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ANDREAS W. DAUM, *Kennedy in Berlin: Politik, Kultur und Emotionen im Kalten Krieg* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2003), 271 pp. ISBN 3 506 71991 2. EUR 24.90

The 1963 visit of US President John F. Kennedy to West Germany, and especially to West Berlin, was an exceptional moment in transatlantic diplomatic relations, even in the general history of diplomatic relations and political spectacle. To communicate the extraordinary nature of this diplomatic visit, its significance, its background, intent, and effect therefore requires a new kind of diplomatic history, and this is what Andreas Daum provides with *Kennedy in Berlin*. If, however, the moment examined was exceptional, one hopes that the methodology Daum deploys in this book will be more broadly used. In this study of transatlantic relations focusing on 'street politics, emotionalization, and theatricalization', the author draws on techniques that have recently proven effective in social historical studies from the history of everyday life to popular cultural history to history of emotion. The result is a wonderfully evocative study of a pivotal point in the history of West Germany and West Berlin, of the Cold War, and of West German-American relations.

Exploiting the same metaphor of a theatrical staging that his subjects themselves employed in setting up successive diplomatic visits, Daum offers the 'backdrop' to the shining spectacle of 23–26 June 1963: from the 1949 Air Lift and American General Lucius Clay's 1950 presentation of the Freedom Bell to hang in West Berlin's new city hall to the playing out of the early, 'old' Cold War scenario, that is, Dwight D. Eisenhower's and John Foster Dulles's interactions with Adenauer, and with West Berlin Mayors Ernst Reuter and Otto Suhr. We see likewise the spectre of Adenauer's and Charles de Gaulle's historic appearance at Reims Cathedral – emotionally fulfilling, but at the same time illustrative of the two veteran politicians' advancing age and stilted public style. Daum depicts for us, too, the more direct 'opening acts' of the 1963 spectacle: the 1961 visit of new US Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson, and the following year of John Kennedy's brother and Attorney General Robert Kennedy. We also see the competing staging of Khrushchev's visit to East Berlin, a pale imitation of John Kennedy's performance a few days earlier, and, finally, the replay of John Kennedy's visit through film, memory, and other means, after the president's assassination only five months

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later. In each of these cases, Daum provides the range of subtexts, the webs of meanings, the intents of various politicians and interests, media and direct popular response alongside these various events, which all sought to draw from existing symbolisms and create new ones. As Daum demonstrates, Johnson's visit to West Berlin in 1961, only weeks after the erection of the Berlin Wall, was primarily to warn new West Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt, who had visited the new president in the White House five months earlier. Brandt, Johnson admonished, had better quit his plaintive and embarrassing demands that the USA respond more forcefully and publicly to the erection of the Berlin Wall. Adenauer, in turn, hoped to use the occasion to jockey for position against Brandt for the new US president's ear. But what the public saw was the 'Johnson effect' – an 'electrifying' 'engineering of politics' that, if only symbolically, at least accomplished what Brandt had demanded: attention to the significance of the Wall, evidence that West Berlin still held its vital place for Americans, even as the population now left the isolated 'half city' in droves. De Gaulle's carefully planned visit to West Germany of the following year could scarcely compete in popular reception with Robert Kennedy's visit to West Berlin, thereby signaling from below the diminution of Adenauer's (Western) 'European' vision that sought to exclude the USA (and with it NATO) from the picture, politically, militarily, economically, culturally, and otherwise.

Thus Johnson's and Robert Kennedy's visits set the stage for John Kennedy's trip in summer 1963, a trip possibly more carefully scripted and choreographed than any in political history, as Daum demonstrates. The densely overlaid symbolism of every planned stop, interaction, communication, and stance spoke volumes about American and West German relations – indeed, far more than its planners could have dreamed, and often more than they wanted. From the beginning, audiences responded to the difference in relations between Kennedy and Adenauer on the one hand, and Kennedy and Brandt on the other. 'The Old One' appeared only more physically debilitated next to the young, handsome, and charismatic Kennedy, while Brandt seemed to glow in the reflected light, his characteristics far better matching those of the US president. While Adenauer exhibited discomfort with the sheer exuberance and mass of the extraordinary crowds in West Germany and all the more in West Berlin, as individuals hung from flag poles and trees, shouting 'Ken-Ne-Dy,'

Brandt and Kennedy were far more comfortable with this mass adulation. They seemed to drink it all in, if with some amazement, finding this perfect fulfilment of a principle of 'see and be seen'. Indeed, if Daum demonstrates that this was a transitional moment for West German politics, he might have emphasized still more explicitly what it meant for West Germans and West Berliners now to be 'allowed' to demonstrate such 'political emotion' as another aspect of 'overcoming' the Nazi past. The visit to the Free University, to Rathaus Schöneberg, and not least to the Ku'damm all reflected in positive fashion that West Berlin was an 'American' city. The visit to the Wall—one of stark emotion for the president himself—was complemented by a visit to the Plötzensee Memorial to victims of the failed July Plot against Hitler, making the well-played Cold War link between Nazi and DDR regimes.

But not all went as everyone had planned. Kennedy's emotionally saturated talk at Rathaus Schöneberg ran far from his scripted speech, expressing his horror at the East German regime at precisely the point at which Brandt had planned to try to normalize East-West relations, a precursor to his later *Ostpolitik*. This was an ironic turn-about of just two years earlier, when Brandt had felt the US leaders had failed to acknowledge the significance of the Wall. At the same time, to a far greater degree than could ever have been imagined, Kennedy convinced the West Berlin crowd—and, via live coverage, West Germans, and Americans—of the unbreakable bonds between America and West Berlin, of a *Vergemeinschaftung* that far transcended close diplomatic relations by any contemporary understanding. His utterance 'ich bin ein Berliner' (which Daum carefully parses historically in an excursus that suggests Kennedy's own role in the ungrammatical and charming conceit) reflected his identification, and those of Americans, with West Berliners, a rhetorical accomplishment that, though unmatched by any particular political acts, treaties, or policies, left West Berliners in a 'mass fantasy' of epic and lasting proportions.

It is certainly difficult at this point in history to imagine the joy of a population occupied by American forces on hearing of Americans' intent to stay with them and not desert them, but Daum makes this moment comprehensible at every level—for the moment at least. In certain respects, it remains difficult to understand why these few words, unaccompanied as they were by significant action, were per-

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ceived to be as meaningful as they were, despite Daum's careful emotional excavation. Why did the figure of Kennedy himself draw a quasi-religious response, as the author describes in his account of 'Kennedy relics'? This is not particularly Daum's fault. It is not clear that historians have adequately accounted for Kennedy's 'star' status even among American audiences, beyond his handsome youth in an era of burgeoning youth culture. Daum gets closer than most others, including his mention of Kennedy as a symbol of hope. That West Berliners sought emblems of hope and optimism makes good sense, as does—and Daum might have discussed this further—West Berliners' and West Germans' own identification with Americans, their prosperity, and their then apparently successful and respected cultural and political hegemony. Both clearly reflected longtime German interests at some level. This study covers remarkable territory in compact form. It has been claimed in the last decade in some circles that diplomatic and formal political history has died a long, slow death. If Daum's exciting, colourful, and thought-provoking study is any indication of the subdiscipline's direction, then the death knells are a very long way off.

BELINDA DAVIS is Associate Professor of History at Rutgers University and currently S. C. Davis Research Fellow at Princeton University. Recent publications include 'From Starbuck to Starbucks, or, Terror: What's in a Name?', *Radical History Review* (2002) and 'Provokation als Emanzipation: 1968 und die Emotionen', *vorgänge* (2003). She is now writing a book on politics and everyday life in New Left West Germany, 1962–83.