upon return from the United States. Bettin personally was sure that the signing of the educational exchange agreement with the United States would only bring bitter defeat for East Germany. He understood quite well that the United States would exploit the educational exchanges to demonstrate the weaknesses, deficiencies, and grimness of East German culture, and thus East Germany would lose this cultural competition. He attempted, therefore, to delay the signing of the treaty.

Yet, the Helsinki Accords, signed by all the European States and the Soviet Union in 1975 and stipulating the opening of borders for mutual cultural and educational exchanges, gave a new impetus for concluding the first agreement between the GDR and the USA.⁸⁶⁰ It was an agreement, however, between the government of the GDR and the non-governmental organization of the United States, which was IREX. Politicians in East Berlin, therefore, were dissatisfied with the fact that

⁸⁵⁸ NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural Affairs. Lot 98D 252. Box 169-172, 205-206.

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁰ NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural and Public Affairs. Subject Files 1945-1997. Box 124.

the United States was represented by a private institution instead of the government, even though this private institution obtained funds from the governmental budget.

The number of scholars finally turned out to be smaller than IREX would have hoped. Initially, six to seven scholars participated from each side, and certainly no sensitive topics such as the American political system or the American constitution or the like were allowed to be promoted and discussed. The Americans tried to reserve special quotas for the social sciences and humanities, but, despite this, the German Republic sent scholars specializing mainly in the natural and technical sciences; it was these very scholars, however, who would later join the dissident movement at the end of the 1980s. Americans were more interested in the history of Germany, in music studies, and in philosophy, which ended up becoming the primary areas promoted by the both governments. During the first years, most of the German participants represented the senior staff of the professoriate in East German universities. The Americans, as usual, demonstrated a diversity of formal professional statuses on the part of their participants. They were professors, associate professors, and students.

In the end, the program developed very slowly because of technical problems and mutual suspicion. When the United States proposed to the East German government the idea of the Humboldt University Book Presentation, aimed at presenting 1,000 books to the University, this program was not stymied. American diplomats in Berlin blamed Washington for the initial failure, due to an inability to overcome certain technical difficulties: the Embassy was struck by the fact that this unrealized Book Presentation was due to problems created on the US side. Ambassadors wrote: "If the GDR wanted to subdue our presence, which the embassy does not believe, problems of our own making have made it easier for them to do it..."⁸⁶¹ Moreover, the exchange program did not work efficiently, because the East German government insisted on the conclusion of a formal intergovernmental agreement in the domain of education and culture. This was something that the United States had previously signed before with many countries around the world, but Secretary of State Vance stated that visits of scholars and academicians need not be formalized. In letters addressed to American diplomats in Berlin, he asked them to get the GDR to invite more US lecturers without

⁸⁶¹ NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural and Public Affairs. Subject Files 1945-1997. Box 124.

setting up a formal program.⁸⁶² In response to this, the government of East Germany declared that there would be no expansion of exchanges without the signing of an intergovernmental agreement.

In the two years following the development of the exchange program, the GDR and the USSR began to articulate their concern about the strong and deep influence the programs were having on minds of the intelligentsia. In 1976, the Soviet Union stated that the impact from the exchange program between the United States and the Democratic Republic was too strong in its rather rapid dissemination of information about the United States among intellectuals. In particular, the Soviets were dissatisfied with the participation of artists, and professors of history and sociology in the exchange program, although this number was small.⁸⁶³ The Soviet response to this was not original: it consisted of a further promotion of Marxist philosophy in all fields of culture and science in the GDR, as discussed in the second part of the chapter. In addition, the political regime began to worry about the presence of American culture in the GDR. Acting Foreign Minister of the GDR, Dr Horst Grunert, published an article on the cultural exchanges. He assured everyone that, despite the growing influence of American culture on the German intelligentsia and universities, socialist ideology had not destabilized, and that the first task of the GDR's foreign cultural policy was still exchanges with the Soviet Union, and only secondarily organizing equal exchanges with capitalist countries. Yet, he recognized that countless artists from Western Europe and the United States had already performed in the GDR, and hundreds of foreign books and films had also appeared in the GDR.⁸⁶⁴ This article bears witness to the fact that the regime tried to convince itself that the socialist state was powerful enough to stop the cultural penetration of the West, even though politicians had already foreseen their future defeat in this cultural contest.

Students under the influence of the dissident movement

In addition to the situation around the exchange program, Moscow was concerned about the negative sentiments articulated by great numbers of the intelligentsia, and especially by artists, poets, and singers. The East German poet and singer, Wolf Biermann, became a new star for East

⁸⁶² Ibid.

⁸⁶³ The Russian State Archive of Modern History. Record Group 5. Inventory 69. File 636: 9.

⁸⁶⁴ NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural and Public Affairs. Subject Files 1945-1997. Box 124.

German university students. In 1976, he gave a concert at University of Bochum in West Germany, broadcast to the East by West German radio and TV. The concert attracted the attendance of thousands of West German students, while millions of Germans in the East were able to listen or watch this concert. This event had a great impact on the young people the GDR, who never before had been able to listen to open criticism of the regime. After that, the bravest students began a movement to read Biermann's forbidden works, listen to his forbidden songs, and organize groups of fans of forbidden Biermann material.

Another inspiration for the development of opposition among the student body was the German philosopher and Marxist Rudolf Bahro. Thanks to the exchange programs that existed between West and East Germany, he was able to bring to the West and publish there his famous book entitled *Die Alternative: Zur Kritik des real existierenden Sozialismus*. The book criticized the absence of political and civic freedoms in the GDR, and demanded political reforms. Bahro had been born in West Germany but he had decided to leave for East Germany. During the middle and end of the 1950s, he studied philosophy at Humboldt University and became a student leader as the editor of *The Forum*, the communist student newspaper. However, Bahro suddenly revised his communist views under the influence of Professor Robert Havemann at the end of 1968, proposing reforms for the political system. After publication of the book in 1978, he was arrested and sentenced to eight years in prison. The Western European public and President of the United States Jimmy Carter personally organized a campaign against this decision.⁸⁶⁵ The Stasi was compelled to free and deport Bahro to West Germany.

His book and life attracted a part of both the student body and of the professoriate, who then established secret circles for the reading of Bahro's works, called *The Critical Marxists*. The most famous circle was the group of students at University of Jena, called the *Bahro-Lesekreise*, led by the professor of literary studies Manfred Beyer. Similar groups of students were found by the Stasi at the Department of History of University of Leipzig.⁸⁶⁶ This segment of academia called itself the followers of Bahro, and they, like other revisionists, defended the existence of the GDR but proposed certain transformations of the system. This trend is very important to understand, because most of the

⁸⁶⁵ See in details: Neubert, *Geschichte*, 226-227.

⁸⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 244, 320. See for details about R. Bahro: D. Bathrick, "The Politics of Culture: Rudolf Bahro and the Opposition in the GDR," *New German Critique* (1978): 3.

opposition groups located in the universities would later stand for the continuation of the GDR's existence but in some revised form with more freedoms.

In short, there were two visible but slow processes going on in East Germany during the middle and end of the 1970s. The first was the growth of a semi-open opposition among university students, and the second was the growing presence of Western culture and science that became more and more difficult for the regime to control.

3. Rapprochement of American-East German relations in education, 1977-1990

In 1977, two important events occurred in both Berlin and Washington that provided a new impetus of the development of American-East German ties in education and culture.

The first concerned the appointment of a new head of the Cultural Division at the East German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who supported American-East German cultural contacts. In January of 1977, an unknown ambassador, Kurt Merkel, became the chief of the Cultural Division instead of Wener Bettin. He was much more positive about the American cultural presence in the GDR than his former chief. Just after his appointment, he talked with the American diplomat in East Berlin about working out a new plan for cooperation, and he agreed to American proposals for an increase in cultural programs.⁸⁶⁷ Following this, Merkel organized the American film week, and museum exchanges and exhibits at the end of 1977.⁸⁶⁸

The second event concerned a new concept elaborated and promoted by American president Jimmy Carter that enormously influenced the strengthening of the internal dissident movement in the GDR and the promotion of American-East German cultural ties. In 1977, the President officially declared that the main aim of American foreign policy would be the advancement of human rights in Eastern European countries. The Helsinki Accords provided a legal foundation for supporting various opposition and semi-opposition groups such as the Green movements or peace movements that started developing in the East. This concept expanded financial support of coming from the United States for dissident movements and supplied real stimulus for opposition to the

⁸⁶⁷ NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural and Public Affairs. Subject Files 1945-1997. Box 124.

⁸⁶⁸ Ibid.

communist regimes.⁸⁶⁹ Moreover, the Carter Administration aimed at expanding cultural contacts with the East in order to disseminate this concept in the Socialist Block.

Thus, a new and expanded cultural plan for cooperation between the United States and East Germany was signed in 1977. It was a breakthrough in American policy towards the GDR. The agreement provided a broad umbrella for all exchanges with the United States. Actually, the United States acquired wider access to the East German market in terms of the performing arts, exhibits, books, and films. In one year alone, citizens of the GDR saw exhibitions from US museums, and films, and were able to buy some American books freely. However, the GDR would not permit US scholars to give lectures as the American government did in respect to East German scholars participating in the university exchange program.⁸⁷⁰ The 1977 agreement increased the number of participants in the exchange programs to 40 instead of 25, and, more importantly, American studies became the primary topic for German scholars sent to the United States. However, these studies of the United States were mostly historically oriented and did not imply any engagement in themes concerning the American political system. Moreover, the government of the GDR did not agree to send German scholars for more than two to three months. This can be explained by the great fear of officials had about the strong impact of the West on German intellectuals. Finally, the Germans demanded that an intergovernmental agreement be concluded in the domain of culture between the two sovereign states instead of the existing agreement between one state (East Germany) and a non-governmental agency (IREX). In 1979, the United States agreed to begin discussing a draft of an agreement which would encompass cooperation between universities, study and lecture tours, and textbooks and teaching aids. The primary emphasis was on cooperation in the field of English and American studies⁸⁷¹. The GDR and the US concluded a new cultural agreement. According to the new agreement, American lecturers obtained the right to give lectures in East German universities and to participate in an exchange of textbooks and to provide teaching aids to East German teaching staff. Also, the United States and

⁸⁶⁹ NSC, "Presidential Review Memorandum 28. On Human Rights. July 08, 1977," in *Presidential Directives and Executive Orders*. Federation of American Scientists, <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/direct.htm> (accessed February 15, 2006).

⁸⁷⁰ NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural and Public Affairs. Subject Files 1945-1997. Box 124.

⁸⁷¹ *Ibid.*

GDR cooperated in the realm of radio and television broadcasting and news agencies, and the German book market was open to American scholarly literature.⁸⁷² However, the two sides could not resolve the major point at issue: the distribution of materials. The GDR continued to object to paragraphs in the text of the proposed agreement concerning access to cultural facilities and to public distribution of materials. For the Americans, the question of access and distribution of materials was a fundamental principle of all exchange programs. However, the Germans resisted and, in 1983, American diplomats in Berlin declared that “it would not be appropriate at the present time for the US to continue talks about the distribution of materials, because of the GDR’s unwillingness to include reference to public distribution of cultural, informational, and scientific materials.”⁸⁷³

Despite these difficulties, cooperation in education and culture grew year by year. In 1979-1980, the government of the GDR allowed IREX to invite several rectors of East German universities to observe the work and life of American universities. The rectors of most pro-communist universities such as Dresden and Leipzig came to the United States in 1980. The Americans noted the great success of this program, because it was the first open challenge to communist education. After this visit, the rectors of these universities and universities in Rostock and Greifswald agreed to sign university-to-university agreements between American and East German universities in the domain of American and German studies. In 1981, IREX established The Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences with the GDR. It was a bilateral organization set up to elaborate collaborative projects in those areas. The commission provided the first opportunity for both sides to explore the political and intellectual life of both countries by using archive records. Obviously, this seemed to be quite an achievement for the United States, that is making the GDR more open. In actuality, the first archival projects were only implemented in 1987-1988.

However, the German professoriate specializing in the humanities began to demonstrate some signs of restraint in regard to participation in such projects. Some of them declared that they did not wish to develop American studies or organize any scientific cooperation with American universities. The government of the United States ignored such declarations in its euphoria over the success of other programs.

⁸⁷² Ibid.

⁸⁷³ Ibid.

A new period in the development of American-East German ties began when the Ronald Reagan Administration entered the White House in 1981. He proposed quite a new approach to liquidate the communist influence in Eastern European countries through information, and educational and cultural programs. Reagan was known as a severe critic of the policy of Détente, convinced that the United States should conduct a more active policy towards Eastern Europe and a much tougher policy towards the Soviet Union in order to liberate the region from Soviet ideology. Reagan was the first president to announce that the United States would apply the cultural and educational contacts that existed between the United States and the GDR in order to promote and strengthen the free press, free union trades, democratic political parties, new universities, and non-governmental organizations openly and without taking into consideration the Soviet position. This new, audacious and shocking concept for the Soviet government was called the "Democracy Project." The President announced it officially in 1982 while on a tour of Western European countries. He encouraged Western European governments, private TV channels, and journalists to help the dissidents in Eastern European countries. And his appeal found a broad response among Europeans. Soon the President established a special semi-governmental philanthropy foundation called the "National Endowment for Democracy" and this organization implemented the ideas of Ronald Reagan to implant democracy in the East until the end of the Cold War. The political regime in the GDR and the Soviet Union could do nothing to counter this pressure, because the United States was acting legally and within the framework of the agreements signed. The Soviet Union tried luring the German intelligentsia and German young people through its usual means of disseminating Soviet culture and expanding the dissemination of their outdated communist ideology, obviously and hopelessly losing cultural contest.

Ronald Reagan understood this quite well, and, moreover, his advisers such as the American historian and economist Richard Pipes convinced the President that the 1980s economic crisis would eventually lead to the development of a strong opposition and to the collapse of the political regimes in the East. In point of fact, early in the 1980s the low price of oil forced the Soviet Union to cut financial support for the European communist regimes, including its educational policy there, beginning in 1981. The opposition grew month by month. When the SED introduced compulsory military education in the universities, this became a factor in a consolidation of the opposition. In order to protest, students

became members of the semi-governmental, semi-independent peace movement. Protesting against war in general and the deployment of nuclear weapons in Europe, in particular, the students demanded more freedom in the GDR and a cancellation of military education and service. By the early 1980s, the 100,000 young people participating in this peace movement suddenly turned into the opposition. The peace movement became the platform for students to demand civil freedoms. The Church and the theological faculties of the universities had become shelters for the opposition after their position became freer in the GDR in 1978.⁸⁷⁴ Consequently, in 1981 as University of Leipzig and Leipzig St. Nicholas Church once again became the center of student demonstrations against NATO, demonstrators suddenly began demanding more freedom in the GDR. Previously, students at the Protestant Leipzig Theological College along with other opposition groups had already initiated a discussion forum about the problems of the GDR and the church system. In 1982, dissidents in the GDR, including some students, signed the Berlin Appeal initiated by Robert Havemann. This demanded the neutralization, disarmament, and reunification of Germany. However, it was the students who suffered the most. They were forced to say goodbye to any prospect of higher education.

At the same time, more and more East German professors were being invited by the West German and American governments to participate in various conferences. These short trips became an effective channel for acquainting them with Western science and culture, even within the existing conditions of the well-documented rigid interdictions and censorship in the GDR. The Federal Republic of Germany, with the assistance of the USA, managed to organize a continuous flow of international conferences held on West German territory and was able to invite their Eastern neighbors to attend. Some of the professors stayed on in West Germany. This was extremely disturbing for both German communists and the Soviet rulers in Moscow. One of the Soviet diplomats reported to Moscow that "...the propaganda [of the West] on aimed at university teachers of the GDR has intensified. Here is a most typical example of the behavior of the German university teaching staff: at the end of September of this year, Professor M. Krauze left for West Germany as the adviser for the documentary film 'Marx is alive' that is being made by East German producers, and he has remained there. He

⁸⁷⁴ J. Ott, "Der Bund der Evangelischen Kirchen, Die Protestanten und Die 'Streitkultur'. Der DDR der 80er Jahre," *Revue d'Allemagne* 24, no. 1 (1992): 143-158.

named the reasons of such a step as ‘disappointment in the public system of the GDR’ and ‘professional dissatisfaction.’ Up until that moment he had had a good reputation.”⁸⁷⁵ The increasing flow of professors to the West frightened the Soviet Union so profoundly that in 1983 Moscow demanded a cut in the number of American exchange programs. However, it could not stop the expansion of new ideas in the GDR.

Due to this new and blatant cultural offensive by Reagan, nearly 90% of the population in the GDR was now able to watch at least one of the three West German state channels which began showing a sharply higher number of American films.⁸⁷⁶ US mass culture infiltrated the GDR through West German television.⁸⁷⁷ Moreover, West German broadcasting companies and television channels began communicating with opposition groups so as to be on the spot when they planned any activity.⁸⁷⁸ United States diplomats and journalists from Great Britain and West Germany played a definite role in financially supporting opposition groups in the GDR and other countries, starting in early 1982.⁸⁷⁹

By 1985, the collaborative research projects between the universities of the US and the GDR were touching on sensitive political themes forbidden earlier by the Stasi. In 1985, a conference on German writers in exile was arranged in East Berlin. Scholars began discussing the problem of the image of the US in the GDR, mutual perceptions, and the role of the Soviet Union in German culture, along with the US Constitution and the political system in the United States. East German professors at all the universities proposed developing American studies at their universities in order to attract financial support from the government of the United States.⁸⁸⁰

Obviously, this policy was now destabilizing the ideological foundations of communism in the GDR. The young people especially fell

⁸⁷⁵ The Russian Archive of Modern History. Record Group 5. Inventory 88. File 208: 4.

⁸⁷⁶ S. Fox, “My Bitter America: The Role of Mass Culture in New Identities for East Germans before and after the Wall,” in *Cultural Transmissions and Receptions. American Culture in Europe*, ed. R. Kroes (Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit, 1993), 198-208.

⁸⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁸ H. Behrend, “The Rise and Fall of the East German Civil Rights Movement,” *New Politics* 6 (1997), <http://www.wpunj.edu/newpol/issue23/behren23.htm>, (accessed 27 May, 2009).

⁸⁷⁹ “Stasi Report on the Size and Structure of the East German Opposition, June 1, 1989,” in *German History in Documents and Images*, <http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/> (accessed May 27, 2009).

⁸⁸⁰ IREX, “Annual Reports, 1975-1992,” in Official Web p. of IREX, www.irex.org/resources/annual/ (accessed May 27, 2009).

under the influence of American mass culture. The regime noted that young people demonstrated their insubordination by brandishing by Western icons such as jeans, Coca Cola and rock music. The latter made so strong an impact, that the SED was compelled to organize a number of concerts for young people. German propagandists stated that “the West German cultural presence will increase considerably in the GDR, while the GDR in cultural and ideological terms most likely lose...”⁸⁸¹ But the most dangerous symbol of Western culture for the socialist system was considered by German communists to be the *Burda* magazine, which nevertheless, began circulate in the GDR beginning in the early 1980s.⁸⁸² This West German magazine disseminated the ideas of fashion for women in the society which was in deep economic crises that provoked additional indignation by the ruling regime.

Finally, a new scope for the American offensive and a new impetus for renewed talks between Americans and East Germans were provided by the Geneva summit between President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985. At this summit, Ronald Reagan clearly stated to the Soviet leader the American intention to increase the frequency of educational exchanges between the United States and the Eastern Block. The proposals of the President concerned such programs as the introduction of new methods of teaching English and social sciences in the universities of East Germany, and also the short-term training of students who specialized in the fields of social studies and the humanities.⁸⁸³ The Soviet leader agreed. Subsequently diplomats from East Germany and the United States were able to sign historic agreements concerning the development of American studies in the GDR and Fulbright academic exchanges in 1987. IREX noted that, since the conclusion of this agreement, American scholars were now able to work on topics that five years earlier would have been characterized as

⁸⁸¹ The Russian Archive of Modern History. Record Group 5. Inventory 88. File 208: 18.

⁸⁸² Ibid.

⁸⁸³ NSC, “National Security Directive 194. Meeting with Soviet Leader in Geneva: Themes and Perceptions. October 25, 1985,” “National Security Decision Directive 223. Implementing the Geneva Exchanges Initiative. April 02, 1986,” in *Presidential Directives and Executive Orders*. Federation of American Scientists, <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/direct.htm> (accessed February 15, 2006); “Joint Soviet-United States Statement on the Summit Meeting in Geneva. November 21, 1985,” “Statement by the Principal Deputy Press Secretary Speaking on Soviet-United States Cultural and Educational Exchanges. August 05, 1986. in *The Public Papers of President Ronald W. Reagan*. The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, <http://www.reagan.utex.edu/archives> (accessed 1 March, 2005).

sensitive ones such as the Soviet Occupation period, the role of the Communist Party in East Germany and others subjects.

Gorbachev's reforms in the Soviet Union and the dynamic cultural policy of the United States in the GDR stimulated the establishment of new and open opposition groups. These dissidents began an open offensive against the regime. In 1986, East German dissidents signed a famous Appeal on the anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution which was disseminated in all the countries of Eastern Europe. The letter demanded political democracy, independence, and pluralism based on the principles of self-government for those countries, along with respect for the rights of all minorities there, and for the peaceful reunification of a divided Europe. However, no university professor signed the Appeal. The government of the United States estimated the number of opposition groups to be ten; university professors, however, were not listed as members of these groups.⁸⁸⁴

The same restraint was demonstrated by university students. In the opinion of some American experts, the oppositional mood of the student body was still weak in 1988: "The mood of political activism evident among some segments of the GDR's younger generation has not spread to the country's student body. During the recent wave of political unrest among East German human rights activists and would-be émigrés the student community in the GDR remained quiet. Similarly, only a few students took part in the unofficial peace movement of the early 1980s. Theology students associated with the Evangelical Church have been the one exception to this political apathy. Students have also refrained from open protests criticizing university conditions."⁸⁸⁵ One of the reasons for this apolitical behavior on the part of students was reported to be the strong, professionally oriented position of university students: "In an East German survey, when asked what they considered the most important aspects of their studies, 94% of the students said that 'learning a job' was very important. On the other hand, 'to become politically engaged' was viewed as important by only 36% of those interviewed."⁸⁸⁶ The second

⁸⁸⁴ "An Annotated Survey of Independent Movements in Eastern Europe. Radio Free Europe Research Report, 1989," in *Open Society Archive*, <http://www.osaarchivum.org/files/holdings/300/8/3/text/120-4-279.shtml> (accessed May 27, 2009).

⁸⁸⁵ "Alienation and Protest: Students in Eastern Europe. Radio Free Europe Research Report, 1988," in *Open Society Archive*, <http://www.osa.ceu.hu/files/holdings/300/8/3/text/119-4-7.shtml> (accessed May 27, 2009).

⁸⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

reason for the lack of critical political thinking and activism among students was attributed to the very strict selection procedure. The political allegiance articulated by the university students was the result of their willingness to conform in order to acquire an education. The third factor was “the way in which a student’s studies were organized. Students were given hardly any choice in planning their curricula once a specific focus of study has been chosen. Students of the same department or discipline were put into seminar groups in which they remained for every course during their entire studies. Each group which consists of twenty to twenty-five people, had its own FDJ (the official youth organization) group, which acted as a monitor. As a result, the average student had little possibility of developing and expressing independent or nonconformist thought and behavior. Finally, American experts noted that “for a student the cost of nonconformist behavior was high. Those who took part in unofficial peace or human rights groups or tried to organize political protest within the university were expelled.”⁸⁸⁷ In addition, in the reports, prepared for the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe concerning the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, the Department of State reported that the GDR maintained the tightest control over access to its institutions, implying American access to the mass media, archives, and universities. In addition, the Department of State reported that the state controlled all cultural offerings and cultural policy. Despite this, the American performing arts obtained access to the local market and had a strong impact on East German intellectuals. The American government opened the US Embassy library, which attracted visitors, though they were monitored by the Stasi. Nevertheless, the number of young East Germans visiting the library in particular increased dramatically the ensuing two 2 years.⁸⁸⁸

Right on the eve of the fall of the Wall, the professoriate and the students were observed as having joined two new nongovernmental organizations, *Democracy Now* and *New Forum*, which led demonstrations in Leipzig in the fall of 1989. The professors and students of the theological faculties and applied science departments of the universities led a list of academic representatives.⁸⁸⁹ However, of the twenty-seven initial organizers of the New Forum, only three were students and five professors. One of the leaders of New Forum was

⁸⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁸ NARA. Record Group 59. Office of Educational, Cultural Affairs. Lot 98D 252. Box 169-172, 205-206.

⁸⁸⁹ Behrend, “The Rise,” <http://www.wpunj.edu/newpol/issue23/behren23.htm>.

Professor Jens Reich. Leading this organization, he, like other professors, rejected the idea of the unification of Germany; on the contrary, most of the members of the professoriate who joined the opposition at the end of the 1980s defended the thesis of a gradual reform of the political system in the socialist GDR without uniting with capitalist West Germany. According to the Stasi reports, only three groups out 150 opposition groups that existed in the GDR in 1989 included members who were professors and students.⁸⁹⁰

As a result, university opposition remained passive. Professors preferred to remain silent and not to articulate their negative attitudes towards the regime and its ideology. They also demonstrated coolness, restraint, and arrogance towards the arrival of American culture and values. None of my sources has provided an appropriate answer as to why university people followed this stance. We can assume that the nature of German conservatism – isolation from politics and academic freedom but formal obedience to the imposition of values and silent repudiation of them – defined the behavior of the German professoriate and a segment of the students. They were not loyal to the Soviets, but they perceived the new ideas coming from the West without the enthusiasm that the rest of German adults and young people had. Hence, neither communist values, nor American ones were the foundation of German thinking and this reflected the value system of the German professors. Their normal stance was to simply defend traditional university.

Conclusion

The period of the mid-1960s through to 1990 saw new and dramatic events unfold in the universities of West and East Germany. The universities of both countries endured reforms and external interference, along with the growth of opposition to the imposition of ideologies, as can be readily observed in both West and East Germany.

Two important events happened simultaneously in both the West and East between 1969 and the early 1970s. The university systems of both countries underwent reforms and new interference from their Big Brothers. The internal university reforms and external interference in universities were interdependent. New transformations in West German universities (establishment of the position of president instead of rector and a departmental system instead of faculties; the attempts of the introduction of student representation on a par with the senior

⁸⁹⁰ “Stasi Report,” 3.

professoriate in administrative bodies; enforcement of federal control over the universities through the establishment of a Ministry of Education) were encouraged by the United States in its struggle with student radicalism. New transformations of East German universities (establishment of the position of director instead of rector and departmental (section) system instead of faculties; and a new imposition of Marxist-Leninist studies on the university curricula) were initiated by the government of East Germany to prevent possible student radicalism, but the consequent outcome of these reforms resulted in Soviet interference in the German university system.

Hence, the reforms in both countries had internal causes: the weak development of university infrastructure and difficult student living conditions on campuses with the rise of student population in West Germany resulting in a student movement labeled as student radicalism by the American government. However, this student radicalism had two sides: one was a moderate radicalism that demanded the transformation of the university system, and the other consistent with leftist, radical and extremist movements. The United States supported the moderate demands of the students, because they reflected American intentions regarding the introduction of student representation in administrative bodies and a revision of the curriculum, and so this student unrest was exploited to pressure the German government to transform German universities yet further along the lines of the American model. On the other hand, the United States was totally opposed to the most radical students who demanded the Marxification of university academic programs. Such students were subject to expulsion from the universities in order to prevent their having a destructive impact on the other moderate and apolitical students. Some of these leftist radicals were expelled, some of their leaders were arrested. The reforms proposed to Bonn by the American government were therefore aimed at promoting the demands of the moderates and at taking disciplinary measures against the radicals, communists, and extremists. In East Germany, the reforms initiated by the SED in 1969 were determined by the student upheavals that had occurred in the West. Frightened at this possible influence coming from West, the political regime of the GDR expanded the hours of Marxist-Leninist studies to prevent students from slipping into pro-West sentiments and open opposition. Both superpowers encountered student opposition which differed in the two halves of Germany. While the United States was concerned with the far-reaching Marxification of West German students, the Soviet Union was dissatisfied with the meager

Marxification of students in the universities of East Germany. It would be interesting to know whether, if the West German students were transferred to East German universities and were subjected to Marxification, would they continue promoting this ideology or not. We assume not, because they repudiated all external pressure and cultural interference which they encountered in their universities: West German students resisted the United States; the East German students evaded Soviet indoctrination.

The results of the reforms in both West Germany and East Germany turned out to be contrary to the expectations of the superpowers. We have noted two consequences of the reforms in West Germany. The first was the fact that either the moderate students were unable to gain power in administrative bodies, being pushed out radical students, or they slipped into a Marxist and pro-Soviet position. This, in turn, contributed to the so-called Marxification of university academic programs, which implied a process of bringing the content of teaching, research, and publishing activities under the influence of Marxist ways of thinking. And the second was the fact that the part of the professoriate called the old and conservative professors by the United States lost their power and position at the universities.

Hence, unexpectedly for the United States, which had been neglecting the problems of the senior university staff in favor of the problems created by radical students, a segment of the conservative professoriate which disliked any American interference in German universities managed a counter-offensive against the reforms. They were able to revise the reforms through introducing a new law aimed at higher education in 1975. The traditional power of a professor and senate were re-established, and equal representation of students and professors in administrative bodies, especially in the curriculum commissions, was eliminated. The American government was unable to overcome this strong opposition, which found support late in the day from the new government of West Germany, and admitted that the reforms had failed and that American influence had been undermined. The decline of West German-American cooperation and the reluctance of the professoriate to participate in American university projects during the mid-1970s and 1980s demonstrated this failure.

In East Germany the situation that centered on the consequences of reforms was less transparent due to the covert nature of the opposition of university people. The Soviets were displeased with the reforms made by the government of East Germany as a preventive measure against

possible student radicalism as well as with the disobedience expressed by a segment of the professoriate labeled as the conservative professors by the Soviet Union. In contrast to West Germany, this disobedience was tacit and manifested itself only in a silent opposition to the reforms. The Soviet Union, but not East Germany, initiated a new reform program aimed at eliminating the conservatism of the professoriate through involving them in cooperative historical and pedagogic studies, through expanding contacts between German and Soviet teaching staff, and by encouraging the professors to sincerely believe in Marxist philosophy. This rather utopian program failed in 1986, when Moscow finally admitted that the German professoriate was not and would never become convinced Marxists.

Hence, both superpowers encountered either open or masked forms of opposition from those professors who admired the old traditions of the German universities such as academic freedom, isolation from politics, the repudiation of imposed ideologies, and a powerful position for the senior staff. It was they who withstood external influences either entirely or to a limited extent in both parts of Germany. Both the West German and East German professoriate believed that the rival ideologies – either American democracy or Soviet Marxism – meant a political ideology that undermined the concept of academic freedom and the other traditions of German university life. Both ideologies were repudiated by the professors but with help of different means depending on where a professor lived. This repudiation of external interference became visible during the period of the American cultural offensive begun in East Germany at the end of the 1970s through the early 1980s. While most of the East German population admired the culture coming from the West through television and radio, the professoriate of East Germany, despite the attractiveness of new symbols and despite the intensity of this offensive, showed a cool attitude toward these new values.

Hence, the behavior of both West and East German students and professors demonstrates their ability to diminish the effect produced by indoctrination coming from the United States and the Soviet Union. Resisting external inference in their educational system and life, German students and professors managed to prevent the elimination of the traditions of the German university system.

Conclusion

Both the American and Soviet transformation policies in German universities were intended to build loyal (democratic or socialist) societies in the divided nation. The universities were considered by both powers to be one of the potent vehicles through which either the American or the Soviet governments would be able to implant their political culture in the context of the Cold War. However, in as much as the Cold War was an unstable period in the development of international relations, with bilateral American-Soviet relations knowing periods of both tension and relaxation, their policies of transformation, which followed from this political context, demonstrated different phases, different impacts, and different responses from German university people.

During the initial period of the Cold War, from 1945 through the early 1960s, when the Cold War was proceeding at a steady gait and when the universities in occupied Germany were losing their old traditions under the strong influence of the new values which had arrived together with such politically and culturally divergent victorious powers as the United States and the Soviet Union, the German universities of the divided Germany were more open to deep external reforms. These American and Soviet reforms, despite the divergent ideological and cultural values of both societies, moved more in similar directions than in different ones. Both powers purged the professoriate and the student body, both revised academic programs and curricula, cleansed library holdings, established new institutes, and changed rectors and statutes to make the universities more loyal and favorable to them in the context of the unfolding cultural Cold War. Yet, two things were different in their transformation policies: their ideologies (liberal democracy and Marxism), implanted in courses, textbooks, and in student organizations, and their reactions (soft and/or tough) to the opposition attitudes articulated by German professors and students. During that period, these reforms undermined those traditions of the German university such as its deep philosophical basis, its isolation from public life, voluntary attendance at lectures, the powerful position of its professoriate, and the absence of a strict curriculum.

However, both American and Soviet reforms were shattered by the opposition which developed slowly but steadily in German universities starting in 1945. The imposition of new statutes from above and the replacement of rectors became the first main objects of indignation. The United States gradually acquiesced to the demands of the opposition and

most of the American proposals were not included in the university statutes. The Soviet Union promoted a new and Soviet model of statute by persuading and pressuring rectors and professors. The revision of the university curricula, which implied the introduction of such disciplines as general education, political science, social studies, and American studies in West Germany, and Marxism-Leninism, the Soviet version of pedagogy, and, to some extent, Soviet studies in East Germany, was the second factor that made a segment of the professoriate and the students rise up in opposition. Due to their resistance, revision took a very long time, and only by the end of the 1950s were these disciplines being more or less taught in German universities. In dealing with such an important reform, the Soviet Union turned out to be more persistent than the United States in undermining the opposition and implementing this reform. By expelling those students and professors who opposed the revision of academic programs and promoting loyal lower social groups in the universities, the Soviets were able to insert new Marxist disciplines into the traditional German curricula. The United States, on the contrary, demonstrated a softer reaction to the opposition and tried to introduce their disciplines through establishing close and friendly contacts between the American and German academic communities. Political science, general education courses, and American studies were gradually imposed on the traditional German curricula. However, both powers recognized the fact that German universities had only formally acquiesced to the revision of curricula and that a segment of both the professoriate and the student body did not really go about developing these new disciplines and did not believe in the new ideas brought either by the Soviet or the American powers. The main visible success of the policy of both powers was reported to have been the establishment of new universities, research institutes, and chairs. These new institutions were seen by them as the very means to undermine any opposition and to implant models of either American or Soviet education in Germany. The independent institutes of political science and chairs of American studies set up at universities in West Germany, and the faculties of pedagogy and chairs of Marxism-Leninism set up in universities in East Germany, turned out to be more effective tools for implanting the new disciplines in the universities than attempting to integrate them into the traditional German academic programs.

Due to the existence of opposition, the relationships that both the American and Soviet governments had with the professoriate and the student body were complex and controversial. Both governments

recognized the fact that final success for their reforms depended on a balanced and correct policy with regarding to these two academic segments – professors and students. For both Americans and Soviets, it became evident that the revision of the German curricula, and of the methods and theoretical basis for scholarly research, could be successfully implemented by creating a loyal and friendly professoriate that would implement and maintain either the American or Soviet plans well into the future. In order to create such a loyal professoriate, the American government introduced the system of visiting professors who were from the United States, established contacts with German faculty members, and urged the latter to transform their universities. These visiting professors, who actually shouldered all the reforms, established new institutes and chairs in the universities, introduced new themes and methods of research, wrote textbooks, and filled the libraries with new books. Their activity contributed to the implantation of American scientific inquiry in German universities and to the establishment of mutual understanding between the American and German academic communities. The Soviet authorities created a new professoriate without sending Soviet visiting professors to German universities. They attempted to persuade the German professoriate to revise courses and academic programs according to Soviet ideology; when this method failed, the Soviets turned to a coercive policy towards the German professors. This practice included political pressure and promotion of professors who were members of the Communist Party. The professoriate, while formally demonstrating its loyalty to the reforms, nonetheless remained dissatisfied with the values, disciplines, and ideas that had been imposed.

Students, in contrast to the professors, openly articulated their discontent with regard to both the Soviet and the American reforms. Communism provoked more opposition activities on the part of students than did American liberal democracy during the period 1945 until the early 1960s because of the association of communist ideology with the oppressive promotion of the new admissions rules aimed at expanding the access of lower social groups to the universities. German students ignored these new rules and showed their contempt for the new students who came from families of workers and peasants by blocking access of these students to the universities. This opposition, however, was suppressed by the Soviets by co-opting students in the midst of the political confusion that had unfolded between liberal and pro-communist groups in the universities. This partisan struggle that had been instigated ended up forcing students to choose socialism over liberalism in order to continue

their studies or, by choosing liberalism, to say goodbye to any prospect of a university education. Quite the opposite, however, was true for those students who studied in universities located in West Germany; here they found themselves in a better position. As students acquiesced in setting up apolitical student organizations and organizing student life along the lines of the American model, the United States ended up cooperating more with the students than with the professors. This cooperation between the American authorities and a segment of the student body, however, resulted in tension between the students and the administration of the universities which would give birth to the student movement in the mid-1960s.

The period of the mid-1960s through 1990, when détente was progressing at a steady gait, brought about new and dramatic events in the universities of both West and East Germany. The university systems of both countries underwent reforms and experienced new interference on the part of both the United States and the Soviet Union. The American interference in West German universities was determined by the student radicalism and anti-American attitudes that had developed among the academic community. The new transformations that had occurred in East Germany's universities, along with Soviet interference in the German university system, resulted in a silent opposition to both the communist regime and the domination of Soviet ideology in university academic life.

In West Germany, the American government encountered two sides to student radicalism. On the one side was a moderate radicalism whose proponents demanded improvement in the university system, while on the other was the leftist, radical, and extremist movement. The United States supported the moderate demands of students, because they reflected American intentions regarding further development of student representation in the administrative bodies of, and revision of the curriculum in the universities. These demands were exploited to pressure the German government in 1969 to transform German universities along the lines of American models. These reforms expanded the power of the students and the junior teaching staff in the universities, and, as a result, a segment of the professoriate, labeled conservative professors by the United States, lost its power and position. However, these reforms also gave a voice to radical and pro-Marxist students and the junior teaching staff. Their leading position in administration bodies and in the curriculum commissions, in particular, was considered dangerous for any further movement in German academic life in terms of its Americanization. The United States was totally opposed to these radicals

who demanded the Marxification of university academic programs. Radical students were subjected to expulsion from the universities in order to prevent any destructive impact they might have on moderate and apolitical students.

The old professoriate, which had lost their influence on academic life after the 1969 reform, mobilized themselves around the idea of rolling back the 1969 reforms. This conservative professoriate protested against both the Americanization and Marxification of the universities. They demanded a return to power of the senior professoriate in order to influence the content of the academic programs, of the curricula, and of the disciplines, as well as to dissolve the curriculum commissions and to abolish student representation in the administrative bodies. In the early 1970s, they mounted a counter-offensive against the 1969 reforms. After several years of struggle with both Marxists and those who supported the Americanization of the universities, the conservative professoriate was able to revise the reforms of 1969 through the introduction of a new law in 1975. The traditional power of the professoriate was re-established, and equal representation of students and professors in the administrative bodies, as well as on the curriculum commissions, in particular, was eliminated. The American government was unable to overcome this strong opposition and was forced to admit that the reforms of 1969 had failed and that American influence had been undermined in German universities. The further reluctance of the professoriate to participate in American university projects during the mid-1970s and 1980s demonstrated this failure.

In East Germany, the reforms initiated by the German Communists in 1969 were determined by the student upheavals that had occurred in the West. Frightened by a possible influence from these, the political regime expanded the hours of Marxism-Leninism studies in order to prevent students from slipping into pro-Western sentiments and open opposition. However, the Soviets were dissatisfied with these reforms, because they saw them being blocked by the stubborn disobedience of a segment of the professoriate, whom the Soviet Union also labeled as the conservative professors. All the provisions of these reforms in fact only existed on paper. Moscow therefore initiated its own new reform program in 1973 aimed at eliminating the conservatism of the professors by involving them in cooperative historical and pedagogic studies, by sending Soviet professors to Germany, and by encouraging the professors to believe sincerely in Marxist philosophy. This rather utopian program

failed in 1986, when Moscow finally admitted that the German professoriate was not and never would become true Marxists.

Hence, both superpowers encountered either open or masked forms of opposition from those professors who admired the old traditions of the German universities such as academic freedom, isolation from politics, repudiation of imposed ideologies, and a powerful position for the senior staff. This opposition on the part of the professoriate condemned external influences in both parts of Germany. The West German and East German professoriate believed that both American democracy and Soviet Marxism undermined the concept of academic freedom and the other traditions of German university life. These ideologies were repudiated by different means depending on where a professor lived: a West German professor who opposed the reforms joined a legal lobbyist organization consisting of conservatives and promoted the new law of 1975; an East German professor agreed to the imposed reforms but in reality continued delivering lectures and doing research according to German tradition.

While confrontation between the West German professoriate and the US government was abating and stabilizing, by the end of the 1970s through the 1980s the East German professoriate and students began to fall under the influence of incoming American and Western culture. The new political context that was détente allowed the United States to influence a segment of East German students and professors, along with the intelligentsia. While most intellectuals supported this influence, since it was helping to develop the dissident movement, the German professoriate suddenly demonstrated their restraint towards the new ideology and values coming from the West. University professors, in contrast to religious young people and the intelligentsia, showed a rather cool attitude faced with these new values. The grounds for such a position can be explained in terms of the old traditional behavior of the German university academia – to be isolated from politics and not to yield to the imposition of ideologies so that academic freedom might be preserved – and this prevailed over the temptation to accept the new incoming liberal ideology. This old traditional behavior on the part of German university academia, which both Americans and Soviets were unable to eradicate during the entire period of the Cold War, became visible in the 1980s.

On comparing the American and Soviet transformations in German universities, we can state that both conducted a policy of cultural imperialism: both powers attempted to impose their models of university education either in West or in East Germany by pressuring the university community and by working to attract this community to their divergent

political cultures. It is evident that their policies of cultural imperialism were stimulated by ideological confrontation: both the United States and the Soviet Union exploited German universities in order to transform German society, to disseminate their rival political cultures, and, generally, to win the minds of Germans in the cultural Cold War. However, open or silent resistance on the part of the German university undermined both their cultural influences and thus the policy of cultural imperialism pursued by the United States and the Soviet Union in German universities eventually failed. Both governments acknowledged the failure of their policies in Germany, and the academic community of the two Germanies was able to retain certain traditional features of the German university system throughout the entire period of the Cold War.